

DREW UNIVERSITY

PREPARING THE LAITY TO SERVE  
AS CHURCH LEADERS AT  
PARKCHESTER BAPTIST CHURCH

A PROFESSIONAL PROJECT

SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL  
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DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

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## **REPORT OUTLINE**

This report is titled, Preparing the Laity to Serve as Church Leaders at Parkchester Baptist Church. It reflects the efforts of the candidate to develop a course of study which would provide the laity with a basic understanding of the Scriptural bases, Baptist underpinning and the responsibilities and duties of officers of the church. It was designed to equip the laity for providing effective and efficient leadership for the church community.

The report consists of five chapters, appendices and selected bibliography. Chapter one focuses on a brief history of the Parkchester Baptist Church and the bases for the project. Chapter two addresses steps the candidate took in implementing the project. It concerns itself with the research and planning phase of the project. Chapter three endeavors to share events which took place during the exercising of the project. The next chapter, four, imparts the evaluation of the project and course of study by the participants and the Advisory Team who were involved in the planning and implementation of the project. The retreat, which was a component of the project, is evaluated by those who participated in the event. Chapter five concludes with lessons learned, observations made and reflections of the candidate.

**CHAPTER ONE**  
**THE BACKGROUND AND**  
**BASIS FOR THE PROJECT**

**(1) A Brief History of Parkchester Baptist Church:**

Parkchester Baptist Church is in transition. The church is evolving in its theological self understanding. It is also in transition in its ethnic population, reflecting the community which it serves. The author, an African American, is the church's first pastor of "color". The church's self image has changed since my arrival and is developing diversity in culture, race, national origin and former religious backgrounds.

The Parkchester Baptist Church is located in the East Bronx. The church is named for the large housing development in the proximity of her location. When the Parkchester Development was built in the early 40's it was a "solidly" White community and was religiously mixed; there were Catholics, Jews and various other Protestants.

The community remained White for more than twenty-five years. The church was birthed during this period in 1946. The founders were fifty-two community residents who saw a need for a Baptist witness in the area. Through their efforts they formed a fellowship which primarily saw itself as a "Christian Family Church," defined by Carl S. Dudley as a:

Church (which) assumes a common cultural base, and builds upon this Christian heritage. The continuity of the congregation is often provided by several extended families, whose well-known names are associated with particular pews in the sanctuary and jobs in the church.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Carl S. Dudley, "Using Church Images for Commitment, Conflict, and Renewal," in the Congregations, Their Power to Form and Transform, ed C. Ellis Nelson (Atlanta: John Knox Press,

The church was a "Bible-believing" group of Christians holding to the word of God. Their theology was rooted in the reform tradition of Calvin and Zwingli. The Constitution of the church, Article II, Purpose, states,

The purpose of this Church shall be the advancement of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. It shall seek to attain this end through the public worship of God, the preaching of the Gospel, consistent Christian living by its members, personal and congregational evangelism, missionary endeavor, and Christian education.<sup>2</sup>

The emphasis was on how the members in the church carried themselves, as opposed to what was going on in the community surrounding the church and the lives of its dwellers. The church mission funds were sent out of the community for world missions, not having a mission program which addressed the needs of those around them.

In the sixties, the Parkchester community began to undergo racial change. Blacks and other minorities moved into the area. Over the years, the church continued to accept minorities but they were allowed to hold only certain offices. The tenor of the church remained the same even though the congregation eventually consisted of a "majority of minorities." When the pastor retired in 1988, the church make up was 90% minorities; however, the "power" remained in the hands of those Whites who stayed.

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1988), 89-113.

<sup>2</sup>Parkchester Baptist Church Bronx, New York Constitution, (New York, unpublished, 1984).

(2) The Problem:

This undertaking was motivated by the need for and request from members of the congregation to have a specific course of study designed to train the laity to serve as church leaders. Although the church has been in existence for forty-six years, the majority of the current members have joined the fellowship since I became pastor in 1990. In that year, there were more than sixty persons who joined the fellowship. Approximately forty-five were baptized into the body of Christ; more than fifty-five percent of these persons came from other denominations. The same patterns hold true for the years 1991 and 1992. Many of the members of the church family who were active when I became pastor were also originally from other denominations. Those who consented to serve as leaders demonstrated the zeal and aptitude for the position, but lacked the basic knowledge of Scripture, Baptist polity and the responsibility of the offices.

(3) The Purpose:

The purpose of this endeavor was to provide those members of the congregation who attended the classes with a basic understanding of the Scriptural bases, Baptist underpinning and responsibilities and duties of officers of the church. The effort was designed to equip them in providing effective and efficient leadership for the church community.

(4) The Scope:

This project developed a course of study which provided the participants with knowledge about the Baptist Church and its officers, their duties and responsibilities. It was designed around a series of classes, approximately sixteen, which were held on Tuesday evenings from 7 to 9 p.m. The classes were preceded by a weekend retreat held from January 21 - 23, 1993 . The classes and retreat were constructed and taught in order to provide participants with the following understandings:

- a) An understanding of what it means to be a Baptist in their particular community.
- b) What it means to work and interact with others in a congregational environment.
- c) The duties and responsibilities of officers of a Baptist church, with particular attention being placed on officers of their community.
- d) Provide the biblical and historical tenets of the Baptist church and those officers which are considered as "Scriptural."
- e) Prepare them to serve as leaders of the church community with a greater degree of confidence.

Significant to the project was the selection of the topics to be taught and the design of the syllabus by the Advisory Team and the candidate.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT**

Preparatory to the implementation of this schema was the development and outline of a "methodology." The "methodology" included generating various phases designed to bring the project to fruition. The phases included "research," "planning," "action," "evaluation," and "writing."

The project was designed for "Preparing the Laity to Serve as Church Leaders at Parkchester Baptist Church." It was predicated upon the biblical passage of Ephesians 4:11-13. This passage clearly admonishes pastors and teachers to instruct the laity in the knowledge and understanding of the faith in order that they may be able to carry out their respective responsibilities. This scriptural mandate, coupled with the realization that those most recently in the Parkchester Baptist Church family were from other denominations, motivated me to address the best possible way to prepare the laity for works of service and, at the same time, instruct them in what it means to be a Baptist. This undertaking was accomplished in four phases, the first two being the "research" and "planning" phases.

#### **(1) The Research Phase:**

The "research phase" required that I read, and in some instances re-read, books relating to various aspects of the Baptist denomination, various teaching methods, and officers of the church. The selected bibliography includes books used in researching this project. The information they provided was part of the basis for subsequent phases of this endeavor. Key to the research phase was the understanding of the congregation who would be engaged in the course of study.



Although Parkchester is a church made up of a "majority of minorities," it is not a "traditional" Black Church. This is true even though the greater portion of the congregants are of African descent. The significance of this is that the research had to involve establishing a basis of comparison between the "dominant culture" which formed the initial foundation of the church and that of the present congregation. The research had to define the Baptist tradition from both the White and Black perspectives. The research also had to include the understanding of the traditions of the Hispanic and Caribbean cultures, which also are a part of the church family. The selected bibliography reflects this attempt in doing the research.

In addition to the ethnic relationship in the church, the research had to consider the church's emerging self image. Its earlier self understanding as a "Christian Family Church" was giving way to a "Christian Nurture Church." Carl S. Dudley relates that the congregation which views itself as a "Christian Nurture Church" understands the church to be:

a "new" and more open family composed of people with different backgrounds who are bonded by their common faith and a covenant of mutual acceptance in the Lord. The congregation sees its ministry in responding to personal concerns and family problems. Lifecycle issues are the focus for most groups which the church sponsors and houses in its building, such as singles groups, young mothers clubs, sports teams, couples clubs, and a parish shepherding plan. Members participate for personal nourishment and growth. They are united in worship, in a variety of special interest groups, and in the person (or figure) of the pastor.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Carl S. Dudley, "Using Church Images for Commitment, Conflict, and Renewal," ed. C. Ellis Nelson, Congregations, Their Power to Form and Transform, (Atlanta, John Knox Press, 1988), p. 100.

The research evolved from the biblical foundations of the "church," moving through the scriptural officers, that of pastor and deacon in the Baptist tradition. It went on to address the historical development of the Baptist tradition from the "White Church" to the separation of the "White Church" between the North and South. Further exploration delved into the birth of the "Black Church" and her subsequent conference bodies, e.g., National Baptist Convention USA. The Baptist church as it related to establishing "missions" in Puerto Rico, the Caribbean and South America was also probed.

Besides the biblical and historical research conducted, investigation was made relative to congregational polity and government. Baptist polity coincides with the congregational form of government. Each congregation is an autonomous body although it aligns itself with a regional and national convention. The way polity is experienced and carried out in the mainline Baptist Church and the Black Church was reconnoitered. Significant to the development of the course of study as it related to the White and Black Churches was Peter J. Paris's comments on the role of the Black Church. He relates the teachings it had learned from the White Church in The Social Teaching of the Black Churches.

