REGENT UNIVERSITY

ASSIGNMENT OF PASTORS IN THE ALLEGHENY EAST CONFERENCE:

HAVING A VOICE AND VOTE IN THE PASTORAL SELECTION OF THE

CEDARS OF LEBANON SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

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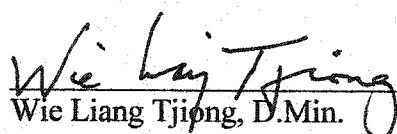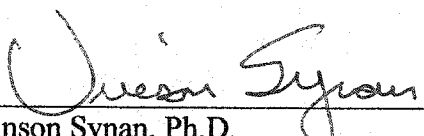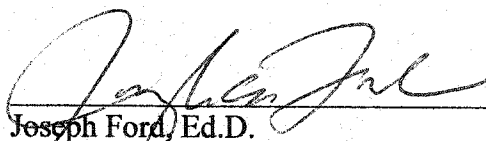
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ABSTRACT

This doctoral project addressed the question: How can the Cedars of Lebanon

Seventh-day Adventist Church congregation have an active part in the selection of its pastor?

In this project, the Allegheny East Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is the focal point.

Historically, the Allegheny East Conference has assigned pastors to those churches that fall

under their administrative leadership. Traditionally, the churches that are members of this

Conference have gone along with the Conference's decision and accepted the pastor assigned

to them. The author considered the long-standing tradition between Conference and

churches and questioned why the assignments are made this way. The author initiated and

developed a process whereby the Cedars of Lebanon church can have a more active part in

the selection of its pastor. The Biblical record and historical writings of the early Seventh-

day Adventist Church were heavily relied upon. Seventh-day Adventists believe the Bible to

be God's final word in all matters of faith. They also believe that Ellen G. White (an early

church co-founder) demonstrated the biblical spiritual gift of prophecy. What she wrote

years ago still has a tremendous influence on Adventist church members today. Thus an

analysis of her writings concerning church organization is included. The author implemented

a process for change and reported these results.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The author has been in active ministry since the fall of 1990. He served as a part time hospital chaplain at Memorial Hospital in South Bend, Indiana while attending Andrews University Theological Seminary in Berrien Springs, Michigan. After graduating from seminary in 1991, the author was asked by the Pastoral Care Manager of the hospital to become a contract chaplain. After serving in that capacity for almost two years, he accepted a call in 1993 to go to Carraway Methodist Hospital in Birmingham, Alabama for a one-year residency in clinical pastoral education.

While in Birmingham, the author attended the Ephesus Seventh-day Adventist Church and was asked by the president of that conference to serve as the associate pastor of the South Park Seventh-day Adventist Church. It was during this period that the author experienced the process of leadership appointment in the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the reaction of the congregation. Some members had little to say, while others were quite vocal about their lack of involvement in the pastoral selection process. It was also during this time that the author began to think more profoundly about the process of pastoral selection in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

At the same time, the author received a call from the United States Navy asking if he would be interested in becoming a Navy Chaplain. In 1994, after finishing residency training at the hospital, he followed God's leading and joined the United States Navy. The author considers the Navy chaplaincy to be of vital importance to his call and philosophy of ministry. Before accepting the call to gospel ministry, he studied social work as a major in college. He sees the military chaplaincy as an avenue to utilize his training and skills as both

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a minister and social worker. The chaplaincy allows him the flexibility and freedom to minister to the spiritual and social needs of those whom the church is not able to reach.

Statement of the Problem

The goal of the ministry project is to answer the question: How can the Cedars of Lebanon Seventh-day Adventist Church have an active voice in the selection of its pastor? The author researched this question and produced findings detailing the positive and negative connotations that such a change may bring about in the church. The author currently attends Cedars of Lebanon and has been a member since 1995.

Cedars of Lebanon started out as a company around 1993. A company is a group of baptized Seventh-day Adventists who are fully instructed in church doctrine, agree with the principles of the church, and are determined by the local conference to be ready to assume the responsibilities of an organized church. Cedars of Lebanon officially became a church in 1997. The current membership of approximately one hundred and fifty people is primarily a young, family-oriented congregation. From its conception, Cedars of Lebanon shared its pastor with another church. This allowed several strong individuals to have a major role in the decision-making process of the church.

After several years of growth and development, the Allegheny East Conference (of which Cedars of Lebanon was a part) decided that this group was large enough to be established as a church. The same pastor whom had helped guide and orchestrate Cedars of Lebanon through its early, formative years was assigned to full-time status. However, when the pastor came on board full-time, a conflict of interest arose between this pastor and the congregation. He was an older gentleman who used a more autocratic style of leadership, while the congregation was used to a more independent style of leadership. Attempts at compromise were unsuccessful, as both sides stood their ground with respect to how the

church should be run. Unfortunately, this led to a dramatic decrease in church attendance. The Allegheny East Conference was apprised of the discord and unrest occurring in the Cedars of Lebanon Church but was slow in addressing the situation.

After some months of tolerating one another, the pastor became ill and passed away, leaving the congregation without a pastor. When the time came for the church to find a new pastor, the Allegheny East Conference sent one of its conference officials to meet with the church board. This official had the board complete the necessary paperwork, asking (among other questions) what qualities the church sought in its next pastor. However, after that initial meeting, there was no subsequent contact between the church board and the conference or any explanation as to who would be appointed as pastor.

When the Allegheny East Conference finally sent a new pastor to the church, it seemed that the pastor was assigned somewhat arbitrarily and without considering the church board's input, because the characteristics that the church asked for in a pastor were absent in this new pastor. His dominating leadership style was not what the church needed at that time; disagreements and arguments soon developed as it became apparent that the relationship was not going to work out. Ultimately, this pastor was assigned to another church, while the Cedars of Lebanon Church was assigned yet another pastor without its consent or input.

Rationale for Doing the Ministry Project

The author has been a Seventh-day Adventist for the past twenty-one years and, from the very beginning of his association with the church, he has known the church to assign pastors to a church for a few years and then move them to another assignment. It never entered his mind to ask why the organization did it this way; he just accepted the church's decision. However, after seeing, hearing and experiencing the impact of incompatibility

between pastor and congregation, he felt that something should be done to see if the way the Conference was assigning pastors was according to God's plan and, if not, what changes could be made.

The author chose this project because he believed that there was a more compatible and consistent way of matching the pastor and congregation than the system that currently exists. He examined the process by which the Allegheny East Conference assigns its pastors to see if it is biblical or cultural, and what impact, if any, change will have on the church and on the Conference.

Limitations and Assumptions

The author designed this project to address the Cedars of Lebanon Church. He realized that unless an official survey or consensus was taken among the congregation, he would be making an unsubstantiated assumption that a large number of his fellow church members wanted to see a new process for pastoral assignment. After he communicated with several families within the church and discovered that this issue should be addressed, he conducted an official survey.

The author's intentions are to present these findings to the president of the Allegheny East Conference so that this information can be used to address the issue of matching the right pastor with the right church in his conference. The author is familiar with the history of the Allegheny East Conference and realizes that people do not like change, even positive change. After presenting this proposal, he predicts that there will be those who want to continue with the way things are. It is hoped, however, that when enough pastors and congregations throughout the Allegheny East Conference become aware of this proposed process, they will see the validity in this study and ask that a change take place.

Biblical/Theological Foundations

The author used the Old and New Testament form of church organization as a model to determine whether the Allegheny East Conference follows that model. It is the author's hope that, based on the biblical data presented in this project, both the Conference and the Church will look at the way that God assigns leaders and be willing to follow His divinely appointed way.

Throughout the Old Testament, God's form of organization was a theocracy. The following examples demonstrate how God was directly involved in the way His people were to do business: the calling of Abram (Genesis 12:1-3), the mission of Moses (Exodus 3:10), the raising up of judges (Judges 2:16), the selection of the Prophets (1 Samuel 3:20), and the appointment of Saul as King (1 Samuel 10:24).

In the New Testament, the church replaced the theocratic rule of God. Christ Himself "set the members, every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him." (1 Corinthians 12:18) It was He who organized them into a living, working body, of which He is the head. Paul believed in and instituted church organization. In his missionary journeys he would gather a group of new believers together and teach them the ways of Jesus Christ. When he felt compelled to move on, he would often leave one of his co-workers behind (Acts 18:24-19:1) or send someone to that particular church who he felt would help it grow (1 Corinthians 4:17, 1 Thessalonians 3:2). The author carried out this project from a Biblical basis and in complete agreement with the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The church polity follows a representative system that is looked at in greater detail later in this document.

Description of Ministry Project

The author examined several aspects while researching the validity of changing the Cedars of Lebanon Seventh-day Adventist Church's process of pastoral selection. First, a

church survey was conducted to determine if a change was needed. Second, the author

investigated whether the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (the final authority

of church organization) dictated the methods and procedures used by the Allegheny East

Conference in assigning its pastors. Third, the author examined how other conferences in the

Seventh-day Adventist Church assign pastors in their churches. Fourth, the author was

prayerfully attuned to feelings and emotions that arose from his investigation. Finally, the

author presented his findings to the Allegheny East Conference and suggested a more

effective way of assigning pastors. The presentation of these findings and the

implementation of this ministry project are described in their entirety in Chapter Four.

Method of Analyzing the Problem

The author communicated with several conferences within the Seventh-day Adventist

Church to determine what pastoral assignment issues and models existed. He believed that

the precedent of selection (which had already established among some Seventh-day

Adventist congregations) could be tailored to meet the needs of the Cedars of Lebanon

congregation and still adhere to the guidelines and by-laws that determine how pastors were

chosen. He presented the results of this project to the Executive Committee of the Allegheny

East Conference Executive Committee and to the Cedars of Lebanon congregation. After the

allotted time for review and processing the information had passed, the Executive Committee

and the Cedars of Lebanon congregation were evaluated to determine the acceptance and

implementation of the project. The author remained in regular contact with the Executive

Committee of the Allegheny East Conference to monitor the progress (discussion, vote and

acceptance) of their review. He also communicated with the Cedars of Lebanon Church to

see what feedback they had received from the Conference regarding their implementation

process and what steps had been taken to make a change.

Results and Contributions

The author believed that there would be strong resistance to the proposed changes

made in the assignment of the pastor of the Cedars of Lebanon Church. Because of the fear

of the unknown and the historical and cultural attitudes that come with doing something for a

very long period of time, people do not like to change, even when it is a change for the better.

However, he expected that after much prayer, debate, and a long, hard look at the data

presented, the Allegheny East Conference would use a new method of assigning a pastor to

the Cedars of Lebanon Church. If that could not happen, then he expected that the Cedars of

Lebanon Church would at least be granted the opportunity to have a greater say in the

process of selecting its pastor. The author intends to introduce the results of this ministry

project to the leaders of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and to any other

conference or church that may be experiencing discomfort or dissatisfaction in the

assignment of a pastor to a church. The author expects that, after all the research and

dialogue, other congregations and pastors will be encouraged and empowered to make the

changes that they believe are needed.

Evaluation of the Project

The author remains in regular contact with the Executive Committee of the Allegheny

East Conference to see whether the project is being accepted and followed. A period of time

for review and implementation of the process has been allotted to see whether there are any

problems (perhaps concerning policy or procedure) that should be addressed. Once the

Executive Committee makes its determination to accept or reject the suggested assignment

process, an official letter will be sent to the Cedars of Lebanon Church informing them of the

Executive Committee's decision. At the time this draft is submitted to committee, the

communication between the Conference and the church continues, with no decision having

been made whether to accept or reject the project. If the proposal is rejected, then the process will continue as it has in the past. Should the proposal be accepted and implemented, the author will wait for nine months after the assignment of the pastor and then distribute a written survey to the members of the congregation and receive verbal feedback from the pastor to evaluate the relationship between pastor and church to see if a better mix has taken place. Any changes discovered, whether through answers to the survey questions or through feedback from the pastor, can be implemented at that time.

CHAPTER 2

SURVEY OF LITERATURE

The Seventh-day Adventist Church operates with a representative form of church government. This means that authority in the church comes from the membership of the local church. Executive responsibility is given to representative bodies and officers to govern the church. Four levels of church structure lead from the individual believer to the worldwide church organization: the local church, the local conference, the union conference, and the General Conference. Each level is "representative," in that it reflects a democratic process of formation and election.[1]

Every member of the church has a voice in choosing officers of the church. The church chooses the officers of the state conferences. Delegates chosen by the state conferences then choose the officers of the union conferences, and delegates chosen by the union conferences choose the officers of the General Conference. Through this arrangement, every conference, every institution, every church, and every individual, whether directly or through representatives, has a voice in the election of the men who bear the chief responsibilities in the General Conference.[2]

Local Church

The local church, which is composed of individual believers, is the nucleus of the entire organization. It is the simplest organizational unit among the Seventh-day Adventist Church but, like other governmental structures, it is built upon the principle of a representative democracy. The local church consists of a united group of Christian individuals who believe in the truths that are accepted by the denomination and who have,

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[1]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual.* (USA: 1986),

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[2]Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8. (USA: Pacific Press, 1948), 236-237.

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after baptism or profession of faith, voluntarily entered into church fellowship in an organized capacity. When one joins a local church, that person not only accepts the solemn obligations and the glorious privileges of church membership, he also publicly declares that he is in full accord with and prepared to defend the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Adventists believe that no one should be permitted to join the church until he has been thoroughly instructed in all the fundamental teachings of the church, understands its organization, and has given evidence of having experienced a new birth into a spiritual experience in the Lord Jesus.[3]

Local churches elect their own officers and church boards by majority vote. Churches elect delegates to the conferences that meet "in session" every two or three years. Executive authority between sessions is exercised by the Conference Executive Committee and executive officers, usually a president, a secretary and a treasurer, all of whom are elected by the session.[4]

Union sessions and General Conference sessions use a similar process where officers and committees are elected, reports given and policies enacted. Within these four levels the Church operates various institutions. In their world outreach, Adventists serve the whole person and have developed services including education, health-care, and publishing. The multiple units of the world Church, whether congregations, conferences, health-care institutions, publishing houses, schools, or other organizations, all find their organizational unity in the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists, through which they are represented.[5]

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[3]James I. Robison, "The Local Church Organization", *Review and Herald*, 24 July 1952, 11.
[4]James I. Robison, "Local and Union Conference Organization", *Review and Herald*, 14 August 1952, 7.
[5]James I. Robison, "Institutional Organizations", *Review and Herald*, 28 August 1952, 11.

Conferences

The local conference includes many churches, all situated in a given territory, that have voluntarily joined themselves together in conference fellowship for the preservation of their common faith and for carrying on the work of the denomination most effectively. The churches that comprise a conference are united in conference relationship by adoption of a constitution and bylaws approved by the delegates from the churches in conference session. A church becomes a member of a conference in much the same way that an individual becomes a member of a church. That is, the church must declare its adherence to the faith and teachings of the denomination, place itself under the legislative and administrative direction of the conference, and recognize the conference as the higher body of authority. The local church will also recognize the constitution, bylaws, and recommendations of the conference as binding upon its organization and membership and conduct its affairs in full harmony with the principles and policies of the higher organization.[6]

There are approximately fifty-one local conferences located with the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, consisting of churches, companies, and missions. Each specific conference is a constituent of a particular union based on demographics and geography. The conference issues credentials, licenses, and certificates to the various types of conference employees. It also directs the activities of the several departments. The conference officers are the president, secretary, and treasurer. These officers, along with the executive committee, form the administrative body. The conference president is an ordained minister and is the ranking officer within the conference where he presides. He is the head of

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[6]James I. Robison, "Local and Union Conference Organization", *Review and Herald*, 14 August 1952, 7.

the ministers in the conference and counsels in all their activities. He is also the chairman of the conference executive committee and of various other committees and boards.[7]

Regional Conferences

Today, eight of the local conferences are Regional Conferences. Regional Conferences are those conferences that consist mainly of African American leadership and constituency. Historically, regional conferences were formed in 1945 or 1946 with the hope that greater numbers of African Americans could be reached in less time than under the previously existing conference. It was also hoped that these new, regional conferences would create more opportunities for African American leaders and others who were gifted by God to develop and use their talents when little or no opportunity existed prior to the formation of the Regional Conferences.[8]

Eight Regional Conferences exist in six of the nine union conferences. These Regional Conferences, and the territories covered by these conferences, include the following:

1. The Allegheny East Conference, headquartered in Pine Forge, Pennsylvania: New Jersey, Delaware, the District of Columbia, and eastern portions of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia,

2. The Allegheny West Conference, headquartered in Columbus, Ohio: Ohio, West Virginia, West Pennsylvania, and Southwest Virginia,

3. The Central States Conference, headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri: Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, and Colorado,

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[7]Donald F. Neufeld, *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia,* rev. ed.(Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1976), 346

8Ibid., 1191

4. The Lake Region Conference, headquartered in Berrien Springs, Michigan: Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Minnesota,

5. The Northeastern Conference, headquartered in New York, New York: New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts,

6. The South Atlantic Conference, headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia: Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Florida,

7. The South Central Conference, headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee: Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, Mississippi, and the northwestern tip of Florida,

8. The Southwest Region Conference, headquartered in Dallas, Texas: Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Arkansas, and New Mexico.[9]

Unions

The Union Conference is the next level of administration within the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Union Conference is a component of church organization formed by a group of several local conferences or missions that form a constituent part of the General Conference in one of its geographical divisions. The union conference organization is similar to that of the local conference and is governed by a constitution and bylaws. Delegates appointed by the local conferences elect the president, secretary, treasurer, committees, and departmental secretaries of a union conference.[10] The eight unions within the North American Division (plus the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada) include the following:

1. Atlantic Union Conference,

2. Columbia Union Conference,

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[9]Ibid.
[10]Ibid., 1514.

