

Leadership in the Urban Church:
An Ethnographic Study of Pastoral Ministry Practices in West Philadelphia

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This research project is dedicated to my wife and children, my family, church family, the research participants, and all that assisted me in any way. I thank all of you and to God Be The Glory!

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Philadelphia

Abstract

This qualitative research project identified pastoral ministry leadership practices in the urban ministry context of West Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The researcher utilized the ethnographic semi-structured research model to interview eight pastors at their respective churches within their urban ministry context. The main focus of the research study was to identify common and/or unique pastoral leadership practices amongst the research participants in order to develop a resource called, “Pointers for Pastors” to add to the existing literature and to enhance pastoral leadership training models.

Chapter One

Statement of the Problem

The available leadership information is not only vast, but it is valuable. The challenge is that the scope of existing leadership literature does not provide enough in-depth information about pastoral leadership practices in the urban ministry context. The existing leadership information lacks the geographic, ethnic and economic diversity to have useful application in urban settings. The goal of this project is to provide useful information for urban pastors. Often the challenge presented to the leader is complex enough without having to then consult irrelevant resources. Since the calling to pastor does not come neatly packaged with administrative skills and experience, the leadership responsibility of pastoring presents a challenge that can be addressed by a willingness and ability to learn. The responsibilities of leadership require answers to questions like: What are potential pitfalls, and can they be avoided? Have others managed to thrive under similar circumstances? How can success be maintained and or replicated? On-the-job-training (learning) is part of any assignment. The question that remains is, is there any information based on urban pastoral leadership experience for current, new or potential pastors to access?

Purpose

The purpose of this research project was to identify the common and unique pastoral leadership strategies/methodologies employed by various practitioners in an urban ministry context. Specifically, the study sought to identify leadership practices to add to the existing literature and to enhance the leadership training models for current and future pastoral leaders.

This research project focused on two basic questions: How do the research participants define pastoral leadership? What are the research participants' pastoral leadership practices?

The scope of this research project focused on eight pastors who are currently serving urban congregations in West Philadelphia. In addition to looking at their pastoral leadership practices, the researcher reviewed other factors such as, education, training, calling, tenure and the church's history and ministries. To gather information for this project, the researcher utilized the ethnographic semi-structured qualitative analysis model. The researcher is familiar with the geographic area and currently pastors in West Philadelphia. To ensure objectivity, the research participants were pastors that the researcher did not interact with regularly.

Due to their ministry schedules and responsibilities, it is often difficult for pastors to have the time to read lengthy books and to take courses, so there is a need for some type of leadership handbook or quick-reference guide to provide insight. The researcher has over twenty years of urban pastoral leadership experience. During this time, the researcher has observed a need for many church members to be led responsibly from where they are in life physically and spiritually to a place of hope and an expectation for change. In this way, leadership is transformational because it leads the person to an opportunity for change. For pastoral leaders in the challenging urban ministry context, formal training and experience are important, but these inform but do not necessarily determine practice. All of this and much more contributes to the urban ministry context especially when consideration is given to the economic, political social and other challenges that exist within the urban community.

Effective leadership is essential for the success of any organization. Some would say that the failure or success of any organization is ultimately the responsibility of the leader. If an organization fails, no matter where the problem is, the leader risks being terminated or removed from his/her position of influence because he/she is accountable for the oversight and

performance of the entire organization. If an organization is successful, the leader may be viewed as an effective leader based on this success.

God is involved in pastoral leadership: Old Testament – Jeremiah 3:15 states, “And I will give you pastors according to my heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding” (KJV). New Testament – Ephesians 4:11, 12 states, “And he gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” (KJV). God also warns pastors: Jeremiah 23:1 states, “Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! Saith the Lord” (KJV).

Importance of the Research Project

This project began with the assumption that a great deal of valuable leadership information from the urban pastoral experience needs to be more formally researched, documented, and shared. When one considers the role of a pastor in any context, one must realize that this individual has to simultaneously wear many hats, not just on the day(s) for corporate worship services, funerals or weddings. Whether or not the church building is open does not matter. The nature of a pastors’ responsibility requires being on call or available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Whether staffing is adequate or not, many times members are reluctant to have anyone other than the pastor directly handling their situation. The reality is that the pastor is viewed as in most organizations, as ultimately responsible and accountable for decisions actions and results.

Context is one of the most important aspects of leadership because it influences the leadership strategies that can be implemented. Variables within the context should be recognized in order for a leader to establish and utilize authority for decision-making. These variables along

with the needs of the individual(s) the pastor serves, impacts context. In addition to the pastor's personal needs, and, in many instances, the needs of the pastor's family, there are also the needs of the individual(s) that are very often more than just spiritual. The spiritual cannot be addressed exclusive of the non-spiritual. Therefore, the pastor is looked upon as the leader who is somehow able to effectively address any and all situations.

