7

AVONDALE COLLEGE

FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURES IN THE LOCAL SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND: A PARADIGM FOR RENEWAL

A THESIS
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BY

BRENDAN PRATT

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AFFIRMATION AND DISCLAIMER

This thesis represents original work. It has not been submitted to any other academic institution. Appropriate recognition has been given for the contribution of other scholars.



B. D Pratt

02-12-04

Date

PREFACE

This thesis grows out of a process of self-discovery. As a pastor in a local Adventist church I have at times been frustrated in my role by structures that I accepted as given but which seemed to hinder the mission of the church. In 2000, my church went through the process of Natural Church Development (NCD). The minimum factor, which in the NCD process is the one that needs most work, was the element of functional structures. In an endeavour to lift this factor I began researching structures in the church and what it would require for the church to be more effective in this regard. I was frustrated by the lack of information that existed in regard to the structures common in the local Adventist church and how they could be made more functional.

Initially, I was searching for the perfect model of church. I was used to following a defined structural blueprint that was outlined in the *Adventist Church Manual* and thought that somewhere there would be a more effective structure that I could apply. As I commenced this thesis, I assumed the endpoint would be a very neat flow chart that would solve the structural problems for the church. What I found instead, was a mindset in regard to structures that means each local church must work through its own values and come up with a structure that grows out of and responds to its unique ministry context. The process of implementing my findings in a local church setting has been an enjoyable challenge.

The thesis is very general in the way it approaches many areas. Some areas, including structural development in the New Testament and Adventist history, along with the sociological and organisational implications for structure, could be an entire thesis area in themselves. However, I have purposely kept the topic broad as I felt it was necessary to include the background historical, sociological and organisational information as part of this thesis so that an overall eclectic approach to structural development could be seen. Without them included I feel that this thesis may give only part of the structural picture and would not provide the resource I was seeking to develop.

While I feel that a thorough Adventist ecclesiology is desperately needed for structure to be functional, this area is only briefly covered in this thesis. The more I explored ecclesiology the more I was being side-tracked into another area that was too much to cover in this thesis – maybe another time!

The effort it took to get this thesis together involved invaluable help from a group of people who deserve to be acknowledged. First, my employers, the North New Zealand Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church who sponsored this study and have continually encouraged me to try new approaches in my local church work. Of this group, I would especially like to thank Warrick Long who not only continually encouraged me in this study but passed on any information he came across which he thought may be related.

My supervisor Dr Alwyn Salom has been extremely helpful in guiding the shaping of the topic and how I could go about addressing it. The time he has put in to editing has also been appreciated. I admire not only his academic ability but his passion to see local churches working right. My ministerial internship supervisor, Dr Stephen Currow, deserves credit for shaping many of my perspectives on the nature of the church. My interest in church life is a reflection of his moulding.

I would like to thank the congregation of the Papatoetoe Seventh-day Adventist Church for their patience in allowing me to implement new ideas as I learned more about structures. I am particularly thankful to Anita Moore for using her 'editing gifts'. I am also very appreciative of the staff team who have taken on extra loads when I have taken time away to work on this thesis.

I am most appreciative to my wife Amanda who is a continual support and always willing to help. Her family has also been very helpful in the process of getting this thesis completed and lastly, my two boys, Brad and Ben who will now see a lot more of their dad.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

PART ONE – THE SHAPE, DEVELOPMENT AND FUNCTIONALITY OF LOCAL CHURCH STRUCTURE..... 6

CHAPTER 1 – THE PLACE OF STRUCTURE IN THE LIFE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH 7

The Inevitability and Role of Structure.....7

The Interconnectedness of Church Structures.....10

Structural Renewal and Church Culture 13

CHAPTER 2 – FUNCTIONALITY – THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRUCTURE AND CHURCH HEALTH.....17

How Structure Impacts Church Health 17

The Importance of Functionality..... 21

Understanding The Organic And Institutional Spheres Of The Church.....23

Functionality And Natural Church Development.....25

CHAPTER 3 – DETERMINING WHAT MAKES A STRUCTURE FUNCTIONAL.....28

The Basis Of Functionality.....28

The Relationship Between Ecclesiology and Structure 30

The Need For An Adventist Ecclesiology – What The Church Is To Be?..... 32

The Church As Community 34

What Is The Church To Do?.....36

Functional Church Practice – How Is The Church To Do Ministry?.....39

CHAPTER 4 – LOCAL CHURCH STRUCTURE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT 43

Structural Emergence in the Apostolic Church.....44

Structural Emergence In The Jewish Church 48

Structural Emergence in the Gentile Church.....51

Church Structure in the Pauline Writings.....53

The Flexibility of the New Testament Church 55

Biblical Principles that Shape Functional Structures.....58

CHAPTER 5 – AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF CHURCH STRUCTURE.....64

From the Close of the New Testament to Constantine.....65

Constantine and the Imperial Church.....67

Church Structure and the Reformation.....71

Post–Reformation Structure 76

CHAPTER 6 – THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL CHURCH STRUCTURE.....79

Structure in Early Adventist History.....79

Local Church Structure And The Adventist Church Manual.....87

The Assumed Church Structure: 1932-Today.....90

Ellen White and Church Structure.....93

Adventist Church Structure Today.....97

CHAPTER 7 – SOCIOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS THAT SHAPE CHURCH STRUCTURE 101

Seeing The Church As a System.....102

Congregational Culture.....105

Social Conflict And Church Structures.....108

The Challenge of Traditionalism.....109

Organisational Change.....113

Structural Equilibrium.....115

Structures of Hierarchy and Dependency.....117

Structures of Communication.....119

CHAPTER 8 – ORGANISATIONAL THEORY AND CHURCH STRUCTURE....122

The Organisational Life Cycle and Local Church Structure...122

The Challenges of Bureaucracy....129

The Relationship between Structure and Size....131

Leadership In The Life-Cycle....138

High Performance Organisations....139

PART TWO – THE CONTEXT OF LOCAL CHURCH STRUCTURAL RENEWAL IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND....143

CHAPTER 9- A BRIEF HISTORY OF STRUCTURAL RENEWAL IN THE ADVENTIST CHURCH....144

CHAPTER 10 – THE CURRENT STATE OF STRUCTURAL RENEWAL IN THE LOCAL ADVENTIST CHURCH....152

Growth, Plateau and Decline....152

Questions of Functionality....155

Defining the Mission of the Church....157

Views of the Adventist Pioneers, Church Manual and Structure....160

Openness to Structural Change....161

Opinions on Future Directions....161

Resources Used In Shaping Functional Structures....163

Five Approaches to Structural Renewal....164

CHAPTER 11 – CASE STUDIES OF FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURES IN LOCAL ADVENTIST CHURCHES....167

Avondale College Church....170

Central Coast Community Church....179

Fremantle Seventh-day Adventist Church....187

Kingscliff Seventh-day Adventist Church....193

North Harbour Seventh-day Adventist Church.....197

Northpoint Church.....202

Papatoetoe Seventh-day Adventist Church.....207

Waitara Seventh-day Adventist Church.....214

Conclusion.....218

PART THREE - CONCLUSION: A PARADIGM FOR STRUCTURAL RENEWAL IN AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND ADVENTIST CHURCHES.....219

CHAPTER 12 – PRINCIPLES THAT UNDERLIE A NEW PARADIGM FOR FACILITATING FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURES....220

Balancing The Inter-Relationship Between Organisation and Organism.....220

Seeing Each Church As A Unique Living System.....221

Being Christ's Body, Expressing Community.....223

Approaching Ministry Holistically.....225

Creating Ministry Forms Out of Clear Values.....226

Being Creative and Flexible.....226

Facilitating Open Communication.....227

CHAPTER 13 – APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES OF FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURES.....228

A Process Rather Than An End-Point.....228

The Necessity of Skilled Leadership.....229

Creating A Team Environment.....230

Forming A Clear Picture of the Current State of The Church: Values and Mission.....231

Facilitating A Church Education Process.....232

Shaping Structures In Relationship To Size.....233

Having Ministry Flow Out of Concepts.....234

Providing A Gifts Based Ministry Process.....235

Facilitating Continual Communication.....236

Pacing The Renewal Process.....237

CHAPTER 14 – ENSURING THE STRUCTURE REMAINS EFFECTIVE.....238

Being Intentional.....238

Conclusion.....240

APPENDIX 241

A – Interpretative Questions for Functional Structures in the Natural Church Development Survey Tool.....242

B- Summary of Natural Church Development Score For Australia and New Zealand.....243

C – Church Board Positions in Adventist Church Manual.....244

D – McIntosh's Typology of Church Size.....245

E – Structural Renewal Survey.....246

F – Structural Renewal Survey Results 251

G – Case Study Churches – Ministry Flow Charts.....253

H – Vision, Mission And Values Statements For Case Study Churches.....257

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....261

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURE PAGE

1. Factors That Underlie Church Functionality 42

2. Moberg's Stages of Organisational Growth and Decline.....127

3. Estimates of where Australian and New Zealand Adventist churches are in terms of the organisational life-cycle.....153

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE PAGE

1. CONCEPTS USED TO DEFINE THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH.....158

2. FIRST PICTURE THAT COMES TO MIND WHEN THINKING OF THE WORD "CHURCH".....159

3. AVERAGE SCORES FOR NATURAL CHURCH DEVELOMENT ELEMENTS FOR ADVENTIST CHURCHES IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND 2000-2003.....243

4. HIGHEST AND LOWEST SCORES FOR NATURAL CHURCH DEVELOMENT ELEMENTS FOR ADVENTIST CHURCHES IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND 2000-2003.....243

5. CHURCH BOARD POSITIONS IN *ADVENTIST CHURCH MANUAL* 244

6. MCINTOSH'S TYPOLOGY OF CHURCH SIZE.....245

7. STRUCTURAL RENEWAL SURVEY RESULTS.....251

INTRODUCTION

The model the apostle Paul emphasises most when depicting the church is the body of Christ.[1] Like all healthy organisms, the church body requires numerous systems to be kept in balance and working together to fulfil its intended purpose. Each aspect must be evaluated regularly to determine if it is still the best way to accomplish the church's mission.

The Seventh-day Adventist church has a colourful history in terms of its organisational development. Initially structure was viewed as leading to "Babylon".[2] Influential Adventist pioneers lent very heavily toward an organic view of the church that saw organisational elements as destructive. In time, the need for guidelines, forms and organisational practices to facilitate the missionary zeal of the church became a necessity and step-by-step structures emerged or were put in place.

Today, the Adventist church is one of the most highly structured denominations in the history of Christendom.[3] Drawing on influences that include New Testament

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[1] The body of Christ forms Paul's basic ecclesiastical paradigm (Rom 12:3-8, 1 Cor 12:1-31, Eph 4:1-16). For an overview of Paul's use of the Body of Christ model see Robert Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 58-67 and Paul Minear, *Images of the Church in the New Testament* (PA: Westminster Press, 1966).

[2] Geo. Storrs, quoted in J. N. Loughborough, *The Church, Its Organization, Order and Discipline* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald, 1907), 87.

[3] George Knight, *Organizing To Beat The Devil* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2001), 6.

forms, early church patterns, changes made in the reformation period, practices from Methodist tradition along with contributions by Ellen White and a range of sociological and contextual influences, the local Seventh-day Adventist church finds itself working in a complicated matrix of procedures and practices. The problem is that in many cases institutionalism and traditionalism have choked the vitality from the local church. The church is now so over-structured that rather then giving life, organisation is draining it.[4]

If the local Seventh-day Adventist church in Australia and New Zealand is to be effective in achieving its purposes, it must be intentional about its forms and systems. A missiological theology of the church must be translated into systems of governance, leadership, and values that effectively contribute to the purposes of the church. In short, the organisational systems and attitudes that facilitate the life of the church must be made functional.

A study of functional structures in the context of the local Adventist church is about examining how it can work within the unique culture of Adventist belief and practice to ensure both the organic and organisational spheres of the church interrelate effectively. The church must have in place structures that allow the dynamic dimensions of the church to work in an integrated, resourced, evaluated and supportive environment.

It must always be remembered that the church is God's creation and not simply a human institution. The function of the church cannot be treated as one would

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[4] _____, *The Fat Lady And The Kingdom* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1995), 7.

treat a business enterprise or a purely social institution. Each local church is a complex organism of inter-relationships. There are spiritual dynamics beyond human control and theories. All this thesis can do is analyse structures, that can be influenced, by the criteria of functionality so that the spiritual elements that are beyond human control can take place in a supportive environment.

Part One of this study examines how structure is shaped and the role it plays in the life of the local church. The first section of this Part defines structure and the importance of functionality. This is followed by an ecclesiological study of the purposes of the church and the principles of structure in the New Testament so that a measurement for functionality can be established. The next section looks at church structure in church history, with a special focus on the development of local church structure in the Adventist church. Many times, renewal is sabotaged by a poor understanding of what issues are really being addressed and purely historical factors are given theological significance. The last section looks at sociological and organisational factors of church structure including the organisational life cycle, systems thinking and responses to change. This part is necessary if a paradigm is to be constructed that is not only biblical but is practically informed and realistic in its ability to be implemented.

Part Two of the thesis examines the context of structural renewal in the Adventist church. It includes case studies of eight local Adventist churches in Australia and New Zealand that are reworking their structures and becoming more effective. Increasingly, churches are re-examining their values, forms, systems and

procedures and, partly as a result, experiencing renewal. Common patterns and themes identified in the churches will prove helpful for other churches working through similar challenges.

Part Three and overall goal of this thesis is the development of a paradigm for thinking through and implementing structures that will provide the local church with a process that ensures on-going functionality. While examples of effective structures will be given to show how purpose is practically applied, this Part does not provide a simple flow chart or guide to implementing a particular structure. Rather, a way of addressing, shaping and evaluating organisational systems is outlined that will allow each local church to develop structures that are not only effective in their particular setting but also open to the changes that are vital for ongoing functionality. The challenge is in changing how one thinks of the church, rather than merely changing forms of ministry.

This thesis specifically focuses on the local Adventist church in an Australian and New Zealand context. The implications will be relevant to Adventist churches on a wider scale, and indeed any church that wishes to evaluate its structures. But by confining the study to a more focused setting, recommendations can be made that are more sociologically and culturally relevant. In a similar way, this thesis does not attempt to address the significant organisational issues of the Seventh-day Adventist denominational structure. While the interrelationships of local church structure and the wider denominational organisation are inseparable,

other significant studies have examined structures at the denominational level.[5] Yet, relatively little has been done in an Adventist setting that examines the structures of the local church. The principles outlined at the local church level can be easily transferred on a wider scale.

One cannot assume that restructuring will solve all the crises and challenges in a local church. Any given situation is a matrix of intersecting factors that may include issues of spiritual depth, finances, leadership style or denominational directives outside of local church control. Structure is just one of those components, but it is a vital one.

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[5] Barry Oliver, *SDA Organizational Structure: Past, Present, and Future* (Berrian Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1989) and Knight, *Organizing* each provide an analysis of the denominational structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church outlining the need and process for renewal.

PART ONE

THE SHAPE, DEVELOPMENT AND FUNCTIONALITY OF LOCAL CHURCH STRUCTURE

CHAPTER 1

THE PLACE OF STRUCTURE IN THE LIFE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

The Inevitability and Role of Structure

As soon as people meet more than once and spend any time together, they will begin to develop a sense of order and leadership. There is inherently some sort of system that underlies the way interrelationships happen. Where a group makes any attempt to achieve a goal or apply a principle there must inevitably develop, even if not intentionally, a procedure or pattern for doing so.

For this thesis, structure is used to refer to the procedures and patterns that shape how an organisation functions. These procedures include both written and unwritten forms, while the patterns include common understandings and how relationships interconnect. Systems theorist, Peter Senge, describes structure in terms of the complex systems that control behaviour including how people make decisions and the "operating policies" whereby they translate perceptions, goals, rules and norms into actions.[6]

Structures shape an organisations expectations and practices. They provide the group with opportunities and boundaries along with setting in place behaviours and thought patterns. Some structures can be intentionally planned while others come about as a product of the organism's nature. Growing out of and

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[6] Peter Senge, *The Fifth Discipline* (Sydney, NSW: Random House, 2001), 40.

expressing structural procedures and patterns is a collective congregational culture with its common ways of thinking, responding and feeling.

When thinking of church structure, often pictures of organisational hierarchy, flow charts or manuals of rules come to mind. However, structural dynamics go well beyond the more obvious systems that can be put on paper to include the institutions, common understandings, values and regulations that shape church culture.

How the church makes decisions is a function of structure. Often the formalised decision-making process just ratifies decisions already made by some other undefined process, especially in smaller churches.[7] While it would be impossible to map every structural pattern in the life of the church, there are common understandings, forms and systems that interconnect the various aspects of church life that can be analysed.

Structures emerge in local churches for many reasons. Some structures grow out of theological understandings and express an aspect of what the group believes about God. Other structures arise to meet the practical needs of the local situation or cultural expectations. For a local Adventist church, many of the structures emerge in response to the suggestions and requirements of the denominational body. Often structures are not so much intentional but develop out of complex sets of inter-relationships between factors including theology,

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[7] Gary McIntosh, *One Size Doesn't Fit All* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999) 73-82, gives an overview of how the unofficial decision making process differs in relation to church size.

mission, cultural context, personalities and tradition. Structure is what underlies and defines how these systems will interrelate.

Richard Rice points out that structures are essential for cultivating and nurturing religious experience and providing avenues of expression and development. "Unless the members of a congregation can agree on at least the basic features of organization, their life together is doomed."[8] An example of the inherent emergence of structure is clearly seen in the early Adventist church. Following the initial shunning of organisation, frustration set in as mission was hampered by a lack of co-ordination and shared understandings. Various systems were emerging among the group without a co-ordinated approach. A. G. Daniels, who had emerged as one of the thought leaders, wrote passionately about how the purpose of the church was suffering due to a lack of structural definition. Daniels gave the following reasons why defined structure was crucial: (1) It establishes order, (2) secures and fosters unity and co-operation in endeavour, (3) strengthens for conquest, (4) strengthens for defence, (5) aids every member in finding his place and doing his part, (6) develops ability and leads to the bearing of responsibilities, (7) recognises and guards the rights and freedom of every member, (8) is an outward manifestation of the inward union and harmony of the body.[9] In short, for the inter-relationships that were happening in the church to

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[8] Richard Rice, *Believing, Behaving, Belonging* (Roseville, CA: Association of Adventist Forums, 2003), 195.

[9] A. G. Daniels, "Organisation," *Review & Herald* 95 (1918): 6.

continue in a manner that would provide common understanding and achieve the mission of the church, structures had to be defined and put in place.

Often church leaders forget that while structural forms are inherent and vital they are not an end in themselves. Structures are the "skeleton and organs that enable the body to fulfill its intended purposes".[10] In a church context, structure must always be seen as a means of facilitating God's purposes in and through the church and is valuable to the extent that it serves the community and enhances its life. James Emery White comments:

> A church's structure can either serve the church or bring it to a standstill. It can energize a community of faith or lead it toward ever deepening levels of discouragement. It can enable men and women to use their gifts and abilities for the kingdom of God or tie their hands and frustrate the most dedicated efforts of God's people. Why? Because the structure of any organization directly affects morale, effectiveness and unity...few areas of church life are as important to rethink as structure.[11]

The question is not will a church have a structure but rather how is that structure facilitating and shaping the life of the church?

The Interconnectedness of Church Structures

The Apostle Paul's description of the church as an interacting body highlights the interconnectedness of structure.[12] When analysing the place of structure in the church it is not just a matter of looking at a series of one-on-one relationships.

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[10] Christian Schwarz, *Paradigm Shift in the Church* (Carol Stream, IL: Church Smart Resources, 1999), 45.

[11] James Emery White, *Rethinking The Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books), 94.

[12] See further Alan Cole, *The Body of Christ* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1964), 11-16.

One factor may promote another, but it can also hinder it both directly and indirectly. Theology, form, history, social conditioning and organisational culture are deeply interconnected and it often takes years for the relationships between factors to be fully realised. For example, making a change in the way children's discipleship is taught may impact family ministry, evangelistic potential, the overall discipleship process, physical aspects of the church facility and ministry recruitment which may take energy from other areas. In the long term, the theological assumptions, views of church and forms that are shaped in the children's ministry will have an impact when they are played out in the wider church. These are only a few of the interconnections in church life.

The interplay between structures is highlighted in the research of Christian Schwarz. From his study of over one thousand churches, across various ethnic and denominational lines, Schwarz identified eight elements common to churches that are effectively achieving the biblical purposes of the church.[13] Further to the study, Schwarz developed an instrument that measured these

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[13] Christian Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches* (Brighton, QLD: Direction Ministry Resources, 1996), 18 maintains that this research is "the most comprehensive research project of the causes of church growth ever undertaken", the NCD study looked at over 1000 different churches across six continents. The cross section included small, growing and declining, persecuted and state-subsidized, charismatic and non-charismatic, prominent models and unknown churches. The survey analysed 4.2 million individual responses. For an overview of the research project see ibid, 18-22. The process is called Natural Church Development (NCD). The project was in an effort to identify it there were universal principles of church health. Eight elements were found to be universally common in healthy churches: (1) Empowering Leadership, (2) Gift-oriented Ministry, (3) Passionate Spirituality, (4) Functional Structures, (5) Inspiring Worship, (6) Holistic Small Groups, (7) Need-oriented Evangelism, (8) Loving Relationships. Looking at universal principles does not mean factors identified with church health in a local setting are wrong but that they are not necessarily universal. For explanations of each element see Christian Schwarz and Christoph Schalk, *Implementation Guide To Natural Church Development* (Carol Stream, IL: Church Smart Resources, 1998), Part 3.

factors and allowed local congregations to see how they rated in relation to each factor. Schwarz emphasises how all eight elements are interconnected and how the quality of health in a church ultimately depends on succeeding in having all eight areas promoting one another. He identified interdependence as one of the key biotic principles necessary for a healthy church and explains the need to think through the impact any change will have on other aspects of church life, even those that at first are seemingly unrelated.[14] The local church must be seen as a system rather than a collection of structural forms and functions.

To really address church issues for lasting change, the structural explanations must be sought. Structural explanations address the underlying causes of behaviour at a level where those patterns can be changed. Rather than merely addressing a behaviour, the system that fosters, allows or generates that behaviour, needs to be examined.

A factor one person might call sociological could be deemed theological by another. In a similar way, a factor that is historical in nature, often over time, takes on theological significance. A seemingly simple decision such as changing the direction the seats face can often be far more significant than just a matter of shifting furniture. It can be rightly or wrongly connected to a view of God and his unchanging nature, a misshaped ecclesiology and the need to maintain stability in the church. These factors are expressed in ways that often do not reveal the

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[14] For Schwarz, ministry must happen in ways that interconnect and support one another. This concept underlies his biotic principles which are symbiosis, multi-usage, energy transformation, functionality, multiplication and interdependence. For a detailed explanation of how this inter-connectedness works see ibid,126-130.

underlying issue and unless structure is seen as an interconnecting web the debate is left to be played out in contexts that never really address what is causing the resistance.

Often it is easier to focus on isolated parts of the system rather than working through the complex matrix of interconnectedness. However, in putting together a paradigm for structural renewal it is important to identify, as much as possible, how each part of the system interacts. Senge outlines how people often think the world is created of separate unrelated forces. He states, "When we give up this illusion – we can then build organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire."[15]

Structural Renewal and Church Culture

The way the system works together makes up what is called an organisational culture. Hans Finzel describes organisational culture as "the way we do things around here".[16] It is based on the shared values and traditions that the church holds. Factors that shape a church's culture include generational mix, shared theological assumptions, ethnic backgrounds, gender, household status, lifestyle affinity and educational level. It also includes local church history and community influences. Each church has its own unique identity and style.

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[15] Senge, 3.

[16] Hans Finzel, *The Top 10 Mistakes Leaders Make* (Colorado Springs, CO: Victor, 2000), 135.

Ralph Kilmann, an analyst of church systems, describes the power of organisational culture. He outlines how any organisation inherently has an invisible quality, "...a certain style, a character, a way of doing things."[17] This culture may be more powerful than the dictates of any one person or any formally documented system. Kilmann explains how understanding the essence or soul of the organisation requires the analyst to travel below the charts, rulebooks, machines and buildings into the underground world of mind-sets, worldviews and relational identities.

Often church leaders focus on ministry methodology without understanding the foundational structural issues that are far more important. It is far too common for church leaders to see a ministry methodology that works well in a particular church's culture and then try to transplant it into their culture without regard for the climate that fostered the development of the methodology or how it interrelates into a system of values and way of thinking. In other cases denominational leaders are intent on putting pre-packaged programmes on to churches with little regard for the local church culture.

When implementing ministry plans the personal history of a church, the way its organisational homeostasis is maintained, the theological values that have been placed on certain forms, its ecclesiology, social views and procedures all need to be understood and accounted for.[18] The structure needs to serve the church in

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[17] Ralph Kilmann, *Beyond The Quick Fix* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1984), 92.

[18] See below pp. 115-117 for an explanation of organisational homeostasis.

achieving its purposes rather than the church serving the structure. This means that if individual churches are to develop structures that respond to their particular contexts then there will, by necessity, be a variety of structural expressions. A "one structure fits all" approach cannot be expected to work in a context where local churches are responding to their own unique challenges. The challenge for denominational churches is in adapting the structural strengths of the denomination to individual cultural settings and creating ways of expression that respond to individual contexts.

While the culture of each church must be accounted for, it does not have to override structural renewal. Structure is shaped by culture; however, it also has the ability to generate it. Social analyst Donella Meadows outlines how, when placed in the same structural system people, however different, tend to produce similar results. "A truly profound and different insight is the way you begin to see that the system causes its own behaviour."[19] The systems perspective maintains that one must look beyond individual mistakes or bad luck to understand important problems.

Often the real issues involve looking into the underlying structures which shape individual actions and create the conditions where types of events become likely. Senge adds that often we do not perceive the power that is found in structure. He says that, "In fact, we usually don't see the structures at play much at all. Rather

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[19] Donella Meadows, "Whole Earth Models and Systems." *Co-Evolution Quarterly* (Summer 1982): 98-108.

we find ourselves feeling compelled to act in certain ways."[20] One of the keys to a re-vitalised, healthy church is not just being aware of structural dynamics but intentionally shaping them to achieve the set purpose.

[20] Senge, 45.

CHAPTER 2

FUNCTIONALITY - THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRUCTURE AND CHURCH HEALTH

How Structure Impacts Church Health

For the church leader to look simply at the sociology of church structure, as we have in section one, is not the goal. Rather, it is to translate this knowledge into structures that promote the mission of the church. Schwarz likens the church to a plant that when provided with the right elements will inherently be healthy and will grow.[21] Schwarz argues that one factor that allows churches to grow in health is the development of structures that take advantage of ministry opportunities.[22]

It has been argued that structures can often control the rate and size of growth in a church. Daniel Butty states: "The organisational structures of the church can be

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[21] Christian Schwarz, *The ABC's of Natural Church Development* (Brighton, QLD: Direction Ministry Resources, 1997), 20-21. It needs to be noted that while Schwarz found that there was a strong correlation between church health and numerical growth not all growing churches are healthy. Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: A Guide*, 39 outlines how two percent of churches in the NCD research project showed above average quality, in terms of the eight characteristics (see above p.11 footnote 13) but had diminishing worship attendance. Five percent of churches were below-average in terms of the quality indicators but were increasing in worship attendance. Schwarz also notes that: "Quantitative growth is attainable by methods other than the development of the eight quality factors such as effective marketing and contextual factors". However, what Schwarz terms "the most spectacular discovery of the survey" is that without exception among the 1000 churches included in the research, every church in which a quality index of 65 or more was reached of the eight quality characteristics is a growing church. A statistical probability of 99.4% showed that there is a qualitative value beyond which quantitative growth will always occur.

[22] It needs to be kept in mind that structures are only one part of the overall quality of church health. Schwarz states that: "There is no one single factor which leads to growth in churches, it is the interplay of all eight elements...We should be wary of advice to follow someone's pet emphasis that excludes the other quality characteristics. The key is found in the harmonious interplay of all eight elements." Ibid, 38-39.

either a barrier to renewal or a channel to allow the waters of renewal to flow with creative energy."[23] Cohen and Gaukroger found in their study of growing churches that, in general, complex bureaucratic forms of church structure restrict health, while simple, intentional, free-flowing structures increase health and subsequent growth.[24]

Church researcher George Barna found in his study of the habits of highly effective churches that in every church that was effective questions of mission and purpose had been intentionally asked of the structures. Barna states:

> One of the least appealing activities for many ministry leaders is creating form and structure within the organization they run. Identifying roles, creating systems that facilitate growth, establishing a viable corporate culture, instituting policies – this is not the stuff most leader/pastors live for! However, every great leader we have studied understands that unless he/she designs the structure of their organization appropriately, he/she has hindered the potential of that entity. Developing structure may be a boring or personally taxing venture, but it is one whose benefits justify the investment in the process. Highly effective churches cannot be agencies of transformation unless they are structured to facilitate effectiveness.[25]

When structures are intentionally mission-focused most times the ministries that result are healthy.[26]

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[23] Daniel Buttry, *Bringing Your Church Back To Life: Beyond Survival Mentality* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1988), 111.

[24] David Cohen and Stephen Gaukroger, *How to Close Your Church in a Decade* (London: Scripture Union, 1992), 60. Cohen and Gaukroger studied the difference between churches in the United Kingdom that were growing and those that had recently closed down.

[25] George Barna, *The Habits of Highly Effective Churches* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1999), 57.

[26] Kennon Callahan, *12 Keys to an Effective Church* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983), 55. Callahan analysed growing churches to find what traits they had in common. An intentional, streamlined organisational structure was found to be one of the six central

The link between structure and church vitality is demonstrated in the research of Peter Kaldor and the National Church Life Survey team (NCLS).[27] In identifying characteristics of effective congregations in Australia the importance of the underlying structural factors is evident. The indicators of vitality were identified as levels of newcomers, young adult retention, numerical growth, sense of belonging, community involvement, faith sharing/inviting and growing in faith.[28]

The importance of structures that help attenders discover gifts/skills is evident in their strength of relationship with the vitality indicators. Its relationship with numerical growth was 4, with involving and retaining newcomers 3.8, with sharing/inviting 3.1, with growing in faith 14.1 and with growing in a sense of belonging 20.9.[29] The sense of belonging is also related to increasing involvement of attenders and general openess to new initiatives which are both factors that grow out of structural dynamics. Another structural factor is how well ministry roles are supported. A relationship of 5.3 was found between levels of newcomers and if there was support for those in ministry roles. Kaldor does warn that there is need for a balance in terms of ministry involvement.

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characteristics of effective churches. Callahan also notes the high correlation between the decision-making process and church health.

[27] Peter Kaldor, John Bellamy, Ruth Powell, Bronwyn Hughes and Keith Castle, *Shaping A Future* (Adelaide: Openbook , 1997).

[28] Ibid, 7-9 explains how these factors are not intended to be prescriptive of church life however congregations that are vital and effective in their mission and ministry are likely to be growing in many of these areas. There is also an inter-relationship between each of these indicators. The statistics used in this section are drawn from the figures presented on pages 23, 34, 40, 48, 55, 63.

[29] Ibid, 15 explains the strength of relationship score which is based on a scale of variation. 0.5-1% is marginal, 1-3% is of some importance, 3-5% is important, 5-10% is very important and above 10% is critical.

"Congregations where attenders feel over-extended, apathetic or discouraged will be less effective in mission. In some circumstances, leaders may need to rationalise activities and find ways to renew and refresh attenders."[30] Finding this balance is largely a function of structure.

Where the congregation is moving in new directions, there were very important correlations with numerical growth 8.4, growing in faith 8.5 and a crucial relationship of 22.2 with growing in a sense of belonging. It would be expected that the new directions would at some level be associated with a process of structural renewal. A relationship of 18.2 exists between a sense of belonging and if leaders are capable of achieving goals. This factor also has a relationship of 9.5 with growing in faith. Having goals implies at least to some extent a structural measurement. Structures that facilitate attender involvement in decision making were related to community involvement 4.7 and faith sharing 21.7.

The NCLS work shows that there are structures that either promote or hinder the vitality of the church. The issue is to what extent do the structures foster church health and how can they be shaped for increased effectiveness in terms of achieving the mission of the church. This is where issues of functionality arise.

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[30] Ibid, 132.

The Importance of Functionality

Functionality, in terms of structure, is when the organisational sphere of the church is facilitating, contributing to and enhancing the mission of the church. The form of the structure is not the critical point. Rather, it is the effectiveness of that structure in achieving the purpose of the church. The central question functionality asks is: to what degree does a particular structure effectively fulfil the function for which it was designed?

What constitutes structural functionality in one context might be very different in another. No structure is absolutely right or wrong. Structures are secondary. They are a means to the end of serving Christ. In time, a good and useful organisational form will become inadequate as church life and the context for ministry change. As the social makeup of the congregation evolves and the practical needs of the community change, the existing structures may no longer be as effective in responding to the church's context and may need to be modified in order to be functional in the new environment.[31] For this reason Mark Oestriecher warns; "Any program or paradigm or model or system that purports to be timeless – or, for that matter 'guaranteed to work' – is to be avoided at all costs!"[32] Functionality is a process rather than an endpoint. It calls for a continual reassessment of the structures of the church in terms of mission.

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[31] Buttry, 111, provides an overview of the need for structures to adjust to changing church cultures.

Schwarz maintains that the change from ineffective to functional structures is the hardest to make in relation to the other essential elements.[33] People have vested interest in structures. Often, the emotion put into developing a ministry methodology, or its past success, works against an objective assessment of the functionality of the programme or form being made. When members attach theological significance to forms or programmes, it is particularly difficult to make functional changes. Most times it is easier for the church leader to follow the path of least resistance even though the consequence is a reduced ability for the church to achieve its purposes.

Another factor working against functionality is that being intentional takes time and immediate rewards might not always be noticeable. Many churches are so busy doing the activities of "church" that they have no time for assessing whether things are being done in the most effective, functional way.[34] Often this is due to the importance of structural issues being down-played. Evangelism, worship or other aspects of church life are often seen as far more worthy of energy and time. Consequently, and somewhat ironically, these areas of church life themselves are often hindered by a lack of supporting functional structures.

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[32] Mark Oestreicher in Dan Kimball, *The Emerging Church: Vintage Christianity for New Generations.* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 33.

[33] Schwarz, *Paradigm Shift*, 118.

[34] Cohen and Gaukroger, 60.

Understanding The Organic and Organisational Spheres of The Church

To create functional structures one must understand the interplay between the organic and organisational spheres of the church. In the New Testament, we find terms that describe the church used interchangeably in reference to both the static, organisational aspects of the church and the dynamic, organic functions. Functional structures are about ensuring the organisational/institutional/static element of the church is helping stimulate the organic/dynamic element.

An over-emphasis on the organic sphere leaves the church without the common understandings and systems that are vital to ensuring that it works together as a body. Kanzo Uchimaura represents the view of those who over-emphasise the organic sphere when he says; "Faith in Christ is what brings the world into existence, therefore the Church should be just as invisible as is faith.... What Christ called his church is a household of faith whose only rule is love."[35] If only the organic end is taken into account, one can, like Uchimaura, become sceptical of structures. Organisation is seen as merely pragmatic and even a hindrance to the Spirit's work in the church. In the early Adventist movement the organic nature of the church was emphasised at the expense of the institutional elements with the result being confusion in terms of church function.[36]

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[35] Kanzo Uchimaura in Veli-Matti Karkkainen, *Ecclesiology, Ecumenical, Historical and Global Perspectives* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 2002), 168.

[36] James White commented on the confusion caused by those who opposed structure in "Church Organization," *Review and Herald,* 27 August, 1861, 6 stating that: "We seem to be wading through the influence of a stupid uncertainty upon the subject of organization." The development of Adventist local church structure is outlined in chapter 6 of this thesis.

At the other end of the spectrum, institutionalism chokes the life from the church. Too often structure is focused on as an end point in itself. This may be due to structures being more measurable than organic functions. Certain practices and forms such as how communion is distributed, if at all, or how preaching is carried out can be seen as the very essence of the church and to divert from the form is seen as inherently wrong. This can be the case even when the diversion from established practice might add meaning to the form or refocus on the original purpose. Whenever a form is seen as an end-point in itself, the result is institutionalism which can lead to an unhealthy focus on maintaining systems rather than working through the purposes of the organisation and how they are being facilitated. A. G. Daniels was very much aware of this condition when he wrote; "Of course, organization, like nearly all other arrangements with which we have to do, can be overdone. Its details can be multiplied until they become unnecessarily cumbersome and vexatious. But that is the fault of organizers rather than of organization."[37] While structural forms and systems are vital, they are only a means to facilitating God's organic purpose in the church.

Schwarz is opposed to a purely pragmatic institutional approach which imagines that church growth can be manufactured by doing the right thing. On the other hand, he also criticises those who are "super-spiritual", maintaining that church life cannot be manufactured at all. Rather, he looks for a middle way: "Effort and energy should be invested in ensuring that the institutional pole of church life is in

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[37] A. G. Daniels "Some Beneficial Features of Organization," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 95 (1918), 6.

harmony with God's principles, so that the organic pole can develop unhindered and healthy."[38]

Many church members resist change because they are honestly confused in regard to what is fundamental to the organic nature of the church and what is an organisational form, the only role of which it is to facilitate the organic. Some people easily confuse a form, which is changeable, with a truth or principle that is unchangeable. They do not understand the difference between absolutes and non-absolutes or principles and applications of principles. For them, beginning the service with silent prayer can be put in the same category as the trinity or meeting at eleven o'clock on Saturday morning can be invested with the same significance as what the Bible teaches about the second coming of Christ.[39] To facilitate functional structures it is important to help church members understand the difference between function and form; the message and the method. These are issues that grow out of the tension between organism and organisation.

Functionality and Natural Church Development

Schwarz found that despite the vast differences in structure from church to church within denominations and cultures, those with a high quality index, in terms of church health, had basic structural elements in common.[40] These elements were then used to shape the fifteen sub-principles that make up the

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[38] Schwarz, *Paradigm Shift*, 99.

[39] For Seventh-day Adventists 11:00 o'clock on Saturday is the standard worship service time.

[40] Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: A Guide*, 28

quality "functional structures" in the NCD process.[41] Churches that had a high functional structures quality index continually evaluated the extent to which structures improve the self-organisation of the church. Structures that did not help were changed or eliminated.

In the Natural Church Development (NCD) church health process, the element that scores the lowest is referred to as the minimum factor.[42] It is the one that needs to be worked on most if the church is to improve in overall church health. In the last three years, twenty-nine Adventist churches in Australia and New Zealand have used the NCD measurement. The element "Functional Structures" consistently scores very low, being the minimum factor in seven of the churches and in the bottom half of the eight elements in the other churches.[43] The average score for the functional structures element over all the Adventist churches studied was 35.2, well below the score of 65 that is considered healthy. Areas scoring lower were Loving Relationships (34.3), Gift-oriented Ministry (32.3) and Small Groups (29.7). The lowest two are elements that would primarily receive the benefit of a healthier structure. Only two of the Adventist churches scored over 65 in the area of functional structures. This result is of even more concern when it is considered that the very fact a church is using the

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[41] By "functional structures" Schwarz refers to the local church structures that are effective, that work. See appendix A for the fifteen questions that the NCD process links with functional structures.

[42] Footnote 13 and 14 pp.11-12 above outline the eight elements and biotic principles of NCD.

[43] Average NCD scores in all elements for Adventist churches in Australia and New Zealand who were part of the NCD process between 2000-2003 are included in appendix B.

NCD process would suggest it has to some extent thought about issues of mission and effectiveness, which are key principles of functional structures.

The problem the Adventist church has in regard to functional structures is highlighted by the fact that for all Christian churches in Australia, that have been part of the NCD process, functional structures is the second highest element.[44] This result would suggest that structural problems in Seventh-day Adventist churches are more a problem of internal forces rather than attributable to wider culture or other external factors. For Adventist churches, a renewal of structures is a significant factor in moving toward greater church health.