As with the nation, black churches have made most of the prominent causes of the white churches their causes, such as prohibition, temperance, sexual laxity, gambling, smoking, dancing, divorce, revivalism, and foreign missions. Although their commitment to these issues aided the task of constructing a viable social order in the black community patterned after the social norms promulgated by the white churches, these issues have often appeared to take precedence over the original purposes of the black church independence movement which aimed at religious, moral, and political freedom from racial oppression. The moral dilemma is seen in their understanding of Christian moral formation, namely, the development of law-abiding, respectable citizens whose diligence in work, thrift in consumption, gentle manners, good character, and patient spirit contributed to the maintenance of peace and harmony between the

racess. In our judgement, as long as the churches thought and acted in that way they constituted no actual threat to the oppressive structures of the larger society but in a sense contributed unwittingly to the maintenance of the status quo.<sup>4</sup>

The significance of this was that the Black Church desired to be separate from the White Church but held an ambiguity about it in that it, for a time, promulgated the same teachings. This was found to be true of other minority churches as well. This dilemma did not change, for the most part, until the Civil Rights movement and subsequently "Black Theology." Paris did acknowledge this tension when he further exhorted,

Independent black churches have always been in conflict with the larger white society, a conflict that has often resulted in considerable ambivalence among blacks toward Christianity per se. On the one hand, blacks have loved and affirmed Jesus, while, on the other, they have rejected "white Christianity." The latter disposition has usually been radicalized in the ideologies of so-called black nationalist groups. During the first century of their enslavement, blacks refused to accept Christianity, because they associated it wholly with the religion of their masters - a religion that viewed them as slaves by nature. Only after they had had the opportunity to reform the religion of their overseers did they accept Christianity. Hence the fundamental principle that we call the black Christian tradition was a necessary condition for the Christianization of the race. In other words, independence and Christian reform logically preceded the religious conversion of black Americans.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Peter J. Paris, The Social Teaching of the Black Churches, (Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1985,) 44.

<sup>5</sup>ibid, 110.

As Parkchester evolved from that of being a "White Church" to that of being an "ethnic church," the same ambivalence of wanting to hold to the religious hermeneutics of White Christians, as opposed to defining their own hermeneutics, was experienced among the members. As a part of preparing for and developing this course of study, it was necessary that this ambivalence be taken into consideration. Understanding all of the aforementioned transformations the church was, and is, undergoing had to be addressed when doing research and developing the course of study for this project.

(2) The Planning Phase:

Concurrent with the "Research Phase" was the "Planning Phase." It had been decided to solicit the assistance of those persons who served as advisors during a previous unit of instruction involving researching the community and its systems. They were familiar with the Doctor of Ministry program from that undertaking and would have to be oriented only to the "Project Phase." Each of the nine people who were to serve was contacted individually; all consented to serve. The team was made up of one male and eight women; all were born in various parts of the United States and are African Americans. The team was not specifically designed to be representative of the church population, but consisted of those people who were immediately available to serve and who I felt comfortable with at the time. An initial orientation meeting was set up and consummated.

The "Advisory Team," as it was designated, consisted of Erma Casterlow, Jean Francis, Valarie Francis, Barbara Jones, Ingrid Moses, Edward Richards, Cynthia Waller, Janice Woods and Dorothy Wright. They are members of the congregation. Their length of time as members varied from two years and up. All are members of the community which the church sees herself as serving. The educational, economic, political, and social background of each member differs. Some are officers of the church while others are not. At least one, Jean Francis, is a senior citizen.

Jean is retired from the New York Telephone Company. She serves as the chairperson of the Flower Ministry. She has been a member of the church family for three years. Jean had converted from the Catholic tradition approximately ten years previously. Erma Casterlow is a member of the church who did not initially serve in an office. In 1993, she was elected to the Benevolences Ministry of the Church. She works at the New York Telephone Company. Erma has lived in the Parkchester area for more than thirteen years. She began irregularly attending the church when she moved into the area. However, she did not unite with the fellowship until 1990; she is a life long Baptist. Valarie Francis was baptized into the church in 1990 coming from the Catholic tradition. Ms. Francis served on the Counting Ministry and, after her term expired, was subsequently elected to the Trustee Ministry. She is a Civilian Personnel Supervisor at the New York City Police Department. Barbara Jones is a Deacon, the former Church Clerk and is active in other Ministries. Barbara has been a member of the church for four years although she had been attending the church for more than eight years. She is a life long Baptist. She holds the Master of Arts degree in Public Administration and Urban Policy from Brooklyn College. Barbara works as a consultant to the New York City Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Alcoholism Services<sup>6</sup>. Ingrid Moses is a long-time resident of Parkchester. She attended the church off and on until she became a member in 1991, uniting through baptism, coming out of the United Methodist Church. In 1993, she was elected to serve as the Sunday School Ministry Superintendent. Ingrid works for Cornell Medical College and holds the Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education. Edward Richards was baptized into the church family in 1991. He did not formerly practice any faith tradition although he had attended various churches in the past. Edward was appointed, in 1992, to serve on the Pastoral Relations Ministry, and also

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<sup>6</sup> During the course of Ms. Jones' tenure on the Advisory Team, she was elected as the Democratic Female District Leader, 76th Assembly District, which covers the Parkchester area.

elected to serve on the Counting Ministry. He works for the U.S. Postal Service. Cynthia Waller was raised in the Baptist Church; her father is a Baptist minister. She united with the church in 1991 through baptism. Cynthia has subsequently been elected to serve on the Benevolences Ministry. She is primarily a mother and housewife, and works in the administrative assistant field outside of the home. Janice Woods has been a member of the church for three years. She holds no offices, although she is active in various Ministries of the church. Janice is a life long Baptist. She is an administrator for the Gulf Oil Company. She holds the Bachelor of Arts degree. Dorothy Wright was baptized into the fellowship in 1991. She was raised in the Baptist Church. Dorothy, in 1993, was elected to serve on the Christian Education Ministry. She is also a teacher in the Sunday School Ministry. Ms. Wright works for the Consolidated Edison Company (CON ED) and holds an Associate of Arts degree.

Preparatory to the meeting of the Advisory Team, a memorandum was prepared. The memorandum included enclosures explaining what the current undertaking involved. At the initial meeting, the memorandum was given out and discussed. Members were then divided into three teams: retreat, syllabus, and evaluation. The retreat team was made up of Janice Woods, Edward Richards, and Valarie Francis. They were responsible for planning and developing the retreat. The candidate provided the team with a list of possible retreat sights and the time period desired for the retreat to be held. The syllabus team included Cynthia Waller, Ingrid Moses, and Jean Francis. They were to select the subjects which were to be taught. The candidate provided a list of topics to the syllabus team from his prospectus as a basis for their selection. In addition to their choices, they were to receive recommendations from the other team members as to topics to be instructed. The evaluation team consisted of Barbara Jones, Dorothy Wright, and Erma Casterlow. This team was responsible for developing evaluation forms to evaluate the retreat, course of study and the involvement of Advisory Team. The candidate apprised

the team of the criteria to be used in the evaluation forms. In addition to the criteria, he also provided reference material on preparing evaluation forms. The sub-teams were instructed as to the need for their interaction. They were further advised to keep notes so they could complete their overall evaluation of the "project design, planning, action and leadership by the candidate." The entire Advisory Team covenanted to meet the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m., unless otherwise notified. During the interim, sub-teams would meet and begin their planning and research in order to further develop their aspect of the project.

Meetings of the Advisory Team were held as scheduled except for February when it was cancelled due to weather. The same attitude of being cooperative and supportive engendered at the initial meeting was present at subsequent meetings. Target dates were agreed upon and sub-teams came prepared with the materials needed to conduct meetings. Reports were received and clarification was given on subject matter as needed. The syllabus team developed two syllabi, one for the retreat and the other for the continuing course of study. The subjects included for the retreat were "Leadership Development" and "Conflict Management and Resolution." The candidate was to teach the "Leadership Development" course and Rev. Dr. Neville C. Brathwaite<sup>7</sup>, selected by the candidate, was to teach the "Conflict Management and Resolution" course. In conjunction with the retreat team, the dates for the retreat were set for Friday, January 22 through Sunday the 24th. The syllabi for the retreat and Tuesday evening class are included in the appendices as Appendix I and II.

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<sup>7</sup>Rev. Neville C. Brathwaite, Phd., is a certified psychoanalytic psychotherapist, a clinical member of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapist. He is an endorsed Mental Health American Baptist Chaplain. For the past twenty-five years he has served as Protestant Chaplain at Manhattan Psychiatric Center and is the first African-American chaplain certified in the State of New York. He is the Ecumenical representative of the New York State Council of Churches for New York City.

The syllabus for the Tuesday evening course was designed for fifteen sessions. It was decided that classes would not be held when there were New York City Public School holidays. Class would meet from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. beginning on January 12, 1993, and continue through April 27, 1993, with a concluding class on May 4th to be used for completing evaluation forms and general comments and discussion. The general syllabus is included in the appendix. In addition to the course outline, the syllabus included a cover sheet outlining the objectives of the course of study. The "selected bibliography" from the prospectus was a part of the package.