Oftentimes, the urban pastor faces a community context that is adversely affected by social, political, economic, cultural, and other challenges. Because of the history and reputation of the urban church, as a source of help, there is an expectation that the church will successfully address all problems. For example, the urban church can often be disproportionately overburdened with a demand for social services and programs involving rehabilitation, housing and financial assistance. The physical layout of urban areas can create parking issues and resulting tension within the community the church is serving. Urban church buildings are often utilized for free community functions, all while drawing financial sustenance from a financially struggling membership base.

Many urban pastors have developed leadership skills, strategies, and experiences through on-the-job training. They have had to address many challenging situations, both spiritual and non-spiritual, for individuals and for the community of believers. It is what these pastors do on a daily basis to transform lives and communities that creates an atmosphere of hope, and a future for a people who outside of the church have to cope with the realities of life in the context of their faith. In the process of coming to terms with such complex variables, pastors gain insights, try strategies, and engage in a meaningful learning.

This study was designed to tap into the wealth of the experience of these leaders so that this experience can be shared and utilized more broadly. In doing so, this study will fill some

gaps in the existing literature relative to pastoral leadership in urban settings. McKenna and Yost say that most of the research that has been conducted focuses on understanding the leader's developmental journey in secular organizations; while research into the key experiences of the pastoral leader's journey is limited (11). The understanding of the leader's developmental journey is important, but equally important is the understanding of the leader's key experiences. Looking clearly at the combination of leadership development and experience will help in enhancing existing leadership models for all contexts.

Rojas and Alvarez, in their discussion about the evolution of leadership models, say that at this time these models are far from being perfect. They point out that individuals interested in the leadership theory module and its relationship to the pastoral sector find that minimal consideration has been given to this aspect of leadership (11). The context in which a leader functions is crucial to the leader's ability to effectively lead. In most instances, the context is a factor in determining the leadership style or approach for a particular period of time or situation. Therefore, the pastor has to have leadership skills and strategies that are adaptable and flexible.

Conn and Ortiz in their book regarding urban ministry, point out that when thinking of leadership the tendency is to think primarily of a local church setting and not the actual context. Additionally, they also say that the meaning of context is rarely regarded as important in developing a philosophy of ministry. They also caution leaders to be aware that some books are geared toward leadership in a suburban/rural community and assume that all Christian leaders serve in a nonurban context (378). Context is a very significant factor in leadership research because it can inform leadership approaches. This will be addressed more thoroughly in Chapter Two. In developing leadership models, all of the available leadership research should be utilized. This is how a model becomes adaptable to various contexts. One of the most important aspects

of any leadership model or style is its relevancy, usability and adaptability. If the leadership model or style is presented with a variety of proposed applications, then the pastoral leader can more effectively determine if it is relevant for their setting.

In addition to insufficient research in the area of urban pastoral leadership practices, there is also geographic bias if the context is ignored. Church size, as an aspect of context, must also be taken into consideration. Christine points out that most books about pastoral leadership are based on large churches and according to Allen Hasse, different size churches may require different leadership styles and skills. In other words, the one style or the one application/style of leadership fits all is not effective in every ministry context (Christine 8,9)! This is why it is so important for the leader to understand the context so that he or she can determine which leadership style(s) to utilize.

Urban pastoral leaders lead not-for-profit organizations (churches) that do not in most instances, have the same incentives for motivating people like for-profit organizations. This in itself requires the urban pastor to possess certain leadership skills and abilities to motivate and influence people to pursue individual and community goals and aspirations. Most pastors have some type of formal theological training but many have not had formal leadership training. Several pastors have shared that their theological training did not adequately prepare them for pastoral leadership.

What exists is a body of research that does not adequately address critical factors in optimizing leadership. What is the spiritual environment? What is the geographic/social environment? How large is the church in question? Have we been treating pastoral qualities as if being the mayor of a small town is the same as being President of the United States? There is a foundational flaw in our historic approach that begs correction. A small inner city urban church

requires a radically different skill set from a “mega-church” in Iowa. Pastors in these environments are not interchangeable parts! Many factors in a context affect the leader, the leadership style(s) and those being led. Each context is affected by size, resources, and leaders’ and congregants’ personalities, beliefs and challenges. A leader is required to adapt to their context to be effective. To take a leader who is effective in one context and then place them in another context and expect the same results can prove to be counterproductive if the new context is significantly different. The findings of this project will contribute to the existing knowledge by identifying and exploring common and distinct urban pastoral leadership ministry practices, for the purpose of adding to the existing literature and enhancing the leadership training models for current and future pastors.