In commenting on the element of functional structure in relation to the overall NCD process Schwarz writes:

> The measurable difference between growing and declining churches is nowhere as great as in the area of structures. This, then, is the area in which growing and declining churches differ most.... In the churches we have studied so far, it has become apparent that, of the eight quality characteristics, the point "functional structures" is one of the most frequent "minimum factors", in other words the area that is the greatest hindrance to growth and in which tangible action would be most liable to bear "fruit". [45]

Schwarz found that in effective, growing churches, leaders were very intentional about how the structures of their churches impacted the health of the church.[46]

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[44] Ian Campbell, "NCD in Australia 1998-2002." *Church Growth Digest* 24 (2002): 2-3.

[45] Schwarz, *Paradigm Shift,* 94.

[46] Ibid.

CHAPTER 3

DETERMINING WHAT MAKES A STRUCTURE FUNCTIONAL

The Basis of Functionality

To this point it has been argued that functional structures play a vital role in the church fulfilling its purpose and that functionality is the degree to which structures facilitate the function for which they were designed. The question that arises is, how is one to determine the nature of the "organic" sphere that is being facilitated? An individual structure might be extremely functional in terms of facilitating its part in a given form or system. However, if that system is not achieving what it has been designed to do then inherently the overall result is dysfunction. Any discussion in regard to the functionality of the church presupposes, at least to some degree, an understanding of why the church exists.

The pictures and definitions that come into the church leaders' minds when they think of the word "church" are the most important things shaping how their congregation functions organisationally.[47] The way leaders define church will determine how they measure success, where they focus time and energy, how they design their strategies and form their ministry philosophies. This then

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[47] Kimball, 92.

shapes how the congregation thinks of church and with it the culture of the church.

It is only when the organic side of the church is defined that the organisational sphere can be measured against it. Without a clear definition of the organic purposes of the church, leaders will continue to incorrectly measure functionality against a variety of standards including attendance, geographic representation, survival, programme achievement or giving.[48] While there is value in making these measurements they are not primarily what the church is called to be or do. Gene Getz explains it in this way:

> I am convinced that both the average church as well as the average parachurch organization definitely lacks a clear grasp on what the Bible teaches about the church. We still confuse function and form, principles and patterns, absolutes and nonabsolutes and that which should be supracultural and that which is strictly cultural. Many Christian leaders have no clear-cut philosophy of ministry based on an adequate ecclesiology that emerges from a careful study of Scripture. Without this foundation, many Christian leaders evaluate success based on personal and corporate experience rather than on biblical theology. Furthermore, quantitative responses still seem to be the "bottom line".[49]

A clear ecclesiology must be at the foundation of any effective paradigm for structural renewal. Three questions are at the core of functionality: (1) What is the church to be? (2) What is the church to do? (3) How is the church to

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[48] Leith Anderson, *A Church For The 21st Century* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1992), 89-91 outlines in detail how unless a clear biblical system of measurement is in place the church will determine success in unbiblical ways.

[49] Gene Getz, *Sharpening the Focus of the Church* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1998), 24.

do it? The answers to the first two questions must be established in order so that the last question can be answered from a strong biblical foundation.

The Relationship Between Ecclesiology and Structure

An analysis of church structure can never be atheological. Questions of church structure are often seen as merely organisational considerations instead of questions of basic theology. Structures are never neutral. They have clear effects on, and are shaped by, the spirituality and theology of the church. While church members may not directly see the implications of ecclesiology and structure, they do experience the vagueness and lack of purpose that results from a very poor ecclesiology or the constraint of a very institutional view of the church.[50]

The church is described in a wide variety of ways in the Bible.[51] In putting together an ecclesiology to underlie structure one must work simultaneously with these different models. Avery Dulles states: "By a kind of mental juggling act, we

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[50] Karkkainen, 161 outlines how over the last fifty years there has been a renewed interest in ecclesiology in the wider Christian church. Some of the more influential ecclesiologies include: (1) Kung, *The Church.* Kung develops a very institutional theology of the church. (2) Wolfhart Pannenberg, *The Church* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1983). Pannenberg outlines a systematic approach to church thinking. (3) Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998). This is an excellent ecclesiology of the growing free church movement. (4) Lesslie Newbigin, *The Household of God: Lectures on the Nature of the Church* (London: SCM Press, 1953). Newbigin is well known for his very missiological view of the church. While each writer has a very different slant on the essence of what "church" is the common theme is that an ecclesiology of church must be established before structures can be deemed functional or not.

[51] Avery Dulles, *Models of The Church* (Goldenbridge, Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1985). This is a standard textbook on Models of the Church. Dulles outlines how scripture gives many pictures that characterise the church including models of institution, mystical communion, herald, servant, eschatology and in the revised edition, the community of disciples.

have to keep several models in the air at once."[52] To pursue just one picture, while being able to produce proof texts for it, ignores the multi-faceted dimension of the church that the Bible describes. The challenge is to integrate these elements into a model of church that translates into functional structures.

Each church member inherently has an ecclesiology of the church in his/her religious makeup. Most times these ecclesiologies are shaped unintentionally and are not theologically sound. The sum of these thought patterns forms the practical ecclesiology of each congregation. One of the tasks of church leadership is to address these paradigms for thinking about the church so that forms and systems can be thought through in a functional way. Too often the way members understand the purpose and existence of the church is not addressed and when new methodologies are introduced they are expected to make changes that go against their paradigm or for which they do not have a sufficient model. Not only are the changes often resisted but even if made they are most times not long lasting or effective.

McLaren points out that even within the same denomination churches of varying sizes will have different ecclesiological paradigms. He states that; "Good church-growth systems would be rendered as powerless...when confronted with a small-church ecclesiology."[53] Often when ecclesiology is addressed, structures that facilitate growth will emerge rather than having to be forced on to the

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[52] Ibid.,10.

[53] Brian McClaren, *Reinventing your Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998), 95.

congregation. McLaren continues by outlining that one of the most functional things a church can do is to ensure that members have a good theology of why the church exists.

For Schwarz, a poor theology of the church is at the heart of what causes dysfunction in a church.[54] Without an intentional, biblically developed theology the church can be structurally reduced to being a hierarchy, institution, church-growth machine, religious entertainment centre or social-service agency.

The Need For An Adventist Ecclesiology – What The Church Is To Be?

Adventists, generally, have not given enough attention to a theology of the church. Richard Rice warns: "This omission in our theological development leaves us without resources in the face of a serious threat to the church in North America."[55] The implications Rice sees include a lack of missiological drive, a poor concept of community and an unclear picture of why someone would even be involved in the mission of the church, much less commit their lives to its purposes. One would assume the same threat for Australian and New Zealand Adventist churches. William Johnsson identified the problem in an editorial of the *Adventist Review*:

> The time has come in Adventist history when more study must be made of the nature of the church.... It is important that the practical questions – questions of structure and organization – not be decided

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[54] Schwarz, *Implementation Guide,* 6.

[55] Rice, 59.

> on a merely pragmatic basis. A theology of the church should inform discussions and decisions about the working of the church.[56]

Church structures need to grow from the doctrine of the church, rather than be imposed and merely justified by proof texts.

In early Adventism, the imminence of the coming of Christ, with the resulting task of evangelising the world in preparation for that event, displaced any tendency toward the development of an introspective, ontological ecclesiology.[57] While understandably the urgency of mission drove the church, its lack of commitment to establishing a basis for other areas of church life and structure led to a very lop-sided view of its purpose. Many of the functional issues the church faces today may be related to the very one-dimensional, pragmatic view of the church that Adventism grew up in.

While on paper there are statements that explain the value of other areas of church life such as worship, discipleship, fellowship and ministry, for the most part, these have not been translated into local church structure. An example of statements and structure not working together can be seen in the area of spiritual gifts. The importance of spiritual gifts and the priesthood of all believers are included among the fundamental beliefs of the Adventist Church. However, most Adventist churches take their ministry placement structure from the *Adventist*

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[56] William Johnsson, "Challenges Facing The Church," *Adventist Review* (June 12, 1983), 4.

[57] Oliver, 327.

Church Manual which is based on a nominating committee system that does little to foster gift-oriented ministry.[58]

Increasingly, Adventist churches are experimenting with differing ministry methodologies that grow out of ecclesiological understandings which are quite different from the context of Adventism. While many of these methodologies are excellent in their own culture and are not inherently wrong, they do not always translate well into an Adventist environment. A clear definition of Adventist ecclesiology is needed if structures are going to be renewed in a way that is biblically based and is effective in an Adventist context.[59]

The Church As Community

The church as community in the context of the body of Christ, is a model that would underlie a more holistic church structure.[60] Community is central to who God is, as expressed in the trinity. In the New Testament, the church is God's new community to reflect his principles to the world. For John, being God's

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[58] Procedures for governance, membership procedures and organisational form for Seventh-day Adventist churches is provided in General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000). In how much detail the *Adventist Church Manual* must be followed is cause for debate in Adventism; see Ron Gladden, *The Seven Habits of Highly Ineffective Churches* (Lincoln, NE: AdventSource, 2004), 114-115.

[59] While the starting point for an Adventist ecclesiology, based on the church as a community, is outlined below pp. 31-32 this is only a very brief overview. It is outside the scope of this thesis to develop the thorough ecclesiology that is needed in Adventism.

[60] Rice, argues very well for a change in the ecclesiological focus of the church toward community. Russell Burrill, *The Revolutionized Church of the 21st Century* (Fallbrook, CA: Hart Research Centre, 1998) makes a similar call for Adventism to develop a "church as community" based ecclesiology with small groups at the heart. Arthur G. Gish, *Living In Christian Community* (Kitchener, OT: Herald, 1979) and Gilbert Bilezikian, *Community 101* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997) provide overviews of how a church based on an ecclesiology of community in the body of Christ would function.

community is at the centre of what the Christian church is called to be (1 John 1:1-3). The primary role of the church is found in being a biblical community that demonstrates the practical application of what happens when a group of people live with Christ at the head. The church must be seen as God's family; adopted by Him as children. Other functions of the church, for example evangelism and ministry, would grow out of this primary sense of being God's community.

The structural implications include the need to develop systems of interdependence within the church that confront the culture of individualism that has robbed the church of what it really means to be a body. A church that takes community seriously would be developing fellowship systems that value togetherness, including small groups and a team ministry environment. Worship structures would be participative. The ministry placement process would be gifts-focused in the context of having systems where people use their gifts as part of an overall community process.[61]

The picture that comes into a persons mind when they think of the church should primarily be images of community. Seeing the church foremost as a community would go a long way towards shaping a more functional concept of the church and with it the emergence of more functional structures.

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[61] Randy Frazee, *The Connecting Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001) outlines the implications for a church structure that puts a high value on community. This extends to an emphasis on living in the same geographic area and having possessions in common.

What Is The Church To Do?

Functional structures need to grow out of a clear understanding of what the church is to do. Church leaders and theologians have defined the biblical functions of the church in various ways. In an 1861 *Review & Herald* article, nine Adventist ministers put their names to a proposed structure that they thought would bring about a more effective, biblically balanced organisation. The biblical elements they intended for the new structure to foster were "Service, spiritual growth and the preservation of order and purity."[62]

Loren B. Mead balances four New Testament functions of the church in his outline of what constitutes a healthy congregation: (1) *koinonia*, a sense of community that transforms the lives of members. (2) *kerygma,* the proclamation of the gospel. (3) *didache,* teaching that grows the church in Christ-likeness and (4) *diakonia*, serving one another and the wider community[63] Mead believes that often church members are left to stumble on to the purposes of church rather than being part of an intentional plan to fulfil them.

Rick Warren, a Southern Baptist pastor, authored a popular book on the purposes of the church. [64] Warren outlines five Biblical purposes of the church as (1) ministry, (2) discipleship, (3) nurture/fellowship, (4) worship and (5)

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[62] J. H. Waggoner, James White, J. N. Loughborough. E. W. Shortridge, Jospeh Bates, J. B. Frisbie, M. E. Cornell and Moses Hull, "Conference Address, Organization," *Review and Herald*, 3 June 1861, 21-22.

[63] Loren B. Mead, *Transforming Congregations for the Future* (Alban Institute, 1994), 118.

[64] Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 103-107.

evangelism. He then explains how to make these purposes the basis of the entire church structure. In what has become known as the Purpose Driven Model everything the church does is evaluated in terms of its achieving one of the five purposes.

For Warren, the issue is not in what style, size or context a particular church is functioning, the question is whether or not the five purposes of church underlie all structures and are taught in a balanced way.[65] Perhaps it is a reflection on how far the Christian church has moved into unintentional institutionalism that these basic biblical purposes were seen, by some, as a revolutionary new model.

The New Testament gives clear instructions for what the church is to do, in terms of function. Christ's commission (Matt 28:19-20) states in general terms why He instituted the church. The books of Acts and the Epistles demonstrate the way in which they carried out His command. Some theologians weight the importance of the functions in terms of how often they are mentioned while others assess the importance levels of each function in relation to what order Jesus or Paul mentioned them.[66] A more balanced approach is to see each function as necessary in the church and use them to the extent of the mission a particular church is called to.

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[65] Ibid., 127-128.

[66] For example Millard Erickson *Introducing Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2000), 347 makes the case based on the weight of Jesus' teaching to the church that the primary function of the church is its evangelistic mission. John MacArthur, *Marks of a Healthy Church*, (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1990), 13, 49 takes a similar approach but bases the importance on order of appearance.

While differences are expressed in regard to what significance is made of the sacraments, church authority and the relationship between the church and the kingdom, a general consensus exists amongst church health analysts in regard to the core biblical purposes of the church.[67] The church needs to be structured in such a way that the following five purposes are facilitated:

(1) Community - genuine fellowship must be facilitated among believers (Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:24-25; Philemon 2:1-4; 1 John 1:3.)

(2) Worship - The church must facilitate corporate worship (John 4:23-24; Acts 2:42)

(3) Spiritual Growth - Instruction, reproof and training must happen in an intentional way. (Acts 20:28-32; 2 Timothy 2:2; Ephesians 4:12-13)

(4) Evangelism - A continuous effort to reach unchurched people must be made. (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15, Acts 1:8; Colossians 1:28.)

(5) Service - Each member is to be glorifying God and edifying one another through serving in ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Peter 4:10, 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12:6-11)

The description of the church in the *Adventist Fundamentals*, while using different words, includes these five purposes:

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[67] Stephen A. Macchia, *Becoming A Healthy Church: 10 Characteristics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999) lists ten essentials, however all are extensions or breakdowns of the five key areas. Gene Getz and Joe Wall, *Effective Church Growth Strategies* (Nashville, TN: Word, 2000) while once again expressing their essentials differently are oriented around the five purposes. The same is the case for Keenon L. Callahan, *Twelve Keys To An Effective Church* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983), Mark Conner, *Transforming Your Church* (Tonbridge, Kent: Sovereign Word, 2000) and Donald J. MacNair, *The Practices of a Healthy Church* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1999).

> In continuity with the people of God in Old Testament times, we are called out from the world; and we join together for *worship* for *fellowship*, for *instruction in the Word*, for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, for *service* to all mankind and for the worldwide *proclamation of the gospel*.[68] (Emphasis added)

In addition to the five purposes this statement includes the celebration of the Lord's supper. While it could be argued that the divine ordinances are essential to what the church is to do, they can be seen as a function of the purpose of worship that must be expressed in the context of community.[69] As such, they are not included in the basic functions of the church for the purpose of this thesis. The *Adventist Fundamentals* show that at least theoretically the five purposes are very much part of what Adventist belief understands the church is called to do. These five purposes form the basis on which a structure can be assessed to determine whether or not it is contributing to the biblical mission of the church.

Functional Church Practice – How is The Church to do Ministry?

Church practice describes the strategies, actions and methodologies a church employs to achieve its mission. While the biblical purposes of what the church is designed to "be" and called to "do" are the same for every congregation, the way

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[68] Ministerial Association General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe: A Biblical Exposition of Fundamental Doctrines* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1988), 134.

[69] This has been a topic of contention throughout Christian history. The linking of the Christian sacraments with Salvation, initially by Augustine, led to an ecclesiology that saw the church as the administrator of the sacraments and therefore the access to salvation. The result was a very institutional view of the church. The Protestant Reformation in part addresses this imbalance with the emphasis on the priesthood of all believers. While the sacraments are to be distributed in a community of believers they could be seen as a part of the expression of worship rather than one of the primary purposes. For an excellent overview of how the sacraments shape ecclesiology and how this relationship functions in an Adventist context see Darius Yankiewicz, "The Authority of the Sacraments," *Record,* (May 18, 2002), 10-11.

the purposes are expressed will be unique. However, there are common questions that a church needs to address in shaping how it will facilitate the mission of the church. These questions include: (1) What is the most effective way to work in order to make the greatest difference in the lives of people? (2) What sort of church government allows the purposes to be lived out in the life of the church? (3) How can intentionality be fostered in the chosen structure? (4) What systems of accountability need to be put in place? (5) What is required in terms of achieving a structure that facilitates ministry without being bound in institutionalism? As each church functions in its own unique culture there is no one answer. However, there are basic principles that underlie the process of integrating purpose into structural practice.

A host of ministry tools exist that are designed to help a congregation in the structural development process.[70] The most tested and widely used ministry development tool used in the context of Adventism in Australia and New Zealand is Natural Church Development.[71] NCD does not outline purposes of church but rather what essential elements are critical in

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[70] Other widely used instruments that measure functionality are: Thom Rainer's, *Church Health Survey* (Louisville, KY: Church Central Associates, 2003) and the MAP tests see Jay Johnston. "An Introduction To MAP – A Kingdom Focused Church Model and Process." *Church Administration* 45 (2002-2003): 10-13. However, the NCD process is the most widely used in the South Pacific and integrates all areas of church life more so than do the above two tests.

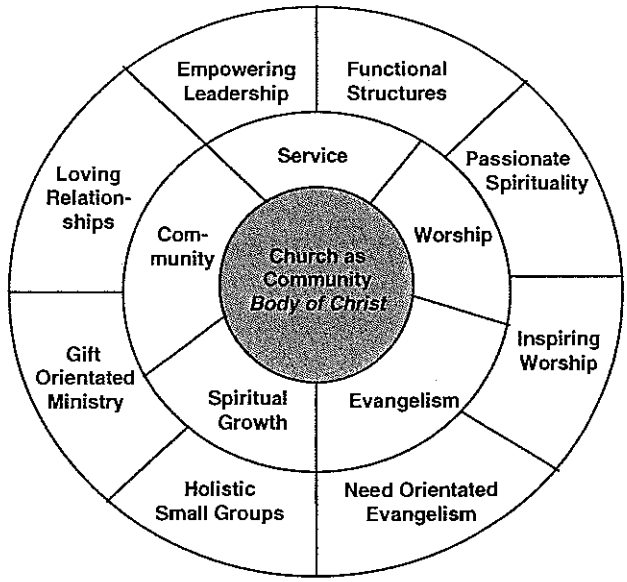
[71] See above p.11 for an overview of the NCD process. The NCD process is not without its critics. Criticisms against NCD include: It assumes a relatively conservative model of church life with such structures as a minister implied. It is fundamentally about congregational development and sees the congregation as the expression of church with little reference to church at, for instance, denominational levels. It assumes an adult concept of church and does little to address children's and youth ministry areas. Further evaluation of the NCD process is provided in Mike Brooker, *Exploring Natural Church Development* (Ridley Hall: Cambridge, Grove Books, 2001), 19-23.

ensuring ministry concepts are implemented in an effective way. It is the adjective used to describe each element that requires functionality.[72] It also needs to be kept in mind that NCD is based on those elements that were found to be universally evident in healthy churches. There are likely to be elements and variations that are effective at a local level that, while not being universal, need to be thought through.

While NCD is a useful tool for ensuring a ministry plan is working, it does not necessarily promote what the church is to "be" and "do" in regard to a biblical context. For instance, a church might score high on passionate spirituality even though its teaching might be unbiblical or leadership might be seen as empowering even though it may not empower biblical purposes. However, if the structure of the church is built on a biblical ecclesiology that expresses the five purposes of the church, then the elements of NCD can form a helpful basis in developing a functional structure.

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[72] The eight elements are listed above in footnote 13 p.11. For example, it is not enough to have small groups, they need to be holistic. In a similar way worship needs to be inspiring, relationships loving and leadership empowering. This applies for each of the eight areas where the presence of the element alone is not the point but rather how that element functions.



Centre Circle: What the church is to "be" (essential)
Middle Circle: What the church is to "do" (essential)
Outside Circle: How functional ministry can be done (flexible) The forms that facilitate ministry need to be developed in each church. The NCD concepts shown here are helpful in this process

Fig. 1. Factors That Underlie Church Functionality

While figure 1 shows a common basis for shaping functional structures, the actual ministry forms that facilitate these concepts will be different as each church addresses its unique environment. Historical, sociological and organisational insights will be valuable in setting the context for functional ministry forms to be developed.

CHAPTER 4

LOCAL CHURCH STRUCTURE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

How the New Testament church responded to its mission, reacted to its environment and facilitated structural emergence provides insights and principles that can underlie healthy church structures today. It is important that what constitutes the essentials of the New Testament church are identified and separated from what are merely forms and practices that might achieve an underlying purpose but are not essential in themselves. Asking how the structures came about, especially in regard to those forms that can be traced from today back to the New Testament, will illuminate how today's church can react to these structures.

Proponents of a variety of church models, including mega, institutional, cell, home, free and various denominational systems, claim a biblical mandate for their particular structure - even at times showing how other models of expressing the church are "unbiblical".[73] In most cases how the differentiation between form

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[73] William Beckham, *The Second Reformation* (Houston TX: Touch), 27-31 claims in his seven tests to identify a New Testament church that if the church does not consider the small group as the church in nature, purpose and power then it is not a New Testament church. Other tests include the church being a living organism over organisation, an ability to reproduce dynamically, to have a sense of simplicity, to multiply, to reach new adults and survive persecution. Beckham goes as far as claiming that the cell church is the "church Jesus designed". Warren, 96-98 and Bill Hybles and Lynne Hybles, *Rediscovering Church: The Story and Vision of Willow Creek Community Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 9, clearly see the mega churches they pastor as very much following the pattern for New Testament churches. Unlike Beckham, they also see a variety of other models also constituting New Testament church Warren states: "There are many different models given in Scripture".

and function is made lies at the core of these disagreements. For instance, some church leaders believe that the house church movement is the only biblical form of church and the only way church can really happen.[74] Others would say this is a form that was born out of necessity at the time and what functionally happened in these homes is where the essence of church can be found rather than in the house structure itself.

Structural Emergence in the Apostolic Church

The book of Acts gives the first insight into how the New Testament church interprets its purpose and goes about achieving it.[75] From Acts we can deduce principles, practices and patterns and can observe powers that advanced the church. In Acts 2-5 the church is presented as a qualitative community empowered by the Holy Spirit. In Acts 6 the church is evolving as an operative structure. In Acts 8-12 the church is evangelising in related communities. In Acts 14:23 leaders are appointed and consecrated. From the fluidity of a relatively unstructured gathering to the point where systems of help are being set up (Acts 6:3-4) and wider councils held (Acts 15), Acts demonstrates an emerging structure as the church responds to the gospel commission to go, teach, baptise and establish community (Matt 28:19-20).

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[74] Definitions by proponents of the house church movement claim the house church structure to be the only church model that fosters true *ekklesia.* Simson Wolfgang, *Houses That Change The World* (Cumbria: OM Publishing, 2001) represents this opinion.

[75] Some might argue that the book of Acts was actually written after the Pauline letters, however, in terms of the church's development Acts recounts the story of the church in its infant form.

For early church structure to be facilitated in any orderly way there inherently had to be a shared understanding of mission, exclusive character and established sense of values, even if not formalised. The leadership of the apostles fulfilled these conditions. While there are a variety of opinions in regard to the use of the term apostle,[76] it is generally agreed that this office provided the centre around which issues of structure could be shaped.[77] The role of an apostle had antecedents in both the Greek and Jewish worlds with the understudies of rabbis or philosophers being referred to as apostles, meaning ambassadors. The understudies were designated with the full responsibility for representing the one who sent them and having the inherent authority to carry on the work of their teacher.[78]

While Peter appears to be looked to most for leadership (Acts 1:15) in no sense was there any authoritarian hierarchy with Peter, or any other apostle, at the

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[76] Everett F. Harrison, *The Apostolic Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1985), 105-107 maintains that the term apostle has both a restricted meaning, applying to the twelve disciples, and an unrestricted wider meaning referring to others who are designated apostles by association with the mission for Christ. Harrison sees a different meaning of apostle extending outside the New Testament where it has a purely missionary function. He finds no ground for apostolic succession. Hans Kung, *Structures of The Church* (London: Burns and Oates, 1965), 155 argues for apostolic succession continuing throughout church history on the basis that this role is inherent in faith and creed and must be passed on if faith and creed are also to be passed on. D. Muller *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology:* (Exter: The Paternoster Press, 1975), 1:134 contends: "We are forced by the perplexing multitude of attempts at a solution to the conclusion that the darkness that lies over the beginnings of the primitive Christian apostolate can no longer be illuminated with certainty."

[77] Maurice Goguel, *The Primitive Church* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1964), 112 explains how the apostles provided the transcendent origin, exclusive character and the value of a norm that was needed for organisation because they had received from the Lord the mission and power to form his church.

[78] Ibid., 95 for a discussion on the role of apostle and its antecedents.

head.[79] By the time of the Jerusalem Council, it seems that James had moved into this "chairmanship" role (Acts 15:13-33; 21:17). [80] While the apostles provided leadership the overall structure was without rank. Richard Hanson states that; "Christians acted as if the whole church, and not merely the minsters, possessed authority."[81] The egalitarian nature of the apostolic church can be seen in the use of the term "Priest". In the Old Testament the term Priest referred to the one who performed ministry for the people which they were not able to perform themselves. If the New Testament writers had wanted to use a term that distinguished clergy and laity in any way this would have been the obvious choice. However, when the New Testament writers did use the term "priest" it was given new meaning in referring to the priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:5, Rev 1:5-6, Rev 5:10).[82]

The actual structures of the New Testament church are difficult to identify. Functions and directives are often described without a description of forms. For example, Acts 2:46 reveals that the early church met together in the temple courts, broke bread in their home and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.

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[79] Harrison, 107-108 explains how Peter's leadership was of a moral rather than ecclesiastical nature and based on his personal qualities rather than any attempt to shape a hierarchy.

[80] Ibid., 107. Harrison explains how James took over the leadership role of the Jerusalem congregation, with other elders, when Peter began his superintending work in Judea and Samaria.

[81] Richard Hanson, *Christian Priesthood Examined* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1979), 10.

[82] E. Earle Ellis, *Pauline Theology: Ministry and Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 100-103 discusses the concept of corporate priesthood that underlies Paul's concept of ministry.

There is no further explanation of the forms this process took. Details of when, how many of these meetings should be held, or who should lead out, are not given. When form is described it varies from situation to situation. The meeting together described in Acts 20:7 is quite different to that described in 1 Cor 11:33. This demonstrates the need to emphasise biblical functions over a fixation on forms.

Just how structured the New Testament church actually was is also very hard to pinpoint. Ellis asks: "Did orderly procedure in a Christian congregation presuppose some ordered structure or did the congregations begin as spontaneous, charismatic meetings and only later, as problems arose, create structures, including official ministries, to meet the needs of the believing community?"[83] The answer is both. There seems to be no entirely uniform pattern. Churches grew up in different settings with varying degrees of structure adopted from their social or religious environments and then adapted to meet particular challenges. Just how unstructured/structured or authoritarian one deems the apostolic church to be is determined by the point in time that is analysed. The structural fluidity was being shaped by mission and taking on the necessary organisation to achieve it.

The use of the word *ekklesia* as the one most often translated "church" gives insight to an inherent understanding of structure. The basic meaning of *ekklesia*

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[83]Ibid., 87.

is an assembly called apart to be something or to serve a particular function.[84] Its use then implies three aspects of local church structure in the New Testament. (1) Believers were to assemble together which implies a specific time and place (1 Cor 11:18); (2) they were to co-ordinate with other believers in the locality (1 Cor 16:1, 1 Thess 2:14); and (3) they had a purpose to achieve. The way they achieved this purpose was shaped by their environment.

Structural Emergence In The Jewish Church

The apostolic church emerged within the framework of its ancestral Jewish faith. There did not initially seem to have been a desire to leave the parent religion. The Christian believers worked within the Jewish system where the growth of sects was not uncommon and where ten adult males could come together and form a synagogue. [85] When the synagogue became a Christian church, the same Jewish order of meeting continued in regard to praise, prayer and instruction (Acts 2:42-47).[86] The practise of having a sermon was a direct development from the Jewish synagogue practice where a text was read and then expounded. The emergence of the role of elder, in the Jewish Christian churches, was based upon that of overseer in the synagogue system where the

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[84] James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Greek Testament* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1890), 26.

[85] Ralph P. Martin, *Worship in the Early Church* (London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1964), 18-27. The synagogue for the Jew was not only the house of worship but also the town-hall and the court of justice

[86] Ibid, 24.

Sanhedrin had a seat of elders.[87] More then one elder was appointed in each church with the role of spiritual oversight (1 Peter 5:1-4).

In Acts, the newly converted believers are found meeting together in the temple courts and breaking bread in their homes showing how Jewish customs were joined with their conversion experience (Acts 2: 42-47) . Even Paul, though a strong advocate of Gentile freedom, as a Jew himself kept Jewish religious customs scrupulously (Acts 21:20-26, 1 Cor 9:20-22).

Structures were put in place to facilitate various areas of church life including discipline (Matt 18:15-18, Rom 16:17; 1 Cor 5:12), leadership selection (Acts 1:23, 6:5-6) and raising money (1 Cor 16:1-2; 2 Cor 8:1-5). The variation in how these functions were carried out throughout the New Testament demonstrates room for adaptation to fit a particular context. In the area of leadership selection, casting lots is replaced by a more character focused system in the Pastoral Epistles. Systems of discipline are also expressed with variation. It seems that the believers were free to choose the structures that best suited their circumstances and facilitated the biblical functions of the church.

The household meeting was the one structure that defined the New Testament church more then any other. For the Jewish Christians, the household meeting was based along the lines of the *paterfamilias* gathering, common in Jewish society. Extended family of aunts, uncles, cousins, hired hands and servants

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[87] The terms Elder and Bishop are closely related in the New Testament and most scholars draw little distinction between them. See Harrison, 107.

would regularly come together for religious meals, worship and fellowship. Meals were an important component of Roman-era religion, sacrifice regularly included a meal shared by the devotees.[88] The Christian household meetings were often mixed groups connected by a very deep sense of family in Christ. In adopting the household as its form, the early church provided the convert with a new and primary community.[89] This structure was probably more a function of already existing societal norms, structures and practicalities rather than any strategic decision seeing this as the best or only way to facilitate church.[90]

Under apostolic care and direction, organisation mostly came about in response to necessity and was very ministry-driven. Only such systems emerged as were necessary to help fulfil Christ's commission and to provide compassionate care for and instruction of the flock. Jesus was the sole head (Eph. 1:20-23) with each local congregation being shepherded by a plurality of men called elders/pastors/overseers who were assisted by deacons (Acts 14:23; 20:17, 28). For the most part, structures to facilitate church life were adaptations of the Jewish system.

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[88] Larry W. Hartado, *The Origins of Christian Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999) 26.

[89] For a more detailed discussion on the structure of the household gatherings see Keith Russell, *In Search of the Church* (NY: Alban Institute, 1994), 3-9.

[90] John Reumann, "One Lord, One Faith, One God, But Many House Churches," in *Common Life in the Early Church: Essays Honoring Graydon F. Snyder,* ed. Julian V. Hills (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press), 117. Reumann suggests that the household was a "capitulation" to the culture of the day.

Structural Emergence in the Gentile Church

The expansion of the Christian church beyond its Jewish roots resulted in the establishment of many Christian churches among people who had no Jewish background. Questions arose concerning the extent to which Jewish customs should be imposed on the Gentile believers. This tension is seen being worked through in the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15). For the Gentile Christians, structural emergence was influenced by their own societal context, even though some in the Jewish churches thought the Gentiles should take on identical forms to them.[91]

While the basic building block of the Gentile church was also the household meeting, its forms were based on a different experience. The Gentiles were already familiar with associations (*collegia),* for various purposes. These associations included trade guilds, dramatic guilds, athletic, dining and burial clubs, along with friendly, literary and financial societies. To the outside observer, the Christian church only added one more to the existing number of associations. This societal structure was generally larger and more egalitarian then the *paterfamilias* structure the Jewish Christians had adopted. As a result, a Gentile congregation was generally structured for larger gatherings in the way it expected its leaders to operate and how meetings were facilitated.

The churches used the same name for their meetings and in part also their officers as did the guilds. For the Gentile churches the terms and functions of

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[91] The Jerusalem Council (Acts15) shows that there was some uncertainty in regard to how far the rules could be relaxed for the Gentiles.

overseer and elder came not from the synagogue but from how these ranks operated in the guilds. Even though both the Jewish and Gentile Christians had "elders" they had different roles that were in keeping with the structures they were adopted from.[92] The Greek churches appear to be more charismatic than was the case for the Jerusalem Church. This is not surprising in view of the different religious environments each grew up in.[93]

Burrill claims that the early church "developed a deliberate culturally sensitive strategy to plant culturally sensitive churches in every people group they found."[94] Burrill may be overstating the case of intentionality however, it is obvious that the New Testament church did sense the necessity for church planting to occur in order to fulfil the Great Commission and were able, for the most part, to distinguish between essentials and what could be shaped by culture.[95]

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[92] Eduard Schweizer, *Church Order in the New Testamen* (Zurich: SCM Press, 1961), 98-99 explains how the forms of service evident in the Jewish community were not evident in the Pauline churches. The role of elder in this environment is not so much the overseer of form and procedure that grew out of the synagogue and was expected in Jerusalem but rather a co-ordinator of the vitality that is found in the ever-present Spirit which would be much more in keeping with the purely functional role of a guild co-ordinator.

[93] For an overview of the cultural influences in the shape of the early church see William Klassen, "Normative Self-Definitions of Christianity in the New Testament" in Hills, ed. 91-105. Michael Goulder, *St. Paul Versus St, Peter: A Tale of Two Missions* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 76 asserts that there was never a single, unified church but instead two competing missions: one overseen by Peter and James in Jerusalem and the other by Paul in Gentile centers. Goulder contends that each group had conflicting ideas on many issues including the concept of church.

[94] Russell Burrill, *Recovering an Adventist Approach to the Life and Mission of the Local Church* (Fallbrook, CA: Hart Research, 1988), 40.

[95] Ibid., 41 outlines a very formalised system of intentional church planting steps. However, this appears to be reading back into the text a pre-conceived idea rather than it being an account of what seemed best and right for the expansion of the church. While Burrill is right to

The New Testament churches interacted with their social environments and adapted societal structures to achieve their purposes. The ability of the early churches to separate culture and essence, allowing different cultural expressions, was a major factor in Christianity becoming an international church.

Church Structure in the Pauline Writings

The writings of Paul reflect the growth of the organisational aspects of the church. The status of officers in the church had become a lot more fixed. Some believers are even given the right to receive remuneration for their services which reflects a developing system of organisation (1 Cor 9:14, 1 Tim 5:18). In the book of First Timothy, which was written by Paul to give instructions regarding church leadership and conduct, the role of elders and deacons is very clearly defined. Some question the Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles because of their advocacy of a well-structured leadership in the local church. However, church structure in the Pastoral Epistles is only a natural evolutionary development of the process already revealed in Acts.[96]

Paul's overriding model of the church is "The body of Christ" which leads to his emphasis on spiritual gifts as the determinant of function in the church. The church was not organised around positions or power, but instead was organised around the gifts of individual members.[97] For Paul, ministry was very much

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emphasise the mission focus of the early church, it is another step to see them as an intentional step-by-step strategy.

[96] See Ellis, 102-107 for a discussion of Paul's authorship and the development of church order in the Pastoral Epistles.

dependant upon the gifts of the Spirit and function was more to be emphasised than office. In regard to worship, the Pauline churches are relatively flexible with an emphasis on expressing the body of Christ through spiritual gifts.

When it comes to an outline of various ministry functions, Paul gives no single normative pattern. He provides four lists of ministries, each different to the other (Rom 12:6-8, 1 Cor 12:4-11, 28-31 and Eph 4:8-13). Nowhere are instructions given on how these gifts fit into an organisational system other than to say "decently and in order" (1 Cor 14:40). However, when needed, Paul clarifies and tightens the regulations in order to meet problems that have arisen in the churches. For example, he was concerned with egocentrism, lack of order and social decencies in regard to the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 11:21). Paul's instructions to remedy the problem include waiting until everyone is served before eating and telling anyone who is hungry to eat at home, making the Lord's Supper separate from an ordinary meal. The way communion is experienced today in Adventist churches includes waiting until everyone is served, based on this Pauline corrective instruction. Regulations are imposed to correct an abuse in the practices of the congregation rather then define what the ideal is. This is also the case for when Paul gives restrictions on the gift of prophecy (1 Cor 14:32-37), tongues (1 Cor 12-14) and the role of women (1 Tim 2:9-15).[98]

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[97] Carl A. Volz, *Pastoral Life and Practise in the Early Church* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1990), 14.

[98] Bilezikian, 86-87 maintains that Paul's instructions can be divided into what is his normative model of the church as expressed in Ephesians and his remedial model were abuses had to be corrected. For a more thorough analysis of how Paul deals with woman in the church see Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1985), 144-153, 283-288.

Along with an unstructured charismatic ministry, an appointed ministry was also present in the Pauline churches.[99] While it had its basis and authority in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, it was distinct. It was identified with persons who were recognised to have established continuing responsibilities. The letters to Philippians and Colossians name specific classes of ministers (Phil 1:1; Col 1:7). Most prominent were the apostles (1 Cor 9:1-12, 2 Cor 12:12). Others to have defined order were those involved in administrative leadership, teaching, worship and missionary endeavours. From the progression of order in the Pastoral Epistles it seems that Paul gives increasingly more prominence to the defined ministry roles, especially in the latter part of his life. This could reflect Paul's recognition of the need for defined direction if the church is to be protected and focused beyond his leadership. Paul's approach to structure demonstrates a willingness to adjust forms as required to be effective in different ministry environments.

The Flexibility of the New Testament Church

A mindset that needs to be addressed is one that believes a divine, biblically mandated pattern for church structure must exist and if only the church could find it, then its problems would be solved. To refer to one New Testament church structure is to miss the point of the great variety and fluidity of structure in the New Testament. Churches with a Jewish background, such as in Jerusalem and Antioch, differed considerably from churches in the Greco-Roman world, such as

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[99] See Banks, 102-12, 131-51 also Schweizer, 96-98.

those in Ephesus, Corinth and Rome. John's letter to the seven churches (Rev 2-3) highlights the diversity of congregations even within a similar geographic region. Each church had different strengths and various ways of going about its ministry. There is no exhaustive form or even fixed terminology for ministry.

Based on their unique environmental and social variables, each church fashioned its own structures, offices and processes for congregational life and worship. This process often included counsel from the apostles. Patzia contends; "Any desire to get back to the New Testament church must deal with this reality and ultimately ask: To which church should we return?"[100] The New Testament provides nothing tantamount to a constitution, working policy, mission statement or strategic plan. It was very much a dynamic phenomenon with no one divine pattern of organisation.

Gene Getz believes that the reason the New Testament gives so much attention to function and includes very little form is that the methodologies are divinely intended to be flexible. He suggests that "If God had dictated form, He would have locked the church into the Middle-Eastern culture in the first-century world. It would have greatly restricted the spread of Christianity to other cultures."[101]

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[100] A G. Patzia, *The Emergence of the Church* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 2001), 144.

[101] Getz, *Sharpening*, 37-38. Gary L. McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth* (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Books, 2003), 155 agrees stating that the reason the New Testament gives so much attention to function and includes very little form is that the methodologies are divinely intended to be flexible.