The course of study was announced to the congregation in order to solicit participants. Solicitations were extended from November 1992 through January 1993. Announcements were put into the bulletin and passed on via word of mouth. The course was open to anyone who desired to come; however, current and prospective officers of the church were particularly encouraged to enroll. At various meetings of Ministries of the church, personal appeals were made for officers to enroll in the class. Forty-five registration forms were subsequently received for enrollment in the course of study.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE ACTION PHASE**

This chapter will endeavor to share events which took place during the exercising of the project. The class make-up will be discussed, followed by the retreat and events surrounding it. The Tuesday evening sessions will then be discussed. Events which proved to be insightful, or caused extended conversations, will be shared. Other unusual occurrences which impacted the class, such as weather, rescheduling or other conflicts, will be conveyed.

#### **(1) The Class:**

As previously mentioned, forty-five registration forms were received. On the first evening of class, those who had registered arrived for the lecture. The syllabus was distributed and discussed. The purpose and objective of the course was discussed in detail. Questions were answered. The upcoming retreat was discussed, including the cost and topics to be presented. The initial response of most of those present was enthusiastic and full of expectation.

Forty-five persons registered for the class, twenty-five to thirty persons subsequently remained in attendance. There were five heterosexual couples, six unaccompanied males and the rest females. Of the couples, four males and four females (not necessarily married to each other) are church or auxiliary officers. Sixteen persons who serve as officers of the church or its auxiliary organizations were in attendance. The four "boards" of the church, Diaconate, Trustees, Christian Education and Missions, were minimally represented. Of the eighteen members of the Diaconate, they were represented by two females and two males. Of the nine Trustees, two females were in attendance.

Of the six members of the Board Christian Education, three females were in attendance. Of the six members of the Board Missions, none attended. Also in attendance were the Financial Secretary(also a male deacon), Sunday School Superintendent and the Assistant Sunday School Superintendent, both females. Ethnically, the class consisted of four Hispanics; two from Puerto Rico, one person each from Panama and Costa Rica. The rest of the class were African Americans from various geographical areas of the country. Fifty percent of the class was from other faith traditions before they became Baptist., e.g., Roman Catholic, Episcopalian, African Methodist Episcopal. One of the participants was not affiliated with any faith tradition but subsequently became a part of this fellowship.

Some of those who dropped out explained their various reasons: one person went back to college, another was hospitalized, others found they had other commitments on Tuesday evenings. However, the majority of those who did not return advised the candidate that the course of study was on a level they believed they could not handle. They thought they would be able to learn in the traditional manner -- by the candidate lecturing and their taking notes. Those in this group felt they would attend the Wednesday evening prayer and Bible study which is on a more traditional level, one they could better understand and appreciate.

The initial orientation included advising the participants they would be divided into three groups. They were further advised they would have to make presentations on the dates indicated in the syllabus. It was explained that the candidate's teaching technique was designed to enable participants to engage the work for themselves. The candidate shares in Paul's instruction to Timothy when he advised him, "what you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well." (2 Timothy 2:2, NRSV.) The groups were to provide support for group members and enhance the learning process. The large number of people in the class, and their remaining in one group, was not

conducive to providing the type of instruction needed for one to engage the lesson.

Martha M. Leypoldt relates in her book, 40 Ways to Teach in Groups,

The leader, therefore, will want to teach in such a manner that the learner is given opportunity to make his (her) own decision, recognizing that to learn effectively a person must take responsibilities and be actively involved in the teaching-learning process.<sup>8</sup>

The size of the class is an important element in ensuring that "learning" takes place. The smaller groups are more amenable for this process to take place. Ms. Leypoldt supports this position when she writes,

...the larger the group the less possibility there is of interpersonal relationships among the participants. When a group exceeds fifteen persons, the number of members who are able to participate meaningfully would be limited. A very few aggressive members would tend to dominate the discussion in a larger group.<sup>9</sup>

It was explained that the groups, in preparation for their presentations, would need to do independent research. The "tools" and supplementary material needed to do the research would be shared with the class. Other aspects of the course of instruction were reviewed so that there would be a minimum of misunderstanding by the participants.

In preparation for the retreat, the class was also informed that groups would be assigned a specific area of responsibility. This included the preached Word, the Lord's Supper, Scripture lesson and music. It was expounded that all groups were to work together in order that no one group carry a heavier burden than the others.

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<sup>8</sup>Martha M. Leypoldt, 40 Ways to Teach in Groups, (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1982), 15.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid*, 28.

(2) The Retreat:

The retreat was scheduled for the weekend of January 22 through 24. The cost was \$120.00, which included all meals, lodging, and transportation. Many of those who registered for the class did so with an expectation of going on the retreat. Twenty people could be accommodated at the retreat site, and, that number had preliminarily stated they would attend.

During the latter part of December 1992, the church embarked on a project to purchase a building adjacent to the edifice. Members of the congregation were asked to contribute whatever they could towards the raising of the \$50,000.00 needed for the down payment and closing cost. Registrants for the retreat were confronted with paying for the retreat or contributing towards the purchase of the building. As a result of this dilemma, only twelve people were able to attend the retreat, in addition to the candidate and the other instructor.

Saturday morning of the retreat began with a morning devotional followed by breakfast. The lectures took place in the morning and afternoon. During the lunch period, the group interacted with the other groups of people who were at the retreat center. They shared stories as they broke bread together. This interaction continued at the evening meal and afterwards. One young lady came by during the evening and stayed with the group for a considerable length of time. They were sharing stories about themselves and their organizations.

Each presenter, Dr. Brathwaite and the candidate, gave two-hour lectures. The lectures included handouts and the active participation of each person. The candidate gave the presentation on "Leadership Principles and Development". Dr. Brathwaite lectured on "Conflict Management and Resolution". The primary biblical foundation used for the presentation on "Leadership Principles and Development" was taken from Ephesians 4:11-16, with particular attention to verses 11 and 12. Gary M. Gray's book,

Christian Growth and Leadership" was used as the basis for the "Ten Leadership Principles."<sup>10</sup> The biblical text used for "Conflict Management and Resolution" was 1 Kings 13:1-10.

The theme for the "Leadership Principles and Development" lecture centered on God's gifts to leaders for the edification of the people so that they could be empowered and go forth to empower others. Jesus as "teacher" and "servant," empowering and sending forth his disciples was the model used to further develop the leadership presentation. The Gospel accounts where Jesus "... began to speak and taught them, saying...," and, "Again he began to teach...," were lifted up to depict his great concern for teaching those who were to do works of service. Ensuring that one who was to lead and give instructions to others was properly trained is an important part of empowerment. The argument between the disciples as to who would be "greatest" and Jesus' response,

...whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve..., (Matthew 20:26b-28a NRSV),

was exhibited as a servant model for leadership.

Supplemental literature used was an article by Jeffrey D. Jones, "The Meaning of Leadership," taken from the April 1981 Baptist Leader, published by the American Baptist Board of Education and Publication (see Appendix III). Primary for the lecture was Mr. Jone's definition of leadership, "A leader is a person who uses her or his gifts to enable others in ministry." His discussion focused on how this definition can be understood and implemented. He further described the leader's role as,

1. The key function of a leader is to enable others;
2. Enabling others is a process through which the leader helps others discover, develop, and effectively

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<sup>10</sup>Gary M. Gray, Christian Growth and Leadership, (Austin, Texas, Church Management, Inc, 1987) 138-142.

use their God-given gifts; and, 3. Others are enabled by leaders whose primary desire is to serve.

Issues surrounding obstacles to one being an effective leader were discussed. Participants were asked to share five attributes of their ability to lead and five barriers to their leadership potential. Some of the obstacles pointed out were one's ego, impatience and lack of confidence in self and others. Attributes included being able to share information with others, adequate self-esteem, and helping to raise one's consciousness about God and forces that impact one's life.

Dr. Brathwaite stated that his workshop would focus on the source of conflict in one's self, family, church and the wider community. It would help participants identify their own internal conflict and how it is expressed in her or his unique way. The anticipated results were to guide the participant in the recognition and resolution of conflict so that effective team building could begin to take place. He defined conflict as "...A struggle for, and/or with, authority." Conflict is inevitable and takes place in everyone's life, usually on a daily basis. Although conflict is usually viewed as negative, Dr. Brathwaite contends that conflict can be resolved in a loving and creative way; further, it can be managed, contained and constructive. He lifted up some of the root causes of conflict as,

1. Each person sees and experiences the world through her/his own perception and framework, therefore one's views may differ from another's.
2. People are intentional and willful human beings, each with her/his own goal and agenda with a desire to accomplish it. Their goal and agenda may not be in harmony with another's.
3. People are social beings, operating in the context of others, family, church, community, and the world is perceived differently by each group in its own context.

The workshop included addressing barriers to effective communication, dealing creatively with criticism, and learning and managing one's conflict resolution style, as well as that of others. Participants were given exercises on "Learning the Skills of Peacemaking," disclosing at least five items which they viewed as serious barriers to effective communications, and how to understand what criticism is and deal with it. The workshop took place in the context of a large group for general discussions and smaller groups for the exercises. The parting thought was that, "One should remember and believe that with God all things are possible; that conflict can be a source of redemption."