3. Lake Union Conference,

4. Mid-America Union Conference,

5. North Pacific Union Conference,

6. Pacific Union Conference,

7. Southern Union Conference, and

8. Southwestern Union Conference.[11]

Atlantic Union Conference. The Atlantic Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is the headquarters for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, and the island of Bermuda. It provides coordination for six local conferences: Bermuda, Greater New York, New York, Northeastern, Northern New England and Southern New England. As of December 31, 2000, the Atlantic Union Conference consisted of 444 churches with a membership of 88,045.[12]

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada. The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada is one of the nine Union Conferences of the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventists. Its territory includes the provinces and territories of Canada as well as the French islands of St.-Pierre and Miquelon, located off the coast of Newfoundland. As of December 31, 2000, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada consisted of 325 churches with a membership of 49,233.[13]

Columbia Union Conference. The Columbia Union Conference is the headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the states of New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia

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[11]Ibid.
[12]Office of the Adult Bible Study Guide, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist (Silver Spring: Pacific Press Publishing, 2002).
[13]Ibid.

and West Virginia. It provides coordination for eight local conferences: Allegheny East, Allegheny West, Chesapeake, Mountain View, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Potomac. As of December 31, 2000, the Columbia Union Conference consisted of 600 churches with a membership of 107,022.[14]

Lake Union Conference. The Lake Union Conference is the headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin. It provides coordination for the following conferences: Illinois, Indiana, Lake Region, Michigan, and Wisconsin. As of December 31, 2000, the Lake Union Conference consisted of 483 churches with a membership of 71,991.[15]

Mid-America Union Conference. The Mid-America Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is the regional administrative office covering Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, and San Juan County in New Mexico. It provides coordination for the following conferences: Central States, Dakota, Iowa-Missouri, Kansas-Nebraska, Minnesota, and Rocky Mountain. As of December 31, 2000, the Mid-America Union Conference consisted of 467 churches with a membership of 55,875.[16]

North Pacific Union Conference. The North Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is divided into six local conferences, each of which has responsibility for the administration of churches within specific territories in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington. It provides coordination for the following conferences: Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Upper Columbia, and Washington. As of June 30, 2001, the North

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[14]Ibid.
[15]Ibid.
[16]Ibid.

Pacific Union Conference consisted of 400 churches with a membership of 86,366.[17]

Pacific Union Conference. The Pacific Union Conference includes Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Utah, Johnston Island, Midway Island, and all other islands of the Pacific not attached to other divisions and bounded by the International Date Line on the west, by the equator on the south, and by longitude 120° on the east. It provides coordination for the following conferences: Arizona, Central California, Hawaii, Nevada-Utah, Northern California, Southeastern California, and Southern California. As of June 30, 2001, the Pacific Union Conference consisted of 641 churches with a membership of 205,664.[18]

Southern Union Conference. The Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is the regional administrative office covering North and South Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky and Mississippi. It provides coordination for the following conferences: Carolina, Florida, Georgia-Columbia, Gulf States, Kentucky-Tennessee, South Atlantic, South Central, and Southeastern. As of June 30, 2001, the Southern Union Conference consisted of 952 churches with a membership of 198,170.[19]

Southwestern Union Conference. The Southwestern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is the regional administrative office covering the territories of Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. It provides coordination for the following conferences: Arkansas-Louisiana, Oklahoma, Southwest, Texas, and Texico. As of June 30, 2001, the Southwestern Union Conference consisted of 523 churches with a membership of 74,014.[20]

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[17] General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, World Church: Organizational Structure [article on-line] (Silver Spring, Md.: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, 2002, accessed 26 March 2003); available from http://www.adventist.org/world church; Internet.
    [18]Ibid.
    [19]Ibid.
    [20]Ibid.

Divisions

Divisions are sections of the General Conference with administrative responsibility for particular geographical areas. Due to the vastness and ethnicity of the members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, it was determined that the church must do something administratively to keep the church together so that it could carry out its God-ordained responsibilities.[21] It was decided to form World Divisions to handle these growing constituents. Currently, the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church has twelve Divisions which are composed of churches grouped by a collection of missions, fields, or states into unions of churches. The names of the Divisions, headquarters, and geographical descriptions are listed below.

1. Africa-Indian Ocean (AID), headquartered in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire: thirty-two mostly French-speaking countries across Africa to the Indian Ocean islands,

2. Eastern Africa (EAD), headquartered in Harare, Zimbabwe: ten nations located primarily along the east coast from Djibouti to Botswana,

3. Euro-Africa (EUD), headquartered in Berne, Switzerland: three Portuguese-speaking nations of Africa attached to 25 central European countries because of common languages,

4. Euro-Asian (ESD), headquartered in Tula, Russia: states in the Commonwealth of Independent States (certain of the countries of the former Soviet Union),

5. Inter-American (IAD), headquartered in Miami, Florida: forty-six nations including Mexico, four countries on the north rim of South America, and the Caribbean Islands,

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[21]Neufeld, 1053.

6. North American (NAD), headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland: the United States, Canada, Bermuda, two islands in the Pacific Ocean beyond Hawaii, and two islands off the coast of Newfoundland,

7. Northern Asia Pacific (NSD), headquartered in Seoul, South Korea: China, Korea, Japan and Mongolia; however, 200,000 believers in the People's Republic of China direct their own program in cooperation with the Three-Self Movement,

8. South American (SAD), headquartered in Brasilia, Brazil: eight nations below the rim on the north of the continent which are associated with Inter-America,

9. South Pacific (SPD), headquartered in Wahroonga, Australia: Australia, New Zealand, Kiribati and the islands of the Pacific lying south of the Equator between 140° east and 120° west longitude,

10. Southern Asia (SUD), headquartered in Tamil Nadu, India: India, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldive Islands,

11. Southern Asia Pacific Division (SSD), headquartered in Manila, Philippines: thirteen countries in the Orient and Pacific Islands north of the equator,

12. Trans-European (TED), headquartered in St. Albans, England: more than thirty diverse nations of Great Britain, Scandinavia and the Baltic, southward from Poland through the Balkans to Greece and the countries of the Middle East, Pakistan and Afghanistan.[22]

According to the Seventh-day Adventist 2002 yearbook, the worldwide church of Seventh-day Adventists consists of 49,724 churches with a membership of 12,035,801.[23]

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[22]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, North American Division: Organizations [article on-line] (Silver Spring, Md.: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, 2002, accessed 26 March 2003); available from http://www.nadadventist.org/org.htm; Internet.
  [23]Ibid.

General Conference

The same plan of organization applies in the General Conference as in the local or union conferences, except on a larger scale. Where the local conference is composed of local churches united in common fellowship, and a union is composed of local conferences joined together, the General Conference is formed by uniting of all the union conferences of the world, together with detached mission fields that do not belong to any union, into one world conference with headquarters in Washington, D.C. Thus, the Seventh-day Adventists have believers joined together in church fellowship, churches united in conferences, conferences united in unions, and unions combined in one world organization embracing the entire church throughout the world.

For Seventh-day Adventists, the General Conference is the Church's highest earthly authority. The General Conference (when it is in session every five years), and the Executive Committee between sessions, is the highest organization in the administration of the Church's worldwide work and is authorized by its constitution to create subordinate organizations to promote specific interests in various sections of the world.[24] When differences arise in or between organizations and institutions, an appeal is properly presented to the next higher organization until it reaches the General Conference (while in session) or the Executive Committee at the Annual Council. During the period between sessions of the General Conference, the Executive Committee shall constitute the body of final authority on all questions where a difference of viewpoint may develop.[25]

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[24]Neufeld, 494.
[25]Ibid.

Governmental Structure of Other Churches

The proper form of church polity or structure of authority has been an issue in Christianity dating back to New Testament times. Through the centuries, the development of church organizational structure has followed a revolving and ambiguous path. Today, although hundreds of denominations exist, most utilize one of four basic categories of church government or polity: Congregational, Episcopal, Papal, and Representative.[26] Most denominations selected specific elements from each of the categories and incorporated them within the structural form that met their specific needs. The chosen form was usually a function of theological rationale, liturgical processes, the need for office and authority in the church, the decision-making processes and an attempt to facilitate missionary expansion.[27]

Congregational. As the Protestant Reformation developed in the sixteenth century, polity became one of the key issues as reformists rejected episcopacy for more local church control.[28] Congregationalism is the simplest form of church government in which authority resides in the members of the congregation, assembled in a church meeting and presided over by a board of elders. In this form of church government, there is no authority outside the local church except for Christ himself. The Church (or local congregation) is complete within itself and is fully capable of determining all matters, including the details of its statement of faith, the selection and (if needed) the ordination of its clergy, and the stewardship of its own properties and resources.[29]

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[26]Andrew B. Mustard, *"James White and the Development of Seventh-day Adventist Organization 1844-1881."* (Ph.D. diss., Andrews University, 1987) 233-63.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Frank S. Mead and Samuel S. Hill, *Handbook of Denominations in the United States*, 11th rev. ed., (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001), 120.

[29]Lloyd M. Hall Jr. and Karl D. Schimpf, "Principles and Practices: The Congregational Way of the Churches of the National Association" [article on-line] (Congregational Press, 2002; accessed 4 May 2003) available from http://www.naccc.org/cong_way_series/principles_prac.pg_1.html; Internet.

Early Congregational Church History. Congregationalism is the result of a consistent application to church polity of the principles of the Reformation, whose religious thought was the rejection of all authority except that of the Word of God. Although they agreed that the Bible was the test of Christian doctrine, none felt that their system of church polity was to be like the other. Luther in Germany, Zwingli in Switzerland, and Calvin in Geneva all organized new churches, but put aside their substantially congregational systems in favor of dependence on the civil authorities in which country they lived. This led to a large portion of ancient government and ceremonial systems being retained, which continued ecclesiastical authority as sovereign rule.[30] The Protestant bodies formed by the great reformers recognized every baptized person living within their territory and viewed reform as taking place within the organized church, rather than from outside the church. There were some, however, who wanted to go further in transforming the current system of church polity. Due to earlier persecution, these Anabaptists were scattered throughout Europe. They tried hard to bring not only doctrine, but also polity and life style to the same test as had Luther and others. They had no creeds of general binding force and held that the New Testament pattern of the Christian church was to be followed. So there were two different theories on church polity: one supported by the leading reformers and the civil authorities, and the other by those who wanted to break with the old way of doing business. What help bring the two sides together were the views and writings of Robert Browne. The system that Browne laid down in the three treatises of 1582 presents with great clarity the essential features of modern Congregationalism.[31] According to Browne, a church existed wherever two or three were

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[30]Williston Walker, *The Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism*, (Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1960), 2.
        [31]Ibid., 2.

gathered together to live by the law of God. He considered a church organized when its members bound themselves by a covenant and elected their leaders. Christ was the head of the church and no temporal power had authority over it. Separate churches fellowshipped, counseled and worked together but had no authority to command one another.

Another significant event in the development of the Congregational church occurred when King Henry VIII of England broke with Rome and ordered the Church of England subservient to the English crown. Many of his subjects, called Puritans, wanted a church that was thoroughly reformed in its worship, governance, and outlook.[32] They did not desire to break with the Anglican Church -- they asked only that it be purified. They craved re-establishing the primitive Christian Church as they understood it, in its purity and simplicity. They objected to the Roman ritual of vestments, candles, incense, readings and chanting. They also wanted it cleared of the corruption of some of the rectors. Their demands were simple and reasonable. And, although Queen Elizabeth I bore the title of "Defender of the Faith," she did not grant their demands.[33]

Others, known as Separatists, left the state church and formed local groups of believers bound together by mutual covenants. One of these churches was gathered by covenant in the village of Scrooby in 1606.[34] They met on Sundays in the home of the postmaster, William Brewster, for Bible study and prayer. Such gatherings were banned by British law, which demanded that all subjects of the king belong to the Church of England and no other. When the threat of persecution by English authorities became severe, the little church of Scrooby, led by its pastor John Robinson, fled to Holland in 1608. After a few

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[32]M. L. Starkey, *The Congregational Way*, (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1966), 11.
[33]Ibid., 12
[34]Louis H. Gunnemann, *The Shaping of the United Church of Christ*, (Cleveland: United Church Press, 1977), 139.

peaceful and prosperous years in Leyden, the Scrooby congregation made plans to establish a

Separatist colony in America. Sailing on the Mayflower from the port of Plymouth, England,

in 1620, the 102 voyagers arrived off Cape Cod in late autumn and landed in a harbor they

named Plymouth.[35] In 1629 and 1630, the Pilgrims of Plymouth were joined by a much

larger migration of Puritans from England, who were non-Separatists. They came to

Massachusetts and formed their churches in the same way the Scrooby Separatists had

formed theirs: by covenanting together, without the aid of king, bishop, or synod. Each

church hired its own pastor and ran its own affairs. Periodically, lay and clergy

representatives of these churches would meet to discuss matters of common concern, but any

conclusions reached were advisory, not mandatory upon the churches. Only the congregation

could decide matters for the local church.

The original Congregationalists were strict Calvinists, who espoused a covenantal

theology.[36] In the early 1700's, the Great Awakening was led primarily by Jonathan

Edwards of Northampton, Massachusetts, who supported the tenets of the original New

England theology.[37] By the 1800s, as the effects of the Great Awakening began to recede,

many were turning to more liberal theologies. A great controversy arose, in which many of

the old First Churches of New England became Unitarian. Nevertheless, the Congregational

churches carried on, joining with the Presbyterians in a Plan of Union for the purpose of joint

missionary endeavors on the western frontiers.[38]

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many of the Congregational

churches in the United States which had initially resisted the Unitarian impulse became more

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[35]Starkey, 31.
[36]Gunnemann, 140.
[37]Ibid., 147.
[38]Walker, 532.

liberal in their theological outlook. No Congregational church could impose a particular creed on its members. But the members, in general, came to see Christianity in a different light. They interpreted the Bible less literally than their ancestors did, and they began to re-adopt some previously discarded worship practices of the more liturgical churches.

The early twentieth century was a time of mergers. As the result of a union of four traditions, the United Church of Christ was born. Two of these traditions were the Congregational Churches, with roots in the New England colonies and founded by the English Pilgrims and the Puritans, and the Christian Church, with origins on the American frontier. These two denominations had a shared tradition of religious freedom and the right of local churches to govern their own life. They united on June 17, 1931, to become the Congregational Christian Churches.[39] The other two traditions were the Reformed Church in the United States, founded by 18th-century German and Swiss immigrants who settled in Pennsylvania and the mid-Atlantic region, and the Evangelical Synod of North America, a 19th-century church planted by German settlers along the Mississippi Valley. In these churches, the "Lutheran" and "Reformed" traditions came together, and they were united on June 26, 1934, to form the Evangelical and Reformed Church.[40]

The Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Churches shared a strong commitment to freedom of religious expression under the authority of Jesus Christ. They combined strong European ties, early colonial roots and the vitality of the American frontier church. Both denominations revered the Bible and were more interested in

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[39]Gunnemann, 165.
[40]Ibid., 191.

what unites Christians than with what divides them. They were united in Cleveland, Ohio,

on June 25, 1957, and formed the United Church of Christ.[41]

About 200 Congregational Christian churches chose not to join the merger, mainly

because of the issue of congregational polity. As a result, in 1955 the National Association

of Congregational Christian Churches was formed to give those congregations a national

fellowship that would not threaten the governance of each congregation.[42]

The emphasis on the autonomy of the local church under the Lordship of Christ is

that which makes Congregationalism unique. They state emphatically that there is not a

king, Pope, nor Archbishop to judge over them, but Christ.[43] They also believe that no

connectional judicatory is to be ranked above the local Church, for here is where Christ has

promised to be present "whenever two or three gather in His name." They are unapologetic

in their emphasis on the local church being such a community of faith being complete under

God in both spiritual authority and ecclesiastical power. Congregationalism is a way of

church life (or form of church polity) that rejoices in the teaching and example of Jesus of

Nazareth.

They believe that the church is a voluntary company of Christians, composed only of

believers united by a mutual covenant to walk in the ways of the Lord. They meet for

worship regularly and endeavor to follow the teachings of Christ, demonstrated in love

toward God and neighbor. They also believe that their polity is not a matter of mere

organization but also a matter of spirit and life. They affirm the New Testament definition of

the church, complete in its local manifestations as a gathered fellowship of Christ-followers.

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[41] Daniel L. Johnson and Charles Hambrick-Stowe, *Theology and Identity*, ed. Reuben S. Sheares (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 1990), 44.
[42] Mead and Hill, 123.
[43] Johnson and Hambrick-Stowe, 68.

