

THE ROLE OF CONGREGATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN CREATING AND
MAINTAINING A HEALTHY CHURCH

By

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I declare that THE ROLE OF CONGREGATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN CREATING AND MAINTAINING A HEALTHY CHURCH is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

SIGNATURE

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SUMMARY

This study considers the ways in which congregational management contributes to maintaining the healthy church through the supporting role of supplying, monitoring and controlling the human, physical, financial, and informational resources needed to allow the pastors to lead the congregation-centred church to fulfil its mission. It was found that congregational managers help to prevent their churches declining into ill-health by helping the pastorate to retain current congregants and attract new ones through charisma. This requires them to first study, analyze and classify the major parts of the diverse congregation and surrounding community and then monitor them to foresee and forestall problems. They play multiple roles in efficient administration, asset management, targeted church advertising, human relations, risk management, project management, professional standards auditing and maintenance, community relations with all faiths, charity, mission, and, above all, customer relations. Recommendations are made for enhancing congregational management's role in the healthy church.

Keywords: congregational management; church leadership; church administration; congregations; congregation-centred church; life cycles of congregations; typologies of congregations; leadership styles; Weber's authority models; charisma; resource management;

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1. Introduction

'The church is a corporation and corporations have no soul'.

(McConnell 1920: 16)

This short quotation from Bishop Francis John McConnell of the Methodist Episcopal Church sums up what the Bishop saw as the principal problem of the church. His statement implies that the church as an organization is soulless and as dedicated to the pursuit of funds and efficiency as the business of his day was.

Stephen Colwell writing almost seventy years earlier believed that the principal problems of the Church (by which he meant the Protestant church of the United States of America) were, in the words of the subtitle of his book, 'Creeds Without Charity...Theology Without Humanity...Protestantism Without Christianity...' (Colwell 1854).

What is implicit in both McConnell's and Colwell's criticisms is that the church has become an organization which has lost sight of its origins, has lost sight of the values and traditions which gave it the vitality to grow from nothing to the world's most powerful and influential religion. Both these writers (especially Colwell) had many suggestions for revitalizing the church, for returning it to its core values. Both predicted the decline of individual denominations but neither foresaw the massive decline in the Church's European homeland and the lesser decline in the United States of America that has occurred over the last half-century.

Today both McConnell's and Colwell's criticisms are still valid but the social, political and religious environment has changed so much that most mainstream churches are in decline. Two of the most liberal - the Church of England and the American Episcopal Church - may (arguably) be irreversibly be on the way to becoming little more than

shadows of their former selves. These statements are not overly pessimistic. Usual Sunday Attendance in Church of England declined from 1 606 000 in 1968 to 826 000 in 2009 - 49% in 41 years – (*Church of England Attendance 2009*) - while the number of Americans identifying themselves as Episcopalians/Anglicans declined from 3 451 000 in 2001 to 2 405 000 in 2008 - 30% in 7 years – (Kosmin & Keysar 2009: Table 3). Almost all other, non-Catholic, Western European countries have seen religiosity declines between these two. Even the Catholic Church is, as the title of Schroeder's (2006) paper puts it, '.... [g]rowing everywhere - except in Europe'.

In this writer's opinion, the reason for the decline of any church is that the church no longer meets the needs of its people. That might be because the church has stood still, while the people moved on or that the church moved on, but in a direction that its people didn't wish to go. In the first case the church failed to adapt¹ when the needs of its people changed; in the second the church did change, but the changes failed to meet the needs of its people and thus the church, or more usually its leadership, had selected the path of decline, possibly of extinction; the changes in the church were thus maladaptive.

The doom-and-gloom scenario sketched above is not of course without many bright lights. The present writer does not believe that there is - except in limited cases - any necessity for despair. Although the level of Christian church going in Europe and the United States may be declining overall, there are many denominations - generally outside the mainstream - that are growing well. It must be emphasised, however, that the major growth in Christianity is outside of Europe and North America in Asia, Africa and South America. Even in the declining churches, many local churches are flourishing although growth is nowhere near as strong as it was during the great 1950s surge in mainstream Christianity.

¹ 'adapt' and 'maladaptive' are used here in a sense analogous to their use in evolutionary biology. This will be the case throughout this work.

The churches which are flourishing are those that have returned at least in some ways to the roots from which Christianity grew. They are churches which are an important part of their communities - not just in the religious sense but in the social, humanitarian and informational spheres. They are churches which offer hope, salvation, faithful worship, and Christian fellowship and charity. They are churches which have well-established local missions, within the community and even within their own membership. They are churches which have broken through the barriers of out-dated thinking and have embraced modernity without abandoning long-held beliefs and traditions. They are churches which hold to the eternal truths of Jesus Christ but are fully part of the modern world. They are able to attract the children and young adults who are the next generation of church-goers and the future of the church.

The comments in the previous paragraph might suggest that the present writer is advocating a return to 'primitive Christianity', to what is pejoratively called 'fundamentalism'. Nothing could be further from the truth. It cannot be doubted that certain 'fundamentalist' churches are growing, but many of the smaller rigidly conservative religious sects have vanished. 'Fundamentalism' is neither a requirement for, nor a guarantee of, church growth. The only guarantee of church growth rests in the ability of individual local churches to retain their present members and draw in new ones. The most rapidly growing mega-churches (to use an extreme example) are not the most fundamentalist; there is - for example - at least one mega-church with a high proportion of gays and lesbians in its membership (*Gay mega-church votes to join UCC 2005*).

These last four paragraphs summarize the background to this work – what the writer believes to be the problem and what he believes might well be the solution.

This work is nominally on 'congregational management' but it is not possible to divorce any part of the church from any other and still have a functioning body. It is the duty of the congregational manager to investigate his own church and its growth status to determine, by comparison with other churches, what the strength and weaknesses of his own church are, to suggest suitable changes - with proper justification - to the appropriate leadership in the local church. Once changes have been decided upon, it is the congregational manager's duty to amass, allocate and disburse those resources as described in Mellody & Theron (2006: 109-112, 115-116). This paragraph sums up the essence of the objectives of the present project.

1.1. The Research Problem

In general a research problem for a Masters-level project, should take the form of a short statement defining the research problem and at least pointing to the solution of that problem (Biggam 2008: 13). There are several exceptions to this rule. The most cogent for this research is the project based around a literature review or survey, *especially one of the general type of review*² (as opposed to a systematic review or a meta-analysis). The mere fact of doing a literature review project means that the researcher lacks a full view of a particular subject. His knowledge will not be complete until all stages of the review (especially analysis and synthesis) have been completed.

It is for this reason that the statement of the problem given below, although short and concise, is in fact one of considerable complexity.

1.1.1. Statement of the Problem

'What is a 'healthy' church and what role should the congregational manager play in establishing and maintaining the healthy state?'

² The subject of types of literature review will be discussed in much greater detail later, but it should be pointed out that a research review (such as this one) is very different in nature from the **review as overview** which is usually written by an expert in a field.

The problem to be examined by this project is thus three-fold. The first step *sine qua non* is to determine what a 'healthy' church is; the second step is to determine the work of the congregational manager³; while the third, establishing the role of the congregational manager in establishing and maintaining the 'healthy church', is the main task of this project. All three steps will be examined in greater detail later but it is necessary to consider here the question of a measure to determine objectively the health of a church.

1.1.2. An objective measure of church health

Books and papers on the 'healthy church' abound; a total of 116 influential documents were studied for this work and 46 were examined in greater detail. Almost all of such works list, explicitly or implicitly, the characteristics of a 'healthy church'.

The emphasis is almost always on 'Biblical'. Gangel (2001:470) for example states:

'Church health does not begin with evangelism or missions - though both must follow. Biblical church health begins with a Christ-centred, Bible-centred congregation determined to be in their personal, family, and corporate life precisely what God wants of them and it makes no difference whether their number is fifteen, fifteen hundred, or fifteen thousand⁴.'

Dever (2001) for example considers there are nine marks of a healthy church; other writers have similar numbers and *apparently* similar characteristics in that they cover theology, mission, fellowship, witness, passionate preaching, a biblical stance and other lesser characteristics. This apparent unanimity is misleading. The interpretation of each characteristic varies according to the theology of the church in question. 'Biblical stance',

³ This step in this project follows the example of, and expands upon, Melody & Theron (2006).

⁴ Original author's emphasis

for example, is interpreted by conservative⁵ Christians as strict adherence to the literal meaning of Biblical passages resulting in, for example, a rejection of homosexuality as a result of the condemnation in Leviticus 18:22 and other places. Liberal churches on the other hand interpret 'biblical stance' as a derived concept - derived from the acts of Jesus and the Apostles viewed through the lens of modern liberal social thinking - which results, for example, in an acceptance of homosexuality as an integral part of modern church life in all its aspects.

The 'marks of a healthy church' will therefore vary from church to church depending on each church's pastorate and congregation, and the nature of the surrounding community. Further the 'marks' are not binary attributes, which can be defined in terms of 'presence' or 'absence'; it is the relative magnitude of the individual 'marks' which is important. It is probable also that the 'marks' of the healthy church will vary from denomination to denomination. Further the relative magnitude of those characteristics necessary for a healthy church will vary within each denomination. For each local church, the relative magnitude of each of the 'marks' will vary with time as changes occur within that church.

For example: if a particular church has a powerfully charismatic pastor, that pastor's presence alone might make it strong and growing and thus 'fellowship' which might be critical to the success of another church, would be less important. If the pastor leaves and his replacement has limited preaching or people skills, then the church suffers a shock which may well drive it into ill-health. The writer visited one such church in 2007; it has only just begun to recover from the loss of the charismatic pastor. Its membership is still 27% below its peak in October 2007 (the minister had left in June of that year).

⁵ In this work, 'conservative' and 'liberal' are used merely as convenient labels for particular theological stances.

Further, determining presence or absence of a particular set of 'marks of a healthy church' tells the congregational manager nothing about the actual health of a particular local church. It would be impossible, the present writer believes, for any but the most fortunate church to have high levels of all 'marks'. For these reasons, the idea of using the existence or otherwise of particular 'marks of church health' was discarded early in this study.

Too many churches base measurements of 'health' on rationalized myths, which '... are especially important in organizations that have ambiguous technologies, that is, uncertain means–end relationships, and where outputs are ambiguous and difficult to appraise, for example, schools, prisons, and hospitals' (Townley 2008:103) and, of course churches. Such measures are dangerous because they can (consciously or otherwise) be all-too-easily manipulated to prove almost anything.

There is, however, one easily-measured characteristic that was common to all works except those of a very few churches - the rate of positive or negative growth. All works without exception agree that a growing church is usually healthy; it's generally agreed (34 of 46 works - 74%) that a church can grow too rapidly and hence become unhealthy; about half (25 of 46 - 54%) agree that a steady-state church is healthy; while all but two (44 of 46 - 96%) agree that a declining church is necessarily unhealthy. It is common cause that the two most liberal churches examined in this study, the Church of England (Crockett & Voas 2006) and the US Episcopal Church (Dart 2006), are in a state of decline and these were the only churches to consider that a declining church could be healthy.

In this work, 'unhealthy' is defined as 'declining in size' and churches which do not have declining numbers are healthy. It is obvious that this statement must be qualified to include the period of time over which the state is to be measured. This was difficult to quantify because it necessarily includes a prediction of the future. Clearly future

projections are literally that: projections based on data concerning previous states so it is unwise to project known data trends further into the future than the data basis allows.

If the past and future periods are too short, noise in the data may hide the long-term trend. If the period is too long, projections into the future become meaningless because while it is easy to chart size changes in the past, projections into the future are much more difficult. An asymmetric period of three years was used in the present study; this is in some ways arbitrary but is generally based on growth statistics for medium, large and mega-churches. Small church data could not be used because lack of data and because the noise caused by the effect of small absolute changes in church size obscures the overall trend over a three year period.

The formal definition of a healthy church used in this study is: 'A healthy church is a church which has been growing or has been in a steady-state for the past two years and which is not expected, in the absence of any major change in the external or internal environment, to start declining for at least another year.'

It follows from this definition that the congregational manager can only use this measure of health in guiding changes to the church if his measurements of church size are accurate and impartial.

1.2. Aims of the Research

The aims for this research - which in that respect alone can be considered an extension of the work of Mellody & Theron (2006) - were to examine congregational management practice through the twin lenses of modern management methodology and modern scientific thinking to produce a practical assessment of current practice and of how this practice might be changed to contribute towards creating and maintaining a healthy church. It was hoped and expected that the study would yield sufficient concrete

information that practical recommendations could be made for improving the health of the church.

It has been shown (Mellody & Theron 2006:106) that the church has two parts, the church as organization and the church as organism or the body-of-Christ. Congregational management belongs to the first of these two parts and has only an indirect, facilitating influence on the second. Congregational management, for example, can never drive missionary endeavours; it can only provide the resources that will enable the church as the body-of-Christ to move in this direction.

It was accepted, in this case, that the overall discipline of practical theology as applied to congregational management had to be considered as *theologia applicata*, that is, theology applied to the service of the church as an organization. Here the present writer also accepts that congregational management considered as *theologia applicata* plays a subsidiary role⁶; it is an important collection of functions, it is necessary for the modern church but it is not *sine qua non*. By itself, congregational management, however skilfully and efficiently it is performed, can never create a healthy church, because it applies almost wholly to the church as an organization.

A healthy church must be constructed primarily through the pastorate and the congregation acting as the body-of-Christ. This does not, however, imply that congregational management is somehow distanced from the need to work in the Christian ethic and to maintain the link with the Holy Spirit that is central to the church's life. The work of Stafford (2005) on the Holy Spirit evident in Richard Hooker's *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity* and other works is proof of this.

⁶ This is, of course, at odds with the suggestion of Heitink (1993: 1) who considers practical theology '... is no longer satisfied with the subsidiary role of *theologia applicata* ...'.

In essence, therefore, the aims of the study were to examine the current functions of congregational management and then to compare these to the way that these functions are presently carried out in analogous modern organizations - principally consulting firms which are run⁷ by professionals and provide professional services - and to see if church functions could be carried out more efficiently and efficaciously.

A critically important part of any modern firm is the obtaining of 'competitive intelligence' - information on the products or services and on working methods of other firms (Bernhardt 2003). Although a strong element of competitiveness is usually absent between churches, a congregational manager must constantly investigate and analyze initiatives and working methods of other churches to determine if his own church can be made more efficient.

It is often suggested that 'professional workers' should not need professional supervision and the auditing of the professional quality of their work. Hawkins & Shoet (2006: 81-86) point out, however, that professional supervision is necessary at every level in almost all professions. Churches rarely have supervision of the pastorate except by other pastors within the pastoral team of the local church. Supervision, say, through bishops may be at a distance and may not truly reflect the situation in a particular church. LaMothe (2005) provides an excellent overview of the topic and gives examples of how resistance to pastoral supervision develops and it may be overcome (LaMothe 2005:11-13). Thus the pastorate in the local church is rarely efficiently supervised and proper auditing of professional work such as preaching and the like is often absent; the present writer has never encountered adequate auditing of this type. It will be suggested later, while it is

⁷ By 'professional consulting firms', the writer means firms which offer, say, geological services by professional geologists and which are managed by geologists acting partly as geologists and partly as administrators and managers. This form of managerial dichotomy is of course the standard form of administration and management in most local churches today.

not desirable for employment law and other legal reasons for the congregation to rate individual pastors, the pastorate can be audited 'in bulk' through 'customer satisfaction surveys' and some form of instant rating of, say, a worship service is certainly possible.

The present work covers all such functions from the practical viewpoint. In South Africa, the use of objective methods in measuring the performance of staff is of critical importance for churches because of the onerous requirements of The Labour Relations Act (LRA), Act 66 of 1995 as amended and the associated case law for the dismissal of non-performing staff. These methods should always be developed in conjunction with labour law experts.

1.3. Scope and Limitations of the Research

The most important limitation of this work is that it deals with the local church almost exclusively. The definition of 'local church' used in this work is:

'A local church is a church situated in a community which draws its congregation largely from that community. The pastorate of the church, who usually but not always, are required to have particular qualifications or licences, is allocated to that church⁸, most often exclusively. Such pastors may be employees of the local church or of a greater denomination. Although they may apparently be organized somewhat informally, at the bottom most churches are more or less formal organizations, with a relatively fixed base or building, an income which is usually drawn exclusively or very largely from the congregation, and some form (however simple) of formal congregational management. It may - or may not - be part of a

⁸ This is intended to exclude churches which have an occasional pastor drawn from another church or the 'circuit rider' type of minister. Such churches do a valuable and important job in keeping small or out of the way churches alive, but they have special characteristics which do not tie with the aims of this study.

greater denomination, or of a loose alliance of church (as some so-called post-denominational churches are) or it may be independent – either fully or in a form similar to that of churches using the Congregational or similar models⁹.

The term ‘local church’ is never used in any other sense (such as ‘a church near to a particular point’) in this work.

A full examination of all forms of church would exceed the limits of the resources available. This research has, therefore, been restricted to congregational management in orthodox Protestant churches, generally mainstream, covering the spectrum from conservative to liberal.

Before considering the specific methodology, however, it is necessary to consider the assumptions made in this study because they affected the writer's approach to every aspect of this work.

1.4. Assumptions made in this study

The assumptions made in this study necessarily affected each of the steps taken and they must be borne in mind when examining the reasons for suggestion made and decisions taken. Indeed, the use of these ‘assumptions’, or some of them, is recommended at several points later on in this text for application to problems, especially those dealing with people in the church.

1.4.1. Ethical standards

All congregational management must be done in the light of Christian ethics (as exemplified in Christ's Great Commandments in Matthew 22:37-40) and in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (Jarrett 1918). Later in this section it will be suggested that

⁹ Especially of the type described by Bainton (1897) where the church is part of a denomination but enjoys considerable local autonomy.

the Church's theology of work should embody Austin Marsden Farrer's well-known 'double agency' concept (Griffith 2003). A similar result might possibly be obtained from a theology of work based on Lawrence (1895)'s principle of the Practice of the Presence of God.

1.4.2. Accountability

The ultimate accountability for all actions taken in congregational management is to the congregation as a whole, not to a council or to the pastorate, for example.

1.4.3. Relationships Within and Without the Church

These relationships – indeed all relationships between groups and individuals within the local church - should be based where possible on cooperation and partnership. This does not imply that all partnerships would be equal or that each group's concerns will be given equal weight in decision making. There will always be senior and junior partners. But it does mean that the church's decision-making leaders should not ride rough-shod over the objections of others.

1.4.4. Evolutionary organization

The local church and its congregation live in a changing world, and the church as an organization or as the body-of-Christ, can only endure if the church is able to adapt to that changing environment, without compromising its basic mission and reason for existence. This implies that the church as an organization has to be an evolutionary one (Dekker 2005; Lesourne et al 2006; Greiner 1972). The concept of evolution used in this work is much closer to the biological one than the work of Dekker (2005) for example.

It should be pointed out that all organizations are evolutionary organizations, because the macro- and micro-environments outside any organization and the microenvironment within the organization change constantly and the organization has to adapt in order to survive. Changes are generally small, but major changes like the death of the pastor, or the discovery of child abuse by church staff (Dart 2002:8-9) can occur in seconds

without warning. In such cases, churches will have to adapt to changed circumstances and the adaptation must be swift. Sometimes organizations are changed by their leadership, deliberately or by chance. Regardless of the *intentions* of those leaders, the changes may be deleterious to the church because they are maladaptive.

1.4.5. Bounded Rationality

Human beings, in religious matters particularly, are not always strictly rational and the congregational manager who assumes that important decisions affecting the church will be made rationally (Chaves 1995; Simon 1953, 1955; Rule 1992) will be disappointed. The 'bounded rationality' (Klaes & Sent 2005; Simon 1986) approach will be taken in this work.

1.4.6. Cui Bono

Every action taken and every proposal being examined should be examined using the principle of *cui bono*¹⁰ in the sense used by Cicero in *Pro S Roscio Amerino* (Cicero 1890). It is too often assumed - for example - that an employee of an organization would necessarily have the same desires as the organization as a whole; this is a mistake as Smit et al. (1997: 277) point out¹¹. That this is untrue is also shown by the recent banking crisis which was largely caused by organizational employees taking unwarranted risks with an organization's assets for the sake of short-term bonuses; organizations went bankrupt while their senior employees grew rich.

Employees usually take a short term view which may well clash with the organization's long-term plan. In a case where the present writer was involved, an ambitious pastor

¹⁰ 'To whom the benefit?', 'who is the person who really gains?' Cicero used this phrase to convey that a person's motives should be examined to see if they are what they appear to be on the surface and that there is no hidden agenda involved.

¹¹ 'Thus each person has a personal agenda which does not necessarily put the interests of the business organization first.'

forced an unhealthy rate of growth on a small church; as a result, the pastor was able to obtain a good position leading a larger church, while the smaller church was torn by discontent after his departure.

1.4.7. Reasoning under uncertainty

Much of a manager's work involves dealing with reasoning under uncertainty. Sometimes managers have to make up their minds in a hurry and are forced to choose what seems to be the best answer to a problem at a particular time; they might be wrong, but sometimes they have to act on 'gut feelings'. However, this is rarely, if ever, the case for the adoption of, say, a long-term change in strategy by introducing a new management system. Such changes must be considered with all the information available on the likely benefits and the almost inevitable undesirable side effects.

Some changes have to be made because the *status quo* clashes, in the opinion of the church's leadership, with the church's ethical stance. The 'ordination of women' and the 'acceptance of gay clergy' are examples involving the Church of England and the U.S. Episcopal Church respectively. This might be termed 'deliberate or conscience-driven maladaptation'. It is indefensible for a church to fail to live up to its ethical standards and some decline in numbers was always inevitable in these two cases; where church leadership failed in these instances, was in failing to try to mitigate the damage although since these two churches were already in serious decline, it is doubtful that much could have been done.

The manager may - probably will - still be reasoning under uncertainty but will be taking a reasoned, calculated risk rather than a wild gamble. This writer believes that the consideration of changes or strategies should be done using an evidence-based approach, such as is widely used in medicine (Stout & Hayes 2004; Sauerland & Seiler 2005) in which treatments for disease, for example, are used only if there is scientifically gathered evidence that they actually work. Management fads, for example, are often adopted by

those who want to appear up-to-date, when there is little evidence that the methods actually work.

1.5. Methodology

It has been said earlier that this work is a literature review. During the process of carrying out the review, it became obvious that qualitative and quantitative data from real, working churches would have to be gathered. This meant (see Section 1.5.4) the examination of many church websites for this data. The writer had to locate churches, randomly select some for examination, determine whether the church was suitable and if so extract the data.

Fortunately the present writer had developed over many years a fast method for locating documents in libraries and manual filing systems. Development of the method began in 1972 when he started research for a M.Sc. dissertation on the microbial leaching of minerals (Mellody 1973) by *Thiobacillus*¹² (now *Acidithiobacillus*) bacilli in acid mine water, a subject about which the writer knew nothing of microbiology. Literature search methods were developed to overcome lacunae in the writer's knowledge.

The methods were developed further and made more general by the combination of the principles of records management with those of information science (as suggested by Mellody 1992). The system was later adapted to the Internet with tools using first the principle of the repertory grid (Jankowicz 2004; Easterby-Smith et al 1996) and later the methods of Heuer (1999) which are simpler and allow for reasoning¹³ under uncertainty.

¹² Specifically by what was then called *Thiobacillus ferrooxidans*.

¹³ It must be emphasized again that reasoning under uncertainty does not force a worker to simply take a wild gamble. The user has to weigh up all the evidence using an evidence-based approach and then take a measured, calculated risk.

For some years in the late 1990s, these methods were presented in the form of courses by the present writer.

In general, the method comprises four stages:

1. Definition of the problem
2. The search process (including the construction of search strings)
3. Analysis of the data
4. Data synthesis

Before continuing with the description of the stages of the method it is necessary to outline the general forms of literature reviews.

1.5.1. Forms of Literature Reviews

The present writer considers that there are in general five types of literature reviews, the last two of which are the end-points of a continuum:

1.5.1.1. The Systematic Review

This is a literature review which is concentrated on a single, usually limited topic and which attempts to identify, analyze and synthesize all high quality information on that topic. High levels of certainty and trust in the results are required (Sauerland & Seiler 2005). Either inductive or deductive reasoning may be employed.

1.5.1.2. The Meta-analysis.

This, essentially a form of systematic review, is '...a collection of systematic techniques for resolving apparent contradictions in research findings; Meta-analysts translate results from different studies to a common metric and statistically explore relations between study characteristics and findings...' (Shachar 2008). The level of proof or certainty required from such studies is very high. Either inductive or deductive reasoning may be employed.

1.5.1.3. The Review as Overview

This is a review, usually written by an acknowledged expert in a subject, which provides a synchronic outline, often with an historical introduction, of the state of a particular discipline or, more usually, sub-discipline at a particular time. Although this type of review generally tried to cover the field, it is most often essentially a summary of the expert's own opinions and work, and may not always provide balanced coverage of the topic.

1.5.1.4. The Detailed Literature Review

A literature review generally directed at one topic, which attempts to cover the entire topic by obtaining representative literature which covers the field adequately and tries to provide a balanced coverage of the topic; the topic is more often than not a restricted one. Either inductive or deductive reasoning may be employed but if there is uncertainty some form of Bayesian reasoning is common. Abduction¹⁴ is not commonly used.

1.5.1.5. The General Literature Review

This is at the other end of the continuum from the previous type in that it usually covers one large or several smaller, often multidisciplinary topics and attempts to get a general coverage of a field without getting a statistically representative collection covering all opinions and topics within that field. For this reason, abduction rather than induction or deduction is most commonly employed because the researcher is essentially reasoning under uncertainty but cannot use any form of Bayesian statistics and is so required to derive the best explanation from the information available. This type of abductive reasoning - moving from evidence to explanation - is widely used in the business world

¹⁴ In the sense of reasoning under uncertainty; that is, information is incomplete and the researcher must select what appears to be the best explanation derived from a particular set of evidence (Aliseda 2006:28-29). Bayesian analysis usually cannot be used in such circumstances because there is no way of estimating probabilities.

as well as in the sciences. **The present work of course based largely evidence derived from such reasoning and, equally obviously, is a general literature review.**

1.5.2. The definition of the Search Problem

This will be outlined in Section 1.5.4

1.5.3. The Search Process

The search process is perhaps the most difficult stage in the entire review but - in the present writer's opinion - it is the one in which the novice (and many experienced) researchers most commonly fail. The writer believes that too little use is made of mediated searches by researchers in South Africa; a properly qualified librarian with a good knowledge of the subject is any researcher's greatest asset.

The problem with research in these days of the Internet and online databases is not a dearth of information, but an excess¹⁵. Efficient searching requires that the researcher has a knowledge of which online databases to search, a knowledge of the search facilities in each database and their quirks especially in their evaluation of, say, Boolean search strings, and a knowledge of the indexing language of particular databases. This implies that researcher has an adequate knowledge of his subject, of general search engines such as those described by Berry & Brown (2005), an ability to construct Boolean search strings (in itself not a trivial problem) and the ability to refine such strings so that search terms are taken from the tail of the Zipf¹⁶ function.

¹⁵ A search of the Internet using the Google search engine and the keywords 'congregation management' (the default Boolean operator for Google is AND) yielded 'about' 2 020 000 at 22:40 on 2010-12-25 and 855 000 000 using 'congregation OR management'.

¹⁶ Zipf's law is a statistically defined empirical function which may be used to approximate the distribution for, say, words in a set of documents. The words that distinguish documents on a topic usually lie in the tail of the distribution while the common words ('the', 'of' etc) lie in the

Once a collection of documents has been retrieved each document has to be examined to see if it is suitable for inclusion in the research. Ruževičius & Gedminaitė (2007a, b) have written on the criteria used in evaluating business information and their reasoning was used extensively by the present writer.

During the early stages of this study, the writer decided not to restrict searches to academic databases but decided to include as much primary information as possible largely from the Internet, but also from other sources accessible to the working pastor, to try and get an idea of what working pastors and their congregants thought of the church, how they ran them and how churches existed in the modern world. This study was intended to be, as far as possible, based on practical, real churches in the practical real world.

1.5.4. Acquisition of Data on Individual Churches

This study was intended to be a literature survey without practical work, other than a limited number of visits to churches in the Johannesburg area in order to get a more rounded picture than could be obtained from the literature. It was soon obvious that it would be necessary to examine real, local churches from the viewpoint of congregational management.

Too few South African churches outside the affluent formerly-white area have websites so, after an attempted telephone survey failed because of cost and a lack of cooptation from churches, it was decided to use U.S. churches because data was freely available and conditions were much the same as in South Africa. Good estimates of the demographics

'body'. By selecting the right words it is possible to retrieve documents on a desired topic with a minimum of irrelevant documents, thus increasing the efficiency of the search.

of church areas from online US Census data (www.census.gov)¹⁷. Data and the tools available on the website for the Association of Religion Data Archives (ARDA) (www.thearda.com) were of great help in selecting churches to be examined. A limited number of churches (about 101) were also examined on Google Street View.

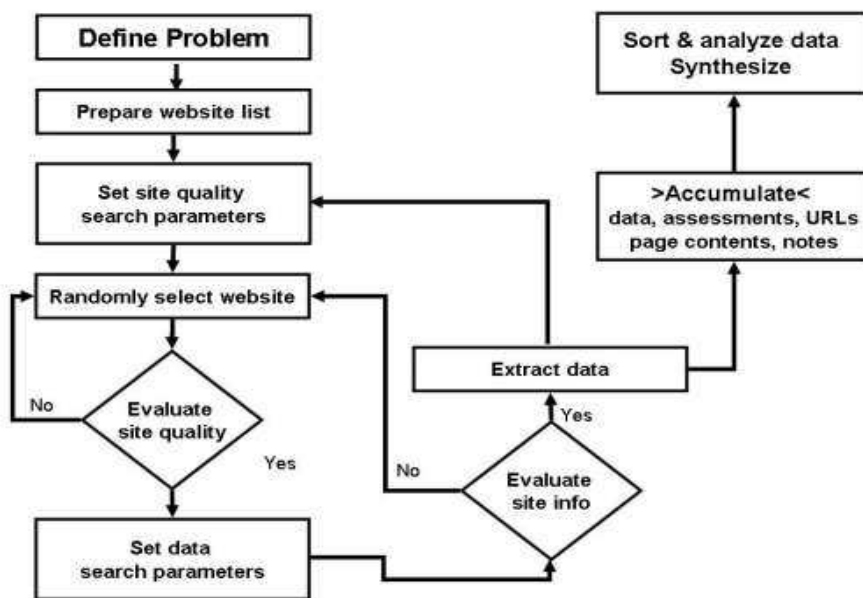


Figure 1.1 : Website Evaluation Process

Only US local churches in the small to large size range (see Section 2 for definitions) were considered in any detail because of the parameters of the study.

¹⁷ It was for example easier and quicker for the present writer to get a good physical, social and financial picture of the New Life Church, Colorado Springs, Colorado, USA, than of the A.F.M. church which is within walking distance of his home and which he drives past almost every day.

At least three thousand churches were examined. Some data – almost always qualitative - were extracted from about 500 of them; later 361 of these were examined in a little greater detail to extract further general information. In the end 219 churches were found to provide sufficiently full details to allow the writer to extract reliable data on staff and church sizes, and other factors. It must be emphasized that, contrary to expectations, a majority of information collected in this way was either qualitative or at best semi-quantitative. Other information was gathered by discussions – mostly online by Instant Messenger and via mailing lists – with congregants and pastors. The resources of the ‘churchadmin’ mailing list¹⁸ and discussions with members outside the list were of great help, not so much for specific information but for deciding on the changing direction of research as the study proceeded.

1.5.5. Data Analysis

Data analysis is perhaps the most controversial aspect of the method as applied to the present project. It has been pointed out that the principal method of reasoning was abduction. It follows from this that the analysis of the information obtained would in general need to employ a technique that facilitated reason under uncertainty, with incomplete information. It is especially important in such a broad-based subject to know when enough information has been obtained, so that a good choice of method, data or process can be made without an attempt to find perfection.

Thus the well-known method of Heuer (1999) was widely used in the present study and the analysis of information followed the example of Heuer (1999: 31-48) using the simple tools described in Heuer's Chapter Eight on the analysis of competing hypotheses (using the summary table on p. 97). This method was, in fact, applied to almost every problem

¹⁸ <http://dir.groups.yahoo.com/group/churchadmin/>

involving competing hypotheses¹⁹. Clearly the use of Heuer's method was largely confined to the data from individual churches (see Section 1.5.4). The only major exception to this was its use in examining the Servant Leader concept.