The evaluation of the retreat was conducted as a separate component; it will be discussed in the succeeding chapter on "Evaluations."

### (3) Tuesday Evening Classes

The class was designed whereas the candidate provided an overview of the topic, coupled with Scriptural references and handouts, which were designed to assist the groups in preparing for their presentations.

For the most part, Tuesday evening classes were conducted on schedule. There were two classes which were not held due to the class attending other functions. The first class was that of April 6, when they participated in an inter-faith seder. The class was allowed to decide on whether to attend the seder or not<sup>11</sup>. The second event the class elected to participate in was a "listening session" conducted by the newly elected Regional Executive Minister of Metropolitan New York. This session actually supplemented the information of the class. It was an opportunity for participants to ask questions of the

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<sup>11</sup>Ms. Leypoldt relates, "...important interactions between the leader and group member are these: The Leader gives the group member an opportunity to participate in developing the goals of the teaching-learning situation. The Group Member assumes his (her) responsibility in determining goals." From a theological perspective human kind has been given "free will" enabling them to make choices. There are, however, consequences to one's choices and the person must assume responsibility for the choice made and the results of their choice.

Regional Executive Minister and his staff. It also afforded them the occasion to glean a better understanding of the relationship between the regional office and the local church, and to observe and directly participate in another leadership style.

The Tuesday evening groups, while researching "pastor," "deacon," and other officers and boards of the church, discovered some interesting points. Regarding the word "pastor," the presenters found it surprising that each time they looked up this word they were referred to "shepherd." They found that the word has a literal, as well as a metaphorical meaning. For their purposes, they dealt with the metaphorical meaning. They established that a "pastor/shepherd" is one who is called by God to lead, teach, tend, nurture, pray and care for, as well as serve the people of God. The "shepherd" is one who "represents" God to the people. For their contemporary understanding of "pastor/shepherd", they relied on the description from A Baptist Manual of Polity and Practice<sup>12</sup>. They found the section on pastoral ministry to be inclusive of the duties and responsibilities of the pastor. What they found most interesting was the theme of the role of the pastor as being that of a teacher, one who is to empower and equip members for works of service in ministry. On page 98, the quoted,

Equally prominent in the pastor's role is the duty of teaching. While many share in the instructional life of the church, the pastor is the chief teacher. He is a teacher of teachers and plays an important part in the preparation of leaders in all of the church offices.

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<sup>12</sup>Norman H. Maring and Winthrop S. Hudson, A Baptist Manual of Polity and Practice, (Valley Forge, Judson Press, 1990), 95-101.



The office of the Deacon proved to engender much discussion. Most of the discourse centered on the role of women as deacons. Finding that in the Greek the word referred to one being a "servant" and could equally apply to female or male, they addressed it being identified primarily with males. The presenters related that Paul's letter to Timothy at 3:8-13, is considered by many commentaries to suggest the office of deacon is for males only. During the group's presentation, they offered other Scriptures which would lend themselves to another understanding of the gender of deacon. They relied on Romans 16:1, where women are referred to as deacons; Acts 2:17 which quotes Joel 2:28-32 alluding to God pouring out his Spirit on sons and daughters, all flesh. The consensus reached was that one could interpret Scriptures in a number of ways, but it was up to each church as to the construct of their Deacon Board. Another discussion was raised as to the need for deacons to be "ordained" or elected for a term period. In the "traditional" Black Church and some White Churches, deacons are "ordained" and, therefore, appointed for life. Pros and cons were raised about the issue, but no consensus was reached. The constitution of the Parkchester Baptist Church does not call for deacons to be ordained but does stipulate that deacons are to serve a three year term, then a year must elapse before they can be re-elected.

The office of Trustee and the related financial officers did not cause as much controversy as did the office of Deacon. What was found important to the class was the relationship between the Trustees and the calling of the seven as lifted up in Acts 6. They discussed the need for trustees to be spiritual officers as well as temporal persons. The duties and responsibilities of the trustees and financial officers were discussed as they related to the church. What was pointed out was the need for trustees, as well as the other officers of the church, to go through an intentional course of study which would prepare them for the office they hold.

The Boards of Christian Education and Missions were dealt with in a straight forward manner. The highlight of these discussions was the need for the Christian Education Ministry to be more involved with coordinating workshops with other ministries of the church. This is not usually done, but is suppose to be one of their duties. The Mission Ministry is actively involved in promoting missions in the locate community as well as in cooperation with the denomination. The need for the Mission Ministry to be more involved in social action issues was discussed. Consensus was that a separate ministry to deal with these issues should be established, particularly since members of the congregation are involved in movements in the community which address crucial issues forcibly impacting the life of our congregants.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THE EVALUATION PHASE**

The evaluation of this project was conducted in three phases. The first was the evaluation of the retreat; the next, of the Tuesday evening classes and finally, the evaluation of the Advisory Team. In addition to the written evaluations, there was an oral debriefing. Each phase will be discussed under the respective headings. Copies of the evaluation forms are included in the appendices as Appendix IV, V and VI respectively.

#### **(1) The Retreat:**

The overall evaluation of the retreat was excellent. The participants found the location, facilities and organization of the retreat more than adequate. The workshop leaders were well informed and gave their presentations in such a manner that the group could understand the contents. The handouts and interaction were relevant and assisted in gaining a better understanding of the material. The participants were able to relax and enjoy themselves despite the tight schedule which was kept. They related they would have no problem recommending the retreat to others nor attending another retreat if offered.

What participants shared as important to them ranged from the excitement of attending their first retreat to being involved in planning a worship service. For many of the participants this was their first retreat, they did not know what to expect. They enjoyed being able to walk in the solace of the outdoors and feel the closeness of creation. One young lady expressed feeling closer to God in seeing the deer walking across the grounds. To be able to walk in the outdoors and see the full view of the sky without the obstruction of buildings was a retreat and respite in itself. The ability, shared another participant, to be away from the busyness and noise of the city afforded the occasion to be able to listen for God to speak to her. Solace, tranquility, serenity, fresh air, and peace

were, for some, an opportunity to commune with God and actually feel her/his presence.

The retreat provided most with their first chance to actually be involved with planning and carrying out a worship service. The sister who presented the message shared she had anxiety attacks from the moment she was made aware she was to bring the message until after she had consummated her assignment. She expressed the fear and trepidation associated with preparing a sermon and having to present it before a group, even though the group consisted of people she knew. The feeling of being responsible for bringing the "Word of God" to others was "awesome" and "incomprehensible" before that episode. She stated she had a great deal more respect for pastors or anyone else who had the task of sharing a "Word from the Lord" with others. The reality of the task was not thought about before she had to do it, but now she can never look upon it in an unassuming manner again.

Another sister shared her greater respect for the Lord's Supper after being involved with planning the Service and preparing the elements. She, as others also shared, never gave much thought as to what went into preparing for the celebrating of the ordinance. Her experience had been she came to church, the table was set and subsequently, served to the congregation. However, having to handle the "body" and "blood" of Jesus was not what she expected. The realization for her was that she was assisting in preparing one of the two ordinances of the church. She believed she could feel the "presence" of the Lord while handling the elements and serving them. She found herself not being at all cavalier but reverent and humbled. The young lady expressed she had a new found respect for the way she would participate in taking of the Lord's Supper in the future.

The most overwhelming aspect of the retreat for one of the brothers was the workshops, particularly the "Conflict Management and Resolution" portion. He discovered that having to share with others the usual ways he dealt with conflict caused him to have to examine himself as he was not accustomed. The small group he was in did not allow him to "get over" with shallow or trivial answers. They pressed him to the point where it ceased to be an exercise and became an interpersonal action session. He disclosed his sense of ambiguity about the encounter. On the one hand it helped him to begin to deal with himself in a new way; however, on the other, it was somewhat uncomfortable to share with others, especially when the others seem to see through the defense mechanisms he had in place.

In addition to the experiences members had, two other poignant points were shared. The first was a need for a class in interpersonal relationships. This came about as a result of the experiences many had when they were broken into small groups in "Conflict Management and Resolution" workshop. They discovered that their relationships were more surface than real and the need to move beyond that was expressed. Dr. Brathwaite assented to prepare and conduct such a class in September, 1993. The other point was the need to have a follow-up session, in six months or so, with the group to ascertain where they were in their roles as leaders and in handling conflict and to determine whether what they had experienced at the retreat was an aberration or the beginning of a real change. As an aside, if this suggestion were achieved, it would apart from this present project.

(2) Tuesday Evening Classes:

Overall the sessions were given an excellent rating by the participants. They found that the syllabus presented what was lectured on in the classes. The material and handouts proved to be more than helpful in their preparation for their presentation and overall general knowledge. The candidate was clear and thorough in his presentation. However, some contended that the candidate could have simplified the theological terms encountered in the lessons. The participants felt that the time devoted to each topic was more than sufficient. The groups did an excellent job in their presentation. The information shared appeared to be well researched and presented. The questions and issues raised during the discussions were adequately handled by the groups making the presentation. The consensus of the group was that the group format and presentation should remain an integral part of the format.