Theirs is a way that seeks to bring together persons who, by both profession and life, are attempting to translate the teachings of Scripture into action. In that context they endeavor to become a beloved community of encouragement and service to others.

They believe that there is no church other than the local church.[44] They do however, fellowship with other like-minded churches. They believe that the New Testament churches entered into fellowship with one another out of mutual respect. At no point do they find the churches relating to each other out of dominance or submission. For them, the freedom of the local church must always be linked to fellowship with other churches in this way, whether for worship, outreach, or the offering of counsel. It is this voluntary fellowship that marks the difference between Congregationalism and independency. Local autonomy must always be combined with fellowship born of love, not law, as the foundation for cooperative activity. In this way they can avoid the limitations of a sterile independency as they meet together for communion, edification, and helpfulness. They regard such mutual and voluntary fellowship as vital to the Congregational Way. They believe that to be involved in the wider fellowship of churches, whether it the local, state, or national association, makes the church what God called it into existence to be.

Ordinances. The tradition of believer baptism is honored among them and may be the rule for individual churches or certain families within a church. Sprinkling is the most common form of baptism, but pouring and immersion are practiced as well. Each church makes its own determination as to the time and form; however, all agree that this sacrament is the rite of admission to the Church of Christ.

The Lord's Supper (also called Communion) is most often observed in Congregational Churches as a remembrance. Through the reenactment of Jesus' last supper

they are drawn again into the reality of what God is doing through the Christ. When they come together to remember, they are restored and strengthened. It is their common practice to observe "open communion" in which they gladly share Christ's table with anyone who wishes to come in faith. Many churches use plates of bread and trays of individual cups passed through the congregation, while other churches use forms normative for their particular church. The frequency of observance is a matter for each church to decide. Some celebrate the Lord's Supper once a month, while others observe it only two or three times a year.

Ministers. Anyone the church who desires can be a minister of a Congregational Church. Once it is recognized that the Church is "complete" in itself, it has only Christ to answer to in terms of the decisions it makes including the call and ordination to ministry.[45] However, to assure a continuing supply of well-trained clergy for their churches, a Congregational Foundation for Theological Studies was established, where men and women are able to attend any accredited seminary while simultaneously receiving spiritual, emotional, and sometimes financial support; and being trained in Congregational polity.[46]

An office of Pastoral Relations has also been established, which provides a source for churches to discover clergy who are available for call and where clergy may learn which churches are seeking ministers. The function of this office is limited to certifying the accuracy of the record as it is presented on a minister's information form; sharing church profiles with inquiring ministers; and sending minister's information forms to churches at the

[44]Gunnemann, 229.

[45]Johnson and Hambrick-Stowe, 83.

[46]Lloyd M. Hall Jr. and Karl D. Schimpf, "Principles and Practices: The Congregational Way of the Churches of the National Association" [article on-line] (Congregational Press, 2002; accessed 4 May 2003) available from http://www.naccc.org/cong_way_series/principles_prac.pg_1.html; Internet.

minister's request. No member of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches staff is authorized or permitted to interfere in the process. Once the connection is established between a church and a minister, all further discussions are held along that axis and the office is removed from the action. This system provides maximum freedom for ministers and churches while maintaining a forum where connections can be made.

At the appropriate time, the local Congregational church ordains a man or woman to Christian ministry[47] First, the individual, in response to the call of God, seeks to be equipped for ministry (usually through the acquisition of a baccalaureate degree followed by a seminary degree). Second, the church in which this person holds membership, after prayerful consideration, sets this person apart for professional ministry.[48]

Finally, a letter is sent to neighboring churches, inviting them (by pastor and delegate) to convene as a Vicinage Council to advise the church on their proposed action. While these neighboring churches do not have the power to cause that local church to change its actions, and even though the local church retains the freedom to ordain whomever it chooses, churches are well advised to heed the counsel of the gathered ministers and delegates. If the Council does not proceed to the ordination, or in the absence of a Vicinage Council, the ordination is recognized as valid for the initiating church only and has no standing in any wider fellowship, except as it relates to that local church.[49]

Episcopal. The Episcopal Church is synonymous with the Anglican Church and has inherited two thousand years of catholic and apostolic tradition, dating from Christ himself and rooted in the Church of England. It sees itself as a part of Christ's Church, and, as such,

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[47]Johnson and Hambrick-Stowe, 87.
[48]Ibid.
[49]Ibid.

claims to have a continuous unbroken existence since the founding of the church by Christ. Although that claim may be difficult to prove, historical data shows that the Church in England has had an individual and continuous life since the fourth century.

Early Episcopal Church History. The Church of England, mother church of the Anglican Communion, has had a long history. The exact date of the Christian message's first arrival in England is unknown. The first mention of any Christians in Britain is in Tertullian's tract against the Jews written about 200 A.D.[50] For the next century, not much is known of these Christians in Britain. However, the church was well-established enough by the fourth century to send three British bishops from London, York, and Lincoln, to the Council of Arles (in modern France) in 314.[51] With the passing of the Edict of Milan in 312, Christians were free to declare their faith openly without fear of persecution, allowing Christianity in Britain to advance. With this freedom came controversy, however, led by a monk named Pelagius. Pelagius did not agree with St. Augustine's doctrine of original sin and taught that man could reach perfection without the intervention of supernatural grace.

Other early Christians played an important role in Christianity in Britain, including Ninian, Patrick, and Columba. In the 5th century, after the Romans had withdrawn from, and the Anglo-Saxons had invaded Britain, missionary S. David performed work in Wales and Patrick in Ireland.[52] In 432 A.D., Patrick was made a bishop and he set out to convert as many pagans as possible. He baptized so many that he had to ordain clergy and establish monasteries in order to organize the effort. Though isolated from continental Christianity in the 5th and 6th centuries, Christianity in the British Isles grew due to the influence of

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[50] J. R. H. Moorman, *A History of the Church in England*, (Wilton: Morehouse-Barlow Co., 1973), 3.
[51] Ibid., 4.
[52] James H. Smylie, *A Brief History of the Presbyterians*, (Louisville: Geneva Press, 1996), 28.

monasticism. About 563 A.D., Columba founded an influential monastic community on the island of Iona, off the coast of Scotland. From here he taught many monks about Christ and made numerous missionary journeys.[53] Because of his efforts he was able to convert King Brude at Inverness and lead the druids to accept Jesus Christ as their savior. In 597 A.D. a monk named Augustine went to England at the request of Pope Gregory the Great to oversee the development of English Christianity.[54] Augustine's archbishop at Canterbury soon became the symbolic seat of England's church. Subsequent mission work, such as that of Aidan around 634 A.D. in northern England, solidified the church's life.[55] The early Catholic Church in England was a distinctive fusion of Romano-British, Celtic, and Roman influences. It retained powerful centers in the monasteries and lived in tension with the medieval monarchy.

It was under King Henry VIII that the nation and church were able to renounce papal supremacy and to eliminate abuses that had crept into the doctrine and discipline of the church during the medieval centuries of papal influence. Because Henry was disappointed that he had no male child to inherit his throne, he wanted to divorce his wife Catherine of Aragon. When the Pope refused to annul his marriage to Catherine, he decided to break with the church. In his convocations, he forced the clergy to declare him the Supreme Head of the Church. When Parliament passed a series of acts prohibiting the payment of money to Rome, the severing of all connections with the papacy was accomplished.[56]

Although the church was influenced and revived by the religious movements of the Reformation, its worship, ministry, and doctrine continued to be what they always had been,

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[53]Moorman, 10-11.
[54]John E. Booty, *The Church in History*, (New York: The Seabury Press, 1979), 214.
[55]Mooreman, 18.
[56]James Thayer Addison, *The Episcopal Church in the United States 1789-1931*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), 6.

both Catholic and Apostolic. With the accession of Edward VI to the throne, the appointment of Protestant-minded priests occurred, and clergy were now permitted to marry. The Bible, which was now written in English, was used, as well as a set of Forty-Two Articles of Belief. Edward VI laid the foundation of the Prayer Book when he allowed the liturgy to be translated into English.

Upon Edward's death, his sister Mary came to the throne and repealed all the religious legislation that he had put in place, in effect re-establishing the supremacy of the Pope. Mary died after five years of rule and was succeeded by her sister Elizabeth in 1558.[57] While the church believed in the episcopacy, (the historical succession of bishops) it became more Protestant and adopted The Book of Common Prayer as a guide for worship and piety. It established its current worship form during the late sixteenth century. The church relies on traditional liturgy in its worship and follows the teachings of the Bible, tradition and reason.

The Episcopal/Anglican Church came to the United States with English colonization and became an established church in the colonies. It took root with the founding of the first permanent colony in Virginia in 1607, when three ships arrived at the Chesapeake Bay and settled in a place they named Jamestown.

From the beginning, the church was beset with problems, within the colony as well as without. Religious life in the colonies deteriorated due to minimal organization and no central authority. With no bishop to lead and guide the young church it floundered badly. There were two reasons that a bishop was not provided to the colonies. First, he was an official of the state with a large income, a big house, a coach, and a corps of servants. He was expected to live in style. His functions and status were appropriate to an established

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[57]Ibid., 7.

church in an ancient and settled social order. The last thing he wanted to be was a missionary pioneer.[58] Second, the majority of the colonists didn't want bishops, and the British government decided not to create any further problems with the Americans by supplying them with bishops.

Trouble from within the colonies arose because the clergy was poorly paid, at the mercy of vestries, and had no proper system for maintaining discipline. They were not the kind of ministers needed to advance the welfare of the church or to command the respect of the wayward. This helped contribute to the church's inability to provide missionaries to the westward-moving pioneers. They did, however, establish churches in the southern states of Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.[59]

The American Revolution almost destroyed the church due to the fact that a majority of their clergy sided with the King of England. Like all Anglican clergy, at ordination they had taken an oath of allegiance to their sovereign.[60] However, because they were locally supported, the clergy in Virginia differed from those in others states in that they sided with the colonists. When the Revolutionary War was over, the church found itself without aid from the government. Therefore, it had to become self-sustaining, develop a plan for unity and provide an episcopate. In 1783, a conference of churches met in Annapolis, Maryland and officially adopted the name "Protestant Episcopal Church." In 1789 the church constitution was adopted and The Book of Common Prayer was revised for American use.[61]

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[58]Booty, 70.
[59]Addison, 38.
[60]Ibid., 51.
[61]Ibid., 65.

Order in the Episcopal Church has often been viewed as a "middle way" between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism.[62] The bishop is the chief minister, with presbyters and deacons serving under him. The historical succession of bishops is the identifying mark of the episcopacy. The Episcopal form of government is a federal union, where each diocese is autonomous in its own sphere and originally associated with others for the maintenance of a common doctrine, discipline, and worship through The Book of Common Prayer. Each diocese functions through a bishop, who is elected locally with the approval of the episcopate and representatives of clergy and laity from the whole church. The bishop is the spiritual and administrative head of the diocese.[63] The typical pattern for the local congregation is the parish, which elects its own minister (rector or priest), who is vested with pastoral oversight of the congregation and, with the wardens and vestry representatives, administers the temporal affairs and the property of the parish.[64]

Each parish and parochial district (mission or chapel) is represented in the annual diocesan convention by its clergy and elected lay delegates (usually in proportion to the congregation's constituency). Each diocese is represented in the triennial General Convention of the church by its bishop (or bishops) and clergy and lay deputies. Between sessions of the General Convention, the presiding bishop and an executive council carry on the work of the church.[65] Like all the members of the Anglican Communion, the Episcopal Church is autonomous, yet respectful of its place within a worldwide body. It governs its life as deemed best for its people and its particular situation, and tries to balance its needs with the responsibilities to its partners in faith.

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[62]Mead and Hill, 129.
[63]James S. Kerr and Charles Lutz, *A Christian's Dictionary*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 21.
[64]Mead and Hill, 129.
[65]Ibid.

The Eucharist. The Eucharist (also called Holy Communion, the Lord's Supper, or the Mass) is generally regarded as the central service. This sacrament, administered by the priest, is celebrated regularly in all of the congregations of the church in the language and forms common to the people. Depending on the place, the Roman rite or the Protestant rite is the common expression. The communion is open to all baptized people, and one's liturgical style is a personal matter reflecting the extensiveness of its acceptance to all. It stands in the Christian tradition as a body that professes belief in Jesus Christ and seeks to communicate the gospel as it is revealed in the historical person of Jesus and continually revealed in the work of the Holy Spirit. They believe that the life lived and shared with others is the best way to convey their beliefs.

Confirmation. Membership signified in the sacrament of Confirmation is not a requirement for participation in the life of any congregation of the Episcopal Church. In this rite performed by the bishop, one renews the promises of baptism and publicly professes one's desire to assume responsibility for those promises and one's desire for relationship within the community of the church. The full sacramental and pastoral ministrations of the Church are offered to all. One does not have to belong in order to share in this life and ministry, but he may choose to become a part of this particular congregation for a closer personal commitment with this community.

At all times Episcopalians attempt to define the paths that accord with Scripture, the venerable tradition of Church history, and with human reason. Some have accused them of being an elitist church, because there is no "push" to convert newcomers. However, this discretion is their way of respecting one's need for distance. They would prefer that you join them by your own choice, not through coercion. They believe one should be encouraged to

approach the faith commitment and the community thoughtfully and not through pressure.

Because they do not adhere to a strict set of rules for their lives, some have labeled them a

liberal church. They believe God is engaged in making persons with new natures; therefore,

they resist the bondage of fixed rules and regulations. The total membership of the Anglican

community is approximately 70 million worldwide.

Papal. This is the form of church government that governs the Roman Catholic

Church. Roman Catholics are members of a local parish, led by a priest called a pastor. The

parishes in an area form a diocese, a territorial district headed by a bishop. The pope

appoints bishops, who in turn are responsible to him. Bishops in turn appoint and oversee

pastors. The Pope is the head of the Roman Catholic Church. He is the highest member of

its clergy (ordained ministers). There are four orders (ranks) within the clergy: cardinals,

archbishops, bishops and priests. The organization of the clergy by rank is the church's

hierarchy. Each order up through the Pope, who is the bishop of Rome, has more

responsibilities and wider powers of ministry and government than the one below it.

Catholics believe the Pope is Christ's representative on earth and a successor of Saint Peter,

who is regarded as the first Pope. They believe that the Pope is infallible (free from error)

when he formally defines matters of faith and morals.[66]

Early Catholic Church History. The history of the Catholic Church is the history of

Christianity. For a thousand years there was essentially one Church. But due to wars and

invaders, the Christian Church split into two, an Eastern Church and a Western Church. The

bishop of Rome headed the Western Church and the bishop of Constantinople headed the

Eastern Church, without either one asserting authority over the other. A split between the

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[66]John Bowker, *World Religions: the great faiths explored and explained,* (New York: DK Publishing, 1997), 137.

two sides took place when Constantinople was conquered during the fourth crusade, which

left only the Western Church. The Western Church was further split when Martin Luther

ignited the Protestant Reformation. Although weakened, the Catholic Church continued and

is today one of, if not the most, influential churches in Christianity. The writings of the

Church Fathers (e.g., Jerome [c.345 - 420] and Augustine [c.354-430]) instruct the faithful

about how to understand the Scriptures and live a Christian life.[67]

It was during the age of the Church Fathers, from the close of the first century to the

close of the eighth century, that much Catholic doctrine, polity, and devotion were

established. However, it was the great Council of Trent (1545-63) when many Catholic

doctrines were officially defined for the first time and where the current ecclesiastical

structure was codified.[68]

Because the Bishop of Rome helped reform the papacy and removed many of the

abuses that had fueled the reformation, the post-Council of Trent Catholic Church

increasingly looked to the papacy as the guarantor of Catholic unity and continuity. This

helped Catholic bishops and theologians to hold up the Pope as the symbol of stability,

authority, and order in church and society.

The Roman Curia. The Pope is aided in governing the church by cardinals and the

Roman Curia. Cardinals are bishops chosen by the pope to be his main advisers. As a group,

they form the College of Cardinals. They hold the highest rank below the pope, and they

have the responsibility of electing a new pope after a reigning pope dies or resigns. The

Roman Curia is also the pope's administrative arm. It consists of the Secretariat of State and

a number of other departments called congregations, tribunals, councils, and offices.

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[67]Mead and Hill, 82.
[68]Ibid., 84.