1.5.6. Data Synthesis

The data synthesis stage, although lengthy, was perhaps the easiest stage of the work. It consisted simply of fitting the results of the analysis into a coherent whole and writing the bridging text. The last part of this dissertation is, of course, the completed synthesis.

1.6. Griffith's Theology of Work

There are many definitions of 'theology of work'. In this study, 'theology of work' simply means 'the conceptual theological framework within which the work will be conducted and the practical application and implications of that theology'. The theology of work within which a person works is a guide for the bringing of God into the world of work.

The theology chosen for this work is that of Austin Marsden Farrer's most well-known (and probably greatest) contribution to Christianity, the concept of 'double agency'. Farrer's writings are notoriously sparsely written and difficult to read, but Griffith (2003:2) has provided a simple but satisfyingly precise description of the double agency concept:

'Double agency is the term used to describe Farrer's theory of how God interacts with the world in order that the world might be completed and incorporated into God. Farrer describes double agency as God acting in our free obedience. By freely submitting our free will to God's will, sacrificing our wishes for the commandments of God, we are able to be the hands of God in the world. Our work, done in submission to God, is God's work.'

¹⁹ 'Hypothesis' in this context is used in the broad sense of ideas or explanation, not in the sense of a scientific hypothesis.

The application and implications of this concept are reasonably simple – in contrast to Farrer’s own descriptions of them. Human actions in the workplace as well as in all activities humans undertake, are fully the actions of the doers, but are also the actions of God, Who is perfectly hidden. The implications as described by Griffith (2003: 5) are:

‘A tentative answer ... requires us to attempt to reintegrate our vocation and our calling. Our lives are not segmented into profit work and volunteer work, good works for God and real work for ourselves. Work is just work ...[o]ur work makes us fit for heaven, and the more we align our work to God’s will, the more our work allows us to become more perfect. **Each of us, in every job we do, is a co-creator with God of the whole universe**²⁰.’

Little more need be said.

It might be argued that the same result might be achieved by using Brother Lawrence²¹’s Practice of the Presence of God (Herman 1895). This is true in the literal sense – at least the practical results might be the same – but Farrer’s concept is so much wider and so much more spiritually satisfying in its sense of utter completeness.

Griffith (2003:10) concludes with a statement that sums up the entire concept as far as practical application is concerned:

‘All work can be transformed to holy work, provided we allow our wills to follow God’s will. The transformation requires us to reject the service of self alone. It

²⁰ The present writer’s emphasis.

²¹ ‘Brother Lawrence’ was Nicolas Herman’s chosen religious name.

requires all of us to dedicate ourselves to do our work in truth and beauty and for the common good.’

2. The Church and Its Congregation

Earlier in this work, it was suggested that the church as a whole consisted of the church as an organism, as the body-of-Christ, and the church as an organization. The first part of the statement implies that the church, certainly the healthy church, is centred around Jesus Christ. This study will attempt to show that the healthy church as an organization is necessarily one that is centred on the congregation. It is for this reason that the present section is the largest in this report.

In this work the focus of attention is on the church as an organization which is administered by the congregational manager under the overall guidance of the senior pastor and the church council (or similar body). Viewed from this perspective, the whole church as an organization may be divided into three parts:

1. The church buildings, facilities and the staff (including the pastorate).
2. The congregation as a whole and as segmented into groups.
3. The individual congregants.

It might be argued that the inclusion of staff, especially the pastorate, is an error in view of the importance of the pastorate as spiritual, religious and (usually) organizational leaders in the church. Most ministers appear to accept this view and see themselves as independent of the congregation. Attempts to supervise the ministry have met with resistance by some ministers, because many believe that only new members of the pastorate need supervision (LaMothe 2005: 4).

This view is at odds with the facts: pastors are simply employees of the church - critical, vital employees but just employees nonetheless. In a business analogy, the senior pastor may be regarded as the highly paid, much revered, Chief Executive Officer of a company and the congregants as both shareholders and customers of that company. As long as the CEO does well by customers, the company flourishes and the shareholders are quiescent; if the CEO fails - say, by trying to market a product that customers dislike and the company begins to lose money - then the shareholders will soon force the CEO out. In a church, it is not so easy because appointing and maintaining the pastorate is normally a prerogative of the denominational leadership. If this leadership ignores the congregants' wishes, they can 'vote with their feet' and leave. Barrow (2003: 7-8) points out that at this stage many church leaders take refuge in denialism. Some pastors can be positively harmful to the church. Herman (1984: 62) provides an example of an Anglican Church with an original congregation of 250 which fell to 40, following a failed attempt at modernization by a new minister.

The situation is not improved when ministers are simply doing the minimum to keep their job or where they have lost faith. These latter ministers may be 'compelled' to remain in their positions in spite of disbelief for financial, family or other reasons (Dennett 2010: 122). Dennett goes on to say (p. 149):

'Are [disbelieving ministers], in fact, in a good position to lead their congregations towards their own understandings, or are they condemned by their own commitments – to parishioners, their families, their colleagues – to perpetuate the double standards of sincerity that they have crafted so unwittingly over the years? We all find ourselves committed to little white lies, half-truths and convenient forgettings, knowing tacitly which topics not to raise with which of our loved ones and friends. But these pastors – and who knows how many others – are caught in a larger web of diplomatic, tactical, and, finally, ethical concealment. In no other profession, surely, is one so isolated from one's fellow

human beings, so cut off from the fresh air of candor, never knowing the relief of getting things off one's chest. '

Ministers of this type are very unhealthy for the church and congregation. Although they may attempt to disguise their disillusionment, over the long term their work usually deteriorates. A secret of this magnitude is difficult to keep to one's self, is very often detected by their congregants and is bound to come out sooner or later anyway.

For example, Atherstone (2004: 240) points out - suggesting that this may be the reason for the continuing decline of the Church of England - that many Anglican pastors do not accept the 'facts' of the Anglican faith which they preach every day; only 83% of male and 74% of female priests actually believe in 'I believe in God the Father who created the world'.

Another side of the problem is that too many congregants spoken to by the writer feel that the church is 'owned' by the pastorate, run for the benefit of the pastorate and the 'lay elite²²', and that ordinary people are tolerated only as a passive, giving audience. This is of course exaggerated - at least in all churches visited by the writer - but there is enough truth in it to be of concern to those worried about the future of the church. The answer to these difficulties is an acceptance that ministers - vital though they may be - are just employees, who should be treated like employees who, at the same time, are servants of the congregation. The congregation should have a greater role in the hiring, auditing, and retention of ministers - just as customers or shareholders in any business do. Congregants should be encouraged to see themselves as the 'owners' of the church, as the group around which the church exists.

²² Such as socially prominent congregants, senior volunteers and generous donors.

This would change the Church into a 'congregation-centred organization, a truly 'customer-oriented' one. This is not to suggest that pastors should be removed from the leadership of the church, simply that pastors need to become more cognisant of their position and be more willing to descend from a lofty position and treat congregants as people. The running of the church should be done as a partnership between the pastor acting as the church's Chief Executive Officer and the congregation acting as at once the church's customers and shareholders. Customer Relationship Management – which this writer will later recommend as an essential part of the church's strategy (see Section 2.5) – requires, in fact, the building of both internal and external partnerships.

2.1. The Church and Its Location

A particular church may be a wealthy one with all the facilities that any congregant could wish for, or it may be a poor one with desperately inadequate facilities and none of the small luxuries that make life bearable. The church may be located in an idyllic rural area, in a pleasant, friendly suburb or in a rundown, crime-ridden urban slum. The area may be easily accessible with good roads allowing the church to draw its congregation from a wide area, or it may be cramped and bounded by physical features like motorways, rivers, hills or other geomorphologic barriers which restrict the congregational draw-in area to a few square kilometres. No matter what the church is like, congregants sometimes develop a strong relationship with the church as a building; Clarke (2007) discusses this, called the church building 'This Special Shell'. This affection can obviously be very helpful in making congregants proud of their church.

Christianity is a religion of sacrifice. Christians in Africa and in conflict areas around the world risk their lives everyday to attend churches and to worship with fellow Christians. Even their churches are not safe havens as the targeting and murder of Christians in Iraq (Tawfeeq 2010), Nigeria, Indonesia and other countries shows. Christians will sacrifice much for their faith if they have to. Sometimes, this willingness of Christians to sacrifice is taken advantage of in ways that are morally and ethically dubious. For example: at

one church the writer visited, extensive work was in progress in expanding the pastor's already opulent home, while the church and its hall had no toilet facilities. He was told of another in which a former baby feeding and training area for desperately needy young mothers had been converted into a garage for the pastor's luxury German sedan (bought by the struggling church for the pastor's sole use). Ironically in the first case, the sermon delivered by the senior pastor on the occasion of the writer's visit, emphasized the need for congregants to sacrifice time and money for the good of their church; this was evidently one of his favourite themes.

It is the prime task of the congregational manager to make the best of available resources to change into a secure, safe and inspiring sanctuary from the outside world so that congregants feel welcome and comfortable²³, ready to receive the message of the Gospel. The task may be easy or difficult but it must be done, and it must be done for the benefit of all congregants, not just for a subset of 'elite' members. The convenience of the pastorate and other employees or of the 'elite' members of the congregation must never be put above the welfare of the congregation as a whole. The congregation manager has, in words drawn from the hospitality industry, to become 'consumer oriented'. Creating a well-run, welcoming and comfortable church is a major part of the congregation manager's role in creating and maintaining a healthy church.

In this facet of his duties, the congregational manager is acting in the same way that a manager in the hospitality industry would. Congregational managers and the pastorate in general could learn much from hospitality management. In particular, the prime standard by which the success of, say, a hotel is measured in the level of satisfaction of its customers.

Pizam & Ellis (1999: 326) point out:

²³ As Barrows & Powers (2002: 5) say about the duties of a manager in the hospitality industry

‘Customer satisfaction is the leading criterion for determining the quality that is actually delivered to customers through the product/service and by the accompanying servicing... Simply stated, customer satisfaction is essential for corporate survival. Several studies have found that it costs about five times as much in time, money and resources to attract a new customer as it does to retain an existing customer... This creates the challenge of maintaining high levels of service, awareness of customer expectations and improvement in services and product’

This quotation (which was written about the hospitality industry) also sums up the work of a congregational manager and his relationship with congregants. Another very important point made by these writers was the need for an efficient customer satisfaction survey.

It is beyond the scope of this work to prescribe what needs to be done to make a welcome and comfortable area for congregants, but a number of points may be made by considering a hypothetical church from, as it were, the eyes of a newcomer. During this study the writer visited many churches and the comments below are taken from his experiences.

The most important point to making a person feel comfortable is to make that person feel safe. The church should therefore be equipped with as much security as can be afforded. The church, depending on its location, should be surrounded by a security fence with lockable gates and preferably gate guards - at least during high risk periods, like at night or on weekends. The church and its buildings should have adequate burglar- (with recording cameras if funds are available) and fire-alarm systems with emergency buttons at suitable intervals. The church should be equipped with at least the legally required fire-extinguishing devices.

The next important aid to making congregants feel comfortable is the appearance of the building and grounds. As far as possible, the grounds should be landscaped, and well-maintained. Most churches have extensive parking areas which should be properly delineated and marked with markers or painted lines. Parking discipline should be maintained preferably with help from church volunteers. This greatly eases the flow of traffic and avoids the need for latecomers to park behind other people's cars which will cause friction.

Church buildings should be kept painted and, most importantly, kept clean. This is important to engender a sense of pride in existing congregants and to be attractive to newcomers, especially occasional and potential members. Cleanliness is particularly important; congregants will forgive a slightly shabby appearance if they know that the church's finances are low, but they will not forgive church grounds polluted by avoidable littering, or overflowing toilets. The church should appear from the outside to be welcoming.

Similar considerations apply to the interior of the church which should always be properly sign-posted. No matter how large the church is, its congregational managers should strive for an ambience of intimacy. Too many churches - especially of the large, newly-built ones - appear so clinical as to be unwelcoming. Yet some of the old cathedrals - like Notre Dame de Reims or the Cathédrale Saint-Michel de Carcassonne - are vast, soaring buildings, but they appear to hold out their arms in welcome. And even the most casual visitor feels at home. This writer felt much the same on the occasion of his first visit to Rhema Bible Church North - even though he disagrees strongly with the Prosperity Gospel theology of that church.

Churches should be clean and sweet-smelling, light and airy in summer and warm but not stuffy in winter, properly maintained (especially air-conditioning and heating), painted before they look too shabby, properly laid out, easy ingress and egress (especially

in case of fire or other emergency) and good acoustics²⁴. Unless the church and its associated buildings are very simple, they should always be clearly signposted. Pews should be cushioned - some poorer churches suggest congregants bring their own cushions. Where individual chairs are provided, these should be fitted with sound-suppressing rubber feet. If certain pews or rows of chairs are reserved for particular people, the pews or rows should be very clearly marked with a 'Reserved' sign; there is nothing more embarrassing than to sit in an empty seat and then, just after the start of the service, find that somebody comes along to claim 'his' seat. Provision should be made for the largest possible attendance, but in a way that the church doesn't look empty if the number of congregants at worship is small. Where there are toilets near the church, labour should always be employed to keep the toilets clean - just as happens, for example, at cinema complexes. Congregational managers could do a lot worse than making the rounds of hotels, cinema complexes and shopping centres to get the feeling of what can be done and what should *not* be done. Congregants entering the church should be greeted by cheerful, welcoming staff and, as they leave, they should be 'farewell-ed' by the pastorate.

As in any good hotel, the inner workings of the church - accounting personnel, maintenance staff and the like - should never be visible to the congregants. There should always be a skeleton administration staff on duty during worship so that congregants can do whatever business they need to at worship/service time. Congregants should also be able to make appointments to meet the clergy during the week. The administrative offices should be clearly signposted.

An important point that arose out of the writer's own experience was the need for the church pastorate and other employees to keep their problems to themselves. Congregants should not be bothered by the sight of pastors or other employees

²⁴ Or a well-designed sound system.

quarrelling; it is particularly important to ensure that pastors do not show their anger with their colleagues or the church in general in the hearing and sight of congregants²⁵.

Earlier it was said, that creating a well-run church is a major part of a congregational manager's job. However it is very much a first step. The next steps lead to giving the congregation what they need from the church, to satisfying their religious and spiritual needs. To do that, the congregation manager has to consider the nature of the congregation both in terms of the major groups which comprise the congregation *and* in terms of congregants on the individual level. The church has to target certain sections of the religious market, because it is impossible with so many conflicting religious and non-religious life choices available for the church to be 'all things to all men'²⁶. It has to concentrate on offering services acceptable to the larger parts of the congregation but it must provide at least the minimum acceptable services to all congregants. This can only be done with knowledge of the congregation.

2.2. The Congregation

The congregation of a church is unarguably the most important part of the church. All the church employees - from the pastorate down to the lowliest manual worker - are in essence the servants of the congregation. That makes this section the heart of this study.

2.2.1. The Size of the Congregation

The size of a congregation is - except in special, *rare* circumstances - by far the important constraint on the work of congregational management. It determines the work that must be done to maintain the church as an organization and as the body-of-Christ, and the financial, accommodation, equipment, and other resources that will be required

²⁵ In one church visited by the writer, a new minister kept making bitterly sarcastic remarks about the glass ceiling in the church and about patriarchy. However true these and similar allegations may be, airing them in public makes parishioners uncomfortable and may drive congregants away.

²⁶ 1 Corinthians 9:22.

to carry out that work. As importantly, especially to the pastorate, the size of the congregation will affect the present and later career paths of the pastor(s) at the church (Nelson & Everett 1976).

Percentage of Income from Giving	Churches (%)
< 95%	1.2
90 - 95%	28.5
95 - 98%	51.1
98 - 100%	19.2

Table 2.1: Church Dependence on Congregation Giving

It has long been known (Ramsay 1851; Stall 1881; Meil 1886) that the greatest part of a church's financial resources are derived from 'giving' by their congregants in the form of 'tithes' and additional donations; in a given set of circumstances, usually the larger the congregation, the greater will be the local church's income.

This is usually true even for churches which are part of a denomination in which part of the revenue of all churches in a district is collected and used to run the central administration as well as to cross-subsidize the weaker, less healthy churches. Subsidies are usually limited and often can be used for restricted purposes only. If a church has to be repeatedly or continually subsidized, it is likely to be closed down and its congregation distributed among stronger churches. This re-distribution is not always beneficial to the local church to which the members are distributed; although membership is increased, re-distributed congregants are often disgruntled at the closure

of a church that they may have attended all their lives, in which they were baptised²⁷, confirmed, and married and from which friends and relatives have been buried. Disaffected members are probably the greatest source of ill-health that any church could have.

The absolute magnitude of a church's income will, of course, depend on other factors such as the financial demographics of the area(s) from which the church draws its congregation, the state of the macro-economy and the local micro-economy, diversity²⁸ in the congregation and, possibly most importantly, the ability of the church's pastorate to draw revenue from their congregants. This topic will be dealt with in much greater detail later, but it would not be unfair to state at this point that, almost without exception, the message of works on increasing church revenues boils down to 'increase giving by the faithful'.

An exact knowledge of the size of the congregation, its demographics and the commitment of its members is clearly of importance in predicting a church's revenue and in planning for the church's internal and external activities. Further the congregation manager needs to know which members are likely to pay tithes or to respond to financial appeals. Only active members - those who attend church, say, at least once per month - are likely to respond to appeals or to donate on a regular, predictable basis so it is important that the congregational manager should know the number of people who attend church regularly. The relationship between church attendance and the level of giving is one fraught by complicating factors - the most

²⁷ This writer was baptized in All Saints church, Blackburn, England in early 1942 and last visited the church in mid-1947 at the age of 5. But he was still deeply saddened when he found out in 2008 that the church had been closed down in 1983.

²⁸ Hungerman (2007: 1) points out that '...research has repeatedly shown that altruistic behavior is lower in diverse communities'.

important one probably being the state of relations between the pastorate and congregation. It is true to say in general, however, that the more frequently congregants attend church, the more inclined they are to generosity in giving (Lunn et al 2001: 774).

Unfortunately it is almost impossible for the congregational manager to obtain knowledge at the level suggested in the previous paragraph, not only because it would be difficult and time-consuming but also because the situation can and does change so rapidly that the task becomes impossible. It is necessary for the congregational manager to work with what is available and to collect supplementary information about individuals, the congregation and the community as the occasion arises.

What is usually available concerning church attendance is often just the sometimes dubious 'average weekly/Sunday attendance'²⁹ that most churches measure. The church pastorate and, by extension, other staff members are invariably judged by the absolute congregation size and therefore use a much looser definition than is suitable for congregational management purposes. Efforts are sometimes made to inflate the average church membership and it is common for church employees to be rated on figures they themselves have produced and for which there is no independent check. Where church attendance is measured by counting attendees, there is rarely any form of independent checking and never any way of determining absolute attendance in an enduring form. It is obvious that there is little point in carrying out unchecked and uncheckable counts of attendance by people who stand to gain from falsely elevated counts.

²⁹ The 'average weekly attendance' is the sum of attendance at all services held throughout the week; the Sunday attendance figure is the sum of attendance at all services on that day. Both these figures include multiple attendances by individuals. Churches which included the number of people at non-liturgical/non-worship meetings in the church attendance figures were omitted from this study

The congregational manager must, therefore, try to ensure that the 'average attendance' figure is obtained as scientifically and accurately as possible. The data should be collected at the lowest possible level to avoid later manipulation; it must be screened and processed without exaggeration; and 'corrections' - especially those which inflate the numbers - should be avoided. The congregational manager should also attempt, however crudely, to audit the data; an excellent way is to make an independent count of attendance at worship services which are sparsely attended and compare this count to the count provided by the normal people-counting team(s). The present writer has found photographs taken with a cell phone camera invaluable for this purpose.

2.2.2. Measuring church attendance

Accurately measuring church membership is more difficult than would appear at first, largely because of human factors and confusion over what is meant by 'membership'. This section will, however, consider the much simpler task of determining how many people are present in the church at a given time. There are three methods in general use: estimation, direct counts and congregational self-reporting. None of these three methods are very accurate and there is no way of independently verifying the accuracy at a later date. A fourth method, photographic or photogrammetric estimation is suggested in this work. Any form of counting must be examined carefully for possible privacy issues.

The comments below apply largely to South African churches and were gathered by the present writer in person or, mostly, during telephone interviews; it must be pointed out that almost all pastors and other persons with whom the problems connected with attendance measurement were discussed, admitted that their method was flawed in some ways. The survey cannot be considered representative.

1. Estimation. No churches were found in which estimation was employed as the primary method of attendance measurement. It was freely admitted by users

that estimation was at best dubious but was regarded as acceptable for backup purposes when proper counts could not be made for some reason.

The estimation method is simple. In general, the pastor or other responsible person makes an estimate 'using his/her experience in [a particular] church' of the number of people in the church at a particular time³⁰. In some cases, estimates are based around estimates of pew/row packing and the number of empty rows. This is quite clearly an adaptation of Jacob's well-known method of crowd counting³¹. Where estimation has to be used, it is often wise for the congregational manager to make his own estimate using Jacob's method and compare this with the 'official' figure; it is often possible to derive a correction factor which allows the congregational manager to obtain more reliable figures for budgeting and revenue predicting purposes.

The estimation method is at best inaccurate, subject to bias and cannot be checked later by an independent audit.

2. Direct counts are by far the most common method used in churches for attendance measurements; they are usually made by church wardens or church officials with similar functions although with some, usually small churches, counts are made by lay people. Counts are often made with the aid of small mechanical or electronic totalizing or tally counters. Counters are available with

³⁰ On two occasions the present writer was able, using photographs of the congregation, to check estimations made by a church warden. The estimations were 18% and 31% too high.

³¹ Jacob's method consists of dividing the area occupied by a crowd into equally-sized sections, estimating the average number of persons per section and then multiplying this by the total number of sections.

multiple tally buttons so the count may be divided by gender, age and/or other characteristics.

Counts are usually made in one of three ways. In some churches, counts are made of people who enter the church through one or more narrow entranceways. Corrections are made for people who leave the church during the counting process. Secondly counts are made by churchwardens or others standing at the end of rows in the church during a service, often during the passage of the 'collection plate(s)'. Thirdly, if suitable vantage points overlooking the congregation exist, then congregants can be counted from these vantage points.

Although the potential precision of direct counts is higher than estimation, counts are rarely accurate unless the counter is experienced. Further the results are open to manipulation and cannot be checked independently at a later date. However it is possible to check counts crudely at the time using Jacob's method; although inaccurate, it provides at least a broad check on the counting teams. It is often a good idea for the congregational manager to attend sparsely-attended services and make a direct count to serve as another check. The present writer has noted a general tendency of counting teams in sports events to exaggerate the attendance at poorly attended events more than the attendance at popular ones.

There are few likely privacy issues with direct counting unless a deliberate effort is made to identify individuals.

3. Self-reporting During the 1990s, self-reporting of church attendance was seized on as a possible method of correcting the 'under-count' of congregants that supposedly existed in figures supplied by congregations. Marcum (1999: 122) stated self-reporting allowed '...more accurate estimates of church attendance [to be made] using surveys...'. However he adds presciently, '...entirely valid

estimates are unlikely as long as social desirability influences self reports'. More recent work however has cast considerable doubt on self-reporting. Self-reported church attendance is generally grossly over-stated (Marler & Hadaway 1999; Marty 2006; Smietana 2006); U.S. congregants sometimes claim to have attended church twice as often as they actually did. Brenner (Swanbrow 2011) found that high stable, self-reported church attendance rates of 35-45% among U.S. Christians clashed with data from time-diary sources which indicate true attendance rates of 24-25%. Put differently: out of every 100 U.S. Christians, 35-45 claim to have attended church when in fact only 24-25 of them actually did so.

It is clear that self-reporting is too unreliable to be used in determining levels of church attendance accurately. If surveys are carried out, privacy issues may well require that they are anonymous and that the original forms and the data are securely stored.

4. Photographic or photogrammetric method. Aerial and terrestrial photography has been used for many years in ecology, policing, military intelligence and event management to make accurate counts of unconfined animals and/or people in large areas. It can be easily and cheaply adapted to counting congregants in churches of any size. It is important to sidestep issues of privacy by avoiding taking pictures in which individuals are clearly identifiable (most easily done by photographing from a high angle and/or from the rear). Further the congregation must be fully informed and allowed to register objections before a final purchase/installation decision is taken.

The process for churches is simple compared to the problem of photographically estimating the size of crowds in, say, policing or event management because congregations are generally static and sitting in sharply defined areas.

Many churches are fitted with security cameras sited to cover the entire church and these can readily be used for photogrammetric counting. The output of these cameras is generally recorded for security purposes, often on DVDs but also, for older systems, on video tapes; security systems invariably imprint the date, time and, sometimes, camera number on the recorded images. For people counting, the cameras are set to record during services or other events and the appropriate images extracted using a computer directly (from DVDs) or via a frame capture card and suitable software from a video recorder (for video tapes).

Where there are no security cameras, simple low-cost digital cameras (which must be capable of remote triggering and set to imprint times and dates on the images) can be installed and triggered at appropriate times.

The images are then printed (preferably onto clear film to make comparisons easier) and the congregation is counted directly. With care, counts can be almost 100% accurate; the images can be preserved for later auditing if necessary. Images to be stored can if necessary be degraded or reduced to edge view so that individuals cannot be identified thus avoiding privacy issues.

Other methods of counting are available. Counting turnstiles, video and laser counters (like the Honeywell People Counter), card swipe systems, Radio Frequency Identification systems and other methods are widely used for people counting and identification in security applications. However, quite apart from the expense, most of these technological methods are intrusive and disrupt the intimate ambience that churches - even the largest ones - try to encourage.

Measuring the number of people in the church at any one time is simple compared to the next problem - determining what the membership of the church is. The service/weekly/Sunday attendance measures tell us how many people were in the church

at a given time - it is a synchronic measure, a snapshot in time. A weekly average, for example, includes multiple visits by people; some people come once a day; some come once a month; others only come once a year; and still others come only once. The membership of the church is the number of individuals who attend the church, not the number of visits made to the church. Members of a church are those who have some commitment to the church.

2.2.3. Commitment Levels of Church Membership

Ploch & Hastings (1995: 508) point out '[a] significant problem in using membership in a religious organization is that no one seems to know what respondents mean when they report such membership.' Is a person a 'congregant' because that person has attended one church function, or because he/she had expressed an interest in joining the church, attended a few services and was never seen again? Or do people need to display some level of commitment to the local church before they are truly congregants?

This problem plagued the present study from the beginning because more than 70% of the churches examined via their websites either did not report church membership or did so in ways that made it impossible to determine the committed membership. Often this information is not available even inside the church itself, sometimes because no one has bothered to collect it or sometimes because no effort has been made to collate data available in the church's files.

The present writer was unable to find any typologies of South African church memberships which would meet the needs of the congregational manager for planning, budgeting, and resource acquisition and allocation. It was, therefore necessary to produce a typology of membership levels based on attendance, participation in church activities, commitment to the church, financial and other support for the church, volunteerism and links to the church. The suggested classification is based on the writer's own experience concerning the commitment of employees and volunteer

members of churches, clubs and similar organizations. In this work, the first three categories of this typology constitute the church's active membership or true congregation while the first four categories constitute a church's extended congregation. From this point, 'congregation' refers to the first three groups only. In most church reports, the occasional member group (wrongly in the present writer's opinion) is also included in the active membership.

Notes are included on the actions of disaffected members of each category. Albrecht & Bahr (1983:366) point out that people who leave a church do so in one of two ways: (1) they either leave to join another church or they 'cease formal religious involvement and [become non-members]'. The comments that follow here and elsewhere in this work owe much to the simple disaffiliation typology of Brinkerhoff & Burke (1980: Figure 1). The present writer does not fully accept these workers' conclusion that disaffiliation is a slow process; in many cases - too many to be just unusual outliers - the writer has seen disaffiliation decisions being made over a few hours. Much use was made of the work of Finney (1978) in preparing this classification.

2.2.3.1. Social Lay Leadership

These are people who are active in the work of the church often as aides³² to the pastorate, in lay leadership positions in church councils and the like, and in church activities and projects (Barker 1934: 5-6). This group and the following one are self-selected. Indeed potential members (in their own opinions) would normally volunteer immediately; they would not wait to be asked. They volunteer frequently for, and are often delegated, work that would normally be carried out by the pastorate. Suitably

³² In this study lay religious leaders were not considered because in the type of churches studied, only ordained ministers (stipendiary or otherwise) conducted services.

qualified workers, accountants for example, may be used in the church's administration. They usually contribute their time and resources generously to the church.

The present writer has heard these workers described as the 'lay elite'; this is an ugly, anti-egalitarian term but it all-too-often reflects the opinions of the workers themselves. Free-riders³³ (Brewer et al 2006) are very rare, but not unknown in this group. Barker (1934: 1-3) points out the critical importance of this group in Protestant churches. The group contributes very largely to the health of the church. If members of this group become disaffected, they would probably attempt to remove/change the source of the disaffection, otherwise they are likely to make a complete break with the church to join another one.

Hoge et al. (1998: 479) found that in some cases up to 50% of congregants volunteer in the church. Volunteering, they state, is strongly associated with church attendance and participation in other church activities.

It must be pointed out that this group's contribution to the health of the church may be positive or negative. In some churches, particularly those with weak leadership, some or all of the group can become arrogant or too conscious of their 'elite' status. This can have a very bad effect on morale throughout the church. The present writer has even observed bullying of a junior pastor by some of this group. The congregational manager who would very often be the immediate superior of these volunteers should arrange corrective action as soon as complaints are received or problems noted.

³³ In this work free-riders are persons who join a church but do not support that church financially (Brewer et al 2006: 389).

2.2.3.2. Strongly Committed Members

These are people who are in general the 'church regulars'. They attend services at least twice a month, participate in other church activities frequently and can be relied upon to volunteer to help the church. Some may occasionally serve on church committees or work in church projects, although usually not in leadership positions. They tend to support the church through pledging³⁴ and in-church giving. These members can often be persuaded to respond to financial or other appeals. They should be kept informed of all church activities via newsletters and the like; email, text and other messages warning of special events and the like may be acceptable if the intended recipients agree in advance. Free-riders are not common in this group. This group appears to make the most important contribution to the health of the church. The contribution they make is normally positive; this may be for lack of opportunity to be otherwise. If members become disaffected, they would normally attempt to correct the problem or, failing that, leave the church completely; few if any cease formal religious involvement.

2.2.3.3. Committed Members

People who regularly attend at least one service and/or participate in one other church activity per month. They will volunteer moderately and regularly, principally on special occasions but at other times too. The first three groups will generally be the only groups that will volunteer regularly for work in the church, although others might volunteer occasionally. This fact was used in this study to infer the size of the Committed groups because it was reasoned that the size of a church's volunteer group was proportionate to the total size of the Committed, Strongly Committed and Social Lay Leadership groups.

³⁴ Pledging in this context means the regular - monthly, say - donation of previously promised sums of money. In-church giving in this context is putting donations into the 'collection plate' or into boxes (for example) provided for this purpose in the church; these amounts can never be forecast with great accuracy and the congregational manager is often forced to guess at figures for use in budgeting.

The numerical nature of this relationship was not known, so the ratio of the number of volunteers to total church membership³⁵ was used as a rough, qualitative guide. Hoge et al. (1998: 479) found that in some cases up to 50% of congregants in certain U.S. churches volunteer to help in the church. Other studies show widely varying rates. They tend to support the church in limited ways through pledging but most often only through in-church giving. They can sometimes be persuaded to respond to financial or other appeals, especially if the cause of the appeal is of interest to them. They should be kept informed of all church activities via newsletters and the like. This is usually the largest category of church members. Free-riders are comparatively common in this group; a significant proportion of this group consistently provides markedly lower levels of financial support than do others in the group. It is within this group that the present writer believes that the underlife of the church (in the sense of Goffman 1961: 171-174) is most strongly developed. If there is disaffection in the church, it is this group which will probably contain the greatest reservoir. If members become disaffected, they might attempt to deal with the problem, becoming less committed in the process; if this fails, they would probably leave the church but maintain links - possibly becoming Occasional Members. Few cease formal religious involvement.