The participants shared that the topics discussed were of tremendous value to them in their understanding the Baptist tradition, responsibilities and duties of officers and her history. They did express that the topics would have been better presented in a six to eight week course of study for all officers of the church. The topics were not, in their opinion, challenging enough for them. They were looking for a topic which addressed a more contemporary issue encroaching upon them. Topics suggested were cults, prayer in schools, the relationship between church and state, and euthanasia. The interest level for the topic presented was high, but the class believed that if the topic had been more challenging their motivation level would have been correspondingly higher.

The consensus of the officers who participated in the course of study was they felt better equipped to perform the duties they were charged with carrying out. The information provided enabled them to have a better sense of what the particular office was designed to do and how it fit in the overall scheme of the church. Some of the personal responses to the question related to general comments and an overall analysis/critique of the class were:

Because of the class I am now able to understand and question comments made by others. Before these classes when I heard things that troubled me I was not equipped to research subjects that trouble me. I'm very pleased to have been given this chance to grow and learn. I have found friends that without this class I'm sure I'd not have made.

My knowledge of the Scriptures have increased, my willingness to share what I have learned makes me feel good. As for being a disciple of Christ, I'm still striving to reach that goal. Yes, I would and have recommended the C.B.C. to friends and members of various boards in our church.

The Bible class has open my heart and my whole personality as far as being a new disciple in Christ. It has increased my knowledge, my faith and has made me a better person since I have come to really know what a Christian is all about. I would like to see the whole Parkchester Baptist Church take the class. There is a lot to be learned. I would like to see topics on families and communities.

This course was definitely a plus in my spiritual growth. I have broadened by biblical knowledge and my understanding of the structure of the church. I am even more confident when I relate to others relative to scripture and biblical knowledge. I have learned to be confident in my faith and pray for greater faith. I highly recommend this class for all Christians. It should be a must for would be church officers.

The Bible class has encouraged me to study the Scriptures more. I now try to understand what God's word is saying to me personally. I have come to realize that Scripture is interpretative depending on where an individual is in his or her spiritual level. I found it helpful to know the different offices and functions of the officers of the church. I now know who I can go to in the church for what my needs are. I appreciate the Bible class because it has caused me to study subject matter I would not normally study. It has helped me to grow in a better knowledge and understanding of what my personal faith means to me in my everyday life.

### (3) The Advisory Team:

Four members of the Advisory Team were participants in the class, three went on the retreat. The evaluations of the participants were shared with members of the team. As sections of the written project were completed, they were submitted to the team for their review, comments and recommendations, for additions or deletions.

The team's own evaluation of the design and implementation of the project was excellent. They admitted to an uneasy feeling about their being involved in this aspect of the DMIN course of study. This was due to their not feeling empowered to make changes in the material they had received at the initial meeting of the team. When they were given the prospectus it seemed to be rather thorough and not in need of changes, particularly as it related to the schedule of classes. It was not until the candidate assured them that they could, and should, make changes as needed did they begin to feel a part of the process. The team found they were able to work together amicably. There was openness, cooperativeness and positive, as well as negative, input from each other. The need to do their part was impressed upon each other as due dates for information became necessary. Friendships developed as a result of their having to work together. They found they had access to one another, as well as the candidate. They did not feel stressed even though they knew the importance of each part of their assignment.



The team related that their meetings began on time, were to the point and ended when they were scheduled to. (They wished other meetings of the church could be held so efficiently.) The covenant made at the beginning of their being called together was helpful and treated with due diligence. The team expressed the candidate was a good facilitator of the meetings. The instructions given out at the beginning of the project were clear and concise; they assisted the groups in carrying out their assignments with a greater sense of assurance and ease. The candidate was available to answer questions which needed to be addressed. It was important to the group, however, that the candidate did not press his desires upon them as to how things should be done. He was helpful in keeping the assignments on target and in compliance with the prospectus, but the groups were free to present their ideas and recommendations, which were usually accepted.

Each of the team members articulated that the greatest aspect of being involved on the team was the growth they witnessed in the candidate. Their general perception of him was of his being an authoritarian. His mannerism and attitude gave one the impression he was a no nonsense person and his instructions were to be adhered to without question. He proved to be a no nonsense person, however, he showed confidence in the team and their ability to get their assignments completed. The candidate was able to let go of the "reins" and delegate responsibility to the team. He provided excellent resource material and affirmed the team's right to use it or not. He ratified their ability to work independent of him. As a result, the team was able to experience growth of their own. Even when the team made mistakes, the candidate exhibited self control and confirmed the team's right to do so while bringing things back on course. His maturity was exhibited in his enhanced ability to work with and through people. This disposition was also displayed at other meetings of the church at which team members were in attendance.

The team shared they experienced spiritual growth as a result of being involved in the project. In working with their groups, they shared their prayers for the success of the endeavor over all and their assignments in particular. They developed a sense of community with the people with whom they worked. One member related that before being on the team she did not "see" another member of the team who utilized the same transportation each day. Now, however, they greet each other and engage in conversations about the project and other issues in their lives. For the team, their involvement in the project was uplifting. They gained a new understanding of the role of the pastor and that of the other officers of the church.

**CHAPTER FIVE**  
**PERSONAL REFLECTIONS**

In conclusion to this project, I am charged with sharing my personal reflections. That is a difficult task as my reflections are many and varied. I will, however, summarize what I gleaned from interacting with the Advisory Team, Tuesday Evening Class and the response of the congregation to the overall project.

In the sixties we had, in the African American Community, a saying, "Power to the people." What this meant then was related to a cry for independence, justice and full equality in society. In the elementary school the candidate attended, the slogan was, "Knowledge is power." In addition, Ephesians 4:11-16, Luke 4:18-19, Isaiah 58:6-10, and Micah 6:8 informed and shaped my understanding of ministry and the role of the pastor. These Scriptures and sayings remain in the recesses of my consciousness and are a part of my motivation throughout life. In Parkchester Baptist Church the people did not appear to have "power." Instead they appeared to be led about by those few who "claimed" to have their best interest at heart. In general, the congregation was not empowered as the candidate understood power as exhorted in Ephesians 4:11-16 and other biblical text. People were not being trained, not given the tools needed to complete the task they were asked to do. There appeared to be "justice" and "mercy" for the "prominent" and not for the majority. Those few who "claimed" to have power, seemed to fear sharing it and, therefore, failed to adequately prepare others.

If congregants were given instructions, tools and materials needed to perform a task effectively and efficiently, would that be sufficient to empower them? What was the role of the pastor, or other leaders in bringing this effort to fruition? How could the practice of not sharing power with others and perpetuating injustice be overcome, if at all? The task in this project was not only to empower people, but also to find, if once people received the means to empowerment, would they exercise it.

(1) The Advisory Team:

The Advisory Team appeared to be enthusiastic about their involvement in helping to bring this project to realization. There was a sense of "koinonia"<sup>13</sup> which developed between myself and the members of the team. The Team spoke of my pending degree as one they too would be earning. Although the Team and I had worked together in a previous aspect of the DMin program, this endeavor was different. The efforts of the work would be shared with the participants of the Tuesday class and had to be reported as part of my project.

The Team's initial observation of me as having reservations involving them in the project, being authoritarian and a no non-sense person, was correct. Due to the magnitude of the outcome of the project, a degree, I was apprehensive about trusting others with something I believed I could do by myself. I believed these feelings were disguised and not detectable by the Team. As I reflected on my attitude, one of the things which came to mind was the definition of leadership lectured on during the retreat, "A leader is a person who uses her or his gifts to enable others in ministry." I had to ask myself how could I espouse this understanding of leadership and be reluctant to exercise it when given the opportunity.

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<sup>13</sup>W. E. Vine, Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, (McLean Virginia, Mac Donald, n.d.), 217, defines "koinonia", in part, "...a having in common, partnership, fellowship, denotes (a) the share which one has in anything, a participation, fellowship recognized and enjoyed..."

As I pondered the challenge, I reflected on the ministries of three persons I see as models for ministry: Jesus, Malcolm X and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Their ministries and leadership styles were similar yet different. Malcolm X and Dr. King headed organizations. Malcolm X was the founder and leader of the "Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) , and Dr. King was the president of the "Southern Christian Leadership Conference" (SCLC). Both men were charismatic in their ministries and leadership styles. Jesus was also a leader of a movement called "The Way." He too was charismatic in his ministry and leadership style. The difference, however, between Jesus and Malcolm X and Dr. King was that he was also a teacher who empowered others to carry on the movement even when he was not there. Jesus' death did not see the end of the "The Way" but its growth. Leaders emerged and carried on his ministry. In contrast to Malcolm X and Dr. King, when they died, through assassination, their movements lost their vitality and fervor; no effective leader emerged and carried on their ministries. The teaching/empowering aspect of their ministries did not appear to exist. They were "the movement" and not the people that followed them. It appeared to be the opposite for Jesus.