Cardinals and archbishops (highest-ranking bishops) head the various departments of the Curia.[69]

The Secretariat of State assists the pope most directly in governing the church and in communicating with the rest of the Curia. The congregations perform most of the Curia's administrative work. Tribunals have judicial powers. For example, the tribunal called the Roman Rota serves as a court to settle disputes about the validity of marriages. The councils deal with matters of Christian unity and handle relations with non-Christians. The offices are responsible for such functions as drafting papal documents and gathering church statistics.[70]

Bishops. Bishops are considered successors to Christ's apostles. A bishop appoints the pastors of the parishes in his diocese, and the pastors are responsible to him. He also supervises the many church-supported agencies that serve local needs in the diocese, including schools, hospitals, and newspapers. The bishops of the church, together with the pope as their head, form the college of bishops and share authority over the church. They are responsible for teaching and guiding the church as a whole. For example, when the bishops met at Vatican Council II (1962-1965), they issued statements that had great impact on Catholic life and practice.[71]

Parish. A territorial parish includes all Catholic residents in a given area. A national parish primarily serves an ethnic group whose members may live in several territorial parishes. The pastor of a parish is its spiritual leader. Pastors of large parishes are assisted by other priests, by deacons, and, increasingly, by the laity or lay people, people who are not ordained. The role of lay people is to live according to the principles of their faith. They are

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[69]Kerr and Lutz, 42.
[70]Mead and Hill, 97.
[71]Booty, 247.

united with the clergy in worship and prayer, and they are called to exemplify the vision and

values of the gospel at all times. Lay people participate in such church governing bodies as

parish councils and parish school boards. At Mass, they act as readers, reading aloud

passages from the Bible, and they help distribute Holy Communion.[72]

Representative. This form of church government recognizes that the authority in the

church is vested in the membership. Leadership derives its authority and responsibilities

from the constituency. Executive responsibilities are delegated to representative bodies and

officers. This is similar to the local Congregational Church, but differs in that the local

Congregational Church is usually independent and answers to no other governing body. The

local representative church (due to its structure) answers to a higher governing power outside

the local church. Some churches that practice representative church government include the

Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Presbyterian Church, and the United Church of Christ.

Although they all practice some type of representative church government, there are some

differences found in the structural levels of each church.

Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Seventh-day Adventist Church practices the

representative form of church government. Authority and responsibility are vested in the

constituency and shared by delegation with duly elected or appointed representatives who

function freely within the purview assigned to them by church polity. This representative

form of government operates among Seventh-day Adventists from the individual believer to

the worldwide organization in the following four steps on five levels:[73]

- the local church, composed of individual believers,

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[72]Ibid., 97.

[73]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist. *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual.* (Washington, DC: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, 1986), 38.

- the local conference, or local field/mission, composed of a number of local churches in a state, province, or territory,

- the union conference, or union field/mission, made up of conferences or fields within a large territory (often a grouping of states or a whole country), and

- the General Conference, which is the most extensive unit of organization and is composed of all unions in all parts of the world. Divisions are sections of the General Conference, with administrative responsibilities for particular geographical areas.[74]

The Presbyterian Church. The Presbyterian Church also practices a form of representative government. Its denomination is so named because presbyters who represent the local congregation govern it.[75] Each congregation has a local session made up of elders, with the pastor serving as the moderator.[76] From the beginning, Presbyterians have always claimed to be a part of the whole Christian family. They have confessed belief in the "one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church" stretching back through the ages.[77] They have recognized their history as a part of this larger community of believers, not only of the apostolic age, but also all the intervening centuries.[78] As the church spread around the globe, its organization expanded under councils held in regional centers. Many Christians were branded anti-government and became martyrs to the faith. As warring factions fought for control of the empire, Constantine converted to Christianity, ended the persecution of Christians and established it as the religion of the empire.[79] He then moved the capital from

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[74]Ibid.
[75]Mead and Hill, 291.
[76]Ibid.,296.
[77]Smylie, 1.
[78]Ibid.
[79]Booty, 153.

Rome to Constantinople, which helped divide the western Roman Catholic and eastern Orthodox churches even more.

It was between the fourth and fifth centuries that Christian worship, confession of faith, church government, and the way the Christian relates was established which still influences the church of today. The sacking of Rome and the conquering of Constantinople by Islam led to Christians adopting the canon of the Bible as the norm of Christian faith and life, developing their patterns of worship, creeds and theology, structures of governance, and ways of relating to the world as followers of Jesus.[80] Both in the east and west, Christians sometimes worshipped in synagogues, sometimes secretly in catacombs on Sunday rather than on Saturday in honor of the resurrection of Christ. Their worship usually included readings from the Hebrew Scriptures, Christian writings, preaching, prayer, singing, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. As the church grew more in influence, affluence, and power, the liturgy became more and more structured and elaborate. In much the same manner, the way Christians governed themselves grew more complex as time went on. Episcopal authority grew when it was believed that the test of ones faithfulness was in following the bishop. This understanding of church governing helped the church become a more complex hierarchical and bureaucratic structure in both the east and west.

With the formation of church power no longer in the hands of the people, but in the hands of the bishops, corruption became widespread. This corruption led to reformers such as Martin Luther to rise up to combat it. Luther became the catalyst for the Protestant Reformation. With the separating of the church came the question of how to govern the church. Luther wrote sermons and commentaries to help guide the early Protestant church. Other reformers also played a major role in the shaping and formation of the new church.

John Calvin reorganized the governance of the church under a representative system of pastors and laity.[81] Johann Bullinger in Switzerland believed in a covenant theology. His writings, including the First and Second Helvetic Confessions, had a strong influence on shaping the worship and government of the reformed churches. They organized a form of government that included Episcopal leadership. In Scotland, John Knox wrote *The First Book of Discipline*, arguing that Presbyterian order is biblical.[82]

The church in England also went through a reformation period. It was guided and directed by church leaders called commissioners. These commissioners wrote The Directory for Public Worship to replace the Book of Common Prayer. They also wrote the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms to replace the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England.[83] Most of the reformed churches rejected the monarchical and hierarchical church government and moved to a more conciliatory model that emphasized the parity of the clergy and laity. The reformed tradition with its various emphases spread throughout Europe and then to America.

Scot-Irish immigrants who came to live in America during the colonial period brought Presbyterianism to America. They adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith, along with the Larger and Shorter Catechism -- "good forms and sound words, and systems of Christian doctrine" -- for the use of public worship.

Most Presbyterian churches use a basic organizational structure. The session governs the local church, receiving and disciplining members as well as acting for the church's welfare. Presbyteries, made up of congregations in a local district, examine, ordain, and

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[80]Smylie, 6.
[81]Ibid., 17.
[82]Ibid., 31.
[83]Addison, 16.

install ministers; review reports from sessions; and hear any complaints.[84] The synods,

encompassing a larger geographical area, review reports from the presbytery records,

organize new presbyteries, and help to administer denominational matters. The highest

judicial body is the General Assembly, which meets yearly and is made up of lay and clergy

delegates elected by their presbyteries on a proportional plan of representation.[85] The General

Assembly settles all matters of policy and doctrine referred to it by the lower governing

bodies, establishes new synods, appoints agencies and commissions, and reviews all appeals.

There are two key officers of the General assembly: a Stated (principal or chief) Clerk, who

is essentially the chief executive officer of the church; and the Moderator, who presides over

the General Assembly and often speaks for the church during the year.[86]

United Church of Christ. The United Church of Christ has its historical roots

enmeshed in the life and beginnings of the Church of England via the Congregational

Church. The Congregational Church's history is their history, for they came out of the

Congregational Church.[87] The Congregational Churches had formed a national body, the

National Council of Congregational Churches. In 1931, this National Council merged with

the General Convention of the Christian Church to form the General Council of

Congregational Christian Churches. This merger was accomplished smoothly and with little

dissent. A few years later, another merger was proposed: Churches of the General Council

would merge with the Evangelical and Reformed Church, a group with primarily German

heritage and had theological affinities with many Congregationalists but did not accept the

autonomy of the local congregation, which had always been the distinctive feature of

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[84]Mead and Hill, 296.
[85]Ibid.
[86]Ibid.
[87]Gunnemann, 19.

Congregationalism. This merger was eventually completed and formed the United Church of Christ.

The United Church of Christ utilizes a type of representative church government. Its polity can be described as a "covenanted relationship of autonomous units of church life." It is a covenanted relationship between and among parts of the body of Christ within the covenant that God has established and maintains in Jesus Christ.[88]

Because of its history, it combines Congregationalism and Presbyterianism. The local church practices Congregationalism and the organization of member churches practices Presbyterianism.[89] Their constitution is explicit: "The autonomy of the local church is inherent and modifiable only by its own action. Nothing shall destroy or limit the right of each local church to continue to operate in the way customary to it."[90] Associations, conferences and the general synod stand beside the local church. Local churches in a geographical area are grouped into an association, which is concerned with the welfare of the churches within its area. It assists needy churches; receives new churches into the United Church of Christ; licenses, ordains, and installs clergy; adopts its own constitution, bylaws, and rules of procedure; and is composed of the ordained ministers and elected lay delegates of the area.

Associations are related to the general synod through their conferences. They are grouped into conferences by geographical area.[91] The voting members of a conference are ordained ministers of associations in the conference and lay delegates elected from local

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[88]Johnson and Hambrick-Stowe, 72.
[89]Mead and Hill, 126.
[90]Ibid.
[91]Ibid.

churches.[92] A conference acts on requests and references from the local churches, associations, general synod, and other bodies. It meets annually, and its main function is to coordinate the work and witness of its local churches and associations, to render counsel and advisory service, and to establish conference offices, centers, institutions, and other agencies.[93] The General Synod (which meets biennially) is the highest representative body and is composed of conference delegates and voting members of boards of directors of the Covenanted Ministries of the church.[94] It nominates and elects a General Minister and President, an Associate General Minister, and members of the Board of Directors of the Covenanted Ministries: Office of General Ministries, Local Church Ministries, Wider Church Ministries, and Justice and Witness Ministries.

An Executive Council is elected by the General Synod to act for the synod between its meetings. It has responsibility for the church's publications, prepares the agenda for all meetings of the General Synod, and appoints committees not otherwise provided.[95]

<div align="center">Summary and Observations</div>

It has been shown that the polity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is related to and resembles that of a number of previously mentioned denominations. However, it has not been shown how closely the Seventh-day Adventist Church models the polity of the Methodist Church, from which it borrowed heavily in its organizational structure. Therefore, a brief structural comparison of the two churches follows.

United Methodist Church. The basic organizational system of the United Methodist Church is the local congregation, often called a charge. Every charge has at least one person

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[92]Ibid.
[93]Ibid., 126-127.
[94]Ibid.
[95]Ibid.

with pastoral responsibility for the charge. The person with pastoral responsibility is either an ordained member of the clergy, a probationary minister in training for ordination, a student pastor, or a licensed local preacher.[96] Every local congregation relates to other congregations in a geographical area called a district.[97] An ordained minister, with the District Superintendent, has pastoral responsibilities for all the congregations in his/her district. Every district relates to an Annual Conference. An ordained minister called a Bishop has pastoral responsibilities for the districts and congregations in his/her Annual Conference.[98]

The next level above the Annual Conference is the Jurisdiction, a group of Annual Conferences related again by geography.[99] In the United States there are five such Jurisdictions. No one person has responsibility for this group of conferences, districts and congregations; rather, a group of representatives from each Annual Conference in that jurisdiction meets every four years to consider the business of the jurisdiction, electing Bishops to serve in the various Annual Conferences.

The largest organizational body of the United Methodist Church is the General Conference. Like the Jurisdictional Conference, this group is made up of representatives of every Annual Conference in the country and meets every four years. As representatives of the entire United Methodist Church, the General Conference is responsibility for setting church polity, making official statements of belief on behalf of the church, and deciding matters of theology or practical ministry.[100] When placed in its structural order from bottom

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[96]Harriett Jane Olson et al., eds., *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, (Nashville: United Methodist Press, 1996), 201-205.

[97]Ibid., 652-665.

[98]Ibid., 601-651.

[99]Ibid., 511-534.

[100]Ibid., 501-510.

to top, the levels in this manner: Local Church, District Conference, Annual Conference, Jurisdictional Conference, and General Conference.

Seventh-day Adventist Church. The local church is the simplest organizational unit of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and is built upon the principle of a representative democracy. It consists of a united group of Christian individuals who believe in the truths that are accepted by the denomination and who have, after baptism or profession of faith, voluntarily entered into church fellowship in an organized capacity.[101] When a person joins a local church, he or she accept the solemn obligations and the glorious privileges of church membership, as well as publicly declaring that he or she is in full accord with and prepared to defend the fundamental beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists. Adventists believe that no one should be permitted to join the church until he or she has been thoroughly instructed in all the fundamental teachings of the church, understands its organization, and has given evidence of having experienced a new birth into a spiritual experience in the Lord Jesus.[102] Local churches elect their own officers and church boards by majority vote, but the pastor is assigned by the Conference in which they reside. The local conference is made up of a group of churches all situated in a given territory that have voluntarily joined themselves together in conference fellowship for the preservation of their common faith and for carrying on the work of the denomination most effectively. The churches composing a conference are united in conference relationship by adoption of a constitution and bylaws approved by the delegates from the churches in conference session. A church becomes a member of a conference in much the same way that an individual becomes a member of a church. That is,

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[101]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual. (USA: 1986), 38.

[102]James I. Robison, "The Local Church Organization", *Review and Herald*, 24 July 1952, 11.

the church must declare its adherence to the faith and teachings of the denomination, place itself under the legislative and administrative direction of the conference, and recognize the conference as the higher body of authority. The local church will also recognize the constitution, bylaws, and recommendations of the conference as binding upon its organization and membership and conduct its affairs in full harmony with the principles and policies of the higher organization.[103]

The conference issues credentials, licenses, and certificates to the various types of conference employees. It also directs the activities of the several departments. The conference officers are the president, secretary, and treasurer. These officers, along with the executive committee, form the administrative body. The conference president is an ordained minister and is the ranking officer within the conference where he presides. He is the head of the ministers in the conference and counsels in all their activities. He is the chairman of the conference executive committee and of various other committees and boards.[104]

The next level of administration within the Seventh-day Adventist Church is that of the Union Conference. This is a unit of church organization formed by a group of several local conferences or missions, which form a constituent part of the General Conference in one of its geographical divisions. The union conference organization is similar to that of the local conference and is governed by a constitution and bylaws. Delegates appointed by the local conferences elect the president, secretary, treasurer, committees, and departmental secretaries of a union conference.[105]

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[103]James I. Robison, "Local and Union Conference Organization", *Review and Herald*, 14 August 1952, 7.

[104]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*. (USA: 1986), 38.

[105]Ibid.

Following the Unions in administrative levels are the Divisions. Divisions are sections of the General Conference with administrative responsibility for particular geographical areas. These are world-wide in scope and magnitude. Presently the world-wide Seventh-day Adventist Church has twelve Divisions, which are composed of churches grouped by a collection of missions, fields, or states into unions of churches.[106]

The General Conference is formed by the uniting of all the union conferences of the world, together with detached mission fields that are not a part of any union conference, into one world conference with headquarters in Washington, D.C. For Seventh-day Adventists the General Conference is the highest earthly authority for the Church. The General Conference (which meets every five years in session), and the Executive Committee between sessions, is the highest organization in the administration of the Church's world-wide work, and is authorized by its constitution to create subordinate organizations to promote specific interests in various sections of the world. When differences arise in or between organizations and institutions, appeal to the next higher organization is proper until it reaches the General Conference in session, or the Executive Committee at the Annual Council. Thus the organizational structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church operates in this

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[106]Ibid.

manner.

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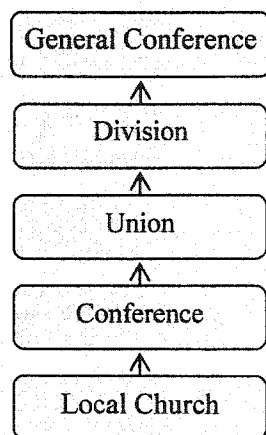
In conclusion, it has been shown that the organizational structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church shares polity with the Presbyterian Church and United Church of Christ as well as some others, including the Assemblies of God Church and the Disciples of Christ Church. However, it is safe to say that the strongest influence on the Seventh-day Adventist Church came from the model of church structure used by the United Methodist Church. Given the worldwide mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, it is understandable why it chose to model itself after an organization that was successful in administratively providing for the spiritual needs of its worldwide constituents. When God gave the church the Great Commission (to take the Gospel into all the world), He knew that some form of church governance was needed. Any organizational structure that facilitates this work should be utilized.

CHAPTER 3

BIBLICAL/THEOLOGICAL GUIDE FOR A VIABLE CHURCH ORGANIZATION

This chapter examines the biblical and theological method and model of church

organization in both the Old and New Testament. Attention is then focused on the

organizational structure of the early Christian Church and the development of the early

Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Throughout the Old Testament, it is clear that God is a God of order. From the

moment that He created something out of nothing, His goal and purpose was to categorize

and classify things as He willed. The story of creation is an example of the way that God

conducts business. He is very clear and concise about structure and how things are to be

done. This operating principle is continued elsewhere throughout the Old Testament

writings, particularly in the Exodus movement as God led His people from slavery in Egypt

to freedom in Canaan.

After looking at the Old Testament, the author reviewed the New Testament passages

referring to church structure. He then performed a historical survey of the practice of church

order as documented by the Apostolic Fathers in the Early Christian Church (96-150 A.D.),

followed by an examination of the early denominational history of the Seventh-day Adventist

Church (1831-1863). Though this topic warrants a more extensive study, the selection of

Scriptures is representative rather than comprehensive. Unless otherwise indicated, all

references to Scripture appear in the King James Version of the Bible.