2.2.3.4. Occasional Members

These are persons who have attended church services or participated in church activities one to three times in the last six months or so. They rarely have any greater contact with the church. They tend to support the church only through in-church giving. They can occasionally be persuaded to respond to appeals although this will likely depend on the

³⁵ Unfortunately few U.S. churches recorded the number of volunteers and only 36 of those examined in this study did; 'semi-quantitative' remarks like 'volunteering is up/down this year' or 'the number of volunteers is double/half what it was last year' are common and these gave some, very crude, measure of the relative strength of volunteerism in a particular church. The rate of volunteerism was not one of the selection criteria for churches to be studied.

interest they have in the reason for the appeal. They should be kept informed of all church activities via newsletters and the like. This writer has not found that this group participates much, if at all, in the underlife of the church; this is probably because the desire to remain a member of this church is too small to be worth the effort of maintaining a false front of apparent sincerity³⁶. This group, therefore, has little effect on the health of the church in most circumstances. If members of this group become disaffected, they would probably drift away from the church to join another or to cease formal religious involvement.

2.2.3.5. Potential Members

These are people who have had some sort of contacts with the church over the past two years, perhaps through New Membership Ministry or through accompanying friends to the church. They may have been members of the church in the past but have subsequently moved to a different church. They provide very little support to the church, usually only through in-church giving during their rare visits to the church. They will generally not respond to appeals. This group has little or no effect on church health. The 'potential' is why these people are kept on the church list so they should be kept apprised of important church activities by special newsletter at two or three month intervals.

2.2.3.6. The Nature of the Commitment Groups

It must be pointed out that these five groups form a continuum and that congregants can move from group to group without prior warning as changing events within and outside the church affect the lives of congregants.

It was beyond the scope of this study to attempt to determine the proportion of each group within local churches. The task would be a daunting one because the propensity of

³⁶ Goffman (Ingram 1982:138) believes that it is important to distinguish between what one is required to do and what one is supposed to do voluntarily. Members of this group simply do not have enough commitment to the church to do more than the minimum required of them.

people to lie about socially desirable things (Marcum 1999: 122; Smith 2005) makes surveys unreliable. However, in lieu of a better solution, the writer has found the use of the Pareto (or 80:20) Principle (Koch 1998; Koch 2002) to provide at least a first-pass estimate. Assuming this principle in the form '80% of church involvement (a good measure of commitment) comes from 20% of the congregants' and considering only the first three categories, repeated use of the principle leads to the conclusion that the Lay Church Workers comprise 4% and the strongly committed members comprise a further 16%. These figures do not seem seriously at odds with the writer's own experience and could serve as a first approximation.

No absolute way of determining the degree of commitment in the church, that is the relative sizes of the first three groups, was found. That was a pity because this could provide an accurate measure of the church's health; the higher the relative level of commitment is, the greater would be the health of the church.

2.2.4. The Size-Based Typology of Churches

Although the characteristics of organizations invariably change as the organizations grow, age or decline, organizations in particular social sectors and of particular sizes generally have many characteristics in common and it is on the basis of a selected set of such characteristics that typologies are created. A typology is usually created to serve a specific purpose so the characteristics (or criteria) used for constructing the typology must reflect that purpose.

For churches, perhaps the most widely used size classification scheme is that of Rothauge (1983: 1) which was originally developed to show the forms that *New Membership Ministry* could (or should) take in churches of varying sizes. Because Rothauge's criteria were essentially a somewhat amended reflection of the form of administration in the various sizes of church, it was found possible to use his classification as the starting point for the one used in this study. It must be emphasized

at this point that the boundaries between categories in any classification system where classification criteria are not dichotomous and/or mutually exclusive are fuzzy³⁷. A change of size category from, say, Family Church to Program Church, does not mean an immediate change in the characteristics; sometimes if the change is relatively small, the former Family Church may never acquire the defining characteristics of the Program church. Indeed each category is - in some ways - a continuum stretching from the preceding category to the succeeding category.

Church Size	Church Type	Rauthauge's Size Names
0-50	Family Church	Small Church
50-150	Pastoral Church	Medium Church
150-350	Program Church	Large Church
350-500+	Corporation Church	Extra Large Church

Table 2.2: Rothauge's Size-Based Classification of Churches

The 'Church Size' in Rothauge's classification is defined as '[the] average attendance at worship over a one-year period' (Rothauge 1983: 1). That measurement was used in making the classification devised in this study. However in practice, especially in a multicultural, multi-language country like South Africa, it would be necessary to combine totals from worship services if multiple services are held on Sunday, say, with each aimed at a different segment of the congregation; a common practice, for example, is to hold two services on a Sunday, one in Afrikaans and the other in English. Since there would probably be little overlap, using the average would gravely underestimate the church's size, leading to failure of management.

³⁷ In the senses of 'unclear', 'unsharp', 'gradual', 'approximate'.

Rothauge's classification is essentially based around the (correct) assumption that - in the administration sense - the church is a service 'business'. And the size and types of administration required for a service organization, whether it is a cinema complex, a hair-dressing salon or a local church, depend essentially on the degree and nature of interaction that users have with the organization. The typology for this present work was based on similar reasoning to that of Rothauge, but the criteria used related specifically to the tasks of the congregational manager.

2.2.4.1. Assumptions Made

The most important assumption made was that the 'size' in the size typology is a reflection of the average attendance at worship at a church averaged over a year - the same as Rothauge's criterion (1983:1); the present writer rejects, as did Rothauge, the use of the numbers of baptisms and communicants. The reason for this restriction in the cases of both Rothauge and this study is that the level of attendance required by both our works implies at least some commitment to the church and its mission.

The second major assumption was that, as outlined above, the degree of interaction - both at services and/or functions and at individual meetings - between the pastorate/administration staff and the congregation is the prime determination of the size of the pastorate and the administrative staff. This will, of course, include all the facilities required for this interaction - the administration and staff for maintaining a church and other buildings, for example.

To allow realistic calculations to be made, a third major assumption was made. It was assumed that the work patterns of Protestant ministers in South Africa approximated those of U.S. Protestant ministers as given by McMillan (2002: Table 3). An edited version of the relevant portion of that table is given below as Table 2.3.

The table shows that interactions with church members outside of worship services would consume 50% of each full-time minister's working hours and that the majority of the other time is connected with preparations for worship.

The final major assumption was that the church's administration was to be done at the lowest possible cost; that the church was to employ as few people as possible so that, where possible, any work that was not central to the church's core functions should be outsourced.

Tasks	Part-time (24.02 hours*)		Full-time (50 hours*)	
	Median %age	Hours**	Median %age	Hours**
Preparing for preaching & worship	41	10.37	32	15.84
Providing pastoral care	16	4.05	20	9.90
Administrative work & meetings ³⁸	11	2.78	16	7.92
Teaching & training for ministry	11	2.78	14	6.93
Denominational & community affairs	8	2.02	6	2.97
Prayer & meditation	6	1.52	8	3.96
Reading (other than for sermons)	2	0.51	5	2.48
Totals		24.02		50.00

* Median working hours ** Corrected for round-off and other errors

Table 2.3 : McMillan (2002)'s US Pastor Work Patterns

³⁸ In using the data from this table, it was assumed that the hours claimed for 'Administrative Work and Meetings' were used to produce data to be presented to the Congregational Manager for processing and were not considered part of Congregational Management's tasks *sensu stricto*.

Outsourcing can make a major difference in costs, not only in the cost of labour itself but in the cost of clerical and other labour required to deal with labour. Commercial firms benefit from economies of scale (Burkholder 2006: 20-23). For example: they have expensive equipment which is economic because it is used all the time on different jobs whereas a church would have to buy or rent, and maintain the same product and its driver for a once a week usage. Outsourced labour is - on a one-to-one basis - more expensive than in-house labour; the major savings come from not having to provide supervision; no clerical work such as payroll, pensions and medical aid is required; there is no need to hire extra staff to allow for sickness or annual, maternal or paternal leave; it is not necessary to hire or buy and maintain specialized equipment, say, for landscaping or building maintenance; and most commercial firms have access to specialized staff, for say plumbing, who would have to be hired even if the church did its own maintenance. Security, information technology, cleansing, landscaping, grounds and building maintenance, bookkeeping, records management, printing and photocopying are some functions which could be wholly or partially outsourced. And this study assumes that they would be.

In 2007 and 2008, the Rhema Bible Church outsourced its information technology, security, gardening, and maintenance functions with the benefits listed above and without loss of quality (*Rhema Bible Church North* 2009: 13-14.).

The staffing levels and other suggestions for the congregational management team assume, therefore, that administration is run at a high level of efficiency - the same level of efficiency that a major company would demand from its staff. This may be unrealistic in churches where the pressure for productivity is much lower than in commerce and industry.

That said, if the staffing levels of a particular church are much higher than would be considered necessary in industry or commerce, checks should be made to ensure that

the church is not over-staffed. One sure sign of this is that the cost of professional (pastoral and otherwise) and non-professional labour exceeds the 'international best practice in the not-for-profit sector...' which requires salary costs of less than 45% (*Rhema Bible Church North* 2009: 8-9). Indeed, the Rhema Bible Church had salary costs of about 59% of its income in 2007; this was reduced to 52% in 2008 and there were plans to reduce it to 45% in 2009 and to '35% of the operational budget by 2011.' Of course, each church has its own special circumstances which must be considered before changing staffing levels.

What a particular church can afford is clearly an important consideration in the real church world; a church with a congregation of 500 mainly poor, rural, informal settlement dwellers may be unable to afford even the minimal staffing levels suggested for a church half or a quarter of its size. In this case, some congregation management functions considered mandatory in this study for more prosperous churches would have to be omitted.

2.2.4.2. Typology Construction Methodology

In considering the typology the writer was concerned about the need to use qualitative data in classifying groups of churches because it introduced an unfortunate subjectivity. The attempts were made to calculate 'natural subdivisions' of congregations of varying sizes to see if classifications could be created that were objective. The first attempt used the assumption that if there were natural subdivisions, these would appear as part of a mixed distribution of church sizes. The hierarchal Bayesian approach of Guo et al. (2008) was used to estimate the individual distributions; it appears that the sample was too small for satisfactory results. The method of Zaleski & Zech (1995)³⁹ was used to calculate the optimal size of a church using characteristics from the 219 churches discussed in Section 1; this failed because, although results were produced, it was not

³⁹ Mr. L. S. Edwards of Birmingham, England, provided the expertise for this attempt.

possible to find physical reasons for them and it is possible that they were artefacts of the method used. The third method used that of Stonebraker (1993) which failed because of the lack of enough reliable data.

It must be stated at this point that the final methodology used was based very largely on the present writer's experience as an employee, as a manager, and as a creator of training, information and geological exploration budgets. Many estimates were made, abduction (Aliseda 2006) - defined as 'reasoning under uncertainty' - has had to be used. At times, and it was impossible at times to find adequate information and estimates based on business practice were necessary to fill in the gaps. At the same time, a strong, conscious attempt was made to emulate the thinking of Rothauge (1983) and apply it to the congregational management task.

Budgeting and planning in non-profit, voluntary organizations is more of an art than a science because there are many unpredictable factors which affect giving (Gittell & Tebaldi 2006: 271; Lunn et al 2001) and thus the resources available. Blazek (2008:77) states:

‘A nonprofit organization may face unique problems in forecasting its revenues. Those nonprofits supported by contributions and grants face the most difficult task. Voluntary donations are often based solely on the giver’s compassion or support for the organization’s mission and their personal generosity.’

The only answer to this problem was believed by the present writer to be the determination of the solution which gave the absolutely minimum functionality to do the job at the lowest cost. At budget time in a real church, then, a basic calculation is prepared followed by the provision of a prioritized list of projects to be carried out or services to be given should funds allow. Here only the basic elements are considered.

The present work is based on a commercial exercise carried out by the present writer in late 2005-early 2007 to determine which services in a church could be outsourced and what level of outsourcing was likely to be. The aim of the exercise was the preparation for a business proposal to be presented to a large company which already had interests in contracting of landscaping, cleansing, and grounds and building maintenance services. After preliminary discussions, the present writer was asked to prepare a report on possibilities and probabilities using data on British⁴⁰ and U.S. churches taken from their websites to see whether there was a *prima facie* case for an inevitably expensive exercise to determine local demand.

The websites of many churches (this project has been discussed earlier) were examined sketchily and 361 selected for further consideration. In the end, it was found that 219 churches provided sufficient information on their websites (usually in the form of the latest annual reports) to determine the number and occupations of non-religious employees. The amount of work available for outsourcing could then be determined (albeit very roughly) from the number of employees whose functions could, it was believed, be outsourced.

At the same time the potential client required that the size of the 'management' (essentially the pastorate) be determined to see if the reduction of non-religious employees could also lead to a reduction in 'management'. The exercise resulted in what was a database of churches of various sizes with numbers of employees and their occupations (including some indication of their training⁴¹), as well as details and rough

⁴⁰ There were found to be major differences between U.S. and British churches and, the writer's potential clients requested - since U.S. conditions were closer to South Africa's than British - that only U.S. church data would be used.

⁴¹ If the occupations and/or job titles of employees were known, it was usually easy to determine if they were non-professional, paraprofessionals or full professionals.

estimates of what the reduced numbers of the various employees were after allowance had been made for outsourcing of all functions that could reasonably be outsourced. After the production of the report, and a feasibility study, the project was shown to be uneconomic⁴² but the data was made available, under very restrictive conditions, for this study.

The various category limits and midpoints were determined by inspection as indicated below. The criteria used for the division were the number and level of employees in the various occupations, the formal structure that would be required to control the staff and congregants and the hierarchal level of the person who had responsibility for congregational management. A church of 30-50 people can have a loose, almost informal structure, but over 50 some form of structure is required to avoid serious inefficiency. With over 100 congregants, a formal structure is increasingly necessary.

Unfortunately this method was possible only for the bigger churches. No data was available for very small churches, partly because the client was not interested in getting many small jobs which would be uneconomic to service and partly because there were few websites for very small churches even in the U.S. For the smaller churches and the lower end of the small-to-medium category, therefore the writer was forced to rely on less than adequate information and his own experience of what the administration of a church was likely to require. The setting of the limits for the categories will be discussed here and in the next section.

⁴² The problem lay in the semi-autonomous nature of churches which meant that the company would have to negotiate individual small contracts with every church rather negotiating one large contract with the overarching denomination. Further the denominations required that these services be offered to all churches - not just the urban ones. This problem would obviously not arise in the case of churches outsourcing their work to local firms.

The upper limit for the informal church was simply a rounded-up 29 which was the highest attendance for any informal church of which the writer had heard. It also seemed to be a reasonable upper limit for meeting at a private house (a fairly large yard would suffice for that number); it would also be a reasonable limit for a small, low-cost (to hire) business premises, a classroom or a library for example.

The upper limit of 15 for the micro-church was based on observations of new plantings and similar considerations to those in the previous paragraph.

Average Attendance**	Category	Rothauge's Category	Meeting Place	Minimum Congregational Management
1 - 30	Informal Church	Family Church	Always Informal	Congregational Leader
1 - 15	Microchurch	Family Church	Usually Informal	Sole/Senior Pastor
16 - 50	Small Church	Family Church	Informal - purpose-built	Sole/Senior Pastor
51 - 150	Small-To-Medium Church	Pastoral Church	Usually purpose-built	Senior Pastor - Subordinate Pastor + 1-3 non-professional staff
151 - 250	Medium Church	Pastoral - Program Church	Usually purpose-built	Usually Subordinate Pastor + 3-5 non-professional staff
251 - 500	Large Church	Program - Corporation Church	Almost always purpose-built	Specialist Pastor + 4-7 paraprofessional & non-professional staff
501 +	Very Large Church	Corporation Church	Purpose-built	Specialist Pastor + partly professional & paraprofessional staff
2 000 +**	Megachurch	Corporation Church	Purpose-built	Specialist Pastor + team of professional & paraprofessional staff

* Average attendance at worship services over one year

** Total average Sunday Attendance (sum of all services)

Table 2.4: Size-Based Typology of Congregations

The upper limit for the small church was Rothauge's and the writer saw no need to change it. It was also based on the belief that 50 was about the largest church which would be relatively easy to run by a single pastor.

The Small-To-Medium Church category was established because careful consideration showed that this category was, in practice, a transitional one and an attendance of 150 seemed about the right cut-off point since this was the point at which the 'traditional' church structure was close to full development. Other details are given in the detailed descriptions in the next section.

The upper limit for the large church is the same as Rothauge's for his Corporation Church ('500' - ignoring the '...and over'). The size of the very large church is equivalent to Rothauge (1983: 1)'s upper limit of '...500 and over'. The size of the megachurch is not comparable with the other figures because it is Karnes et al. (2005: 262)'s figure given as the total Sunday attendance (at all services) which they state '...has become the accepted figure'. As a comparison: the Rhema Bible Church annual report claims an average Sunday attendance figure of 13 450 for 2008 (*Rhema Bible Church North 2009*: 11). These last two categories were added for the sake of completeness. The final typology is seen in Table 2.4

2.2.4.3. Detailed Description of the Categories

In this section, each of the categories in the typology will be discussed in some detail. This study covers only congregational management functions but it was found necessary to include a wider description of the various church type categories to keep the discussions of congregational management in context.

The present study was not intended to involve any form of practical research and all the descriptions of churches of the small church and higher categories are based largely on information taken from local church and denominational websites primarily from the United States. However, the existence of informal churches was discovered serendipitously and the description of these churches is based on the follow-up to that discovery. Similar considerations apply to the micro-church category.

Comments on 'structures' and the like will be generally based on the centre of the size category concerned and may not apply to either of the limits in particular cases. It bears repeating that the limits of categories can never be hard-and-fast.

Finally it must be emphasized that all the congregation management personnel numbers were determined assuming that all functions that could be outsourced were outsourced and that even where work was done in-house, every effort would be made to outsource parts of the work. The staff levels given are thus probably smaller than are found in practice. The writer found that Parkinson's Law is still active in many South African churches.

2.2.4.3.1. The Informal Church

This description is based wholly on a limited number of South African informal churches seen by the present writer and anecdotal evidence from members of those churches concerning other informal churches. No U.S. informal or micro-church websites were found.

This category was added at the end of this survey even though it falls outside the scope of this study, because it was believed the typology would be incomplete without it. Informal churches are essentially amateur churches, usually started and run by untrained amateurs - although the writer understands that some are run by failed or retired ministers. A very few of these churches refer to themselves as House Churches or Cell Churches but most encountered by the writer rejected either of these labels. This type of church should not be confused with House (of the type described by Thurman 1979) or Cell Churches (Comiskey 1997) which are part of the structure of larger, formal churches. Although the number of these churches encountered was too small to constitute a good sample, the writer did not find any tendency to gender bias in the selection of leaders;

there were more male leaders than female, but the writer believes that this is a reflection of the poor sample.

There are evidently a surprising number of these churches but obtaining details is difficult and almost all information given here comes from second-hand, anecdotal 'evidence'. The largest informal church of which the writer has heard, had 29 members, but the median size would appear to be about 8-12. The theology expressed in informal churches may be unorthodox, allegedly harking back to the early days of Christianity. The writer heard reports of syncretic theologies apparently involving 'New Age' concepts like the Great Goddess of Marija Gimbutas (Meskell 1995), but none of these could be confirmed.

They meet usually in the houses of adherents but business premises or other places which are convenient and available free or at very low cost are also used. The congregational leader is always unpaid; costs are minimal and are usually settled on an *ad hoc* basis by the congregational leader with contributions from members; the meetings are a combination of simple prayer/worship meetings and social gatherings; and liturgy - where it exists at all - is simple. Some, perhaps most, of these churches arose out of Bible study or other religious gatherings; anecdotal evidence indicates that a major factor in the starting of one of these informal churches is dissatisfaction with the church(es) to which the 'congregants' of the informal churches originally belonged. Many - but probably less than half - of these 'congregants' keep in touch with their former churches or with new ones, and it seems likely that these fall into the *Potential Member* category of their former or new church's congregation. While there is always a small drift of new members into, and old members out of, an informal church, the core of the congregation is surprisingly stable.

It might be argued - as the writer has done - that these gatherings do not really represent churches; they are simply informal gatherings of like-minded people. The invariable answer from informal church members is 'Matthew 18:20'⁴³.

2.2.4.3.2. The Micro-Church

This description is based wholly on a very limited number of South African new-planting micro-churches and descriptions of new plantings in the popular literature.

In South Africa, micro-churches are very small churches which are most often local gatherings of worshippers attached to larger churches. All the churches seen in the present study which were not new plantings or declining once-larger churches were attached to an African Initiated Church⁴⁴ (A.I.C.).

New plantings found in the present study were always controlled through the church from which the planting was made. The congregation is usually enthusiastic with initially high commitment. However, new plantings are probably the most likely of all churches to decline rapidly. In the present study discussion with pastors and other congregants indicated that at least half of new plantings were unsuccessful, and died after five or fewer years.

Only one definitely declining new planting was seen during the present study; the enthusiasm had drained from the congregants; minor conflict - rare in the new plantings seen in this study - was evident; and the present writer felt that most members were simply going through the motions. Within a year the micro-church had closed down.

⁴³ 'For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.'
(Matt. 18:20 Holy Bible: King James Version)

⁴⁴ Data was collected by direct observation of the very common 'outdoor churches' associated with A.I.C.s by driving around open areas in certain Johannesburg suburbs, but the study of these very interesting groups was outside the scope of this research.

The internal structure of new-planting micro-churches is almost always loose. Members of the team tend to show initiative. In all the new-plantings seen, the pastors were all graduates and overwhelmingly male. This may have been an artefact of the present writer's search technique. It must also be pointed out that no new plantings by liberal South African churches (the Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian churches, for example) were visited; the only new-plantings seen were from Charismatic or Baptist churches.

Congregational management functions are invariably the responsibility of the pastors although for the most part, pastors had little or no control over the source and sizing of funding. Usually the principal congregational management functions are run through the mother church. Services were often held in members' houses or small business premises.

It must be pointed out here that the 'mission' of the new-planting micro-church is to cease being a micro-church and move up the categories to the large or even mega-church size. In most of the new plantings seen, the pastor's optimism is great. Planning in these churches therefore is almost always based on the expectations of better times ahead.

Very little is known of declining micro-churches. The two churches seen by the writer in this category were both under threat of fairly imminent closure. The structures of the church, the congregational management and the churches' assets - especially the buildings - all seemed to the outside observer to be relics of better times. Commitment levels were generally low.

2.2.4.3.3. The Small Church

The Small Church is the first church to have some form of formal structure. Generally the proportion of Social Lay Leadership and the Strongly Committed Groups is relatively larger than in the higher categories of this typology. There is usually a greater sense of

fellowship in the church and, as Dudley (2003: 9) says, 'Small churches have a will to live - against all odds'. The writer's observations generally confirmed these comments, but sometimes there is an air of stridency, almost of defiant desperation in the websites of such churches.

Most churches of this size have a single pastor. For the most part, they have a linear structure with the pastor at the top and the congregation, in order of commitment categories, below. This apparently strongly hierarchical structure is usually mitigated by the nominal supervision of a church council and/or denominational oversight. The effectiveness of the supervision and oversight is largely dependent on the character of the pastor; a charismatic pastor who has the support of his congregation can easily override attempts at control. This may or may not be healthy for the church. The deciding factor is the relationship between the congregation and the pastor.

The physical church will fairly often be an informal building (say, an unused business premise or a warehouse) in urban settings because of the high cost of land and construction work; in some cases, a building may be acquired or donated and then converted into a church. Purpose-built churches are not common unless the church is attached to a larger denomination or the small church was once a medium or large church. In rural areas, where costs are much lower, small churches commonly use purpose-built accommodation.

The congregational management functions are almost always part of the pastor's responsibility with aid from one or perhaps two multi-skilled employees who function as receptionist, bookkeepers and general clerks⁴⁵ who carry out the routine tasks but the burden on the pastor can be heavy. The advent of computers has often had a salutary effect on these churches, but often these useful devices are under-utilized only as

⁴⁵ These staff would normally be non-professionals with only on-the-job or low level training.

supplements to a manual system that is kept 'because it works'. This system is changing as younger, computer-literate pastors enter the church although at the moment the level of computer-literacy is not high even in new graduates.

The provision of facilities to enable congregants to attend church - child care and transport of people - would generally be done by volunteers.

2.2.4.3.4. The Small-To-Medium Church

The name of this category was chosen to reflect the writer's belief that this category is in some ways a transitional one, that churches within this category are likely to retain characteristics of the small church at the lower end and acquire characteristics of the larger churches at the upper end. This size of church would usually have a purpose-built or converted building; a church hall and possibly a senior pastor's residence might also possibly be built although this building might have had to be done in stages, rather than at one time. Older churches, built at a time of lower land and construction costs, tend to have more sumptuous accommodation than ones built later although there are exceptions to this.

The midpoint church size of this category is, in the present writer's opinion, the largest that can be efficiently run by a single pastor; at the higher end of the category only a very efficient pastor with non-professional help could cope. It can be seen from Table 2.3 that the pastor with 150 active congregants will probably not have enough time to deal with those congregants who need pastorate attention (for counselling and the like). Further the increasingly heavy burden of administration is likely to prove too much for one person. For this reason, churches with congregations larger than 100 generally have two, possibly three, pastors. Non-stipendiary and/or part-time pastors may be used in the junior position(s).

In this case, the senior pastor may retain overall responsibility for congregational management and delegate some of the functions to a subordinate (in this case this subordinate is likely to be the most junior) or the pastor's immediate subordinate may be allocated all congregational management as part of his responsibilities since the amount of congregational management work is unlikely to justify a full-time manager. The congregational manager would normally be assisted by up to three or so non-professional staff members. In a church with only two or three pastors, the pastors would normally fill all functions of the pastorate at one time or another in the absence of their senior(s), but these churches begin to show the specialization of pastors' duties which will be a hallmark of later categories. In some cases multiple pastors might be required to allow for increased diversity in churches.

At this point too, the development of the 'traditional' church hierarchal structure is well advanced. Relationships within the church staff become more formal.

This category is the first in which the familiar 'line and staff' (Brown & Golembiewski 1974; Belasco & Alutto 1969; Smit et al 1997: 241) church structure is reasonably well developed. Line managers and personnel, usually the pastorate, carry out, and have responsibility for, those activities which advance the main work of the church, or what might be called the 'core functions' of the church. Their authority stems from their right to make decisions and have these decisions implemented 'down the chain of command' (Smit et al 1999: 230-232, 241).

Staff functions are those functions, like accounting, human relations, clerical work, building maintenance and the like, which are essential to the working of the church as an organization but do not contribute directly to the core functions of the organization. Staff managers and personnel carry out these functions and render advice and service to other personnel, both in line and staff; their authority is derived from their professional position and technical knowledge (Smit et al. 1999: 241).

Where congregational management is one of the functions of a pastor, that pastor will occupy a place in both the line and staff paths; this can lead to conflicts of interest (which the line part usually wins) to the detriment of the church.

In this category and earlier categories, the line and the staff functions are not as sharply separated as they will be in larger churches and often staff employees will encroach on the responsibility of line managers. This is usually done by informal allocation of authority on one or a few occasions by the senior pastor; the delegation of authority later becomes hallowed by time and usage, especially if the encroaching employee is an old 'valued' employee. The problem is worsened if the pastor is weak enough to allow it to continue. This is an unhealthy situation which can lead to conflict and increased staff turnover. The writer has observed that this form of conflict is often interpreted as racism or sexism in situations where appropriate conditions exist.

Facilities for congregants to enable congregants to attend church would normally be provided by volunteers.

The congregation itself begins to change across the category. Up to the lower limit, the proportion of the social lay leadership and the strongly committed membership in the groups of churches has, for the most part, been relatively high, and the church has been buoyed up by their enthusiasm. However with the increase in size, there is a fall in the relative size of the most committed groups and an overall decline in enthusiasm as could be predicted from the traditional Troeltsch-Weber church-sect model (Alston & Aguirre 1970: 63). The writer believes that there is a concomitant increase in size of the underlife of the church which increases the potential for conflict. It must be pointed out here that

there are many exceptions to this statement, almost all growing churches with a dynamic, charismatic⁴⁶ pastorate.

2.2.4.3.5. The Medium Church

Medium churches are generally of the traditional church model with the line/staff paths fully developed. Except under the most favourable possible circumstances, this size of church could not be run by a sole pastor. Although this was of course possible in the past, the increased burden of modern living and, especially, the increased expectations of modern congregations make it impossible in the writer's opinion. The problem is exacerbated by the increased and increasing diversity of congregations in a multi-cultural country like South. Africa.

The size of the pastorate will vary according to the needs of the church and its congregation, constrained at present by the economic environment. It is likely though that the church would have at least four pastors - senior pastor and three, possibly four or more, others. Generally one of the junior pastors will be allocated the congregational management function as one of his functions; as far as the writer could tell, most US churches of this size would have the senior pastor's second-in-command as congregational manager although the manager would certainly have other line responsibilities, including acting for the senior pastor.

⁴⁶ It is important not to confuse 'charisma' with 'popularity'. Charisma (as will be discussed later) is the ability to draw in new people and retain old members even under adverse conditions; a popular minister may be well-liked but cannot draw new and retain old members under poor conditions. It used to be said in the writer's early adulthood that the difference between a charismatic and a popular priest was the size of the congregation on a cold wet, Sunday morning; the charismatic priest had a fair sized congregation while the merely popular minister had only the usual hardy church stalwarts.

The other junior pastors would probably have specific portfolios allocated to them as well as their line pastoral responsibilities; New Ministry, Adult Religious Education, Sunday School, special projects and the like. At this church size, each pastor would probably have multiple responsibilities, because the individual portfolios would probably not be sufficiently large to justify a person full-time. With the current financial climate in the US following the 2008/9 Financial Crisis, churches are being forced to use temporary staff, often part-time, to fill formerly full-time positions.

The church would likely be purpose-built, but the size and quality of the building would depend on many factors including those discussed in the previous paragraph. Facilities to enable congregants to attend church would normally be done by volunteers, but transport - possibly in the form of a small bus - might be available.

The congregational management department would probably consist of the pastor mentioned earlier plus a team of three to seven or more non-professionals. It is common to find paraprofessionals⁴⁷ in these positions in the U.S.

Again the overall commitment of church members declines but the relative decline appears - at least to the writer - to be less than in the previous category. It almost appears as if the decline was slowing and the satisfaction/dissatisfaction ratio was reaching a plateau. This may, however, have been a misapprehension on the present writer's part and/or an artefact of the samples and/or reasoning process. Many of the websites of the larger churches in this category bore the unmistakable hallmarks of the professional website constructor and the use of professional editors to shape the message

⁴⁷ In the U.S., a paraprofessional is a person working in one of the professional fields (accounting, medicine and the like) who are trained in the field but not qualified to act as full professionals; they are normally highly trained assistants to the true professionals. In South Africa, the most widely known paraprofessionals are the paramedics.

that was displayed on the website. These professionals are skilled at manipulating the message to give the most favourable interpretation even to the direst of events without actually lying.

2.2.4.3.6. The Large Church

The large churches are in general organized like businesses; they have reached the 'corporation', possibly even the soulless, state decried by McConnell (1920: 16). The church would almost always be purpose-built with many facilities like a church hall, accommodation for the pastorate and the like. The church may well own facilities detached from the main church for specialist functions like training, Sunday School and so on. Increasing facilities for congregants, like child care, transport and so on, would be available often staffed by properly qualified personnel, especially towards the upper size limit.

The large church would have a multiple pastorate in which individual pastors would, certainly at the upper limit, have individual portfolios with individual responsibilities (New Ministry, Youth and so on). Many pastors, especially the senior pastor, would be qualified at post-graduate, possibly doctoral, level. All but the most junior would have received specialist training. Another feature would be the use of pastors qualified in more than one field. The Music Director, for example, might be a normal pastor with formal qualifications in the church music field. At lower church sizes, music direction would probably be a subsidiary function of one of the pastors or even left in the hands of sometimes unqualified, sometimes volunteer, lay person.

Although the congregational manager might well be in both line and staff, the manager would normally be a senior employee - most often just below the senior pastor. Towards the higher limit of the category, the manager would probably have formal qualifications in management or related functions and be assisted by an increasingly well-qualified and experienced team; at the upper limit some would be paraprofessionals, possibly even

professionals. The staff-line functions would be well separated and possibly beginning to ossify to rigidity. The enthusiasm present in the smaller churches where even accounting staff felt the spirit of the enterprise would, at the upper limit, be almost gone. Congregational management staff members are now just doing a job. Up to this point it would be exceptional to find members of the team who were not also members of the church, but from here onwards increasing numbers of staff are not affiliated with the church. These staff members are hired for their ability; their religion is possibly a secondary consideration.