I concluded I could not allow this opportunity, to empower others to carry on ministry, to pass without making an honest effort to use my gifts to enable them to practice ministry. In order for the very essence of the project to be carried out, I had to be able to release the "reins" and let the people I had selected to assist me in this endeavor do so. This self understanding had to also be extended to the congregation whom I was called to serve. A DMin classmate once challenged me by sharing, "I had to decide whether I was going to pick up the Bible and be a pastor, or pick up the gun (referring to my 22 years of law enforcement prior to being called to the full time ministry) and continue to be a cop." I did not want "followers" but people who were

empowered to do ministry whether I was present with them or not.

The ministry of Jesus to the people, church, as lifted up in Luke was to affect "release" and "sharing", not continuing to "oppress" and "hoard" information, power and "good news." I believed I had to follow the example of Jesus, if I were to do the ministry of Jesus. I decided to pick up the Bible and be a pastor.

I found that when trust was extended to the team, the veiled atmosphere of cooperation truly became one of collaboration. The team was able to begin their task in earnest. They were better able to trust and relate to me and each another. My changed attitude was claimed and exhibited by the team. An important observation for me was that the team can, in most situations, discern the disposition of the leader and will reflect that attitude towards others they are charged to interact with and lead. True "koinonia" began when trust was established and shared between the parties.

## (2) The Tuesday Evening Class:

Most of the members of the Tuesday evening class knew of each other. Some had worked together in other ministries. For the most part, participants had to come to know each other. The three groups which were established reflected a microcosm of the larger church family. Two of the groups melded with relative ease. They were able to work together and accomplish assignments. The third group, however, found the task a bit more difficult. Unlike the other two groups, for some reason the third group's members were unable to subjugate their personalities and wills for the good of the group. The group received individual attention from the candidate in an effort to bring them together and move them along. The result was that the group participated but more as individuals rather than as a cohesive group. They made their presentation, but the presenters seemed to reflect more individual sentiment than group consensus. This particular group's attendance was sporadic and there was a great deal of complaining from the members.

The groups did come together in another way. During the presentations the presenters prepared a repast for the entire class. The idea of the repast originated with the groups. The meals were home cooked and there was plenty for everyone to eat. The class fellowship that emerged enabled the entire class to cohere and help each other. There did not appear to be competition as to who could offer the best or fanciest meal. The group which was unable to come together sat with other members of the class. They found support from others outside of their group. The two other groups' members usually sat together.

The participants interaction reminded me that in groups there will be conflict. The way conflict is addressed will depend upon the level of cooperation the parties are able to maintain. Conflict is not always resolved by the "leader" but can be left to the group to resolve. The leader, however, must monitor the situation and not allow it to deteriorate to a level where it will be unmanageable. When Jesus' disciples were arguing as to who would be the greatest in the group, Jesus admonished them that they were not to be as the gentile leaders who abused their positions of power and responsibility. His disciples were to be servants of all, they were to share alike in power and responsibility. Jesus did not resolve the conflict, instead he gave direction and instruction.

Charles R. McCollough relates in his book Resolving Conflict with Justice and Peace, a paramount element in building community is "empowerment for social esteem. . ."<sup>14</sup> Groups must be allowed to confront themselves, face their own issues and move towards resolving them. The leader's role is to assist in the process without interfering. One of the ways the leader can assist is by having the knowledge of what McCollough calls "ingredients". He pens, "The ingredients for successful

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<sup>14</sup>Charles R. McCollough, Resolving Conflict with Justice and Peace, (New York, Pilgrim Press, 1990) 65. he writes, "Empowerment on this level rests on a list of ingredients that present when the group is able to effect behavior change in its members and also develop powerful bonds within the group."

change are: (1) structure; (2) strong group support; (3) letting go to a higher power; (3) catharsis; (4) transfer; (5) success."<sup>15</sup> In randomly selecting groups from a larger population, the risk is that there will be those who are incompatible. Being alert to that and ready to acknowledge and address it will enable the larger group to experience less disruption. Advise and guidance are tools the leader can exercise in conflict situations, while letting the parties resolve the situation themselves.

Some of the participants desired to address topics which were more "challenging." I was aware of the multifaceted issues pressing on the lives of the congregants. Topics suggested by members reflected their desire to come to terms with such issues surrounding euthanasia, prayer in public school and church - state relations. They desired to be true to their Christian principals while being realistic in their response to those and other concerns. These topics will be addressed in subsequent study groups and workshops.

The course of instruction and its related topics were considered as essential to address the most prevailing need of the congregation. This decision came about as a result of the influx into the fellowship of those who were not versed in Baptist tradition, history and the responsibilities and duties of its officers. Another concern was the vacuum of trained officers which occurred when some of those in leadership left the church as a result my assuming the pastorate. This vacuity could not subsist for any length of time without causing hardship to those in office and the congregation as a whole. The need was assessed and addressed. As a result of this project, a pool of trained persons now exists who can serve as future officers of the church.

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<sup>15</sup>ibid 65.



### (3) The Congregation's Response:

The response of the congregation to the project was generally supportive. For the most part members shared the excitement of the participants and myself. Congregants visited specific classes when groups made their presentations. They could see a positive change in the way those officers who were participants conducted themselves in the performance of their duties. Some articulated they witnessed growth in me, both spiritually and in my leadership style, as a result of the project and the DMIN program, in general. There were those who shared that my sermon presentation improved, they were presented more competently and with vitality, addressing the needs of the congregation. Other comments related that I appeared to be more relaxed as I presided at meetings of the church and attended organizational meetings.

There were disparaging comments from some also. They believed that the group which completed the course of study would be favored by me in the future when positions became available. My emphasis for leaders to have some training before, or after, assuming office is construed by some as my way of excluding people from serving as officers. This apprehension is real for these people, however unfounded it may be. I realize these fears must be taken into consideration as officers are presented to the church for election in subsequent years. Their fears must be weighed in the balance with the on-going need for trained leadership in the church community; however, I believe that no one should presume they will assume a leadership role in the church community without some form of training. For to do so would be to nullify the efforts of this project and the biblical mandate to equip saints for the work of ministry.

In conclusion, Jesus admonished and cautioned his disciples as he sent them out with power and authority to be, "wise as serpents and innocent as doves." Ministry is, at times, that type of juggling act. The balance between being sensitive to the needs of the whole group, while not being distracted by a segment of the group, is precarious at best. Empowering the laity for ministry is admirable, but it can be exclusive. Those who are more aggressive and motivated than others will tend to take advantage of classes such as were presented. Realizing this, there must be a means in place to serve the needs of those who can not endure a rigorous course of study yet have the desire and zeal to serve in their church community. Empowerment must take diverse forms to address and meet the needs of those who desire to serve as leaders. Inclusion must be a real consideration as one seeks to empower the laity to do ministry.

A person's motivation for serving can not be taught. Sharing the "servant" model for those who desire to serve was important for me. By doing this it was hoped that one would reflect on Jesus' words of his not coming to be served but to serve. Self examination for those who are being instructed must be an important factor in the presentation. Motivation for service should be a desire for one to serve God and God's people and not self serving. For me, endemic to leadership is the understanding that discipleship is denying one's self, taking up her or his cross and following the Master. The words can be spoken, but the principal can not be implemented in one unless they claim it as their own. Empowerment is received instructions and having authority delegated to one. Effective and efficient service is assessed, in part, on what one does with the authority given and what they have learned. The greater part, however, of assessing whether one is effective and efficient comes out when one demonstrates their ability to empower others, or whether they lord their authority over others. Jesus reminds us, and I concur, the greatest is the one who is a servant of all.

## APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX I

**EMPOWERING THE LAITY TO SERVE**  
**LINWOOD SPIRITUAL CENTER**  
**139 SOUTH MILL ROAD**  
**RHINEBECK, NEW YORK 12572**  
**TEL: 914-876-4178**

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 22, 1993:**

4:00 P.M.	Depart Parkchester Baptist Church
6:00 - 7:00 P.M.	Dinner
9:00 P.M.	Fellowship

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 23, 1993:**

7:00 - 9:00 A.M.	Breakfast
9:30 - 12:00 Noon	Workshop - "Leadership" Rev. Hillary Gaston, Sr.
12:00 Noon	Lunch
2:00 - 4:30 P.M.	Workshop - "Conflict Management and Resolution" Rev. Dr. Neville C. Brathwaite
5:00 - 6:00 P.M.	Dinner
7:00 - 9:00 P.M.	Development of Sunday Services
9:00 P.M.	Free Time

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 24, 1993:**

7:00 - 9:00 A.M.	Breakfast
9:30 A.M.	Worship Service
12:00 Noon	Lunch
1:00 P.M.	Departure