Old Testament

Order marks the movements of God. He is not the author of confusion, but He is able

to organize his work and people. Thus, we see in the Old Testament that God established

organization according to His perfect will. The Old Testament texts of Exodus 18:13-27 and

Deuteronomy 1:9-18 demonstrate how Moses followed the counsel of his father-in-law,

Jethro, and appointed leaders over different groups of people. In Numbers 10:29-36, 11:11-

17, and 24-30, we see God telling Moses to gather seventy men (elders) and bring them to the

Tabernacle so He could place His Spirit upon them and share in the leadership responsibility.

We read in 1 Samuel 9:15-17, 11:12-15, 12:1-2, 13:1, and 15:34-35 and Hosea 13:11

that God told Samuel to anoint Saul as commander over His people when they cried out for a

king, as the nations around them had. These texts provide information as to how God

worked and orchestrated the orderliness of His chosen people throughout their early history.

Moses' Call and Instruction. When Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt,

they were a large, disorganized group of people – approximately six-hundred thousand men

on foot, not including women and children -- haphazardly fleeing (Exodus 12:37, 38).

Therefore, God provided for them an impressive system of organization to govern their

conduct in both civil and religious matters. God was the center of authority and government.

Moses stood as the visible leader by God's appointment, to administer the laws in His name.

When Moses' father-in-law Jethro came to visit, Aaron and all the elders came and

ate bread with them (Exodus 18:12). Even though the term "elder," as it is used in this

context refers to the old or aged and not to the office of elder,[107] it demonstrates the pattern

that was to later influence the office of elder. Jethro saw that Moses and the people were

suffering unnecessary fatigue from standing around all day and Jethro objected to what

Moses was doing (Exodus 18:13-18).

Jethro therefore counseled Moses to confine his work to making inquiry of God and

divide the work of judging the people among "able bodied men who feared the Lord."

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[107]*Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary*, (Lake Wylie: Christian Heritage, 1988), 36.

Moses followed the advice of his father-in-law and appointed men over thousands, over hundreds, over fifty and over tens to judge small matters. However, every great matter was still to come to Moses (Exodus 18:24-26).

Israel's organization became precise and detailed. In their march through the wilderness, they now proceeded in divisions (Numbers 10:28). They were divided into twelve tribes, with a prince over each, and further divided into groups of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens (Deuteronomy 1:15; Exodus 18:21, 22). Each tribe had its assigned position while in the camp and when marching. Thus, the political organization of Israel was born.

Saul's Appointment. Though a monarchical form of government for Israel had been foretold in prophecy, God had reserved to Himself the right to choose their king (1 Samuel 9:17).[108] It was never God's plan to appoint a king among His chosen people, but because they cried out for a king like the nations around them, He granted them their wish. So Samuel the prophet "took a vial of oil and poured it upon Saul's head and said, "Is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?" (1 Samuel 10:1) Thus the government of God's chosen people changed from a theocracy to a monarchy.

In the organization of God's people in the Old Testament, there appears to be continuity within the Old Testament texts. God saw the situation of His people and met them in their need. Whether they were ignorant slaves just out of Egypt or a rebellious nation clamoring for a king, God met them where they were in their relationship to Him.

This section has described the method of "church" organization during the Old Testament period. The next section examines the Biblical record of church organization to determine whether there is any continuity between the Old and New Testament methods.

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[108]Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, (Mountain View: Pacific Press, 1911) 608.

New Testament

From a superficial reading of the New Testament record, it appears that no exact

detailed code of regulation for church government was established. However, closer

examination of the New Testament seems to suggest that, although the church did not have a

rigidly formalized structure, it did have levels of authority beyond the local church. We see

Christ leaving behind a body of leaders in the apostles, whom he himself had chosen, and

giving them a few general principles for the exercise of their ruling function. He

commissioned them to preach the gospel and to ensure the welfare of those who accepted

that message. This involved shepherding as well as housing the flock and meeting problems

of relationship (Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15). We also see evidence that the New

Testament Church structure was strongly influenced by the Jewish Synagogue. Scripture

reveals that the first Christians were Jewish; this would lead to an expectation that there was

a great Jewish influence upon the early church (the Greek word for assembly in James 2:2 is

the same word used for synagogue or church).[109] According to Luke 7:3 and 22:66, we see

that elders, or *"presbuteroi,"[110]* were a part of the governing party in and around Judea

during the time of Christ. This group of elders carried over into the early church and,

according to Acts 15:6, 22-33; 21:18-25, seemed to make some form of ecclesiastical

decisions regarding general church problems and had the authority to send authorized

representatives to direct the work in a certain area (Acts 8:14; 11:22, 27).[111]

Jesus and the Disciples. Jesus understood the role and function of the Jewish leaders.

He didn't try to change or reorganize the system that they had in place. He simply modified

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[109]*Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary,* (Lake Wylie: Christian Heritage, 1988), s.v. "assembly".
[110]*The Analytical Greek Lexicon,* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), 340.
[111]Tim Crosby, "The New Testament Church: was it hierarchical or congregational?" *Adventist Review,* 14 February 1985, 6.

it so that it would be more inclusive to all who accepted Him. So He called unto Himself

twelve disciples. The Twelve were chosen that they might be with Christ (Mark 3:14), and

this personal association qualified them to act as his witnesses (Acts 1:8).

From the beginning, they were endowed with power over unclean spirits and diseases

(Matthew 10:1), and this power was renewed and increased, in a more general form, when

the promise of the Father (Luke 24:49) came upon them in the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts

1:8). On their first mission they were sent forth to preach (Mark 3:14), and in the Great

Commission they were instructed to teach all nations (Matthew 28:19). Thus, they received

Christ's authority to evangelize at large. However, they were also promised a more specific

function, as judges and rulers of God's people (Matthew 19:28; Luke 22:29, 30) with power

to bind and to loose (Matthew 18:18) and to remit and to retain sins (John 20:23).[112]

New Testament Church. The early church model is that of an organization gradually

developing as needs arose. The Day of Pentecost depicts the beginning and origin of the

church. It speaks of the coming of the Holy Spirit, calling a people out of this world to form

the body of Christ, which is the church (Acts 2: 1-13; 38-41; 6: 1-6). According to Acts, one

of the first organizational groups consisted of the apostle's council in Jerusalem. Because of

the trouble with some Pharisees (Judaizers) claiming that it was necessary for Gentile

believers to be circumcised in order to be saved, "...it pleased the council of apostles and

elders with the whole church to send letters to all the churches, informing them of their

decision (Acts 15:1-29)."

We also see the New Testament church showing evidence of congregational

involvement in church polity. Under Peter's direction, the congregation participated in

selecting a new disciple to replace Judas (Acts 1:15-26), although they did not vote on the

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[112]*The New Bible Dictionary*, 3rd ed., s.v. "binding and loosing," by D. R. W. Wood.

matter. Also, because of the sudden growth in membership, Acts 6:1-6 describes that caring

for the needy among them took the apostles away from teaching and preaching the Word of

God. The congregation then selected seven men under apostolic direction to serve as

deacons and brought them to the apostles to be ordained into office.[113] This led to two

distinct offices in the early church: that of elder, which was taken from the Jewish

synagogue, and that of deacon, "*diakonos,*" which was developed out of the necessity of

caring for the widows. The terms bishop and elder, or "*episkopos,*" which means to look

upon, inspect, oversee, and look after, are interchangeable.[114] Both describe the office of an

ecclesiastical overseer (1 Timothy 3:1, 2; Titus 1:17).

Another kind of leadership and organizational structure was developing in the early

church, as other New Testament Scriptures are examined. Churches were not organized

under one leader, but each church was an independent group that was guided and directed by

a board of elders. Acts 15:2 states that there was a council of elders at Jerusalem with James

as the head. Acts 14:23 states that "when they (Paul and Barnabas) had ordained them elders

in every church." Titus 1:5 states that "For this cause left I thee (Titus) in Crete, that thou

should set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had

appointed thee."

The church at Jerusalem, considered by many to be the "mother church," did not try

to control or govern every local church established in the cities of the nation. However, it

played a major role in their instruction and establishing them in the faith. Philip, an

evangelist, entered Samaria and many believed in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 8:5-12). The

church at Jerusalem heard about this wonderful act of God and sent Peter and John to

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[113] Matthew Henry, "Commentary on Acts 6". "Matthew Henry Complete Commentary on the Whole Bible"[on-line] accessed 12 September 2003; available from http://bible.crosswalk.com/Commentaries/MatthewHenryComplete/; Internet, 1706.

[114] The Analytical Greek Lexicon, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), 160.

confirm them in the faith (Acts 8:14). When the complicated and perplexing question of circumcision arose among the Gentile churches, Paul was sent up to Jerusalem to seek the advice of the apostles and elders there (Acts 15). When the decision had been made by the leaders at Jerusalem, delegates were chosen and appointed by the apostles and elders to accompany Paul and Barnabas back to the Gentile churches with letters announcing the decision of the Jerusalem conference concerning the circumcision question (Acts 15:22-33).

In summary, it appears from these texts that the organization of the New Testament church was based on several forms of church government. First, it patterned itself after the Jerusalem church and consisted of a group of elders who looked to the "mother church" to make ecclesiastical decisions regarding general church policy. Second, it seemed that there was some form of church organization where the congregation was somewhat involved in the decision making process of the church. Third, God called for the ordination of church leaders, not by church input or vote, but by men (Paul, Titus, and Barnabas) whom He had prepared. Finally, some church issues were decided by God Himself as He gifted them, too.[115]

Paul

The ministry of the Apostle Paul continued the type of leadership and organizational structure that was guided and directed by the Holy Spirit. His pattern for missionary journeys was to preach first in the synagogue (Acts 13: 42-44; 17:2; 18:4; Romans 1:16). When the mass of Jews rejected the Gospel, the focus of Paul's preaching shifted to the Gentiles. After some Jews and Gentile "God fearers" accepted the "message," they became the nucleus for a local assembly (Acts 13:46).

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[115]Johnson, Barton W. "Commentary on 1 Corinthians 12". "People's New Testament". [Commentary on-line] (St. Louis, MO: Christian Board of Publications, 1891. accessed 12 September 2003) available from http://bible.crosswalk.com/Commentaries/PeoplesNewTestament. Internet.

On his return visit, Paul would ordain elders in every church, by prayer, fasting and the laying-on of hands (Acts 14:14, 21-23). Elders were ordained for all of the Asian churches by Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:23), while Titus was enjoined to do the same for Crete (Titus 1:5). Although the disturbances at Corinth may suggest that a more complete democracy prevailed in that congregation (1 Corinthians 14:26), the general pattern of church government in the apostolic age would appear to be that of a board of elders, augmented by prophets and teachers ruling each of the local congregations with deacons to assist, and with a general superintendence of the entire church provided by apostles and evangelists.

Early Church Era

In the previous section it was shown that church organization was planned and structured according to a God-given directive. The continuity of Scripture with respect to church organization in the Old and New Testament was reviewed and was discovered to be necessary, not only because God ordained it, but because the church had been given an overwhelming task and organization was necessary to accomplish any task.

In this section the focus moves from the ancient world and its cultural situation to the contemporary world. Across the centuries, the development of organization in the Christian church has followed a demanding and sometimes precarious course. It is difficult to ascertain the precise form or structure of organization during the emergence of the Early Church (96-150 A.D.). However, the process whereby the Early Church developed a system of organization seems to have evolved from the structure present during the Apostolic Era. They formed and built upon that which was already in place and made adjustments as were needed. A survey of early Christian literature reveals references to various ministerial offices and functions:

1. Clement of Rome, in his <u>First Epistle of Clement to Corinth,</u> (circa 96 A.D.), uses the words "bishop, presbyter and deacons" (42.3-4),

2. Ignatius of Antioch, (died circa 110-115 A.D.) in his epistle to the Trallians refers to bishop, presbyters, and deacons. (7.2), and

3. Polycarp (died circa 156 A.D.), in his letter to the church at Philippi refers to the elders serving with him.(5.6)[116]

At first glance, the pattern of church leadership in the Apostolic Era appears to match that of the Early Church Era. However, closer observation of leadership appointments in the latter centuries seems to depart from this pattern. Although there appears to be no scriptural basis for churches uniting and organizing to form denominations, this is found in Protestant churches today. It is true that there was much fellowship and intercourse between Christians, but this was done because of the spiritual unity that prevailed as a result of their common belief in, and love for, the Savior.

What then happened that caused the church to stray away from the biblical mandate? Alex P. Hay makes the following statement:

> During the second century it seems to have become common for the elders in a congregation to choose one of their number to preside over them, and to apply to him the designation of Bishop. Even then he was not considered as a higher rank, but simply "first among equals.[117]

The power of the Bishops over the Elders and the congregation continued to expand in the third and fourth centuries. As the Bishops accumulated more power and became "priests" of and for the people, believers lost their "priesthood ministry;" thus the creation of "clergy" and "laity" followed. In time, the Bishop of Rome became "the Bishop of Bishops,"

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[116]Du Preez, Gerald T, "A Survey of Selected Aspects of the Practice of Ecclesiastical Appointment in the New Testament, Early Christian, and Seventh-day Adventist Church." (Berrien Springs: Masters Thesis, Andrews University, 1995).

[117]Alex P. Hay, *The New Testament Order for Church and Missionary,* (Audubon: New Testament Missionary Union, 1970) , 249.

and the local churches were welded together under "One Holy Catholic Church" under one head: the Bishop of Rome.[118]

Today, the Christian Church models a hierarchical form of church government. Although there are countless variations of local assembly government, there are four general classifications into which nearly all of the denominations may be placed: Congregational, Episcopal, Papal, and Representative.

1. Congregational: the form of church polity that makes the local church congregation supreme and final within its own domain. This is usually referred to as congregationalism.

2. Episcopal: the form of church government in which bishops govern, usually with three orders of ministers (bishops, priests, and deacons).

3. Papal: the form of church government in which the supreme authority is vested in the Pope. From him, the church is governed by cardinals, archbishops, bishops, and priests. The local church or individual member has no authority in church administration.

4. Representative: the form of church government which recognizes that authority in the church rests in the church membership, with executive responsibilities delegated to representative bodies and officers for the governing of the church.[119]

This section has presented the teaching and practice of church organization during the era of the Early Church. The next section will examine the beginning organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Although the author has argued that there are four types of church government, traditionally most scholars have said that there are three types of church organization in the

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[118]Kevin J. Conner, *The Church in the New Testament*, (Blackburn: Acacia Press, 1982) , 91.
[119]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist. *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, (Washington, DC: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, 1986), 37-38.

New Testament: Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Congregational. It is not the author's place or intent to propose that any method of church organization is right or wrong. However, it has been his intent to determine whether the way that churches were organized were biblically-based, so that he could purpose a change in the way his church (Cedars of Lebanon Seventh-day Adventist Church) went about the calling and installing of its pastors. The author believes that a scholarly look at the organizational structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is necessary to determine whether this change can be implemented.

Early Seventh-day Adventist Organization

The Seventh-day Adventist church grew out of the Millerite movement that arose toward the end of the Great Awakening that swept across America during the early- to mid-nineteenth century.[120] The Millerites were sure of their doctrine and their message but unsure of the form of organization to adopt; as such, they resisted the idea of church organization. They viewed any form of church organization as returning back to the "Babylon" from which they had just come.[121] However, due to church growth and the need to preventing bizarre interpretations of Scripture, some early leaders saw the need to develop a biblical model of church organization.[122] Those who were strenuously opposed to this trend chose to separate from the group rather than support the move to form an organization.[123] In spite of this trend, in 1861 the church appointed a group of nine ministers and asked them to study the Bible with respect to church organization and set forth their recommendations. This group recommended a three level form of government consisting of local churches, state conferences, and a general conference.[124]

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[120]Neufeld, s.v. "Organization."
[121]Ibid.
[122]Leroy E. Froom, *Movement of Destiny*, (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1971) , 136.
[123]Gary Land, *Adventism in America: A History*, Studies in Adventist History, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986), 36-65.
[124]Emma H. Cooper, *The Great Advent Movement.* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1935), 54.

Ellen G. White, considered to be one of the co-founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, outlined her support for church organization as follows:

1. To provide monetary support for the ministers.

2. For the missionary work of the church.

3. For the protection of the churches and ministry from unworthy members.

4. For the holding of church property.

5. For the publication of truth through the press.[125]

In 1860 the official name, Seventh-day Adventist, was chosen. The next year, the Michigan Conference was organized. In 1862 the Michigan Conference took churches into its conference by vote. In 1863 the first General Conference was held.[126] One of the initial steps in organization was the giving of cards of recommendation, signed by "leading ministers," to preachers who had proved their ministry and who were in harmony with the program of the church.[127] Also, local churches out of necessity began to choose deacons and elders to help in the leading and running of the church.[128]

As time went on, many changes and refinements evolved. One of these was the organization of local conferences into districts, which was the forerunner of the present union conferences. Also, the tying together of work in various local churches through associations emerged. These would later become departments of the work.[129]

The preceding section examined the aspects of the development of a system of church organization within early Seventh-day Adventism. However, the question remains: is this organization Biblical or pragmatic? The desire of the early Adventists was to remain true to

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[125]Ellen White, *Testimony to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, (Boise: Pacific Press, 1923), 26.
[126]Cooper, 54.
[127]Neufeld, s.v. "Organization."
[128]Ibid.
[129]W. P. Bradley, "First Steps in Church Organization," *Review and Herald*, 22 February 1968, 16.

the biblical model in the establishment of their church order. They believed that every detail should reflect the New Testament example. However, it is significant to note that the overall rationale for church organization at this time does not appear to reflect the New Testament model as much as the pragmatic needs of the youthful movement.