The congregation has reached its full development, with the various levels of commitment remaining similar to those of the medium church or still declining slowly. Volunteerism is generally not high. Support for this church - judged on a person-by-person basis - has usually ebbed to its lowest level and giving (in-church and pledging) is the lowest - measured on a *per capita* basis - of any churches up to this point. The underlife of the church has almost reached its maximum extent. It must be emphasized at this point that the degree of enthusiasm and disaffection within a church depends on many factors, the most important of which is the quality of the pastorate. Increasing size is not inevitably accompanied by increasing disaffection, in a large proportion of the congregation feeling detached and alienated as is shown by the fact that mega-churches, which are by far the largest of all churches, are also amongst the most vital and effective.

One or more charismatic pastors, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, can work wonders. There are any number of large Charismatic, especially Pentecostal and African Initiated, churches to serve as evidence of that.

2.2.4.3.7. The Very Large Church

Very large churches are outside the terms of reference of this study but were added for the sake of completeness.

These churches always have a formal structure with the pastorate separated from the direct congregational management function. The congregational managers in these churches will often have that work as their only function although they may have limited pastoral functions as well. In such churches, the congregational manager is not always the second-in-command as it were, although the manager will almost always report to the senior pastor or, less commonly, deputy senior pastor. Here the congregational manager has become part of the staff and divorced from line responsibilities. In the U.S, on occasion, non-pastoral personnel have been used to fill the congregational manager's position; in the few examples seen by the writer the congregational manager in these cases was always also a member of the church.

The congregational management team at this stage is a professional one, a mixture of professional and/or paraprofessional workers with non-professional auxiliary workers. The levels of responsibility - and revenue - have reached a point where only full trained workers can fill the higher positions. Again, at this level, the religion of the workers are not necessarily that of the church although in almost always all cases, workers are contractually obliged to abide by the church's standards of conduct. Churches have to take great care to avoid discrimination against their personnel; failure to do this can result in problems with anti-discrimination law suits which can have expensive⁴⁸ consequences.

⁴⁸ As in, for example, the well-known case of Mr. Johan Strydom, a homosexual music teacher, who was dismissed by the Moreleta Park NG Kerk for failing to uphold the church's standards by having a same-sex relationship. The church was ordered to apologize and pay damages of R87 000. A judgment of this order could easily bankrupt a small church (*Church ordered to apologise to gay music teacher* (2008)).

2.2.4.3.8. Megachurches⁴⁹

Only one megachurch - the Rhema North Bible Church - was examined because this size category is beyond the scope of this study. Rhema North is a beautifully crafted, rich⁵⁰, lush, opulent, professionally run church. The physical church is attractive and well-placed in well-maintained surroundings; it is easy of access, parking is simple to obtain (for early arrivals) although the sheer number of people inevitably means that latecomers have to park in the surrounding suburbs. The congregational management team is completely professional and highly motivated - and skilled at not answering questions.

The welcome given to visitors was by far the best the present writer received anywhere. Everything is done to make people welcome - visitors and regular congregants alike. The senior pastor, the Reverend Ray McCauley, is a skilled, charismatic preacher and comes through to the large audience as being interested in each and every individual person. He is a brilliant orator, free of the irritating rhetorical tricks that appear to be *de rigueur* in certain churches. His message is short, straight-forward and forthright. He offers certainty, consolation, and love. The honesty with which he talks is palpable. Better than that, he offers the mercy of Christ and the path to salvation without equivocation. His audience is moved, inspired - and entertained.

It's no wonder that his congregants have the highest overall commitment levels of any church visited by the writer and that the average Sunday attendance is nearly 14 000 people. The Rhema Bible church is expensive for the visitor because it is almost impossible to resist the appeals and blandishments confronting them. But, in the commercial sense, Rhema gives value for money.

⁴⁹ The figure of 2000+ given in Table 2.4 for attendance is the total Sunday attendance and is not comparable with the other size figures noted.

⁵⁰ Income in 2008 was R100 million.

The point here is not that every church should aspire to become a Rhema church, but that every church should make use of its limited resources to make their congregants' visits to the church an exciting, enjoyable and - above all - rewarding experience. During this study, the present writer all too often came out of a church and thought 'What a waste of time! Why did I bother to come here at all?'

2.3. The Life Cycle of a Congregation

Congregations are born; they grow; they mature and cease growing; they decline; and then they die.

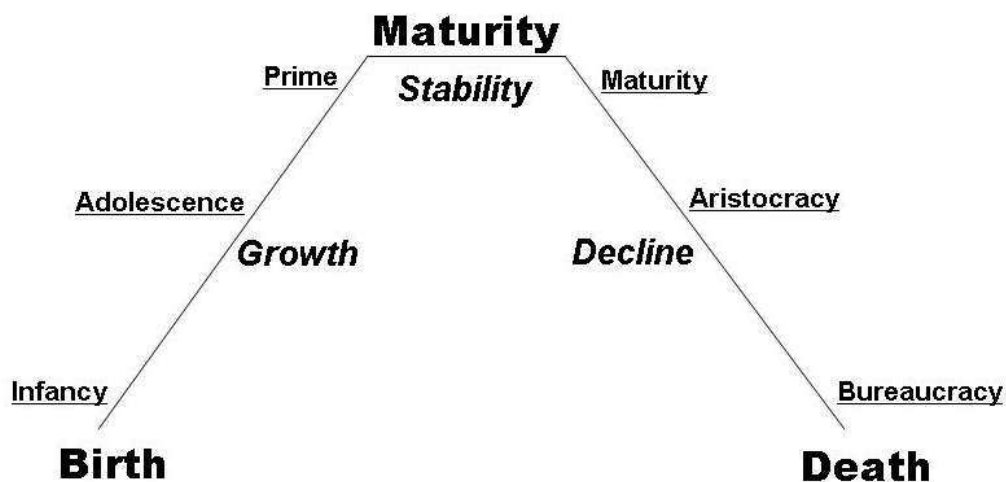


Figure 2.1: Life Cycle of a church

The figure (modified from Routhage 1985: 3-8 and Saarinen 2001: 6) shows the stages in a congregation's life. The church is born in a surge of enthusiasm – perhaps through the initiative and efforts of one person. The commitment of the tiny congregation is boundless, with optimism for the future at the highest it will ever be.

Following its birth, the congregation enters **Infancy**. Not only is enthusiasm high but the congregation has a strong instinct for survival. 'The charisma of the founder

continues to be the glue that brings people together and the congregation tends to be an extension of his or her personality - enthusiastic but lacking in managerial ability' (Saarinen 2001: 9). This begins to drag on the community and if allowed to continue, could lead to lack of enthusiasm and a rapid decline.

As the congregation grows, it enters **Adolescence** and develops the need for greater managerial and congregational support structures. A church council may, if it is part of the denominational pattern, be set up. New ministries are developed; the gathering of new members takes a more formalized approach with one or more teams specially set up for this. The church is often burdened by heavy debts, which seem unsupportable but initially enthusiasm and the 'God will provide' approach carries the church through. Growth is high, possibly so high that the number of new members outruns the church's resources. At this point, the church is in the greatest danger it will be until the declining stage.

The church now is critically dependent on the surrounding community. If the community is growing, the church can use the community's growth to fuel its own, but if the community has ceased to grow (perhaps because of a recession like the one that happened recently), the church may begin to decline or fail. The enthusiasm, ability and charisma of the pastor will be one of the critical factors here (Saarinen 2001:11). Many charismatic pastors are poor managers – which is why so many church start-ups fail. This is much of a Catch-22 situation; an enthusiastic, charismatic pastor is required in the start-up phase, but he/she must also be a good manager, able to balance probabilities and to temper his enthusiasm before he/she destroys what is being built. The congregational manager has to act to temper over-enthusiasm by pointing out the problems of, say, taking on too much debt or of spending money the church hasn't got.

Congregational management structures will be reasonably well developed for a small church, but much, perhaps all, of the direction of that function will be in the hands of the

pastor. This is not good for the congregation because one of the essential checks-and-balances in the growing church is missing.

If the church gets through this stage, it grows until it enters its **Prime**. The congregation is committed, enthusiastic, open to others and optimistic. It has developed its congregational and management structures, it has learnt to carry out its mission – now fully developed and articulated – efficiently, its growth, though beginning to slack off, is still high. Congregational management is very close to its full development. ‘It is a congregation that has learned creative use of the inherent conflicts between the visionary and the pragmatic, the emotional and the rational. It is characterized by a redemptive and creative oscillation between people concerns and program concerns, with a strong sense of mission as the fulcrum’ (Saarinen 2001:11). The congregation is now at its peak; church life for the congregants will never be as good again. Up to this stage, the church could be, or could become, a congregation-centered church. From here onwards, the church is increasingly dominated by the needs and desires of the pastorate and the ‘elite’ members of the congregation.

Growth begins to falter or cease and the congregation has now settled in to its **Maturity**. Enthusiasm is still high; services, programs, missions and projects are still functioning efficiently, and the church is usually full ... but commitment is down from its peak. The church is a prestigious institution within the community, the pastor is involved within the local community as a leading member of many civic projects and his opinion is greatly respected. The church and its members appear ubiquitous in the community. The decline of the congregation has, however, begun.

The next stage, the **Aristocratic** stage, is the Maturity stage gone, as it were, to the bad. The decline is now fully underway. The church and congregation are busy, but it is an unenthusiastic busyness. ‘The congregation at this stage takes on the characteristics of a good ol’ boys club. Power and authority are jealously guarded ...’. The congregation has

become smaller and it is aging; young people are avoiding the church so there are few small children around. Conversation within the congregation is often nostalgic about the time when the church was bustling with activity and brimming over with enthusiasm. The church strikes many within and outside the congregation as one that is being run increasingly for the benefit of the pastorate and the 'socially elite' members of the congregation; this is reflected in the decline of the number and types of projects, missions and ministries.

The congregation has now entered the **Bureaucracy** stage. The openness of the congregation in its Prime stage is gone. Rules and regulations are the prime way of keeping order in the church. The senior pastor is now the senior bureaucrat. Fences are built between functions. Congregational management is now hide-bound and ossified into a rule-book; in this stage it is part of the problem and not the solution. The congregation still exists but it is moribund.

The church endures a while longer, possibly only through an infusion of money and help from the greater denomination, but the congregational decline continues with a smaller and smaller number of people using the administrative facilities of the church. An oversized congregational management department functions for a while and then stops. The congregational manager turns out the light and locks the door for the last time.

Death has come to the congregation.

This description has been that of a 'typical' church. But there is no such thing as the 'typical church' because each church at any stage of its lifecycle is unique. What are not unique, are the problems it will face. In its youth, the congregation faces the problems of excess, of reaching too far, of trying to do too much with too little. 'Essentially the factors which contribute to the growth of the church can lead to its failure (Saarenin 2001:15).

Its failures are failures born of good intentions; they are failures of commission rather than omission.

The failures of the declining stage, however, are usually failures of omission. The enthusiasm has gone and what remains is a sense that things should remain the same. This produces a feeling of ossification, of the end of pleasure in going to the church. The congregation feels that matters have been taken out of their hands, that they are no longer valuable to the church. The church has drawn in on itself and is concerned only with itself as an organization. There is little fellowship, little joy and less reason to come to the church. And so people stop going.

The question of the leadership of the church and congregation will be discussed in the next major section but it is convenient at this point to discuss leadership at the various stages of the congregation's life cycle. It must be pointed out here that decline, whether it is due to over-enthusiasm or a lack of enthusiasm at any stage can be reversed. Unfortunately these problems can only be overcome by changing the church leadership because, in the writer's experience at least, changing a leader's character and personality is far more difficult than any other way of reviving a dying church. Some leaders are perfect for planting a church, but poor at running a thriving one. Other leaders are good in times of quiet and stability but useless in a crisis. No leader, however charismatic and skilled, can be good at everything. It is the duty of the church council for independent churches, or the greater denomination in the case of denominational churches, to recognize when a leader has reached their personal limits and replace them.

Rothauge (1985: 9-11) points out that a different type of leader is required at each major stage of the congregation's life.

In the Birth stage, the leader must be a **Catalyst** to spark the enthusiasm, overcome the obstacles, and energize the congregation. Congregants, even enthusiastic ones, at this stage need to be pulled after a person who leads by example.

As the church is being formed and as the congregation grows, the pastor needs to develop a sense of order within the church and congregations; projects and other ventures have to be led to completion. Too many new plantings fail not because they have too few members, but they have so many that the structures of the church are overwhelmed and the church descends into chaos. The pastor needs, therefore, to be an **Organizer**.

As the church reaches stability, the initial enthusiasm will be over. People have had enough of the excessive excitement, of the feeling of being on the edge. They require that the church functions well and efficiently, that worship is organized properly, that management is sound and that they can devote their time to the service of God rather than to trying to get things to work. Here the leader needs to be a person who can run complex structures, an **Operator** in fact. However, as Rothauge (1985: 9) says, “stability’ becomes the first period of reshaping-in order to maintain vitality as well as continuity. Consequently, the best ‘operator’ also will be a clever innovator.’ This stage is a turning point in the life of the congregation; the church can be revitalized, perhaps taking a different direction or it can decline.

In the declining stage, congregants are aware of trouble. They notice the decline in the number of their fellows; they see the over-sized church which is now too big for its congregation. Many wonder if they themselves are not part of the cause. The pastorate is demoralized and some move on to more fulfilling work; other are demotivated and their work performance tends to drop off. Soon rumours of the church’s decline move through the congregation; the rumour can so easily become a self-fulfilling prophecy. At this

stage, the pastor needs to become a **Healer**⁵¹. The congregation requires revitalizing, strengthening and turned into a direction of energy and creativity (Rothauge 1985:10).

If this did not happen and the death of the congregation becomes inevitable, the pastor needs to encourage the congregation to accept this fact by offering support, even encouraging some over-dependency to bolster up the congregation, by being, in effect, a **'Parent'** so that the congregation dies with dignity and in the love and respect of its remaining members.

2.4. Congregation and Congregants

Congregational managers maintain, or should maintain, two types of information on congregants: demographics and personal information. The first is general information about the congregation as a whole or about parts of it; the information covers groups not individuals. Most of this information is not confidential.

The second is information specific to one person; it contains his or her personal details: names, contact details, families, disabilities and the records of the individual's contacts with the church (giving, counselling and the like). All of this information is confidential - the degree of confidentiality depends on what the information is.

These two forms of information are acquired and should be treated in different ways; the unifying guiding principle should be to avoid even the suggestion of privacy issues.

Both are critical to the performance of the congregational manager's tasks.

⁵¹ It is unlikely that a minister who has let the congregation get into this condition, will retain enough of the congregation's respect and confidence to be able to work a miracle and should certainly be replaced.

2.4.1. Demographics of the Congregation

In the general sense, the sense in which it is used in this study, the demographics of a population may be defined as the characteristics of the members of that population. It includes - along with many other characteristics - gender, ethnicity, language, age, income, disabilities, education, occupation, and family status. The demographics are essentially a measure of diversity, of differences in the population. An organization - like the local church - seeking to serve the people of an area cannot serve effectively unless it takes these differences into account. Service has to be tailored to suit the needs of the people who require it; further the service has to be provided in a way that makes it accessible, comprehensible and useful to the target population. There is, for example, little point to providing extensive services aimed at young mothers, if the population being served is an aging one with few young people; similarly there is no point in offering services in English, if the population speaks mainly Zulu.

There is, however, even less point in assuming that diversity exists, providing services tailored to it, and then finding out that the supposed diversity does not exist or the services provided are not desired. About four years ago, a liberal church near the writer's home, which had offered two Sunday morning 'traditional' services in English at 08:30 and 10:00 for many years, began offering three worship services, in the hope of attracting more diverse congregants to offset a continuing decline in numbers and an aging congregation. Two of the new services were 'traditional' services - in Afrikaans at 07:30 and in English at 09:00 - and the third was an English 'contemporary' service⁵² at 11:30.

⁵² Contemporary services are, in the writer's experience, more expensive than traditional services largely because of the cost of providing suitable music.

The new arrangements were expensive for the church because neither of the two pastors at the church spoke Afrikaans well and a part-time Afrikaans pastor had to be hired. After an initial sharp increase, total attendances settled down back to roughly 15% lower than before. Enquiries by the writer showed that, over the many years of two English services, the earlier service had become the 'preserve' of older congregants and the second a *de facto* family service for younger people. The senior pastor knew of this, but told the writer that it was felt that any losses of English people would be more than made up by a gain in Afrikaners and young people; in any case, the pastor said, 'they'll have to get used to it'.

This example illustrates the major problems associated with trying to exploit diversity without proper preparation and taking care to involve all stakeholders meaningfully.

- Attempts to exploit non-existent diversity by churches invariably result in (often expensive) failure;
- Before any diversity-based major changes are made, both diversity and market surveys should be carried out to find out exactly what diversity exists and, as importantly, to determine that any new services offered will be adequately utilized by the target market; the writer also noticed that market surveys usually overestimate possible usage of services so it is probably wise not to plan services that the research shows to be just above the lower limit of feasibility. Market segmentation⁵³ is all-important;

⁵³ Market segmentation is the process of dividing the general 'market' (in this case all congregants) into individual 'market segments' (groups of congregants) each with similar, distinct needs so that services or products can be optimized for each segment. Clearly determining that there are in fact any markets at all for a company's products is a crucial part of this process (modified from McDonald & Dunbar 2004:33-34)

- Changes to long-standing arrangements should be made only with the concurrence and cooperation of the congregation, the existing stakeholders (Board 2010: 2). The church is a voluntary organization that asks its congregants to pay to attend services; congregants are paying customers and should be treated with respect and courtesy; and
- Changes should be introduced gradually and analyzed objectively at intervals to be sure they are achieving what was intended and that they are not alienating a church's current congregation

The preceding comments emphasize the problems that can occur if diversity is assumed and it does not exist. Ignoring diversity also has costs because the church cannot make the best use of its resources. Determining the diversity of the congregation then should be the first, and arguably, the most important act of the congregational manager in preparing his church for the future.

2.4.1.1. Determining Diversity in Congregation and Community

The first, important step in determining diversity in the congregation is ensure the collection of information from new or potential members at the time of their first visit to the church. A suitably worded, not too long, questionnaire should be handed to all and sundry and should be readily available for use by congregants when their personal details (births, marriages, children, and deaths for example) change. The second step is gather and analyze all data available in the church's files. This can be a mammoth task, but is an essential part of the congregational manager's job. If necessary, a proper filing system should be set up; the present writer has outlined the setting up of such a system (Melody 1992).

Congregants move away, change churches, stop formal religious involvement or even die so for a church to remain the same size - let alone grow - it is necessary to attract new members, which involves drawing people in from the greater community surrounding

the church. The congregational manager should therefore include in any congregational diversity survey some provision for surveying the local community.

An initial diversity or, better, a demographic survey consists of six or seven stages:

1. Determining if a survey is necessary at all. It may be that the information sought is already present in the churches files (perhaps in the form of membership forms or lists prepared for other uses). This is a critical step because surveys are expensive and time-consuming - even if done 'in-church';
2. Determining the purpose and depth of the survey (Brace 2004:7-13);
3. Determining the particular characteristics sought because it is usually impractical to cover everything of interest;
4. Determining the methodology (the writer has observed that many small organizations use a combination of searches for publicly available data and one or more targeted market surveys⁵⁴);
5. Preparing the measuring instruments (Brace 2004) (at least two instruments are usually prepared because the congregation instrument would usually have different - or at least additional - questions to those given to the larger community). It will probably be necessary to prepare other instruments for follow up questions shortly after the survey and after, say, a year or two to check for changes in opinion as a result of changes in the church. The internal church survey could, for the sake of

⁵⁴ These would usually be designed and carried out by the church itself, usually aided by knowledgeable congregants. A richer church might use the services of one of the many commercial market survey firms. A third, cheaper, compromise method is to use a university lecturer (say) who specializes in market research to provide help and advice; such a lecturer would be especially valuable in stages 4 to 6.

- convenience and lower cost, be combined with a congregant satisfaction⁵⁵ survey of the type used in the hospitality industry (Pizam & Ellis 1999);
6. Analyzing, interpreting and synthesizing (Smith & Fletcher 2004) the data⁵⁶; and, optionally,
 7. Carrying out a market segmentation exercise.

It is not sufficient to carry out a single survey and rely on this for the indefinite future. Follow-up surveys are sometimes necessary shortly after the main survey to answer supplementary questions but usually follow-ups are scheduled after major changes in the church or community or at intervals of a year or so. Between surveys, the congregational manager must keep his finger on the pulse of the congregation through conversations and discussion; even straw polls⁵⁷ are useful at time.

Any amount of data can be collected, but it is useless unless the data is changed into information filtered and synthesized to aid meaningful decision making. This means that data should all be computerized. This raises the problem of computer-literacy in churches.

In its 2008 annual report, Rhema Bible church - an organization with a gross income of R100 million - boasted that '[t]here was considerable focus on Pastors enrolling for computer courses...' and '... the majority of staff is now computer literate ...' (*Rhema*

⁵⁵ Customer satisfaction surveys have to be acted upon if they are to be successful.

⁵⁶ A serious problem with church surveys is what Brace (2004: 181-2) refers to as the Social Desirability Bias. Respondents to questionnaires select answers that are socially desirable rather than the truth.

⁵⁷ Used in this study to mean small, short polls with results intended only to provide indicators to the solution of questions. They are generally not representative or binding but convey information useful to the congregation manager.

Bible Church North 2009: 12). This is the sort of boast that might have been heard in industry twenty-five years ago, but to hear it from a major church in 2009 shows the state of computer-literacy in the entire church.

The majority of older pastors encountered by the present writer were computer-illiterate. Astonishingly, the writer even met a pastor who used the Facit NTK mechanical calculator for all his Small Church accounts; these were then ‘typed’ up by his wife on a new personal computer for presentation to the church board. Many of the younger pastors are computer-literate only to the extent of being able to surf the Internet, to do online social networking (like Facebook and Twitter), and to carry out simple word-processing. A few could use spreadsheets. Almost none were familiar with customer relations management software, accounting systems, statistical programs, the advanced uses of word processors and spreadsheets, data mining software, database managers, presentation software and the many types of other software available for the church office.

On the other hand, the present writer came across relatively few administrative personnel - especially the younger ones - who were not computer literate, at least in the use of Office suites, accounting software and the like. While it is better for pastors to be able to use computers to extract the data that they need, it is often sufficient to have the pastor sit next to a computer-literate person and outline his requirements.

2.4.1.2. Using Demographics Data in the Church

Demographics are used in the church for two general purposes which are analogous to those used in marketing. The church uses demographic data about its congregation to do a segmentation of the congregation, isolate the major groups, determine the needs of the congregation in terms of the major segments and tailor the church's services to those major groups. There are two types of factor that will draw or allow people to go to church: factors that are both ‘necessary and sufficient’ and factors that are ‘necessary but

not sufficient'. An example of the first kind would be a powerful, charismatic pastor like, for example, Billy Graham or the Reverend Ray McCauley. The latter's church started out with a congregation of 13 people in McCauley's parent's home just over 30 years ago and has now expanded to church with a total Sunday attendance of over 13 000 (*Rhema Bible Church North* 2009: iii, 11). An example of the second type would be that of a conservative Protestant young mother who needed childcare facilities before she could attend a church; a nearby Anglican church might have a childcare facility which would be the necessary part but it wouldn't be sufficient because the church's theology would be anathema to her.

It is unwise for the congregational manager to place too much faith in being able to increase attendance by changing the church. Generally the church would be able to change only peripheral details to attract new members if it was not to alienate the old ones. The best that could be done is to make the church more appealing (as outlined in Section 2.1) and elsewhere, to change times of worship, provide childcare or transport and so on to make it easier for people to attend. They could also change the format of the worship services by having, say, 'contemporary' and 'traditional' services. The church could build up its New Members ministry to give newcomers a stronger welcome, but it is necessary to draw people to the church in the first place. Many liberal churches attempt to make churches more inclusive but the writer has not found that these attempts work, largely because the 'inclusive' usually means 'formerly disadvantaged minorities', and in the nature of things, minorities are small in numbers.

The second use is in two parts, both of which concern the outside community in which the church is situated. The church needs to know if and how it is possible to draw in new members from the outside community to make up the members lost through migration, cessation of formal religious involvement, death and the like. In some cases, for example, the community may have changed so much that no significant intake from the surrounding community is likely. In that case the church would have to draw people in

from areas outside the surrounding one; unless access is easy, this is a difficult task at best and usually requires that the church has a vibrant, charismatic pastorate. An example of an area where major religious change has happened is the Johannesburg suburb of Emmarentia where a Muslim community connected with the mosque near Emmarentia Dam has sprung up. These cases are rare, but they do exist.

In any case, regardless of the religious make-up of a community, the church should be widely involved, with other churches, denominations, or even other faiths. Churches should respond in emergencies, join in local celebrations and resist the temptation to turn every community contact into proselytisation. Mission has its place, but a church must never use charity to further mission. This is simply taking advantage of others and is, at best, unethical and is self-defeating because converts made in this way are very often just rice Christians. It also destroys any attempt to build a place for the church in the community outside of the sphere of religion.

The information that the church requires in detail depends on the specific uses to which it will be put. The general data required will be age, income, race and ethnicity, gender, language, marital status, family status, disabilities, educational attainment levels, employment/unemployment status, mobility⁵⁸, health, and mortality among others. These characteristics will give the church an overall view of its congregation and the community around it. In addition to these the church also needs details of the distribution of religious groups within the area. Depending on the size of the area, any or

⁵⁸ Mobility in this context means the ability to get around quickly and refers to ease of access to and within the area via roads or public transport. It also refers to the presence of motor vehicles. Is the area a fairly affluent one where most people have cars and can travel some distance to church, or is it a poor one where people have to walk? In the former case, much will depend on the attractiveness of the church; megachurch congregants may travel great distances but most people prefer to go to a church in their general neighbourhood.

all of these factors may vary across the church's draw-in area and it is necessary for the church to establish the distribution of desirable (from the church marketing viewpoint) characteristics across the area.

The church can establish its current draw-in area by plotting the position of its own congregants on a map. It is not necessary to plot all, just those who live relatively far from the church. Very often redrawing a 'ring' of the locations of congregants around the church pinpoints areas where the church has few congregants. The congregational manager uses this map, in conjunction with satellite images (Google Earth is a superb, free resource for this), topographic maps and maps of the built environment⁵⁹, to determine if there are any natural topographic or geomorphologic boundaries to his area and then locate areas where marketing of the church by, say, pamphlets and the like.

The importance of demographics for the church itself lies in the use of advertising. Outside of the congregation, few people know much about a particular church. In most areas, the writer believes, that is because people have no reason to care. The church is just a building in their neighbourhood. So the church has to advertise itself, to bring itself to people's attention strongly enough that people want to find out about the church. The advertising has to be enticing enough to draw people in but not so exaggerated that people are disappointed when they actually come to the church.

Advertising has been used (Joseph & Webb 2000: 20) to find a solution to the following and other problems:

1. 'Stemming membership decline
2. Identifying prospects and recruiting new members

⁵⁹ The manmade part of the environment, which includes houses, buildings, transportation infrastructure, sports facilities and all the other elements required for living.

3. Building 'customer satisfaction' among current members without compromising core religious principles, teachings and values
4. Developing or modifying programs, services and ministries to respond to the spiritual and emotional needs of demographically or psychographically [sic] diverse groups within a congregation
5. Increasing member involvement in church activities; encouraging volunteers
6. Increasing the average Sunday collection and formulating fundraising plans
7. Communicating with and inviting former members to re-join' (list modified slightly from Joseph & Webb 2000: 20)

It will be observed that, of Joseph & Webb's seven reasons, only one (number 2) deals with external recruitment. The remainder deals with current or former members. The advertising is not aimed so much at recruiting new members as in revitalizing current ones. This is the way that all good, successful advertising campaigns work; true, they draw in new buyers for the products advertised, but they also confirm old loyalties. They revitalize and revivify the original consumer base and these customers attract new ones as well. Joseph & Webb (2000: 21-22) citing other authors, point out that '...successful church marketing must always include a systematic marketing effort directed to the recruiting, motivating and managing of volunteers ... lifeblood of church ministry...'. In essence this form of internal advertising is directed towards the lower grades of membership commitment groups, to spark the interest and involvement of the less committed groups like the Occasional and Potential membership groups. Clearly to revitalize the church in this way requires carefully focused advertising which in turn requires demographic knowledge of the congregation as a whole.

It is not enough, though, to consider the congregants as a group and to advertise extensively. The church has to make each individual feel welcome, comfortable and valued within the church.

2.5. The Congregants

Thus far, congregants have been viewed in bulk or as members of relatively large groups. In this short section, congregants will be viewed as individuals or as individuals in the context of their immediate family.

Throughout this study, the writer was shocked - but not surprised - about how little interest was taken of ordinary congregants. The reason for this, the writer believes, is historical; until - perhaps twenty or thirty years ago - it was socially desirable in South Africa and elsewhere for people to attend church. And in any case, people felt that, even if they didn't really enjoy going to church, they were gaining salvation by doing so. Many congregants had great loyalty to their church and pastors. Church-going was a habit so that churches had what amounted to a captive audience. Further, being a member of the pastorate was a prestige position; people revered and respected⁶⁰ ministers simply for being ministers, not because of their personal attributes. This encouraged ministers to develop a sense of entitlement, almost of arrogance.

Since then, going to church has become a voluntary activity and the reason why mainline churches are dying in Britain and the United States is simply that people are opting out of going to church because they have better, more enjoyable things to do. Kosmin & Keysar⁶¹ (2009: Highlights) state simply:

‘American population self-identifies as predominantly Christian but Americans are slowly becoming less Christian’

⁶⁰ The present writer noted a tendency, especially in older churches, for the pastor to be shielded from harsh realities. Pastors are promoted/given excessive raises, bought cars, allowed to use church assets for private gain and the like, simply because they are ministers. This applied even to ministers who were regarded as lazy or inadequate by the congregation.

⁶¹ This is the American Religious Identification Survey for 2008.

and

‘The challenge to Christianity in the U.S. does not come from other religions but rather from a rejection of all forms of organized religion’.

This does not mean that Americans are becoming less religious, simply that they are finding other ways of expressing their religious feelings. Kosmin & Keysar (2009: Highlights) state:

‘The historic Mainline churches and denominations have experienced the steepest declines while the non-denominational Christian identity has been trending upward particularly since 2001.’

The present writer believes that the solution here is essentially Customer Relationship Management [CRM] (Winer 2001; Anderson & Kerr 2002), the art of making customers feel welcome and comfortable, knowing that they are valued as individuals, that the church regards all congregants as equally valuable, that the church treats every congregant in the same way and that the congregant’s needs will be taken care of. Each congregant needs to know that when he/she comes to the church, they will receive exactly the same treatment as everybody else.

This can only be done if the pastorate and the church administration staff know their congregation and the community in which they live, if they learn to know about the people they come into contact with everyday, and at least recognize acquaintance with a person they see often, but rarely speak to. The congregational manager must arrange a suitable filing system in which congregants’ personal details and all details of their contacts with the church are kept. Congregants should be asked to update their details regularly and keep track of who does. The pastorate in particular needs to develop a primary, human relationship (Dudley 203:48-49) with each one of the church’s members. Dudley was talking about small churches, but the CRM method allows even

large organizations with a large customer base, to develop almost personal relationships with customers over a vast area. The local church has a much easier task.

The pastorate should for example mine community gossip to keep track of what is happening there, keep good records of each member of the congregation and try to augment those records as they can. They should be alert for changes in the congregation's families by arranging for volunteers⁶² to keep the church informed about changes in the lives of congregants: births, birthdays, marriages, injuries, sickness, deaths, children's problems, the loss of jobs and the myriad of other small events that make up the life of a community. The church should respond, where appropriate, by having a member of the pastorate or a member of a volunteer group telephone to offer congratulations or condolences for important events, or to arrange hospital visitation and the like. What must be avoided is the impression that the church is only interested in the socially prominent members or rich donors in the congregation. The main thing is to let every member of the congregation know that the church knows and cares about them and that everyone is treated equally.

The next section of this study is on the church's leadership and management but it will continue the theme of maintaining good relationships both with individual congregants and the congregation as a whole.

⁶² This would in fact be an 'intelligence network' to keep the pastorate in touch with the congregation.

3. Leadership and Management in the Church

The principal topic of this section is the leadership of the church, that is, of the pastorate – especially the senior pastor – and of the role the congregational manager plays in enabling the pastor to fulfill his job. The congregational manager acts as an adviser, as a supplier of information and resources (human and financial) and, perhaps most importantly, as one of the checks-and-balances in the church.