This fact is often overlooked today and the impression given that God has somewhere mapped out the perfect local church structure. The *Adventist Church Manual* can give this impression when, after addressing the divine organisation given to the Israelites, states:

> When we consider the New Testament church we find the same perfection in its organization. It could not be otherwise, for it is of divine origin.... For the sake of her healthy development and for the accomplishment of her glorious task of carrying the gospel of salvation to all the world, Christ gave to His church a simple but effective system of organization. Success in her endeavours to achieve her mission depends on loyal adherence to this divine pattern.[102]

The result is that church members can get the impression that the forms and structures in the *Adventist Church Manual* are in some way divinely inspired and ignore the huge amount of flexibility in relation to structure that the New Testament gives. The consequence of such an approach takes away the New Testament ability to adjust forms to more effectively achieve the functions that are divinely mandated in scripture.

The variety of structure in the New Testament calls for a functional ecclesiology recognising that while Scripture provides certain universal principles regarding the church structure and its ministry, it does not establish a fixed model of the church. By implication, this encourages the church to exercise responsible freedom in structuring itself.

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[102] *Adventist Church Manual*, 21-22.

Biblical Principles that Shape Functional Structures

While the New Testament gives room for great flexibility in structuring the local church, there are clearly defined principles that need to underlie the structures if the church is to achieve its God given purpose.

a: The Headship of Christ

The church is described as Christ's body and His bride (Col 1:24; Rev 19:7). This means one person is never exalted as head of the church. The church is, in fact, a benevolent dictatorship, with Christ as the dictator (Eph 5:23). The head is to rule the body and keep the desires of the body in check. In 1 Peter 5:2-3, Peter tells the elders that they are to "tend the flock of God that is in your charge not as domineering but as being examples to the flock". He then goes on to call Christ the "chief shepherd".

While it would be expected that every Christian church would attest to this statement, often churches can get institutionalised to the point that they become reliant on their own forms and structures rather than Christ. Church leaders must remember that the source of life is not in the components, structure or process. It is the connection with the Godhead that breathes life into the church. Pictures of the church as the people of God and body of Christ reinforce this concept.

The church must not be so structurally pragmatic that it forgets that it is a spiritual organism. This does not just mean putting Jesus at the top or centre of an organisational flowchart but fostering a culture that seeks God's leading at all

levels of church life and is ready to adapt a structure if it is discerned that the leading of God is directing otherwise. Recognising Christ's headship brings with it a commitment to prayer in the culture of the church. Paul often reminds the church to pray corporately and privately for one another and the life of the church. "It cannot be overstated that an emphasis on prayer is the essential component in the effectiveness of any church structure."[103]

This principle also means that the forms and systems that are used in the church will be consistent with Christ's character. The church is to be like Christ reflecting the divine qualities of the One who has called it into being.[104] The implication for structure is in selecting the methods one plans to utilise. For example, to use competition with another Christ-focused ministry, deception or a plea to pride in order to foster the church's programme would be incorrect.

b: Christ-Like Leadership

While the headship of Christ is the beginning point for church structure, the New Testament places a large emphasis on the character of its leaders. On most occasions in the New Testament there was a plurality of leadership. In developing a church structure, the ideal is that there should be more than one spiritual leader to serve as godly models. While at times there was a centrality of leadership in one person, Bilzekian maintains that this was in a new church or

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[103] Michael J. Anthony, *The Effective Church Board* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1993), 117.

[104] Although the Church is like Christ, it is not an extension of incarnation. To say this would be an illegitimate use of metaphor. For a discussion on Christ's likeness in the church see Cole, 70-75.

unusual situations and was on the way to developing a leadership team.[105] Gish goes as far as stating: "The hierarchical view is a perversion of the New Testament understanding of leadership."[106] What is clear, is that the New Testament expected team leadership.

All church leaders should be spiritually and psychologically qualified to lead. Paul outlines in detail the character qualifications for being an elder or deacon (1 Tim 3). Organisation, no matter how skilfully planned and executed, cannot take the place of vital, dynamic godliness on the part of those who put forward the work of the church. Anthony states; "A smooth and concise church structure can fall apart if the wrong leadership comes into the equation."[107]

c: The Priesthood of All Believers

The very nature of the body of Christ makes it important for every member to contribute in terms of the purposes of the church. Each believer is gifted to serve the body (Rom 12:3-8, 1 Corinthians 12; 1 Peter 4). Unlike the Old Testament priestly system, the New Testament church affirms all as "priests" (1 Peter 2:5). This means that ministry belongs to all members and not just a paid staff or particular group. Healthy church structure must foster the identification, development and deployment of spiritual gifts and encourage a culture where

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[105] Bilezikian, 144-153 discusses Paul's use of remedial models of leadership while heading toward his normative model of team leadership.

[106] Gish, 215.

[107] Anthony, 117.

each person's ministry is affirmed. Church planning must take into account the skills and talents present within the congregation.

The New Testament also affirms that every believer is responsible for and capable of relating directly to God (Rom 5:1-5; 1 Tim 2:5; Heb 4:14-16). Church structure does not inherently provide any redemptive access to God. Each believer is of equal value before God and has the same access to Him through union with Christ.

d: Interdependence

Seeing the church as the body of Christ and recognising the priesthood of all believers underlies the interdependence that is inherent in a New Testament church structure. The New Testament includes many "one-another" statements where the church is instructed to care for, nurture, love, serve and pray for one another.[108] Church members are united to each other sharing in love, suffering and life.

An essential aspect of a Christian community is its sharing fellowship and having things in common. Schwarz identified a clear relationship between church health and the extent to which church attenders spend time with each other outside the worship service.[109] Church structures must ensure that opportunities for community are facilitated. Randy Frazee maintains that the centrality of

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[108] Gene Getz, *The Measure of a Church* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2001), 189-190 gives an overview of the one-another injunctions in Scripture.

[109] Schwarz, *The ABC's*, 17.

community has been lost in the modern church and with it the power to transform society.[110] "The church has become more focused on the independence of democracy than on the interdependence of community."[111]

The New Testament church lived a lifestyle where church was not a service but a continuous series of interactions. Many of today's churches are structured around a one hour event, where the church tries to cram in many competing aspects of church life. Frazee points out that many churches today are more structured on society than community. In a society, people live peaceably with one another, bound by goods and services. In a community, people define themselves more around relationships rather than status. A church which structures like a society, seeing itself as primarily the provider of services, will therefore fail to develop the characteristics of an interdependent community.

Interdependence calls for a balance between individuality and conformity. Structure must never swallow up the individuality, creativity or uniqueness of personality which properly belongs to each member in the church (Romans 12:4-5). The structure of a church must be characterized by interdependence between two poles; harmony in the church and respect for the individual. This means that there is a collaborative, non authoritarian relationship rather than a tightly autocratic superstructure.

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[110] Frazee, 10.

[111] Ibid.

While social context and the wide variety of New Testament expressions of church makes a return to the New Testament church impossible, it is vital that the essence of what made the New Testament church so powerful and effective underlie any attempt at structural renewal today.

CHAPTER 5

AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF CHURCH STRUCTURE

Just how the church moved from what is evident in the New Testament to how it is expressed today is a complicated matrix of intersecting motives and forces. However, some sense must be made of this web if structural renewal is to be historically informed and forms that have developed over time seen for what they really are. Often historical practices of the church are "sanctified" even though their emergence is for largely unspiritual reasons.

In this chapter, the structural development of the church following the New Testament period will be analysed with a particular view toward Adventism. The very nature of diversity in the church means that in characterising an era of history with such brevity, gross generalisations and over-simplifications will be made. The goal here is not a structural analysis of church history but rather the general feel of how history shapes the church today. In doing this, the two periods out of which flow most of the practices of present-day Christianity will be highlighted: Constantine and the Reformation. [112]

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[112] James Rutz, *The Open* Church (Beaumont, TX: Seed Sowers, 1992), 44 states in regard to Constantine and the Reformation that "these two periods of time are like two gigantic cauldrons out of which have flowed most of the practices of present-day Christianity."

From the Close of the New Testament to Constantine

Just how far the new revelation of Jesus could continue being expressed in the framework of Judaism was a source of tension for the early church. Some wanted to remain a Jewish sect while others were eager to move away from its influence. However, by the time of the Jewish revolt of AD 66 and the subsequent destruction of the Temple in AD 70 the Jews and Christians were very distinct and in many regards opposed to one another. By the end of the second century, Justin Martyr could record as a curiosity the existence of Christians who kept all the practices of Orthodox Judaism.[113]

Persecution was perhaps the greatest factor shaping structure during this time. As early as AD 64 the Christians were being persecuted by the Romans. The church was conscious of itself as existing in a hostile, antagonistic and persecuting environment. Loren Mead outline how "Life in the early Christian communities was intense and personal and each of its members was aware that they were called to witness to God's love in that hostile world."[114] The resulting structures facilitated a personal meeting of worshippers with forms that encouraged a high level of participation. A lot of time was devoted to building up the courage, strength and skill of its members to engage in mission.[115]

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[113] Gish, 215.

[114] Loren Mead, *The Once and Future Church* (NY: Alban Institute, 1994), 10.

[115] Ibid., 12.

As Christianity spread and came into contact with more cultures an increasing diversity in the church became evident. The Hellenisation of Christianity radically altered faith and structure.[116] A shift in the view of God meant moving from a personal, historical event-based concept to absolute original principle. The consequence for structure is a more institutionalistic, static view of the organisation and function of the church.

Authority and exercise of ministry in the church was increasingly restricted to those who had official ordained status. For example, elders began to be elevated above fellow elders and titles were assumed as applying exclusively to one man. Such bishops began to oversee more than one congregation. Ignatius of Antioch was worried about dissension in the churches and the spread of false teachings and so in an effort to preserve order, monarchical episcopates were elected.[117] The church was being increasingly governed by a hierarchy rather than the earlier team approach. Initially the hierarchy was called chiefs of the laity. However, this was later lost and in its place an increasing distance between clergy and laity was formed.[118] These changes in church order were made with

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[116] Schwarz, *Paradigm Shift,* 12.

[117] M.A. Smith, *From Christ to Constantine* (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 1976), 34.

[118] FF Bruce, *The Spreading Flame* (Devon: Paternoster Press, 1970) 206-209 discusses the progression from a college of presbyters to a single bishop. He sees this development as "almost inevitable in the circumstances" based on the assumption that committee rule is weak unless there is a strong chairman who inherently becomes the single leader. He does however see an influence coming from converts who were acquainted with mystery cults in which sacred rights were carried out by people called hierophants. Bruce maintains that it may have been, at least to some extent, under theses influences that the "Christian minister assumed the office of priest as the dispenser of grace conferring rituals and as the custodian of the kingdom of heaven."

good intentions and no doubt served to protect the church but they carried their own defects into the structure of the church.

Changes in worship reflected this increasingly more regulated and formalised environment.[119] Clement of Rome dictated rules to govern procedures in the church that included set prayers and readings[120] By the time the *Didache* was written (believed to be between AD100 - AD160) the Lord's Prayer was to be repeated three times daily, twice weekly fasts were in place and the prayers and liturgies were very structured. Smith comments; "Although more formalities were added as time went on, this kind of arrangement was to prove viable until the churches received the doubtful blessing of state patronage."[121]

Constantine and the Imperial Church

Constantine became Caesar of the Roman Empire in AD 306. His connection with Christianity marks a turning point in church history. It was he who first gave Christianity protection by law, seeing it as a unifying and organising force. Under Constantine, Christianity was adopted as the religion of the Empire. "It meant much more than the end of persecution...the Church became more and more implicated in high political decisions."[122]

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[119] See ibid,188-198 for an overview of the developing formality in worship.

[120] Goguel, 277-278.

[121] Smith, 73.

[122] Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1967), 125

Using a combination of the Roman governmental and feudal systems, Constantine, in part, oversaw the development of a church structure that still shapes how the church is expressed and perceived today.[123] The state demanded from the church the right to administer ecclesiastical law, to call all general councils and have final authority over their actions, to elect all bishops of important sees, hold the position of the supreme judge in the spiritual courts and have the deciding vote in all dogmatic controversies. The church took on the organisation of the Empire and became somewhat the servant of the state. Roman rites, festivals and ceremonies became part of the church calendar.

Burrill maintains that it was not so much Constantine that changed the paradigm of church but that the church shifted first and the identification of the church with the empire was the natural result of the paradigm shift. Burrill sees the process of the shifting paradigm of church beginning in the second century as the church identified more with the empire.[124] This shift shows how society can transform the church rather than it being the other way. While it is necessary for church to be culturally sensitive, this period of church history shows that when the essence of church is lost to societal structure, an unhealthy concept of the church can result.

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[123] Bruce L. Shelley, *Church History In Plain Language* (Dallas, TX: Word, 1982) 105-115 gives an overview of how the "Christianization of the empire" and the "imperial interference" in the affairs of the church begins and how "we can detect the fall-out of these two developments to this day." 105.

[124] Burrill, *Life and Mission,* 144.

Church government, in following the pattern of civil governance, continued the early church's move toward an increasingly hierarchical structure. This led to a differentiation in the ministry, which in turn, developed the hierarchy that saw church officers becoming very distinct from the laity. By the early part of the fourth century the *Apostolic Constitutions* defined the role of the laymen in the following ways: "The layman should honour the good shepherd (the bishop), respect him like a father, lord and master, as the high priest of God as a guide in piety...He who hears the bishop hears Christ."[125] The bishop is described as: "The keeper of knowledge, the mediator between God and you in the several parts of your divine worship."[126]

This gap between clergy and laity is still very evident today, even in churches from the Protestant tradition such as the Adventists who, while closing the gap doctrinally with statements regarding the priesthood of all believers, still generally treat clergy as distinct from laity. Rex Edwards states that "in spite of our profession, we have seriously misunderstood and certainly inadequately expressed the full meaning of this doctrine."[127] While there may be a number of factors that bring about the distinction between clergy and laity including education, societal structures and a natural tendency toward hierarchical institutionalism, Edwards maintains that within Adventism the relationship between the clergy and laity is still shaped by the changes made in the church during the third century.

The nature and life of church was markedly changed in this period and in part was reflected in and shaped by the movement toward building cathedrals and

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[125]*Constitution of the Holy Apostles*, 16, 21 quoted in Rex Edwards, *Every Believer A Minister* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, `1979), 69. The *Apostolic Constitutions* are made up of eight books that provide insights into the religious practices of the first three centuries.

[126]Ibid, 410 in Edwards, 69.

[127]Ibid, 63.

placing rituals and leadership within those buildings. State patronage ensured the resources were available to provide buildings and this was a factor that led to the demise of the house meetings.[128] Worshippers moved from being participants to spectators.

Out of this redefined structure grew new ways of thinking about the church. It was coming to be seen primarily as an organisation rather than as an organism. The change in structure brought with it a fundamental shift in how the church related to God and how God could relate to the church. From this period the idea grew of church being a building where people went one day each week to have someone (priest, pastor) do something to them or for them. The larger churches that developed during this period turned worship from communal to ceremonial. Preaching moved from focusing on the needs of people to oratory. [129]

Mead outlines how there was no longer a clear distinction between the world and the church.[130] Evangelism became something that happened at the frontier of the Empire by specialist missionaries. The congregation became a parish and people became part of the congregation by birth. The priest became a chaplain to the community. Christianity was being a good citizen. Mead argues that many people in contemporary society have grown up in this paradigm. He states; "People think that being Christian is the same thing as being a good citizen.

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[128] Eusebius, G.A Williamson (trans) *The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine* (London: Penguin Books, 1989), 305 outlines how under Constantine new buildings for worship were being dedicated "everywhere".

[129] Beckham, 43 gives an overview of this paradigm shift.

[130] Mead, 14-16.

Mission suggests that most of the structures of congregational, denominational and ecumenical life remain oriented to this paradigm."[131]

This period was the great age of creed making. The Nicean Creed was formed in this period in AD 325. Around AD 500 Gregory the Great invented an order of worship that was decreed as the only one for all the churches in Christendom. For Catholics, that order has been largely unchanged in fifteen hundred years. Burrill comments; "The way we do church today is more a paradigm of the Roman Empire of the Middle Ages than of New Testament Christianity."[132]

Church Structure and the Reformation

In Germany and Holland, the Renaissance resulted in a movement, led by Erasmus, called "Humanism". Erasmus believed that the chief virtues - love, humility, purity, life and vitality – had been buried under the heavy pile of doctrine and ceremony. He wanted people to be "reasonable and to use their common sense". Erasmus in a very true sense, prepared the way for Martin Luther.[133]

The reformers reacted against the institutionalised church and sought life and vitality. The Protestant Reformation brought with it a radical new way of looking at the church. It shifted emphasis from sacramental relationships to the Word of

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[131] Mead, 14. Philip Hughes believes that Mead has underestimated the implications of the paradigm shift. Hughes explains how the paradigm shift Mead identifies goes even further and "...makes contentious the very nature of community and religious faith and hence the nature of congregational life and mission." "The Once and Future Church by Loren Mead" available, www.cra.org.au, viewed 24 July, 2004.

[132] Burrill, *Life and Mission,* 148.

[133] Ed Hayes, *The Church* (Nashville, TN: Word, 1999), 133 and 109.

God. The authority of the Bible and justification by faith became cardinal doctrines again. The most significant application of this period in terms of structure is the emphasis on the priesthood of all believers and the consequent belief that Christ has committed ecclesiastical authority to the church as a whole.

Luther's view of the ordained ministry and its relationship to the ministerial function of the congregation has been the subject of considerable research and debate. Some scholars find Luther stressing the ordained ministry, the clergy, to such a degree that the laity appears to be completely subordinated to clerical authority. Other scholars claim the opposite for Luther.[134] A balance between the two is more evident. Luther emphasised the "common ministry" of the laity before 1525, in the context of his attack on medieval clericalism, and stressed "special ministry" of the clergy after 1525, when he discovered the spiritual poverty and intellectual weakness of the medieval laity.[135] Luther clearly saw that the priesthood of all believers necessitated each Christian's involvement in ministry. He consistently argued for active congregations as guardians of the freedom of the gospel. However, he failed to put in place a corresponding new role for the clergy.[136] As a result, little change occurred in the ministry of the laity,

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[134] For a discussion on Luther's view of Priesthood, Ministry and the Congregation see Jaroslav Pelikan, *Spirit Versus Structure: Luther and the Institutions of the Church* (London: Collins, 1968), 32-49.

[135] Gert Haendler, *Luther on Ministerial Office and Congregational Function* (PA: Fortress, 1991), 10.

[136] Edwards, *Every Believer* , 94, referencing John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Henry Beveridge trans, (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1845-46), bk. 3:3.42: bk. 2.15.6: bk. 4.18.17.

since the clergy's role, derived from the non-biblical paradigm of the Middle Ages, was still in place.

To understand Luther's view of church structure one has to take note of the fact that he had to fight on two fronts: on the one hand, against the Catholic position that regarded the church/hierarchy as absolute; on the other hand, against the Enthusiasts who appealed to the Spirit in their claim that they were the true Reformers.[137] Luther stresses the non-institutional character of the church; he disliked the word *kirche* (church) and preferred terms such as *sammlung* (assembly) and *gemeinde* (congregation). For Luther, the church was in the first place a communion of saints, a gathering of believers. His most famous definition of the church simply says that the church is "The gathering of all believers, in which the gospel is purely preached and the holy sacraments are administered in accord with the gospel."[138] This view of the church brings with it a far more flexible church structure.

In Geneva, Calvin talked about the New Testament church, but drew a good deal of church order from the Swiss cantonal government. This was probably the origin of the "collegiate ministry" in the reformed tradition. Calvin put a very high emphasis on preaching. The church is founded on Christ alone, "But the church is founded on Christ by the preaching of doctrine." It is by the preaching of the

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[137] Karkkenien, 39.

[138] Martin Luther, "The Augsburg Confession 7.1: The Church," in *The European Reformations Sourcebook*, ed. Carter Lindberg (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 153.

word that "God begets and multiplies his church."[139] The emphasis Adventists have placed on the sermon, often seeing anything else as "preliminaries", grows out of this period of the church.

Rutz outlines how Calvin and Luther both promoted a similar worship service format around the same time, 1540.[140] The order of service being:

-Song

-Announcements

-Prayer

-Offertory

-Song

-Sermon

-Song

-Benediction

This order of service, over 460 years later, is still the one basically suggested in the *Adventist Church Manual.*[141] Viewing the time of 11:00 am as starting the "sacred worship hour"[142] is also a structure inherited from Luther. Initially, Protestant services were held at dawn, the same as when the Mass was scheduled. However, Luther liked to spend Saturday nights discussing theology

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[139] Benjamin Milner, *Calvin's Doctrine of The Church* (Leiden, Netherlands: E.J Brill, 1970) 109.

[140] Rutz, 61.

[141] *Adventist Church Manual,* 88.

[142] This is the terminology used to describe the worship service in Ibid., 71.

and drinking with friends, so moved the service to 9:00 am. As he got older it was moved to 10:00 am and then 11:00 am, the latest he could go and still call it morning worship.[143]

While turning away from some of the institutional dynamics of the Catholic Church, the reformers became trapped in their own modified paradigm that did not allow their theological discoveries to shape structures for church life. Darrell Gruder makes the case that the Reformation re-definition of the church, even if unintentionally, still perverted what "church" means. The Reformers, in their effort to raise the authority of the Bible and ensure sound doctrine, defined the marks of a true church as: a place where the gospel is rightly preached, the sacraments are rightly administered and church discipline is exercised. However, these marks narrowed the definition of the church itself as a "place where" idea instead of a "people who are" reality.[144]

The Reformation concept of mission was also driven by a Middle Ages understanding of the state and church relationship. Luther, Zwingli, Calvin and others each sought to create a biblical kingdom ruled over by the state. All within that kingdom became citizens of the church and as the political leaders of the kingdom changed their religion so the religion of the state changed. This meant that the New Testament model of the church being structured around mission is still not recovered in the Reformation. Many of today's denominations have

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[143] Rutz, 60.

[144] Darrell Gruder, *The Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1998), 79-80.

descended from these Reformers and this perhaps explains why the paradigm of church as expressed in the Middle Ages is still largely intact.

The church remained a place where certain things happened, such as preaching and communion. In this structure, people came to church rather than lived it and were content to remain spectators. Over time, leaders refused the laity the same liberty and freedom they had demanded for themselves and the church institutionalised the freedoms the Reformers had claimed.

Post–Reformation Structure

Out of the institutionalised religion that soon developed in the Reformation churches came a variety of groups that wished to maintain the vitality and freshness they saw reflected in the New Testament.[145] The discovery of America provided a natural means by which many could begin anew. But in most instances, even in those early days, the same "institutionalism" was transferred. It was a constant struggle, as it had always been, for the church to keep a proper focus on biblical objectives and principles and to keep from becoming institutionalised.

Toffler points out that the biggest structural impacts during the post-reformation period came as a response to societal shifts.[146] For many years much of civilisation existed in an agrarian culture. Society's form and structures were relatively small and this was reflected in the structure of the local church where

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[145] Getz, *Sharpening* 255.

[146] Alvin Toffler, *The Third Wave* (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1980), 28-29.

systems of decision-making and electing of positions were made with the understanding that the congregation knew one another. When society moved from the "agricultural wave" to the "industrial wave" things changed significantly. Industrialisation gave birth to centralisation of population and with it large societal structures. Forms and structures came into existence to accommodate functions that involved thousands of people living in a particular geographical area. Generally, the church took on models of industrialisation that included a diminished emphasis on community and a more structured approach to interaction such as class learning systems and more formalised decision making systems. The church became more institutionalised as it required more and larger systems of management.

Many church administrative structures can be seen to be taken directly from their particular societal context with varying degrees of adaptation. Indigenous churches, isolated from historical ecclesiastical structures, most often adapted a chieftaincy or tribal system. This system meant that church governance operated on the same basis as did the village/tribe where all decisions were made by the chief or the group of tribal elders and everyone followed without question.[147] As people became more educated and involved in the political process in various countries, the Presbyterian form of church government evolved offering a representative format. When governments became

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[147] For a discussion of societal structures, church growth and corresponding implications for church structure that includes the tribal system see Paul G. Hiebert "Social Structure and Church Growth" essay in Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (eds), *Perspectives On The World Christian Movement* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1981), 389-389.

democratic, churches started using congregational forms.[148] The denominational structure of Adventism resembles closely the representative political system of the United States of America.

The effectiveness of military systems also attracted ecclesiastical attention. The Salvation Army follows the centralised military pattern. In Adventism, the structure of Pathfinders is very much military-based.[149] What is evident in most cases is that the freedom that allowed the initial adaptation and shaping of structure is lost. Structures that were at some point functional, become ingrained regardless of the need to respond to a changing environment. Church history shows that people, plus structure, plus age more often than not, equal institutionalism.[150] When forms are held to be more important than their meaning or reason for existence then the way to functionality is blocked.

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[148] Gary L. McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003), 154.

[149] Pathfinders is the name given to the denominational teen programme in the Seventh-day Adventist Church that is organised similar to the Scout movement.

[150] McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth*, 251.

CHAPTER 6

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADVENTIST LOCAL CHURCH STRUCTURE

Structure in Early Adventist History

The early Adventist church has been described as enthusiastic, focused, determined but not organised.[151] Adventism grew up in culturally conservative American New England out of a variety of denominational backgrounds including Methodist, Baptist and Christian Connection. The early Adventists remembered how strong, well-organised church bodies had opposed their Advent "truth" and so shunned attempts toward church organisation.[152]

A central figure in the Advent movement, out of which the Seventh-day Adventist Church later grew, was William Miller. Miller insisted adamantly in the 1830's and 1840's that he had no intention of organising a distinct religious body. However, by necessity, leaders emerged among Miller's followers to ensure that materials were published, halls and auditoriums were rented and lectures advertised. Vance notes that "All of the necessary components of what was

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[151] Arthur W. Spalding, *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1961) 1:291.

[152] Rice, 58.

becoming a mass movement within mainstream Protestantism were co-ordinated."[153]

Following the "Great Disappointment" of 1844, a group of believers, who gathered around a new interpretation of the events, came together for study and to encourage one another.[154] Initially there was no formal membership, ministry positions or anything that could resemble the organisational structure of an official church. However, over time, there was an emerging structure for group co-ordination and with it the inherent need for leadership. Adventist tracts and periodicals were being printed and public meetings held. As more people were convinced of the message being preached, groups were set up with the goal of further study, accountability and encouragement. In reality the system was acting as a denomination even if some did not want to recognise it at the time.

The group meetings, which became known as the social meetings, were perhaps the defining structure of the early Adventist period. The format for the meeting was shaped by a combination of the Methodist prayer and class meetings.[155] Most of the forms of early Adventism were influenced by Methodist organisation.

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[153] Laura L. Vance, *Seventh-day Adventism in Crisis: Gender and Sectarianism Change in an Emerging Religion* (Chicago, Ill: University of Illinois Press, 1999) 16-17.

[154] In Adventism the date of October 22, 1844 is referred to as the "Great Disappointment". On this day the Millerites expected the second coming to occur. For a brief overview of the Millerite movement and 1844 see R. W Schwarz, *Light Bearers To The Remnant* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1979) 37-71.

[155] At this time, the mid-nineteenth century, the Methodist class meeting was being replaced by prayer meeting. Prayer meeting in this context is not to be equated with what Adventist's call prayer meeting today. It was a time of some Bible study but mainly testimonies and a place where people held one another accountable. For an overview on the Adventist social meeting and its Methodist roots see Burrill, *Revolutionized*, 103-129.

This is probably due to the fact that not only were many of the earliest pioneers Methodists, but Ellen White, a charismatic leader who the church recognised as having the gift of prophecy, was among them.

Uriah Smith, who was a leading Adventist pioneer, describe the social meeting as:

> A meeting characterized by spiritual and soul-cheering testimonies, the beaming eye, the voice of praise, the earnest and stirring exhortation, and often the falling tear – scenes in which faith and love flame up anew.[156]

For the early Adventist church, the social meeting was more important than preaching. Preaching could be omitted but the social meeting was never neglected.[157] A typical Sabbath morning is described by a Brother Holiday in the Adventist Review; "At the commencement of every Sabbath we meet together for prayer and exhortation.... Sabbath morning is occupied in social meeting, Sabbath School and Bible Class."[158] For this group, at least, preaching was not at the forefront. White counselled that the church should not expect to have a sermon every Sabbath.[159] The Sabbath School was borrowed from the Sunday School training concept used in most Protestant Churches while the Bible Class was the place for cognitive

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[156] Uriah Smith, "The Conference," *Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, 23 May,1865, 196.

[157] Burrill, *Revolutionized,* discusses the relative importance of the social meeting as opposed to preaching 108-109.

[158] Brother Holiday, "Letter," *Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, 2 July 1861, 46-47.

[159] Ellen White, *Evangelism* (Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1946), 348.

For the most part, the emergence of the Adventist model of church bears strong similarity to the early Christian church. Adventism was a very evangelistic movement with most of its resources devoted to that purpose. Being part of the church did not primarily mean turning up to an event but rather living in relationship with others who shared similar beliefs and being part of the on-going study of the Bible in groups.

Each congregation differed quite markedly in regard to how it went about being the local church. Battle Creek was a larger, more traditionally modelled church. A sermon was preached most weeks at Battle Creek. It was also the first Adventist church to have a resident pastor. Smaller churches, which included most Adventist congregations, were primarily arranged around the Sabbath School and Social group with occasional preaching. The church was more centred on relationships and Bible study than it was on a worship service/preaching event. However, after the death of Ellen White in 1915, the social meetings gradually faded. Over time, Adventist churches began to pattern their services increasingly more after those of other Protestant churches. Clergy were appointed over congregations.[160] The prayer meeting became a time for the pastor to give a cognitive Bible study followed by a season of prayer. The relational element became very much secondary to cognitive truth in most churches.

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[160] Burrill in both *Revolutionized* and *Life and Mission* calls throughout for a return of the Adventist pastor to a church planting role and not to be settled in congregations. While the sentiment of Burrill's statement is understandable, with many pastors being caught in maintenance rather than mission roles, it seems that Burrill is limiting his view of how the church can be expressed to one style of church which is mostly found in infancy i.e. in both the New Testament development and the planting of early Adventist churches.

The structures of Methodism, more than any other organisational system, were increasingly adopted. Methodism saw membership reserved for those who had experienced conversion and followed a consistent Christian lifestyle. Methodists required a period of probation for many converts, and such religious exercises as attendance at worship services and missionary and benevolent activities were required of the believers. This became the case for the Adventist church as well. By 1930, most Adventist local churches were conducted in an almost identical way to that of a Methodist congregation.[161]

How this formalisation and uniformity came about gives a valuable insight into the process of institutionalism in the local church. As more groups began meeting and as the wider Adventist church became more structured, efforts were made to co-ordinate the functions of the local church in a more systematic way. In 1882, a *Review & Herald* supplement, *"Instructions to Church Officers"* was published that contained "suggestions" on how to select appropriate officers and how to facilitate the meetings of the church. "This action revealed the growing realization that church order was imperative if church organization was to function effectively, and that uniformity in such order required guiding principles to be put into printed form."[162] At around this time a push for uniformity started emerging in the church.

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[161] Burrill, *Life and Mission*, 153-159, gives an overview of the Methodist Impact on Adventism, especially in relation to the clergy role and member care

[162] *Adventist Church Manual, xx.*

Growing out of a push for uniformity was the proposed church manual which was printed in a *Review and Herald* series. The proposal was prefaced with:

> This should never be regarded as a cast iron creed to be enforced in all of its minor details upon the members of the S.D. Adventist church. The directions which it contains for the transaction of business matters should not be regarded as invariable under all circumstances but rather as suggestions simply, which are offered for the assistance of those who feel that they have need of aid, and are not unwilling to accept the counsel of others."[163]

The proposal was presented to the 1883 General Conference where it was voted down. Uriah Smith, in his summary of proceedings stated; "The brethren feared that it would possibly formalize the church and take from its ministers their freedom to deal with matters of church order as they might individually desire."[164] A growing tension is evident in the church between those seeking uniformity and those who wished to maintain ecclesiastical freedom.

The minutes of the 1883 General Conference Session record the reasons the committee appointed to consider the church manual recommended it be rejected:

> It is the unanimous judgement of the committee, that it would not be advisable to have a Church Manual.... It would seem to many like a step toward the formation of a creed, or a discipline, other than the Bible, something we have always been opposed to as a denomination. If we had one, we fear many, especially those commencing to preach, would study it to obtain guidance in religious matters, rather than to seek for it in the Bible, and from the leadings of the Spirit of God, which would tend to their hindrance in genuine religious experience and in knowledge of the mind of the Spirit. It was in taking similar steps that other bodies of Christians first began to lose their simplicity and

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[163] Uriah Smith, ed, "The SDA Church Manual," *Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, 5 June 1883, 361.

[164] Uriah Smith, ed, "General Conference Proceedings 22d Annual Session," *Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, 20 November 1883, 733.

> become formal and spiritually lifeless. Why should we imitate them? The committee feel, in short, that our tendency should be in the direction of simplicity and close conformity to the Bible, rather than in elaborately defining every point in church management and church ordinances.[165]

This response illustrates the deeply held conviction among many early Adventists that organisation must be avoided otherwise they would become like the churches they had left. Organisation in itself was seen as the problem rather than institutionalism.

Following the 1883 General Conference, George Butler, General Conference President, wrote a lengthy article on why the Church Manual was rejected. The reasons Butler gave for rejection included:

> (1) The Bible contains our creed and discipline. What it has not revealed relative to church organization and management, the duties of officers and ministers and kindred subjects should not be strictly defined and drawn out into minute specifications for the sake of uniformity, but rather be left to individual judgement under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Man cannot safely supplement this matter with his weak judgement. All attempts to do so in the past have proved lamentable failures.
> (2) A variation in circumstances requires variation in action. God requires us to study important principles which he reveals in his word, but the minutiae in carrying them out he leaves to individual judgement, promising heavenly wisdom in times of need. His ministers are constantly placed where they must feel their helplessness and their need of seeking God for light, rather than to go to any church manual for specific directions placed therein by uninspired men.
> (3) Minute specific details lead to weakness, rather than power. They lead to dependence rather than self-reliance. Better make some mistakes and learn profitable lessons thereby than to have our way all marked out for us by others....It would gradually shape and mold the whole body and those who do not follow it would be considered out of harmony with established principles of church order....Would our ministers be broader, more original, more self-reliant men? Would

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[165] Ibid.

> their spiritual experiences likely be deeper and their judgment more reliable? We think the tendency all the other way...
> (4) There seems to be no logical stopping place when once started upon this road.... Hence we stop without a church manual before we get started.... For these and other reasons the church manual was rejected. It is probable it will never be brought forward again.[166]

Butler was very keen to see the local church open to shaping its own responses to its environment and challenges. For Butler a church manual would be too "stifling". Interestingly, Butler was supportive of formalising a denominational structure and gave reasons for support that seemingly contradict his line of reasoning on the Church Manual.

In 1907 J.N Loughborough gathered together the generally accepted rules for church life in *The Church, It's Organization, Order and Discipline.* While this was a personal undertaking it long held an honoured place in the movement as the way to conduct the affairs of the church.[167] This document effectively became the standard for church practice and set in place the mindset that paved the way for the introduction of an official Manual.

Local Church Structure And The Adventist Church Manual

It wasn't until 1931 that the General Conference took action to publish a Church

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[166] George Butler, "No Church Manual," *Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, 27 November 1883, 745-746.

[167] Walter Beach and Bert Beach, *Pattern For Progress: The Role and Function of Church Organization* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1985), 89. "The older of the two authors of this present book can recall that his father, for fifty years a church elder and for most of that period a conference committee member, cherished this booklet and deviated from it barely an inch!"

Manual. J.L. McElhany prepared the manuscript by interviewing pastors and other church leaders, attending "scores of workers meetings" and putting together "what worked".[168] The opening sentence reads: "It has become increasingly evident that a manual on church government is needed to set forth and preserve our denominational practices and polity".[169] The mindset that opposed a Manual in 1883 was no longer effectively part of the church's self concept and an interest in preservation had overtaken the flexibility that was so valued in earlier Adventism. Even still, the *Adventist Church Manual* was careful to note that it was a guide rather than a binding system. The manual is prefaced with:

> Many of our preachers, church officers and workers generally have had but little experience in the management of church matters. All these therefore deeply feel the necessity of something in the form of a Church Manual which shall contain a few simple rules to guide them in the discharge of their various duties.[170]

The 1932 *Adventist Church Manual* was a collection of what, at that time, was deemed to constitute effective church practice. The church needed systems in place for transferring members between congregations, guidelines for who was and was not an approved Adventist speaker and systems for working through denominational situations that required co-operation between congregations. The Adventist church in the United States, at this point, was generally made up of small congregations in rural environments where everyone knew one another.

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[168] *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual 1932 ed., 5.*

[169] Ibid.

[170] Ibid.

This mindset is reflected in the *Adventist Church Manual* where systems for leadership appointments along with the transferring and disciplining of members are shaped by the assumption that members are well known to one another. .

The process of institutionalism is highlighted in that in the sixteen subsequent editions of the *Adventist Church Manual* mostly only additions are made and very rarely is anything ever taken away or revised. At each General Conference Session the *Adventist Church Manual* is revised and each time it has become increasingly more structured and formalised. What started out as a "guide" has in effect became the "inspired" way to structure the church. Today, at least in Western Adventism, the *Adventist Church Manual* is seen as the test of orthodoxy. Its very prescriptive church structure is often quoted at meetings of the local church as the final word. The shift in emphasis from variety to unity has meant a structure that may have been functional for a particular time, setting and size is now prescribed for all contexts. Moving away from this structure is often seen as going against inspired counsel.[171]

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[171] The Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual is updated and voted on at the General Conference Session. This Session has taken on a significance that for many Adventists means they treat a General Conference Session decision as inspired. An action at the 1946 General Conference Session stated that: "All changes or revisions of policy in the *Church Manual* shall be authorized by the General Conference session" see *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual* 2000, 1. At the 1877 General Conference Session it was: "Resolved, that the highest authority under God among Seventh-day Adventists is found in the will of the body of that people as expressed in the decisions of the General Conference when acting within its proper jurisdiction; and that such decisions should be submitted to by all without exception, unless they can be shown to conflict with the word of God and the rights of individual conscience." See *Review and Herald*, 4 October 1877, 106. In a survey of 45 ministers in the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference the Church Manual was listed amongst the main factors that inhibited a movement to increased functionality.

James I Robison in a *Review and Herald* series that outlines the Adventist church structure as provided in the *Adventist Church Manual* states: "This we believe is the plan given us by the Lord for the carrying on of His work in the world. It is divine in origin, reasonable, and the safest that could be devised."[172] Beach, former General Conference vice president, writes: "...anything that undermines the basic church structure, however effective, currently fashionable or alluring the program might be momentarily, will eventually end in disaster and apostasy."[173] This type of thinking leaves some church members viewing the *Adventist Church Manual* as almost an extension of the Bible.

The *Adventist Church Manual* in its statement on why members should study the Manual states:

> These provisions represent a safeguard against debilitating trial and error, inconsistency, injustice, and outright apostasy. These principles and policies contribute to the preservation of the oneness of God's church in all the world. They will forestall the natural tendency in all lands to imitate too closely the practices and policies of government, business, or other churches and to develop in different lands a different church. [174]

While structure is essential and what the *Adventist Church Manual* seeks to guard against is important, it seems that the equally necessary element of vitality has been lost.

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[172] "The Local Church Organization," *Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, 17 July 1952, 12.

[173] Beach and Beach, 81.

[174] *Adventist Church Manual*, 92.

Over time, most structures have a decreased ability to achieve the purpose they were designed for and this is the same for the structure prescribed in the *Adventist Church Manual.*[175] Ron Gladden identifies this problem when he states:

> Adventist churches are patterned after the 1952 model. The new ones we plant are not much different. We are frustrated that our message makes such a minimal impact. But society has changed dramatically and we have not. We turn on the lights at our storefront "hardware stores" and lament that no one today cares about our "hardware".[176]

This situation highlights the need for a clear definition of what the Adventist church essentially must be so that unity can be retained while necessary flexibility can be facilitated.