Chapter Two

Survey of Literature

There is a vast amount of literature available on leadership. This survey is an overview of the literature on the history of leadership, the evolution of leadership theories, the definition of leadership in general, and the definition of pastoral leadership. It concludes with some of the qualities of an effective leader.

Evolution of Leadership Theories: It is very important to be aware of the history of leadership and leadership theories because this is the foundation from which other research emanates.

Northouse points out that, “leadership has been a topic of interest since the dawn of man” (“The History of”).

The article begins with a discussion about Frederick Winslow Taylor who is credited with an early impact on leadership research. Taylor, in the early 20th century, introduced a practice of scientific management that was not a leadership theory but changed the manner in which leaders-managers interacted with employees. He recognized employers could get more production out of their employees if they divided labor projects into their various parts and then trained employees to specialize in these areas of the production process. This concept impacted the leader-manager and employee interaction. Additionally, Taylor believed that leaders were born and not made. This belief created an interest during the 20th century that resulted in the “Great Man and Trait Theory.” Largely in agreement with Taylor, this theory proposed that certain men were born to lead and these men stepped up to assume their natural place when crises arose.

“Trait Theory” presented the idea that only men born with leadership characteristics would make successful leaders. The question that arises now is what are the characteristics that

one must be born with to be a leader? This idea of born leaders led to additional research to determine the right combination of characteristics that would lead to the effective leadership of organizations. The search for the right combination of leadership characteristics resulted in R. M. Stogdill's list of traits and skills that included a leader who had a vigorous and persistent drive for responsibility. This leader would also be someone who would think outside the box and be confident enough to accept the consequences of the decisions made. After Stogdill's list was presented, Kurt Lewin and his colleagues Lippett and White in 1939 proposed that within an organization, three leadership types were exhibited. Those leadership types included: Autocratic leadership – the corporate leader made all the decisions without consultation; Democratic leadership – the leader-supervisor included the members of the organization in the decision-making process; and Laissez Faire leadership – the leader played a minimal role in the decision-making process (Northouse, *Leadership Theory* 8).

Thereafter, leadership research introduced a concept called Charismatic Theory, which some believe was the precursor to Charismatic Leadership Theory introduced by Max Weber, a German sociologist. Weber described Charismatic leadership as a “special personality characteristic that gives a person exceptional powers” (qtd in Northouse “The history of”) resulting in the person being regarded as a leader. Even though this person is regarded as a leader, there is no guarantee that he or she will be an effective leader. To possess a certain type of leadership characteristic is important, but the ability to utilize that characteristic is most important for leadership effectiveness.

Fred Fiedler proposed the “Contingency Theory of Leadership.” He believed that the best leadership style was the one that best fit the environment. To determine the best leadership style, he proposed the “Least Preferred Coworker Scale.” This scale included categories such as

uncooperative, cooperative, unfriendly, friendly, etc. with points assigned. Some critics stated that “the parameters were vague and open to interpretation and that they were context free” (Fiedler).

In 1967, R. Likert and in 1971, G. Yuki proposed the “Participative Leadership Theory. Likert developed a measurement called the “Likert Scale” that was used to measure degrees of acceptance of a given premise. His list of leadership styles included: exploitative authoritative – the leader develops minimal if any concern for the followers or their concerns and communicates in a demanding accusatory manner and makes all decisions without consulting subordinates; Benevolent authoritative – this type of leader is concerned with employees, recognizes and rewards performance, but makes all the decisions without consultation; consultative – makes a serious effort to listen to the follower’s ideas, but decisions are still leader-controlled; and Participative – this leader displays great concern for employees, listens to their ideas and includes them in the decision-making process. In view of what Likert proposed, there seemed to be no discussion in reference to which leadership style would be more effective or appropriate for which environment.

G. Yuki who worked with Likert, proposed these explanations for “Participative Leadership” styles: Autocratic – this leader makes all the decisions without consultation; Consultation – this style leader asks the subordinates for their ideas and opinions but makes the decisions alone; Joint-Decision – the leader requests ideas from the followers and includes them in the decision-making; and Delegation – the manager-supervisor delegates to a group or an individual the authority to make decisions. It appears that both Likert and Yuki saw the importance of leadership styles that included the followers and subordinates in conjunction with the leader in the decision-making process (qtd in Northouse “The History of”).

In 1975 and 1976, “a number of organizational behavioral scientists, Dansereau, Graen, and Haga, 1975; Graen and Cashman, 1975; and Graen in 1976; proposed a Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX)”. This is a social exchange theory that focused on the quality of the relationships between leaders and followers. These scholars pointed out that leaders develop “separate exchange relationships with each subordinate as each party mutually defines the subordinate role” (qtd in Northouse “The History of”). This theory is very interesting but does not appear to be appropriate for leading large groups that may prohibit the one-to-one discussion required to define the subordinate’s role.