It is first necessary to define the use of ‘leader’ in this work. ‘Leader’ is used in a neutral sense, without the all too common implication that a ‘leader’ is somehow better than a manager. Leaders are defined by their followers. ‘A leader’ then, ‘is a person who has followers’.

A discussion of ‘leadership’ and ‘management’ in the church invariably leads to a discussion of the superiorities of the ‘leader’ over the mere ‘manager’. Bergh & Theron (2003: Table 11.3, p. 213), for example, list characteristics of both types of worker: the manager is described as a more hide-bound individual than the leader, who, these workers allege, is more concerned with ideas than routine, a risk-taker, less formal, and cares more about communicating vision than simply ‘monitoring results against plans’. They describe effective leaders as requiring ‘vision, possessing a certain degree of charisma and the ability to be a transformational leader’ (p. 214). A few lines later, however, these workers say ‘[a]s effective management is required, it is necessary for leaders to be successful managers’. Smit et al. (1997: 278) point out that ‘leadership is one of the functions of management⁶³’. It can be seen therefore that leaders have to be managers and managers have to be leaders; it is only the emphasis on the several elements of their work that differs. Bartlett (quoted by Doh 2003:65) states:

⁶³ The others are Planning, Organizing and Controlling. These three, while being mentioned occasionally in this section will be dealt with more fully in the section on Church Administration.

‘I think that the literature has created a false dichotomy. I guess it is useful pedagogically, and so people talk about leadership as different from management.... Good management is about achieving results through others and I think that it always encompassed leadership.’

In this work – and in every successful company the present writer has seen – leaders and managers are regarded as partners, unequal partners true but partners nonetheless. The reason for the ‘unequal partnership’ is that one of the forms of leadership, the primary form of leadership, concerns the core functions of the church, the church’s mission and the reasons why the church exists at all; the second form of leadership concerns the acquisition, supply and allocation of resources (essentially congregational management) which allow the church’s core functions to be carried out. The pastor’s job is the heart of the church because the pastor leads the congregation; congregational management may be necessary, but it is not sufficient to carry out the reason for the church’s existence.

The leaders have to lead in two very different ways: they must be the leaders of the church as an organization (that is, of the physical church, its assets and its employees) and as the leaders of the congregation. These two functions require very different forms of leadership skills. As leader of the church as an organization, a pastor requires (as Bergh & Theron (2003:214) point out) a degree of charisma but the pastor has authority and power over an employee which is quite independent of the charisma the pastor possesses; the employee has to obey any legitimate order or risk becoming unemployed. Here the congregational manager acts as manager in the fullest sense as the person to whom some or almost all of the pastor’s organizational duties will be delegated⁶⁴, leaving the pastor free to do the core job as the leader of the congregation.

⁶⁴ This does not in any way relieve the pastor of overall responsibility for management; delegation can only go so far.

As leader of the congregation, on the other hand, the pastor has no power over congregants in the church. Thus, the pastor needs to be able to influence people who are in their church voluntarily, who are able to find other things to do instead of going to church, who would likely leave to go to another church if they were made unhappy and, most importantly, who are being asked to pay for the privilege of attending the church voluntarily. Thus pastors have to have enough charisma to retain congregants and to draw in new congregants to replace the inevitable losses. Pastors as leader of the congregation need quite different abilities from pastors as managers to carry out the Church's functions of *Kerygma*, *Koinonia*, *Diakonia*, *Martyria*, *Didache* and *Leitourgia* (Benedict XVI 2005: para. 25a; Hunneshagen 2002:191; Heitink 1993: 278; Heyns & Pieterse 1990: 13-15). Pastors need to be good preachers, sympathetic listeners with an ability to knit diverse people together in fellowship, good missionaries both within and outside the church, good teachers and skilled liturgists. It is almost as if pastors have to have two professions, each of which requires persons with different skills sets⁶⁵.

Thus the pastor has to act in two very different ways. And thus, in the present writer's opinion, two separate models of leadership are required for the pastor to deal with the two sides of the pastor's job. The first model covers the pastor as a manager and the second the pastor as church leader doing the 'real work' of the church.

The next major sections will cover the questions of leadership and management in the church by pointing out the characteristics of each type and how these fit into the church

⁶⁵ This type of dichotomy is usual in jobs which require a professional to control an institution as its manager and to carry out activity in a very different discipline. Medical doctors running their own practice, scientists in charge of research laboratories, geologists running field camps or geology departments on mines all have the same problem as has been pointed out earlier.

both as an organization and as the body-of-Christ. However it is first necessary to lay the groundwork by discussing the question of power and authority in the church.

3.1. Authority-Power Relationships In the church

As Mellody & Theron (2006:114) point out the crux of the problem of church management lies in the concepts of authority, power, responsibility and accountability and these concepts must form the centre of a workable model of both the pastorate and congregational management. First it is necessary to define four interrelated concepts: authority, power, responsibility and accountability.

‘Authority’ denotes the right of a leader [or manager] to give commands to and demand actions from subordinates’ while ‘power denotes the ability of a leader to influence the behaviour of others without necessarily using his authority’ (Cronjé et al 1997:139). As would be expected the question of authority in the church is a difficult one for an organization that supposedly believes in the freedom of the individual. In the present study, the dictum of Lavery (1967: 381)⁶⁶ – ‘Freedom as far as it is possible, constraint as far as it is necessary’ – will be used as a guide to the proper use of authority and power.

Power may be defined as ‘the possession of controlling influence’ and it is the ability to ensure compliance with its possessor’s wishes. Power ‘to enforce compliance through fear, whether psychological, emotional or physical’ is ‘coercive power’ (Cronjé et al 1997:139, 141) and ‘is more common in church circles than many will admit. Pastors, for example, may be pressured by subtle threats from council members; rich donors may have extra privileges within the church;’ (Mellody and Theron 2006:115-116). Power should always come with authority, but it can too easily be acquired informally and used corruptly.

⁶⁶ Lavery, a well-known Jesuit writer, meant this in the context of the Catholic church; this writer has chosen to expand it using a much freer definition of ‘freedom’.

Earlier it was pointed out that the members of the Lay Social Leaders can become over-conscious of their status in the church, develop coercive power and can become arrogant bullies. While this is most common in churches with weak leadership, it is present in all churches to a lesser or greater extent. Power used badly always creates an unhealthy situation and turns the evolution of the church to maladaptation. This is particularly the case where the power is acquired informally (as in this example) because this power is absolute power because it is power without responsibility and accountability; '[p]ower tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely' as Lord Acton put it in a letter to Bishop Creighton.

Responsibility rests 'on a leader executing a given task in accordance with instructions' (Cronjé et al 1997:140). The leader – or individual concerned – is delegated the authority/power and given the resources to do a task and the responsibility then is to do that task both according to the instructions given and to the level required, say, by the organization's standards. Responsibility then requires that the pastor does the task in a way that is compatible with a set of overriding ethical, moral or technical standards. If the task does not conform to, say, the church's policies and procedures and/or to the moral, ethical and other standards that govern the Christian church, then the instruction is illegitimate and the pastor should not carry out the task.

'Accountability ... [is the] answerability of a person for the correct execution of a task [that is] ... a person is rewarded for correct execution or penalized for faulty execution [of the task]...' (Bell 1931:9). To be meaningful, 'accountability' requires that failure to obey an instruction or to carry out the instruction correctly results in punishment; if this is not the case, the person concerned cannot be regarded as having been held accountable.

For the leader or manager, the four concepts are necessarily interconnected. 'Clearly, *authority and power* are ... bound to *responsibility* and *accountability* because the

former two allow the manager to carry out a task, while the latter two induce him to carry it out properly.’ (Mellody & Theron (2006: 114).

The exercise of authority and power in the church is necessarily circumscribed by the fact that the church is a voluntary organization. The leader must exercise authority with discretion, especially if it is necessary to take measures within the church that are unpopular with the congregation or a major part of it. In that case, the pastor concerned has to balance the unpopularity, even opprobrium, that the action will bring against the pastor’s own charisma – the ability to retain congregants even in adverse circumstances. In any case, even in the most important circumstances, he has to try to convince rather than to force - cooperation rather than conflict. This often makes leading difficult, especially if pastors know or suspect that, though they may be popular, they are not charismatic. In such cases, pastors may compromise in a way that satisfies no one. And the health of the church suffers a blow. The congregational manager’s role here is to advise the pastor on the approach to take in such a situation and to advise him of the costs in resources and money; this requires a deep knowledge of the particular church and of the ‘major’ congregants involved.

The problem is made even more difficult by the fact that all authority and most of the power in the local church is, *de facto*, in the hands of the congregation. It might be argued this is untrue, because particularly in the case of a denominational church, the pastor’s authority comes through the bishops and/or other leaders of the church and only they can dismiss him. Congregants, however, have the same power that all consumers have, they can cease to ‘buy the product’ and leave the church⁶⁷ or, on a lesser level, they can withhold contributions. Thus the church’s leaders, particularly in

⁶⁷ As happened in the case investigated by Herman (1984); the congregation of an Anglican church objected to some forms of ‘modernization’ and left the church, causing the congregation to plummet from 250 members to 40.

these days of declining congregations, are in the hands of the congregation. But which part of the congregation?

The difficulty is that the pastor generally has no idea of the feeling throughout the church on any particular issue; the pastor hears voices from the congregation but can rarely know whether the voices are genuinely the voices of the church as a whole or whether they are the voices of a small, but vocal minority who are at odds with the rest of the congregation. If the pastor makes the wrong choice on an important matter, the church could evolve and fail to adapt to the congregation's wishes. Of course, there are occasions when the vocal minority is right, perhaps for moral reasons; by opting to do the right thing in such a case, the pastor has to accept a probably transient loss of popularity. That's why Dale (1997:58) argues: '[m]anagement experts agree that not-for-profits are by far the most challenging organizations to administer. Since the church is both spiritual organism and human organization, congregations are doubly difficult to manage.'

The pastor then is faced with a dilemma, because strong church leadership is necessary to guide the church, to control the use of influence by, say, socially prominent congregants, generous donors (Lyon 1999:282) or even his denominational superiors, or to prevent abuse of church property (Pollock 1996:61). But, on the other hand, a display of strong leadership – especially if misdirected by a person who is not strongly charismatic - might alienate an important segment of the congregation.

A common 'solution' in this case is a bad one; the pastor claims that a certain action has to be taken because of a *fiat* of higher authority (say the local bishop or denominational leader). Such an excuse diminishes the minister's authority and risks embarrassment, even censure, if congregants complain directly to diocesan or other authority. Authority and power will ultimately always remain with the formal (appointed or elected) management of the church or the denominational leadership since the authority of the

pastorate in these cases is really borrowed authority, authority that can and sometimes is, withdrawn at short notice. People often don't mind bald-faced lies⁶⁸, or the little white lies to avoid hurting a person, but lying about something important chips away at the bond of trust that must exist between the pastorate and the congregation. The congregational manager should therefore point these facts out to the pastor before the deed if possible; failing this it, he/she must attempt to minimize the damage but without compromising the trust that must also exist between the congregation and congregational management. It must be emphasized yet again, that the congregational manager's primary duty is to the congregation as a whole, and if the pastor errs in this or any other way, it is the congregational manager's duty to correct the problem, discreetly if possible, but must never aid in any form of cover-up. Sometimes the health of the church can only be maintained by the application, as it were, of a cautery.

Thus although a pastor may appear to congregants to have unlimited authority and that any action needed to improve the church's health can be taken by the pastor, in practice the pastor's power is constrained by circumstances and people, and most importantly, by the limits of the pastor's own personality. This has become a problem in many churches facing the challenge of adapting to the modern world in a way that does not lead to conflict, or at the worse an exodus of congregants. Only pastors with sufficient charisma can ignore these limits and then only to a degree. As an adviser the congregational manager has the duty to remind the pastor of the limitations of his authority, acting in this instant, as one of the checks-and-balances within the church.

⁶⁸ Bald-faced lies are lies told with no intention to deceive (often by politicians) because it is common knowledge that what the speaker is saying is a lie (Sorensen 2007: 251). Sorensen concludes '... that the apparent intensity of our disapproval of non-deceptive lies is a rhetorical illusion'.

3.2. Leadership in the Church

It has been pointed out above that the pastor and the congregational manager have to work in tandem. In essence, the pastor may be thought – rather simplistically – as the public face of the church while the congregational manager is the ‘man in the small back room’⁶⁹ who keeps the church as an organization running.

3.2.1. Charisma and Leadership in the church

Many church managers accept the rationalized myth that, provided that people were given the right training, experience and support, they can fill any position. This denies the common experience in business that people have different talents and skills which fit some people for jobs leading others, while other people have little or no leadership ability and must use their talents in another field.

Bell (1931:i) points out that professions have three prerequisites for success – talent⁷⁰, training and experience. He goes on to say that ‘the most difficult professions are ... [those that involve] ... leading and managing people’ (Bell 1931: ii-iii); doing so, he implies, the successful manager needs much talent, training and experience. Taking Bell’s comments with those of Dale (1997:58), it is clear that congregational management is no sinecure.’ (Mellody & Theron 2006: 115). Bell’s comments may be extended by saying it requires even more talent, training and experience to lead a church as a pastor.

This long preamble leads up to the simple statement that not everyone, however intelligent or well-trained, is capable of leading a church⁷¹. Indeed, in the very nature of

⁶⁹ To paraphrase the title of Nigel Balchin’s famous novel.

⁷⁰ In the sense of ‘aptitude’

⁷¹ Even if they were, there would not be sufficient churches for them to manage. The writer gained the definite impression that there was an oversupply of potential ministers in South Africa. There is, however, very likely an undersupply of **good** potential pastors.

things, most graduates in ministry, divinity or theology are *not* capable of leading a church; based on the writer's experience with young geology and mining graduates, he suggests that the ratio is probably less than 1:50 for a medium church. Church management all too often believes that 'equal opportunity' automatically translates into 'equal performance', appoints an unsuitable person to do a job, and then forever after blames that person for being a failure. One of the problems in judging leadership is that almost every one is convinced that, given the chance, they too could be leaders. Bernstein (1998:269) points out that '[w]e like to believe that we are above average in skills, intelligence, farsightedness, experience, refinement and **leadership**⁷²'. The writer's experience is that charisma is thought of in the same way which would account for the mutters of 'discrimination' that often arise when pastors with an over-inflated opinion of themselves are passed over for promotion.

Further, different people have different levels and forms of talent for particular jobs. The well-known Peter Principle⁷³ (Peter & Hull 1969: 25) reflects this. What Peter suggests is that an employee in a company (say) starts at the lowest level and by dint of doing a good job, is promoted repeatedly until one day, the employee rises to a position where his talents are insufficient, is unable to do the job and has thus reached his level of incompetence.

It has been said that the important quality for a pastor is charisma; indeed, the writer believes it to be the quality *sine qua non*. But how does one recognize charisma? Weber (as will be shown later) believes that charisma is a built-in talent, something that is probably inherited. Dupertuis (1986: 111) point out that most workers after Weber have

⁷² Present writer's emphasis.

⁷³ 'In a hierarchy every employee tends to rise to his level of incompetence ... in time every post tends to be occupied by an employee who is incompetent to carry out its duties ... Work is accomplished by those employees who have not yet reached their level of incompetence.'

accepted Shils' 'classic statement' that 'Charisma, then, is the quality which is imputed to persons, actions, roles institutions, symbols and material objects because of their presumed connection with 'ultimate,' 'fundamental,' 'vital,' order-determining powers'.

Dupertuis herself (p.122-124) considers '... the imputation of charisma is an active, conscious, changing process which at least in religious settings involves non-cognitive, modes of perception.'

Carlton-Ford (1992:365) shows that self-esteem is affected by the presence of a charismatic leader, saying that '... the existence of a charismatic leader significantly interacts with group rituals and group size in affecting group members' self-esteem. Individual involvement in collective effervescence...'; he also states that interpersonal power positively affects self-esteem even if there is no charismatic leader present.

In discussing charisma in organizational setting, Conger⁷⁴ et al. (2000: 747) point out a number of the effects of charismatic leadership on followers. These are:

- Increased follower reverence and charismatic leadership.
- . Follower trust and satisfaction (the researchers indicate that these are mediated through leader reverence.
- Followers' sense of collective identity and perceived group task performance.

Conger & Kanungo (1987) developed a model which relied on followers' perceptions of leadership behaviour. A brief description is given by Conger et al (2000: 748); here they indicate that followers see the forms of behaviour by charismatic leaders as 'expressions of charisma' and their behaviour indicates that such leaders and their missions are 'are

⁷⁴ These workers have also developed a scale, called the Conger-Kanungo charismatic leadership scale (Conger et al. 2000: 747), for measuring charismatic leadership and its effects on followers.

extraordinary. As such, individuals choose to follow such leaders in management settings ...[through] perceptions of their leader's extraordinary character'.

In any case, people recognize charisma in a person, suggesting that this is one of the 'instincts', that humans have evolved the ability – or, the writer believes, an increased ability – to recognize and respond to charisma. The 'response' is obviously of particular importance since there is little evolutionary point in recognizing a quality if no one is not going to respond to it. Charisma may also relate to the possession of desirable objects; Pinker (1997:499) points out that '[a]sset-holders, then, are not just seen as holders of their assets. They exude an aura or charisma that makes people want to be in their graces'.

Whether a person can learn charisma is a moot point. The writer believes not; this, he believes is an innate ability, that (assuming Conger & Kanungo's behavioural theory is correct) some people have the ability to produce the behaviour that attracts followers. Thus unless some method is found to duplicate this ability in another person (Dupertuis 1986) suggests there may be ways – complex and difficult ways in her estimation), charismatic pastors are born and cannot be 'made' by training and/or experience.

Charismatic behaviour is also advantageous from the point of view of promotion through the ranks. Grant & Bateman (2000: 72) point out that supervisors' perceptions of the ability of charismatic persons are likely to be more favourable than assessments of non-charismatic persons.

'Charisma' is not, cannot possibly be, a dichotomous quality, because there are many people who are able to attract followers in small numbers that probably reflect the 'amount' of charisma they have. Indeed Crant & Bateman (2000:63) state '...charismatic leadership is found in varying degrees in managers throughout the organizational hierarchy; it is not limited to world-class leaders'. Charisma may in fact be a nearly

universal quality; perhaps the 'amount' most people have is not significant in terms of its effect on others.

Charisma, however, may not last. Blasi (1995:245), in discussing this, points out initially the person was 'ennobled by virtue of his own actions' (Weber 1978:1139) but then charisma declines until the person has only the 'false' or 'office' charisma which derives from his office. Similarly a person with little charisma may inherit 'office charisma' from occupying an office previously occupied by a charismatic person. In this way charisma becomes 'routinized' as charismatic authority is replaced, after the leader's death or departure, by a bureaucracy controlled by a rationally established authority or by a combination of traditional and bureaucratic authority'. Andelson (1980: 730, citing Turner), points out that '[t]he rise of charismatic leaders and the routinization which legitimizes their successors is 'an endless series of negotiations among actors about the assignment of meaning to the acts in which they jointly participate'. In a different context, Berman (1986-7: 67-68) points out that the same thing happens in the arts as charismatic persons are replaced by bureaucrats.

Some churches have a system that tacitly selects for charisma. The fast growing Charismatic churches have such a system which has developed from the beginning of the movement, to 'select' charismatic persons to participate in leadership. Perhaps here 'select' is the wrong word and 'self-select' is more correct in that the leaders chosen are those who display charisma. In mainline churches, leaders are chosen for other characteristics which may not be suitable for the church to which these pastors will be sent. The present writer could not help but notice how strong was the commitment in Charismatic churches, and how the sense that one obtained of congregant commitment and belonging was very much greater in Charismatic churches than in, say, the mainline

churches⁷⁵ the writer visited; that this was true is confirmed by the work of McGaw (1979). This worker compared charismatic church and a mainline church that were similar in economic and other indicators, and showed that, not only was commitment stronger, but there was ‘greater closure, strictness, consensus on authority, and social cohesion’ in the charismatic than in the mainline church. Indeed in a later paper, McGaw (1980: 299) showed the decline of mainline churches in the face of growing charismatic churches may be attributed to ‘[the charismatic churches]’s vitality...’ which results from ‘... its superior ability to provide meaning and belonging to its members’.

In summary, therefore, there is one important characteristic – charisma – that is essential to the pastor. Churches in which the pastor is chosen for charisma increase their congregants’ self-esteem, provide a powerful sense of belonging, and hence a powerful sense of commitment to the church. They provide a warmth and fellowship that is rare elsewhere. Their congregants feel that the church offers more than just a place to visit, it provides a haven from the world. Congregants of charismatic churches gain something every time they go to church, and come home feeling satisfied. Members of some mainline churches, in most cases, do not gain these advantages; members of these churches then do not feel satisfied but *satisfied*⁷⁶ because they have, in truth, chosen second-best.

The congregational manager, like all members of the church leadership and management, will probably be aware of such problems within the church because of low morale within the congregation. It is not the direct responsibility of the congregational

⁷⁵ This could be a misapprehension because the sample size was *very* small. The popular literature, however, bears out this suggestion.

⁷⁶ Satisficing, Herbert A. Simon’s term, means ‘choosing an alternative that meets or exceeds specified criteria, but that is not guaranteed to be unique or in any sense ‘the best.’ (Callebut 2007:76).

manager to deal with this problem, but it is his/her duty to ensure that this is known to the pastorate – who often seek refuge in denialism - and suggest solutions that can be implemented within the church's resources. A 'customer satisfaction survey', carefully conducted will certainly be required here.

It was said earlier that the church is an evolutionary organization (like all others which have to adapt to changing circumstances) and that the leaders of some churches often attempt to force the evolution in a direction which could be deleterious to the church concerned. It is difficult to avoid the impression that the leaders of mainline churches have mistakenly selected for the extinction of their own churches.

3.2.2. Models of Church Leadership

It must be stated here that there is no overall best, panacea-type leader for the church. Different circumstances inevitably determine which type of leader is 'best' for a particular church at a particular time in its lifecycle⁷⁷. The one point that has been made is that the leader of the local church must have some degree of charisma. The leader must be one who stands up above the crowd, who makes each congregant feel special, who fosters self-esteem and who makes the church's congregants proud to be a member of the church⁷⁸. It will be obvious from the above and the remarks made earlier that the general models used for leadership will be those of Weber.

However before going on to this, it is first instructive to consider a model that the writer believes would be bad for the church – the 'servant leader' concept which is an excellent example of the type of management/leadership models which are touted as panaceas,

⁷⁷ The point has been discussed at some length in Sections 1 and 2.

⁷⁸ This should always be checked by say a customer satisfaction survey; too many pastors develop a ring of sycophants who mislead them by telling them what they want to hear rather than the truth.

‘universal cures’ for church management problems. It is a normative theory, and therefore, by definition would seem suitable for a church. But this and other normative theories make assumptions that cannot be upheld in the real world. For the church to succeed, it has to treat people like people; it cannot start out with the assumption that people can be persuaded to act like saints.

It is also a management fad. Management fads are the bane of a working manager’s life. Gibson & Tesone (2001:132) state:

‘Management fads, like clothing fads, are cyclical in nature. They start out quietly, attract a lot of attention, spread through adoption by people who want to be in the in crowd, then often fade into obscurity as the adopters tire of the fad and the effort to maintain it... Some fads, however, [become] ...so useful that they become mainstays of our repertoire.’

There is a major difference between using a management fad – especially an untested one – in a large organization and a church. The large organization can absorb the deleterious effects of an ill-advised management system, because most people in the organization will, once the implications of the system become clear, simply pay lip-service to it until it fades into obscurity. For a church, which is an organization relying on voluntary attendance by paying congregants, it is a different matter; if congregants don’t like a new management style, they may object but more likely the less committed ones will go to another church. The cost and the impact of failure can be catastrophic – not the least to the reputation of the pastor who adopted it.

3.2.2.1. The Servant Leader

It is at least as important to discuss systems of leadership that are unsuitable for the church as it is to discuss ones that are suitable. The ‘Servant Leader’ concept will be discussed at some length, not because the concept itself is so useful, but because the

assumptions it makes are contrary to people's everyday experience. The concept assumes that people will sacrifice their own interest in favour of others for extended periods. Its application in the church, to the congregation, assumes that the congregation will keep coming to a church where they get no positive joy, but simply the satisfaction of sacrifice. The church's experience has been the other way – if people aren't given a positive reason to go to church, they simply won't go.

Lowder (2009:1), in a discussion of servant leadership vs. transformational leadership, points out that servant leadership is more aligned to personal development, that is, to the individual, while transformational management is oriented to organizational development. The pastor's work is not to deal with individuals but to be leader of an organization (the congregation).

The 'Servant Leader' concept of leadership is one of the normative theories of leadership which ' ... make ... normative commitments explicit by offering recommendations for how leaders ought to behave [and] often identify good leadership with what thinkers from Plato to Burns hold is necessary for leadership itself, namely, concern for the good of followers.' (Goethals et al.2004:262). Matteson & Irving (2006) has compared two of these theories (Servant and Self-Sacrificial Leadership), showing that there are differences but also major similarities. This is true of all the normative theories examined by this writer.

The problem that the writer finds with normative theories of leadership is that these theories require leaders to treat ordinary people in an extraordinary way. Worse, the theories require people to adopt strategies that are harmful to their own ambitions in favour of someone else's.

During discussions - both in person and over the Internet - with pastors, ministers, priests⁷⁹ and laity, the writer was astonished by the amount of support given to the Servant Leadership as the most desirable model for church management. In fact it was difficult for the writer to avoid the belief that this mode of leadership was regarded as a panacea, a 'universal cure' for the church's ills.

The most striking thing that the writer noticed, however, was that every, single example of servant leader mentioned – whether they were world leaders like Gandhi, Mother Theresa, Martin Luther King Jr, or Billy Graham or the leaders of local churches – was a charismatic person, judging by either publicly available knowledge or the description given in the discussions. In fact the most common descriptions of local church Servant Leaders were 'charismatic', 'able to draw people to him', 'attracted members like flies' and so on. Another surprising thing was that people described as 'servant leaders' were overwhelmingly male; of the over two hundred local, not world, leaders discussed in this context no more than twenty-seven were women. It suggests, therefore, that where the 'servant church' concept is apparently successful in a church, it is because the church pays only lip service to the concept. Or it may be that only charismatic – probably only very charismatic – leaders can apply the concept to large numbers of people at once.

The 'servant leader' concept was first proposed by Greenleaf in a 1970 essay (Greenleaf 2002). Much of the popularity of Greenleaf's work seems, in the present writer's opinion, to stem from the quality of Greenleaf's somewhat 'purple prose'. He also portrays, towards the end of his book, the 'Servant Leader' as a lone figure awaiting the call to serve, almost as if the 'servant leader' is necessarily a person ahead of his time, an appealing image for the would-be leader who is aging and has yet to 'make the big time'. For example: in the conclusion of his major work, Greenleaf says of the 'Servant Leader:

⁷⁹ Anglican priests. The three Catholic priests, with whom the writer has spoken, tended to espouse a more dominating role.

‘In the absence of solid evidence of such initiatives [being more hospitable to servant leaders], servant leaders may stand alone, largely without the support of their culture, as a saving remnant of those who care for both persons and institutions, and who are determined to make their caring count-*wherever they are involved*⁸⁰. This brings them, as individuals, constantly to examine the assumptions they live by. Thus, their leadership by example sustains trust.

They also serve who stand and wait. Milton’ (Greenleaf 2002: 342).

Is this the sort of leadership that would draw people into the church? Or would it be more likely to drive them out?

The ‘Servant Leadership’ concept suggests that servant leaders succeed, in terms of obtaining good results in their work, by focusing on the needs of their colleagues, subordinates and the people they work for. They are leaders, who have the quality of being able to listen to others and to translate what they hear into supportive help for those others; they have empathy, persuasion, stewardship⁸¹ and personal growth; they eschew the hierarchal approach, preferring to use cooperation and collaboration based on empathy and trust, rather than the authority of position. Authority for the servant leader is in fact earned by this cooperative approach. Their aim is to grow others and thereby carry out the business of their organization through the work of others. This illustrates the difference between applying the concept between the leader and a small staff and applying the same concept to a congregation of several hundred. Techniques that work well in the intimacy of an office are unlikely to work *en masse* in a crowded church.

⁸⁰ Greenleaf’s emphasis

⁸¹ This is emphatically NOT ‘stewardship’ in the sense of Mellody & Theron (2006).

In fact:

‘...a true leader is one who is a servant first. He asserted that this leadership style begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then, conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The best test asks, Do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?’ (Bocarnea & Dimitrova 2010: 255).

Is this what congregants want and need? Are people going to come voluntarily and pay to see a self-effacing church leader? Or do they want, quite rightly, an exciting church, one that is bubbling over with enthusiasm? The truth is quite simply that to draw people into the church, a church has to provide ‘value’ from the first moment a potential new congregant enters it.

Greenleaf (2002), in the first three chapters of his book - ‘The Servant as Leader’ (p. 21-61), ‘The Institution as Servant’ (p.62-103), and ‘Trustees as Servants’ (p. 104-146) describes the major components of his theory. As would be expected, Greenleaf devotes some time to discussing an organization – the church - in which he believes his theory would be naturally applicable. Chapter VII in Greenleaf (2002: 231-261) contains the application of the theory to the church. Servant Leadership parameters may be tested by instruments like the Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) Servant Leadership Questionnaire. The questionnaire (Dannhauer & Boshoff 2007: 149) has been tested in South Africa ‘in an automobile retail organization with 100 dealerships spread across South Africa’ with fair results.

The application of the ‘servant leadership’ principle in an organization is carried out by what might be described as a trickledown process. The leader of the organization applies the servant leadership concept to his immediate subordinates and colleagues, and these

employees then introduce it to their immediate subordinates and so on. Like all leadership modification techniques, constant reinforcement is necessary.

A widely known model of servant leadership (Patterson 2003) lists seven constructs (*agápao*⁸², love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, empowerment, and service) that can be used to measure the effect of servant leadership in an organization. All of these are necessary attributes for a healthy church, but the problem lies in the practical application. A pastor needs to be able to work ‘in bulk’ as it were, to sway crowds as Jesus and the great preachers since him did. The ‘servant leader’ concept is intensely personal; it demands more than just passing contact between leader and follower. It would be impractical to apply servant leadership principles to crowds of people, most of whom visit the church only once a week at best.

The most obvious failing of the technique is that it assumes that the servant leader concept is so compelling that it overcomes in some ways the normal ambitions that exist in all members of an organization. It also assumes:

- That nearly everyone in an organization is committed to the long-term future of that organization and have made at least a medium-term commitment to remain with the organization In fact Drury (2004:1) in a quantitative study found that ‘...contrary to what the literature indicated, organizational commitment and servant leadership had a statistically significant inverse relationship’. Using servant leadership would weaken the commitment of congregants to the church;
- That they are prepared to serve as a preliminary to leadership;

⁸² Winston (2002) defined ‘agápao’ as ‘to love in a social or moral sense, embracing the judgment and the deliberate assent of the will as a matter of principle, duty, and propriety’

- That nearly everybody is honestly committed to applying the concept judiciously and fairly⁸³;
- That everyone is both able and willing to be empathic and caring, to step aside and to work through others; and
- Most importantly it assumes that few people will cheat and attempt to game the system to get recognition for successes that were partly or wholly the work of others. It is worth repeating here the comment of Smit et al. (1997: 277) that ‘Thus each person has a personal agenda which does not necessarily put the interests of the business organization first.’

These are not simply the characteristics of people that the writer has met during this study or in his life in the world of work. Assumptions that ordinary human beings will behave for lengthy periods in ways that benefit others rather than themselves must certainly be questionable. Unfortunately, these types of assumptions are typical of normative theories of leadership.

Even when the servant leadership principle is applied as an ‘official’ practice of a church, there are doubts about its authenticity. Anderson (2005:1), however, has studied the application of the servant leadership principle in the Latter Day Saints (Mormon/LDS) church and found that her study ‘showed a significant correlation between self-perceptions of servant leadership and individual employee job satisfaction.’ This is probably a function of the high level of commitment demanded of Mormons and the strong social and peer pressures within the LDS for members to conform to the *mores* of the church. It may not, therefore, represent the true position within the church. In any case, the LDS represents a special case. On the other hand, Nelson (1993: Table 1)

⁸³ Spears (2010: 27) states ‘[o]ne assumes the good intentions of co-workers and colleagues and does not reject them as people, even when one may be forced to refuse to accept certain behaviors or performance.’

regards the LDS as using Weber's 'Rational-Legal' model which would be difficult to reconcile with the 'servant-leadership' model that church allegedly uses. It may be that the church changed between the two studies.