## **APPENDIX II**

### **SYLLABUS - JANUARY - MAY 1993**

- Jan 12**            **Introduction and Review**
- a.     **Objectives**
  - b.     **Tools needed for class**
  - c.     **Overview of subjects**
    - 1.     **Retreat - Jan 22-24**
    - 2.     **Brief history of Baptist denomination**
    - 3.     **Parkchester Baptist Church Covenant and Constitution**
    - 4.     **Study of Office of the Pastor**
    - 5.     **Study of Office of the Deacon**
    - 6.     **Study of Office of the Trustee**
    - 7.     **Study of Office of the Treasurer and Financial Secretary**
    - 8.     **Study of Christian Education Ministry**
    - 9.     **Study of Mission Ministry**
    - 10.    **Concluding session and evaluation**
- Jan 19**            **Brief History of Baptist Denomination:**
- a.     **Baptist in general**
  - b.     **American Baptist Churches**
  - c.     **Parkchester Baptist Church**
- Jan 22-24**        **Retreat:**
- a.     **Leadership Development**
  - b.     **Conflict Management**
  - c.     **Independent Bible study**
  - d.     **Closing Worship Service and Lord's Supper**
- Jan 26**            **Study of Office of the Pastor:**
- a.     **Biblical bases**
  - b.     **Historical development**
  - c.     **Duties and responsibilities**
- Feb 2**             **Group I Preparation of Office of the Pastor**
- Feb 9**             **Group I Presentation, Office of the Pastor**

- Feb 16 Study of Office of the Deacon:**
- a. **Biblical bases**
  - b. **Historical development**
  - c. **Duties and responsibilities**
- Feb 23 Group III Preparation of Office of the Deacon**
- Mar 2 Group III Presentation, Office of the Deacon**
- Mar 9 Study of Office of the Trustee and Financial Officers**
- a. **Biblical bases**
  - b. **Historical development**
  - c. **Duties and responsibilities**
- Mar 16 Group II Preparation of Office of Trustee and Financial Officers**
- Mar 23 Group II Presentation, Office of the Trustee and Financial Officers**
- Mar 30 Study of the Christian Education and Mission Ministries:**
- a. **Biblical bases**
  - b. **Historical development**
  - c. **Duties and responsibilities**
- Apr 6 Groups I, II, and III Preparation of the Christian Education and Mission Ministries**
- Apr 13 No Class**
- Apr 20 Groups Presentation of Christian Education Ministry**
- Apr 27 Groups Presentation of Mission Ministry**
- May 4 Concluding Session and Evaluation**

# The Meaning of Leadership

• by Jeffrey D. Jones

[Christ] who 'gave gifts to [us]'; he appointed some to be pastors, others to be pastors and so on. He did this to prepare all people for the work of Christian ministry. In order to build up the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-12, Good News Bible).

From its very beginning the church has recognized the need for leadership if it is to fulfill its obligation to be the body of Christ at work in the world. In fact, leaders have been so much a part of the life of the church for so long that we rarely spend time thinking about the concept of leadership—that is, just what the purpose of being leaders is. This is especially true about volunteer leaders in the church. All too often we think only about the tasks of volunteer leaders without attempting to relate their role to the purpose and nature of the church. This means that they become functionaries rather than ministers, job doers rather than faith nurturers, institution maintainers rather than mission enablers.

In this article we want to begin to rectify some of that by exploring together the meaning of leadership. We will do that by proposing a definition of a leader and then exploring the meaning of that definition in greater depth. First, the definition that we propose is: *A leader is a person who uses her or his gifts to enable others in ministry.*

Now let's begin our probing.

... who uses her or his gifts . . ."

This portion of our definition is based in the first part of the Scripture passage that is quoted at the beginning of the article: "It was [Christ] who 'gave gifts to [us] (including you and me)'. The gifts which were given, according to the New Testament, led some to be apostles and others to be prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Today, in a similar fashion, God's gifts lead persons to become members of boards of Christian education, trustees, members of finance committees, deacons, and other church leadership. Our concern isn't so much the office as it is the gift. If we are to use these God-given gifts in our leadership in the church, we must first discover them. That, of course, is not as easy as it might seem. Gifts have a tendency of hiding themselves from those to whom they have been given. Many God-given gifts are so much a part of who we are as persons that we ourselves don't think of them as gifts but merely as qualities which are commonly held by everyone. The good organizer often complains that he or she has a gift for organization and planning, that being organized is part of being human. The truly creative person often thinks of creativity as the natural result of hard work rather than as a special gift. One of this leads to our first observation about gifts: *Gifts are discovered through interaction with others.* If we are not aware of our gifts, we need others to tell us about them. Even if we are aware of them, it is usually

only because our interactions with others have called them out of us and made them evident.

But just discovering gifts isn't enough. If they are to be used effectively in leadership, *gifts which have been discovered need to be developed.* Many gifts can be used without careful attention to their development, but the effectiveness of their use can always be increased through training. The person with musical ability can choose not to take lessons, not to practice. That ability, then, may be an interesting plaything or a tool to use to pass the time, but it will never be developed into real musical talent. The same holds true for the God-given gifts which may be used in leadership. These gifts need to be developed through training so that they can be used to their greatest effectiveness. Without that kind of development they remain mere playthings.

A third point which is important to our understanding of gifts is that *gifts are given by God to everyone.* As Ephesians 4:7 (Good News Bible) puts it: "Each one of us has received a special gift in proportion to what Christ has given." God doesn't limit the gifts, and we shouldn't limit the leadership. That doesn't mean that everyone should be an officer of the church, but it does mean that we need to see the potential that everyone has "to enable others in ministry." This potential isn't restricted by age. Children and youth have been given gifts as well as adults. This potential isn't restricted by sex. Women and men, boys and girls have all been given gifts that can be used in leadership in the church. This potential to lead in some way by using our gifts to enable others in ministry isn't restricted by intelligence, education, economic status, or any other human distinction. "Each one of us has received a special gift. . . ."

Finally, we should note that *there are a variety of gifts.* Paul, in 1 Corinthians 12:4, phrases it this way: "There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them." The variety is probably greater than most of us realize. And because we have a limited perception of the gifts of the Spirit, we limit the work of the Spirit. The variety extends beyond gifts that can be used in teaching and preaching and through service in elected positions. If our view of the gifts is limited in this way, we confine the Spirit's work to teachers, preachers, and committee members. But the Spirit's work cannot be confined, and neither should our understanding of the Spirit's gifts.

What we've said here has many implications for the church that wants to be intentional about its leadership. Some of those implications might be:

- That church will provide an atmosphere of openness and acceptance that allows the experimentation that

leads to the discovery of gifts.

- That church will provide opportunities for members to share the specific gifts that they see in one another.
- That church will provide opportunities for leaders and potential leaders to receive the training that will help them develop their gifts.
- That church will find ways in which it can look to children and youth for leadership. This will mean giving careful consideration to the gifts of children and youth and finding ways in which those gifts can be used to enable others.
- That church will work to sharpen its understanding of the nature of gifts so that it will be as inclusive as possible.

“. . . to enable others . . .”

This is what makes a leader different. Others use their gifts; others are engaged in ministry; but the leader *enables* others for these things. Ephesians 4 tells us this when it notes that the gifts are given for a reason: “to prepare all God’s people.” Enabling others is the key to leadership. So in order to understand how a leader functions, we have to understand what it is that “enables” persons.

The dictionary defines “enable” as “to give power, strength, or competency.” But, in truth, the power, strength, and competency that is needed for ministry cannot be given by one person to another. It comes from within as a gift of God. It can be encouraged by others; it can be called forth by others; but it cannot be given by others. Enabling others, then, is a process through which the leader helps others discover, develop, and effectively use their God-given gifts.

If this is what enabling is, how does the leader do it? Before we look at specific methods, a word needs to be said about the basic stance the leader must take in this enabling process. *In order to be an enabler of others, the leader must serve others.* The Bible clearly sees the serving role as the appropriate basis for leadership. In both the example (such as John 13:2-17) and the teaching (such as Matthew 23:11) of Jesus this concept of leadership is evident. It is the Christian understanding of what makes a leader. But it is also the realistic understanding of what makes a leader. For it is only in serving others—in helping them become and be the persons God intended—that the leader can fulfill the enabling role. Realistically, there is no other way. It may be possible to manipulate others to behave in a certain way or to force them into action, but that is not true leadership. Manipulation and force do not lead others to discover, develop, and effectively use their God-given gifts. And this, as we said above, is what must happen if a person is to do the enabling which makes her or him a leader.

We can summarize what we have said so far in this section in three statements:

1. The key function of a leader is to enable others.
2. Enabling others is a process through which the leader helps others discover, develop, and effectively use their God-given gifts.
3. Others are enabled by leaders whose primary desire is to serve.

With this as background let us turn now to the specific ways in which a leader enables. In one sense our task in listing these ways is an impossible one, for the list is limitless. Leaders can enable in countless ways as they relate to, speak with, listen to, and work with others. So in order to get some sort of a handle on the role of the leader, we are going to have to limit ourselves. For our purposes we will talk about five general ways in which leaders enable others. We can say that a leader enables others for ministry as he or she:

1. encourages their personal growth.
2. helps them gain knowledge.
3. aids them in developing skills.
4. assists them in working with others.
5. provides them with an appropriate setting.

Few leaders will function in all five categories, but most of the important work of all leaders will fit in one or another of the categories.

1. *Encourages their personal growth.* Persons grow as they develop a knowledge of who they are, an awareness of the gifts they have been given, and a sense of their purpose in life. This personal growth is essential to enablement because without it persons are so tied up in themselves that they are unable to function with and for others. Central to this personal growth is the development of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Again, this cannot be given to someone, but one of the vital enabling functions of the leader is to encourage its development.