Joseph Bates, an early minister in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, recognized a progressive development in methods of church order, in the system found in the New Testament. He wrote an article that supported pragmatism over biblical ideals. He states that:

> The leaders recognized that there was a developmental progression from the pattern given by Christ in the Gospels and the subsequent system implemented by the Apostles. Accordingly, the view was espoused that the precise pattern was not demonstrated, but only the principles."[130]

Although the Seventh-day Adventist Church assigned nine ministers to study the New Testament model for church organization, it appears that what the church instituted during its early days (when it was struggling for its theological identity) was a system based on need, which appears to have become entrenched and a part of the fabric of the new church.

Conclusion

The Bible appears to present a definitive, consistent pattern regarding the structure of church organization. Both Old and New Testament methods of church structure underwent theological and ideological changes during the Early Church era. The evidence seems to suggest that some modern churches have abandoned the Biblical model and adapted their own specific way of church organization based on their particular needs. The early Seventh-day Adventist Church appears to have followed the same pattern and embraced the practices of the existing churches of the day. These practices were apparently adapted to meet the

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[130]Joseph Bates, "Church Order", *Review and Herald*, 29 August 1854, 22.

particular needs of the early Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Biblical model is definitive but allows flexibility. The examples found in both the Old and New Testament bears this out:

1. In Exodus, God permitted Moses to delegate some authority from him to others who were well suited for the task.

2. In 1 Samuel, although it was not His intended plan, God allowed Israel to have a king when they requested one.

3. In the Gospels, Apostles were chosen by Christ and commissioned by Him to perform the tasks He selected for them.

4. In the book of Acts, the addition of the seven men to lead in the church demonstrates God's flexibility in organization.

5. In Paul's writings, persons are placed in charge of churches at the direction of Paul, the elders, or those given responsibility for fostering the growth of the congregations.

Given this flexibility, it stands to reason that there is biblical direction within the pages of Holy Writ that suggest that the way the Allegheny East Conference appoints pastors can be changed or adjusted and not be contradictory to Scripture.

Recommendations

First, a more comprehensive study should be undertaken, where church organization is traced along the entire spectrum of Biblical, Christian and Seventh-day Adventist history. Second, because there is precedent in Scripture for the adjustment of church organization as the needs of the church require, the Allegheny East Conference should permit the Cedars of Lebanon Church to have a voice and a vote in the selection process of its pastor.

CHAPTER 4

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PASTORAL APPOINTMENT PROCESS

The intent of this project is to test the author's proposed plan for pastoral appointment by the Allegheny East Conference for the Cedars of Lebanon Seventh-day Adventist Church. The plan is designed so that members of the church can have voice and a vote in the selection of its pastor. The history of this situation is more fully described earlier in Chapter ---. To summarize, the Allegheny East Conference assigned as the first pastor to the Cedars of Lebanon Church the same pastor who had been sharing pastoral responsibilities with another local church. When this pastor came to Cedars of Lebanon Church full time, conflict arose between the pastor and the congregation (his leadership style was not what the congregation expected). Attempts at compromise were unsuccessful. The Allegheny East Conference was made aware of the discord and unrest on in the Cedars of Lebanon Church, but was slow in addressing the situation. After a period of struggle, the pastor became ill and shortly thereafter passed away, leaving the congregation without a pastor.

When the time arrived for the Allegheny East Conference to assign a new pastor to the church, the conference sent one of its officials to meet with the church board and asked them to complete the necessary documents, which asked what the church sought in a pastor. After that meeting, there was no follow up contact with the church board from the conference explaining who would be appointed as pastor. The conference, without discussing their decision with the church, sent someone to be the new pastor of the Cedars of Lebanon Church. His dominating leadership style was again not what the church wanted and needed, and disagreements and arguments soon developed as it became apparent that the relationship was not going to work out. The conference then assigned this pastor to another church and sent the Cedars of Lebanon Church yet another pastor without its consent or input. The

author, frustrated with the way events were occurring, developed a process through which the Cedars of Lebanon Church could have a more active part in the selection of its pastor.

The plan proposed in this chapter integrates recommendations from pastors and denominational leaders. This plan has several goals: First, it attempts to minimize the time required of Conference Executive Committee members, who usually have other responsibilities beside their work on the committee, to select and appoint a pastor. Second, it attempts to develop a procedure that does not result in many pastoral interviews that could disrupt the churches' ministry emphasis. Third, it attempts to help the Conference find a pastor who matches that particular church in a relative short period of time. And finally, it attempts to develop a procedure that can be easily modified to meet the needs of any specific Conference. At the conclusion of this process, it is hoped that both the Cedars of Lebanon Church and the Allegheny East Conference will see the wisdom in this method and utilize it for the appointment of its future pastors.

Design of the Proposed Pastoral Appointment Process

The proposed pastoral appointment process (PPAP) was carried out in three distinct stages that required analysis, research, and writing. These stages were:

1. Performing a readiness for change survey of the Allegheny East Conference to determine their readiness for change and conducting a need for change survey among the Cedars of Lebanon congregation to determine whether they believed that a change was needed in the way pastors were appointed.

2. Researching the ecclesiastical data to establish a biblical mandate.

3. Writing a document which could be used as a resource for implementing change.

Survey. The survey stage consisted of conducting a readiness for change survey of the Allegheny East Conference, (see Appendix A), conducting a pastor appointment

questionnaire of congregation of the Cedars of Lebanon Church, (see Appendix B), and evaluating the results.

The PPAP evolved from the author's frustration with the method the new pastor was assigned to the Cedars of Lebanon Church. He believed that the appointment could have been managed using a more inclusive process. Because he believed that a more inclusive process involving the church was needed, and because he believed that others within the congregation felt as he did, the author conducted an informal survey to test his theory. An informal survey was initially performed because the author did not want the congregation to think that this was an official study being conducted by the church board or that the survey would commit them to implement the author's recommendations.

Approximately forty percent of the members participated in the informal survey in order to discuss their views about the author's theory. Of those who were surveyed, ninety percent responded that they were frustrated as well, but felt helpless about changing the way things were done in the selecting and appointing of a pastor. Given the level of frustration and the overwhelming percentage of church members who believed it was time for a change, the author asked for and received permission from the church board to conduct a formal survey.

Research. The research stage consisted of the following steps:

- Reviewing the Seventh-day Adventist historical record for church polity,

- Reviewing Biblical support for church polity,

- Searching other resources of church polity, such as dissertations, theses, and official church documents, and

- Conducting personal interviews with church leaders and pastors about the pastoral appointment process.

The author started by examining how members of the Cedars of Lebanon Church could become a part of the appointment process. He looked at church organization in both the Old and New Testaments to examine if the Allegheny East Conference's polity was functioning biblically as well as to discover whether a change could be made. It was discovered that the conference's organizational structure seemed based more on reasons of practicality than theological rationale. He then looked for dissertations, theses, official church documents, or other articles written about this topic. Unfortunately, this research yielded very little information, as there were no official studies or research which had been conducted in this area.

The author then interviewed several different Conference Presidents about the appointment of pastors. These interviews concluded that the Seventh day Adventist denomination had historically appointed its pastors without input from the congregation needing a pastor. When these Conference Presidents were asked if they had considered changing the appointment process, several responded that they did not believe that the current system needed to be changed, while a few others responded that they saw the need for change and had done so. After hearing that several Conference Presidents were implementing their own appointment process, the author contacted them and asked whether they would agree to share their revised method of selecting and appointing pastors. Those who agreed to do so sent their documentation and, upon review, the author discovered that there was no consistency among the selection processes. Each president was doing what he felt was best for his particular conference. The author then began to write a document that would unify the whole process.

Step-By-Step Model

The author wrote a step-by-step model of the PPAP based on the readiness for change survey conducted for the Allegheny East Conference. He emphasized that, due to the time constraints of this ministry project, the timely return of the surveys was vital for the process to work. The process could only be as good as the input received for implementation and was to be implemented in the following manner by the Allegheny East Conference and the Cedars of Lebanon Church.

The Allegheny East Conference. First, the Allegheny East Conference Executive Committee (CEC) and pastors of the conference should complete the readiness for change survey to see if they are ready for change (see Appendix A). If, according to the survey, they are not ready for change, then those areas that are inhibiting change should be focused upon and improved (if possible). Second, the Conference leadership may need to lean more fully about the need for change. Finally, change might have to wait until there is a more change-friendly context within the Conference.

If the Conference is ready for change, the Conference Executive Committee (CEC) develops a personal profile for each of their pastors. The profile identifies their gifts, professional experience and expectations and should be updated annually, so that it remains accurate and current. Most Conferences already have a procedure in place to profile their pastors; if they feel it will serve this purpose, they can use this existing profile. In the event that the CEC does not have a method of profiling their pastors, a suggested model appears in Appendix C.

The CEC should also develop a church profile that includes a statement of the church's needs, characteristics and vision. Again, this profile should be updated annually to demonstrate the growth and progress of the church. Most Conferences already have a

procedure in place to determine the vision and personality of its churches; if the Conference feels that it will serve their purpose, they can use the existing profile. In the event that a participating church in this ministry project does not have a church profile in place, a suggested model appears in Appendix D.

After the profiles have been established, the CEC prays with those pastors and churches wishing to make a change. A date and time should be set aside so that everyone can be involved in this part of the process. Praying for God's will to be done is the focus of this particular step. It is vitally important that both the candidates and congregation believe that it is God's will that they be matched. Following much prayer, the CEC develops a compatibility list using the church profile and the pastor profile to match the church's needs with the gifts of the pastor (see Appendix E). When a Conference looks at the church being considered and the pastors that are available, this list will help simplify the matching process. The list can also be used to inform any church or pastor that a change is about to take place and of the need to prepare for that change.

After the matching process, the CEC prescreens the list of candidates that they believe would match the needs of that particular congregation. Based on the pastoral profile and the church profile, several names may stand out as a good match. The CEC should consider all of the data available and choose the candidate that best matches the church. The list of candidates is then shared with the Cedars of Lebanon church. The CEC asks the church Pastoral Appointment Committee (PAC) to review the names of possible pastoral candidates for consideration and recommendation. The PAC reviews the package submitted from the CEC and presents their recommendation to the church. This package contains the church profile, the pastor profile, a compatibility profile, and other helpful information. The church makes its choice; if there is more than one candidate, the selections will be ranked in

order of preference (first, second, third, etc.). The PAC then informs the CEC of its decision. While the church's selection is given some weight during the decision-making process, it is not the only consideration.

After much prayer and thorough consideration, the CEC decides who to appoint or not to appoint and informs the PAC. The PAC notifies the church of the CEC's decision about which pastor will be appointed to them. The congregation, having voted for its choice, having a high level of trust in God and the CEC, and believing that the will of God is being done, receives the appointed candidate as its pastor. As a way of monitoring the progress of the relationship, each year the Conference, pastor and church meet (on an agreed-upon date) to determine if the match between pastor and church is working out. Any problems or concerns can be addressed and handled at this time.

In the event that the conference and church are not compatible, a candidate outside of that Conference can be considered. If a candidate outside the particular Conference was considered for an appointment, the CEC would then prescreen that candidate and evaluate him in the same way a candidate within the Conference would be, with an additional reviewing of credentials, education, resume, ordination or licensing and references. For example, has he served effectively in another Conference? What does his current Conference President say about him?

In summary, although it is called a step-by-step model, some of the steps can be done at the same time. Prayer is a vital part of this process, and can (and should) occur at the beginning as well as during the development of this method. Also, personnel profiles and church profiles can be developed even if the conference or church is not ready for change. They are useful tools to have on hand and can be used when a decision to change is made. With the Conference and church working together and sharing information with one another,

a closer, more trusting relationship will develop which will benefit all concerned whether or not a pastor is appointed.

Cedars of Lebanon Church. The church completes a pastoral appointment survey to determine if it is willing to participate in the appointment of its pastor (see Appendix B). If the church does not want to participate in the appointment of its pastor, then there are no further steps to be taken in this process. If, however, the church wishes to participate in the appointment process, then it selects the members of the pastoral appointment committee (PAC). The PAC should be large enough to accomplish the task at hand, but small enough to provide efficient communication and interviews. The PAC should be composed of active church members who support the work of the church and should be representative of the church's membership.

Once the PAC has assembled, it has several tasks to perform. It surveys the congregation in an effort to understand their desires and expectations of a new pastor (see Appendix F). It meets with the CEC to review the list of pastoral candidates and presents the list of pastoral candidates to the church for their approval and vote. After much prayer and discussion the church reviews the candidates and votes for their choice. Finally, the PAC informs the CEC of the church's recommendation for pastor.

It is important that the PAC and the church understands its role and function. The church empowers the PAC as its representative in its communications with the Conference. At all times the PAC operates with the church's best interest at hand. It is vital that the church understands that it has a voice and a vote in the selection process, but the final decision of who to appoint (or not to appoint) is still controlled by the Conference.

Survey of the Pastors and Executive Committee Members

In order to determine whether the pastors and Executive Committee members were ready to change the way the Conference appointed its pastors, the author sent a readiness for change survey and letter of his intent to each pastor, associate pastor and committee member to ascertain how many of them were ready for such a change. The Conference consists of approximately ninety pastors and associate pastors, as well as some Executive Committee members who are not pastors. Six weeks were allotted for this step, in order to allow adequate time for the surveys to be completed and returned. When this time frame proved insufficient, four more weeks were provided so that enough surveys could be received and tabulated.

Follow-up

After roughly thirty-three percent of the readiness for change surveys were returned by the pastors, associate pastors, and executive committee member, the author contacted the Conference Secretary to see what, if any, progress had been made toward reception and implementation of his recommended changes. This was a positive conversation and the Conference seemed willing to continue the dialogue.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE PROPOSED PASTORAL APPOINTMENT PROCESS

The goal of this ministry project was to determine whether the Allegheny East

Conference would implement a process to allow the Cedars of Lebanon Seventh-day

Adventist Church to have a voice and a vote in the selection of its next pastor. This project

had four objectives.

- To gather information through surveying the Cedars of Lebanon Church and the

    Allegheny East Conference pastors and Executive Committee members,

- To process the information gathered and present it to the Cedars of Lebanon

    Church and Allegheny East Conference Executive Committee,

- To evaluate this information and implement a process that would contribute to the

    Church and Conference reaching its goal, and

- To reflect on the process and make any needed adjustments that would bring

    about the desired results.

In keeping with the goals of this ministry project, the author evaluated both the

Allegheny East Conference and the Cedars of Lebanon Church. The results of the surveys,

the lessons learned, and the projected adjustments concerning each organization were

reviewed and documented.

Survey of the Cedars of Lebanon Church

The Cedars of Lebanon Church was surveyed to determine the desires of the

congregation in the appointment of its pastor and to ascertain how much involvement and

input they wanted to have in the appointment process (see Appendix B). Approximately one

hundred and ten members were present on the Sunday that this survey was conducted. Of

those members present, fifty-five surveys were distributed to the adult members to record

their feedback. The remaining members of the congregation were children and youth who were asked not to participate. Of the fifty-five surveys handed out, forty-six (84%) were returned for tabulation. The survey consisted of the seven questions found in Appendix B. In response to Question 1, the majority of the respondents (30) said "No" when asked if they satisfied with the way the pastor was appointed. Such statements as "We should have more input," and "But it is what we are used, too," were among the "No" answers. Twelve answered "Yes" to the question, one responded "OK," and three had no comment.

For Question 2, the majority of the respondents (36) said that they wanted to see some form of change in the way the pastor was appointed. One said that they "would like to see change but would not be distressed if it did not happen." Four answered "No," two responded "Maybe," and three had no comment.

In response to Question 3, when asked about having some input into the pastor appointment process, the majority of the respondents (41) answered that they wanted to be able to have some sort of input. Three responded that they did not want input and two had no comment.

For Question 4, when asked about choosing their next pastor, the majority of the respondents (39) provided several statements about how they would accomplish that task. Some responded "Interviews," some answered "Resumes," some "wanted to hear the person preach first," some "wanted to choose between several names and not just one name." One did not want to choose their next pastor and six had no comment.

In response to Question 5, the majority of the respondents (42) thought that the congregation should have a voice and a vote in the selection of its pastor. Two said that they should not have a voice and a vote while two had no comment.

For Question 6 (concerning the adoption a method of selection), the majority of the respondents (38) said that they would like to see a new method implemented. Three said they would not like to see a new method, and one was happy with the way the Conference selected their pastor. Five did not comment.