Much of the pressure to use this method in the church is, it seems to the writer, based at least partly on the name of the concept which appears so suitable for the pastor. Some workers seem to see the concept in the New Testament stories; Grant (2005: 72), for example, points out '[u]nderpinning the New Testament paradigm of servant-leadership, are words such as *doulos, diakonos, leitourgos, latreuo, oiketes and hupertes*'. There is also allegedly a similarity between the concept and the way that Jesus worked in the early part of His earthly ministry. Gray (2008) raises the same point about St. Paul in the context of the leadership paradox of Philippians 2:5-11 in a discussion of management theory which appears to be more mythical than practical. The present writer is unable to convince himself that Gray's frequent references to 'chaos⁸⁴' in its scientific meaning make any sense. Particular comments like 'The paradox promoted by the Pauline model of leadership is that under chaotic conditions the charismatic leader may not be as effective as the subservient leader' appear *prima facie* to show that Gray is confusing 'chaotic' in its ordinary meaning with the scientific use of the word which is deterministic in meaning, and this casts considerable doubt on the main thesis which Gray is trying to advance.

The writer does not believe that the servant leader concept would make sense to the people of Jesus' time. It is difficult for him to escape the feeling that the 'Jesus as servant leader' concept is simply a grafting of modern sociological thinking onto Gospels written nearly 1900 years before the 'servant leader' concept was created.

⁸⁴ 'Chaos is a technical expression for a specific type of irregular motion produced by a deterministic system ... Chaos lies within a well-ordered structure and as such is not chaotic in the ordinary sense of the word.' Kapitaniak & Bishop (1999: 38).

3.2.3. Weber's Leadership Models

Having discussed in detail a leadership model that would be bad for the church, it is possible to consider other leadership models in this and the next section in the light of the problems that were found with normative, self-sacrificing theories of management. It should be pointed out that the difficulty the writer sees with 'normative theories' is not in the 'normative' – which is an extreme desirable characteristic; it lies in the practical application.

Perhaps the most well-known classification of ideal leadership types is that of Max Weber in an essay entitled *Politics as Vocation* (Weber 1946: 77-121). This highly influential essay of Weber's and others like it, have perhaps had the greatest influence of any writings on the subject of charisma in organizations. After 90 years, Weber's theories are still cited and argued over. In *Politics as Vocation*, originally given during the German Revolution of 1918-19, immediately after the end of the First World War, Weber divided ideal leadership authority types into three classes:

1. **Traditional Leadership Authority:** 'First, the authority of the 'eternal yesterday,' i.e. of the mores sanctified through the unimaginably ancient recognition and habitual orientation to conform. This is 'traditional' domination exercised by the patriarch and the patrimonial prince of yore.'
2. **Charismatic Leadership Authority:** 'There is the authority of the extraordinary and personal gift of grace (charisma), the absolutely personal devotion and personal confidence in revelation, heroism, or other qualities of individual leadership. This is 'charismatic' domination, as exercised by the prophet or - in the field of politics – by the elected war lord, the plebiscitarian ruler, the great demagogue, or the political party leader.'
3. **Legal Leadership Authority:** 'Finally, there is domination by virtue of 'legality,' by virtue of the belief in the validity of legal statute and functional 'competence' based on rationally created rules. In this case, obedience is expected

in discharging statutory obligations. This is domination as exercised by the modern 'servant of the state' and by all those bearers of power who in this respect resemble him.' (Weber 1946: 79).

There is no doubt that the leaders of rapidly growing churches, like the Rhema Bible Church, are of the powerfully charismatic type; this is certainly why they are so successful – they are able to attract and retain followers. Most pastors met by the writer fall into one of the other two classes as will be explained later, although many must have – or had in the past – some charisma.

Weber wrote another essay (*The Sociology of Charismatic Authority* - Weber 1946: 245-264) specifically on the charismatic leader. In describing the charismatic leader he outlines charisma's principal characteristics and hints at the dark side of this attribute.

'Charisma knows only inner determination and inner restraint. The holder, of charisma seizes the task that is adequate for him and demands obedience and a following by virtue of his mission. His success determines whether he finds them. His charismatic claim breaks down if his mission is not recognized by those to whom he feels he has been sent. If they recognize him, he is their master – so long as he knows how to maintain recognition through 'proving' himself. But he does not derive his 'right' from their will, in the manner of an election. Rather, the reverse holds: it is the duty of those to whom he addresses his mission to recognize him as their charismatically qualified leader' (Weber 1946:246-7).

Of course this is the extreme view of a charismatic leader; it has been shown previously that charisma is not the reserve of world-class leaders but is much more widely spread. One can, however, see how well it fits charismatic, evil men like Adolf Hitler and Jim Jones of the Peoples Temple and Jonestown Massacre infamy (Richardson 1980). The latter case shows that sincerity is not a necessary condition for a charismatic leader to be

successful; Jim Jones was a communist although he preached the social gospel (Wessinger 2000:31-33).

It was stated earlier that there was almost a presumption in the church that Jesus was a 'servant leader'. In the writer's opinion, there is a far greater resemblance between Jesus' ministry and Weber's charismatic leadership. He finds Weber's description of Jesus (Weber 1946: 245-264) far more realistic than that of 'servant leader' supporters. Jesus' assembling of the disciples as, for example, in the 'fishers of men' encounter is typical of Weber's charismatic leader. Jesus simply called to them⁸⁵, saying nothing about who He was; He simply expected them to recognize His uniqueness⁸⁶ and they did. Jesus Christ appears in the Gospels as a powerfully charismatic leader who stood aside for no one; He did almost everything himself. He was certainly capable of drawing His immediate followers to Him - all charismatic leaders do that - but in the New Testament, He is shown moving great crowds⁸⁷, not by personal contact, but by the sheer force of His charisma. Each member of His audience of many thousands felt that He cared for them in a very real way – this is the mark of a charismatic leader, not the stand-aside, work-through-others, 'servant leader' of Greenleaf's description. Only after His death and resurrection, was the mission passed on to the disciples.

⁸⁵ Mar 1:16 Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

Mar 1:17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. (Holy Bible: King James Version)

⁸⁶ Weber (1946: 246-7) describes the charismatic leader as believing that '... it is the duty of those to whom he addresses his mission to recognize him as their charismatically qualified leader'.

⁸⁷ In Matthew 14:13–21, Mark 6:31-44, Luke 9:10-17 & John 6:5-15 (Holy Bible: King James Version), Jesus is described as feeding 5 000 men with an unknown number of women and children.

Modern applications of Weber's work to the church do not generally consider the darker side. Nelson (1993), for example compared '...the Christian Congregations, the Assemblies of God, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS or Mormon)⁸⁸ in the U.S. and Brazil, each denomination typifying a different Weberian type of authority but coexisting in the same social and institutional environment'.

Most older and not a few younger ministers, who the present writer has met, have, or believe they have Traditional Leadership Authority. Often such pastors believe that the mere fact of being a pastor confers on that person the right to respect, to authority and power and to a 'decent' (affluent) lifestyle. The great problem with having this type of authority is that, in these times of declining congregations, it can be very difficult to accept that the time for traditional authority, for automatic respect, is gone and that there is a need to change and evolve the church to adapt to the new world. Today's congregations do not – in this writer's experience – give automatic respect to the pastorate; they expect the pastorate to **earn** their respect.

The Legal Leadership Authority type is either not common in the church or it is too difficult to distinguish from Traditional Leadership Authority in the context of the working. Legalistic pastors abound, but most of these are quite clearly of the Traditional type. None of those distinguished as having this type of authority by the writer were in senior pastorate positions so it was not possible to determine who a church responds to this type of leadership.

In certain situations at certain times, each form of authority – or some modification of it - is the 'best' for a particular church at a particular time. There is a tendency by some pastors and church leaders to assume that it is all or nothing. In this work, no such

⁸⁸ The LDS was regarded as Rational-Legal, the Christian Congregations as Traditional and the Assemblies of God as Charismatic (Nelson 1993: Table 1).

assumption is made; the next section, though devoted principally to the Charismatic Authority model, will show that all models have their uses and that there is no single 'best' model that covers all churches at all times

3.3. Leadership Styles and the Congregation

It was stated above that no one particular model of leadership was the best for all churches. Stevens and Collins (1993: 116) point out that a leader's style has to be matched to the congregation. They quote a case in which a pastor 'sought to be a servant without leading. He was always asking his deacons and others what he could do to serve them.' Unfortunately for the pastor the congregation wanted leadership, and he was eventually forced out of the church by others taking over. This is of course an extreme case: the pastor committed the ultimate sin by 'refusing' to do the job he was being paid for.

A pastor new to a church has to tread carefully at first before rushing in to demonstrate his leadership style. The previous pastor will have had a particular style which may or may not have matched the congregation. Whether it matched or not, the congregation will have developed certain expectations and will compare the new pastor's style against those expectations; more importantly, the congregation will also compare the new pastor's style to what it wants from the pastor. Lummis (2003: 2) points out that, in hiring new ministers, '... churches are quite discriminating, with lay leaders often relying heavily on their own experiences with a previous pastor or two'.

Lummis (2003: 2) lists a series of requirements that church members often require in and from a pastor:

1. 'Strong spiritual leader.
2. Commitment to parish ministry and ability to maintain boundaries.
3. Available, approachable, and warm pastor with good 'people skills.'
4. Consensus builder, lay ministry coach and responsive leader.

5. Entrepreneurial evangelists, innovators and transformational reflexive leaders.’

Very often in business, recruitment committees have – or are given – contradictory requirements. The requirements listed here are not contradictory and sum up the ideal pastor in many ways. These form a model to the aspiring or new pastor. Unfortunately, in many cases, candidates know of such requirement lists and try to spoof the recruitment committee or individual. The congregational manager must minimize this possibility by providing full information on the candidate since it is often possible to prepare a very good picture of the candidate from records and check if there are inconsistencies between what the candidate says and what the record shows.

Congregations very often have other requirements as to what the pastor should be like:

1. Gender, race, marriage, and sexual orientation of clergy
2. Age, experience and job tenure of the pastor.

These types of requirement are often discriminatory – not always over the obvious points like race. Lummis (2003: 2), for example, shows that ‘[I]aity often want a young married pastor as a way to draw in young families, but also a pastor with experience’ which is contradictory and the church might have to compromise.

Particular churches may have specific problems. The church may be recovering from a scandal like the Ted Haggard scandal (Gorski et al. 2003) which devastated the conservative 14 000 member Denver, Colorado, church when the pastor, Ted Haggard, was accused of ‘drug-fuelled sex sessions’ with a male prostitute. Not only was the church struck by the scandal but it was forced to make a ‘six-figure settlement’ with the prostitute concerned (*New Life Addresses NEWSCHANNEL 13 Investigation* 2009). Scandals of this magnitude are very rare but smaller ones are not and the incoming pastor would need to tread carefully and take council with the rest of the pastorate

(especially the congregational manager), the church council, and the lay leadership before taking any steps at all.

People	
1. Person Oriented High relationships/Low Tasks	3. Total Involvement High relationships/High Tasks
2. Passive Involvement Low relationships/Low Tasks	4. Task Oriented Low relationships/High Tasks
Tasks	

Figure 3.1: Blake and Mouton’s Managerial Grid

That said, there are certain general conclusions that can be applied to a variety of churches. The leadership requirements of churches depend very largely on five basic characteristics:

- the size of the church;
- the health of the church (in terms of whether it is growing or declining);
- the stage of the congregation’s life cycle;
- the demographics of the congregation; and
- the state of feeling or morale within the church.

The overriding consideration is usually the size of the church as has been stated elsewhere because it dictates the tasks that have to be done and the resources that will be available to do them.

Stevens & Collins (1993:64-68) describe four management styles based on Blake and Mouton's famous grid. The grid's ordinates (y axis) shows increasing 'concern for people' and the abscissae (x axis) show increasing 'concern for the task'. The four quadrants of the grid define general styles:

1. The 'person-oriented leadership' (top left quadrant) – high relationships/low task concerns (strong on monitoring personal relationships, and weak on getting the job done);
2. The 'task-oriented leadership' (bottom right quadrant) – low relationships/high task concerns (pushes the task without concern for the reactions of people);
3. The 'passive involvement leadership' (bottom left quadrant) – low relationships/low task concerns (often referred to as the 'opt-out' style because the leader's involvement is mere observation); and
4. The 'total involvement leadership' (top right quadrant) - high relationships/high task concerns. The present writer has always felt this style to be innately contradictory but Stevens & Collins (1993:68) say the style assumes that the goals of the church meet the needs of the people, and that the people are drawn in, fully involved in the process. The likelihood of these assumptions being true anywhere, especially in the multicultural African context, appears small.

Stevens & Collins (1993:62) refer to three inappropriate styles of management or leadership – the *dictator*, the *slave* and the *martyr*; these styles are essentially the ordinary meaning of the words. The *dictator* attempts to force compliance on the congregation; the *slave* appears weak but may be strong, disguising strength by a facade of weakness – working hard and 'looking for sympathy'; while the *martyr* manipulates people by playing on a sense of guilt induced by the martyr's behaviour.

The pastor may meet the congregation or large groups of the congregation, or he/she may meet individual congregants or small groups. Some forms of leadership have to be

modified for dealing with limited numbers of people at close range or in special situations. A form of situational leadership (Pienaar & Spoelstra 1991:3) usually has to be employed in many situations if the pastor is not to look stilted, uncaring or even foolish; the use of this form of leadership will be discussed later in this section.

For a small church, the pastor needs to adopt a leadership style which is both intimate and detached. The pastor needs to gain the friendship of the congregation without sacrificing dignity or weakening leadership. Many a young pastor has been too friendly with certain congregants and has later paid for it when the 'friends' take advantage of this to throw their weight around in the church.

'Small churches', said Dudley (2003: 9), 'have a will to live' and a vitality that few larger churches can match. The congregation is more cohesive than larger churches; there is rarely a significant underlife in the church. The pastor then has to adopt a leadership style that emphasizes charisma; there is the need to draw on and maintain the intimacy of the congregation. The style that is virtually mandatory for the small church is the person-orientated style (top-left quadrant on the grid). It is helpful that the administrative tasks of the leader are usually light enough for the pastor to spend much of his time with people.

The small-to-medium church is, as indicated earlier, something of a transitional type of organization. The pastor still needs to be a charismatic person, but gradually across the category, the pastor's ability to have close contact with all the members of the congregation is reduced due to the sheer numbers involved. Although primarily people-oriented, the pastor would probably be compelled to devote more time to tasks not involving people.

In the medium church, the writer believes that the pastor would continue this trend by becoming more and more detached from the congregation. The danger arises that the

pastor's behaviour may change and he/she loses true charisma to gain office charisma which exposes him/her to a loss of affection and respect from the congregation. If the pastor can ensure that he/she can have enough contact with the congregation in an informal setting, this danger can be avoided. Involvement with congregational projects, church visitations, visits to church groups like youth groups or Sunday School on a regular, but informal basis all serve to keep the pastor in touch with the congregation. The correct position for the medium church pastor is in the centre of the managerial grid.

The pastor of the large or very large church is, almost necessarily, somewhat detached from the congregation. It is no longer possible for the pastor to know more than a small proportion of the flock. It is no longer possible to visit enough people after hours to make up for the lack of informal contact at the church. The pastor's position in the managerial grid perforce moves towards the bottom right corner of the grid, into the task-oriented block. To overcome this, the pastor needs relatively high charisma which needs to be employed effectively through sermons designed (through their subject and delivery) to draw the congregation together at worship services, which is the only place he/she is likely to meet the congregation.

These forms of leadership are intended to deal with the congregation as a whole or in large groups. A different attitude has to be adopted for dealing with small groups or individuals, or with larger groups in special situations like natural disasters which cause a whole congregation to be adversely affected. The pastor has to adopt a form of leadership fitting the situation, that is, situational leadership has to be employed.

Situational or contingency leaders work on the premise that leadership has to be adapted to the situation at hand because there is no 'best' method which will suit all occasions. The leader has to assess the situation and adapt his management style to suit the situation and the person(s) involved. Gale (2009: 132) point out that '... leaders must

then work to integrate all [circumstances] into a solution that is most appropriate for a specific circumstance'. This might mean a minor change in a usual method, or using an entirely new approach.

Special circumstances, like bereavement, require special treatment at all times, but there are many others, each of which has to be treated in a different way. Sometimes a display of sympathy is a good thing, but at other times sympathy is actually harmful. The most important point for the minister to remember is that he/she must be as honest and open with congregants, because a hint of falsity or other inappropriate emotion is often immediately detected even by grief-stricken people. The switching of leadership styles in a way that seems natural and unforced is a very difficult technique to master.

In all these cases, the congregational manager's work is to keep a check on the congregation, constantly monitoring its reaction to events in the church, to initiatives taken by the pastorate, and to the reactions of the congregation to changes within the greater denomination and the enclosing community. It is essential that the pastorate be kept in touch with the lives of the congregants so that the church can respond. There are few things that bind the congregants closer to the church, than a pastorate which is actively monitoring the lives of the congregants so that the pastorate can help or offer sympathy in time of need.

3.4. Concluding Comments

This section has shown how the pastorate and the congregational manager should work together. More than that though, it has shown that a healthy church stays that way only through the cooperation of all parts of the church towards fulfilling the pastorate's goal of serving the congregation. It was said earlier – somewhat facetiously – that the pastor was the public face of the church and the congregational manager was the 'man in the small back room' who kept the church running. This is more true than many, non-administrative workers can know. Few members of the congregation will have much to

do with the church's administration except as a contact with the pastorate, or when things go wrong. The best form of administration is an administration which is normally almost invisible, but is always there ready to help.

The next section will show how this is done.

4. Administering the Church

Church administration is, of course, the main work of the congregational manager. Indeed in some churches, this is acknowledged by using the title of ‘church administrator’ instead of ‘congregational manager’. Mellody & Theron (2006: 112) state:

‘The close relationship between church and secular management has been compellingly described by Brendan McGuire (quoted by Milicia 2005:15) when he said ‘[f]undamentally it’s the same, You deal with lots of different people who have their own agendas and you have to keep everyone unified on the same standard.’ But he adds, ‘... this standard is Jesus Christ.’ ‘

The perceptive comment by McGuire is perhaps the key to the work of the congregational manager in his task to establish and maintain the church’s health while at the same time attempting to deal with the world around it. The church has to become, in effect, a ‘business organization’ but, with guidance from the Holy Spirit, using Christ Himself as the standard. Many churches in their haste to adopt modern methods and to ‘become part of the real world’ have forgotten that the church is dedicated to the Kingdom of Jesus Christ and is not of this world. A church can change only so much before it fails to meet the needs and wishes of its adherents; once it evolves beyond a certain point in a direction away from Christ and His Word, a church loses touch with its people and begins to decline.

Before continuing with the discussion of the congregational manager’s work, it is necessary to discuss the church structure and where the congregational manager fits into this.

4.1. The Church Hierarchy

The organogram⁸⁹ shows the structure of a fictional, but realistic church. Almost all churches are hierarchal. Indeed, in spite of attempts to develop ‘flat-structured’ organizations in recent years, the structure of organizations appears, at least to the writer, to be as hierarchal (or even more so) than organizations were half-a-century ago when he first started work. Even the somewhat risible organizational format, called the ‘chaordic’ organization, invented by Dee Hock (Hock 1999)⁹⁰ which supposedly represents a blending of ‘chaotic’ (in the scientific sense) and ‘ordered’ behaviour eventually settles down into what appears to the writer to be a normal hierarchal organization.

A structured organization, though it is often rigid, has the advantage that all members of the organization using it know where they fit into the organization, who would be likely to know what, who to approach to get particular tasks performed. More importantly each individual knows what the organization expects. It is far easier for a newcomer to fit into a structured organization than an open one. The important point about structure in a church is that it helps the congregants to find the right person to deal with any problems they might have.

⁸⁹ The organogram is a diagram showing the hierarchal relations in the church. Essentially, it shows lines of responsibility linked with lines of authority.

⁹⁰ This was another, briefly lived, management fad which curiously (see Gray 2008) seems attractive to researchers in church management. Hock, like Gray, appears to confuse ‘chaotic’ in the scientific sense (which deals with an ordered, deterministic state) with the word used in its ordinary meaning.

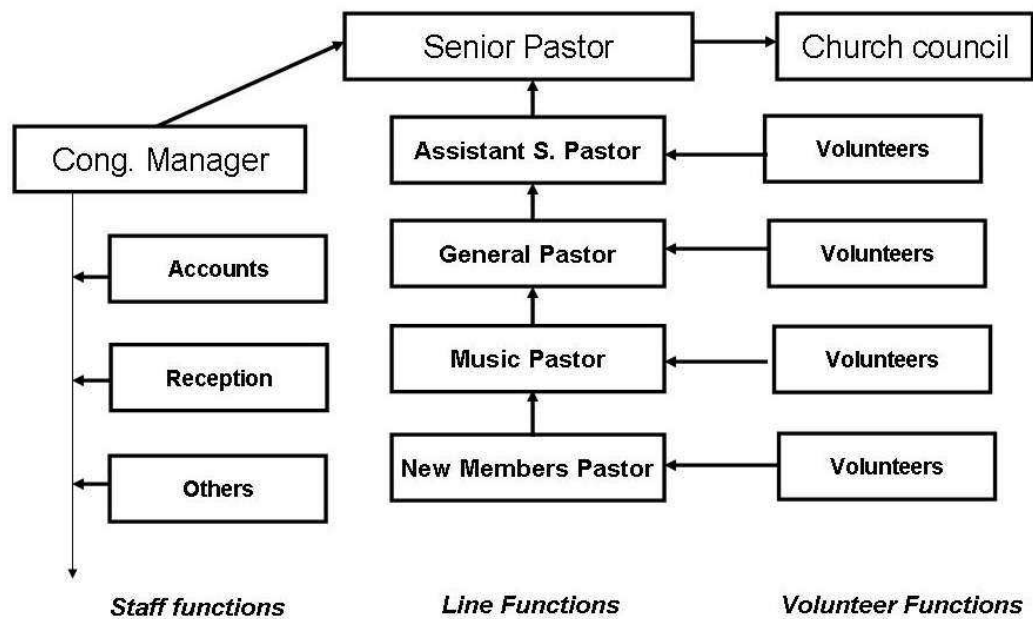


Figure 4.1 Hypothetical Church Organogram

Each column represents a different set of functions, with different reporting relationships, responsibilities, authority and power. The ‘Line’ column is always the most important, since it proceeds directly from the leader of the church, the senior pastor; each person on the list has direct authority over those below; where a general pastor is a specialized pastor (say, the music director) as his subordinate, the specialized pastor will still have positional or professional authority because of his specialization. In many cases, specialized pastors report to their immediate superior on ordinary matters, but to the senior pastor or, usually, his deputy on professional matters. This is particularly applicable to the music director/pastor. Although this organogram shows that all but the last pastor has authority over the one below, in many churches most of the junior pastors are on an equal footing.

The line functions are the core functions of the church, the functions which bear directly on the reasons for the church’s very existence. Often, where there are two or more chains

of command, the line proceeding directly from the pastor is called the 'main line' in recognition of its overriding importance.

The staff functions are auxiliary functions within the church. The staff group normally has administrative relationships with all members of the church staff and the congregants because the staff administers the church. They carry out the human relations work for the entire church, control the maintenance and buildings, supervise the upkeep of the ground, and the like. Because of the importance of the work, the congregational manager would usually report directly to the senior pastor or, at the very least, to his deputy. Sometimes the most junior pastor is given the work of congregational management, but this is rare because the congregational manager needs a certain degree of authority to be able to function. The congregational manager has direct control, subject to the overriding authority of the senior pastor, over the staff in Congregational Management. In some cases, members of the staff will have positional and/or professional authority, allowing them positional or professional autonomy. Chartered accountants, for example, have at least two levels of responsibility before the church; the first is to the law and the second is to the ethics of their profession.

Conflicts between staff (as the advisers) and line (as the doers) employees are common. As Dalton (1950: 343) said : '...there is often much conflict between industrial staff and line [groups] and in varying degrees the members of these [groups] oppose each other'.

It is unusual to show the 'volunteers' sections in the organogram as if they were part of the church's staff. However, most churches rely on volunteer staff very heavily and it seems reasonable to include them here. The administration of volunteers will be dealt with later.

4.2. Administration

The work of the congregational manager as administrator is essentially that of the manager of an organization whose functions then would be the four traditional ones which may be combined under the acronym of POLC – planning, organizing, leading and controlling. It is worth pointing out at this point that the manager will almost always be in charge of checking standards, at least for routine work around the organization. To make this possible a complete list of standards, filed in some easy to reference manner, is an absolute requirement. Equally important is a set of policies and procedures for dealing with many aspects of the church's activities. There are legal requirements in South Africa that organizations should keep certain types of records – especially for employment and other similar purposes – in this case the congregational manager would be wise to use an experienced labour consultant to prepare a list of these records; it may be expensive initially, but the long term saving could be substantial. All employees and other appropriate persons should be required to read the policies and procedures and steps should be taken to ensure that these people are kept apprised of changes.

The overall strategies of the church will generally be set by the pastorate⁹¹, the church council (or equivalent) in conjunction with the congregation in the ideal case, although in practice the congregation is often bypassed and the strategic objectives all-too-often become compromises between competing factions within the pastorate and council. This should not be so. 'Strategic Planning', as Mann (2005) points out, is 'Spiritual Practice'. Further she suggests:

'[w]hile the 'holy conversation' of strategic planning is itself a spiritual practice and may contain particular spiritual disciplines, there is yet a third way that strategic planning and spiritual practice might interact. Strategic planning is sometimes the setting in which received spiritual practices are refashioned to

⁹¹ Hopefully in compliance with the requirements of the greater denomination.

address emerging needs. Diana Butler Bass has called this process re-traditioning⁹²

The decisions that come out of the strategic planning sessions, which should be held at no greater than yearly intervals so that the church's strategy may be evolved to ensure that it reflects major changes in the internal and external environment of the church, affect the life of a church for years to come. Because of this Bullard (1983) recommends the use of outside consultants in church strategic planning. The congregational manager, as collector, allocator and controller of resources, will almost always be involved with strategic planning, and the results of the planning will set the course of his work for the next year at least. Strategic planning is not only important for its own sake, but also for the insight it gives the planners and the congregational manager into the church and into the thought processes of its managers. Mintzberg (1994:114) states that strategic planning has taught managers much 'about how organizations function and how managers do and don't cope with that functioning; most significantly, it has told us about how we think as human beings and that sometimes we stop thinking.'

The balanced scorecard, a strategic performance management tool and standard structured report, which is used by managers to monitor activities by their staff and monitor the consequences of the actions, has been widely used in non-profit organizations (Ronchetti 2006). This worker (p. 32-33) prepared a balanced score suggestion for the widely used Rick Warren's (1995) Purpose-Driven Church model for religious organizations.

Planning and organizing are strongly related. Planning (Cronje et al 2000:119-129), in general, combines the task of meeting the long-term goals of the organization – say. over

⁹² Changing the secular tradition of strategic planning as what might be called a business practice from a secular tradition to a spiritual one more in keeping with the churches role.

a five year period - through a series of short-term (usually one year) operational plans which intended to perform the necessary maintenance of the organization and meeting those long-term goals which fall within the time period covered by the operational plan; the plan needs to contain some provision for reviewing the long-term objective and strategies to see that they are still both realistic and feasible.

One of the great temptations of short-term operational plans is to deviate from the master, strategic plan in order to accelerate progress in meeting one or more short-term objectives. This can result in a series of decision which are small in themselves but the sum total of those decisions is to force the church in a direction which moves it away from its major goals or which lands it with an increasing debt burden. Haraldsson et al. (2008) refer to this as the 'tyranny of small decisions' (following Kahn 1966 whose work dealt, partly, with the effect of decisions on the consumer) and said 'A carefully designed policy, based on good intentions and careful planning, simply turns out to be powerless when it comes to dealing' with the problem of the tyranny of small decisions.

Kahn himself states 'The 'smallness' of the decisive, individual transactions - their limited size, scope and time-perspective - can, it is argued, be a source of misallocations...' and that ' ... the contribution influence of the smallness of the controlling decisions ' possibly requires the substitution of '... a 'large' [decision] for a piecemeal accumulation of small decisions'. Orr (1979: 50) even out that the 'tyranny of small decisions' may well be increasing the risks in modern life as a whole where humans, by a series of small careless, decisions, increase the risk of catastrophe. The present writer, like many others, is strongly convinced that the greatest problem of our time - global warming - is the results of millions of small, unconsidered decisions, made without considering the larger view of the earth's ecology as a whole.

At each stage of the plan consideration has to be given to the resources available. The goals or objectives are important in any organization, but especially churches, because

these ensure 'guidance and unanimity' (Cronje et al 2000:123) and tell the planners what to plan for. Organizing, essentially, is the allocation of resources, the determination of working methods and the scheduling of work; it involves the building of structures which define duties and establish procedures.

'Leading' and 'controlling' are also closely related. The former involves directing people to, and in, their tasks and motivating them to carry out the tasks correctly and efficiently to the standards set by the church, within overall Christian ethical practice. The congregational manager, who will be dealing with non-pastoral employees in the main and will therefore have power over them, will still require some charisma, some ability to draw the best out of people if results are to be the best rather than just the minimum that the employee feels able to get away with. The congregational manager must strive to inculcate an attitude of respect for the work itself. Controlling is essentially the acts of managing the use of resources to carry out tasks, efficiently, thus driving the organization to achieving its goals.

Having discussed what the manager has to do, it is now possible to see what skills the manager needs. First of all the manager needs conceptual skills, the ability to take a holistic, objective view of the organization and its environment especially in times of change (Katsioloudes et al. 2004:240). How broad a view is needed depends on the level of the manager, but all managers need this skill.

All church staff members who come into contact with the congregation need good interpersonal skills, the congregational manager no less than others. However, the congregational manager needs to be able to deal with employees in such a way that members of a church staff feel that they are part of an organization that cares for them – even if the employees are not members of the church, or even of the Christian faith. All employees must be motivated to do their best for the organization even though (as stated earlier) they may have personal agendas which are not compatible with those of the

church. This includes making the congregational management department, a safe working area, free of harassment and bullying. The congregational manager must have the confidence of his/her staff in arguments with the pastorate and other line officials; he/she must back up her staff so that if they are in the right he/she supports them fully, otherwise he/she corrects the problem. The congregational manager must never allow feuds or 'bad blood' within the department or between members of his/her department and the pastorate, other employees or, especially, the congregation.

In dealings with the congregation, the congregational manager must behave as a pastor dealing with people who can be irrational and unreasonable at time. He/she must make allowances but maintain the dignity of his/her office. He/she must at all times be cognizant of the need to ensure that even under the most trying circumstances, congregants feel welcome and comfortable.

Ideally if a congregant has a problem involving congregational management, the problem should be sorted out and smoothed over as quickly as possible; if there has been conflict, the congregational manager should endeavour to deal with it in such a way that the congregant (and the employee(s)) involved come to look upon the incident as just a small 'family tiff'. A church which has simmering feuds, however small these may be, cannot be considered healthy. Such conflict very often results from weak discipline in the congregational management department which allows key or skilled staff to acquire unacceptable coercive power.

One of the problems noticed by the present writer to which he took great exception, is the ignorance that congregational manager who are pastors often display when dealing with the technical activities of their department. On many occasions the writer has heard pastors say 'I don't understand technical things, I just leave everything to So-and-So who's trained to deal with it.' This leads the pastor to rely excessively on the professionals, paraprofessionals or other staff they employ. This is dangerous, not only

because it indicates that the congregational manager is doing his job in a sloppy, slipshod way, but it opens the door to fraud, to theft (usually of money) and to carelessness which inevitably results in loss to the church. Recently the writer was told of a fraud case involving fake invoices and payments to a company set up by a church employee; in many cases, the fake invoices were countersigned by the pastor, though he evidently had no knowledge of the fraud.

This means that the manager should know enough about everything being done in his or her department to be able to check the worker, or – at a pinch – be able to do replace almost any worker for a short time. He or she must be an auditor and should preferably learn at least some of the ways of the internal auditor as detailed, say, in Pickett (2005)'s little condensed volume which is perhaps ideally suited for the task in the church. Duncan & Stocks 2003: 213) say '[a]lthough the concept of internal control is as relevant to churches as it is to profit-seeking organizations, many authors have indicated that churches typically have weak systems of internal control'. This not only encourages fraud but more importantly, it deprives a pastor of the control needed. Of course, the pastor is occasionally a criminal as the case of the Rev. Donald Ouellette and the US\$250 000 stolen from the Immaculate Conception Church in Worcester (USA) (O'Brien 2003). Here O'Brien quotes a church official as saying 'loose bookkeeping down at the Chancery (in Worcester). You would have thought after a year of not paying anything back that would have raised some flags, but apparently not.' This event shows the effect that weak controls have on the larcenous.