The Assumed Church Structure: 1932-Today

An analysis of the structure proscribed for the local church in the *Adventist Church Manual* highlights an underlying, increasingly more regimented, concept of the church that leans very heavily toward the institutional sphere. For example, in the 1932 *Adventist Church Manual*, ministry placement in the local church involved the minister or pastor in charge of the church, or in the absence of a minister, the church elder, bringing the matter to the attention of the church

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[175] Bill Hull, *7 Steps to Transform your Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 104-105 outlines well the problem that has come from using the rural American model of two hundred years ago and applying it in urban settings. For example, the nominating committee system is based on a church where people knew each other. Decisions in this type of church were already made informally. Transferring this same system to an urban church can be frustrating and dysfunctional.

[176] Ron Gladden, *Building a Home Depot,* on website www.plantthefuture.org, Dec 9, 2003, 3.

and determining how the church desires the process to happen.[177] In the current *Adventist Church Manual* nominating is a very well defined complex process that is explained over several pages and involves selection and nominating committees working within very defined guidelines.

The 1932 *Adventist Church Manual* suggests a church board of nine and possibly three extras. By 2000, a church following the *Adventist Church Manual* would have a minimum board of twenty three. In tracing where the additions come from, it seems that when a ministry issue is on the agenda at General Conference session, such as family ministry or woman's ministry, a place on the local church board is created for that ministry area whether functional at the local church level or not.[178]

The *Adventist Church Manual* makes many assumptions about what the church is and should be and while an underlying concept of the church must be inherent in any shared structural understanding, the *Adventist Church Manual* assumes more than is needed. It moves through issues of membership, baptism and qualifications for church office. It advises against having a person in a position long term, which seems to be more based on the American political systems then Paul's concept of spiritual gifts. It outlines job descriptions for the role of elders, deacons and deaconesses assuming that these roles will be the same in every church.

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[177] *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual 1932 ed.*, 65.

[178] A list of when board positions were added is provided in appendix C, table 5.

Many forms of church life are assumed in The *Adventist Church Manual.* It assumes a choir and a Sabbath morning "hour". It states that long preliminaries should be avoided with the assumption that preaching is central and anything else is deemed to be preliminary. Prayer meeting, Adventist Youth Society and Pathfinders are all programmes described in great form rather than as principle based guidelines. The church is structured around departments including Health, Stewardship, Family Ministries, Women's Ministries and Children's Ministries. While these factors are not inherently dysfunctional, the *Adventist Church Manual* assumes only one type of church structure which in many cases today is not a functional model.

In regard to church culture, the *Adventist Church Manual* brings together many White quotes. For example, on reverence the *Adventist Church Manual* quotes the following instruction:

> The congregation should pass quietly to their seats ...common talking, whispering and laughing should not be permitted in the house of worship, either before or after the service. Ardent, active piety should characterize the worshippers.[179]

However, it later quotes Ellen White as saying:

> Nothing is so deadening to the spiritual life of a church as a cold, formal, atmosphere that drives out hospitality and Christian fellowship.... Especially should this be so in connection with the worship of God.[180]

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[179] *Adventist Church Manual 2000,* 68.

[180] Ibid., 69.

These seemingly conflicting instructions assume one style of church, ignoring variations in culture in regard to the expression of reverence and the huge variety of ways "church" could be expressed while still maintaining Biblical purity.

Ellen White and Church Structure

From its inception the Adventist Church has recognised the spiritual gift of prophecy to exist in the life and ministry of Ellen White. As both a principle pioneer and prophet her impact in shaping the church is crucial.[181] In the *Adventist Church Manual,* White is quoted more often than scripture to support a point. Often in church conflicts, the writings of White have been used to thwart attempts of renewal and increased functionality, even if, as some maintain, she is read and used incorrectly.[182] While this small section cannot address all the issues regarding the influence of White, it is important that her view of the church and functionality is outlined so that a paradigm for renewal can take account of a factor that is important to many Adventists.[183]

In the early Adventist church White's repeated advocacy of the clergy as trainers and equippers and the laity as performers of ministry in the church did much to bring the early Adventist church back to the New Testament model of

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[181] For a discussion of the balance of Ellen White as both prophet and pioneer explorer see Arthur N. Patrick. A Paper presented to the Forum on "Being an Authentic Seventh-day Adventist Christian in the 1990's," Wahroonga Activities Centre, Sydney, April 29, 1995.

[182] This is ironic when White often called for increased functionality and instructed likewise. The way the church has used White's writings has often been unhealthy see Knight, *Meeting Ellen White: How to Understand and Apply Her Writings* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1997), 44.

[183] For discussions on the issues surrounding the reading and use Ellen White see Ibid. and Graeme Bradford, *Prophets Are Human* (Warburton, Vic: Signs Publishing Company, 2004).

giftedness.[184] She was so emphatic about clergy being trainers and equippers that she stated that pastors who are performing ministry rather than teaching members to minister should be "discharged."[185] Her concept of every member caring for one another, being involved in evangelism and the life of the church being almost entirely the responsibility of members instead of clergy went against the dominant model that was common in the wider Protestant church at the time. However, with her death this emphasis was largely lost and a more pastoral model adopted.

White is often quoted in matters of practice, especially by those who want to keep a more traditionally structured model of church. Her enormous volume of writing ensures that a comment by her can be found on most aspects of church life. Often her statements, taken from all sorts of contexts, are quoted with little regard for her original purpose or intent.[186] In so doing, she is used to address situations she might never have imagined. Often applications she made of principles are confused with the principles themselves.[187] People choose

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[184] Burrill in *Life and Mission*, 173-177 gives an in-depth study to the concept of clergy as outlined in the writings of White. Burrill, 175 states: "Ellen White's view of a healthy church was one in which all members were actively engaged in ministry. Not only did such a view carry missional overtones, but clearly in her mind it resulted in healthy Christians. She was so emphatic as to assert that only this model of lay ministry could result in church members being overcomers."

[185] Ellen G.White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1948), 197-198.

[186] Knight, *Meeting,* 44.

[187] Ibid.

statements that suit their model and other statements that can be seen to promote an opposing view are largely ignored.

This situation of being able to find statements that fit at each end of the institution versus organism continuum is somewhat brought about by the fact that White saw the need for interrelationship between the structured institutional sphere and dynamic functionality. For White, the role of structure was to support the vitality of mission. In 1853 she stated: "The Lord has shown that the gospel order has been too much feared and neglected. Formality should be shunned; but, in so doing, order should not be neglected[188] White recognised the need to balance necessary organisation with functionality.

White was very supportive of the push for organisation in the church, especially at a denominational level. She saw the need of order as flowing out of the character of God. She states; "System and order are manifest in all the works of God throughout the universe.... Order is the law of heaven, and it should be the law of God's people on the earth."[189] When considerable opposition to any notion of organisation emerged from both ministers and laypersons during the latter 1850's and early 1860s, White stood consistently with those who advocated church order. Although at no time did she attempt to delineate the structural form

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[188] Ellen White, *Early Writings* (Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1882), 97.

[189] Ellen White, *Testimonies to Ministers* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1923), 26.

such order was to take.[190] White's reasons for structure in the church include (1) avoiding confusion, (2) to provide support for the ministry, (3) for carrying the gospel to new fields and (4) for protecting the church from unworthy members.[191]

Relating more specifically to the need for local church structure White comments:

> I was shown that some have feared that our churches would become Babylon if they should organize; but those in Central New York have been perfect Babylon, confusion. And now unless the churches are so organized that they can carry out and enforce order, they have nothing to hope for in the future; they must scatter into fragments.[192]

However for White, the need for structure did not mean there was no flexibility. In her own ministry, White continually adapted or encouraged various methods that achieved the purposes of the church in a variety of situations. Her understanding of structure was one where systems and methods were open to change with the Holy Spirit guiding. She did not expect uniformity in structure but did see the need for unity in the purpose and essence of church. She states;

> There must be no fixed rules; our work is a progressive work, and there must be room left for methods to be improved upon. But under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, unity must and will be preserved. [193] Ways will be devised to reach hearts. Some of the methods used in this work will be different from methods used in the past, but let no one, because of this, block the way by criticism.[194]

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[190] Oliver, 55. While this statement is made primarily in relation to the denominational structure the same can be said for how White related to matters of local church structure.

[191] White, *Early Writings*, 97.

[192] Ellen White, *Testimonies To The Church* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), 1:270.

[193] Ellen White, *Evangelism*, 105.

[194] Ellen White, *Testimonies* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), 7:25.

White was committed to structure and unity but clearly recognised the need to be functional in terms of structure. After her death, the Adventist church became locked into a very defined paradigm, a situation, it appears, she would not have encouraged.

Adventist Church Structure Today

In a similar way to the New Testament church, Adventism has experienced the process of internationalisation. As Adventism has adapted to various environments, different cultural expressions of Adventism have developed. The café churches of Sweden seemingly pay little attention to the structure of the *Adventist Church Manual.* There is a great need for Adventism to become culturally relevant without compromising the gospel.[195]

The very heavy structure that often characterises the Adventist Church today makes it difficult for leaders in general to be innovative when it comes to renewing churches. Attempts to change governance structures, worship service formats, membership expectations and old programmes can be met with heavy resistance.[196] Most local church innovation is happening in the context of church plants. While the success of these innovations may filter into established churches, for the most part, renewal in established churches is slow. Apart from having to work through all the usual issues related to transition such as change

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[195] See Alfred McClure, "Planting and Harvesting," *Review*, 5 December 1996, 17-18.

[196] This is based on comments made by a group of seventeen Adventist pastors from across New Zealand in a workshop on functionality in churches where they were asked to share their experiences or observations of leading change in their congregations. New Zealand Pacific Union Conference minister's meetings held at Longburn Adventist College April, 2004.

and resourcing, Adventist leaders also have to work around members who appeal to the *Adventist Church Manual* as the official voice of the church. Eddy Johnson, Ministerial Association Secretary for the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference, writes: "It seems to me that too often we attend workshops but are not able to do much if anything as far as implementation goes. Our church is heavily structured and is not very flexible when it comes to changing the paradigm."[197]

In many cases a call for increased functionality is seen as more of an attack on the church than it is a quest for greater effectiveness. In writing on church structure C.D Brooks states: "When God tells us something, He gets it right the first time! He doesn't have to edit or adjust.[198] Brooks' underlying assumption is that the church he grew up in is the one God got right. Others, like Jay Gallimore, an Adventist conference president, would prefer the "imperfections" of current structure to what he terms as "popery" when leadership is invested in one or a few.[199] Leadership by a smaller group rather than the entire congregation is one of the factors he identifies as occurring in Adventist churches that seek structural renewal, especially those who "experiment with the church growth methods of non-Adventist churches."[200] Beach maintains that apostasy is the

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[197] Eddie Johnson, circular to New Zealand Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists pastors July 2003.

[198] C. D. Brooks. "I Want My Church Back!" *Adventists Affirm*, Fall 2002, 34.

[199] Jay Gallimore, "Can the Church Be Relevant and Survive?" *Adventists Affirm*, Fall 2002, 24.

[200] Ibid., 18.

end result of structural renewal. He states; "A study of church history reveals that that the changing of organizational principles and structured lines of authority have played a large role in many religious apostasies."[201] In each of these cases, where people are opposed to structural renewal, the issue seems to be more about opposition to changing worship styles than it is about deeper issues of structure.

At the same time, more people and churches are sensing the need for a healthier church. In many of these cases the *Adventist Church Manual*, in relation to local church structure, is increasingly being seen as an historical document of curiosity rather than useful. Ron Gladden, an Adventist employed as a church consultant, includes in his most recent book, techniques for how to get around the "problems" of the *Adventist Church Manual*.[202] Increasingly more churches are working through their issues of functionality in regard to structure and moving outside of the manual in their response.[203] In denominational magazines, churches are featured that have disregarded the Manual in relation to their structure.[204]

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[201] Beach and Beach, 80.

[202] Ron Gladden, *The Seven Habits*, 114-115.

[203] Churches that represent this process are included in the case studies below pp 167-218

[204] In recent *Ministry* magazine articles, churches and church leadership events have been promoted that, while Adventist, advocate a structure that is quite different from that outlined in the *Adventist Church Manual* in terms of governance, nominating and decision making processes. See promotion for "Re-church," *Ministry*, July 2002, 26 and "Ignite," *Ministry*, November 2003, 30.

Lyell Heise sums up the issues confronting the local church well when he states:

> Adventist congregations vary enormously in size, worshipping in homes, retirement villages and schools, as well as in churches. Given such diversity, issues of worship style can never be prescribed by denominational headquarters or conference session votes. Congregations must find their own consensus, and the discussion must be mission driven rather than simply "comfort-zone" driven.[205]

While this statement is specifically in regard to worship the same issues colour implementation of all purposes of the church. A return to the flexibility that is evident in the New Testament and early Adventist church structures is needed.. Clear purposes and principles maintained authenticity but allowed freedom to respond to the unique environment in which each church was located. Too often forms become more important than function and the result is a structure that is so caught in tradition it is unable to respond to its environment functionally.

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[205] Lyell V. Heise, "Worship, A Journey into God's Presence," *Record*, 18 May 2002, 12.

CHAPTER 7

SOCIOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS THAT SHAPE CHURCH STRUCTURE

On an institutional level, the church has much in common with all other human institutions. For example, the church provides social fellowship, educational development, behavioural standards and organisational policy; all of which highlight the need to understand the church as the body of Christ in its human dimension. It means that to study the Scriptures alone is not enough. Observation of human behaviour and an understanding of organisational development are also required to work out the significance of Biblical material in the life of the church. Oliver states: "The church is not only a divine institution, but also a human organization in an imperfect context. Idealistic principles must be tempered with realism, and theological prescriptions must be combined with sociological models."[206]

While it is essential that structural renewal be centred on and grow out of the Bible, methods may be borrowed from the business world or from studies done in behavioural sciences if they make the church more church-like. However, they must not be used indiscriminately. There needs to be a theological rationale behind each process which bases it in Biblical principles. This is why it is vital for a church to be very clear about why it exists before deciding how ministry will

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[206] Oliver, 273.

happen. Church leaders need to develop skill in theologically evaluating both the integrity and practicability of the methods they may adopt and apply them with discretion to the needs of the church.

Relationships in all organisational structures are overlaid by emotional implications from past, personal and organisational experience. In most cases, congregations respond emotionally more than they do functionally. The behavioural component must be worked through if a process of continual structural renewal is to have any chance of being part of the church's culture.

This chapter, while not designed to provide a much needed exhaustive analysis of how sociological issues impact church structure, will in a general way demonstrate the inter-connectedness of functionality and sociological factors. The interplay between sociological factors and organisational theory (chapter 8) is, for the most part, indistinguishable. This chapter will look more at the sociological sides of organisation while chapter 8 will examine the organisational issues of life-cycle and size versus structure in relation to the church.

Seeing The Church As a System

A systems approach to organisation views various social structures in terms of their consequences or functions. The idea is that the various elements of the organisation are related to one another in such a way that a change in one leads to a change in the others. Peter Senge outlines how, if structures are to be effective, it is imperative that one thinks through how one action can impact

another.[207] Thinking systematically means seeing the interrelationships of the whole and assuming multiple causes rather than a simple cause. It assumes that there are many contributing factors to any given set of circumstances.

Senge describes what he calls a "learning disability" whereby it is difficult for people to appreciate what is happening in the larger system beyond their small part. He states; "If one believes that one's part of the organization is the most important or finds it difficult to empathise with the needs of other parts of the system, then it is very difficult for that person to work with, and for, others in the organisation."[208] One cannot expect that the parts will just think about the whole. Structures must be put in place that facilitate this process.

Systems thinking is integral to the implementation of the Natural Church Development model. Schwarz outlines what he calls biotic principles which are all based on a systems understanding.[209] The biotic principle of Symbiosis identifies beneficial relationships within the congregational system. Energy transformation describes the energy coming into the system, whether negative or positive, and aims to use the total energy in the healthiest way. Interdependence recognises the inter-relationships that exist in the church system. Schwarz emphasises the importance of understanding the church as a complex organism in which all parts are linked.

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[207] Senge, 69.

[208] Ibid., 18.

[209] The biotic principles Schwarz identifies are included above in footnote 14 p.12.

> The way the different parts are integrated into the whole is more important than the parts themselves. It is therefore important to gain an ever deepening understanding of the nature of this network, rather than just considering isolated activities or an individual segment of church development. [210]

A change to one part of a church's structure impacts the other parts in some way.

In a church setting, it is often easy to identify one element of church life and take action without considering the wider impact on the system. For example, some churches put a high emphasis on evangelism at the expense of other ministry areas. While evangelism is an important element of church life, it can be over emphasised at the expense of the other purposes. Some other ministries may be under-resourced financially, or in regard to time and personnel, as they compensate for the resources that have been shifted to evangelism. When new people do join the church through the evangelistic programme, they are then faced with poor discipleship or under-resourced worship and may end up leaving the church due to what the system now lacks in other areas. Seeing church as a system requires balancing many variables.

Parsons and Leas present an overview of how systems thinking relates to the church environment.[211] They identify continuums that call for balance in various aspects of church life, including the need to think systematically through planned

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[210] Schwarz, *Paradigm Shift* 244. Schwarz outlines the biotic principles and their implications for church life 243-248.

[211] George Parsons and Speed B. Leas, *Understanding Your Congregation as a System* (New York: Alban Institute, 1993).

versus spontaneous aspects in the system, the concentration of authority versus dispersement, managerial leadership versus transformational and collegial excess versus individuality. Finding the right balance on these continuums is important in developing healthy systems.

Congregational Culture

Systems continue because of agreements or contracts of shared meaning which people make with one another. In every organisation there are patterns of beliefs, symbols, rituals, myths and practices that have evolved over time. These in turn create common understandings among members as to what the organisation is and how its members should behave.[212] This system of shared meaning is what is often referred to as organisational culture or in a church setting, congregational culture. Most large organisations have a dominant culture and numerous sets of sub-cultures.[213] In terms of functional structures, most times the culture of an organisation has a far greater relationship to functionality than does any formalised flow chart or structural plan. Structural renewal will only be lasting if the congregation's culture is also changed.

Robbins and Barnwell have identified ten factors that are crucial in shaping an organisation's culture. They also outline how most of these factors are closely intertwined with an organisation's design. The factors are:

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[212] Linda Smircich, "Concepts of Culture and Organisational Analysis," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 28 (September 1983): 339. See also Jay M. Shafritz and J. Steven Ott, *Classics of Organization Theory* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 1992), 490-502 for an outline of what defines organisational culture and how it impacts the organisation.

[213] K. L Gregory, "Native-View Paradigms: Multiple Cultures and Culture Conflicts in Organizations," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 28 (September 1983): 359-376.

(1) Individual Initiative: The degree of responsibility, freedom and independence that is fostered.

(2) Risk Tolerance: The degree to which innovation is encouraged.

(3) Direction: How clear are objectives and expectations?

(4) Integration: The degree to which units are able to operate in a coordinated manner.

(5) Support: The degree to which clear communication and assistance is provided.

(6) Control: The number of rules and regulations along with the amount of direct supervision.

(7) Identity: The degree to which there is identification with the organisation as a whole.

(8) Reward system: The criteria for performance.

(9) Conflict tolerance: The degree to which people are encouraged to air conflicts and criticisms openly.

(10) Communication patterns: How open or restricted are they? [214]

These issues must be worked through and structures put in place to facilitate them being fulfilled in an organisation.

A strong culture is characterised by the organisation's core values being strongly held and widely shared. Robbins and Barnwell state; "The more members that accept the core values, agree on their order of importance and are highly

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[214] Stephen P. Robbins and Neil Barnwell, *Organisation Theory* (Syndey, NSW: Prentice Hall, 1998), 356.

committed to them, the stronger the culture is."[215] This is especially important for a church where the purposes of the church need to permeate throughout the entire culture for it to function effectively.

The three factors that have been identified as being the most important in sustaining an organisational culture are: (1) the organisation's selection practices, (2) the actions of top management and (3) the organisation's socialisation methods. [216] These factors have implications for a church environment in how the leadership responds to the mission of the church and how new members are assimilated. People learn the culture through stories about the organisation, rituals, common language and material symbols. The way the church facility looks, the values that are inherent in stories, what practices the church perpetuates as valuable and what words are in common usage all inherently let people know the values of the culture. In these regards, observation and experience are far more important than written mission statements and policy manuals. Where there is a conflict between what is observed and experienced and what is written, the observation and experience will have the greatest impact.[217]

Anthony Robinson outlines how congregational culture is both a product of the church system along with the wider social environment. He establishes how

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[215] Ibid., 358.

[216] Ibid., 361.

[217] Richard L. Daft, *Essentials of Organization Theory and Design* (Cincinnati, OH: Internatiional Thomson Publishing, 1998), 232-233.

factors such as the break down of social trust, the ambivalence toward authority, the removal of absolutes and the rise in the consumer mentality are factors of the wider social environment which can very easily shape the church culture. Structures must be put in place to work through these factors and shape them toward church mission.[218]

Social Conflict And Church Structures

An aspect of church culture that is of particular importance to functionality is how the organisation views and works through conflict. Conflict is inherently part of organisational interactions. It is often seen as a negative factor, especially in a church environment where Jesus' plea for unity is often interpreted as being anti-conflict. A distinction must be made between conflict and hostile or antagonistic attitudes. The unity comes in having shared values rather then lack of conflict. Conflict can actually strengthen unity when worked through positively. Corser points out that a certain amount of discord, inner divergence and outer controversy, is organically tied up with the very elements that ultimately hold the group together. He writes; "Conflict serves to establish and maintain the identity and boundary lines of societies and groups."[219]

The absence of conflict cannot be taken as an index of the strength and stability of a relationship. Closeness gives rise to frequent occasions for conflict, but if participants feel that their relationships are tenuous, they will avoid it. When

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[218] Anthony B. Robinson, *Transforming Congregational Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 6.

[219] Ibid., 38.

conflict does happen in this avoidance environment it will often be more intense and carried out in ways that are more destructive than would otherwise have been the case.[220]

One safeguard against conflict disrupting the consensual basis of the relationship is contained in the social structure itself. Structures must be in place that provide for the institutionalisation and tolerance of conflict. Corser writes; "Whether internal conflict promises to be a means of equilibration of social relations or readjustment of rival claims, or whether it threatens to 'tear apart,' depends to a large extent on the social structure within which it occurs."[221] There must be structural systems in place that allow divergent opinions, based on common values, to be expressed and worked through. This is what Corser calls "safety-valve institutions."[222] Often, it is conflict that allows structures to move forward. A lack of conflict causes people to become disengaged from the system. Where there is no conflict and challenge of the system, traditionalism takes hold.

The Challenge of Traditionalism

In churches, perhaps more than any other place, people become fundamentalistic about forms. Over time the furnishings take on meaning and the systems become sacred, a process referred to as traditionalism. James Emery White states;

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[220] Daft, 311-312.

[221] Corser, 152.

[222] Ibid.,156.

> Our current church structures are strangling us, but we love them. More than that, they feel holy to us. To change them feels like disloyalty to God – even though we know it's just a chair, just an organizational arrangement, just a leadership position.[223]

Even when it is apparent that the structures are not working people still have huge difficulty in accepting change.

Within people there is a natural conservative dynamic to preserve the *status quo*.[224] The behavioural need for security leads to institutionalism with its refusal to understand forms and structures from a functional point of view. Institutions are assumed to have an almost magical quality. This is a sociological issue, even though it is most times expressed in theological guise. Getz, when addressing the human resistance to change writes:

> Social historians have made two important observations. First, in studying people and their societal structures, they have discovered that over a period of time people tend to fixate – particularly on forms. People do not want to change....Christians differ little from people in general in their psychological makeup. Structures provide a sense of security. And when we tamper with structures, we are tampering with people's emotional stability. This causes anxiety and anxiety always results in resistance to change.[225]

For the church leader embarking on structural renewal traditionalism most times is the biggest obstacle.

A sense of tradition is different to the problem of traditionalism. The church needs a strong connection with its past to give it a sense of continuity, community

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[223] James Emery White, 100.

[224] McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth*, 153.

[225] Getz, *Sharpening*, 40.

and an understanding of how God works in history. In contrast, traditionalism, a determination simply to repeat the past, is negative.[226] Schwarz discovered that half of the churches that had low-quality ministry and declining attendance indicated traditionalism was a major characteristic of their church. In the high-quality, growing churches, only 8% said that they had a problem with traditionalism.[227] Carl George, in his analysis of Adventism in the United States, identified traditionalism and cultural fundamentalism as the biggest limiting factors for the Adventist Church.[228]

In a quest for safety, people and churches develop behaviours and systems that are very deeply embedded and can be very difficult to identify. Ayers believes that traditionalism essentially grows out of selfishness.

> We need to investigate the church's administrative system to see if its aim is to give life or to keep control. The problem with our churches is not that they are traditional, but they are selfish. We want things done our way, on our terms, in our time.[229]

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[226] E.Stanley Ott, *Twelve Dynamic Shifts for Transforming Your Church* (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 2002) 9-17, offers an extensive discussion of three types of churches: (1) traditional churches, where the emphasis is on continuing what the church has done in the past and fitting people into established programmes; (2) transformational churches, where the emphasis is intentionally meeting needs and ministry as a way of life and (3) transitional churches, where congregations find themselves somewhere in between.

[227] Getz & Wall, 102.

[228] Carl George, *Empty Streets, Empty Pews* (Columbia, MD: Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1988), 11. Dudley and Cummings, in a study of the Adventist church in North America also found traditionalism to be the number one factor that inhibits growth in Adventism, Roger Dudley and Des Cummings, *Adventures in Church Growth* (Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association,1983), 13.

[229] Stephen L. Ayers, "Order in the Church," *Church Administration* 43 (Summer 2001): 14-16.

Many times issues of control are covered in theological terms to protect a sense of power.

Ironically, success often leads to traditionalism. Parsons and Leas state:

> Many congregations are stuck in their successes. They can point to an earlier time of vitality and growth and to subsequent efforts to build on their success....But their successes led them to embrace organizational patterns and habits that no longer serve them well. They continue to exercise the same set of muscles while the rest of the body atrophies.[230]

What worked in the past is tightly held onto even if it is no longer functional. Churches, like people, can live in their past successes. Any threat to this past success creates a "holy war".[231]

The problem is that societal shifts, in terms of what is relevant, are happening much faster than what the church, in most cases, can keep up with. Hull identifies that twenty-five years ago it took twenty years for a church methodology to move from inception to irrelevancy. Ten years ago it was fifteen. Today, the cycle has collapsed to seven years. Hull outlines; "Because culture is speeding down the road at a frightening pace, leaders today must be willing to live with constant change."[232] This is why it is vital that a clear understanding of the essentials of church are embedded into the fabric of the congregation so that changes are made and evaluated on a Biblical basis.

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[230] Parsons and Leas, 1.

[231] Bill Hull, *Seven Steps*, 101.

[232] Ibid.

Organisational Change

Because institutions are configured out of interrelated cultural and structural elements, they tend to resist change.[233] Organisations by their very nature are conservative. Members fear losing what they already have and those in power, who are in the best position to initiate change, typically have the most to lose. Most organisations are bureaucracies with built-in mechanisms that lift predictability but work against change.

Noel Tichy maintains that waking the organisation to the need for change is the "...most emotionally wrenching and terrifying aspect of renewal".[234] Part of what makes this step in the change process so wrenching and terrifying "...is the extreme intensity people have to feel before they are prepared to change."[235] Tichy highlights the importance of creating a clear compelling vision that shows people how their lives will be better with the change and the necessity to communicate. People find change uncomfortable and threatening. Even good changes are seen as a threat to their sense of security. Organisational routines, systems and strategies tend to persist even when there is strong evidence that they should change. However, change is necessary if the organisation is to respond innovatively to its shifting environment. For functionality, change is

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[233] Norman Goodman, *Introduction To Sociology* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1992), 47. See also Richard H. Hall, *Organizations: Structures and Process* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1987), 29 for an overview of the factors that cause organisational inflexibility.

[234] Noel Tichy and Stratford Sherman, *Control Your Destiny or Someone Else Will* (NY: Doubleday, 1993), 331.

[235] Ibid.

inherent as questions of effectiveness are continually asked of the structure and changes made to ensure that particular functions are happening in the most effective way possible.[236]

Recently, change theory has moved from studying macro change to looking more at micro changes and how the macro can be shaped at this level. Traditional approaches to organisational change have been dominated by assumptions promoting stability, routine and order. As a result, organisational change has been treated as exceptional rather than natural. However, Tsoukas and Chia maintain that change, especially on a micro level, can be treated as the normal condition of organisational life. Tsoukas and Chia define change as "The reweaving of actors' webs of beliefs and habits of action to accommodate new experiences obtained through interactions."[237] They claim that because this is an ongoing process, change is inherent. Change is best facilitated when the organisation is seen as a quasi-stable structure and as sites of human action in which, through the ongoing activity of members, organisation emerges. The role of managers is to clear their vision to see what is occurring and at the same time help fashion a coherent and desirable pattern out of what is happening.

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[236] A lot of work has been done in the field of organisational change that can be very helpful when worked through in a church context. Some excellent guides to change have been published that relate what has been learnt from change theory to church life. For adaptations of change theory to a church context see Alan Nelson and Gene Appel, *How to Change Your Church Without Killing It* (Nashville, TN:Word, 2000), Dan Southerland, *Transitioning The Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), Leith Anderson *A Church for the 21st Century* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1992), and Lyle Schaller, *Strategies for Change* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1993).

[237] Haridimos Tsoukas and Robert Chia, "On Organization Becoming: Rethinking Organizational Change," *Organization Science* 13, (September-October 2002): 582.

The application in terms of church is that members are continually changing toward something. The issues of church life are not so much about the big obvious changes but rather the micro changes that are inherently happening continuously. Tsoukas and Chia highlight the need to focus on the "...subterranean, microscopic changes that go on in the bowels of organization."[238] These changes may never acquire the status of formal organisational systems and routines but are no less important. Microscopic change occurs naturally, incrementally and inexorably through "creep", "slippage" and "drift" as well as natural "spread". Microscopic change reflects the actual becoming of things. It is this "becoming of things" that inherently shapes the life of the church.

Structural Equilibrium

Behavioural scientist, Kurt Lewin, suggests that organisations are rarely, if ever, at a point of total consensus about what they are and how they should operate. Instead, organisations are in a state of organised compromise, where the forces for change and the forces against change are in equilibrium.[239] This equilibrium is dynamic in nature.

Within a certain range, the whole system can adapt to minor shifts and changes but there is a sense of mutual, most time unspoken, agreement that the

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[238] Ibid, 580.

[239] Kurt Lewin, *A Dynamic Theory of Personality* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1935), and *Resolving Social Conflicts* (New York: Harper, 1948) in Mead, *Transforming Congregations*, 104.

equilibrium will not be changed in a basic way. That unspoken agreement is a powerful force to keep change within limits. Neither the people who push for change nor those who oppose it get all they want, but they have enough and the system rests. This is what Lewin calls the structural homeostasis. While ever change is made within these boundaries it is accepted, even if reluctantly. However, when the boundaries are pushed beyond what is comfortable, anxiety responses are triggered. Each organisation has its own range of homoeostasis to work within. Mann writes;

> Paradoxically, when leaders try to fix everything they hear complaints about, they actually stimulate new objections from the opposite direction. This is natural, because living systems have powerful (if subtle) ways of maintaining equilibrium. Change any part and the rest of the system is sure to react.[240]

One of the most important structures in a church to identify is this homeostasis. While it will rarely be mapped out on paper, this cultural understanding is what needs to be worked through in a process of functional renewal. The church leaders must determine the boundaries of the homeostasis and how much room there is to work in before the equilibrium is upset. When the boundaries are understood they can be worked within and through much more constructively.

To bring change, Lewin says, one must unfreeze the equilibrium, install the change and then refreeze the new homeostasis. When change is introduced poorly without unfreezing, trust is disrupted and opposition mobilised. Refreezing

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[240] Alice Mann, *The In Between Church: Navigating Size Transitions In Congregations* (New York: Alban Institute, 1998), 32.

a changed system involves training people in the behaviours needed, making periodic evaluations to take into account what has gone wrong, and listening to opposition, ever seeking to improve the quality of the new homeostasis.

Structures of Hierarchy and Dependency

Over time churches, like most institutions, become stratified into levels of power. While unbiblical, these stratifications become hierarchical, with those considered most important at the top and those less important at the bottom. The hierarchies that develop are most times full of emotional overtones that complicate attempts to make the structures more functional. [241]

Thomas Harris outlines how every hierarchy is overlaid by emotional interaction.[242] In developing his model of dependency systems, Harris uses familial experiences of children and parents to describe patterns of reaction. Each person has a set of characteristic messages received from parents usually prompting them to do something they did not want to do. These collective experiences are recorded in the memory as what Harris terms "parent tapes". In response to the parent tape there is also a set of emotional and verbal answers which become "child tapes". When parent and child tapes interact between adults in the church, the result is generally unhealthy. Harris says that one of the few ways to break out of these unproductive exchanges is for someone to

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[241] Mead, *Transforming Congregations*, 97.

[242] Thomas Harris, *I'm O.K – You're O.K* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1967), 16-36.

intervene with the "adult tape" which states facts or asks for data and tries to solve problems. It attempts to focus on the issue at hand and seek collegiality in doing it.

Mead, in commenting on Harris' model in relation to churches, maintains that the structures at the "higher" levels often communicate with the "lower" levels using the parent tape. Pastors relate to the congregation too frequently out of the "You must do this" parent tape. It is not surprising then that the response is childish: ignoring the messages; resenting the message and criticising the messenger; dragging feet; being late; not carrying through on promises. Parent-child agreements are often overlaid with unwritten expectations and undefined emotional contracts. Too often attempts at structural renewal are sabotaged by leaders or the congregation operating out of unhealthy dependency systems.

The "adult tape" must come from the church leadership in the form of more accountability, communicating a clarity of purpose and clear expectations. Volunteers need to know what they are expected to do, what resources are available and that what they are doing makes a difference in achieving the overall purpose before they set about making the changes. This allows everyone in the structure to be empowered and relate at adult levels.

Structures of Communication

To work within the sociological structures of church effectively, communication is vital. Kaldor states that "Many writers agree, of all group processes, communication is one of the most critical to the effective functioning of a congregation."[243] The NCLS data shows a relationship between whether attenders felt that people in their congregation were aware of what committees and groups in the congregation were doing and a sense of belonging, growing in faith and numerical growth.[244]

A high level of communication is essential to structural renewal because informed people are easier to motivate and will cooperate more readily with each other in achieving church goals.[245] Good communication helps to relieve alienated feelings over cliques or power bases which are perceived as in 'control' of the church. It also allows people the opportunity to make decisions from a more informed point of view.

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[243] Kaldor et al, *Shaping*, 129.

[244] Ibid, 129.

[245] Rensis Likert, *The Human Organization: Its Management and Value* (Tokyo: McGraw-Hill Kogakusha, 1967). Likert, identifies communication as one of the main variables in his four systems of organisational relationships. Likert's system 1: Exploitative Management, is his poorest relational form in achieving results. This system does not communicate apart from expressing desires clearly and forcefully. System 4: Participative Management, his most effective relational form, includes strong upward and downward communication. Although Likert's theory has been criticised for being too simplistic there is clearly a link between levels of communication and organisational effectiveness. For a general overview of communication and organisational effectiveness see Stephen W. Littlejohn, *Theories of Human Communication* (London: Wadsworth Publishing, 1999) 302-326.

Communication systems must be put in place that allow for information distribution and feedback. Okhuyesen and Eisenhardt outline how "The structure of knowledge flow is crucial. Without structures, knowledge is too disorganized. Without knowledge, structure is not useful."[246] Information distribution lets the church know what decisions are being worked through and why these decisions need to be made. It involves communicating values and how the actions taken will contribute to the church achieving its purposes. Feedback is of special importance in helping decide the rate at which change should be introduced. People are far more willing to cooperate when they feel that they are working in a culture of openness and trust. This culture is often a function of communication.

Most people do not want to be involved in every decision. However, they do want to be assured that decisions are made in an accountable, open environment and that all factors are being considered. Many times structural renewal is hindered by a simple lack of communication. When leaders act as though they have something to hide and do not value congregational opinion, then problems arise. In an environment of participatory decision-making, people trust the leadership. Hull states that "This is the setting most conducive to getting things done." [247]

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[246] Geraro Okhuyesen and Kathleen Eisenhardt, "Integrating Knowledge in Groups: How Formal Interventions Enable Flexibility," *Organization Science* 13 (2002): 370-386.

[247] Hull, 117.

Insights, like these, from sociological theory will go a long way toward helping the church evaluate and improve its structures. They can be explored and used to help churches become learning organisations whose structures can adapt and in so doing, remain supportive of the ultimate mission for which the church exists.

CHAPTER 8

ORGANISATIONAL THEORY AND CHURCH STRUCTURE

Organisational models are relevant to the church to the extent that they enhance the purposes of the church being achieved and express the values of a congregation. The importance of a clear mission and priorities consistent with that mission, approaches to organisational effectiveness, insights about leadership and working with teams are aspects of functional church life that are often modelled by effective companies. However, it must be remembered that business models have secular presuppositions and rarely make building community a primary consideration.[248] The goal of organisational study for the church leader is to analyse what is common in all organisations and make applications to church life that will assist the church in achieving its unique purpose.

The Organisational Life Cycle and Local Church Structure

While every organisation is unique, there are identifiable patterns that are observed in the nature of organisations. Robbins and Barnwell state: "Organisations are like fingerprints. Each has it own unique structure....Yet again like fingerprints, no structure is truly unique. All fingerprints have common

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[248] Howard Snyder, *Decoding the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), 67. Snyder identifies a common concern when he outlines how the church has too often tended to follow the corporate bureaucratic model and become a secular, democratic organisation with boards, constitution and administrators rather than a body listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit. In a similar way, Gish, 208 reminds the church it needs to be careful to ensure that the "power of organization not take the place of the power of the Holy Spirit".

elements that allow them to be classified around common elements."[249] Sociologist David Moberg points out that churches, like other organisations, generally follow a similar pattern in terms of organisational life cycle. Five general phases are identified: (1) incipient organisation, (2) formal organisation, (3) maximum efficiency, (4) institutionalism and (5) disintegration.[250]

The first fifteen to twenty years of a church's life cycle are typically its most dynamic ones. During this time, vision and understanding of the church's purpose are generally very clear. Morale is high and this helps draw people into participation. Changes are easily adopted and integrated into the church structure. Because of minimal organisation, there is spontaneity and flexibility in decision making. Structures are created in response to the needs, with the function of ministry determining the form. This phase of church is very evident in Acts and in early Adventism.

As the initial euphoria of establishing the church wears off, it generally institutes a relatively predictable series of programmes and infrastructure. The zeal that was focused on the "why" of ministry is now concentrated upon "how" ministry is done and structures are formalised.

After some years working through such issues the church reaches its mature, most efficient stage. The people, practices and policies are set in place. Change

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[249] Robbins and Barnwell, 244.

[250] David O. Moberg, *The Church as a Social Institution* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ:Prentice-Hall,1962), 120-121.

may be introduced, but the foundation has been solidified. The church now has a discernable tradition and systems that were developed to allow ministry become solidified as part of the tradition regardless of their current value to the mission. Structures that are organized for security, predictability and safety end up taking precedence over purpose. This is the institutional plateau on which many churches rest for many years.[251]

Without realising what is taking place, a church gradually begins to find itself on a ministry decline. Current members have a poor understanding of the purpose of the church. This results in ministry being done "because we've always done it that way". The plateauing of a church almost always involves increased bureaucracy, emphasis on maintenance and unwillingness to change. A church with a bureaucratic structure becomes a maze of maintenance. Most of the system's energy is used in just keeping it running. Questions regarding the system's effectiveness are seldom asked.[252]

The structural flexibility of a church in its beginning years provides for a maximising of ministry and a minimising of maintenance. At the end of a church's life cycle, the situation is reversed and a church maximizes maintenance

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[251] Thom Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth: History, Theology, and Principles* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1993), 200 points out that most churches end up not even being structured for the laity to do ministry. Persons involved in the church often spend their time on committees or boards rather than in front-line ministry. C. Peter Wagner, *Leading Your Church To Growth* (Eastbourne, Sussex: Kingsway Publications, 1988), 122 comments that as the church grows it gets more and more unwieldy and tends to multiply boards and committees ad infinitum. Instead of providing opportunities for ministry, this structure drags down the church.