In response to Question 7, most of the respondents (39) indicated that they would give of their time to participate in a new selection process. One said no, five had no comment and one was undecided. The numerical results are tabulated in Appendix H.

Cedars of Lebanon Survey Results

In summary, the majority of the congregation responded as follows: they were not satisfied with the way the pastor was appointed (30 responses), they would like to see a change in the appointment process (36 responses), and they wanted to actively participate in that process (41 responses). Most agreed on the means and method to bring about the desired change (39 responses). They wanted to interview the prospective pastor face to face (3 responses), to hear him preach (1 response), to receive interviews or resumes (20 responses), as well as a variety of other comments.

It came as a surprise that so many members of the congregation (13 responses) indicated that they were satisfied with the way the pastor was appointed and that there were 5 respondents who had no comment on the subject. That number was expected to be much lower. One member stated that the process was OK because God was the one who appointed the pastor. Another member said that it would not hurt to change, but they would not be distressed if it did not happen.

Overall, the author was pleased that the majority of members participated and responded positively. He was also pleased that they responded positively about how they

wanted the process to change and that they were willing to get involved and be a part of the process (see Appendix H for numerical results).

Lessons Learned

The author learned several lessons as a result of the feedback from the appointment process surveys. These lessons included the following:

1. More positive results could have been obtained had the questions been asked more clearly. From the written responses received and the conversations that took place following the survey, it became obvious that some members misunderstood the meaning of some of the questions asked. Questions 1 and 2 could have been asked differently, as some members stated that they thought the questions referred to our current pastor – because they were satisfied with him, they did not want to replace him with someone else. The author worded those questions so that the congregation could respond easily and quickly.

2. Although the survey was short and required mostly yes/no answers, the congregation needed more time to properly complete them. This survey was conducted during a worship service, when most members would be present and could participate. However, given the time and structure constraints, it appears that some members were unable to complete the entire survey. There were several forms which did not have answers for the last two questions of the survey, which suggests that this was a possibility. In the future, a better time and place to conduct the survey will be chosen.

3. The author's initial belief that most church members wanted a change in the method of appointment process was confirmed. This corresponded with the informal survey of the congregation which had been conducted earlier.

4.   Overall, the church as a body was supportive of the survey and project. The PPAP was presented to the pastor, who suggested that it be taken to the Board of Elders for their input. Once they were aware of and comfortable with the procedure, they recommended that it be taken to the church board for a vote. The church board voted for the project to move forward, and it was carried out as planned, with little objection.

5.   Even though the means and method for change is provided, not everyone will want to see that change happen. It was expected that there would be less satisfaction with the current process than there actually was. Also, the author confirmed that some in the congregation did not like change, even positive change. They have been doing something for one way for so long that that is the only way they know how to do it. It was also learned that when it comes to changing the way things are done in the church, if it is not a change that can be attributed directly to God (i.e., a "thus saith the Lord" change), many will not want to change.

Adjustments

As a result of the responses to the Pastoral Appointment Surveys, several of the suggested adjustments to the process will be made. First, a venue different from a worship service will be provided for the congregation to complete the survey. Second, the questions will be presented differently, to minimize the misunderstanding of those questions. Third, more time will be allowed for the congregation to adequately complete the surveys. Finally, input on the survey questions will be solicited from the pastor and elders.

As a result of the responses to the surveys, the author's personal conversations and feedback from the congregation, the author is convinced that the PPAP provides a proper

forum in which the Cedars of Lebanon Church can have a voice and vote in the selection of its pastor.

Survey of the Allegheny East Conference

Several days before sending out the readiness for change surveys to the pastors and Executive Committee Members of the Allegheny East Conference, a letter was sent to the Conference President, informing him about the forthcoming surveys. This was done so he would be aware of any inquiries about the surveys that might come from the pastors and Executive Committee members. It was also done to establish a dialogue as well as to create a more receptive environment for the surveys being sent out. After informing the Conference President, a readiness for change survey was conducted among the pastors and Executive Committee members.

One hundred and four surveys and letters were sent to each pastor and Executive Committee member. The mailings also included a self-addressed, postage-paid envelope to facilitate the return of the surveys. After receiving a relatively small number of surveys (ten) by the requested return date, the author followed up with the remaining names from the mailing list by calling or e-mailing those who had not responded and requested that the surveys be completed and returned as soon as possible.

After eight weeks, of the one hundred and four surveys sent out, thirty-three were completed and returned, four were returned unanswered because they were sent to the wrong address, and one was returned blank. That recipient remarked that he returned the survey without completing it because it seemed to be speaking only to pastors. This recipient was not a pastor but a member of the executive committee. Upon re-reading the letter sent to the Executive Committee Members, the author determined that the language was tailored to the pastors and not the committee members. This feedback is included below.

Results of the Readiness for Change Survey

When asked about being ready for change, the majority of the respondents (14 responses) said they were favorable that the Conference President and Executive Committee were ready to change the way they appointed pastors. The majority of pastors (12 responses) of pastors said that they were most favorable about changing the way they were appointed to churches. It was thought that most congregations within the conference were favorable (11 responses) or most favorable (15 responses) toward changing the way its pastor was appointed.

When asked whether the conference was open to creative ways of appointing pastors, the majority of the respondents (14 responses) said they thought that the conference was most favorable while ten thought them to be favorable. The majority of pastors (19 responses) said that they were mostly favorable as being open to creative ways of being appointed to churches, while nine said they were highly favorable. It was thought that most congregations were favorable (14 responses) as to being open to creative ways its pastor was appointed.

When asked about what effect a change in the pastoral process would have on the overall mission of the conference (13) thought it would be most favorable. The majority (14) of pastors thought it would be most favorable. And it was thought that most congregations (12) thought it would be most favorable.

When asked to evaluate the conference officials' concern about knowing and understanding their constituents, the majority of the respondents (13 responses) said they thought they were highly favorable in their concern. The majority of pastors (17 responses) said they were most favorable in their concern toward their congregations.

When asked to assess the Conference's effort to evaluate the effectiveness of its current pastoral appointment process, the majority of the respondents (10 responses) thought that the Conference's effort was favorable. Appendix L provides a numerical breakdown.

Initially, it was disappointing that so few pastors returned their surveys. However, upon deeper reflection the author realized that expecting a higher response was unrealistic. Given the nature of what was being asked of them, the author was pleased that such a large number (33%) of the pastors participated and responded positively. He was also pleased that some pastors provided verbal feedback that was timely and encouraging. After listening to the feedback from the Executive Committee member and re-reading the survey, the author became more fully aware of why none of the Executive Committee members responded to the survey. Although the author initially thought that the questions were inclusive of the Executive Committee members in its language, it actually was not written in such a manner.

Lessons Learned From Readiness for Change Survey

There were two lessons learned as a result of the feedback received from the pastors and Executive Committee members regarding the readiness for change surveys. These included the following:

1. The surveys sent to the members of the Executive Committee will be written differently than the ones sent to the pastors. This inadvertent oversight led to approximately ten percent of the survey audience being excluded and vital information not being gathered, which meant that a broader and more comprehensive understand of the Conference's readiness for change could not be assessed.

2. Feedback was given that suggested that, in some of the survey questions, it was hard to understand what the questions were really asking. Those unclear questions may have received different answers had they been asked differently.

Projected Adjustments

As a result of the responses to the readiness for change surveys, the following suggested adjustments will be made to the process:

1. Provide different survey questions so that the Executive Committee members can be a part of the change process.

2. Present the questions in a different way to minimize the misunderstanding of those questions. Some pastors responded that they had difficulty clearly understanding what was being asked in several of the questions.

3. Provide more time to the Conference personnel to adequately complete and return the surveys.

4. Solicit input for survey questions from pastors, members, mentors, co-workers and strangers to get a wider variety of questions, so that there is no appearance of bias.

Expected Results

As a result of developing the PPAP, it is expected that, when a pastor is assigned to the Cedars of Lebanon Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Conference Executive Committee will include the church in the process of selection and appointment. The author anticipates that this will lessen the pastoral frustrations expressed by the church membership in his informal survey. There should be fewer pastoral frustrations in the areas of personality conflict, leadership style, and church vision.

Reflections

While reading and performing the research for the Pastoral Appointment Process, the author became aware of a number of valuable lessons:

- The vital connection between Conference and church. Both need each other's support in order to fulfill the mission that God has called them to do. Because these two groups must work closely together as a part of this plan, the trust and confidence in one another should become much deeper, leading to a healthier relationship.

- Just because there is a vision for change, others may not accept that vision. A great deal of frustration occurred because the author realized that, no matter how vital or important the vision is to succeed, people sometimes have a hard time accepting change. Even after a step-by-step process was demonstrated and the advantages explained, many people were hesitant to act.

- The need for clarity. This was discovered through some of the questions he received from his dialogue with the Allegheny East Conference. By answering and addressing them in a timely and professional manner, he allowed the Conference to better understand what he recommended in the way it appoints pastors. He believes that, with more education and awareness, it will not be very long before most Conference members will come to see the significance of this plan.

- The evaluation of the Conference Presidents who received this proposed plan for study. Their responses were important to the outcome of the final product. They accurately assessed the needs of what they were looking for in this new

appointment process (both the church's and Conference's role and function in the

process). Their honest input and feedback was vital in the implementation.

- Future implications. The author believes that the implementation of this process

  will guide the Seventh day Adventist Church into the twenty-first century and

  lead to a more cohesive relationship between Conferences and churches.

Overall, this was a valuable learning experience. It has confirmed the author's belief

in the need for a new pastoral appointment process, not only for the Allegheny East

Conference, but also for the Seventh day Adventist Church denomination as a whole.

Conclusion

The Proposed Pastoral Appointment Process (PPAP) was developed in order to

provide an appropriate medium for the Cedars of Lebanon Seventh-day Adventist Church to

articulate its desires and wishes to the Executive Committee of the Allegheny East

Conference with respect to its pastoral appointment. However, knowing and understanding

that the implementation of this process may not be realized, the author believes that the

success of the process must be rated not on whether or not it is implemented, but whether the

author clearly and concisely developed, documented, and demonstrated a systematic model

to bring about an effective medium for change to take place. Therefore, if the Executive

Committee of the Allegheny East Conference does not choose to execute the Pastoral

Appointment Process for the Cedars of Lebanon Seventh-day Adventist Church, it will not be

viewed as a failure. This is necessary because, at this writing, the Allegheny East

Conference has not made known whether it intended to implement the PPAP. In fact, the

author has had very little dialogue with the Conference.

Because of this lack of communication, the author looked at other possible avenues to

present his proposal to the Allegheny East Conference. He solicited the input from a pastor

of a church within the Allegheny East Conference and started communicating with him. The pastor was given a copy of the PPAP for review and comment. After several of his questions were answered, this pastor took the PPAP to determine whether he could use his influence and position to bring it to the attention of the Executive Committee.

The author also was able to communicate with the Secretary of the Allegheny East Conference, who suggested that the document be sent to another person, the Ministerial Director, who was better equipped to handle the dissemination of the contents of the PPAP. The author sent the Ministerial Director a copy as recommended and waited patiently for a response. While the author waited for the Ministerial Director to contact him, the Secretary of the Allegheny East Conference informed the author that the PPAP was being placed on the agenda at the next ADCOM meeting (taking place within the next few weeks). The purpose was to discuss and vote on the document. The author was told that he would be notified of the vote of the committee once it had taken place.

At the beginning of this paper, the author believed that a process could be created and implemented that would allow the Cedars of Lebanon Seventh-day Adventist Church to have a voice and vote in the selection of its pastor. At the conclusion of the project, he now believes that such a document has been produced and demonstrates the success of the process by answering the following questions: first, did this document provide the Cedars of Lebanon Church and Allegheny East Conference with the proper tools for making a change, and second, was this document in agreement and harmony with the Biblical and historical record of the Seventh-day Adventist Church?

The author believes that once the Pastoral Appointment Process is introduced to the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a denomination, other Conferences, churches and organizations will follow its steps and achieve their objective.

APPENDIX A

READINESS FOR CHANGE SURVEY

Each topic listed below is vital in determining the Allegheny East Conference's readiness for change. Try to be objective and truthful in the evaluation process. Please circle the number that most accurately reflects your viewpoint.

1. Not Favorable 2. Favorable 3. No Opinion   4. Most Favorable   5. Highly Favorable

1. How would you rate the Conference President and Executive Committee's readiness toward changing the way it appoints pastors?
   1   2   3   4   5

2. How would you rate your readiness for changing the way you are appointed to churches?
   1   2   3   4   5

3. How would you rate the congregations within your conference as being ready for changing the way its pastor is appointed?
   1   2   3   4   5

4. How would you categorize the Conference's ministry philosophy (core beliefs that drive ministry) as being open to innovative and creative ways of appointing pastors?
   1   2   3   4   5

5. How would you categorize your ministry philosophy (core beliefs that drive ministry) as being open to innovative and creative ways of receiving your appointment?
   1   2   3   4   5

6. How would you categorize the ministry philosophy (core beliefs that drive ministry) of over 50% of the congregations within your conference as being open to innovative and creative ways of being assigned a Pastor?
   1   2   3   4   5

7. How would you rank the Conference's concern for adherence to traditions, forms and customs more than the effectiveness of its current pastoral appointment process?
   1   2   3   4   5

8. How would you rank your concern for adherence to traditions, forms and customs more than the effectiveness of the current pastoral appointment process?
   1   2   3   4   5

9. How would you rank the concern of the churches within your conference for adherence to traditions, forms and customs more than with the effectiveness of the current pastoral appointment process?
   1   2   3   4   5

10. What affect (if any) would a change in the pastoral appointment process have on the overall mission of the conference?
    1 2 3 4 5

11. What affect (if any) would a change in the pastoral appointment process have on your overall mission as a pastors of the conference?
    1 2 3 4 5

12. What affect (if any) would a change in the pastoral appointment process have on the overall mission of the churches in the conference?
    1 2 3 4 5

13. How would you evaluate the conference officials in regularly seeking to know and understand the needs, hopes and aspirations of it constituents?
    1 2 3 4 5

14. How would you evaluate yourself in regularly seeking to know and understand the needs, hopes and aspirations of your congregation?
    1 2 3 4 5

15. How would you assess the conference's effort to evaluate the effectiveness of its current pastoral appointment process?
    1 2 3 4 5

Total Score:_____

Survey adopted from Aubrey Malpurs book, *Advanced Strategic Planning*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 214-218.

APPENDIX B
PASTOR APPOINTMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear church member, in an effort to understand the desires of the congregation in the appointment of its pastor, your prayerful response to the following questions is requested. Please take a few minutes and answer the questions before leaving the sanctuary today.

1. Are you currently satisfied with the way the pastor is appointed to the Cedars of Lebanon Church?

2. Would you like to see a change in the way the pastor is appointed to the Cedars of Lebanon Church?

3. Would you like to have some input into the way your pastor is appointed to your church?

4. If you had your choice, how would you go about choosing your next pastor? Explain_____

5. Considering its past history, do you think that the Cedars of Lebanon congregation should have a voice and a vote in the selection of its pastor? Explain_____

6. Would you like to see the Cedars of Lebanon congregation adopt a method that gives you a voice and a vote in the selection of its pastor?

7. If such a method of selection were available would you give your time to participate in the process?

NOTE: Please turn your survey in to the ushers at the end of the service. Thank you for providing me the necessary feedback for my doctoral project.

APPENDIX C
PASTOR PROFILE
Please write a few relevant and concise thoughts about each topic listed below.

Personal Information

Name_____

Age_____   Years Pastoring_____

Home Phone(___)_____   Office Phone(___)_____

E-mail _____

Fax (___)_____

Spiritual gifts:

   1) _____

   2) _____

   3) _____

Spouse' name _____

Children:

   1) _____age____

   2) _____age____

   3) _____age____

   4) _____age____

Most challenging ministry areas:

Most satisfying ministry areas:

Growth areas:

Why do you want to change churches?

Thoughts about Leadership

Thoughts about Administration

Thoughts about Worship

Thoughts about Evangelism

Thoughts about Fellowship[131]

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[131]Vonhof, John. *The Alban Guide to Managing the Pastoral Search Process,* (Washington, D.C. The Alban Institute, 1999), 107-112.

APPENDIX D
CHURCH PROFILE
Please write a few relevant and concise thoughts about each topic listed below.

Church Name_____ Membership_____

Average Age of Members_____ · Gender Mix_____

Ethnic Backgrounds Represented_____

List Ministries engaged in:

List Ministries you would like to see started:

List Congregational Interests:

List desired professional qualities of a Pastor:

List expectations of a Pastor:

Thoughts about Leadership:

Thoughts about Administration:

Thoughts about Worship:

Thoughts about Evangelism:

Thoughts about Fellowship:

Thoughts about Nurturing:

Thoughts about Counseling:

Thoughts about Teaching:[132]

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[132]Ibid., 104-106.

APPENDIX E
COMPATIBILITY LIST
Using the information gathered on the Church Profile and Pastor Profile please match as close as possible the needs of the church with the gifts of the pastor. The more similar the matches between church and pastor, the greater the possibility for a successful relationship.