Management and technical skills are all important ones. A course 'aimed at empowering church leaders' (Ntshinga 2005) was put together some years ago by the African Federation of Churches⁹³, the University of Johannesburg, Unisa and the Gauteng

⁹³ The African Independent Churches were involved with this initiative which does not appear to have yielded a great deal of fruit, especially in more affluent areas.

Department of Health (churches often work closely with efforts to deal with the HIV/AIDS problems) to put together a course). Milicia (2005) points out that the Catholic Church has also taken heed of this problem. And has encourages pastors to learn the methods of 'the modern business world'. The role (and limitations on the role) of the laity are discussed at length in USCCB [2004]. This article is particularly important for its emphasis of the pastoral duty of oversight.

The congregational manager has to play three overriding roles to do his part in keeping the church healthy.

1. **Take decisions:** This is the primary duty of all managers – to take decisions beyond the competence or responsibility level of subordinates on simple or difficult matters); these decisions may be apparently short-term ones or ones which could affect the church's objectives or mission. In every case, the decisions have to be taken holistically, and bearing in mind the 'tyranny of small decisions. The congregational manager will almost always be reasoning under uncertainty in this case; it often seemed to the writer, that the more important the decision was, the greater the uncertainty. Here the manager must always use the evidence based approach, considering the church's health in the same way that a medical doctor would consider the health of a patient (Glasziou & Del Mar 2003). While the need of evidence-based medicine is immediately apparent in the medical profession, too many pastors rely too heavily on their own experience, training and prejudices and fail to use the bad experiences of others to avoid problems; many frequently make decisions irrationally because of pique or other even less acceptable reasons. Adhering, as far as possible, to an evidence-based approach applies a discipline to pastors which allows them to make better choices.
2. **Interpersonal relationships:** the manager has to deal with superiors, subordinates, members of the congregation and outsiders like contractors, ministers and congregants from other areas. 'In each case the manager's tasks will be different and will require different skills; he may need to convince a

superior of the need for extra financial resources, bolster the confidence of a subordinate ... [comfort and counsel a bereaved congregant], or take a tough line with a delinquent contractor.’ (Melody 2005:3)⁹⁴.

3. **Information:** the manager must develop an extensive information network within the church and the greater community to ensure that all available information is used to bolster up decisions taken. This topic has been mentioned earlier, and will be dealt with in more detail below.

4.3. The Church’s Resources

Melody & Theron (2006: 109) point out that all churches like all organizations have four types of resources: human, physical, financial and informational. Most of these resources have been dealt with piecemeal throughout this whole work – especially in the section on the congregation. Only the human, physical and informational resources will be dealt with here.

The raising and allocation of financial resources have been widely discussed throughout this work and a summary in this section would serve little purpose. It suffices to say that the congregational manager has a special duty of care where financial resources are concerned. The congregational manager will not often be in charge of making investments because this is usually reserved for the church leadership, most often acting with the help of a professional investment adviser. He/she must however scrutinize any investments made to be sure that they are secure and above-board.

No one is completely immune to temptation, including church pastors. De Bruin (2005) describes the case of Jan Niemand, an Apostolic Faith Mission (A.F.M.) pastor with 17

⁹⁴ This note was on interpersonal relations in the geological exploration office but it applies to many organizations run by professionals acting both as professionals in a particular field and managers of an organization.

years of service with the A.F.M. church, who was caught for his part in a fraud case involving ‘millions of rands, raised under the cover of Christianity and Christian services’.

The congregational manager will normally deal with the collection of dividends and this should be done openly. If any employee becomes secretive about money or investments, steps should be taken to find out why because secrecy is a red flag for fraud. Similarly if there is an employee who deals with money never takes leave and is always on hand to do transaction, and most importantly resents ‘interference’ in his/her work, an investigation should be launched because these behaviours are indicators that something is wrong (Coenen 2008: 36-39).

All church administration, especially that part of it dealing with money, should always be computerized and all members of staff, except labourers, should be computer literate.

4.3.1. Human Relations Management

The church’s employees, volunteers and the congregation constitute the church’s human resources. Mellody and Theron (2006:109) omitted the congregation from their list designedly, reasoning that the congregation were the customers and shareholders of the church, and, therefore, could not be classed with the church’s resources. This reasoning was mistaken; on further reflection the present writer realised that the congregation was in fact the greatest resource the church had.

This is not simply because the church derives its income from the congregation, or that the congregation is ultimately the reason for the church’s existence. It is because the church is an organization with products that are largely intangible; the feedback from the congregation, the input of the congregation into church life, the fellowship stemming from the congregation and the three-sided interaction between the pastorate, the

congregation and the greater community around it are vitally necessary to the church's *raison d'être*.

Expenditure	Range (%)
Charity	1-5% (2%)*
Buildings and Grounds	16-28% (20%)*
Debt Servicing	9-31% (19%)*
Personnel (all categories)	26-62% (54%)*
Church Operations	3-11% (9%)*
Ministries & Missions	6-23% (11%)*
*Mean value ⁹⁵	

Table 4.1: U.S. Church Expenditure

A church which does not stir its people, which has a congregation viewed as 'passive consumers of religion' is a church which, though it may look alive, is in fact drifting along semi-moribund. It has evolved itself onto a path that leads to extinction. A church revival is often attributed to the 'charismatic' pastor who dragged the congregation out of their lethargy. This is wrong; such a pastor has simply awakened the natural feelings for the church that existed in the congregation and that may well have been suppressed by poor pastorate/congregation relations in the past.

The congregation has already been dealt earlier. Here this study will deal with the employees. Church employees generally consist of the pastorate (who are by far the most expensive workers) and the administration staff who may be professionals, paraprofessionals or workers who have had either a little training or have learnt 'on the job'.

⁹⁵ These mean figures will, obviously, not total to 100% because each average is drawn from a different population. The average applies only to the characteristic concerned and cannot be used out of that context.

The figures, extracted from the information on the 219 churches mentioned in Section I show as has been said elsewhere in this work, that the cost of human resources was by far the greatest single item in the budgets of almost any which. It was pointed out earlier that the Rhema Bible church spent 59% of income in 2007 and 52% in 2008; an attempt was being made to lower this cost to 45% in 2009 (*Rhema Bible Church North* 2009: 8-9). For most churches, the attitude is taken that the pastors are the heart of the church and the church has to pay what it must to attract them.

Most churches face a dilemma: it is easy to get pastors, the difficulty is to get good pastors who are valuable and churches like to retain them. Does a church hire a less suitable person in the hope that that person will grow into the job and develop the charisma and experience that is required for the job? This is a difficult prospect because if the pastor is an arrant failure, the labour laws in South Africa make it very difficult to dismiss even very poorly performing or unsuitable staff. The use of short term contracts, now so popular among churches, is a very weak reed to rely on.

The congregational manager, who would usually be responsible the actual hiring of people selected by the pastor and other church leaders, must undertake the often difficult task of checking that people hired are what they say they are, that their qualifications are genuine, that there are no suspicious gaps in their records, that they have no police record and that all their references are checked. All too often, people are hired on a whim because, say, they seem to have the same *ethos* as the church, but later problems emerge and the church has to go through the always difficult task of dismissing the person or living with a unsatisfactory employee.

The other staff are, usually, much less expensive than the pastorate⁹⁶ and may be on different conditions which exclude medical aid or pensions; in this case the workers are usually given a wage that contains an additional amount for these items so that workers can purchase their own. However, the cost of employees is at least 50%⁹⁷ higher than their basic wage because of the cost of medical aid, pension, and other fringe benefits like housing and vehicle allowances. Unfortunately many churches are locked into unrealistic, poorly worded contracts which cost the church far more than was intended. Promises are made by the church in the expectation of particular income levels by pledging and so on and may be unrealistic. In one case seen by the writer, a pastor was promised an annual increase of 10% over inflation; the church intended that this should be 10% of the Consumer Price Index (CPI)⁹⁸; the pastor read this as 10 percentage points above inflation, which, using the example in the footnote, would be 20%; the pastor's wage more than doubled⁹⁹ over the five years he was with the church. Abuse is another, often excessive cost for the church. A prime source of abuse (Pollock 1996:61) is the use of church property, most often vehicles and office equipment.

Other expenses associated with employees are the need to keep accurate records, administration of payments (especially wages¹⁰⁰), maintenance of benefits provided

⁹⁶ The very limited information the writer has been able to get on South African churches indicate that the wages of the pastorate are, on average, triple the wages of the other workers. This figure must be viewed with caution because 'average wage' includes that of labourers who are poorly paid and rarely get benefits.

⁹⁷ This is a standard, rule of thumb, given to the writer by several medium-sized South African companies' human relations managers. It was not possible to obtain figures for actual costs.

⁹⁸ That is if CPI was 10%, the pastor would receive a raise of 11%.

⁹⁹ Increases are of course compound interest as it were.

¹⁰⁰ Payrolls are often difficult and cumbersome to administer – even for relatively small staffs. Fortunately, most of these functions can be outsourced.

through external companies¹⁰¹, housing, the possible need to provide temporary replacements for staff during holidays (including maternity or paternity leave) or illness and many other factors.

All of the points raised above should once again have raised doubts about the position of the church as an employer, and emphasized the need to keep employee numbers down to the minimum necessary. Outsourcing is probably the best way to reduce the number of administration employees (as has been indicated above); another method is to greater use of volunteers (see the next section). Volunteers could be used much more widely in the church, at higher levels in the same way that this is done in the U.S. Baird (1870:10) foresaw this need; indeed he states that volunteers often want either too much or too little. He says:

‘They want sometimes to take the charge of the parish off the clergyman's shoulders altogether; sometimes they have such a pious horror of trenching upon the ministerial office that they are practically of little use. These difficulties however, though troublesome, are not insurmountable, and are rapidly disappearing as clergy and laity come to know each other better.’

These comments from 1870 echo those that the writer found, 140 years later, from South African clergy during the present study when asked about ‘volunteers’. A recurring theme

¹⁰¹ Except for churches which were part of one of the very largest denominations, employee benefits were usually provided as a cash allowance which allowed the employees to make their own arrangements or membership is arranged for some individual or group membership schemes of commercial medical aid schemes or pension funds. Initially, the writer understands, pensions in South African churches were of the defined benefit kind; latterly almost all churches have changed to, or have introduced, defined contribution schemes. This has been the source of much unhappiness.

was that the clergy shouldn't get too familiar with volunteers, because 'familiarity breeds contempt'.

4.3.1.1. Volunteer Workers

In larger churches, there are six levels of volunteer workers:

1. The Social Lay Leaders (Barker 1934);
2. Trained volunteers who work with children and other vulnerable people (childcare, Sunday School, Youth Group and similar workers). These volunteers must be carefully vetted and trained. Some churches only accept people for these positions if their jobs involved children or other vulnerable people.
3. Trained volunteers who will not work with vulnerable people (members of the choir, musical instruments players and so on).
4. General volunteers who have a variety of tasks which require little or no training.
5. Occasional volunteers who can be called upon for one-off tasks where labour is required.
6. Specialist volunteers who can be relied upon to provide specialized help occasionally.

The leaders of the volunteer groups would often be drawn from the social lay leadership mentioned in the Section on the congregation. In spite of the importance of volunteers in many churches, they are often treated shabbily and churches which act this way have a high turnover in volunteers. Baxter (2005), in a study of the volunteer culture of Liberty Church¹⁰², Tulsa (OK), found that:

1. 'Volunteers Need to be Treated as Equally as [sic] the Paid Staff
2. Volunteers Need to be Recognized and Rewarded

¹⁰² Liberty Church produces high levels of volunteers who occupy fairly senior (for laity) positions in the church.

3. Volunteers Need to be Given Serious Levels of Responsibility
4. The Vision of the Organization Must be Clear and Communicated Regularly to the Volunteers
5. The Paid Staff Must be Willing to Accept and Respect Volunteer Co-workers
6. Volunteers Need to Have Clear Job Descriptions or Clear Assignments
7. Volunteers Need to be Able to spend Time With Others in the Organization to Develop Relationships and Trust’.

Giving volunteers responsibility would generally be impossible for most churches in South Africa because with ‘responsibility’ comes ‘accountability’ and a volunteer cannot be held accountable because it is not possible to apply sanctions if the volunteer goes astray. But the rest of the conditions appear perfectly reasonable.

Hoge et al. (1998: 479) found that in some cases up to 50% of congregants in certain U.S. churches volunteer time to help the church, although the amount varied considerably. Members of the Assemblies of God (a Charismatic church) and the Baptists volunteer the most hours, the Lutherans and Presbyterians came next with the Catholics last. Congregants with higher education and income volunteer more often than others. Volunteering is strongly associated with church attendance and participation in other church activities. Turnover of volunteers can be high and surveys the writer has seen that were done in such cases are very often critical of the church and the church’s staff, the major complaint being that they are not treated with respect. Skoglund (2006:201) reports similar complaints from health volunteers in the U.S.; she also reports that the principal motive for volunteering is because the volunteers like helping people.

The administrative work for a volunteer is not much less than that for paid labour. Volunteers, regardless of the work they are going to do, must be carefully vetted. Full details, with documentary proof in the form of identity documents, of their names, accommodation, education and so on must be made. And full records should be kept in a

confidential, secure filing system. Persons who are to work with children or other vulnerable persons must be checked to see if they have police records and should preferably have a medical examination. Full details of all work, attendance at the church with dates, workplaces, fellow workers, details of any incidents and other details must be kept. If volunteers are to use dangerous equipment on church property, the relevant insurance cover must be taken out as is the case if volunteers are to drive church vehicles. If necessary, care must be taken over occupational health issues. If volunteers are paid in any way (for expenses, say) full receipts are required. In some cases the South African Revenue Service may need to be informed.

Volunteers should be surveyed at least twice yearly, and after any incident within the volunteer program. Questionnaires should include, in addition to general questions, ones on problems encountered, staff-volunteer relations, relationships within the volunteer groups, bullying and harassment, and problems with congregants.

4.3.2. Asset Management

The church's assets consist of moveable and fixed property and the value of the property (less the remaining parts of any mortgages) is almost always the church's greatest form of collateral. The church buildings and their maintenance have been dealt with earlier. Here it suffices to say that a major portion of the administrative work in the church is concerned with the church's buildings and real estate. Table 4.1 shows that the cost of maintaining the church grounds and buildings is about 20% of income for churches in the U.S. although this is expected to be lower in this country because of the availability of (relatively) cheap manual labour. The other major cost usually connected with buildings is the cost of servicing mortgages¹⁰³. Many U.S. churches are heavily mortgaged and are

¹⁰³ This is usually the item which requires the greatest debt servicing. The other major item is the church's equipment, especially vehicles.

paying the price for this since the recession started in the U.S. Banjo (2011) points out that '[t]he number of religious facilities unable to pay their mortgage is surging'.

The famous Family Christian Centre (Orangevale, CA) started by pastors Rich and Lindy Oliver had a spurt of growth from a few hundreds in the 1990s to 650 in 2002. They borrowed U.S. \$ 2.4 million to build a 1000-seater church and social centre. In 2006, housing prices tumbled, there was a surge in unemployment, some congregants moved away while others cut their giving sharply. The church went bankrupt and the pastors restarted their church in a rented shop (Banjo 2011). South African churches, particular the independent ones, have been lucky that the situation never got as bad in this country, but the situation of too many U.S. churches provides a warning to South African churches.

To avoid this type of problem, the congregational manager has to act cautiously. Generally, the role of the congregational manager is restricted to the maintenance of assets and the servicing of debt associated with them. It is important to take a conservative view and to oppose the use of buildings and other church property as collateral for loans. He/she has to act as one of the checks and balances on the power of the pastorate and, most importantly, as a damper on optimistic revenue projections and the accompanying overenthusiastic spending of the church's resources. Probably the best way to do this is for the church to adopt open and transparent accountancy where all purchases costing above a nominal amount, use of church property for private purposes and so on are subject to the scrutiny of the congregation.

All equipment bought or leased for the church should be used only on official church business. One of the greatest abuses of church property is the use of church-owned or leased vehicles for private use. It has occurred in every church that the writer has attended for any length of time. Sometimes vehicles are bought for church use – paid for out of tithing – and then used exclusively by the pastorate. Indeed vehicles ostensibly for

the church's use are sometimes chosen to suit the senior pastor and are then used as personal vehicles. With leasing and running charges a semi-luxury car can cost the church R5000 per month or more; such 'unofficial' perquisites are rarely reported to the South African Revenue Service which is a crime and makes the congregational manager into an accomplice.

4.3.3. Informational Resources

The subject of church records has been a concern for research for many years. Southard (1969: 185) points out that the collection of records and statistics in churches then 'typically stress the church as a place, in contrast to the church as people' – and this is still true forty years later. Interestingly, Southard also mentions '[t]he growing demand for a computerized data retrieval system to serve the many needs of pure and applied religious research'. The church is still lagging on that front.

Most churches have a 'filing system', but few churches - except megachurches - have a filing system that can be used to provide value for the church. At a guess based on his own discussions with clergy and congregants, the present writer would suggest that perhaps as few as 20% of South African churches have a system which allows them to extract more than a very limited amount of useful information from their files. Lists of congregants are often kept in odd books, which are almost always out of date (and over-optimistic); no note is kept of professional functions like who led worship on particular days, or which pastor made pastoral visitation or hospital visits during a month and so on.

It would almost never be possible to segment the church's congregation easily or to provide information on the working habits of the pastors, to determine how many pastoral and hospital visitation were made over a lengthy period, to list the congregants who have major illnesses over, say, the last year and so on. There are often many reasons for this, but the main one encountered by the writer in the church and in his business

experience, is that people, realising that ‘information is power’, tend to keep as much as possible in their own heads. Often the writer has heard a church employee saying ‘I dread the thought of Ms. XYZ retiring because she’s the only one who knows where anything is’. This is a bad reflection on the senior pastor in particular because it allows a lower-level employee to gain unjustified coercive power.

It also encourages the leaking of personal and private information by church employees as a demonstration of power. During the mid-1950s, one of the writer’s aunts first learned of her husband’s adultery with her sister, through a church secretary. Recently a church in the Free State suffered the loss of a list of HIV-positive congregants who were being counselled. The list is endless.

This particular problem should be dealt with by drawing a line under an antiquated filing system, establishing a new one (see Mellody 1992) and entering all new records into the new system as they come in. Full records - if necessary by requiring all employees to provide updated, personal details - should be assembled for each employee and placed in an individual file in a secure area; these records should be updated on a continual basis as employee’s family and other circumstances change. All employees at the pastoral and senior non-pastoral level should be required to keep a work diary – checked¹⁰⁴ at least monthly by the congregational manager and/or the senior pastor. A file should be kept for all congregants who contract the church, with detail of the contacts. Starting with new members, all congregants should be asked to provide the necessary minimum of personal information (as has been described earlier); photographs should if possible be obtained. Details of the individual congregants’ encounters with the church should be

¹⁰⁴ It might be argued that this is unwarranted in the case of ‘professionals’ like pastors, who can be trusted to work diligently. The writer disputes this; doctors have to keep lists of patients and of their illness and treatment and lawyers keep information on their clients and their affairs; so do almost all other professionals. Why should pastors be excepted?

recorded; this should not include details of counselling and the like; such records should be dealt with according to the church's policies and procedures.

Where possible, all information should be placed in a database, although this can be very expensive. Certainly the myriad of lists that litter all churches should be entered into a computer (even if is done only in the form of a simple Excel or similar spreadsheet) so that the information is available to everyone who needs to know.

Thus the congregational manager needs to have all publicly available information readily available. Aside from administrative information, the congregational manager needs to keep personal information on congregants who might visit the church, after say, telephoning in to make an appointment to see a pastor so that they can be greeted by name and so that the pastor knows at least a little about them and their problems.

The setting up of an information system to keep the congregational manager and thus the pastorate apprised of developments in the lives of congregants and the community surrounding the church has been described elsewhere. This collection of data should include newspaper reports, radio or television reports, or comments on online social services like Facebook and Twitter. There are people like scrapbookers¹⁰⁵ who would often be glad to help. It may be possible for the congregational manager to foresee problems or events in which the church can help the community, perhaps in conjunction with other churches.

¹⁰⁵ 'Scrapbooking' is a common hobby in which people attempt to preserve the history of their families, communities or other places, events, or times, by assembling a collection of written or printed material which is assembled into a series of scrapbooks.

4.4. Risk Management in the Local Church

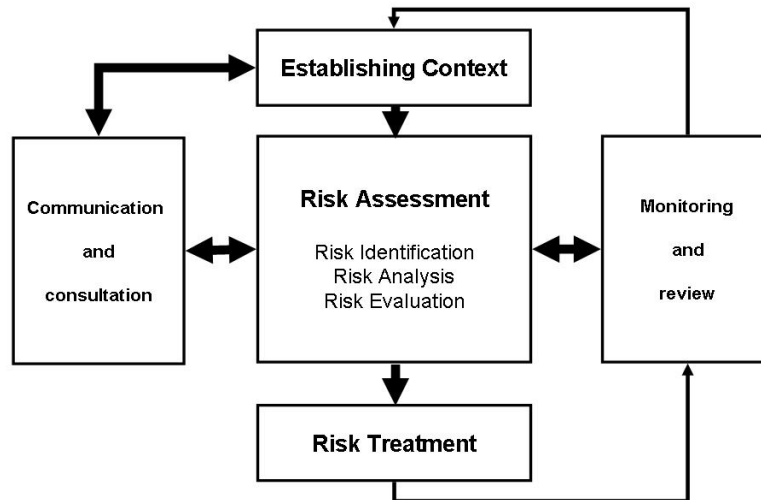


Figure 4.2: Risk Management in the Local Church

The congregational manager is almost invariably the person responsible for risk management. The definition used in this work for 'risk' is the ordinary meaning of the word – 'expose to a chance of loss or damage'. Loss and damage may come from many sources with which any church could be exposed. Some of these cannot be avoided, natural disasters like flooding, earthquakes, violent winds, landslides, sinkholes, or lightning cause physical damage. There is of course the failure of equipment, say, an electrical short which sets fire to the church. Vehicles commonly are exposed to risk or damage. Congregants may slip and injure themselves on church grounds or inside building. Some forms of loss or damage are caused deliberately or as the result of an illicit or illegal act; theft and fraud by staff or congregants, vandalism, and illicit use of church property which is then damaged. These events all result in physical damage to the church and insurance can readily be obtained. Reputational damage is more subtle, but can be equally damaging to the church. A pastor or other church employee being found to have committed a crime or socially undesirable act can give a church's reputation a

hard knock. This can often be mitigated by decisive action against the employee, but often a taint remains, reflecting on the church and its entire staff.

The current method for reducing and managing is Risk Management which has been introduced in many companies, most of which use the Risk Management standards, the ISO 31000:2009¹⁰⁶, developed by the International Organization for Standardization. The primary document that has been produced by this organization is the ISO 31000 which contains principles and generic guidelines on Risk Management. The information that follows was taken largely from that document via a number of sources¹⁰⁷. The diagram above is redrawn from InConsult (2009: 4). It might be argued that the standard is far too complex and is therefore unnecessary for a church. This is perfectly true – certainly the full standard is (or will be when it is completed) too complex for the church but the principles are relatively simple as will be seen below. For the sake of illustration, this note will use as an ongoing example an examination and treatment of a church and its grounds for risk purposes.

The writer believes that risk management for large organizations should be initiated by an outside consultant because establishing a proper system is not easy in such cases. For the smaller, medium and *possibly* large churches a risk management system can be set-up by the church itself using a simplified version of the generic processes described here. They are simple and easy to apply; moreover they provide the discipline and guidance required to maintain a system. The important point is, as always, to make one or a few persons responsible for risk management and ensure that they keep to it.

Physical security, for example, reduces certain risk factors as does the use of alarms mentioned elsewhere in this study. The first stage of the first stage is the

¹⁰⁶ The '2009' refers to the year in which the standard was published.

¹⁰⁷ The most important source was Ms. M. Melody, the present writer's daughter.

Communication and Consultation in which all stakeholders (the pastorate, the congregational manager, the church's other employees, and the congregation are informed fully of introduction of risk management and provided with details of how it will affect them personally. Comments and feedback are gathered and changes made to the proposed procedure if necessary. All stakeholders are kept informed throughout the process.

The second stage establishing the cultural, social and economic **context** in which the church lies and the feelings of its people, especially with respect to risk. This is followed by the establishment of a policy, processes, planning and methodologies. The third stage, **risk assessment**, involves:

1. the **identification** of risk by examining the church, its physical security like the fences, burglar alarms, monitoring cameras, fire protection, gates, doors and their locks, safety doors, emergency buttons, safeguards against fraud and so on by discussing possible sources of risk and examining those possible sources;
2. the **analysis** of the risks identified to find sources, likelihood and consequences to determine what is being done at present in the church, determining if present methods are effective or can be improved and then determining the residual risk; and
3. finally an **evaluation** of what the risk represents.

If the level of risk is judged to be too high, a **treatment** may be suggested which could include treating the sources of risk (like repairing the fences or adding extra razor and Dannert wire), avoiding the risk, or changing the consequences of the risk. There will always be some remaining risk, but it can be lowered and kept to an acceptable level

All risk management involves some form of mitigation of risk by insurance. Insurance does not stop a burglary or a fire, but it does make it possible to repair the damage

caused by a problem. An insurance requirements assessment should always be done by an expert.

4.5. Project Management in the Local Church

This particular section is regarded as very important for the church because project management, while not a panacea, can be used to make a major contribution to the church's health. It allows the pastorate and the congregational manager to make major changes to the church and to its running as cheaply as possible and in small stages that are affordable and result in incremental improvements. It is often mistakenly thought that project management is useful only for physical projects like setting up a Sunday School. It can also be used for, say, introducing a new form of worship service (say, if a 'contemporary' worship service is to be introduced), for surveying the congregation, for setting up a hospital visitation scheme, for building a system of home visitation, for setting up new ministries (say, a New Member Ministry), for introducing volunteers into the church administration system, for starting a choir, and a host of other things.

Churches have all sorts of minor and major projects in progress at any time. There may be fund-raising attempts, Sunday School outings, repairing some of the church's buildings using volunteers, cleaning up the environment around the church grounds, painting new churches, home and hospital visitations by volunteers, organizing a fund-raising concert, marking off proper parking bays for congregants, setting up a centre for the aged, sending volunteers to assist after disasters, fixing the drains, opening missions, organizing blood collection drives and a host of other things, some large and important to the church as a whole and others small and important only to a small groups of congregants or people in the community.

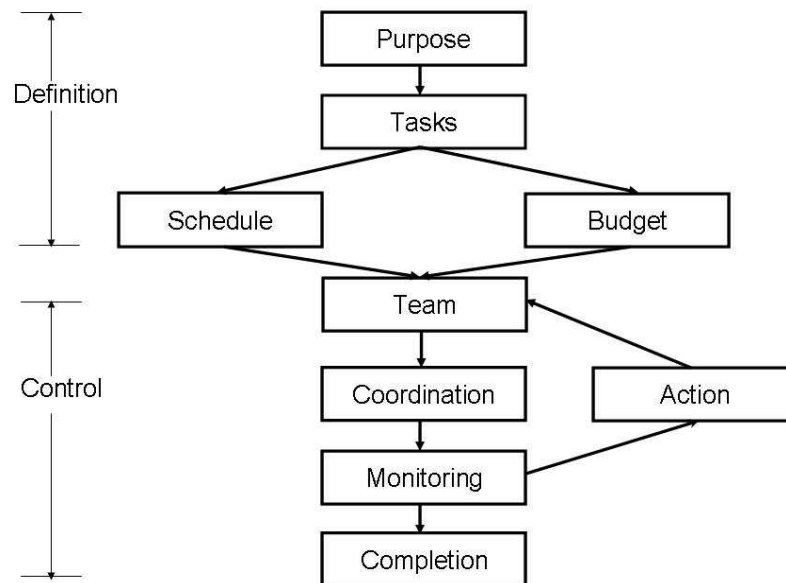


Figure 4.3: The Project Management Process

For most churches, all these ‘projects’ have at least one thing in common: they are poorly organized and most often fail¹⁰⁸ or at least remain uncompleted. A total of 81 major (those budgeted to cost U.S. \$2 000 or more) projects from 61 of the 219 churches mentioned in Section I could be identified and the success or otherwise determined. Of those, 15¹⁰⁹ were abandoned/cancelled, 61 were behind schedule by at least 50% of allocated time, 59 were more than 50% over-budget (all but one were also behind schedule) and 24 did not reach expectations¹¹⁰ (it is not known how many failed to reach their major goal(s)). There were of course overlaps in the categories; some projects were behind schedule, over-budget and failed to meet their major objectives, for example.

¹⁰⁸ A project fails when it is abandoned, is not delivered on time, is over budget or does not meet expectations. A complete failure is a project that is abandoned or does not meet its major goals.

¹⁰⁹ 10 were abandoned/cancelled because they were grossly behind schedule.

¹¹⁰ Generally it was not possible to determine what the expectations were or the ways in which the projects failed, so it could not be determined if the expectations were unrealistic.

It is not just churches, of course, that have failed projects; most organizations suffer at least to some extent in the same way. To overcome this problem, a formalized system for running projects – called projects management (Portny 2007) – has been introduced.

Project management is a technique, widely used in the business world, of carrying out projects, of limited, defined duration, which have specific, often measurable goals. Figure 2 (redrawn from Thomsett 2002:9) shows the overall process of initiation and completing the project. The aim, as Thomsett (2002: ix) puts it, is:

‘Getting more results with fewer resources: This ideal defines project initiatives in many organizations. However, it is not simply the economic value, efficiency, or speed that defines success in project management. The process needs also to involve quality control in the supply chain, concern for product safety and value, and cooperation within the organization’.

The technique¹¹¹ covers the initiation of the project (based on a need within the organization), planning, and organizing, followed by the securing, allocation and controlled usage of resources to complete the project. A major part of project management is the ongoing or timed assessment of the progress of the projects, analysis of the assessment followed by modifications of the methodology to correct for flaws or for changes in the environment. It must be emphasized that a project is a temporary, limited undertaking.

Setting up a Sunday School¹¹² with defined requirements by a specific date would be a project useful for the church; on the other hand, the project management principles

¹¹¹ Much of this description is taken from Thomsett’s introductory section (Thomsett 2002: 8-10).

¹¹² This example will be used throughout this section because it is among the most common and typical that the writer has seen.

would not be used for running a Sunday School after it has been set up because it would not be of limited duration or with specific, relatively short term objectives. The question of the quality of the work is important. It is not sufficient just to set up a Sunday School; the idea is to set up the best Sunday School possible within the major constraints of the project parameters which are very often the scope, duration and, above all, cost of the project.

The process begins with the determination of the **Purpose** of the project. It is not sufficient for the senior pastor to say to one of the other pastors ‘the church wants you to set up a Sunday School so get going’.

It is necessary to consider (Thomsett 2002:8):

- Why the project is being undertaken in the first place. Do the children of the church really need bible lessons in a *formal* Sunday School?;
- Whether the project is really necessary or is it just a vanity project¹¹³ for the church. Is the Sunday School being built because ‘churches always have Sunday Schools’ or is there a need for it? Will enough children be sent to the Sunday School to make it worthwhile? A cost-benefit analysis (Andersen et al. 2009: 147) is almost always necessary; and
- What the project is expected to achieve. What contribution will the completion of the project make to the church’s health? Will the Sunday School yield something useful or will it be nothing more than a white elephant, holding back the church’s progress.

¹¹³ There are few things more demoralizing to a project team than the realization that the project they are working on is not necessary but is being done to satisfy some whim of the organization’s leader.

The congregational manager will be involved at every stage of the project, especially at progress meetings. The position will be *ex officio* unless the manager can contribute technically as part of the project team.

Projects, even the shortest, are built around a series of short, clearly defined tasks, carried out in sequence or in parallel, designed in such a way that the progress of the project can be measured through the completion or otherwise of the small steps; each of the smaller tasks must be big enough to be efficient, but small enough to carry out relatively easily within the parameters of the project. This step is shown on the figure as **‘Tasks’**.