[252] Getz, *Sharpening*, 252 identifies the advanced stages of Institutionalism.

and minimizes ministry. In its first years the biblical functions create the forms of ministry, but in later years the forms strangle the functions.

If nothing is done to change the trend, a church eventually disintegrates into a period of stagnation and decline. Rigid structures prevent new ministries from being started and drive visionary leaders away to other churches where new ideas are accepted and implemented. Many churches enter the final phase of the life cycle unaware that they have begun a slow descent. George Barna points out that because churches are non-profit entities whose existence requires only a name and a person or two to maintain the legacy, a dead church is not necessarily an ex-church. He says that in the USA, "thousands of churches have deteriorated to the point where they are a ministry in theory only, a shell of what they had once been."[253]

William Weitzel and Ellen Jonsson studied the process of organisational decline.[254] The stages identified were:

(1) Blindness: There is a failure to anticipate or detect internal or external threats. Decline may set in long before it is reflected in performance statistics.

(2) Inaction: The signs of decline are apparent but little is done about them.

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[253] George Barna, *Turnaround Churches* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1993), 22-23.

[254] William Weitzel and Ellen Jonsson, "Decline in Organisations: A Literature Integration and Extension," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 34 (March 1989): 102.

(3) Faulty Action: Differences of opinion regarding courses of action proliferate leading to an increase in power plays. Decisions often focus on indicators rather than causes of decline.

(4) Crisis: Major re-orientation and revitalisation is necessary or the organisation will suffer certain failure. People in the organisation suffer from divisiveness and social fabric begins to break up.

(5) Dissolution: The organisation collapses.

The dysfunctional consequences of organisational decline include centralisation of decision-making with decreased participation and control emphasised. There is no long-term planning with crisis and short-term needs overshadowing strategic planning. Innovation is discouraged by risk-aversion and scepticism. This environment causes many leaders to leave. These factors combine to result in a resistance to change that continues the slide toward decline.[255]

However, decline is not inevitable. Organisations differ from people and plants in that their cycle isn't predictable. An organisation may go from youth to old age in a matter of years or it may last for centuries. More important, it may go through a period of stagnation and then revive. John W. Gardner suggest that "Organizations need not stagnate. They often do, to be sure, but that is because the arts of structural renewal are not widely understood. Organizations can renew themselves continuously."[256] An ongoing culture of renewal can and must

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[255] Ibid.

become the nature of the church. Church leadership must continually assess where the church is at on the life cycle and be continually re-shaping ministry on the first half of the cycle in a way that guards against institutionalism, figure 2. The paradigm for how this process happens is the goal of this study and is outlined in the last Part of this thesis.

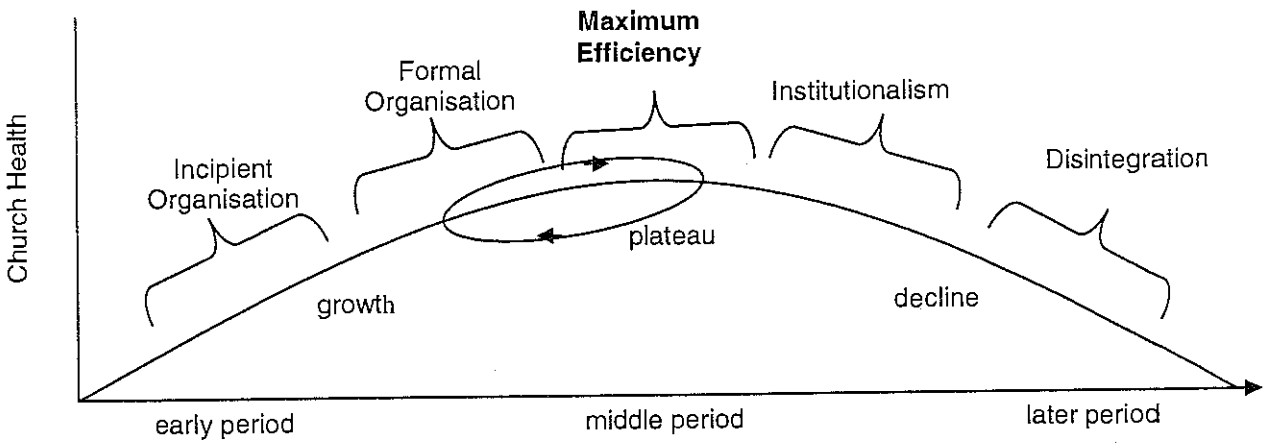


Fig. 2. Moberg's Stages of Organisational Growth and Decline

The institutional drift toward "safer" patterns being fixed over time in religious organisations is identified by Max Weber in his study of religious sectarian

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[256] John W. Gardner, "How to Prevent Organizational Dry Rot," *Harper*, October 1965, 20 in *Sharpening*, Getz, 252-3 disagrees with Gladden who writes that we need to acknowledge that all churches eventually plateau and that the plateau factor will continue to frustrate our efforts to grow existing churches. "For years, we have not been aware of this. We have made repeated, vigorous and well-meaning attempts to make existing churches larger only to find that no matter what pastor we assign, how much money we spend or what evangelist conducts a series, the church remains at its plateau.... Today, pastors lay awake at night trying to figure out what to do. Lay people pray and work with disappointing results. Conference officials allocate *mucho pesos* to evangelistic efforts. Yet our churches have nearly all completed their cycle of growth." Ron Gladden, website www.plantthefuture.org, Dec 9, 2003.

development.[257] Weber argues that as sects move toward becoming bureaucratised and seek accommodation to secular society they are less willing to take on positions or changes that may go against social expectations. Vance develops this theory in relation to the role of woman in the Adventist church.[258] "Weber's Sociological theory of sectarian development hints that religious maturation and change may affect the allotment of authority on the basis of gender."[259] While women and members of other underprivileged groups are allowed increased authority early in the development of a sect Weber states that "only in very rare cases does this practice continue beyond the first few stages of a religious community's formation, when the pneumatic manifestations of charisma are valued as hallmarks of a specifically religious exultation."[260] Thereafter, as routine and regimentation of community relations sets in, the public authority previously allotted to women is limited and eventually disappears entirely. This factor may have changed as society and church takes on different views in regard to women. However, it does demonstrate the process of institutionalism as the church is shaped by society and its desire for a sense of stability and acceptance in society.

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[257] Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963), 104. An analysis of Weber's work is given by Talcott Parsons, *Sociological Theory and Modern Society* (New York: The Free Press, 1967), 35-78.

[258] Vance, 16.

[259] Ibid.

[260] Ibid.

This life-cycle process applies both to particular ministry programmes and the church as a whole. The goal of functionality is to have a paradigm of thinking through and applying factors of church life that ensures the particular system keeps renewing itself.

The Challenges of Bureaucracy

Most times in the life-cycle, organisations get caught in systems of bureaucracy. Bureaucratic systems have clearly defined processes and sub-units that ensure the system maintains a certain level or procedure. These systems initially help an organisation achieve growth by providing reliability and predictability. However, this very regulation then becomes detrimental as it reduces flexibility. Rules and regulations become so emphasised that they take on a symbolic meaning of their own. The rules become more important than the ends they were designed to serve with the result being goal displacement and a loss of organisational effectiveness.[261]

Warren Bennis outlines how bureaucracy grew out of a reaction against the personal subjugation, cruelty and subjective judgments that were acceptable practices during the early days of the Industrial Revolution.[262] Bureaucracy emerged out of the need for order, precision and demands by workers for

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[261] Daft, 106-107.

[262] Warren Bennis, "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Future," *American Psychologist*, 38 (July 1970): 595-608.

impartial treatment within the organisation. For this environment then, bureaucracy was functional.

Bureaucratic rules and regulations not only define unacceptable behaviours but also minimum levels of acceptable performance.[263] If the organisation's goals are not internalised and made a part of the employee's behaviour, the rules encourage apathy. The rules become interpreted as setting the minimum standards for performance rather than identifying unacceptable behaviours and an environment is created where people will do the bare minimum to get by. This can also be the case in church systems where standards become more important than values. Leaders lament a lack of involvement, yet one of the causes may be a structure that promotes minimum behaviour.

Victor Thompson sees the highly formalised bureaucracy as creating insecurities in those in authority that leads to what he calls "bureaupathic" behaviour.[264] Decision-makers use adherence to rules to protect themselves from making errors with expression like; "Don't blame me. I was just following the rules!" Thompson suggests that as people in hierarchical positions become increasingly dependent upon others for the achievement of organisational goals, they tend to introduce more rules to protect themselves against this dependence.

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[263] Alvin Gouldner, *Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy* (New York: Free Press, 1954), 7.

[264] Victor Thompson, *Modern Organisations* (New York: Knopf, 1961), 17.

This leads to alienation, concentration of power and an inability to adapt to change.[265] Churches can very easily become bureaucratic in structure with elaborate systems of committees, checks and balances that safeguard the church but which, without continual, intentional revision, become dysfunctional bureaucracies.

The Relationship between Structure and Size

The way structure is facilitated, the change process worked through and communication made effective in human institutions is often a function of group size. Alfred Chandler concluded that changes in strategy preceded and led to changes in the organisation's structure.[266] Organisations typically start with a single product or line. The simplicity is compatible with a flexible, simple structure. As organisations seek to grow, they take on more ambitious and elaborate strategies. This desired complexity is achieved by redesigning the structure to form specialised units based on the functions performed. If it continues to diversify, a structural form is needed that allows for the efficient allocation of resources, accountability in regard to performance and coordination between units.[267] Some would contend that Chandler's proposal is over-simplistic and that the changes are not so much a function of free strategy but arise out of organisational crises at the various levels or growth.[268]

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[265]Robbins and Barnwell, 274.

[266] Alfred D. Chandler, Jr, *Strategy and Structure: Chapters in the History of the Industrial Enterprise*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1962), 13.

[267] Ibid.

[268] Robbins and Barnwell, 110.

Larry Greiner proposed that an organisation's evolution is characterised by phases of prolonged and calm growth, followed by periods of internal turmoil and revolution, whereby the structure must be renewed if the organisation is to move through the next stage.[269] Each stage of evolution creates its own crisis and initiates a new phase.

The phases Greiner outlines are:

(1) Creativity: The founder's energy provides direction. Only a simple structure is needed which, as growth occurs, creates a crisis of leadership.

(2) Direction: The organisation becomes difficult to manage by relying on informal communication. Formalisation happens and basic systems are put in place. This creates a crisis of autonomy.

(3) Delegation: Decisions are decentralised which creates a crisis of control.

(4) Coordination: Processes such as reviews, evaluations and activities to facilitate coordination are put in place which creates a crisis of red tape.

(5) Collaboration: A strong interpersonal collaboration between the organisation's members comes about. A strong culture acts as a substitute for formal controls.

Greiner acknowledges that movement between phases will vary both within and between organisations and that some organisations revert to earlier stages.[270]

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[269] Larry E. Greiner, "Evolution and Revolution as Organizations Grow," *Harvard Business Review*, 50 (July-August 1972): 37-46.

[270] Ibid.

A predictable pattern that follows Greiner's outline is identifiable in the way churches interact at various size levels. The congregation's expectations, the way ministry is delivered and decisions made are often functions of size. Alice Mann identifies six general sizes.[271]

0-60 attenders – Family Size

60-150 attenders – Pastoral Size

150-200 attenders – Plateau Zone

200-350 attenders – Program Size

350-400 attenders – Plateau Zone

400-500 attenders – Corporate Size

Mann outlines how churches must act their size if church life is to be functionally facilitated. Dysfunctions arise when churches either act a size larger then the one they are or when they act a size below. She says that at times, churches will need to "...relinquish the ghost of pastoral size structures in favour of their family size reality."[272] She also reminds the reader that many different factors are in play, and subtle gradations exist that make any size theory look oversimplified.

Mann suggests that size transition is a lot like standing on a fault line. "You can make better decisions if you know not only where the rifts occur but also what

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[271]Mann, 17.

[272]Ibid, 26.

deeper movements of the earth are driving the surface eruption."[273] These periods of transition are what Greiner's model refers to as crisis points.

Gary McIntosh in *One Size Doesn't Fit All* gives a typology of church size.[274] Mcintosh outlines how the size of a church influences the structure that must be shaped to facilitate that size. It affects how leadership is facilitated, the role of the pastor, the role and type of staff, how change occurs and how growth strategies can be pursued.

While this systems approach to church life is very general and exceptions can be pointed out, it is vital that church leaders work through the implications of how size interacts with structure. Carl George explores the critical interactions between size and growth in many of his books.[275] He identifies barriers to growth at 200, 400, 800, 1 500 and 10 000. George maintains church structures that might be functional at one particular size can actually be the barrier that holds the church back from achieving further growth when at another size.

One example of how size shifts change church dynamics is in how decisions are made. Smaller churches expect participatory democracy. However, this style of governance often holds the church back as it grows larger. Democracy appears to be relatively easy to attain in the congregations of thirty - sixty members. It is

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[273] Mann, 2.

[274] McIntosh, *One Size Fits All,* 143-144. This typology is provided in appendix D.

[275] See Carl George, *Prepare Your Church for the Future* (Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 1992); *The Coming Church Revolution: Empowering Leaders for the Future* (Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 1994) and Carl George and Warren Bird, *How to Break Growth Barriers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1993).

far more difficult to implement when the membership reaches one hundred and nearly impossible if the membership exceeds two hundred. Likewise, the greater the emphasis on participatory democracy, the greater the probability that the natural and inevitable distrust by the members will lead to a "split" as some of the members walk out to form a new congregation.[276] Hull states:

> "For the church to grow congregations must rid themselves of the controlling mentality leading to an elaborate system of committees with a myriad of checks and balances.... Churches have been too concerned with limiting authority, reducing power and smothering initiative."[277]

At the same time there must be a mechanism for the congregation to have meaningful input and if necessary, vent its frustration with leadership. As churches grow, the challenge is to respond in structural ways to further facilitate that growth.

The small church is relationally driven. The pastor, if there is one in place, is often not the primary leader of the congregation. That role is often given to an individual or individuals who by their personal interaction with others influence the rest of the church. Since people are more important than performance, small churches often overlook poor performance rather than confront the individual and risk relationship. The small church works through informal channels to make decisions and keep organisational balance.

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[276] Hull, 111.

[277] Ibid., 116 goes on to outline how leaders are not called to represent their congregation. The role of leadership is to liberate people to fulfil their potential. Any leadership that focuses on securing a certain faction's rights will dull the organisation's cutting edge.

Glen Damon outlines how the small church is generally built around family models. He outlines four main family models that churches, most times subconsciously, base themselves around. He identifies these models as: (1) traditional family, (2) blended family, (3) cosmopolitan family and (4) ethnic family. Decision making in each of these "families" is made in a different manner. In the traditional family, decisions are made before meetings, in the blended family by the entire congregation. For the cosmopolitan family, decisions are made by a few but ratified by all and in the ethnic family, decisions are made by custom. Each has characteristics that make it unique, yet they are basically structured along family lines.[278]

The research of George Parsons and Speed Leas suggests that a greater proportion of members may actually participate in decisions in a pastoral size church than at the family size.[279] The heightened role of the pastor moves decision- making from the "kitchen table" to somewhere more accessible.[280] The pastor's central position as communication "switchboard" also allows for a great deal of informal consultation and problem solving: he or she can monitor key relationships, initiate needed conversations and anticipate likely clashes.

Worship structures should also be appropriate for the size of the church. Considering what the small church does well rather then focusing upon its

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[278] Glen Daman, *Shepherding The Small Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2002), 56.

[279] Parsons and Lees, 126.

[280] Ibid., 212.

weaknesses, enables the church to develop a worship service that honours and exalts God. Because of its size, the small church can enjoy more interaction and participation than its larger counterpart. Spontaneous testimonies, the involvement of children and interaction within the sermon can strengthen and highlight the benefits of being small and lead to a more dynamic and meaningful worship.[281] The same size adaptability concept holds true for evangelism. By having evangelistic events focused upon social interaction rather than "evangelistic preaching," the gospel can be presented in a clear manner, yet in a way that does not violate relational value.

As attendance approaches 150, the congregation must become more group-centred again because the pastor can no longer carry around the whole system. Board and pastor must find ways to keep the parts connected in networks of collaboration. Clergy must shift a good deal of their time away from direct delivery of pastoral care and focus on assembling and guiding the small team of ministry leaders. Mann points out that the skills needed for this transition have not usually been emphasised in seminary. Hence, many clergy find themselves poorly equipped for a pastoral to programme size transition.[282]

Pastoral size churches resemble an organism more than an organisation. On the other hand, in programme and corporate size churches the variety and complexity of relationships require conscious attention to the matters of identity,

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[281]Ibid.,108.

[282]Mann, 18.

purpose, structure and roles of leadership. In the corporate Church, systems are at their most essential. The ability to co-ordinate multiple staff and manage the diversity of its ministries is critical. Systems must be in place that help the leadership team and wider church keep its focus on the big questions such as its purpose and role.

Leadership In The Life-Cycle

Andrew Ward maintains that a very different leadership style is needed for each size transition or in relation to where an organisation is up to on the organisational life-cycle.[283] He divides leadership style into creators, accelerators, sustainers and terminators. Ward maintains that if leadership is not matched correctly then, regardless of a structure on paper, that structure will be dysfunctional. His theory does not always call for a new leader at each stage, but more ideally, that the leader can adapt and provide the type of leadership the structure needs at its particular point.[284]

The personality of the leader is influential in shaping an organisation's structure.[285] When there is a thirst for power, very little authority is delegated. When the leader is suspicious of others, elaborate information systems are put in place to monitor workers.

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[283] Andrew Ward, *The Leadership Life Cycle: Matching Leaders to Evolving Organisations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

[284] Ibid., 104-105.

[285] Robbins and Barnwell, 219.

Congregational leaders are vulnerable to the same learning disabilities that organisations experience. Leaders can simply develop their strengths and fail to see the impact of long-term events, of gradual shifts in the environment surrounding the church or changes within the congregation itself.[286] They can develop tunnel vision, born out of the necessity of the tasks, and fail to see a holistic view of the congregation.[287] For ongoing functionality to be facilitated in the life of the church, leadership is crucial. Structures must be in place that facilitate leadership development, help leaders with issues of self-education and resource them to lead in functional ways.[288]

High Performance Organisations

Organisational theory of recent years has been very focused on what elements are common to organisations that achieve at high levels.[289] Much of what organisational theorists promote today comes from the observations of Ken Bamforth, Eric Trist and Fred Emery following their study of British coal miners.[290] One mine had created a new paradigm for work organisation that was yielding

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[286] A number of authors provide transitions of leadership theory into church life. See Bill Hybels, *Courageous Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002); Leith Anderson, *Leadership That Works* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1999); Tom Marshall, *Understanding Leadership* (Tonbridge, Kent: Sovereign Word, 1991) and John Maxwell, *Developing the Leaders Around You* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1995).

[287] Parsons and Leas, 3.

[288] Andrew J. Dubrin and Carol Dalglish, *Leadership an Australasian Focus* (Milton, Qld: John Wiley and Sons, 2003), 428-432.

[289] Stephen P. Robbins and Neil Barnwell, *Organisation Theory: Concepts and Cases* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1998), 46-71 give an overview of the development and implications of organisational theory.

[290] J.H. Boyett and J.T. Boyett, *The Guru Guide* (NewYork: John Wiley & Son, 1998), 130.

significant improvements in productivity, costs, cycle times, absenteeism and worker morale. Trist, Bamforth & Emery called this method of workplace design the sociotechnical approach and it has been described as perhaps one of the most "highly relevant, least understood and rarely applied perspectives on management and organizational design in history."[291] Trist describes it this way: "The conventional system combines a complex formal structure with simple work roles; the composite system combines a simple formal structure with complex work roles."[292]

In a high performance organisation the traditional hierarchy is dismantled. Rather than a flow chart of responsibility, there is a more flattened team structure commonly mixing and matching three types of teams: work teams, improvement teams and integrating teams. Most systems thinkers emphasise the cross-functional dynamic of these teams. This approach demands specific and demanding performance goals for all teams clearly linked to the organisation's mission and strategy.

However, even the companies held up as examples of those experiencing success, have found it difficult, if not impossible, to expand high performance practices much beyond a few isolated experiments.[293] Reasons given for the lack of implementation include:

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[291] Ibid.,

[292] Quoted in ibid.,129.

[293] ibid., 140

(1) The tradition of individual freedom that goes against the collective nature of teamwork.[294]

(2) Managers are threatened. For managers, teams are a loss of status, authority and responsibility.[295]

(3) Maybe the transition for the traditional organisation is just too hard to accomplish.[296]

Issues such as a flattened hierarchy and interdependence are scriptural concepts of church structure. If there is any environment where the concepts of the high performance organisation are applicable, it should be in the context of church.

In regard to a church board or leadership team, a high performance approach would bring about a range of changes. Rangan outlines how traditional approaches to the work of boards of non-profit organisations perpetuate a number of deficiencies, such as: time on the trivial, short term bias, reactive stance, unclear strategies and poor accountability. A high-performance model would emphasise an outcome-driven, organising system that separates large issues from small, forces forward thinking, enables proactivity, cradles vision, explicitly addresses fundamental values, balances over-control and under-control and forces an external focus.[297]

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[294] Charles Manz and Henry Sims, *Business without Bosses*, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1993), 17-18.

[295] John Zenger, *Leading Teams* (Homewood, Ill: Irwin, 1994), 86.

[296] Boyett and Boyett, 140.

[297] V. Kasturi Rangan, "Lofty Missions, Down-to-Earth Plans," *Harvard Business Review* 32 (March 2004): 11-119. See also Geoffrey Kiel and Gavin Nicholson, *Boards that Work* (Sydney: McGraw-Hill, 2003), 101-102.

For such a group to function, a clear, common purpose is essential. This must be biblically based and revolve around what the church is to be and do. Clear roles and expectations must be in place. There must be an accepted leadership team, effective processes and solid relationships.[298] From the leadership level the high performance functionality moves out through teams to empower the wider church.

In short, the church must be made functional. The old culture of traditionalism that provides an environment for pessimism and a powerful attachment to the *status quo* must be replaced. A new congregational environment must be shaped that evaluates biblical purpose, rewards creativity, encourages innovation, stimulates optimism, and increasingly seeks to reflect God's purpose for His church.

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[298] Chuck Allen, "Understanding the Keys that Produce Exceptional Team Ministry Results," *Church Administration* 44 (Fall 2001): 6-8.

PART TWO

THE CONTEXT OF LOCAL CHURCH STRUCTURAL RENEWAL IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

CHAPTER 9

A BRIEF HISTORY OF STRUCTURAL RENEWAL IN THE ADVENTIST CHURCH

In moving toward a paradigm for structural renewal in the local Adventist church, it is important that the environment to be addressed is clearly identified. An important part of this process is understanding the influences that have shaped structural renewal to this point. This will help enable the new paradigm to account for and address existing mindsets.

Prior to the last two decades little intentional thought had been given to the functionality of structures in the life of the local Adventist church.[299] The forms and programmes, adopted largely from the Methodists, had seemingly served the church well. Issues such as local church governance, the pastoral role and structures to facilitate worship, evangelism and spiritual growth were very fixed. When the church was introspective, doctrinal issues consumed most of this energy. The implications that these theological discussions may have had in terms of local church structure were rarely pursued.

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[299] The *Record*, which is the official Adventist publication for Australia and New Zealand, contains no articles that directly address the function of local church structure in the years 1960-1980. It is dominated by articles about doctrine, lifestyle choices, institutional concerns above local church level and devotionals. Where local churches are mentioned it is usually in reference to successful evangelism or the opening of a new church building. From 1985 onwards issues of local church structure begin to be addressed regularly.

This lack of analysis in the Adventist church regarding local church structure matched that of the wider Christian church environment.[300] In a society that was considered Christian, churches demonstrated a greater need to defend distinctive beliefs rather than examining the structures of church life. This approach reflected the institutional nature of the Christian church in this period. Most churches were part of denominational systems where leadership above the local church level set the issues for the denomination.[301] In this context local church life was minimalised at the expense of wider denominational issues. Some Adventists felt that the local church was neglected as the denomination focused on building and maintaining successful institutions.[302]

It must also be remembered, that the existing local church structure was initially functional for the size of most Adventist congregations and the society they were working in. In 1960 the *Record* contained fifteen reports of churches, mainly rural, that had built new buildings due to the congregation having outgrown its facilities. It can be inferred that at this point, the ministry structures of these churches were still facilitating growth. As a result, with little apparent need to examine structures, the emphasis continued to be on belief. However, what one

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[300] Hans Mol, *Religion in Australia: A Sociological Investigation* (Melbourne: Thomas Nelson, 1971), 303 - 304, characterizes the Christian church in Australia as static in the period leading up to the 1970's and sees a "...lack of intellectual and aesthetic vitality".

[301] Mead, *Once and Future*, 4-5 gives an overview of how denominational, institutional structures came to set the agenda for the church and how in this environment local congregations took on a passive, responding role in regard to the mission of the church.

[302] Monte Sahlin, *Adventist Congregations Today – New Evidence for Equipping Healthy Churches* (Lincoln, NE: Center For Creative Ministry, 2003) 5. While this statement is in reference to the Adventist church in the United States, Australia and New Zealand have the same institutional system of governance and experienced a similar process.

believes theologically must continually shape structure as the church interacts with its environment and lives out its theological convictions. While society was changing the structures of the church were not.[303]

In the early nineteen eighties, a growing call for structural renewal at the local church level can be seen in the Adventist church. Issues of functionality begin to be addressed in Adventist journals and questions of local church forms and functions begin to be asked. The environment for this questioning grew out of the theological upheaval and self-analysis that characterised this period in the Adventist church, especially in Australia and New Zealand.[304] The environment that asked "why" questions in terms of theology fostered a way of thinking that extended to "why" questions being asked in regard to local church structures.

The growing call for renewal may have also been a function of a societal shift. The culture in which the church had operated well up until the 1960s, was now very different.[305] A shift in worldview was emerging that saw the primary starting point for life decisions move from "truth" to "meaning". Where once people joined, or stayed in the church on the basis of doctrinal assent, this new mindset

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[303] Peter Kaldor et al. *Winds of Change* (Homebush West, NSW: Lancer Books, 1994), xiv, outlines how the changes of the 1960s and 1970s left many churches "flat-footed" in their efforts to relate faith to a "dramatically changing contemporary reality."

[304] For an overview of the theological climate in this period in Adventism see William G. Johnsson, "Overview of Historic Meeting," *Record*, 8 September 1980, insert and *Spectrum*, 11 (November 1980).

[305] Hugh Mackay, *Reinventing Australia* (Pymble. NSW: Angus and Robertson, 1993), 21-23, characterizes the shifting values in Australian society under the title "The Age of Redefinition." Kaldor et al. xiv, commenting on this period of history states: "large numbers of a whole generation voted with their feet on traditional forms of church life. The faith of their childhood was not answering the questions they were asking as young adults."

made meaning the first point of reference.[306] Responding to the quest for meaning brought with it questions of "why" and "how". When church members, along with society, began asking these questions in regard to church life the need for structural renewal became increasingly apparent.

Some of the answers that church leaders were looking for were found in the church growth movement. In the nineteen seventies and eighties hundreds of church growth books and many periodicals came into existence. Most were adaptations of the central church growth proponents, such as Donald McGavran, C. Peter Wagner and Ralph Winter. Each of these writers called for accountability in the church and a lift in the level of intentionality. This focus raised questions in regard to the underlying structures that shaped the local church.

In the Adventist church, authors including Roger Dudley and later Monte Sahlin adapted church growth principles to an Adventist context.[307] In 1986, in Australia and New Zealand, Alwyn Salom founded the Institute of Church Ministry and Evangelism (now the Institute of Church Ministry). The Institute provided growth consultancies, demographic information, church life seminars and built up a

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[306] Joseph Natoli, *A Primer to Postmodernity* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers,1997), 13-15. For an article on how this worldview shift relates to the ministry context of the Adventist church see Bertil Wiklander, "Understanding Secular Minds: A Perspective on 'Life-Development'," *Ministry* 85 (March 2003): 12-15.

[307] Roger Dudley and Des Cummings, *Adventures in Church Growth* (Washington DC: Review & Herald, 1983) published the standard Adventist textbook on church growth and later Monte Sahlin, *Sharing Our Faith With Friends Without Losing Either – What The Fastest Growing Adventist Churches Know* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald), 1990, became a common church growth text for Adventist tertiary theology departments. For a general survey of the church growth movement in Adventism during the nineteen eighties see Steve Daily. "Church Growth Bloweth Where It Liseth," *Spectrum* 19 (February 1989): 2-4.

network of pastors committed to local church renewal. Regular Adventist sponsored tours to the United States exposed pastors to what was happening in a variety of Adventist and other churches. In reporting on a church growth tour in the *Record,* C. A Townend begins:

> Church Growth concepts are a bright star on a grey horizon in countries of the western world where churches are static and declining....Are there churches where Church Growth programs are working? What are the processes of growth? Perhaps we could discover principles that would work in Australia and New Zealand.[308]

Church growth principles were accepted whole heartedly by some church leaders and rejected by others. However, the very debate brought focus to the importance of local church structures.

During the nineteen nineties, the church growth movement shifted in focus somewhat to be dominated by practitioners who were testing and proving church growth principles in their local church contexts. This group of pastors included Bill Hybels and Rick Warren. The churches these pastors grew became models and what they wrote, taught and advocated set the agenda for church growth literature. These pastors outlined the need for intentionality along with a culture of change in the local church. For Adventist pastors who felt trapped in the formalism of the local church, these models offered relevance and with it a new level of intent in regard to re-focusing local church structures.[309]

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[308] C. A. Townend, "Avondale Church Growth Tour," *Record,* 19 Oct 1985, 1.

[309] This opinion was expressed by a number of Adventist pastors who each have been in ministry for over fifteen years, during a discussion on the impact of mega churches during the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists minister's meetings held at Longburn College April , 2004.

In their haste for structural renewal, many pastors tried to impose techniques and programmes from mega-churches on to their local congregations with little thought for Adventist culture, let alone the unique environment of their local church. In a church environment where the "worship hour" was the central point of church life most attempts at renewal were directed toward structures that facilitate the worship programme. This was at the expense of structural renewal from a values basis up. Many congregations, without understanding the underlying values, rejected the changes. The move toward structural renewal and the worship debate became so entwined that for many church members it became difficult to separate one from the other.[310]

Structural freedom, in terms of moving away from the traditional model of local church structure, was often embraced without enough thought and preparation in regard to what was replacing it. Many Adventist pastors could see where they wanted church structures to be but did not allow the necessary time or have the understanding of church life that allowed them to successfully move there. This often led to confusion in local churches.

However, in some Adventist churches the principles of structural renewal were applied very successfully. These churches made lasting and effective changes.[311] Yet in other cases where change was made, the church later

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[310] Based on discussions with seventeen Adventist pastors who in a workshop on functional structures, held at the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists ministers meetings, Longburn Adventist College 22 and 25 April, 2004, were asked to recount their experiences and observations of the change process in their churches.

[311] See below, pp. 162-209.

moved back to its familiar structures. Often this happened when pastors were transferred before the new culture had firmly been entrenched.

In more recent times, the shift in emphasis to church health has seen an increasing body of material in this area. The work of Christian Schwarz set the agenda for this emphasis in the Adventist church.[312] Church health explains the structures of the church and implications in a manner that is more adaptable at the local level. Adventist churches that experimented unsuccessfully with church growth models are now embracing church health concepts. Churches are thinking through issues of underlying church structures and what programmes grow out of these rather than the other way around.

Currently the cell church and emerging church movements are beginning to be explored by some Adventist pastors. These movements that question the very nature of church and rebuild it with structures largely unfamiliar to Adventism bring with them questions of structural flexibility, governance and accountability.[313] As different structures continue to emerge, the need for an

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[312] The Natural Church Development process had been given emphasis in denominational magazines. See Doug Robertson, "What Makes Adventist Churches Grow?" *Record,* 5 April 2003, 10-12; Sharlene Guest, "A Church That Grew," *Record*, 2 March 2002, 8-9 and a three- part series by Greg Shaller and John Gry, "Growing Healthy Churches," *Ministry* 74 (January 2001): 8-9; (March 2001): 11-15 and (May 2001): 14-15.

[313] For an overview of cell church concepts see Joel Comiskey *Home Cell Group Explosion* (Houston, TX: Touch, 1998) and Larry Stockstill *The Cell Church* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1998). For an overview of emerging church concepts see Kimball, *Emerging*; Howard Snyder, *Decoding The Church.* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2002) and Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch, *The Shaping of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st Century Church* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003).

Adventist paradigm of local church structure that combines individual adaptation with a sense of overall belonging is important.

CHAPTER 10

THE CURRENT STATE OF STRUCTURAL RENEWAL IN THE LOCAL ADVENTIST CHURCH

Adventism in Australia and New Zealand is increasingly being broadened in terms of structural expression at local church level. Churches that have been started in the last ten years include cell church, café church and youth church models. These are among new churches that have very different structures to those the Adventist church is familiar with. This is not to imply that a radical change in the expression of church is necessary to be functional. Waitara church in Sydney is achieving increased functionality in what is outwardly a traditional expression of Adventism. However, while increasingly more Adventist churches are working through issues of functionality, these congregations are still the exception.

Growth, Plateau and Decline

To gain a general summary of where Adventist churches are in terms of functionality, Conference Church Development or Personal Ministries directors in Australia and New Zealand were asked to estimate the number of churches in their conference that were in the three basic phases of the institutional life-cycle.[314] A brief description was given of each phase.[315] The assumption here

[314] In the Adventist church system a group of churches, often by state, makes up a conference. The conference provides resouring and an overall coordinating function. The Personal Ministries director (in some conferences called Church Development) is the key ministry resource provider who travels around to the churches.

[315] For an explanation of the institutional life-cycle see above, pp 122-129.

being that increased functionality results in growth and consequently churches in the growth phase would be those most likely to be functional. Of the eleven conferences in Australia and New Zealand nine replied. These conferences represent 349 of the possible 590 congregations that are in Australia and New Zealand.[316]

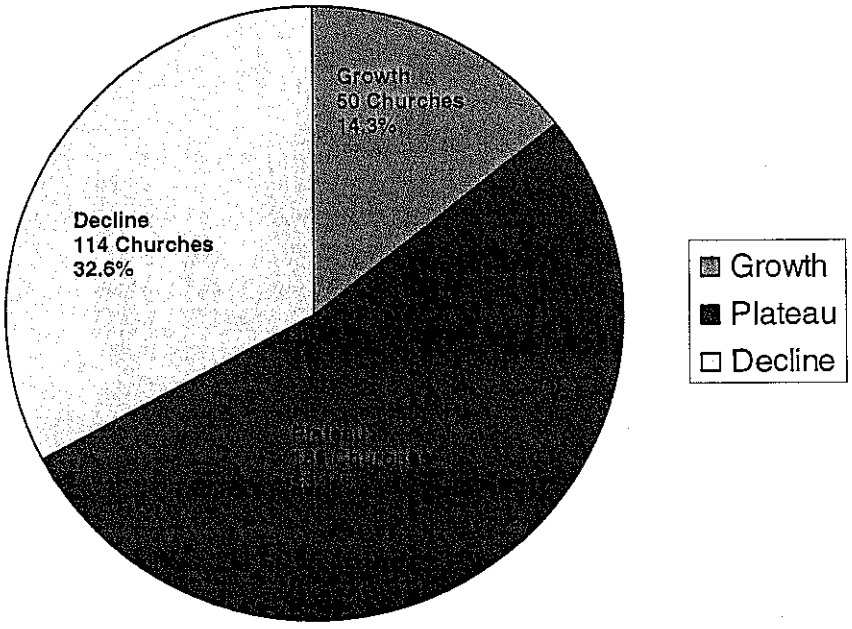


Fig. 3. Estimates of where Australian and New Zealand Adventist churches are in terms of the organisational life-cycle.

While respondents were not asked to identify individual churches, in four responses the "growth phase" churches were identified. These responses

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[316] This figure includes what are known in the Adventist system as "companies". A company is a congregation status that means that all the functions expected of a "church" in the Adventist system are not established. This is usually due to size as companies are either new groups heading toward "church" status or groups that have been churches but in decline have been moved back to company status. For the purpose of this thesis companies are treated as churches.

identified thirty one of the fifty churches that were estimated to be in "growth phase". In this group sixteen churches had names that specifically targeted an ethnic group and can be observed to function within a traditional structural model of Adventism. This may suggest that for these churches the traditional structure is still, to some extent, functional.

Of the remaining fifteen churches identified in "growth phase", four can be observed to be using the traditional Adventist structural model. These four churches are in a rural environment and have less than 150 attenders. This is of interest when compared with the environment the traditional Adventist model grew out of which was also rural and generally made up of congregations of less then 150.[317] In talking with pastors and/or church members from these four congregations it is evident that there is a high degree of intentionality in regard to mission. Many of the plataued and declining churches are also rural with less than 150 attenders. However, even with a structure that could possibly still be functional little is happening. Eight are congregations that have made obvious structural renewal attempts to varying degrees and three are new church plants.

A general assumption may be that in some cases the traditional structural model can still respond functionally while in other cases it must be adjusted to meet different challenges. In churches where the traditional structure can still be functional the biggest issue is intentionality in terms of having that structure focused for mission.

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[317] See above, pp 87-90.

Questions of Functionality

To gain a deeper understanding of the current state of structural renewal in Australian and New Zealand Adventist churches a survey that asked about structural issues was sent to all pastors who are in local Adventist churches. There was a total of 260 surveys.[318] Responses gave information for 74 churches. It should be noted that the pastors of churches that are generally considered more functional in Adventist circles were more likely to respond, with fewer responses proportionately coming from churches that do not have a profile for being functional. Of the eight most recent Adventist church plants in Australia and New Zealand all pastors responded. This may suggest that these pastors are more interested in the area of functionality and more willing to assess their churches or are simply more willing to return surveys. Hence, the responses may be skewed somewhat to provide a more positive picture than might actually be the case. However, the correlations and clear trends that emerged can be very helpful in mapping out the environment which a new structural paradigm must address.

When asked if the way a church is structured effects the spiritual tone of the church, 88% of pastors believed that it did. While 89% of pastors believe that the way the church is structured is important for the growth of the church.

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[318] The structural renewal survey (SRS) form is included in appendix E. Pastors were targeted for the survey as in most cases they are the leaders who set the agenda for the church. The overall paradigm for renewal that this thesis is constructing will be designed primarily for pastors, or the key leaders in the church to use in conjunction with the pastor. Pastors were asked to have their leadership teams also fill out the survey. However, this only happened in six churches. Each of these churches are included in this thesis as case studies and this is where these responses will be used.

However, when asked if their church had given any thought to the effectiveness of their structures in regard to facilitating ministry, 47% replied they had not or did not know. Of the 53% that had thought through structural effectiveness a third are churches that have been planted within the last seven years. Many of the more established congregations have not intentionally worked through functional issues.

To the question of whether the church has an evaluation process in place to assess the effectiveness of the various ministry areas, 46% replied "yes". As would be expected, there was a high correlation of .788 between this question and if the church had thought about the effectiveness of its ministry structure. However, when asked if ineffective programmes are changed, 74% responded "yes". Some evaluation process must be in place, even if it is by intuition.

When asked how ministry success could be measured, by far the most common responses related to levels of involvement, attendance and church harmony. Only eight responses listed set ministry goals or pre-established principles. Another five pastors replied that they had never thought of how success could be measured while another stated: "There is no evaluation – everyone just races on doing more things".

Very few pastors (only 27%) have developed any kind of organisational flow chart to portray the church's ministry structure. This can be seen to be a function of

the *Adventist Church Manual* which provides a structural outline for ministry and consequently, pastors do not see the need to develop their own flow chart.[319]

Defining the Mission of the Church

Knowing the mission of the church is important in regard to having functional structures as it provides a basic measuring point for ministry effectiveness. Just under half the churches (48%) do not have, or are unsure it they have, a mission statement. Where there is a statement, 84% of pastors claim that it is well known in the congregation. A correlation of .577 exists between whether a church has a regularly communicated mission statement and if it has an evaluation process. A similar correlation of .586 exists between churches that have an evaluation process and set ministry goals. These results show that the mission statement, goal setting and evaluation process are all related.