CHURCH   *PASTOR*

CHURCH	PASTOR
Leadership	**Leadership**
Strong____	Strong____
Average___	Average___
Weak___	Weak___
Administration	**Administration**
Strong____	Strong____
Average____	Average ___
Weak____	Weak____
Worship Service	**Worship Service**
Strong____	Strong____
Average____	Average___
Weak____	Weak___
Evangelism	**Evangelism**
Strong____	Strong____
Average____	Average___
Weak____	Weak___
Fellowship	**Fellowship**
Strong____	Strong____
Average____	Average___
Weak____	Weak___
Vision____	**Vision**____
Mission____	**Mission**____
Goals____	**Goals**____
Strengths____	**Strengths**____
Weaknesses____	**Weaknesses**____
Community Involvement____	**Community Involvement**____
Values____	**Values**____
_____Date Church needs a Pastor	_____Date Pastor available

APPENDIX F
EXPECTATIONS OF THE PASTOR'S ROLE

In an effort to help your Pastor Appointment Committee know the qualifications that you are looking for in a pastor, please fill out the following questionnaire.

1. What age person would you like for our next pastor? Check one.
   ( ) Age should not be a major factor
   ( ) Under 30
   ( ) 30-39
   ( ) 40-49
   ( ) 50-up

2. What preference, if any, do you have regarding the amount of experience our   next pastor should have? Check one.
   ( ) Experience is not important
   ( ) 0-5 years experience
   ( ) 6-10 years experience
   ( ) 11-15 years experience
   ( ) 16-20 years experience
   ( ) 21 or more years experience

3. Considering our church's needs and her programs, on which of the activities should our next pastor spend the <u>most</u> time and the <u>least</u> time?
   (a) Preparing sermons
   (b) Visiting church members
   (c) Counseling, advising members
   (d) Attending meeting or functions of the church
   (e) Office work, administration
   (f) Evangelism, soul winning
   (g) Personal prayer and devotion
   (h) Personal care and family concerns
   On which three should the pastor spend the <u>most</u> time? ____ ____ ____
   On which three should the pastor spend the <u>least</u> time? ____ ____ ____

4. Please list in order the qualities or characteristics you would like to see in a person serving as our pastor. One being first and ten being last.
   ( ) Having a caring and concerned attitude
   ( ) Being friendly
   ( ) Having integrity
   ( ) Showing personal maturity
   ( ) Showing spiritual maturity
   ( ) Showing motivation
   ( ) Being creative
   ( ) Being enthusiastic
   ( ) Developing good relationships

5. What preaching style do you like best?
   Evangelistic _____
   Scholarly _____
   Topical _____
   Stories _____
   Other (describe) _____

6. What are your divine worship expectations concerning our next pastor?
   Traditional____Conservative ____Contemporary____As the Spirit moves____
       Other____

7. What is your particular preference for our next pastor as toward his personal life?
   Check as many as desired.
       Married   Yes___ No___
       Divorced Yes___ No___
       Remarried Yes___ No___
       Single   Yes___ No___
       It should not matter_____

8. How much involvement in feeding the hungry, visiting the shelters and working with community programs should our pastor be? Check one.
       Little____
       Much____
       None____

9. What leadership style would you prefer in our next pastor? Check one.
       Domineering_____
       Passive _____
       Servant _____

10. What do you think the new pastor's view concerning the youth/children of the church should be? Explain._____

APPENDIX G
PROPOSED PASTORAL APPOINTMENT PROCESS EVALUATION

Please circle the appropriate number for each question with one being the lowest and four being the highest. N/O indicates that you have no opinion at this time of completing the evaluation.

1. How do you rate the clarity of the Proposed Pastoral Appointment Process (PPAP)?

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	

Comments:

2. How do you rate the validity of the PPAP?

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	

Comments:

3. How do you rate the way the PPAP was presented?

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	

Comments:

4. How do you rate your ability to follow the steps of the PPAP?

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	

Comments:

5. How do you rate the usefulness of the PPAP in the assessment of its pastors?

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	

Comments:

6. How do you rate the usefulness of the PPAP in the assessment of its churches?

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	

Comments:

7. How do you rate the usefulness of the PPAP as being a suitable method to appoint pastors to churches?

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	

Comments:

8. How do you rate the value of the PPAP in helping the Allegheny East Conference Executive Committee in selecting and appointing its pastors?

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	

Comments:

9. How do you rate the value of the PPAP in providing a model for church involvement in the pastoral appointment process?

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	N/O
1	2	3	4	

Comments:

10. After evaluating the PPAP, what would be your reason(s) for not implementing the model?

APPENDIX H
PASTOR APPOINTMENT QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

QUESTION #	NO	YES	NO COMMENT	MAYBE/ OK	INTERVIEWS/ RESUMES/ OTHER
1.	30	12	4	0	0
2.	4	36	4	2	0
3.	3	41	2	0	0
4.	1	0	6	0	39
5.	2	42	2	0	0
6.	3	38	5	0	0
7.	1	39	5	1	0

APPENDIX I
LETTER INFORMING CONFERENCE PRESIDENT OF READINESS FOR CHANGE SURVEYS

Larry D. Black

March 17, 2003

Elder Cheatham,

I am writing this letter to inform you that I am in the process of sending out a questionnaire to yourself, the Conference Executive Committee members, and the pastors of the Allegheny East Conference. This questionnaire seeks information in regards to helping the Allegheny East Conference have a more consistent and customary way of appointing its pastors. Not that the Conference is doing a bad job in appointing its pastors, it's not. However, there is always room for improvement.

As part of my doctoral project, I have developed a document that will allow any conference or church to be fully involved in its pastoral appointment process. It is my belief that if the instructions of this document are followed, the time restraint as well as the anxiety level that normally develops during this procedure will be decreased. I also believe that by allowing the churches to be more involved in the appointment process, the trust level between the conference and churches will be increased leading to greater stewardship and a higher percentage of tithing.

Your support and blessing will indeed help me to collect the necessary data to prove my belief to be true. I wish to thank you in advance for your assistance in my doctoral project, as I desire to make a major contribution to the Allegheny East Conference.

Sincerely,

Larry D. Black
D. Min., ABD

APPENDIX J
PASTOR SURVEY COVER LETTER (SAMPLE)

Larry D. Black

[DATE]

Dear Pastor_____,

I am a doctoral candidate at Regent University. Part of my dissertation project is to survey and receive input from the ministers of the Allegheny East Conference. I hope to identify the need for a change in the pastoral appointment process, measure that need and provide a document that would allow the Conference and church to bring about such change.

I ask that you would prayerfully and truthfully complete the enclosed questionnaire. Most people are able to complete the questionnaire in just a few minutes. Your response and any comments will be treated with utmost confidentially. After the results are tabulated and compiled, I will be able to proceed with presenting the Allegheny East Conference Executive Committee with my findings. The finished product will enable the conference to place you in churches where you can maximize your growth as well as theirs.

Please return the completed questionnaire to me no later than April 1. A self-addressed, stamped envelope is included for you convenience. Thanks again for you help.

Sincerely,

Larry D. Black
D. Min., ABD

APPENDIX K
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SURVEY COVER LETTER (SAMPLE)

Larry D. Black

[DATE]

Dear Executive Committee Member,

I am a doctoral candidate at Regent University. Part of my dissertation project is to survey and receive input from the ministers of the Allegheny East Conference. I hope to identify the need for a change in the pastoral appointment process, measure that need and provide a document that would allow the Conference and church to bring about such change.

I ask that you would prayerfully and truthfully complete the enclosed questionnaire. Most people are able to complete the questionnaire in just a few minutes. Your response and any comments will be treated with utmost confidentially. After the results are tabulated and compiled, I will be able to proceed with presenting the Allegheny East Conference Executive Committee with my findings. The finished product will enable the conference to place pastors in churches where they can maximize their growth as well as the churches.

Please return the completed questionnaire to me no later than April 1. A self-addressed, stamped envelope is included for you convenience. Thanks again for you help.

Sincerely,

Larry D. Black
D. Min., ABD

APPENDIX L
READINESS FOR CHANGE SURVEY RESULTS

	Not Favorable 1	Favorable 2	No Opinion 3	Most Favorable 4	Highly Favorable 5
1.	1	14	4	7	4
2.	0	5	4	12	10
3.	1	11	2	15	3
4.	1	10	3	14	3
5.	0	3	0	19	9
6.	1	14	7	7	1
7.	4	13	4	6	4
8.	14	8	2	4	2
9.	5	5	11	9	0
10.	0	4	6	12	8
11.	0	3	6	14	7
12.	0	7	2	12	9
13.	4	2	3	8	13
14.	0	6	0	17	9
15.	5	10	1	9	6
	36	115	55	165	88

APPENDIX M
PROPOSED PASTORAL APPOINTMENT PROCESS COVER LETTER SENT TO
CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

Larry D. Black
(757) 420-4896
blackld@hotmail.com

[DATE]

Mr. President,

Several weeks ago I sent out a survey to the pastors and Executive Committee members asking for their assistance with my ministry project. Thirty percent of the surveys were returned and indicated that a favorable atmosphere existed within the Conference that would allow a change in the way the Allegheny East Conference appoints its pastors.

This feedback assisted me in creating a model that I believe would facilitate favorable change. This is not to suggest by any means that the Conference's process is not working. My research gave me the belief that this model could be a benefit to the Conference and its churches.

I am not privy to your point of view as the Conference President. My perspective is purely from a research base. I would gladly like to obtain your analysis and feedback of my research findings and model so that I can integrate your wisdom and insight with my research and model.

Thank you in advance for your continued support and I ask for your blessing as I strive to serve our God and His Church. If you have any concerns or questions about this project please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Larry D. Black
D. Min., ABD

APPENDIX N
DESCRIPTION OF THE PROSED PASTRORAL APPOINTMENT PROCESS SENT TO THE ALLLEGHENY EAST CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

Description of the Proposed Pastoral Appointment Process

This ministry project will examine the pastoral appointment process by the Allegheny East Conference for the Cedars of Lebanon Seventh-day Adventist Church. The members of the church agreed to participate in this project to give insight concerning their involvement in the process of the appointment of their pastor. The author solicited and obtained recommendations from pastors and denominational leaders concerning their pastoral appointment procedures. The results of this feedback and input revealed that the Allegheny East Conference could benefit with changes in procedure. (Increase in tithe and attendance) This project has incorporated the different methods of how other Conferences within the denomination appoint pastors and suggest changes in the current Allegheny East Conference procedures. To implement the suggested changes in procedures this ministry project created a model for those changes. The model has the following goals.

First, to develop a process which does not disrupt the conference or church's ministry emphasis when selecting and appointing a pastor. Second, to assist the conference in selecting a pastor who matches the needs of a particular church in regards to personality, skill and experience. And lastly, to develop a procedure that can be easily modified to meet the needs of any specific conference or church.

It is hoped that at the conclusion of this ministry project that both the Cedars of Lebanon Church and the Allegheny East Conference will benefit from the model that has been created for the appointment of its future pastor.

Step by Step Process

The author created a step-by-step model for the Proposed Pastoral Appointment

Process (PPAP). The PPAP is based on the readiness for change survey conducted for the

Allegheny East Conference and the Pastoral Appointment Survey completed by the Cedars of

Lebanon Church. The model for the PPAP is to be implemented by the Allegheny East

Conference and the Cedars of Lebanon Church in the following manner.

The Allegheny East Conference

1. The Allegheny East Conference Executive Committee and pastors of the

    conference fills out the readiness for change survey to see if they are ready for

    change. (appendix A)

2. If, according to the survey they are not ready for change, then those areas that are

    impeding change should be focused upon and improved if possible. Second, the

    Conference leadership may need to be more fully educated concerning the idea of

    a need for change. And finally, change may have to wait until there is a more

    change-friendly context.

3. If they are ready for change, then the Conference Executive Committee (CEC)

    develops a personal profile for each of their pastors that identify their gifts,

    professional experience and expectations. This profile should be updated annually so

    that accuracy and truthfulness can be maintained. Most Conferences already have a

    way of profiling their pastors. They can use this already existing profile if they feel it

    will serve their purpose. In the event the CEC does not have a method of profiling

    their pastors, see appendix C for a suggested model.

4. The CEC develops a church profile that includes a statement of its needs, its

    characteristics and its vision. This profile should be updated annually so as to

show the growth and progress of the church. Most Conferences have a way of determining the vision and personality of its churches and this can be used if they feel it will serve their purpose. In the event that a participating church in this ministry project does not have a church profile in place, see appendix D for suggested model.

5. The CEC prays with those pastors and churches wishing to make a change. A date and time should be set aside so that everyone can be involved in this part of the process. Praying for God's will to be done is the focus of this particular step. It is vitally important that both the candidate(s) and congregation believe that it is God's will that they be matched together.

6. The CEC develops a compatibility list using the church profile and the pastor profile to match the church's needs with the gifts of the pastor. (See appendix E for model.) When a Conference looks at the church being considered and the pastors that are available, this list will help simplify the matching process. It can also be used to inform any church or pastor that a change is about to take place and they need to prepare themselves for that change.

7. The CEC prescreens the list of candidate(s) that they believe would match the needs of that particular congregation. Based on the pastoral profile and the church profile, several names may stand out as a good match. Consider all the data available and pick the candidate that best matches the Church.

8. The list of candidate(s) is shared with the Cedars of Lebanon church. The CEC asks the church pastoral appointment committee (PAC) to review the names of possible pastoral candidate(s) for consideration and recommendation. The pastoral appointment committee reviews the package(s) submitted from the CEC and presents

their recommendation to the church. (Package contains church profile, pastor profile, compatibility profile, and any other helpful information) The church then selects their choice (if more than one candidate, they will order their selection 1, 2, 3) and through the PAC, informs the CEC of its decision. The church's selection is deeply considered in the decision but not the only consideration.

9.   After much prayer and thorough consideration, the CEC makes the decision whom to appoint or not to appoint and informs the PAC. The PAC notifies the church of the decision of the CEC on what pastor will be appointed to them. The congregation, having voted its choice and placing a high level of trust in God and the CEC, and believing that the will of God is being done, receives the appointed candidate to be its pastor.

10. Each year the Conference, Pastor and Church meet together (on an agreed upon date) to determine if the match between pastor and church is working out. Any problems or concerns can be addressed and taken care of at this time.

If a candidate outside the particular conference were considered for an appointment, then the CEC would prescreen that candidate whom they believe would match the needs of the specific church. That candidate would be evaluated the same way a candidate inside the conference would be with an additional reviewing of credentials, education, resume, ordination or licensing and references. (Has he served effectively in another conference? What does his current conference president say about him?)

Cedars of Lebanon Church

1.   The Cedars of Lebanon Church completes a pastoral appointment survey to determine if she is willing to participate in the appointment of her pastor. (see appendix B)

2.   If the church does not want to participate in the appointment of its pastor, then there

      are no further steps to be taken in this process.

3.   If the church does want to participate in the appointment process then she selects the

      members of the pastoral appointment committee. (PAC) The PAC should be large

      enough to get the job done but small enough to provide efficiency in communication

      and interviewing. The PAC should be made up of active church members who

      support the work of the church. It should also be representative of the church's

      membership.

4.   The PAC conducts a survey of the congregation in an effort to understand their

      desires in what they are looking for and expecting from a new pastor. (see appendix

      F)

5.   The PAC schedules and meets with the CEC to review and discuss the list of

      pastoral candidate(s). This can be accomplished through a variety of ways.

      (conference call, video conferencing, or meeting in person)

6.   The PAC presents the list of pastoral candidate(s) to the church for their

      approval and vote.

7.   After much prayer and discussion the church reviews the candidate(s) and votes

      their choice.

8.   The PAC informs the CEC of the church's recommendation for its pastor.

Expected Results

With the development and implementation of the PPAP it is expected that the

Conference Executive Committee will discover the benefits of being more inclusive of the

Cedars of Lebanon Church in the process of selection and appointment of her pastor. It is

expected that the frustrations expressed by the church membership discovered doing the

pastoral appointment survey will be dramatically reduced. Additionally, it is expected that pastoral frustrations will be fewer in the areas of personality conflict, leadership style, and church vision.

<div align="center">Evaluation</div>

The PPAP model was developed to enable the Allegheny East Conference Executive Committee to establish a more inclusive role for the Cedars of Lebanon Church in the process of selection and appointment of her pastor. It also gives the church through a more involved manner the opportunity to articulate her desires and wishes in the selecting and appointing of her pastor. The enclosed evaluation (see appendix G) has been created so the conference and church can assess the effectiveness of the PPAP and provide any desired feedback.

The following appendices were added to the document so that the Conference President could better understand the process and what it was that was being asked of him. Appendix A: READINESS FOR CHANGE SURVEY. Appendix B: PASTOR APPOINTMENT QUESTIONAIRE. Appendix C: PASTOR PROFILE. Appendix D: CHURCH PROFILE. Appendix E: COMPATIBILITY LIST. Appendix F: EXPECTATIONS OF THE PASTOR'S ROLE. Appendix G: PROPOSED PASTORAL APPOINTMENT PROCESS EVALUATION.

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