Setting the time limits for each of the small tasks requires that the times to complete each task have to be determined within the project’s parameters. Some tasks will have to be completed before others can start (‘critical tasks’); it may be possible to carry out some of the tasks in parallel reducing the overall time. This is a critical stage; adequate time to complete each task properly must be allowed. In the writer’s experience, the second most dangerous mistake to make in project management is to underestimate the time it takes to do a job; the first most dangerous is to buckle in to pressure to shorten the duration of the project to less than the amount calculated. This stage results in the **Schedule**.

The **Budget** is one of the major constraints on the project. The congregational manager will have to calculate what the church can afford by estimating the resources that are available for the project. Each task is then fully costed¹¹⁴ (labour, materials and time) and

¹¹⁴ The costing is always done in monetary terms and includes everything, even the costs attached to ‘free’ materials. For example paint for the Sunday School might be donated by a congregant subject to the condition that the church picks it up. The cost of transport, labour, and where applicable, opportunity costs must be added together.

the total and administration charges determined so that the financial and other resources required. If this total amount is significantly less than the congregational manager's estimate of available funds, the project can go ahead, otherwise parameters have to be changed and the project re-costed. The reaction of clergy when it is pointed out that a Sunday School, for example, cannot be setup with the available funds is to say 'Go ahead anyway. God will provide'. This is a dangerous and very unhealthy attitude to take.

All the steps up to this point are part of the definition phase. All the following steps are the Control phase; the actual setting up of the Sunday School in this example. is the Control

Up to this point the church has invested little more than the time of its staff. But once the go-ahead is given, a **Team** must be appointed. The team must be the best available, must be selected for technical knowledge, ability to get on together, and internal discipline, and should be taken from all sections of the church. Ajmal & Kekale (2010) point out, however that organizational culture plays an important role in knowledge sharing so care must be taken with the selection, monitoring and integration of the team. The leader must never be just a figurehead; a pastor should never be appointed just because 'a church project must have a pastor at its head'. All members of the team must be carefully selected from all sections of the church (pastorate, other employees or the laity) so it is multidisciplinary in that at least one member will know how a particular task is to be performed. Johnston (2003) says 'There's no simple, foolproof way to make a team jell, but you can set up the right environment, take sensible steps towards building the team, and hope for the best.'

The leader must be skilled as a leader because firm control is almost always needed to control a team of disparate individuals; the leader must be firm and able to bind the team into one, to encourage initiative but not recklessness in the team. The

Coordination stage is perhaps the critical one for the success of the project. The leader supplies the vision for the team (Englund et al. 2003: 25) also, the importance of which should not be underestimated in choosing the leader

Monitoring the progress of the project is a key element of the process. The completion of the small tasks – cleaning up the area to be used for the Sunday School, preparing the walls for painting, sanding the floor are examples – must be monitored to see that they are done on time and within budget. If emerging problems are seen – say late delivery of supplies, overbudget items, or the lagging of tasks behind schedule – these are corrected through the **Action** stage(s) by making changes to the working plan through the team. This is an iterative process which may be repeated many times over the life of the project.

The **Completion** is the final stage of the project when the work is completed and the results handed over the church. The Sunday School is now ready, equipped and waiting for the first children. It is only at this stage that the project is complete. Thomsett (2002:10) points out: '[e]ven when the project is effectively managed and kept on schedule for 99 percent of the time, if the final step is not taken the deadline will not be met.' In an example seen by the writer, a church hall was refurbished and put in tiptop condition, except that the outside door had no lock and was kept secured by a chain. When the writer visited the hall two years later, there was still no lock despite many complaints.

A major danger in project management is the intrusion of Parkinson's Law¹¹⁵. Normally the team will shrink as the project proceeds because 'specialists' are removed from the team as the need for their services ceases. Sometimes, the team remains at the same size,

¹¹⁵ This law, as stated in its original source (C. Northcote Parkinson in 1957 quoted by Gutierrez & Kouvelis 1991:290), 'manifests [sic] that 'work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion.'

working hours are wasted because the excess members do not wish to leave the team and expand their work until it fills an inordinate amount of time.

From this very brief introduction, it can be seen that the project management technique is perhaps the answer – but not a panacea – for keeping the church on track and expanding its activities (and hence its attraction for new congregants) efficiently and at a reasonable cost. Provided that no attempt is made to apply the technique to repetitive daily or monthly tasks, it can contribute greatly to the church's health. Trying to apply the technique inappropriately, leads to failure and to 'project fatigue' on the part of those tasked with routine, mundane work poorly disguised under the heading of 'project'. Extreme care should be taken to ensure that specialists are used correctly where their skills are of the greatest use. Too often specialists are asked to volunteer help, complete their task and then are pressured into taking on routine manual labour (say). This leads to a break down in relations with such volunteers.

4.6. Auditing the Work of Church Employees

The work of all employees – not excluding the pastorate – should be assessed formally on a regular, usually annual, basis; minor assessments would be held as frequently as an employee's supervisor thinks is likely to be necessary. This would normally be done by the head of the church employee's department, but in some churches, all assessments are made by the senior pastor or his deputy. The form these assessments take, the consequences of a poor or good assessment and the procedure that will be taken if the employee is judged to need further training all should be detailed in the church's policies and procedures. The pastorate is usually assessed by the greater denomination, the church council or elders, or in some way specified in the pastors' contracts. This is the formal church system.

Loyalty	High	Hostage		Loyalist / Apostle
	Medium			
	Low	Defector/Terrorist		Mercenary
Satisfaction:		Low	Medium	High

Figure 4.4 : Jones & Sasser's 'Apostle' Segmentation Model

There is, however, one 'informal' way of estimating the performance of the church's leadership and staff, certainly in bulk¹¹⁶. This is the satisfaction of the congregants with the church and its staff. A crude measure of 'satisfaction' is the rate at which old congregants leave the church and new congregants join it. However, Jones & Sasser (1995) with their 'Apostle' model for segmenting a market on consumer satisfaction have shown that dissatisfied consumers sometimes remain as an organisation's customers, while others who are perfectly satisfied with the organisation leave. This paradoxical result is explained in their paper and visually in the figure above which was redrawn from Henning (2008).

Basically, Jones & Sasser (1995) consider 'loyalty' vs. 'satisfaction' in consumers, and then segment the consumers into four types – loyalist/apostle, hostage, mercenary, and defector/terrorist; these are the extreme positions and there would be an infinite number of lesser and greater combinations of loyalty and satisfaction. The characteristics of these consumers (in terms of a congregation) are:

1. **Loyalist/Apostle:** - high loyalty, high satisfaction - 'staying and supportive' . These are people committed to the church, the Social Lay Leadership and the Strongly Committed segments of the congregation; they, more than anyone else, sing the praise of the church and are, in fact, the church's best 'salesmen'.

¹¹⁶ The application of any method to elicit the congregation's feelings on individual pastors should be avoided at all costs.

2. **Mercenary:** - low to medium loyalty, high satisfaction - 'coming and going; low commitment'. These people are partly in the Committed Group and partly in the Occasional member segment. They are likely to be part of the church's underlife.
3. **Defector/Terrorist:** - low to medium loyalty, low to medium satisfaction - 'leaving or having left and unhappy'. 'Defectors include those who are more than dissatisfied, quite dissatisfied and neutral Letting these customers defect is the greatest mistake any manager can make...' because they can be turned back into highly satisfied people. The key to this is recognizing them as individuals and dealing with their problems. This might not be possible in the church though in the way that it would be with consumers dealing with, say, a service organization.
4. **Hostage:** - high loyalty, low to medium satisfaction - 'unable to switch; trapped'. These consumers would probably be in the Committed segment of the congregation because of their high loyalty, but would tend to be a significant part of the church's underlife. The present writer feels, without a great deal of evidence other than his observations, that these congregants would tend to heap the blame for their dissatisfaction on the shoulders of the pastorate.

The importance of this segmentation is quite simple; it gives a guide to the pastorate and the congregational manager as to what needs to be done to convert as many congregants as possible into loyalists/apostles.

To determine the levels of satisfaction within the church, customer satisfaction surveys are, perhaps, the only answer as has been mentioned elsewhere in this work. The International Standards Organization (ISO) has a very well-known standard for customer satisfaction - the ISO 9000:2000 standard. This is certainly the world benchmark for such surveys and thus should be examined by all congregational managers before conducting a customer satisfaction survey; Hill et al. (2002) provide a clear presentation of the elements and implications of this standard. Bluestein et al. (1999) present an excellent description of the customer satisfaction audit.

These surveys may take many forms; they may be large formal surveys or just a survey along the lines of the service scorecard (often little 'smiley face' notes) asking the customer to rate service that consumers often find in hotels (Brace 2004: 97) or fast-food outlets. The church's dignity would be impaired if actual 'smiley faces' were used on survey forms, but a discreetly worded note left in piles under a sign saying 'Please take our confidential worship survey' at the exit to the church near a post-box would probably be acceptable. The note could contain specific questions on the quality of preaching and the liturgical presentation, for example.

This would be extremely useful in making a judgment of the quality of their work, their charisma and popularity of the minister(s) concerned with the congregation for example. Surveys taken when events are fresh in people's minds are more likely to be accurate than those taken later. It must be pointed out, however, that all pastors, to whom this idea was broached, threw their hands up in horror at the suggestion; one pastor was so affected that a cup was thrown on the ground! The thought of 'congregants, of all people, sitting in judgment on pastors with smiley faces too' was regarded as something horrific.

The formal customer satisfaction survey may be done in several ways:

- Congregants could be asked as they walk out of the church, possibly using some form of stratified sampling or one of the other methods suggested by Chaudhuri & Stenger (2005:33-76). The writer feels that this would require professional interviewers unconnected with the church and a promise of confidentiality otherwise the congregants might feel under pressure to give, say, a false indication of high satisfaction. Surveys using professional interviews are, however, very expensive and most churches would probably not be able to afford them;
- A telephone survey, if contact details are available, with the same conditions as above;

- Mailed questionnaires, which is perhaps the most common method. This would not give an immediate answer like the small notes above, but it would give the congregational manager an overall picture of what congregants thought of the church. These questionnaires could be attached to or form part of the question list for a diversity survey mentioned earlier in this work. Similar considerations apply to choosing the questions and so on that were mentioned in discussing the diversity survey apply here too;
- There are many sites, some of which are free, on the Internet where surveys can be developed and posted online. The present writer used the free version of SurveyMonkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/>) for posting questions on several topics in this study. The answers were useful, but not very scientifically obtained since the writer knows nothing of the respondents in many cases. Congregants would have to be informed of the URL of the site and of the procedure to access the specific survey. This would very probably bias the results of the survey in favour of the opinions of computer-literate congregants. Greenlaw & Welty-Brown (2009: 464) tested paper, web-based and mixed methods for response rate and cost and reported that the mixed method, though more costly, had better response rates;
- An email survey is possible and very cheap. The principal problem is that most congregants would simply glance at it, think of it as spam, and put in the Spam folder; fake 'surveys' are common spam items and the users' email services' or their Internet Service Providers' spam filter would probably remove any such item; and
- One church in the U.S. found by the writer uses a pre-selected group of congregants who are asked to submit specially designed survey forms to the church once or twice a month. The submissions are anonymous. This appears to work well for the church concerned, but the possibly insuperable difficulty for other churches would be finding a suitable group of congregants.

Questionnaire design is an art that requires experience and many problems result from the questions themselves (Brace 2004: 13). The writer believes that if a church could afford it, professionally drawn up questionnaires or at least the compromise of using a consultant (say university lecturers) should be employed. This is particularly important for surveys which are designed to elicit information about individual members of the pastorate. Immense care has to be taken to avoid any suggestion of discrimination in such case which the writer believes should be avoided at all costs. This and other factors could lead to individuals resigning and approaching the Council for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration with a claim against the church for 'constructive' dismissal. *Relatively* low-cost templates are available on the Internet for customer satisfaction surveys; the writer has seen those of QuestionPro¹¹⁷ used with some success.

The best time to conduct a survey depends on what the survey is for. A survey concerning an event is probably best done when the information is fresh in the minds of the congregants; otherwise a regular questionnaire once or twice a year might suffice. A survey before an impending change in the church might be useful as a form of 'referendum' on those changes; customer satisfaction surveys should probably always be done after a major change but the survey must be timed so that the full effects of the change have manifested themselves.

Survey results should never be viewed in isolation. The latest should be compared with its predecessors and trends and other factors carefully examined. Cooil et al (2007: 67) point out the usefulness of such longitudinal surveys.

Analysing the results of a customer satisfaction surveys, other than the smallest, is best done statistically; Figini (2010) discusses two methods. The first (p. 70) is a graphical one in which:

¹¹⁷ <http://www.questionpro.com/akira/showArticle.do?articleID=customersatisfaction01>

‘... nodes represent variables, and edges drawn between nodes represent conditional dependences. That is to say, a line or arrow is drawn between two nodes unless the two variables are conditionally independent given some or all of the remaining variables. In this way, the graphs supply precise representations of the interrelationships between the variables in the model.’

The second (p. 71) is a:

‘... model taking into account a dynamic component represented historical customer satisfaction data collection. We note that customer satisfaction can change over time. At one point in time, for example early in an intervention or early stage of a program, the customer might be mildly dissatisfied and at a later point in time, the customer might be very satisfied’.

The latter method is in effect the longitudinal model described earlier.

These two extracts, the author believes, illustrate the fact that the analysis of customer satisfaction surveys is difficult. Manual methods are likely to reflect the biases of the analyst so the present writer feels that the results of such surveys should be analyzed – if at all possible – by a professional who will be able to explain the more subtle factors involved better than an untrained congregational pastor could see from the raw data. Failure to properly analyze the results of a survey is tantamount to throwing away the greatest benefit from that survey.

Once a customer satisfaction survey has been carried out, rumours of it will spread though the congregation and congregants will very probably develop high, possibly exaggerated, expectations of the changes that this will bring. As always there will be opponents, reluctant acceptors and strong acceptors of the proposals contained in the rumours. These can only be dealt with by openness and transparency where the results

are made available as soon as possible. Any changes must be made with the cooperation and acceptance of the congregants and should be thoroughly discussed with them before changes are made. The more dictatorial pastors might attempt to override the findings of the survey, which can arouse resentment. Any proposed changes must be carefully costed by the congregational manager so that when the matter is discussed all parties to the discussions are aware of the issues involved and each of their costs. Full records must be kept. Implementation must be judiciously timed and should be in stages with sufficient intervals better to allow the full implications of each change to be fully explored.

Project management with its checks and balances, monitoring and review, would probably be an excellent way to implement major changes of this sort.

It should be pointed out that such surveys can be usefully combined with a pastoral satisfaction survey. There are several scales available; the writer 'administered' a rather unscientific test on SurveyMonkey to evaluate the Ministerial Job Satisfaction Scale of Glass (1976) which yielded an interesting, but unusable result.

5. Conclusion

This section of the dissertation firsts sums up the research objectives, the working methods and some of the early problems encountered. The findings of the study will be considered next. This is a literature review; the findings then, will consist of what the writer discovered classified in a way that makes it of general applicability. Recommendations will be made in two ways: the majority will be at the end of this work and the rest in the text at the point where the problem or finding to which the recommendation applies is discussed. For some subjects it is better, in the writer's opinion, to give recommendations at the point where the subject is discussed.

5.1. Research Aims, Initiation and Data Collection

The original proposal for this study stated the aims of this study clearly. The writer intended to examine 'congregational management practice through the twin lenses of modern management methodology and modern scientific thinking to produce a practical assessment of current practice and of how this practice might be changed to contribute towards creating and maintaining a healthy church'. The study was meant to be a practical, literature-based study of the broad principles behind the present working practices of congregational management. These would be examined to see if current practices are adequate for the modern world, and to suggest changes if they were not. The examination would have to be made in the context of the church as a whole because it is never possible to examine the working practices of one department of an organization satisfactorily if the researcher ignores the department's context. Thus the church, the working pastorate and the congregation would have to be studied.

Early in the study, it was found that the academic literature was inadequate for a practical study. It was decided to include as much primary information as possible - largely from the Internet, but also from other sources accessible to the working pastor.

Real churches were also studied through the use of data drawn from the websites of U.S.¹¹⁸ churches combined with visits to a number of South African churches and many discussions – mostly online - with congregants and pastors.

The subject of this study related to the health of the church, and the first problem encountered was what was meant by the ‘healthy church’. The definition for the ‘healthy church’ used here is: ‘a healthy church is a church which has been growing or in a steady state for the last two years and, barring any major change, is not expected to start declining in size for at least the next year.’

The theology of work chosen was that of Griffith (2003:10) which is based around Austin Marsden Farrer’s elegantly complete ‘double agency’ concept of how God acts in the world. Human actions are completely those of the actors, but are also the actions of God Who is perfectly hidden.

After analysing and synthesizing the data from websites, a clear picture of the church, of the church’s congregation, of the church’s leaderships, and of congregational management and of the congregational manager’s role in the church emerged. It was impossible to separate the church, its congregants, the pastorate and congregational management into neat sections that could be dealt with separately in a linear fashion; the intertwining of the roles of these parts of the church were too complex. The congregation, it was concluded, is the reason for the church’s existence as an organization and therefore any discussion should concentrate on them. All parts of this work ultimately centre on the congregation.

¹¹⁸ U.S. churches were selected because too little information was available about South African churches, U.S. conditions were similar in many ways to those in South Africa and many U.S. churches have data easily available on their websites.

5.2. Findings of this Study

5.2.1. The Church

The main finding and conclusion of the study on the physical church was that, quite simply, the healthy church is a clean, warm place where congregants are protected in a secure, safe and inspiring sanctuary from the outside world so that they feel welcome and comfortable, ready to receive the message of the Gospel. The role of the pastorate and other employees in developing and maintaining this comfort and security is critical. In the healthy church, church employees are welcoming, well prepared for their work, and they take pleasure in providing congregants with good worship, fellowship and witness. When people leave a healthy church, they feel proud¹¹⁹ and filled with the joy of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Their lives feel enhanced and, for a little time at least, they feel part of the Kingdom of God. The role of the congregational manager is to use the resources available to provide this sanctuary from the world as efficiently and efficaciously as possible.

5.2.2. The Congregation

The congregational manager's viewpoint on the congregation is dominated in some ways by consideration of the resources he/she will need to provide services for the congregation. The amount of resources needed to sustain the church depends on the number of church members and their requirements; the availability of the resources depends very largely on contributions from the congregation. This in turn depends on many factors including the size of the congregation, the general economic level of congregants and the commitment of congregants to the church. It was found that many churches have no idea of their true membership, mostly because there is no commonly accepted definition of 'church member'.

¹¹⁹ Not boastful

The question of how to determine church attendance accurately was considered and it was found that commonly used methods were inherently inaccurate. It was recommended that a photographic method be employed which if used carefully would overcome these flaws.

The study concluded that, for congregational management purposes, members were those people committed enough attend church at least once per month. A typology of congregants classified by commitment was produced; it had five classes ranging from 'social lay leader' composed of high committed people in lay leadership positions down. Only the first three groups were believed to be committed enough to support the church. It is these three groups that hold the key to the health of the church

Using the data from U.S. churches mentioned earlier, a size-based typology of churches was constructed. It had eight size-based categories of church: the Informal Church (1-30 members), the Microchurch (1-15 members), the Small Church (15-50), the Small-To-Medium Church (51-150) which was regarded as a transitional type, the Medium Church (151-250), and the Large Church (251-500 members). The remaining two churches, the Very Large Church (greater than 500 members) and the Megachurch (2000+ members) were not studied in detail in this work.

Each of these types of churches was found to have its own distinguishing characteristics which were 'forced' onto the churches by their size and situation. It was found that the characteristics allowed the congregational managers to predict from the size of a church what resources would be required for its upkeep and to allow it to fulfil its mission and what resources could be expected to be provided by the congregation.

5.2.3. Diversity in the Congregation

The next part of this work deals with the make-up of a congregation, as opposed to its size. It was found that the measurement of diversity in the church was one of the critical factors in determining what measures would be needed to be taken to restore a church to health or to maintain it in that state. It is not only the diversity within the church that is important; the diversity in the surrounding community may place constraints on the church's ability to retain current members or draw in new ones.

It was concluded that the key to keeping congregants in a church and turning them into enthusiastic advocates, is to treat them as individuals, to know them, to provide services for them, to acknowledge their needs and desires, to greet them, to provide meaningful worship services conducted by charismatic, skilful pastors and to ensure that their experiences within the church are memorable. This means that pastors, the congregational manager and other church staff have to know their congregants well and this involves collecting as much information as possible on them.

The church needs some sort of 'intelligence' system to keep it in touch with events in the congregation and in the greater community. The healthy church is always a valued part of the community outside the purely religious field and this value can be increased if the congregational manager knows its congregants and their community.

5.2.4. Leadership in the church

The leadership – the pastorate - of the church was found to be one of the critical factors in determining the health of the church. The work of the congregational manager is to provide the pastorate (and the congregation) with the right environment for proclamation of the Word, and for carrying out the church's functions of carry out the Church's functions of *Kerygma, Koinonia, Diakonia, Martyria, Didache and Leitourgia*.

The key to running the healthy church from the leadership viewpoint was found to be getting the balance of authority and power with the church correct through the judicious

use of responsibility and accountability because the first two allow the manager, either directly or through delegation, to carry out needed tasks while the latter two ensure that that the person who does the tasks, does them properly to the church's standards.

In discussing leadership in the church, it was found that, to keep the church healthy (that is, not declining in number), the pastorate had to retain as many of the current congregation as possible and to replace the inevitable losses by drawing people into the church; a growing church requires a constant influx of new members. As the world becomes more secular and there is no longer social or peer pressure to drive people to church, people have to be positively attracted, have to be given a good reason to go to church. It is not sufficient just to make the church a pleasant place – there are many pleasant places. It was concluded that the factor *sine qua non* for growth – or even stability - in the church was a charismatic pastor.

The choice of a leadership model for a church is a critical decision for the church's future. A bad choice – like 'servant leadership' which is too focused on individual person growth to be a good model for dealing with a congregation as opposed to dealing with individuals - could cripple the church in its attempt to survive and grow. It was concluded that the best general model for a church leader was Weber's Charismatic type.

It was also found that leadership style had to be modified to suit the circumstances in which it was being used. That is, the situational leadership has to be applied in many cases, where for example the congregation was recovering from a shock, or at particular stages in its lifecycle. It was concluded that the good leader is one who know what style to use, is flexible enough to use the right style for the job, and is charismatic enough to carry it off. Sometimes a leader has to be strong and firm, harsh even; if the leader is using, say, servant leadership, the cognitive dissonance induced in the congregation by a harsh style might harm cause the congregation to believe that the leader is a hypocrite,

that the 'servant leadership' style previously used was just a façade. Only a charismatic leader could survive this loss of confidence.

5.2.5. Church Administration

The primary conclusion reached was that the church leaders and congregational manager have to work as a team on which the pastor was the captain, and as a partnership in which the pastor was the senior partner. Cooperation between the users of resources to fulfill the church's primary functions and the congregational manager as the supplier of those resources was the key to efficient church administration. By themselves, congregational managers cannot create or even maintain the healthy church, but they have an indispensable role in supporting the pastorate which can.

It was found that the 'traditional' hierarchal structure was surprisingly effective at facilitating the functions of the church. It provides an acceptable, flexible support system for the pastorate, but also gives sufficient discipline to ensure that necessary work was done efficiently. The healthiest church is one in which the church's hierarchy is out-of-sight of the congregation. In business it has been found that an open organization fosters growth and innovation, but for the church innovation in the *organization* is not the primary goal; the desire should be to reduce the size of administration by outsourcing rather than to expand it. The need for innovation is in the field of congregation-pastorate relationships.

As far as the running of the church is concerned, it was found that the church as an organization had to have strategic planning procedures that emphasized the goals of the church and which provided guidance to the congregational manager to plan practical steps for providing the resources to achieve those goals. It was believed that for many churches an outside consultant should be employed to guide the strategic planning process. For the day to day running of the church it was found that that the church is lagging behind the outside world in its application of modern management techniques

and in its use of modern technology to ease the burden of church administration. It was recommended that these should be employed as quickly as possible.

The church's employees are not only its greatest cost, they are also its greatest assets. It was found that employees must be chosen carefully, and adequately – but not excessively – paid; they should be given market-related benefits which are sufficient to retain them, but not so high that the cost of employees cripples the church. Contented employees are essential to the functioning of the church and thus a key to the healthy church. It was found that churches generally are over-staffed and that staffing levels could be sharply reduced by outsourcing. The use of volunteers was found to be advantageous to the church, by reducing its reliance on paid staff, and by permitting the church to bolster its current activities and to expand them into new fields.

Asset management in the church is always a difficult operation but is achievable by careful use of church resources, preventing the abuse of church property and by adopting a conservative stance in monetary and investment matters. The stewardship approaches of Mellody & Theron (2006) form a good basis for this.

The church's informational resources are the key to the church's survival because they allow the church to retain its congregants and to draw in new one from the surrounding community by allowing the church to provide services and advertising targeted at various segments of the congregation and community. To create these resources, it was recommended that all churches develop a modern filing system which should be computerized to the greatest extent the church's resources allow. It was found advantageous for the church to become a valuable part of the community outside the sphere of religion and this could only be done through the use of information.

Risk management and project management were investigated for use in the church and were found to be very suitable for making the church safer and more efficient.

Finally it was found that auditing of the professional functions of the church was a need that had been ignored for too long. Most churches had no clear idea whether the preaching of pastors was good, whether counseling was effective, whether pastoral visitations and hospital visits were being made frequently enough or even whether there are problems, like bullying, in the church. It was found that Customer Satisfaction surveys, partly in the form of large surveys of the congregation and partly through services scorecards distributed throughout the church to allow congregants to give immediate feedback, would be a valuable source of data on congregational discontent. Warnings were given of the need to avoid asking congregants about individual pastors, which could cause legal problems. The healthy church is one in which the pastorate and congregation are working together. Conflict – even creative conflict – is rarely desirable.

5.3. Recommendations

Recommendations have been made throughout this work at the place where the topic was discussed generally. This list, which does not fully follow the order of topic discussion in the main text, is a summary and extension of those recommendations.

5.3.1. The Congregation

The first and most important recommendation is that local churches should reorganize themselves as the healthiest form of church – the ‘congregation-centered church’. This is not so much a physical recommendation as changing the church’s mindset from the state where it is accepted that the pastorate are the leaders of the church and the church is centered around them to the acceptance of the idea that the congregation is the reason for the church’s existence.

This implies:

- That the clergy have to accept that they are leaders only in the sense of the company CEOs who are the leaders of the company as long as they give good

service but, in the ultimate, they are the servants of the shareholders who can withdraw their approval at any time if they fail; and

- That the clergy need to devote their work to the congregation's service, to providing them with meaningful, enjoyable experiences in liturgy, preaching and the other functions of the church, to try to build up the congregation spiritually, and to draw congregants deeper into the love of Christ and their fellow men. It is of course the duty of the pastorate to spend time in prayer and reflection but that is also the duty of every Christian and is not specific to the pastorate.

All further recommendations in this section depend on the one above.

For congregational management, the key recommendation is to learn about the congregation by determining:

1. The size of church attendance accurately using a photographic method and keeping this figure updated;
2. Diversity and demographics of the congregation;
3. The size of the committed groups;
4. The needs and desires of the congregation;
5. The opinion of the congregants of the church's current services, the pastorate, and their general treatment by the church and its staff;
6. The life cycle stage of the congregation;
7. The physical draw-in area for the congregation and the presence of barriers which would hinder its expansion;
8. As much as possible about individual congregants and the community they live in; and
9. Diversity and demographics of the greater community

It is strongly recommended that collection of the data listed above should be done as a project (or a series of projects) to make the process more efficient. This will certainly

involve the setting up of an efficient – preferably wholly or partially computerized – ‘intelligence’ system with correspondents who keep the congregational manager aware of changes in the congregation, in the community and in the lives of congregants.

Just gathering information is pointless; this information must be analyzed and synthesized to produce a list of problems within the church, of those things that are being done satisfactorily but could be made more efficient and, as importantly, of things that the church is doing well. Depending on the sizes of the problem, it may be possible to deal with them within the pastorate and congregational management, it might be necessary to call in outside consultants, or to involve the congregation as a whole.

It is strongly recommended that the church should carry out regular customer satisfaction surveys to check that congregants are content and there are no major problems looming on the horizon. The details of this have been discussed elsewhere, but keeping the church healthy requires that congregational management proactively search for problems and respond to those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

This provides the basic working knowledge for the next stage.

5.3.2. Church Leadership

It has been suggested that the pastorate and congregational management should consider themselves as partners with the congregational manager as the junior partner. It is recommended that this be made formal, that a protocol, acceptable to both partners, be drawn up specifying in sufficient detail the way that the partnership should work. It should detail authorities and responsibilities, tasks and spheres of control. This should be flexible enough to be workable but not so flexible that it is distorted whenever there are conflicts of interest.

While this is out of the scope of this work, it is important to state here that the pastorate is, more often than not, the reason for a church's decline. It is the pastor who decides the church's direction which in turn is often decided by the pastor's personality and abilities. It is recommended that the first step in any attempt to solve church problems should be a thorough analysis of the pastorate and its functions – either by an outside consultant or by the greater denomination. The reason for this recommendation is simply that both the pastorate and the congregational manager are too close to the problem to have an objective view on the situation. Consultants should never be allowed to direct change because it weakens the authority of the pastorate. Change may necessitate the transfer of the current pastor to a place that is more suited for his talents.

If a new pastor is to be selected, it is recommended that the congregational manager should draw up a list of the problems and that questions based on these problems should be put to possible pastoral candidates. Those answers will be a key to a candidate's suitability for the job. That person's abilities, training and experience must be confirmed by proper vetting before the person is hired. Further attention should be focused on the candidate's stance on leadership and his views on the place of the pastorate in the church.

It is recommended that in selecting a candidate, charisma be used as a requirement *sine qua non*. No further recommendation can be made on the leadership from the point of view of congregational management, because the responsibilities for doing that lies not with congregational management but with the church council or the greater denomination.

5.3.3. Church Administration

Recommendations have been made on church and administration throughout this work. These sum up to the firm recommendation that church administration should be conducted with the smallest possible staff at the lowest possible cost. This means that the

church's administration should be as lean, mean and efficient as possible and that outsourcing or volunteers should be employed at every reasonable opportunity.

It is recommended that the congregational manager, in conjunction with other members of the pastorate and, if possible, outside consultants should analyze the church's administration from top to bottom without fear and favour. A full job description should be drawn up (or updated if one already exists) for each position which should be ruthlessly analyzed to see:

- If it is necessary in the first place;
- If it is a full-time job, if it can be done by a part-time worker or included in the tasks of another worker who is not fully occupied;
- If the worker is properly qualified;
- If there are any 'red flags'¹²⁰
- If the job is being performed as efficiently as it could; and
- If the worker in a particular position is doing the job as described in his job description or whether there has been job creep and the worker is now doing something quite different.

In this way, the congregational manager will have a list of jobs that are necessary, and how much effort they take to do. It will also be possible to decide whether the job should continue to be done by a particular employee, whether the job should be given to someone else, whether the job is suitable for outsourcing or whether it could be done by volunteers¹²¹. The maximum use should be made of volunteers in non-mission-critical jobs.

¹²⁰ Signs of personal (like excessive drinking) or work-related (like embezzlement or bullying) problems.

¹²¹ This is a difficult step to take because by their very nature, volunteers are unreliable.

The results of this analysis should be put into operation.

Strategic planning is essential in an organization like a church and should be carried out at least once a year with regular (say, monthly) reviews of progress. The planning should be carried out for at least a two (preferably five) year period ahead; the annual reviews would allow changes if the internal or external environment of the church has changed.

It is recommended that the church's resources should be treated conservatively and should never be wasted on vanity projects. It is recommended that a list of criteria by which spending is to be judged should be drawn up and that managers or other persons requesting expenditure should have to justify each major expenditure in terms of those criteria¹²². This provides a series of constraints which militates against waste. There are always exceptions, but these should be justified. It is recommended that a cost-benefit analysis be performed on every major item of expenditure using the method outlined by Zerbe & Bellas (2006:10-38). It is also recommended that all minor items of expenditure, especially discretionary spending, should be closely monitored.

Few churches have considered risk management seriously, but here it is recommended that all churches that can afford it should have a risk analysis of the church carried out and should adhere to the recommendations of the survey.

Finally it is recommended that congregational management and the church develop the project management mindset so that church projects are carried out in a formal way with proper monitoring and evaluation. Project management can be applied in many ways – including to make, or at least to initiate, the changes recommended here. Provided project management is used wisely, it is probably the most powerful weapon in the hands of congregational management.

¹²² This is widely done in mineral exploration projects, for example.

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