When asked to define the mission of the church, pastors gave a wide range of responses. These responses were then categorised into how they reflected the five purposes of church established in chapter 3 of this thesis. While a variety of words were used, they were grouped in terms of concepts expressed, as shown in Table 1.

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[319] In a workshop on church structures held at the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists ministers meetings, Longburn Adventist College 22 and 25 April, 2004, when asked about an organisational flow chart for ministry structures, several pastors replied that the *Church Manual* negated this need.

TABLE 1

THE COCEPTS USED TO DEFINE
THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

Concept Combinations Expressed	Number of Times Expressed
Evangelism	15
Evangelism and Spiritual Growth	15
Evangelism and Community	14
Evangelism, Spiritual Growth, Worship, Ministry and Community	8
Community	5
Spiritual Growth and Community	4
Evangelism and Worship	3
Evangelism and Ministry	2
Spiritual Growth	2
Spiritual Growth and Worship	1

In addition, Four pastors did not know if they knew the mission of the church and three pastors listed the mission of their church as to survive. The majority of pastors do not approach the mission of the church in terms of a holistic balance of the five purposes.

The way mission is expressed in the church is closely related to what picture first comes to mind when thinking of the church. Each pastor who gave a negative concept of mission such as survival, also gave a negative picture of the church including "a place to be wary of", "hard to motivate people sitting in pews", a "group of moaners", "problems" and "a building with old wives discussing whether

to have marmalade or raspberry jam on their scones." However, overall the first picture that came to mind when thinking about church was a word associated with community (Table 2). This gives a good basis to work from in establishing the structural implications for what the church is to "be".[320]

TABLE 2

FIRST PICTURE THAT COMES TO MIND
WHEN THINKING OF THE WORD "CHURCH"

Picture	Number of Times Expressed
Family	12
Body	12
People	11
Building	10
Community	9
Weekly Event	7
Frustration	5
Problems	3

The fact that 10 pastors identified a building as the first picture shows the high significance that Adventists put on buildings. This was also evident in the National Church Life Survey, (1996). When asked the importance to the worship experience of the building in which the congregation meets, 62% of Adventist

[320] See above, pp. 32-33 for a discussion of what the church is to "be."

attenders responded with "very" or of "some" importance. This mindset indicates an attachment to outward forms over ministry functions. [321]

Views of the Adventist Pioneers, Church Manual and Structure

When asked if the Adventist pioneers used an inspired model of church structure at local church level 35% responded "yes" while 19% were unsure. From the comments made by pastors who chose to fill in the optional explanation, the answers to this question may reflect various interpretations of the word "inspired" and may in fact indicate whether pastors felt the Adventist pioneers used biblical principles in their local church structure rather than the model being God's divine blueprint.

When asked if the Bible gives a blueprint for how a local church is to be organised, 53% responded "yes" while 15% were unsure. Once again, from explanations, it appears that those who responded "yes" may have had principles for church structure in mind. The high levels of unsure responses to these questions may indicate indecision about the question or show an uncertainty that exists in regard to how the organisational structures of the church came about, what is essential and what are human forms.

When asked to consider the local church structure as outlined in the *Adventist Church Manual*, 36% believed it to be legislative/binding on the local church while 12% were unsure. The structure in the *Adventist Church Manual* is still used as

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[321] Alwyn Salom, *The National Church Life Survey, 1996 and the Seventh-day Adventist Church* (Institute of Church Ministry and Evangelism, 1998), 27.

the system of governance and ministry placement in 67% of the churches that responded.

Openness To Structural Change

When thinking of change, 82% of pastors respond that their congregation is open to new programmes and ways of going about ministry, while 81% claim that their leadership team is open to strategic changes to increase fruitfulness. As expected, a high correlation of .726 exists between these two responses. However, in many cases the changes do not seem to happen, for when asked about significant changes over the last ten years only 54% responded that changes have been made. When asked if new approaches to ministry are tried, only 51% responded that they are. This leaves a big group of churches where the pastor believes the congregation to be open to new ministry ideas but where little significant change is happening.

Of those that have made changes the vast majority were in regard to the worship service and only eight churches mentioned other changes including to the ministry placement process and leadership systems. When asked if the local church organisational structure seemed immovable and unchangeable, 41% claimed that it or did not know.

Opinions on Future Directions

To the question of whether or not a written plan exists for achieving future ministry goals, 76% of pastors responded that there was not such a plan. In regard to ministry planning, 75% of pastors thought they had a long term

approach. This means there is a large group of pastors who believe they have a long term approach to planning but have no written goals.

The need for clearly defined goals, with a resulting clear vision, both of which are products of functional structure was shown in the NCLS.[322] When asked: "Does this congregation have a clear vision, goals or directions for its ministry and mission?" 36% of Adventists responded that there are ideas but no clear vision, goals or direction or that they were not aware of a vision. A further 25% are aware but are either not committed or only partly committed, while the remaining 38% are strongly committed to the vision, goals or direction. The Church Life Survey in New Zealand (CLSNZ) found similar results with 37% of Adventists responding that they were either not aware of a vision or were aware of ideas but not of a clear vision, goals or direction for their congregation.[323]

In regard to their opinions about the future direction of the congregation, 20% of Adventist respondents thought the church needed to rethink where it was heading, while 11% did not know and 2% thought it was unclear.[324] For CLSNZ the results are once again very similar with 18% of Adventists believing the church needed to rethink where it was heading, 3% responding that the future

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[322] Keith Castle and the NCLS team, *National Church Life Survey 2001: Denominational Report – Seventh-day Adventist* (NCLS Research, 2002), Table 53. Hereafter referred to as NCLS, 2001.

[323] Church Life Survey, New Zealand, 2001: Summary Report for Seventh-day Adventist Denomination (n.d), Table 53.Hereafter referred to as CLSNZ, 2001.

[324] NCLS 2001, Table 52.

was unclear while13% did not know.[325] These results show the need for Adventist church leaders to see the value in planning and clearly articulating plans for the future.

Resources Used In Shaping Functional Structures

Pastors of the sixteen churches that have undergone significant functional change in terms of ministry structure were further contacted and asked about the influences and resources that shaped their remodelling. The answers highlighted a great deal of eclecticism with most models incorporating various influences. Often when other Adventist churches were listed as the main source of an idea they in turn identified other models from which they had drawn.

By far the major influence in remodelling comes from various adaptations of Willow Creek and Saddleback resources. Other models that were adapted include:

- the meta-church model as explained by Carl George[326]
- the spiritual gifts, lay driven models promoted in Adventism by Russell Burrill[327]
- the cell church systems promoted by Larry Stocksill[328] and Joel Cominksy[329]

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[325] CLSNZ 2001, Table 52.

[326] George, *Coming Church Revolution.*

[327] Burrill, *Revolutionized.*

[328] Stocksill, *Cell Church.*

[329] Comiskey, *Explosion.*

- various models of church planting promoted by Ron Gladden.[330]

Some Adventist leaders feel that it is dangerous to use models from churches outside of the Adventist system.[331] However, the churches represented in this survey have thought through their mission, values and ministry environment and then shaped models from other churches to respond to their own needs. It is only when a church works through the underlying issues for themselves and comes up with their own answers, even if the final forms are borrowed from other contexts, that a particular church can really address its issues of functionality.

Five Approaches to Structural Renewal

When correlations between churches are made, five general approaches to church structural renewal are evident. Grouping these general style descriptions is useful in determining starting points for structural renewal and the mindsets that must be addressed.

1. Churches that see it as theologically wrong to change structures (4).[332]

Some pastors see structural renewal as theologically wrong. Other responses indicated that in some congregations, while the pastor was in favour of structural renewal the majority of church members saw it as theologically wrong and no

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[330] Ron Gladden, *Plant the Future* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2000).

[331] Jay Gallimore, "Can the Church Be Relevant and Survive?" *Adventists Affirm,* Fall 2002,18 states: "Many think that somehow we can have a true world church and copy relevant contemporary congregational churches. At some point we will cling to the one and abandon the other."

[332] The number of churches in this survey that correlate into these categories is given, but due to the possibly skewed nature of the samples this does not provide an overall accurate picture for the wider Adventist church in Australia and New Zealand.

structural change is made. For them, it goes against the inspired counsel or wisdom of the wider church as expressed in the *Church Manual.*

2. Are not aware of the need to, or do not have the energy to change ministry structures (26).

Notably, the structural renewal survey showed 80% of churches rate themselves highly on willingness to change, yet 50% do not make any significant changes. Leaders in these churches are seemingly not opposed to structural renewal, but are unaware of the need to do so or do not see enough benefits in putting energy into the process. In other cases, the church may be so busy doing ministries that they do not take the time to think through why they exist or the benefits of structural renewal.

3. Churches that have made structural change but then reverted back (7).

Some pastors described churches that had made significant changes to their ministry structures but have then moved back to their former state. In many cases, the changes were made at leadership level, or by vote of the church board. However, they did not became embedded into the culture of the church. When a pastor was shifted or the change became too difficult the congregation reverted to the former system.

4. Churches that adopt structural changes without working through how the new structures fit their culture (21).

This is closely related to the scenario in number three, however, the church continues working in the new environment, even if it is not functional. These churches make structural changes without a defined mission, values or an evaluation process. Because a church changes its structure, the resulting structure is not necessarily more functional.

5. Churches that work through the questions of structural functionality and then respond (16).

In these churches issues of mission have been thought through and then structures shaped to facilitate the mission. The eight church plants represented in this survey all came into this category. This does not mean these churches do not borrow from other models, but they have thought about what they are accepting and have evaluated the implications. These churches have clear values and systems for evaluating in terms of those values.

The increasingly diverse structures that are developing within Adventism brings with it challenges for the current Adventist model of "church". The essence of what makes an Adventist church must be clearly outlined and made practical so that as various models are developed they come from a basis of what an Adventist church is to "be" rather than Adventism being an appendage to other adopted models.

CHAPTER 11

CASE STUDIES OF FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURES IN LOCAL ADVENTIST CHURCHES

The case studies in this section represent a cross section of Adventist churches in Australia and New Zealand that are becoming increasingly functional in regard to their structures for ministry. This is not a top eight of Adventist churches, although among these churches are those that scored highest in the Natural Church Development (NCD) measure of functionality amongst Adventist churches.[333] Nor are these churches outlined as models to be copied. To do this would miss the point of each church going through its own structural discovery process. The case studies included here are to show how some Adventist churches have gone about that self-discovery process and how transitions have been made. The lessons that have been learned and principles that underlie their functionality will be valuable.

The churches are intentionally drawn from a variety of contexts including established and new churches of various sizes. The process of moving toward functionality is quite unique in each setting. Each church was chosen because of a combination of factors including NCD score in the area of functional structures where available, responses on indicators of functionality from the structural

[333] An overview of NCD results for Adventist churches in Australia and New Zealand 2000-2003 is included in Appendix B

renewal survey and by asking Adventist church conference directors which churches they saw as most functional.

The case studies generally involved surveying the pastor and lay leaders followed by interviews with them. Each church was then visited during its worship time with the exception of Fremantle (because of geographical distance) which had been visited prior to this thesis being commenced. On visits to each church, members were randomly engaged in conversation and asked about what they saw to be the key factors that made their church work. In addition, websites, bulletins and other written material was worked through to glean aspects of functionality and where possible, board and leadership meetings were attended in an observing capacity.

While many other Christian churches may be doing better in terms of functionality then even the best Adventist church, the case studies were limited to Adventist congregations so that specific Adventist contexts could be addressed. There are already a number of resources that look at the functionality of non-Adventist churches.[334]

Each church is looked at under the same general headings. While these studies do not investigate every aspect of structure in the church, especially the unspoken understandings, they do give an overview of the main structural

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[334] George Barna, *The Habits of Highly Effective Churches* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1999); William M, Easum, *The Church Growth Handbook* (Nashville, TN: Abington, 1990); Randy Frazee, *The Comeback Congregation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997); Bob Russell, *When God Builds a Church* (West Monroe, LA: Howard Publishing, 2000), and Rick Warren, *Purpose Driven Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995) include examples of functional ministry structures in other than Adventist churches.

dynamics in each church. By focusing on some areas of church structure that are particularly fundamental to renewal the basic factors that shape a church's structural transition can be observed. Analysing the same areas in each congregation allows for comparisons to be made that highlight the uniqueness of each renewal process yet give overall principles that need to be thought through.

An overview is initially given of the structural transition process. This section looks at how the church moved toward being more focused in terms of the values and ministries its structure facilitated. The next section looks at how mission and vision are defined and communicated. It was observed that in each of the case study churches a lot of work had been done in the area of communicating mission and vision. The underlying values of the church had to be changed before structural changes would be understood and effective. Observing how each church went about this process was deemed to be valuable for other churches embarking on a similar process.

The next section looks at the style of leadership that facilitated the transition. Knowing the leadership style is helpful in shaping a picture of the environment that allowed structural regeneration to happen. The ministry structure and placement process is also outlined. This process is one of the obvious, more easily measurable structures of the church and gives insight into how the church sees its mission. This section also highlights the variety of structures that are being developed as churches think outside the established *Adventist Church Manual* pattern. The final area outlined is each church's systems of evaluation. This is important to know in terms of the church's ability to assess on-going functionality.

A brief observation is then made of how each case study contributes to an understanding of the structural renewal process within Adventism.

Avondale College Church[335]

The Avondale College Church (College Church) is unique in many ways. It is located on the campus of Avondale College, a tertiary institution operated by the Adventist church. College church identifies its attendees in terms of being, "student, staff or people in the community."[336] The last term refers to attenders of the congregation who are not directly associated with the College but make it their church home. When college is in semester attendance at the church is over 1000 people. Over the last five years College Church has experienced increased ministry inclusiveness, has lifted the level of spiritual growth significantly and become more focused on service and outreach.[337] While the ministry context of College is unlike any other Adventist Church in Australia and

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[335] The information for this study included:
1) a series of interviews with Acting Senior Pastor Ian Howie (the Senior Pastor, Lyell Heise, was on study leave) and Assistant Pastor Scott Dobson (March 2003)
2) interviews with four student leaders in the church (March 2003)
3) perception questions of ten attenders (March 2003)
4) collection of many Avondale College Church documents
5) attendance at the 20 August 2002 Business Meeting
6) structural renewal survey responses
7) attendance at the worship service during August and December 2002, July and October 2003 and April and July 2004.

[336] "Report to Avondale College Church: Development of Values, Vision and Mission," 20 August 2002.

[337] While quantitative comparisons are not available, this is the impression of both ministry staff and five long term attenders who were asked how things had changed over the last five years.

New Zealand, an analysis of its ministry structures will be helpful in seeing how a large church has adapted to its structural challenges.

Overview of Structural Transition Process

College Church traces its history back to 1897. Over this period there have been many changes in its style of ministry, yet relatively few changes in terms of governance and how the purposes of church are facilitated. The opening of the current building in 1986 provided a point of change in terms of the worship service and new worship structures were put in place. The Senior Pastor at this point, Pastor Lyell Heise, was a skilled worship leader and College Church became a model in regard to worship structures.[338]

During the nineteen nineties College Church was very strong in the area of worship but made little impact in regard to the other areas of church life. The "Not Church" programme was its only major evangelistic endeavour.[339] Sabbath School, with limited impact, was its only spiritual growth area apart from the worship service. Little was done to build the purposes of community or service. While aspects of these purposes were happening through other means on the campus, College Church was largely detached from student life. For many

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[338] Other large Adventist churches in Australia and New Zealand took on the structure of worship teams and specific worship co-ordinators based on the College church model. Up until this point the pastor had overseen most aspects of the worship service.

[339] "Not Church" was an afternoon service aimed at reaching unchurched. It had limited success apart from being a training ground for theology students to think through church for the unchurched concepts. An overview of "Not Church" is given in David Chapman, "Not Church Says "No" To French Test," *Record*, 11 November, 1995, 10.

students and community members it was little more than a worship service to attend each Saturday.

In the first part of 2000, the Strategic Planning Committee developed a new ministry structure. The aims were to broaden the ministry impact of the church by providing:

a. a mentoring process for potential leaders, for the College Church and beyond
b. more deliberate nurture
c. more service projects
d. focussed educational opportunities for members, families and the community
e. opportunities for new believes to grow
f. a process to have believers involved in outreach.

The proposal that outlined the new structure states:

> The model outlined endeavours to address these identified needs in a creative and flexible way. It does not reflect many of the traditional models for staffing within the Adventist Church, but neither does the College Church represent the norm in terms of membership or community. Rather, it seeks to bring together the best of what we do as Adventists and the knowledge we have gained as a church since the traditional models of staffing were established many years ago.[340]

The proposal was adopted by the board and integrated into the church.

Notably, the structure grew out of clear pre-established values, was the result of thorough investigation by a planning team of the issues that the board had

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[340] "Report From Strategic Planning Committee, College Church Staffing Proposal," 28 August 2000. Document presented to the pastoral team and board.

agreed needed to be addressed and was presented sequentially in various draft forms. These factors made for a relatively smooth transition to a very different ministry structure.

How Mission and Vision are Defined and Communicated

The move to a new ministry structure occurred in an environment where the values and mission of the church were also being emphasised to the church attenders. Various ministry pamphlets were developed for each major area of church life that clearly articulated the purpose and vision for that ministry area. On arrival at the College, students were provided with information packs that clearly outlined why College Church existed and how they could be involved.

A shift in the focus of sermon topics is evident with the concepts of church life being presented.[341] In addition, a new bulletin cover contained pictures and words to convey the vision while the back cover gave opportunities for people to tick how they wanted to be involved at the church or where they needed help. This change subtly communicated the new emphasis on ministry involvement in the church. The vision statement, "Building Christ's Kingdom for God's Glory"" was also put on large wall displays, depicting aspects of community, above each entrance to the church. The statement is also printed on most documents that come from the church.

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[341] In September 2000, at the same time the new structure was being put in place, the church ran a five part series on discipleship. Over the next year each of the values was regularly integrated into sermons.

In 2002 the church went through a process of redefining the Values and Vision. This was not so much to change course but to have clearer ways to promote them. The report to the church on the vision process explained:

> This is not a task we undertake every year, but we should nevertheless always remain prepared to refine the concepts that motivate us as a group of Christ's Followers. Unless a church has a clear understanding of its purpose it may achieve nothing, or it may be driven by the strongest opinion at the time. Avondale College Church has a clear vision and needs to express its mission or purpose....The process is complete when the leaders and the Church are committed to the Vision, Mission, Dream and Strategies for the Church.[342]

The team working on this process defined three primary aspects of mission which were expressed as: (1) an inward spiritual growth experience, (2) an outward service and community experience and (3) an upward worship experience. The team did not finish at this point, but moved on to discuss strategies and structures for how each ministry area would achieve these concepts.

Leadership in the Church

The intentional process of structural renewal was initiated after a change in pastoral staffing. Pastor Lyell Heise returned to the church after eleven years away which included ministering at a large American Adventist church and being involved in Avondale College marketing. Both roles would have further developed skills needed for the structural transitioning process. A new associate, Ian Howie, arrived at the same time. Both men, along with the Youth Pastor Mark McNeill and later Craig Vanas, were strategic in their approach to church

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[342] "Report to Avondale College Church: Development of Values, Vision and Mission," 20 August 2002.

life and values-driven. They shared a vision of what College Church could be and the impact it could make in terms of students seeing a more effective way of being the "church" and modelling this in the churches they would move to.

College Church puts a high emphasis on growing student leaders. Theology students in particular are given significant leadership roles in the church. One student, Scott Dobson, who is currently a Volunteer Assistant Pastor, was identified as being a significant influence in the structural transition process. The nature of using student leaders makes for a high turnover, but brings with it a sense of creativity and experimentation, characteristics that have been valued in the transition process.

Ministry Structure and Placement

The model for ministry structure at College Church is based on combining three dimensions. (1) Multi-generational ministry areas. (2) Purpose concept departments that flow through each generational ministry. (3) A small group structure focusing on nurture, discipleship and outreach.[343]

Each generational area, referred to as the vertical ministries, has leaders, associate leaders, sub-leaders and teams. The particular teams that operate in each area are created in response to achieving the ministry objectives set out by the area leader who will have worked through these objectives as part of the overall church Leadership Team. This approach builds in flexibility and allows ministry areas to be shaped as needed. In the previous model, set

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[343] The ministry chart for Avondale College Church is included in appendix G, fig. 7.

programmes were filled each year with little thought given to what outside that programme might achieve wider ministry goals.

The concept based ministries, referred to as the horizontal ministries, also have leaders, associate leaders and teams. These ministry concepts are integrated throughout the church through church-wide initiatives and working with generational teams to foster that concept in each age-group. The management team has a leader who oversees those teams who fill administrative/service aspects of the church including finance, communication, custodial and records. The small group ministry leader works with a network of coaches, group leaders and apprentices. Each area leader is an elder of the church and along with the pastoral team, make up the leadership team for the church. Pastoral staff are assigned to work with each area leader.

Ministry placement is overseen by the leadership team. The combined leadership team make recommendations for associate and sub-ministry leaders and teams. The area leaders then build their teams around these recommendations. When a vacancy exists on the leadership team, the team appoints a new area leader on the basis of giftedness. The church officers are taken to Business Meetings to be approved as needed. Positions are not appointed for specific time frames but are based on the assumption that a person will continue serving in that area until circumstances change and adjustment becomes necessary.

Systems of Evaluation

The leadership team regularly reviews each ministry area and works through how they see each ministry functioning but this does not include quantitative goals apart from attendance. Clear job descriptions exist for each leadership role and explain the expectations. However, no formal system evaluates how well these expectations are being met.

Observations

Since working through the structural renewal process the church has developed a much broader ministry base. It has become more integrated into campus and community life as generational leaders look at overall ministry opportunities rather than, for example, a Sabbath School programme alone. While worship continues to be a strength, there is now also intentional discipleship programmes including spiritual gifts seminars and special lecture series along with a greater emphasis on outreach. The Friday night First Church is seeker focused and is reaching unchurched young people.

The way the structure assigns generational leaders, concept leaders and assigned pastors makes for a team approach for congregational life. Several leaders may be working on the same issue. For example, a deficiency in teen discipleship would be addressed by the teen leader, education leader and assigned pastor. This is above whatever leadership structure in the teen ministry is dealing with the issue. For some leaders this cross-purpose environment has worked very well and made for a supportive, collaborative approach. For other

area leaders the environment has proved "frustrating" and they are unsure of where responsibility begins and ends. The need for a more defined evaluation system that ensures integration is happening has been identified and is being worked on.

The small group structure was expected to take "several years"[344] to develop and this is proving to be the case. The transitional nature of the church is making it very difficult for a solid small group base to be formed.

The ministry placement process had been identified as an area that needs further adjustment. The current system of not having set terms for the leadership and having this same team appoint the new leaders has been identified by some members as a structure that makes for self-perpetuation without accountability back to the wider church.[345] This issue is presently being worked through by the church leadership.

The traditional Adventist model of ministry placement involves the wider congregation appointing a selection committee to appoint a nominating committee. Ministry placements are then brought to the whole church for approval. This system may work in smaller churches but gets cumbersome and very difficult in a large church environment like Avondale College. However, some church members in the large church still want the ability to have input.

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[344] Ibid.

[345] It is interesting to note that the church still has Business Meetings where members can have input. However, at the August 20, 2002 Business Meeting only eleven people were present including four pastoral staff.

How Avondale College church responds to this question is important for the wider Adventist church. Structures at Avondale College church often move out to other churches as theology students, who have worked in the church, move away to take on pastoral roles.

Central Coast Community Church[346]

Central Coast Community Church (CCCC) was launched at the beginning of 1999 in Wyong north of Sydney. CCCC is focused on reaching the unchurched and consequently has a casual, contemporary style. From an initial group of eighteen core members, CCCC has now grown to ninety eight members and a total of 240 regular attenders. CCCC's continued growth has brought with it a need for frequent re-assessing of its ministry structures. In the NCD measurement, CCCC scored sixty four in the functional structures element. This score is the third highest for the functional structures element for any Adventist Church in Australia or New Zealand.

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[346] The information for this study is based on:
1) interviews with Senior Pastor Wayne Krause (8 February and 14 October 2003 and 31 July 2004)
2) attendance at worship services (18 October 2003 and 24 July 2004)
3) attendance at church planting leadership conference facilitated by CCCC (May 2004)
4) interviews with three members of leadership team (May 2004)
5) structural Renewal Surveys
6) perception questions of six attenders (24 July 2003)
7) collection of various CCCC documents and resources

Overview of Structural Transitions

The vision for CCCC grew out of the Mt Colah Seventh-day Adventist church where Krause had led nine years of growth. The Mt Colah congregation had outgrown its facility and the church began looking at its growth options. Krause's vision-casting for a church plant led to a group of fifteen people making a commitment to it. Each of the fifteen was made aware of the values and personal effort a church plant would require. Krause also met with the three members of the Wyong Seventh-day Adventist church who were at that point "keen to see anything happen."[347]

Krause is of the opinion that it is "easier to give birth than to raise the dead"[348] and so during 1998 the total group of eighteen began meeting each week to work through the vision, values, mission and structures for a new church. A leadership group of four was chosen by Krause and approved by the wider group. This leadership group began putting in place the ministry structures for the new church. The structural design process included a high degree of communication with the wider group. The initial ministry structures revolved around worship, small groups, children's ministry and spiritual gifts which Krause saw as the four basic building blocks needed for shaping CCCC. Leaders were developed or recruited for these areas.

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[347] Interview with Pastor Wayne Krause, 31 July 2004.

[348] Interview with Pastor Wayne Krause, 8 February 2003.

In April 1999, CCCC was launched with 65 in attendance. Having a spiritual gifts ministry process in place ensured various ministry areas began to emerge naturally in a supportive environment. The ministry structures of the church were flexible and adapted easily to the emerging ministries of new attenders.

As the church grew in attendance, the need for a wider leadership base, along with a more co-ordinated ministry structure, was identified. Currently CCCC is working through another stage of growth that places a leader over each of the church purposes and promotes those purposes throughout the various aspects of church life.

How Mission and Vision are Defined and Communicated

During the sixteen month preparation period, the core group worked on team building, a mission statement, studied the biblical purposes of church and developed a set of Bible-based values for the church. This group had a high degree of ownership in terms of CCCC's mission.

CCCC's mission statement is: "Changing and Growing Lives With Jesus Christ." A big emphasis is placed on how every member and ministry must, in some way, be impacting the change and growth process. The mission statement is on cards and the various promotional material of the church. In the structural renewal survey, CCCC was one of the few churches whose leadership team agreed that the mission statement was well known in the congregation.[349]

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[349] In the structural renewal survey, leaders of each church were asked to answer the same questions as did the pastors. To the question: "Is the mission statement well known?" 55%

The five purposes of church are not only evident in how the church is structured but each ministry is clear about which purpose it is primarily committed to. Regular leadership training and revision of the purpose, mission and values with the leadership team ensures the reasons for the church's existence are continually kept before the leaders.

In sermons, announcements and publications the vision is continually held before the church. Each week the congregation is in some way reminded that "this church exists for its non-members." More importantly, Krause believes that the vision must be lived out by each leader "who must embody what is the very best about the church."[350] Awards are presented for those people who do embody the vision and live out the values. To keep a focus on the values of unchurched people, each CCCC member is regularly asked; "What can we do to make this church more attractive to your friends?" In addition, each small group includes an unchurched attender. This ensures members remain focused on outreach as opposed to a group becoming overly introspective.

The church has clear membership requirements that include a commitment to the mission and values. Each quarter, various mission-focused courses are operated including: Discover Your Church (membership), Bodyworks (CCCC's spiritual gifts ministry placement course), Becoming a Contagious Christian (relational evangelism) and Participation Plus (training for small group leaders).

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of leaders replied "no" where their pastor had replied "yes". In many churches, the mission is not as well known as the pastor perceives it to be. However, the five leaders from CCCC who responded to the question agreed it was very well known.

[350] Interview with Krause 8 February 2003.

These courses not only train members for ministry but re-affirm their commitment to CCCC's vision and values

Leadership In The Church

The church is reliant on the clear visionary leadership of Krause which would be expected in a church that is going about church life quite differently to the Adventist norm. Krause believes that most church plants fail due to inadequate leadership.

The bulk of CCCC's attenders are relatively new Christians which brings with it a lack of spiritual depth in recruiting new leaders. Two current members of the leadership team expressed the need for more leaders to be developed who understood the unique nature of CCCC. They expressed how the wider Adventist system does not foster the understanding of "church" or leadership that is needed in the CCCC ministry context.

The need for leadership development is being addressed through implementing a three year leadership growth track that includes completing the four seminars listed above, listening to recorded leadership presentations each week along with reading and writing leadership reports. Another way CCCC is addressing its leadership need is by having a ministry apprentice with each leader.

Ministry Structure & Placement

The ministry structure of CCCC is based on a small groups model along with a clear understanding that every member is a minister. Initially, the structure was very fluid and adapted to cope with the ever-changing ministry environment. This flexibility had strengths in that it allowed for a quick response to ministry opportunities and challenges. However, in the absence of a more defined system, most of the decision making responsibility came back to Krause.

Currently, CCCC is implementing a new structural plan. The new structure was shaped to meet clearly defined aims including:

1) to free the leadership team from management issues so they can look at strategies, planning and long term goals

2) to keep ministry balance by supporting each purpose

3) to facilitate spiritual growth, visioning, encouragement, nurture and ongoing ministry skill development

4) to facilitate church growth through the foundational principles of spiritual, emotional and personal growth

5) to facilitate the work of the Holy Spirit through ensuring members minister out of their spiritual giftedness

5) to facilitate better communication between the leadership team and ministry leaders

6) to support accountability and reporting through the various levels and ministries of the church.

The resulting structure has three main levels.[351] At the first level, the leadership team of seven people, which includes pastoral staff, have been freed from direct ministry responsibilities to focus more energy on the overall direction of the church. At the next level are those ministry leaders who comprise the management team. This group includes the children's ministry director, youth director, Bodyworks (spiritual gifts placement) leader, small groups' leader and the treasurer. In addition, leaders for each of the five purposes of the church are part of this group. The purpose areas are discipleship, community, needs-oriented evangelism, gift-oriented ministry and inspiring worship. The various ministry teams are grouped under their primary purpose concept but are also made aware of their need to incorporate each ministry purpose.

While this structure emphasises the inter-relatedness of the purposes, it is open to clashes or role confusion where areas overlap. For example, the gift-oriented ministry leader is quite separate from the leader of Bodyworks, who oversees the spiritual gifts placements.

Krause outlines how the structure will be continually evaluated as needs change and as the congregation grows. He believes that structures must fit personalities and not have people forced into serving a structure. Thus, even though this system is well defined there is a high degree of fluidity in its application.

Ministry leaders are appointed by a group that includes the Senior Pastor, Executive Pastor, Treasurer, Bodyworks (spiritual gifts) leader, Small Group

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[351] The Central Coast Community Church ministry chart is included in appendix G fig. 8.

leader and Leadership team representative. The role is advertised and then interested people are interviewed in regard to their servant profile. A recommendation is then made to the leadership team who take it to the wider church. Team leaders are free to choose their own teams which are ratified by the leadership team. While a ministry leader must be committed to the membership covenant and be in a small group, other ministry positions are more easily accessible with a strong emphasis on first step roles and trial placements. Appointments are adjustable according to changed circumstances rather than for fixed terms.

Systems of Evaluation

From its beginning, CCCC has intentionally built a culture of self analysis and evaluation. After most programmes, teams debrief in respect to what aspects worked well and what could be done more effectively.

Krause identifies evaluation as an area CCCC could be more effective in. Each team has a key purpose question. However there is no evaluation to asses how well a particular ministry is doing in achieving its purpose. One of the goals of Bodyworks is for all teams to evaluate their effectiveness and fulfilment every six months.[352]

[352] Purpose questions diagram is included in appendix G fig.9

Observations

CCCC is an example of how emerging structures can grow out of a clear definition of mission, values and purpose. It provides a case study of how structure must change to facilitate ongoing growth as a congregation responds to its changing environment.

Fremantle Seventh-day Adventist Church[353]

Fremantle is a port side suburb of Perth in Western Australia. In 2004, the Fremantle Seventh-day Adventist Church (Fremantle) is celebrating its centenary. While average church attendance is around 150, around 200 people would refer to themselves as regular attenders of Fremantle. Fremantle has transitioned from a traditional congregation that included fifteen young people to one that is contemporary and is making a significant impact amongst fifteen to thirty year olds. Over 75% of the congregation are under the age of forty. In the NCD element of functional structures, Fremantle scored 74 which is the highest result in this element for any Adventist church in Australia or New Zealand.

Overview of Structural Transition

The impetus for transition came in the early nineties when a visiting speaker focused the church on the work of the Holy Spirit. The result was a growing

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[353] The information for this study is based on:
1) discussion with Senior Pastor Andrew Skeggs (7 December 2003, formal interview 22 July 2004)
2) interview with Brad Flynn (Associate Pastor) (22 July 2004)
3) perception question asked of two attenders (28 February 2004)
4) strategic plan of the church, e-newsletters and church website.

interest in worship renewal. By 1994, some of the elders, lead by an elder who has been described as "particularly strong and talented"[354] began reading and discussing books by Carl George and later Bill Hybels. Growing out of this reading was a series of discussions on the nature of "church". A vision was established among the elders for Fremantle to be a church that was culturally relevant and that would not only keep its own youth but attract new youth. The pastor and some board members spent time "catching up" as the elders continued to move the board in this direction. It was decided that instead of changing the traditional worship service, a new contemporary service would be a trial addition. In hindsight, this proved to be a successful transitional move and the number of people who left the church at this point was minimal.

Where Fremantle differed from many other Adventist churches that have both a traditional and contemporary service is that the services were not run at the same time. The contemporary worship service leaders were involved in the traditional service and then attended the contemporary service. Overall, this arrangement brought about a high level of goodwill between those who wanted to transition the church and those who preferred it to stay as it was. The transition at Fremantle went well beyond the addition of a contemporary service and the spirit of congeniality that had been developed was valuable when changes began being made to the ministry structures.

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[354] Interview with Associate Pastor Brad Flynn, 22 July 2004.

How Mission and Vision are Defined and Communicated

The leadership team has a clear picture of what the church is to be which is well defined in its vision document.[355] The overriding concept of church is still based on Carl George's meta-church model however incorporates the five purposes of church. Each leadership team meeting spends time reaffirming the vision, goals and values. There is a long-term approach to ministry. In 2002 the church shaped a strategic plan which defines what the church will look like in 2005.

The publications of the church, which include weekly and monthly newsletters along with an extensive website, are all focused on the mission and vision of the church. New members receive a free copy of the book *Purpose Driven Church*[356] so that they can "catch up with the way the 'church' is seen around here."[357]

Leadership in the Church

The current Senior Pastor at Fremantle, Andrew Skeggs, has been at the church for six years. However, the leadership team recognises that in the Adventist denominational system Skeggs could be moved at any point so they have intentionally set about ensuring that the vision is so well known and owned by the church that even if Skeggs did leave the congregation would still be committed to

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[355] "The Vision and Values of Fremantle Seventh-day Adventist Church," October 2002.

[356] Rick Warren, *Purpose Driven Church*.

[357] Interview with Pastor Andrew Skeggs, 22 July 2004.

its plan. Fostering this commitment includes having a church member paid out of local church funds to work with the church as the associate pastor.[358]

A high emphasis is placed on leadership training. The leadership team regularly attends training events offered by the Willow Creek Association and other church resourcing groups. Skeggs comments that the leadership team are "reading books that only pastors would read in normal churches."[359]

Unlike the traditional Adventist model, where a quarterly Business Meeting votes on most issues of church direction, Fremantle has only one annual general meeting. This meeting serves a reporting and visioning function. Special "one topic" meetings are called if the church needs to be updated on a church-wide issue, such as the current refurbishment plans. Leaders are encouraged to make significant decisions at team level. Skeggs comments that "this can be done with confidence as the leadership team is very united toward the same direction."[360]

The leadership team is relatively young with only two people aged over forty. There is a high level of enthusiasm and sense of community among the leadership group. Conflict is quickly brought into the open and worked through.

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[358] The Adventist denominational system provides paid staff for the local church out of tithe. All tithe from the local church is remitted to the conference level of administration. Money for local ministries comes from offerings above tithe. Increasingly, more Adventist churches are identifying a need for more paid staffing and are filling this need through paying staff from local funds rather then through the conference system. This brings with it a set of new structural challenges in terms of training and evaluation.

[359] Skeggs Interview 22 July 2004.

[360] Ibid

Skeggs sees his job as quite different from that of the traditional Adventist pastor. Rather than spending the bulk of his time visiting, conducting Bible studies and leading seminars he puts a lot more energy into administration, strategic thinking and working through systems. He is of the conviction that the church members will do the work of the church if they know why and if there is a system in place that allows them to get involved and be resourced. Skeggs states that "the pastor's job is to get the whole congregation swimming."[361]

Ministry Structure and Placement

Each person spoken to at Fremantle described the ministry structure as very "fluid". People feel comfortable to change portfolios and job descriptions. The leadership team is willing to collapse ministries and open others. There is a clear sense that the church needs to facilitate what God is gifting people for and that if no one in the congregation has the gift or desire for a certain ministry area then it should not be continued.

Initially, when the structural transition was made from a traditional board to a leadership team, people were given portfolio responsibilities for each purpose of church. While the five purposes are still the filter for determining ministry value other portfolios are added as the leadership team senses a need. For example, currently there is a small groups portfolio.

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[361] Ibid.

In terms of ministry placement, only the key leaders are nominated from a ministry placement team that is selected by the church. The key leaders are then free to put together teams as they see necessary to achieve their particular concept in the life of the church. There is an emphasis on matching gifts to avoid end of year changes with the belief that once people have found their area of service they will stay serving in connection with that area.

The current structure is designed with three main areas, corporate worship, support ministries and small groups.[362] There has been a lot of effort put in to having the congregation see small group participation as of equal importance to worship service participation. Over 60% of the church is now in small groups.

Systems of Evaluation

Each ministry area is evaluated annually by the leadership team in terms of how well that purpose is being achieved. While this evaluation is subjective in nature, the recently started NCD process allows for a more objective component. At each leadership meeting the purposes of the church are evaluated in a general manner with specific ministries being looked at if there is a problem. Within ministry areas it is up to the overall leader of that portfolio to evaluate as they see necessary.

Observations

The leadership team is progressive and continues to strive for effectiveness. Currently the team is working through the area of discipleship which had been

[362] Structural diagram is included in appendix G fig. 11.

identified as the most lacking ministry area. Fremantle is an example of a traditional church that has been transitioned following a period of study in regard to the nature of "church". It demonstrates what can happen when the congregation is given a clear picture of what the church is to be and a clear understanding of why things need to change, before transitions are made.

Kingscliff Seventh-day Adventist Church[363]

Kingscliff Seventh-day Adventist church (Kingscliff) is situated in the far north of New South Wales. It is described as "a relaxed congregation with a beach culture."[364] While Kingscliff has been operating since 1977, in the late nineties it took on a new focus and became quite a different church in terms of its style of ministry and the resulting people it was reaching. The congregation has recently shifted into a new building and currently has an average attendance of 250. Kingscliff is a very young church with many of it leaders under the age of thirty. It is known for its open, optimistic atmosphere and a spirit of acceptance.[365] Worship is a big strength of the Kingscliff church. Its music group often leads

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[363] The information for this study is based on:
1) an interview with Senior Pastor Adrian Raethel (23 June 2004)
2) an interview with a theology student who was involved in the church during preternship, (5 December 2003)
3) perception interviews with five attenders (20 July, 2004).
4) study of vision and mission documents

[364] Interview with Pastor Adrian Raethel, 23 June 2004

[365] Ibid.

conference-wide youth meetings throughout Australia and New Zealand.[366] The senior pastor, Adrian Raethel, is in his fifth year of ministry at Kingscliff.