2. *Helps them gain knowledge.* The knowledge we are speaking of in this instance is of two types. First, there is a basic knowledge of the Christian faith. Bible study is central here, but also of concern is an understanding of the purpose of the church, of the role of the Christian in the world, and of the traditions and heritage of the church. The second type of knowledge is that which relates to the specific ministry for which the leader is enabling persons. While it is true that the leader does not in all cases enable someone for a specific ministry, it is important in those cases when this is being done that specific and essential knowledge about that area of ministry be shared.

3. *Aids them in developing skills.* In aiding the development of skills in persons, the leader is helping to insure the effective functioning of that person in ministry. Our understanding of skills is very broad. It includes all that must be done in order to make ministry effective. Skills do for the hands of the Body of Christ what knowledge does for its head.

4. *Assists them in working with others.* Because the church is a community, ministry always happens in the context of relationships. One of the enabling functions of the leader, then, is to work to make these relationships as meaningful and effective as possible. This function is most clearly seen in the work of chairpersons of boards and committees, as they function both to enable the groups to do their tasks and to be responsive to their members as persons.

5. *Provides them with an appropriate setting.* Ministry happens in the concrete. In order for persons to use their gifts effectively, the concrete setting in which they minister needs to be appropriate. This enabling function



of the leader is often overlooked because it can happen without any direct contact with the persons who are being enabled. For example, as members of a board of trustees in a church make decisions about the church building, they are providing a setting for ministry which can enable persons with whom the trustees do not work directly to use their gifts effectively in ministry.

This leads us to one concluding observation about the enabling role of the leader. That is that this role is not always a direct or an immediate one. In a very real sense the teacher of first grade children is enabling them for ministry as she or he encourages their personal growth and helps them gain knowledge. We, however, usually do not see that teacher's role in this perspective because we do not see a direct relationship between what is happening in the classroom and the involvement of the children in ministry. But whether it is direct or not, the relationship is there, and it is appropriate for us to see the work of the teacher as "enabling others for ministry."

In what we have said about enabling, there are a number of implications for the church that wishes to be intentional about the role of its leadership.

- That church will want to give serious thought to the enabling role of its leadership. Too often leadership is thought of in terms of accomplishing a task and not enabling others. But to get to the root of what leadership is all about, every task of a leader needs to be seen in terms of how it enables others for ministry. A church's leaders could undoubtedly gain many new insights into their roles by assessing all of their tasks in light of the five enabling functions that we discussed. A next step might be for each leader to look at each of these five functions and ask, "How can I do that in my leadership role?"
- Closely related to this, yet important enough to be considered separately, is an exploration of the serving nature of leadership. For many this will be a new concept. For most it will be a concept that has not yet been put fully into practice. Jesus is our primary model of the serving leader; so some careful Bible study of Jesus' relationships with others will provide much insight for leaders. Such insight may help us refocus our understanding of leadership on serving others.
- In our discussion of leadership and ministry we come back again and again to the importance of the discovery of gifts. This seems to be a clear and strong statement: that any church that wants to be serious about its ministry *must* provide the atmosphere and the opportunities in which its members can discover, develop, and effectively use their gifts. This is both a prerequisite for leadership and one of the principle tasks of leadership. There is no way to avoid its importance for the church's ministry.

... in ministry."

The nature of the church's ministry has been the subject of volumes and volumes of work. Certainly we cannot be thorough in our discussion of it in this article. But the nature of the church's ministry is central to an understanding of leadership. It, really, is what we are

all about. Ephesians 4 again gives us insight. Leaders exist, it tells us, to enable all God's people to do something, and that something is "the work of Christian service." The enabling, the discovery of gifts, are not ends in themselves. They are the means by which we do God's work in the world, the means by which we minister.

We can sharpen our understanding of ministry by viewing it from two perspectives: where it happens and who does it. The ministry with which we are concerned is a ministry which happens *within* the church and *outside* of the church. As a ministry *within* the church, it is a ministry of church members to one another: being the loving community, accepting the rejected, caring for those in need, supporting the weak, and comforting the bereaved. As a ministry *outside* of the church it reaches into the community and the world to respond to human need with a gospel of love and hope: uplifting the lowly, empowering the powerless, confronting all that dehumanizes, preaching the Good News, reconciling the world and its inhabitants to one another and to God.

The ministry with which we are concerned is a ministry which is accomplished *by* the church and *apart* from the church. As a ministry *by* the church, it is accomplished as the church itself becomes involved, ministering within the church and outside of the church. As a ministry *apart* from the church, it is accomplished as the church sends its members forth as individuals each to minister in his or her own place.

The ministry is a large one: it is to all of God's world. But this is the vision of ministry that must undergird our development of leaders, for it is the only vision which holds forth all the potential that belongs to us as God's people.

Again, we can note several implications of this section for churches:

- Because the development of effective leaders must be grounded in a church's vision of its ministry, a statement of that vision (as a purpose statement) needs to be made.
- The two perspectives from which we viewed the church's ministry may be a helpful tool for a church looking at its vision of ministry. A simple listing of the church's involvements according to the four descriptive phrases ("within," "outside of," "by," and "apart from" the church) could tell a church much about how it sees its ministry. In our making a listing, it is important to note that there will be overlap among the categories.
- With an assessment such as that described above in hand, it is then possible for a church to deal with the question of how it should enable persons for each type of ministry. Answers to this question become the beginning point for selecting and developing leaders.

The task of leadership in the church is a large one. But the gifts have been given and the call is clear. Above it all stands the promise, which again Ephesians 4 holds forth: "We shall all come together to that oneness in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God: we shall become mature people, reaching to the very height of Christ's full stature" (v. 13, *Good News Bible*). ☐

## APPENDIX IV

### PARKCHESTER BAPTIST CHURCH RETREAT EVALUATION FORM January 23-25, 1993

Please circle your choice of answers to the following questions about the retreat you have just attended. Each question is weighted on the basis of 1 - 5: 1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Satisfactory, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. How do you like the location of the retreat?  
1      2      3      4      5
2. How were the facilities?  
1      2      3      4      5
3. How was the retreat organized?  
1      2      3      4      5
4. Were the leaders and speakers informed regarding their respective subject areas?  
1      2      3      4      5
5. Was the level of presentation so that you were able to understand it?  
1      2      3      4      5
6. Were the handouts legible and relevant to the topics?  
1      2      3      4      5
7. How would you rate your ability to meaningfully participate in the retreat activities?  
1      2      3      4      5
8. How did you enjoy the retreat overall? What was your level of fulfillment?  
1      2      3      4      5
9. What is the possibility that you would recommend a retreat to others?  
1      2      3      4      5
10. Would you attend another retreat?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX V**

**PARKCHESTER BAPTIST CHURCH  
CONTEMPORARY BIBLE CLASS  
EVALUATION FORM**

**Rev. Hillary Gaston, Sr.  
Instructor**

Please answer the following questions by placing a circle around the number which best expresses your response to the questions. Please write a brief explanation about your answer on the lines provided. The numbers represent: 1-Poor, 2-fair, 3-Satisfactory, 4-Good, 5-Excellent. Thank you for your cooperation.

**I. Curriculum:**

1. How did the course outline (syllabus) relate to the actual lectures presented?  
1 2 3 4 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How did the handouts and other material used in the course relate to the topic being presented? 1 2 3 4 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How would you rate the lectures for clearness and completeness in the way they were presented? 1 2 3 4 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Was the time devoted to each topic in the syllabus sufficient? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What would your overall rating of the group presentations be? 1 2 3 4 5  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Discuss some of the strengths or weaknesses of the group presentations, i.e. was there sufficient opportunities to ask questions. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. What is your rating of the coverage of the topics by the groups? 1 2 3 4 5

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Should group presentations continue to be a part of the course of study?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Briefly comment on what you liked or disliked about the groups. Suggest changes, or modifications you believe should be made, if any, i.e. size of group, to large or small; participation of couples in the same group. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

II. Give an overall analysis/critique of the Contemporary Bible Class. Relate how it has, or has not, affected you in your biblical knowledge, faith and being a disciple of Christ. State if you would or would not recommend the class to others. If you would, why and if not, why. List other topics you believe would be helpful in future classes.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please give your name, if you care to: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX VI**

**PARKCHESTER BAPTIST CHURCH  
D.MIN ADVISORY TEAM  
EVALUATION FORM**

Please circle your answer to the following questions using the scoring as indicated:

1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Satisfactory, 4=Good, 5=Excellent.

1. How did the Advisory Team work together? 1 2 3 4 5

2. Did the team share good information and ideas? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_  
Comment on the team's working together and its information sharing.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Were the meetings productive? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

4. Was the material given by the Pastor easily understood? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

5. Was the information provided by the Pastor helpful in planning the retreat?  
Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

6. Was there sufficient time to prepare for the retreat? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

7. What did you find most relevant about the meetings? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Would you be willing to participate in another project such as this one?  
Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

9. Would you recommend this type of team to others for similar projects?  
Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

General Comment and suggestions regarding the D.Min Advisory Team. (Use reverse side for additional space.)

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Hillary Gaston, Sr.  
Signature