Overview of Structural Transition

Up until 1998, Kingscliff operated in a very traditional Adventist environment. A short drive away was Tweed Heads Seventh-day Adventist church. The Tweed congregation was experiencing rejuvenation with a new focus toward catering more for young families and returning former Adventists. At the end of 1998, Kingscliff and Tweed were merged in a decision that was "far from unanimous."[367] This resulted in a "fair amount of pain" for traditional members as the more relaxed atmosphere of the Tweed group began to dominate. Some older members transferred to a more conservative nearby church, while another group chose to start their own fellowship. Having traditional congregations nearby has been seen as useful in the transition process in that people who do not like the new environment can find a church home that is comfortable for them.

How Mission and Vision are Defined and Communicated

Kingscliff has an unusually high level of ministry involvement with over 80% of adult attenders involved in an area of service. There are over 100 people in the worship ministry area alone. Kingscliff's mission statement is focused on

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[366] In the Adventist denominational structure, a conference is an administrative level that coordinates a group of local churches, usually divided by state.

[367] Interview with Pastor Adrian Raethel, 23 June 2004.

involvement.[368] In preaching and teaching a high value is put on service. Raethel outlines how for him preaching is central in keeping the church focused on its Biblical mandate.

Raethel also outlines how a sense of unity also contributes to involvement. Church picnics every Sabbath give a sense of cohesion and remind people that they are a part of something bigger than themselves. There is a high emphasis on prayer and its power in the life of the church. The whole ministry team, which includes every person involved in a ministry, regularly get together for prayer, worship, bonding and unity.

Leadership in the Church

The leadership structure is, on paper, similar to the traditional Adventist model with department and programme leaders making up the board. However, the spiritual emphasis and commitment to mission of board members ensures it operates with the philosophy that it exists to make ministry happen rather than be in maintenance mode alone. There is a great deal of latitude given to ministry leaders to oversee their group and start new ministries as they see fit. A high value is placed on spiritual leadership and worship is an important part of every leadership team meeting.

Raethel sees his pastoral role as continually evolving. Currently, he sees his main role as providing the spiritual oversight for the church and coordinating the emerging ministries so that they work together effectively.

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[368] Kingscliff's mission and vision statement, along with the mission and vision statements of other case study churches are included in appendix H

Ministry Structure and Placement

While still operating in a largely programme-based, departmental structure, Kingscliff's environment of intentionality and flexibility means this structure is not stifling. Concept areas of the church, including worship and spiritual growth ministries, have been encouraged and included at leadership level as they have emerged. This has ensured the church has moved beyond a programme-driven environment.

Having such an effective worship team, that incorporates over half the congregation, is remarkable and Raethel pays tribute to "excellent leaders in this area."[369] The way this team is run ensures spiritual growth, community, worship and ministry all happen for this part of the congregation. The approach to this ministry flows into other areas of church life.

The key leadership roles of the church are filled by a traditional nominating process. However, once nominated, leaders can choose and work with their teams as they wish. New people are very quickly integrated into church life and ministry involvement.

Systems of Evaluation

Each individual ministry is responsible for self evaluation as measured against the objectives of the church. The board evaluates the overall running of the church.

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[369]Interview with Pastor Raethel, 23 June 2004.

Observations

Raethel sees a need to rework how the church functions in order to give more emphasis to needs-oriented evangelism and building a stronger community profile. Kingscliff is an example of a structural transition where key leaders with an understanding of the church's mission are able to foster these values through their ministry areas. It also shows how a flexible environment that encourages new ministries can work very well when there is a clear vision and mission.

North Harbour Seventh-day Adventist Church[370]

North Harbour Seventh-day Adventist Church (North Harbour) began as a branch of the Ponsonby Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1930. It is situated on the fast growing North Shore of Auckland in New Zealand. In its past, it has been primarily run by some very strong families and has experienced cycles of slow growth and decline. In 1996, the church shifted into a new building and while it theoretically had a focus on reaching the unchurched, this was not happening to any noticeable extent. In 2001 the arrival of Pastor Russell Willcocks with a new perspective on church life, was the catalyst for significant change. Over the last four years average attendance had moved from 100 to 250. Of this growth, 45% is from formerly unchurched people, 45% is transfers from other congregations

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[370] The information for this study is based on:
1) many informal discussions with senior pastor, Russell Willcocks, along with a formal interview (6 May 2004)
2) perception questions asked of ten North Harbour attenders (4 June 2003)_
3) visit to North Harbour worship service (14 Sept 2002)
4) structural renewal survey responses
5) Study of newsletters, board material and website.

and the remainder is biological. North Harbour scored 60 in the NCD element of functional structures.

Overview of Structural Transition

When Willcocks arrived at the church he noticed low membership involvement, a very poorly run worship service, very few leaders, a low level of community and, overall, a very unwholistic approach to church life. Willcocks began the transition process by putting together and envisioning a group of leaders. He led a process of discovery on what the concept of "church" is and how the North Harbour congregation could be far more effective then it was at that point.

Early in the transition process a new church structure was proposed. At this point, there was no documented structure. The church had moved away from the traditional *Adventist Church Manual* approach to ministry structure but had not replaced it with a clear alternative. Willcocks initially put in place the structure he had been involved in during his internship at the Papatoetoe Seventh-day Adventist Church. This was a concept based structure shaped around the five purposes of church with a focus on the eight elements of NCD. The North Harbour leadership team were very open to the new structure.

While this structure was working well in the larger Papatoetoe congregation, it required too much human resource input for the size of North Harbour and the stage it had reached. Willcocks states that he "brought a big church structure

into a small church and for a while burnt people out."[371] After realising that not all ministries could start at once, the structure was refined in terms of what aspects of church were most important and needed the most resourcing at that point. This was determined along NCD lines even though a formal NCD test was not taken at this point. Willcocks states; "It became apparent that the structure needed to be adjusted to fit the people rather than the other way around."[372] However, he recognises that early in the transition process a structure that was too big was better than none at all. In commenting on the overall transition process Willcocks says: "A whole lot of church health came along, people enjoyed it, stayed and got involved."[373]

How Mission and Vision are Defined and Communicated

Willcocks recognised the importance of communication in the transitional process and immediately took the responsibility for this area. He wrote a series of newsletters to keep the church informed of what was happening and why. Regular leaders and church wide-vision nights kept the church informed and involved. Material was given out to read and listen to, retreats were held where concepts were worked through so that the level of ownership was deepened.

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[371] Interview with Pastor Russell Willcocks, 6 May 2004.

[372] Ibid.

[373] Ibid.

A North Harbour Church Manual was written that spelt out the mission, vision and values of the church along with operating procedures.[374] This mission and its implications were preached, included in baptismal studies, newsletters, bulletins and updates. Business meetings were changed to become vision nights with all agenda items being presented in terms of how they would move the church forward. Breakout discussion groups worked though the challenges presented. The church was continually reminded that it exists to reach "lost people."

Leadership in the Church

To this point, the transition process had been driven by the pastor. Willcocks initially took responsibility for communications, worship, planning and most other aspects of church life. As people came to understand the vision and grasp what it required, each of these roles has been given away and Willcocks then worked on lifting other areas. This is a different philosophy to Fremantle where they do not raise a ministry that that there is no leader for. When asked his perspective on this philosophy, Willcocks responds; "That would be great in an ideal environment but little would have happened at North Harbour if it had not been pastorally driven."[375] Willcocks sees the pastoral role as promoting and driving the overall vision of the church. While he is involved in visitation and Bible studies he sees his main role as training, equipping and leading the church toward health in all areas. Willcocks puts a lot of emphasis on self leadership along with resourcing other leaders in the church. Willcocks' philosophy is: "If

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[374] North Harbour mission, vision and values are included in appendix H.

[375] Interview with Willcocks, 6 May 2004.

you've got no idea then get on to it, pray, talk, read, listen, find out and then do it."[376]

Ministry Structure and Placement

The current structure still very much revolves around the five purposes of church and operates at three levels. The central leadership group is the board of elders. This group, which includes pastoral staff, looks at the overall directions of the church. Each elder is also given the responsibility of nurture and support for a leader at the next level. Level two is the board of group directors. This board comprises the leaders of the various departments in the church including worship, nurture/fellowship, discipleship, outreach, administration and the children's ministry leader. Each of these leaders is responsible for envisioning and developing teams that foster their particular concept in the life of the church. This creates an environment of ministry emergence that has supporting structures for the growth of these new ministry areas.

Ministry placement is done by nominating committee selected by the whole church. However, once the group directors have been chosen they are free to form their own teams in liaison with the nominating committee.

Systems of Evaluation

Every year the structure is formally reviewed by the board and throughout the year adjustments made as new needs are identified and new people rise to ministry levels. Each ministry area is reviewed by the board of elders where

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[376] Ibid.

issues of effectiveness are discussed in relation to that ministry fostering its concept in church life. The board has been trained in NCD, with this process providing the objective basis for ministry direction.

Observations

North Harbour demonstrates a transition from little structure to a very pastorally driven structure to now, one that is very broad in terms of leadership and involvement. This transition process shows how differing structures are functional at various stages in the transition process and must be continually monitored and re-adjusted. However, while the structures changed, the underlying concepts of church health were continually emphasised.

Northpoint Church[377]

Northpoint Church (Northpoint) is a new church plant in the north eastern suburbs of Melbourne led by Pastor Loren Pratt and Pastor Greg Evans. It currently meets for worship in a motel near the Melbourne airport. At the end of its first year it had already moved from the initial start up group of thirty five to sixty regular attenders. It is included in these case studies as it runs on a cell church structure which is quite different from the usual Adventist structure for

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[377] The information for this study is based on:
1) interview with Senior Pastor, Loren Pratt (15 November 2003 and 14 July 2004)
2) attendance at the worship service (20 September 2003)
4) attendance at the after worship debrief (20 September 2003)
5) perception questions asked of four attenders (20 September 2003)
6) responses to the structural renewal survey.

local church ministry. In its first year of existence, Northpoint has been given a wide profile in the Adventist community of Australia and New Zealand.[378]

Overview of Structural Transition

Both Pratt and Evans pastor traditional Adventist churches, Greenvale Seventh-day Adventist Church and Preston Seventh-day Adventist Church respectively. Rather than try and change these churches into cell churches, a concept both pastors were attracted to, they chose to use interested members in their traditional churches to help plant a new cell church. Because Northpoint's worship service is in the afternoon and the mother churches meet in the morning, most of the start-up members still attend the mother church along with pouring energy into Northpoint.

How Mission and Vision are Defined and Communicated

Northpoint has a very strong emphasis on evangelism. The bulk of its growth has been a result of running prophecy seminars, a public evangelistic series and follow up of letterboxed cards offering Bible studies. Evangelistic values are modelled by the leadership and regularly emphasised through the testimonies of the new people during the worship service. All members of the church are expected to be "working a territory" which means letterboxing and follow up of

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[378] Kellie Hancock, "Motel Church Grows," *Record,* 29 May 2004, 1; 5. Featured on *Adventist Media Centre,* "Motel Church Makes an Impact," *Advent News* 9 February 2004. The senior pastor of Northpoint, Loren Pratt was also asked to present a report on the Northpoint church at the mid-year meetings of the South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, June 2004.

Bible study cards in a designated area along with inviting people to geographically based cell groups.

Church leaders are given cell structure resources to read and these are then discussed at leadership meetings.[379] The church has been at a size where the vision of the church has been able to be spread through direct pastoral contact. However, as the church grows the need for better systems of vision communication have been identified and are starting to be put in place. These systems will include a website, vision newsletters and more regular vision nights.

Leadership in the Church

Northpoint is driven by the evangelistic values of both Pratt and Evans. The primary way leadership flows is from them to the group of cell leaders. When new people attend the church they are immediately placed into a new members cell group where the values and vision of the church is taught.

Being a cell group leader automatically qualifies a person to be on the church leadership team. This team meets every six weeks to sort through directions and plans for the church and even decides what themes need to be preached. As the church grows the plan is to have the most effective cell leaders become cell coaches and only coaches would be on the leadership team. Pratt sees his main role as training the cell leaders and modelling evangelism so that a steady flow of people are joining the cell system.

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[379] The resources primarily used are Stocksill, *Cell Church,* and Comiskey, *Explosion.*

There is no traditional quarterly business meeting, but rather an annual friends and family night which is called to look at the overall direction of the church and explain the specific direction for the next year.

Ministry Structure and Placement

The cell group is the central point of all church life. Systems of community, discipleship, service, worship and evangelism are all facilitated through the cell system. The strength of the church is very much related to the strength of the cell leaders and the process that trains them for effective cell leadership.

Ministry placement is minimal as the only roles that need to be filled are either administrative or related to the corporate worship service. Even then it is cell groups that take on the welcoming ministry and traditional deacons' roles on a rostered basis. The worship team is a cell of its own that then takes on the responsibility of leading the church in corporate worship. The worship service is still largely cell-based with congregational singing followed by a thirty minute sermon and then thirty minutes of discussion that occurs in the cell groups. Any personnel appointments that need to be made (e.g. treasurer) are discussed and voted by the cell leadership team and reviewed yearly. New members are immediately involved in ministry as they become part of a cell.

Systems of Evaluation

Each cell leader has an evaluative scale in relation to what makes an effective cell group. Evaluation of where the church is in terms of overall direction happens in the leadership team. It is currently a very subjective discussion of where the leaders feel the church is in regard to its purposes. However, plans are being made for a more formal quantitative evaluation system.

Observations

The challenge in this environment is to ensure that the cells remain resourced and effective. It is also important that the multiplication of cells actually happens and that the structure is not choked by an unwillingness of cells to split and start new groups. This is a new model in the context of Adventism in Australia and New Zealand. While in most traditional Adventist environments it would take a long time period for a congregation to move structurally to this system, the Northpoint model has given the traditional churches it grew out of a chance to experience and see the values of cell church and some of its values are beginning to be established in the mother churches.

Papatoetoe Seventh-day Adventist Church[380]

Papatoetoe Seventh-day Adventist Church (Papatoetoe) is located in Manukau City, South Auckland. The congregation was formed following a tent mission in 1923. In the late eighties, Papatoetoe was identified by conference leadership as a church that could become a church growth model in the conference and was resourced for this process. Between 1996 and the present the church has moved from an average attendance of just below 300 to 650. The current Senior Pastor has been at the church for nine years. Papatoetoe is made up of a wide variety of cultures and age groups which includes 200 children under the age of fifteen. The worship service is blended. However, contemporary and conservative worship experiences are provided at Friday night programmes. It's most recent score in the NCD element of functional structures was 64.

Overview of Structural Transition

Visionary leadership by Pastor John Denne during the late eighties and mid nineties saw some of the underlying cultural dynamics of the church re-adjusted. The church benefited by having a long term pastor. Denne, in two blocks broken by a short time of conference leadership, led the church for fourteen years. It was at this time the worship style began a transition to be more seeker-sensitive. These changes were met with resistance. However, the skilled leadership of

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[380] The information for this study is based on:
1) the author of this thesis is the Senior Pastor
2) regular perception surveys carried out in the congregation
3) collection and overview of various leadership documents
4) structural renewal survey responses.

Denne, and in part due to the credibility his tenure had built, ensured the transition process was worked through in an intentional and strategic manner. While there was not significant growth in the early nineties the church had began positioning itself to be more relevant in its outlook and a culture of ministry excellence had been created. Over the last ten years the church has made a number of structural shifts. Many of these changes were in response to the pressure being put on the structure by growth.

The impetus for the first major restructure came as a result of the NCD process in 2000. Papatoetoe had experienced rapid growth in the preceding three years and structurally it was finding it difficult to keep up with the demands of this new ministry environment. Few leaders were surprised when the element functional structures (34) was identified as the Papatoetoe's minimum factor. A team was put in place to investigate what structure would best facilitate the five purposes of church in the Papatoetoe environment. Up until this point, the board had been composed, like most Adventist churches, with programme leaders such as the Pathfinder director, social leader and Sabbath School leader being automatically board positions. This was identified as a limiting factor in that these leaders often would be representing their programme rather then working on concepts for their ministry area that may be better achieved outside the parameters of the particular programme they were responsible for.

A leader was appointed to oversee a team of ministries in each concept area. Youth and children's ministry, although not a ministry concept, were spotlighted

as special focus ministries by the church board. In addition, an operations team was added. This meant a leadership team of eight plus the pastors. This team provided the leadership in each department plus the overall co-ordinating function. This system worked well and the NCD score in functional structure moved to 65 within a year. This is the same structure that was initially taken on by North Harbour Seventh-day Adventist Church as they began their re-structure. Not only was a new structure put in place but a culture of re-evaluation was established by yearly NCD reports. It was this re-evaluation that highlighted new structural challenges that have been recently put in operation and which are outlined below.

Papatoetoe has had and continues to have major structural changes. Determining how much to change can be made at any one time has been a challenge for the leadership team. The leadership team are very familiar with the saying "You eat an elephant one mouthful at a time." There has been a deliberate and patient approach to change which has allowed the bulk of the church to move along the change process journey together.

How Mission and Vision are Defined and Communicated

In the mid-nineties the church was facility focused. The emphasis on the building may have been a result of the huge debt the church owed on the building and the continual need to fundraise. The building, with no people, was on the front of the bulletin and post cards were being sold of an empty church. In 1998, following a time of church refocusing, the bulletin cover was changed to a collage of people.

Faces of church members were shown on the screen during the offering at the worship service and sermons continually reminded the congregation that church was about people rather than a building. The five purposes of church were promoted heavily and each leader was given a copy of *Purpose Driven Church*[381] which was studied as a team. The five purposes of church are continually brought into sermons and are on the front of most documents circulated by the church, including the current bulletin cover.

The church mission statement was hung in the foyer, put on bookmarks and printed each week in the bulletin. Despite these efforts, many people knew a statement existed but were unsure what it was or meant. Recently, the mission statement has been revised to be more easily remembered.[382]

The church has a very clear vision for the future which is made available in e-newsletters, as handouts and on the website. The importance of communication was identified by the leadership team as one of the central points in having a large congregation know where the church is moving. The church employs a half-time communication leader to ensure the communication process is facilitated at a high level.

Ministry focus spots and e-mails focus on the mission or highlight where the values are being embodied. A ministry fair, much like a trade show, where all the

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[381] Rick Warren, *Purpose Driven Church.*

[382] Current mission statement is included in appendix H.

ministry areas make displays and enlist volunteers has also been found useful in keeping the mission of the church in front of the congregation.

Leadership in the Church

The first circle of leadership is made up of the Senior Pastor and Elders who regularly meet together to consider the spiritual oversight and future directions for the church. The day-to-day running of the church is carried out by the next circle of leaders who head the teams.[383] The Senior pastor works closely with each team leader in developing plans for the department and integrating the overall vision of the church. The bulk of leaders at this level are paid by the church including the programming, outreach, youth, children's ministry and administration leaders. Other paid staff include a gift-oriented ministry co-ordinator, communications (half time), secretarial assistance (half time) and pastoral visitation (1 day).[384]

In 2003, the church recognised the need to be more intentional in regard to leadership development. Regular leadership development nights where either a speaker comes in or a DVD on leadership is watched have made for a successful start. A leadership track is being implemented and leadership resources are being made available.

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[383] The Papatoetoe Seventh-day Adventist Church ministry flowchart is shown in appendix G. fig. 13.

[384] For an overview of general staffing arrangements in the Adventist denomination and how paying staff at local church level is the exception see above, footnotes 356, p.190.

Ministry Structure and Placement

The church has continued to grow and in 2003 the leadership team identified the need once again to re-work the structure to respond to the new ministry environment where additional services will be added and a multi-campus approach adopted. It was found that although each team leader could recite the NCD biotic principles[385] they were not being integrated into church life. The system created an environment of independence and no team had actually worked through the concepts of symbiosis, multi-usage and energy transformation. The structure was once again reworked and now each ministry area is responsible for each purpose and for integrating with other departments. and integrate with other departments. The concept names were removed and made the overall ministry environment. Each team has a primary purpose but must work with other teams to be part of achieving the remaining purposes. The board, which is comprised of team leaders, makes a monthly evaluation of how well this is happening and thinks through ways to facilitate the integrative process even more effectively. At each board meeting a purpose is selected and discussed with each team leader deciding how their team can more effectively work with others to achieve that purpose.

Papatoetoe has an intentional spiritual gifts based approach to ministry. The *Connections* spiritual gifts resouce is widely promoted.[386] Service opportunities

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[385] See back, footnote 14 p 13.

for new attenders have been developed and ministry opportunities are accessible. The ministry placement team is made aware of people's passions, gifts and personal styles and, where possible, people stay in their area of giftedness for the long term. The ministry placement team includes five people selected by the congregation, five elders, five staff and the *Connections* consultants. Annually, this group chooses the area leaders and then breaks into smaller groups with that leader to plan its ministry needs. The ministry placement team meets throughout the year to ensure ministries are being resourced effectively and that new attenders are being integrated into ministry.

Systems of Evaluation

The NCD process is used each year to give an overall evaluative score. However, the main system of evaluation is through Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Each team, working with the leadership team, has developed KPI indicators that show to what extent that team is being effective in achieving its ministry purpose. The measurements include aspects that are surveyed yearly and other measurements that are measured weekly and monthly. The overall leadership team sees only those KPI's each month which indicate the overall nature of the church. It is only when there is cause for concern or celebration that the team KPI's are brought to the wider leadership team.

The overall KPI's include measurement of how many people are at various stages along the discipleship track each month, the number of people

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[386] Bruce Bugbee, et al, *Connections: Implementing Spiritual Gifts in the Church* (AdventSource, 1996).

participating in small group life and the number involved in service. With this system of evaluation ministry opportunities and challenges can be identified early, teams have a goal to work toward and can have objective facts to celebrate and see how what they do fits into the overall mission of the church.

Observations

The larger the congregation grows the more difficult it has become to keep the church focused on its vision and mission. Large sub-ministries must be continually reminded of their central purpose. Papatoetoe demonstrates how over a long period of time a continual focus on what the church should be matched by incremental structural change can lead to a healthy transition.

Waitara Seventh-day Adventist Church[387]

Waitara Seventh-day Adventist Church (Waitara), is located on the upper North Shore of Sydney. It was started in 1903 and today has just over 400 members. Of recent years it has become well known in the denomination for its emphasis on evangelism and its continually high level of baptisms.[388] Waitara was led by Pastor Bruce Price for sixteen years before his retirement in 2000. For the last four year it has been pastored by Pastor Geoff Youlden who, until filling this

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[387] The information for this study is based on
1) interview with the senior pastor Geoff Youlden, (10 July 2004)
2) attendance at worship service (20 December 2003 and 3 January 2004)
3) perception interviews of four church attenders (Dec 2003)
5) collection and analysis of various publications including website.

[388] See Doug Robertson, "What Makes Adventist Churches Grow?" *Record,* 5 April 2003, 10-12; and Nathan Brown, "Long Term Tenure Builds Team Spirit," *Record,* 26 May 2001, 8-9.

position, was a public evangelist in Australia and New Zealand. Price had developed a strong culture of evangelism which Youlden intensified. While Waitara is traditional in its approach to worship it is progressive in putting in place intentional structures to achieve its mission. In 2003 Waitara was featured in the *Record* as one of four healthy church models in Australia and New Zealand.[389]

Overview of Structural Transition

The word Youlden uses repeatedly to describe his approach to church life is "intentional". He has re-focused and added to the existing structures of the church with a view towards mission. The leadership team meets weekly to assess how the church is performing in relation to mission. While the changes Youlden has made have not been the type that generally cause pain, Youlden has also been careful to "choose his battles."[390] For instance, the church does not have female elders. Youlden is personally in favour of female elders however feels that to address this issue now would only shift the focus from where he wants it to be. While the worship style is not contemporary the church is aware of its target and that in a city the size of Sydney there will still be a large group who prefer the traditional worship style Waitara offers.

How Mission and Vision are Defined and Communicated

Waitara church is continually re-focused toward the urgency of evangelism. Youden says, "The church cannot let its guard down one bit otherwise people will

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[389] Robertson

[390] Interview with Pastor Geoff Youlden, 10 July 2004.

end up somewhere else."[391] The preaching is continually of an evangelistic nature, testimonies are regularly included in the worship service from new converts and the communication that comes from the church is continually focussed on "winning more people". Youlden reminds the church continually that "Waitara is about evangelism".[392] Each part of the church, from children's leaders to the weekly lunch preparers clearly knows where they fit in to the evangelistic process. One young adult when asked why he came to Waitara responded: "The worship style is not really my thing but I really feel like I am part of a big deal when I come here – plus it's friendly."

Waitara also has a strong culture of excellence. This is modelled from the leadership down. Church publications are printed on glossy paper; the welcome pack is very professional, as is the website. Youlden emphasises that "Everything that is done must be intentional and done well"[393]

Leadership in the Church

Youlden has a strong sense of leadership and the role it plays. He states that "the church is representative of the pastor." He is intentional about modelling the values and inspiring others. The weekly leadership team meeting, which includes the three pastors, leading elder, leading shepherdess, deputy elder and worship co-ordinator focus on communicating vision along with the "nuts and

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[391] Ibid.

[392] Ibid.

[393] Ibid.

bolts of how to keep the church sharp".[394] Each team has regular meetings to ensure they are doing all they can to be effective. While Youlden can appear to be very much the central leadership figure there is a team of other strong leaders who ensure the vision is communicated at the various levels of church life.

Ministry Structure and Placement

The basic ministry structure is based on the *Adventist Church Manual* with a programme-driven board and business meetings. However, the difference for Waitara is in what structures are facilitated in addition to the basic structure. Currently there is a heavy emphasis on small groups as the basic building block of Waitara's evangelism strategy. Twenty two prophecy seminars are being operated in homes as small groups. Each home has two leaders and receives church support. It is in experimenting with various structures, changing what does not work and keeping what does, that Waitara is able to be functional in terms of its mission. Youlden believes that the other four purposes of church, worship, spiritual growth, service and community grow out of evangelism and that they must be emphasised in an evangelistic context.

Waitara has a deliberate policy of getting new people involved in significant ministries as soon as possible. While this way of going about ministry placement does not fit the traditional Adventist approach where people are to be established in the church before being given a ministry, it is an example of how Waitara is

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[394] Ibid.

willing to make these allowances and adjustments to increase the level of evangelism.

Systems of Evaluation

There is continual weekly assessment in each sphere of leadership in regard to what is working and what requires readjusting. Most of this evaluation is based on subjective observations of how well that ministry has achieved its part in the evangelistic process.

Observations

Waitara demonstrates how structures can be re-worked to facilitate a strong sense of mission. In Waitara's case, a high level of evangelistic intentionality over a long period has allowed a church culture to develop that is functional in regard to its mission. Continual re-assessment of these structures allows them to be further refined and made increasingly more functional.

Conclusion

While each church in the above case studies represents different journeys toward structural renewal, there are characteristics in common that ensure the right environment is created for renewal to be fostered. These common characteristics will be outlined in Part Three of this thesis.

PART THREE

CONCLUSION:
A PARADIGM FOR STRUCTURAL RENEWAL
IN AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND ADVENTIST CHURCHES

CHAPTER 12

PRINCIPLES THAT UNDERLIE A NEW PARADIGM FOR FACILITATING FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURES

When creating functional structures, it is not merely a matter of redesigning a board, congregational flow chart or implementing a new programme. While these aspects of church life are often indicators of a congregation's values and systems, they are only the outward workings of a more fundamental change. At a deeper level, there needs to be an understanding of the principles of structure and the nature of the "church". This needs to be established before moving on to how the actual structures are outwardly expressed.

Balancing The Inter-Relationship Between Organisation and Organism

The basis for structural renewal starts with understanding the role of structure in the church. The church needs to be understood as both a living spiritual organism and a structural organisation. The value of the organisational sphere is found in how it facilitates the organic functions of the church. Either sphere by itself is not a functional expression of the church.

A concept of church must be established that allows members to identify the difference between what is a core purpose of the organic nature of the church and what are simply forms that allow the organic sphere to be effectively facilitated.

The role of organisational aspects of the church needs to be clearly seen as necessary in achieving the dynamic, spiritual aspects of the church. It is important to remember that designing functional structures is not the endpoint in itself. Structures should not be considered "sacred" in themselves, so that they cannot be changed. The goal of functional structures is to facilitate the mission of the organism and not merely create a smooth flowing system.

Seeing Each Church As A Unique Living System

The church needs to be seen as an integrated unique living system. Because each congregation shapes and responds to its own unique environment, each church will have different structures that allow it to be functional. These structures will need to adapt as various changes in the context of ministry call for different responses to ensure continual effectiveness. Seeing the church as a system brings with it a more dynamic, fluid view of the church as it inter-reacts with its environment and mission.

In this new paradigm, a linear cause and effect approach to church life is not the answer. Instead, the church needs to be seen as being alive with a web of interrelationships that need to be continually shaped and responded to so that the mission of the church is continually being facilitated in the most effective way. Too often in the old paradigm, there was an underlying assumption which implied that if a particular programme was adopted then the church would thrive. This approach saw the church as a machine with interchangeable parts rather than as a living system. The result is imposed structures that are often not owned by the

church because they are not in harmony with its values or do not respond to its unique environment. To ignore the complexities of an individual church makes for systems that never really allow for and can in fact stifle the vitality of the local church.

Many of the structures in a local church need to arise out of its own matrix of interrelationships. This means that for functional structures to be developed, each local church needs to be seen as its own system and be encouraged to develop its own structures. This variation can be seen in the increasingly diverse expressions of local church that are currently emerging in Adventism. The cell church approach of Northpoint is very different from the meta-church, multi-site model that Papatoetoe is moving toward. The way Avondale College Church structures its governance system with purposes to be expressed through generational teams is quite different from how Central Coast Community has a department for each church purpose. Each of these expressions of being the local church is quite different from the model of church outlined in the *Adventist Church Manual.* However, each shows how individual congregations can adapt to their own unique environment yet still hold a common mission. While this approach may take away aspects of wider control and uniformity, it is necessary for vitality at the local church level.

There is no one model for the local church in the new paradigm. The New Testament, rather then imposing one perfect structure, presents a variety of

structures through which God works. A particular structure, that may be functional in a given context, cannot be seen as the answer for every church.

In the past, Adventism has found a sense of denominational identity in sharing a basic common structure for local church life. There have been advantages to this approach in terms of clearly defined procedures that ensured at least some system of organisation where there might otherwise be none. In many contexts the common approach was, at least to some degree, functional. However, in the new, more fluid paradigm there will need to be room for a much wider expression of what it means to be a local Adventist church. Denominational identity needs to be found in a common ecclesiology with its understanding of what the church is to "be" and "do" rather than in how each local congregation then structures its individual response to this common mission.

Being Christ's Body, Expressing Community

In an Adventist context, functional structures need to grow out of the biblical purposes for the church. This involves having a clear picture of what the church is designed to "be." This is an area that needs particular focus in the process of structural renewal in Adventism. Responses to the Structural Renewal Survey (SRS) demonstrate the lack of a clear picture amongst Adventist pastors in regard to how they see the church.[395] It is not sufficient for the church to be defined as a building, or merely a place where a worship service happens. It

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[395] See above, Table 2, p159. For an overview of the SRS questionnaire and results see appdix E and F.

needs to be viewed and explained in relational and experiential terms as God's new community.

The church is as an interconnected body that exists to show the world what happens when Jesus is at the head. When structures are put in place without this picture the reason for that structures existence is often not clearly understood. Having a clear picture of what it means to be Christ's body and interrelate as such is important in establishing the type of structures that will facilitate this community.

It is important in shaping church structures to begin with recognising the headship of Christ. The church should never be so reliant on its forms and structures that it forgets its spiritual nature. Forms and systems used in the church need to be consistent with Christ's character, including a love for people and desire to promote servant hood. Church leaders need to continually remember that the source of vitality in the church is not its structures or processes, but its connection with the Godhead. Spiritual vitality is central to effective structural renewal.

Being a body inherently means that the church must value interdependence in its structures. Structures should encourage individual initiative, but in the context of overall cohesion. This involves recognising the priesthood of all believers and the role that structure plays in facilitating the individual gifts that God has placed in the context of a church body.

Approaching Ministry Holistically

The next question in establishing principles for structural renewal is to ask what the church must "do." Structures must revolve around facilitating five biblical ministry concepts. These concepts are evangelism, worship, service, spiritual growth and community. This means that in designing structures, the church needs to be seen in holistic terms. To fill just one, or some, of the purposes misses the overall biblical design for the church. The SRS demonstrated the need for education in this area in that only eight responses identified the mission of the church as including the five purposes.[396]

Understanding the biblical purposes of church is important in developing a more flexible environment for expressing church structures. People in the church need to be able to differentiate between biblical principles and cultural forms. This education process is important so that they realise what practices can be changed but also identify what about the church is absolute and needs to be protected.

It is only after establishing the foundational points, what the church is designed to "be" and what it is called to "do", that the principles of how the church will facilitate the five ministry areas can be addressed.

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[396] See above, Table 1, p158

Creating Ministry Forms Out of Clear Values

Structures need to grow out of values. A church inherently has a set of values, even if unwritten, by which its systems of interactions are shaped and measured. Functionality require those values to be shaped around biblical purposes and concepts that will promote the mission of the church.

The values that Central Coast Community, Fremantle, North Harbour, and Papatoetoe churches have, give these congregations a framework for determining what their structures are adapting to or aiming to express.[397] This gives definition and purpose to the process of structural renewal.

Being Creative and Flexible

For church structure to facilitate ministry effectively in a changing environment, it is necessary for innovation to be encouraged. Risk-taking, in regard to expressions of ministry, is essential. While this sometimes will mean church life in the new paradigm may not feel secure, the alternative is structural atrophy. The new paradigm calls for routine reconfiguring of structures based on changes in church size, constituency, resources and strategy.

In Adventist congregations that responded to the SRS it was encouraging to note that 83% of leaders saw their congregations as open to new programmes and ways of going about ministry. 71% of respondants believe their congregation encourages creativity in people's thinking while 63% feel that their congregation often tries new approaches to ministry. These results suggest that there is an

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[397] These values are included in appendix H.

ability for Adventist congregations to positively respond to the challenges of structural renewal in this regard.

Facilitating Open Communication

The new paradigm also calls for systems of open communication. Effective communication allows the church to move away from systems of dependency and engenders a greater degree of belonging and involvement. A continual communication flow between the various areas of church life is essential in creating an environment that allows for structural fluidity while still retaining overall interrelationships and a common focus. Structures need to be put in place that ensure the communication process is facilitated. The fact that 73% of Adventist churches responding to the SRS have no organizational flow-chart suggests that in many Adventist congregation systems of communication between leaders might be unclear. Communication pathways must be intentionally outlined to ensure the flow of information from and back to leadership.

This communication system must include a tolerance of healthy conflict, with structures in place that allow for people to disagree and express their opinion so that together the underlying values can be addressed and structures shaped that facilitate effective mission.

These principles will, if explored and used, help Adventist churches become unique living systems whose structures can adapt and thus remain supportive of the mission for which the church exists.

CHAPTER 13

APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES OF FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURES

A Process Rather Than An End-Point

When it comes to applying the principles of functional structures, there are no quick solutions. The application process is a continual journey for the church, rather than a task to be completed. Because structural forms provide an organisation with predictability and security, changing them can be threatening. The process needs to be worked through with care and diligence.

When each church is seen as a unique living system, a prescriptive approach to structural renewal cannot be applied. However, there are helpful lessons that have been learned and common processes that can be observed from churches that have already moved toward increased functionality. While these observations can act as a guide for the structural renewal process they should not take the place of a congregation's own structural development journey.

Church leaders need to avoid the temptation of attempting to "fix" their structural deficiencies with a model that has worked in other environments. While it might offer immediate results, this kind of prescriptive approach often ignores the underlying issues of the church that created the initial dysfunction. The process of healthy structural renewal grows out of a changes in values and mind-sets which takes time.

Adventist leaders at levels above the local church also need to adopt a process approach toward local church life. Often the effectiveness of a church's leadership is measured in terms of baptisms. If this is the only assessment of a church, then the results are often "quick fix" answers to get the "numbers". This can happen at the expense of doing the long-term work of changing church member's values and mindsets and going through the structural transition process that facilitates healthy, growing churches.

The Necessity of Skilled Leadership

Leadership is crucial in the structural renewal process. Lyle Schaller claims that "the reason more churches are not renewed is that 95% of today's pastors do not bring the gifts, skills, passion and persistence required for that most difficult assignment."[398] In each functional church studied in this thesis, strong leadership was evident and each leader was committed to skill development. The beginning point for the leader who wants to move the church toward structural renewal is self-assessment. The leader needs to be clear on the reasons and motives for embarking on this process. The leader must also be willing to lead in an environment that may involve risk, disharmony and a large time investment in learning new leadership skills.

Because each church is different, the role and expectations of the pastor will also be unique in each environment. However, in most cases of successful structural renewal, the pastoral role was defined in terms of facilitating church health and

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[398] Lyle Schaller, in forward to Donald Morgan, *Share The Dream, Build The Team* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Books, 2001), 11.

leadership for change. For a new paradigm to be effectively implemented, Pastors require training and resourcing for holistic church leadership.

The structural renewal survey shows that many pastors have not sufficiently thought through issues of ecclesiology. Before moving the church along the structural discovery process, it is important that the leader has a clear picture of what the church is designed to be.

Creating A Team Environment

The next point of implementation involves educating, envisioning and working with a team. The team needs to seek God's leading, be resourced and learn the concepts and significance of structural renewal. Having a team creates vitality through collaboration and participation. In many cases, this team will already exist as the leadership team. In smaller churches, it may even be the whole congregation. The goal of this team is to help articulate and communicate the vision along with identifying obstacles and assisting in embedding the new values into the church culture. In some church environments this process can take over a year, for example Central Coast Community Church, in other environments, example North Harbour, the team is learning as changes are being made. The skill of the leader is in perceiving the rate of change that is possible at any given point without destroying the system. Resistance to a new idea can never be eliminated, but it certainly will be minimised through collaboration and involvement of a wider group.

While there needs to be defined systems of leadership and accountability, the environment for decision making should be a supportive team as opposed to a hierarchy that communicates control. In the case studies of functional Adventist churches, a relationally based teams approach to ministry was found to be more conducive to creating functional structure than the formalised hierarchical structures that generally characterise a committee. Each leader talked in terms of teams and relational styles of meetings rather than more clinical systems of operation.

Forming A Clear Picture Of The Current State of the Church: Values and Mission

For the right changes to be made, an assessment of where the church currently is in relation to structural renewal is required. Often an objective assessment, like NCD, can help in this process. This stage will include identifying and working through the implications of where the church is at on the institutional life-cycle and its attitude toward structural renewal. Knowing how a church reached a given point helps in identifying the values that currently hold the system together and at what pace the structural renewal process can proceed.

Growing out of the church's analysis process, a set of values and a mission statement need to be clearly articulated. A mission statement provides a measuring point for all existing and new programs. The need for this process in Adventist churches was shown in the SRS responses where just under half the churches (49%) had not developed a mission statement. The mission and values

need to be modelled and taught so that when changes are made people can see the basis for them. In addition, goals and objectives need to be shaped so that there is a clear picture of the direction the structural renewal process is taking. The results of NCLS and CLSNZ highlight that a large group of Adventists in Australia and New Zealand are not aware of the goals and future plans of the church.[399] If people are expected to change, they need to know where they are going. Keeping the vision continually before the congregation is also important in guarding against institutionalism.

Facilitating A Church Education Process

The church has to be clear about the New Testament principles of the church and what its purposes are. The picture of "church" in the minds of each church member needs to be those of community. The need for functionality also needs to be made clear to church members. This will include an explanation of the cost, in terms of mission, of not making changes. The values that underlie structural change, including the value of "lost" people, cultural relevance and a commitment to biblical purposes need to be established before significant changes begin to be made. The congregation should feel a sense of being part of the change process toward something better. This can happen in many ways including newsletters, courses, one-on-one conversations, small group curriculum and sermons.

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[399] Summary of NCLS and CLSNZ is above, p 155.

It is important that the five ministry purposes are taught, modelled and kept before the church. This must be an ongoing process as these concepts require continual reinforcement. It is encouraging to note the in the SRS responses 57% of leaders in the congregation receive regular training. While it was not determined what this training involved there is, in over half the congregations, a process in place to begin the education process amongst the leaders. It is only when the church understands its biblical mandate that it will begin to see why structural renewal is necessary.

Shaping Structures In Relationship To Size

The "one size fits all" method that has often characterised the Adventist approach to local church structure has made for congregations that are often trying to be something that they are not. When shaping structures, it is important to recognise the church's internal size environment and what structural type works best as a function of size. Many Adventist churches are operated on a pastoral size model (60-150) with its unique set of structural dynamics. The problem comes when churches are of a different size but still trying to fit the pastoral mode.

For smaller churches to be functional, it is vital that they make the shift to family size structures (0-60). A small church should not be expected to run the same structures as that of a larger church. The small church's internal environment is better suited to structures of informality. The small church could take advantage of its size and achieve the five purposes of church through a small group meeting

in place of a formal worship service. If the informality works the church will soon have more people. At that point the informality will be strained and the church will need to transition to a structural system that better suits its new size. In a similar way, larger Adventist churches need to restructure in view of the programme (200-350) or corporate (350-400) size dynamics. The structure of each local church should be shaped in response to its own internal environment.

It is important to think through and anticipate the structural transition points and begin preparing the congregation before the size transition is required. The church should be reminded that even though their current structures work well, with growth (or decline), they will necessarily become obsolete.

Having Ministry Flows Out of Concepts

The way the ministry flow plan is designed, reinforces and shapes structural values. While there are countless ways to work through the ministry flow plan, to be functional it needs to have a concept-base rather than be programme driven. The five concepts of church (worship, evangelism, spiritual growth, community and service) are underlying environments for ministry that are applicable at all times and in all situations and which must be facilitated in every ministry plan. Programmes are merely the forms that deliver the concepts. A valuable exercise for a church leadership team is to assess each purpose of the church and determine what the church does currently to facilitate it and what ideas could make it happen more effectively.

By structuring around concepts, the institutionalisation of programmes is less likely. Rather than having a programme represented at leadership level, that programme can be under the overall concept area. The leadership team is then more likely to work through ways of lifting a concept area rather than adjusting a confined programme. Most times this does not involve finding new leaders and alienating current leaders, but rather re-envisioning current leaders to a broader role. For example, the Sabbath School leader may be willing to become the spiritual growth leader for the whole church and someone else in the Sabbath School team takes on his/her role.

Providing A Gifts Based Ministry Process

How ministry leaders are selected is also an important process in the establishing of functional structures. While once again this process will be very different in churches of different natures, the selection process in functional ministry placement structures recognises spiritual gifts and their unique contribution. The structures need to foster a person's individuality while placing him/her in an environment that encourages interdependence. In most cases this involves having a spiritual gifts training programme in place that identifies a person's ministry area and then co-ordinates ministry placement so the gifts can complement other gifts in forming a ministry team. This is an area that needs particular emphasis in light of the SRS results where only 36% of Adventist congregations have a process in place that allows for spiritual gift identification.

Ministry placement structures, while needing clear definition, require flexibility in the way people are shaped in to ministry areas. Opportunities for first time service need to be available along with systems of ongoing training.

Facilitating Continual Communication

Continual communication is essential in the structural renewal process. People need to know why things are happening and what is expected of them. They need time to consider and be prepared for change. They have to see that decisions are being made in an open, considered and honest way, even if they are not part of the decision making process. Structures that facilitate congregational feedback and let them know they have a voice if needed should be in place. In the case study churches, all smooth transitions were characterised by high levels of communication including newsletters, vision nights, widely distributed documents that articulated future direcitons and breakout groups. In some cases, example North Harbour, this process was worked through in a matter of months. In other cases, example Papatoetoe, the process was spread over years. The fact that only 32% of churches responding to the SRS have a written plan for achieving future ministry goals shows the need for emphasising the value of communication, at least written forms, in the renewal process.

Pacing The Renewal Process

It is important to identify at what pace change can be made. The equilibrium of the church, and what forces hold it in place, needs to be understood. The cost of shifting this equilibrium should be anticipated and the necessity to refreeze it included in the paradigm change process.

Each case study used in this thesis went about the change process in different ways and at different rates. The challenge for the church leadership team is to work through how best, and at what pace, change can be facilitated in their environment.

As churches address issues of functionality they will continually adjust and when necessary revolutionize their organisational structures. This brings with it a challenge for administrative levels above the local church in the Adventist system. As more Adventist church re-create themselves for increased structural functionality the local churches that result will look very different. New forms of structural expression will arise that will require imaginative staffing and different styles of resourcing. While this will bring with it the possible failures, inherent in risk taking, the vitality of being more mission focused is worth that risk.

While it would be easier to have a set process and model for structural renewal, by its very nature this can not be the case if the structure is to respond functionally to particular ministry settings. However, guided by principles, being aware of and using helpful resources and by taking on the suggestions of others, congregations can embark on an ongoing process of renewal.

CHAPTER 14

ENSURING THE STRUCTURE REMAINS EFFECTIVE

To put in place a particular structure and see it as the answer is to miss the point of functionality. Churches, along with the wider environments they work in, are continually changing. Consequently, the forms that facilitate the church achieving its mission at one point are unlikely to do so at another. Functionality, in terms of structure, calls for regular evaluation of the forms and systems that facilitate congregational life and its mission. This is an area needing emphasis in Adventist congregations where in 57% of churches responding to the SRS there was no evaluation process in place to assess effectiveness. The fact that 81% of respondents believed leadership is open to strategic changes to increase fruitfulness suggests that once the value of changes is made clear, a function of evaluation, there is room for positive progress.

Being Intentional

To change structures in an effective, ongoing manner an intentional evaluative environment needs to be developed. Evaluation builds a body of knowledge that can help leaders refine activities, select appropriate resources, describe impact and understand more fully the context that is being addressed. It allows current church needs to be determined against the backdrop of biblical principles, historical lessons and social implications. Forms and structures require

continued evaluation to see if they are facilitating biblical principles and reaching New Testament goals and objectives.

Evaluation systems can be as simple as a debrief meeting after a programme or as complex as a system of ministry key performance indicators. The larger the church, the more formal its evaluation system will need to be. In large churches, no one person or team can know the overall situation of the church. It is only through combined evaluation that the larger picture emerges. Even in smaller congregations, it is useful to have at least some objective data, for example NCD, which reveals an overall picture that might be different from each person's seperate opinions.

Effective evaluation of a ministry structure requires a defined expectation against which it can be measured. This should be expressed in terms of how a particular ministry contributes to the purposes of the church. The evaluation can then determine how well a particular form is achieving its function.

Leaders need to understand the concepts of structural functionality so well that when a particular form they are overseeing is deemed to be not functional it is changed and rather than being seen as a failure, is a step on the way toward increased effectivness. Leaders must continually be reminded of the fact that their programme is just a vehicle for facilitating a ministry concept. The vehicle will inherently become dysfunctional at some point and new ideas need to be tried. If leaders see ministry structures as flexible and adaptable, evaluation

opens up the process of discovering alternative strategies for fulfilling the mission.

The reason that an evaluation process exists needs to be kept in mind, so that it in itself does not become organisational bureaucracy. Ministry evaluation forms or key performance indicator information should be used to shape ministry responses. The evaluation system itself requires regular evaluation in a process that is always adapting and moving the church toward increased functionality.

Conclusion

There is not a special kind of congregation or model that has the answer. There is not one system that will automatically produce functional structures. However, there are underlying values to be shaped, purposes to be facilitated, goals to be articulated and a mission to be fulfilled. Creating functional structures is not about simply changing to a different structure. Functionality calls for a different way of thinking about structure. This change of thinking may be hard to work through in the short term, but will prove to more effective in achieving the church's mission.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Interpretative Questions for Functional Structures in the Natural Church Development Survey Tool

Key Question: Are the forms of organization in the local church planned in terms of their effectiveness and usefulness for the health and growth of the church?

Interpretative Questions

1. Have all structures in the local church been evaluated to determine that they are working effectively?

2. Have effective structures been extended and ineffective structures been eliminated or changed?

3. Have structure been identified which are not yet present but would be helpful, and have definite plans for putting them into operation been prepared?

4. Have newly implemented plans been evaluated?

5. Has a church mission statement been developed from which definite action plans have grown?

6. Is the church mission statement regularly communicated to church members?

7. Has it been discovered how many church members actually know the church's mission statement?

8. Have all church structures been evaluated to discover their potential for the health and growth of the church?

9. Does every local church lay leader have a co-leader?

10. Doe all local leaders receive regular support and help through a supervisor4 or coach?

11. do all local church leaders receive regular training?

12. Does the training program for lay leaders deal with topics relating to their real needs and is it part of an overall training concept?

13. Has an organization diagram been developed which accurately portrays the church's structure?

14. Has a flow chart been developed which portrays the relationship between the various ministry areas of the local church and how people enter the church and move from one ministry to another?

15. Have ways been identified of using the strengths of the local church to improve the organizational structure?

APPENDIX B

Summary of Natural Church Development Scores For Australia and New Zealand.

TABLE 3

AVERAGE SCORES FOR NATURAL CHURCH DEVELOPMENT ELEMENTS FOR ADVENTIST CHURCHES IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND 2000-2003

CHARACTERISTIC	AVERAGES
Inspiring Worship	43.7
Passionate Spirituality	43.6
Need-oriented Evangelism	43.1
Empowering Leadership	37.4
Functional Structures	35.2
Loving Relationships	34.3
Gift-oriented Ministry	32.3
Holistic Small Groups	29.7

TABLE 4

HIGHEST AND LOWEST SCORES FOR NATURAL CHURCH DEVELOPMENT ELEMENTS FOR ADVENTIST CHURCHES IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND 2000-2003

CHARACTERISTIC	HIGHEST SCORE	LOWEST SCORE
Empowering Leadership	69	20
Gift-oriented Ministry	74	-3
Passionate Spirituality	60	19
Functional Structures	75	17
Inspiring Worship	68	13
Holistic Small Groups	73	8
Need-oriented Evangelism	74	21
Loving Relationships	65	0

APPENDIX C

TABLE 5

CHURCH BOARD POSITIONS IN *ADVENTIST CHURCH MANUAL*

Board Position	Year of Manual									
	32	51	63	67	76	81	86	90	95	00
Pastor	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Elder(s)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Deacon(s)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Clerk	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Treasurer	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Missionary Leader	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Missionary Secretary	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Sabbath School Super	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
MV Leader	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Head Deaconess	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Community Service Leader	-	Y	Y	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Family Ministries Leader	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	Y
Women's Ministry Leader	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y
Children's Ministry Leader	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y
Education Secretary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y
Home & School Assoc Leader	-	-	-		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Adventist Youth Society Leader	-	-	-	-	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Pathfinder Director	-	-	-	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Adventurer Club Director	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y
Interest Coordinator	-	-	-	-	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Communication Secretary	-	-	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Health Ministry	-	-	-	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Temperance	-	-	-	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-
Stewardship	-	-	-	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Religious Liberty Leader	-	-	-	--	-	-	-	-	Y	Y
Additional members as desired	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Trust Services Secretary	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-	-	-	-
Inner-City coordinator	-	-	-	-	-	Y	Y	-	-	-

APPENDIX D

TABLE 6

McINTOSH'S TYPOLOGY OF CHURCH SIZE

Factors	Small Churches	Medium Churches	Large Churches
Size	15 – 200 worshipers	201 – 400 worshipers	401+ worshipers
Orientation	Relational	Programmatical	Organisational
Structure	Single cell	Stretched cell	Multiple cell
Leadership	Resides in key families	Resides in committees	Resides in select leaders
Pastor	Lover	Administrator	Leader
Decisions	Made by congregation. Driven by history	Made by committees. Driven by changing needs	Made by staff and leaders. Driven by vision
Staff	Bivocational or single pastor	Pastor and small staff`	Multiple staff
Change	Bottom up through key people	Middle out through key committees	Top down through key leaders
Growth Patterns	Attraction model through relationships	Program model through key ministry	Proclamation model through word of mouth
Growth Obstacles	Small-church image Ineffective evangelism Inadequate programming Downward momentum Ingrown fellowship	Inadequate facilities Inadequate staff Inadequate finances Poor administration Increasing complexity	Poor assimilation Increased bureaucracy Poor communication Loss of vision Lack of member care
Growth Strategies	Renew a sense of purpose Begin new ministries Cultivate evangelism Celebrate victories Start new groups/classes Involve new people	Develop distinct identity Add additional staff Use facilities multiple times Offer multiple worship services Write a long-range plan Improve quality of ministry.	Renew the vision Design assimilation plan Streamline procedures Offer need-based events Adjust leadership roles Increase the number of small groups.

Gary McIntosh, *One Size Doesn't Fit All* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999)

APPENDIX E

Structural Renewal Survey

Section A:

1. How would you define the mission of the church?

_____
_____
_____

2.What is the first picture that comes to your mind when you think of the word 'church'?_____
_____
_____

3. How many people make up the board or governing team of your congregation?_____

Section B:

Answer the following questions by circling the appropriate response.

4. Is there an evaluation process in place to assess the effectiveness of the various ministry areas in your church?
   a. Yes b. No c. Not sure

5. Are ineffective programs changed?
   a. Yes b. No c. Not sure

6. Does your church have a written plan for achieving future ministry goals?
   a. Yes b. No c. Not sure

7. Has a church mission statement been developed
   a. Yes b. No c. Not sure

8. If a mission statement has been developed, is the statement generally known in the congregation?
   a. Yes b. No c. Not sure

9. Has your worship service undergone significant change over the last ten years?
   a. Yes b. No c. Not sure

10. If you have problems in your work in the church, do you know who you can turn to for help?
    a. Yes b. No c. Not sure

11. Has an organizational flow-chart been developed which accurately portrays the church's structure?
    a. Yes b. No c. Not sure

12. Has an intentional process/pathway been put in place that allows new attenders to grow in their relationship with Jesus?
    a. Yes b. No c. Not sure

13. Do you believe that your Pastor/s and church leaders have a long-term approach to Ministry?
    a. Yes b. No c. Not sure

14. Do you have a written job description for areas of responsibility in the church
    a. Yes b. No c. Not sure

15. Does your congregation have a process (like 'Network' or 'Connections') that allows you to spiritual gift identification?
    a. Yes b. No c. Not sure

16. Do you believe the Bible gives a blueprint for how a local church is to be organised?
    a. Yes b. No c. Not sure
    Feel free to explain if necessary:_____
    _____
    _____

17. Do you believe that the Adventist pioneers used an inspired model of church structure at local church level?
    a. Yes b. No c. Not sure
    Feel free to explain if necessary:_____
    _____
    _____
    _____

18. When considering the local church structure as outlined in the Church Manual do you believe its suggestions are legislative/binding on the local congregation?
    a. Yes b. No c. Not sure
    Feel free to explain if necessary:_____
    _____
    _____
    _____

19. Do you set ministry goals, or is there a goal-setting process, for your area of ministry?
    a. Yes b. No c. Not sure

Section C:

Answer the following statements by circling the appropriate number according to the scale below

5.=Strongly Agree
4.=Agree
3.=Unsure
2.=Disagree
1.=Strongly Disagree

20. The mission statement of our church is regularly communicated to The congregation. **1 2 3 4 5**
(Please place a cross in the box if your church does not have a mission statement) ☐

21. Leaders in our congregation receive regular training. **1 2 3 4 5**

22. Adequate resources are available to achieve ministry goals effectively at local church level. **1 2 3 4 5**

23 The pastor meets at least once a quarter with the leaders of each ministry area **1 2 3 4 5**

24. Our congregation is happy for people of various backgrounds, age groups and gender to take part in leading the worship service. **1 2 3 4 5**

25. Training is available for workers and leaders in the various ministries in our church. **1 2 3 4 5**

26. The Church Manual is referred to for authority in the decision making process of our church. **1 2 3 4 5**

27. Our congregation is open to new programmes and ways of going about ministry. **1 2 3 4 5**

28. Our leadership team regularly sets aside time for strategic planning and goal setting. **1 2 3 4 5**

29. Our congregation encourages creativity in people's thinking. **1 2 3 4 5**

30. It is dangerous to plan and organize spiritual things. **1 2 3 4 5**

31. Our congregation has clear plans for the future **1 2 3 4 5**

32. Church members in our congregation are trained to do their work effectively. **1 2 3 4 5**

33. The way our church is organised effects the spiritual tone of our church. **1 2 3 4 5**

34. In our church we often try new approaches to ministry. **1 2 3 4 5**

35. Our church is both creative and imaginative in the way it conducts the various ministry activities of our church. **1 2 3 4 5**

36. Values, vision and mission are regularly reviewed by the leadership of our church. **1 2 3 4 5**

37. Our church is conservative in the way it 'does church'. **1 2 3 4 5**

38. The organizational structure of our church at local church level seems immovable and unchangeable. **1 2 3 4 5**

39. The way our church is organised is important for the growth of our church. **1 2 3 4 5**

40. Our leadership is open to strategic changes to increase fruitfulness. **1 2 3 4 5**

Section D:

Open Questions:

38. If different from the procedure outlined in the *Church Manual*, how does your congregation select leaders for the different ministries in the life of the church?

_____
_____
_____
_____

39. How are major decisions made in the life of the church? How are minor decisions made?

_____
_____
_____
_____

40. How do leaders acquire the team/committee with whom they work?

_____
_____
_____
_____

41. If a person who had been away from your congregation for the last three years cam back, what changes would they see?

_____
_____
_____
_____

42. If changes are evident, how well do you feel these changes have been received by the congregation?

_____
_____
_____
_____

43. What indicators would measure success for a ministry in your congregation?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you for your participation – Your time and opinions are very much appreciated.

APPENDIX F

TABLE 7
STRUCTURAL RENEWAL SURVEY RESULTS

Responses For Questions 3-40

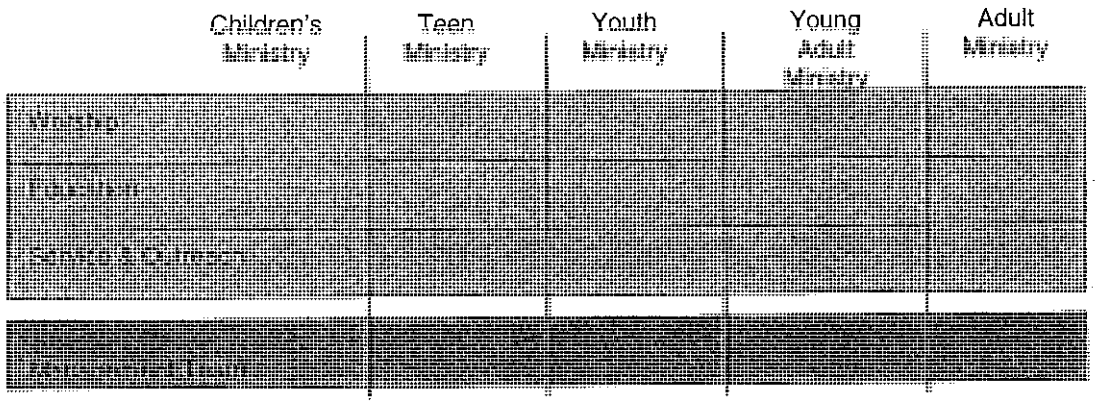
Churches	3B	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19 C	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
1	9	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	2	2	4	2	2	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
2	13	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	5	4	2	5	1	4	4	2	5	4	5	5	4	2	4	4	4	4	4	2	2
3	20	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	1	2	2	2	2	2	4	5	4	2	2	2	2	2	4	2	2
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5	42	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
6	9	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
7	10	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
8	13	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
9	14	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
10	12	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
11	6	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	4	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
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TABLE 7 continued

| | | |

APPENDIX G

CASE STUDY CHURCHES MINISTRY FLOW CHARTS



Small group ministry to permeate and integrate.

Fig. 7. Ministry Chart for Avondale College Church.

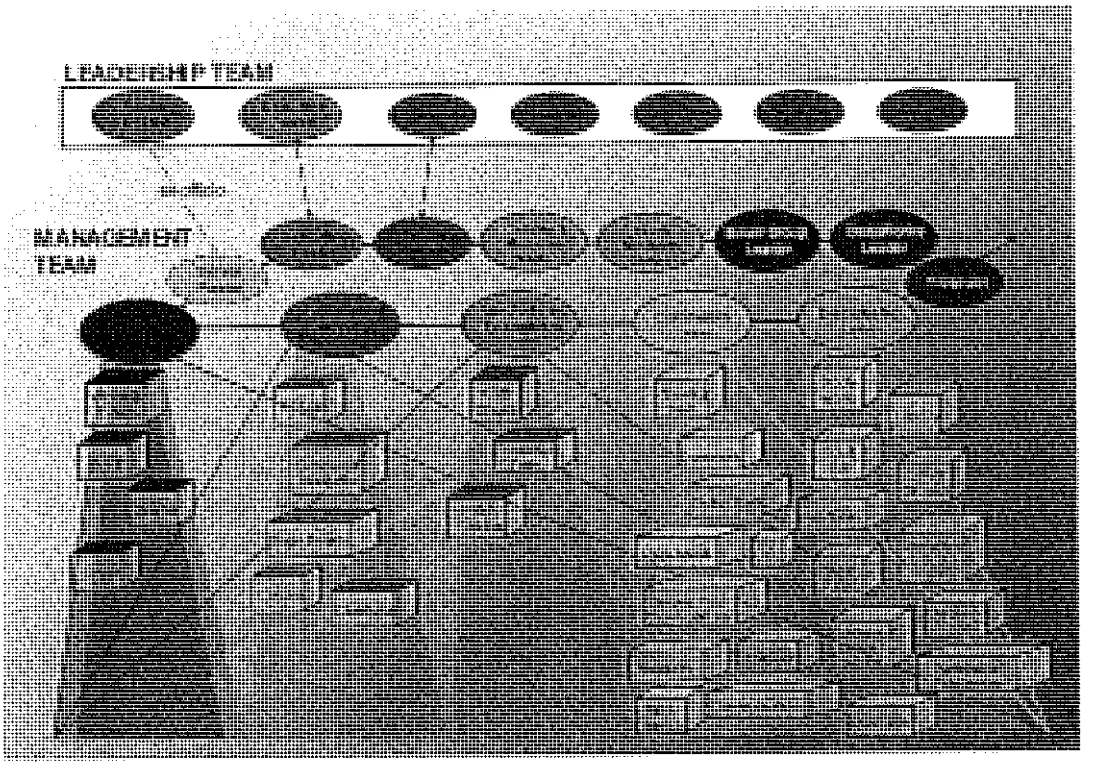


Fig. 8. Ministry Flow Chart for Central Coast Community Church

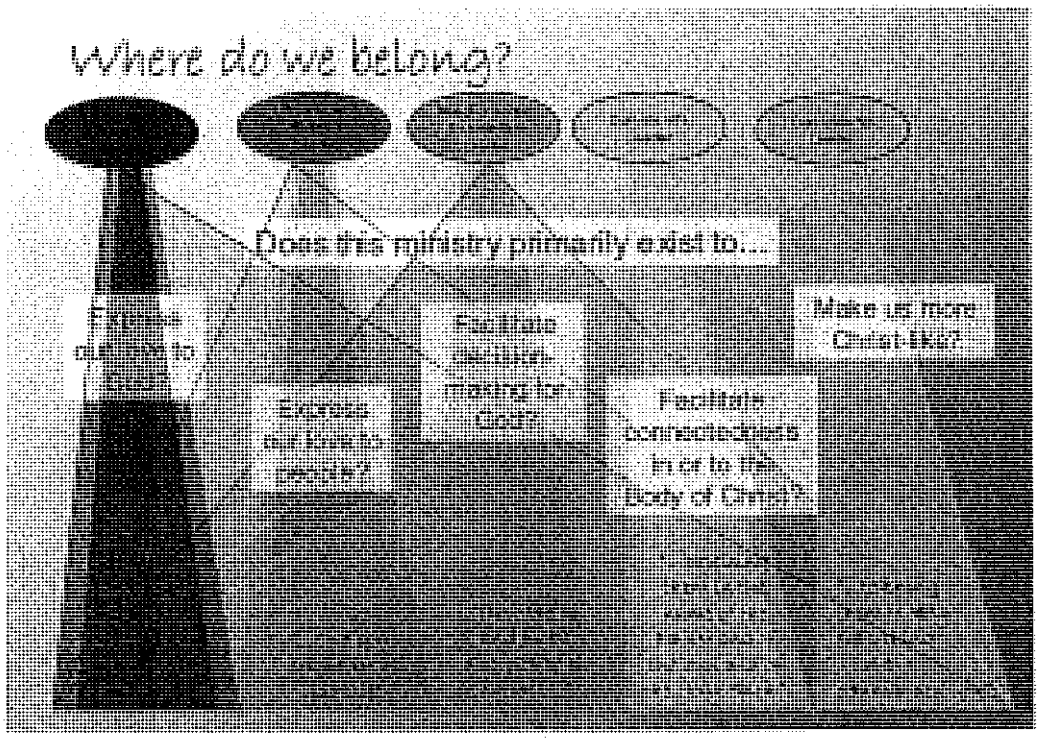


Fig. 9. Ministry Purpose Chart For Central Coast Community Church

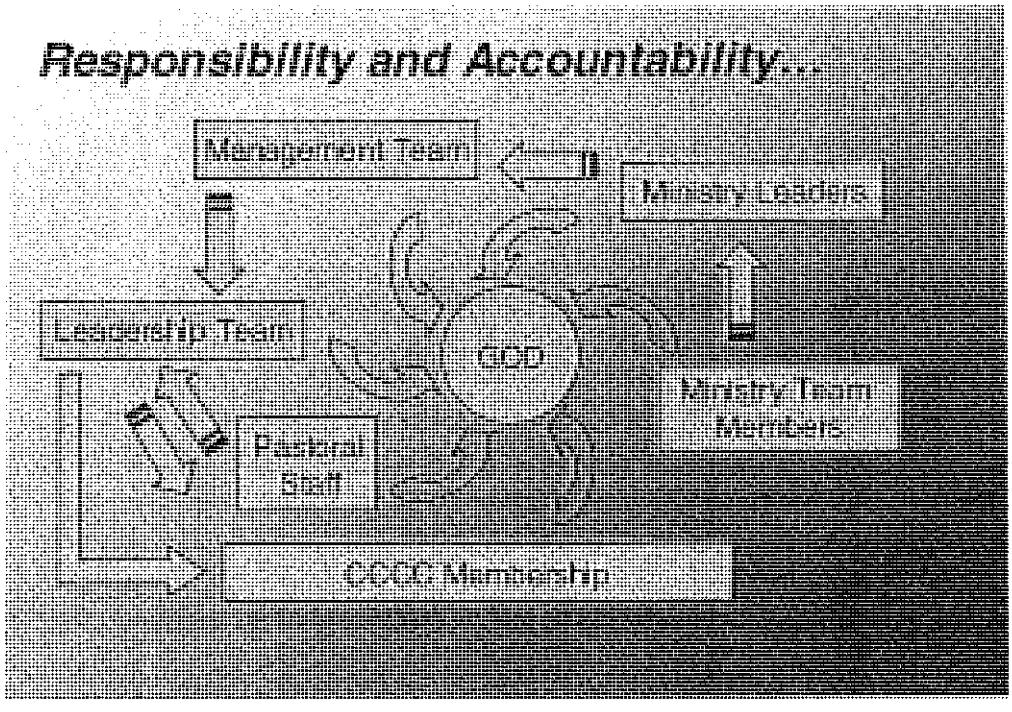


Fig. 10. Ministry Accountability Chart For Cental Coast Community Church

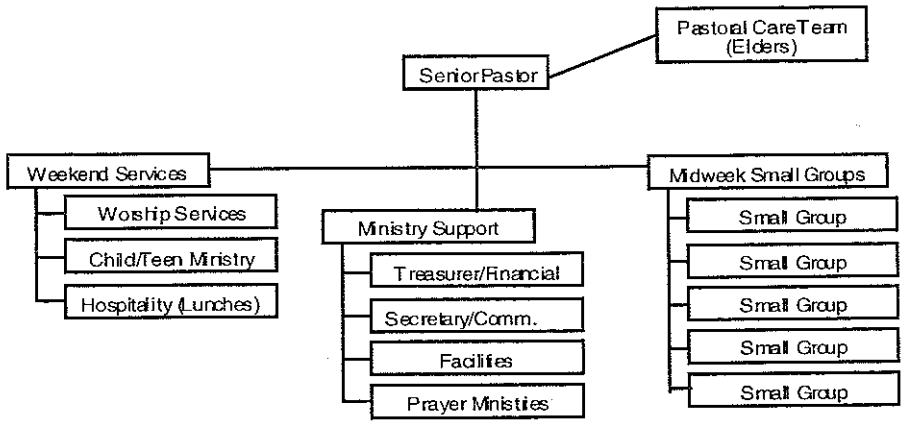


Fig. 11. Fremantle Seventh-day Adventist Church Ministry Flow Chart

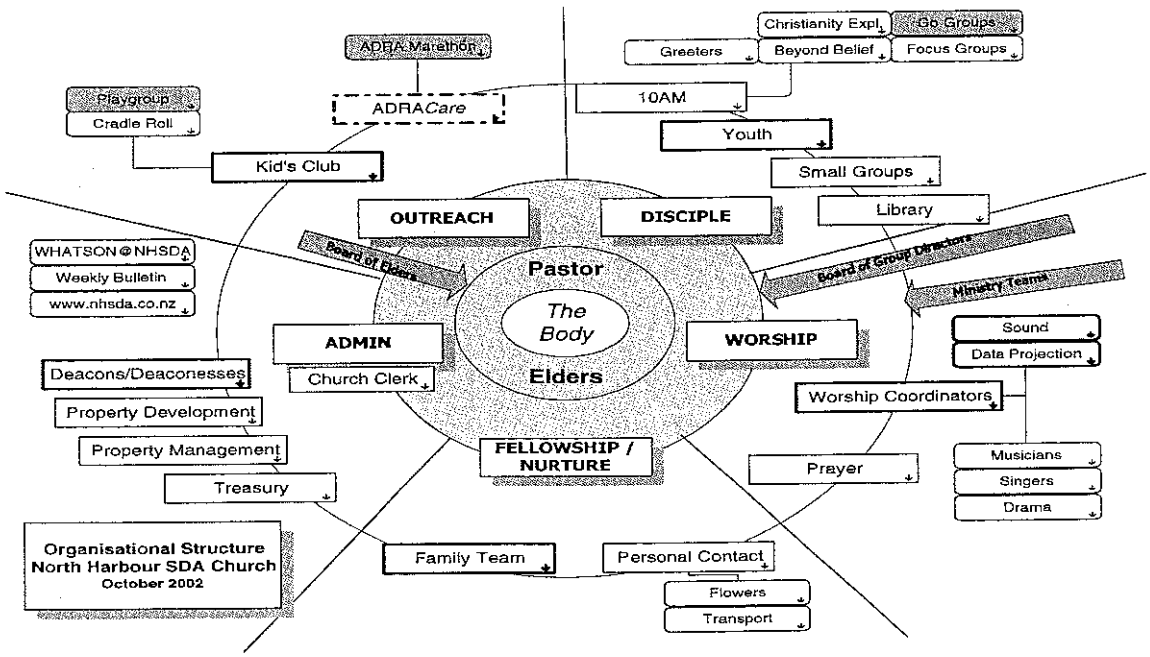


Fig. 12. North Harbour Seventh-day Adventist Church Ministry Flow Chart

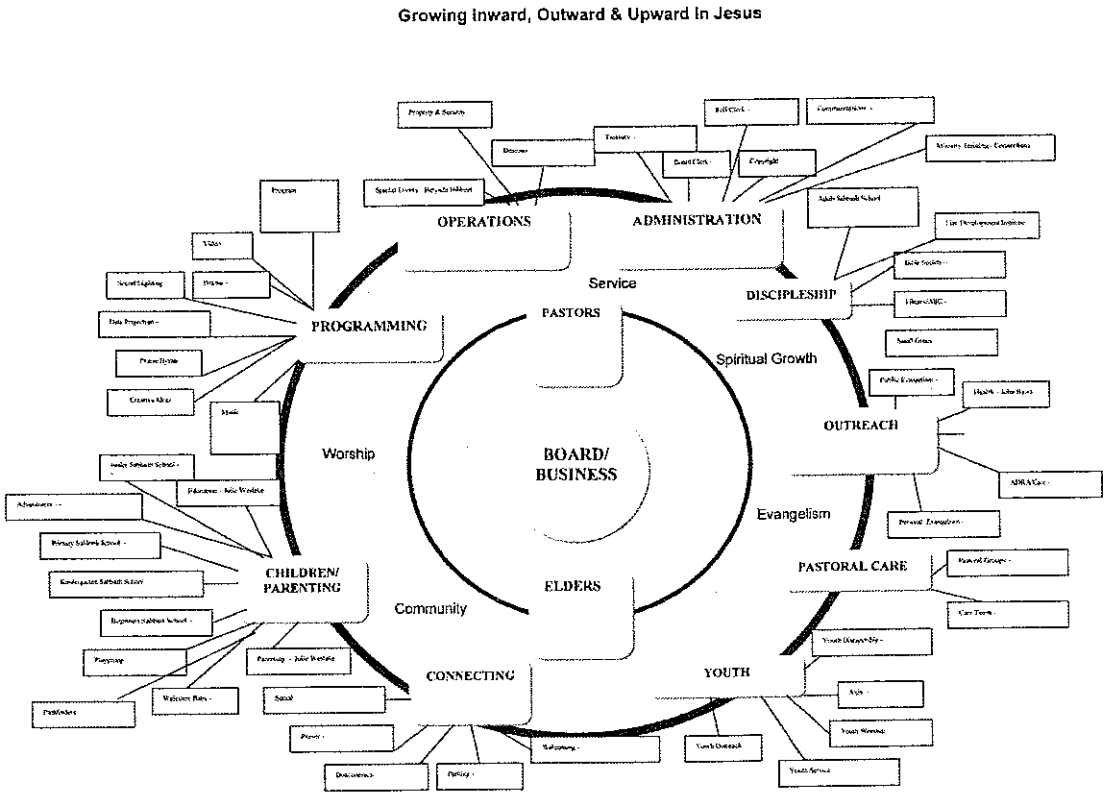


Fig.13. Papatoetoe Seventh-day Adventist Church Ministry Flow Chart.

APPENDIX H

Vision, Mission And Values Statements For Case Study Churches

H.1 Avondale College Seventh-day Adventist Church

Vision Statement:
Building Christ's Kingdom for God's Glory

Mission Statement:
Inward Discipling, Outward Saving and Upward Empowering

H.2 Central Coast Community Church

Mission Statement:
Changing and Growing Lives With Jesus Christ

Biblical Purposes:
Inspiring Worship, Gift-Oriented Ministry, Need-Oriented Evangelism, Discipleship and Community

Core Values:
-The Experience of Salvation
-Love, Acceptance and Forgiveness
-Relevance
-Excellence
-Empowering Leadership
-Process
-Multiplication
-Authenticity
-Encouragement
-Holistic Small Groups

H.3 Fremantle Seventh-day Adventist Church

Vision Statement:
-A passionate love for God (worship and prayer);
-Healthy, harmonious relationships with each other (caring and serving); and
-A positive impact on the people around them (sharing and growing)

Mission Statement:
-Our mission is to focus people on Jesus Christ by helping people to discover who Jesus is and what He can do for them. We are also committed to working together to make a difference in our world, especially through sharing what we believe is the hope of the world: Jesus Christ.

Values;
-Based on the Bible
We believe the Bible is the roadmap for a successful life and a great church.
-Led by God's Holy Spirit
The most important question that we ask is "Are we heading where God wants us to go?" Our success as a church is defined by whether or not we are doing what God is asking us to do.
-Being relevant
We believe Jesus offers long-term solutions to today's problems. Our aim is to ensure that people from all backgrounds can cleary understand how Jesus can meet our needs today.
-Reaching out
To share hope and love with people that are far from God means that we often have to reach out to them.
-Grace
We want God's unconditional grace and acceptance to flow out from us to everyone we meet.
-Freedom
We believe Jesus can set people free from whatever is stopping them from living an abundant and successful life now and in the future.
-Authentic, healthy, loving relationships
"Relationships aren't optional in the church - they are the church!" (Hybels, Rediscovering Church). To have an authentic, healthy and loving church - our relationships with each other must also be built on these characteristics.
-Unity
Our unity is based on the fact that we are committed to following Jesus. At Freo Church you'll find an exciting diversity of people - but we all share a common vision and mission.
-Empowering
We are empowering people to serve and lead in their workplaces, communities, small groups and church.
-Excellence
We do the very best we can because we believe it honours God and it inspires people.
-Sustainable
We want to build a church that will continue to impact future generations.

H.4 Kingscliff Seventh-day Adventist Church

Vision Statement:
To be a vibrant and growing community who, by faith in Jesus, demonstrate His love and share His message of grace and acceptance.

Mission Statement:
To demonstrate the love of Jesus in an environment of acceptance where people are:
-Open to God's leading through the Holy Spirit
-Involved in Christ-centered worship
-Reaching out to others in loving service
-Nurturing a community of believers

H.5 North Harbour

Mission Statement:
To be a Spirit-filled community of believers, united and enthusiastic in sharing God's word so that the plan of Salvation can be achieved

Values:
-WE VALUE A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS
We believe that in order to authentically minister to others, our own relationship with Jesus must be a priority.
-WE VALUE LOST PEOPLE
We believe that God so loved the world that He gave His only Son so that humanity might have everlasting life. We are committed to helping lost people understand their significance to God, and we encourage others to do the same.
-WE VALUE SERVANTHOOD
We believe that we have been chosen to serve God and so we model our lives after Jesus Christ.
-WE VALUE COMMUNITY
We believe that loving relationships are the essence of Christian Community, and so we seek to build them into every aspect of church life.
-WE VALUE STEWARDSHIP
We believe that we honour God through our response to Him. Every believer has God-given passion, gifts and resources for the purpose of building up the church, and so we seek to facilitate stewardship in its many forms.
WE VALUE AUTHENTICITY
We believe that quality growth both individually and in relationships is characterised by trust, openness and honesty.
WE VALUE RELEVANCE
We believe that the acceptance of truth is dependent upon perceived relevance so we seek to personalise the Gospel while remaining doctrinally pure.
WE VALUE EXCELLENCE
We believe that who we are and what we do brings honour to God, so we aspire to become and do the best we can without expecting perfection.
WE VALUE THE WORD OF GOD
We believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, and so it is the sole authority for our faith and practice. This includes matters of doctrine, experience and relationships

H.6 Papatoetoe Seventh-day Adventist Church

Mission Statement;
Growing Inward, Outward and Upward Together In Him

Values;
-We value our personal growth. We believe that to authentically minister to others we must put a high priority on our own growing relationship with Jesus.
-We value individual transformation. We believe that the gospel has the power to transform lives so we seek to encourage this change through authentic spiritual growth.
-We value community. We believe that loving relationships are the essence of Christian community so we seek to promote loving relationships in every aspect of church life.
-We value lost people. We believe that Jesus Christ came to save the lost so we commit ourselves to this mission and encourage others to do the same.
-We value servanthood. We believe that we have been chosen to serve God so we model our lives after the example of Jesus Christ.
-We value participation. We believe that every Christian has been given a passion(s) and gift(s) for the purpose of building up the church so we seek to facilitate members' contributions.
-We value stewardship. We believe that we honour God with our resources, so we seek to use them in the most effective way possible. This includes our health, relationships, spiritual gifts, time and finances.
-We value truth. We believe that an effective, growing relationship with Christ is based on doctrinal purity so we commit ourselves to presenting truth in a life-changing context.
-We value relevance. We believe that the acceptance of truth is dependent upon perceived relevance so we seek to personalise the gospel while remaining doctrinally pure.We value excellence. We believe that who we are and what we do brings honour to God so we aspire to be and do the best we can without expecting perfection

H.7 Waitara Seventh-day Adventist Church

Mission Statement:
-To preach the Three Angel's Message to the world and to share with them Jesus' salvation plan for mankind
-To keep God's Ten Commandments and have the faith of Jesus Christ
-To Glorify the Lord by reflecting His character and ministry

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