Following this, Dr. Paul Hersey and Dr. Ken Blanchard proposed the, “Situational Leadership Theory.” This theory provides the leaders with the responsibility for selecting the leadership style based on the maturity or developmental level of the follower. Hersey and Blanchard proposed a “four quadrant configuration based on the relevant amounts of directive or supportive [leadership] needed to motivate a given employee to fulfill a given task” (Hersey, Paul and Ken Blanchard). The four areas of the quadrant included: Directing – this was designed for the least mature employee or member requiring the leader to use directive words only and no supportive behaviors for employee motivation; Coaching – the leader-supervisor uses highly directive and high supportive words and behaviors in their interaction with employees; Supporting – the leader-supervisor refrains from directive behavior and focuses only on supportive behavior. This was used for employees who performed well on their own but either lacked self-confidence or were overwhelmed with a new assignment. The fourth category was Delegating – the leader-supervisor is no longer required to offer directive or supportive behaviors because those employees perform very well on their own and are competent and confident enough to work unsupervised. This theory presumes and suggests that the leader-

supervisor has the ability to direct, coach, support and delegate effectively. The question is what type of leader or what are the characteristics of a leader who would be able to effectively utilize this theory?

Evans (1970) and House (1971) introduced the “Path-Goal Theory of Leadership”, based on Victor Vroom’s “Expectancy Theory,” [referred to as the Vroom-Yetton-Jago-Decision Making Model]. “The central focus of Vroom’s theory was to assess how the nature of the group, leader, and situation determine the degree to which the group is to be included in the decision-making process. This is accomplished by using Vroom’s flow-chart style decision-making procedure that arrives at a style of decision-making” (Vroom, et al). Based on Vroom’s model above Evans and House introduced their “Path-Goal Theory of Leadership”. This theory proposed that subordinates will be motivated if, “a) they think they are capable of the work (or high level of self-efficiency); b) believe their efforts will result in a certain outcome or reward; and c) believe the outcome or reward will be worthwhile.” This theory of leadership is similar to the “Situational Theory” in that it allows for increased participation of and interaction with the followers by the leader and at the same time provides the leader with flexibility in various situations (qtd in Northouse “The History of”).

Dr. Robert Greenleaf in 1970 and 1977 wrote a series of essays that proposed a type of leadership based on the follower. Up until this time, most of the theories were focused mainly on the leader or leader’s perspective. Greenleaf called this theory, “Servant Leadership.” This leadership theory did not truly catch on however, until the mid-1990’s when Larry Spears dissected Greenleaf’s ideas. Spears proposed ten characteristics of servant leaders: Listening; Empathy; Healing; Awareness; Persuasion; Conceptualization; Foresight; Stewardship; Commitment to the growth of the people; and Building community. In 1995, Spears delineated

these characteristics and that led to the creation of conceptual models of leadership by many leadership researchers (qtd in Northouse “The History of”).

“Transformational Leadership [introduced and developed by Burns and Bass] has been the most widely researched form of leadership from the 1980’s to 2011. Transformational Leadership refers to the process whereby an individual engages others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and maturity in both the leader and the followers” (qtd in Northouse “The History of”). In 1985, Burns in his publication, *Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectation*, provided the following concepts of “Transformational Leadership”:

Idealized Influence – the leader-supervisor acts like a role model of ethical behavior and gains respect and trust; Inspirational Motivation – the leader communicates high expectations and inspires the crew to reach higher; Intellectual Stimulation – the followers-subordinates are stimulated to think outside the box, be creative and innovative; and Individualized Consideration – the subordinates are provided a supportive environment and the leader cares about each employee’s needs and desires (qtd in Northouse “The History of”).

Recently, proposed leadership theories indicate that the research is now focusing more on not just the leader but also on the follower because of their significant impact to the leadership process. This research interest led to a closer examination of those being led and their affect upon the context. This resulted in the realization that it is very important to study those being led and their contributions to the context that effect leadership styles(s) and effectiveness.

One of the most recent concepts of leadership is “Adaptive Leadership.” Introduced by Dr. Ronald Heifetz who is regarded as one today’s top leadership researchers. He states that,

The practice of leadership, like the practice of medicine, involves two core processes: diagnosis first and then action. Those two processes unfold in two

dimensions; toward the organizational or social system you are operating in and toward yourself. That is, you diagnose what is happening in your organization or community and take action to address the problems you have identified. But to lead effectively, you also have to examine and take action toward yourself in the context of the challenge. In the midst of action, you have to be able to reflect on your own attitudes and behavior to better calibrate your interventions into the complex dynamics of organizations and communities. You need perspective on yourself as well as on the systemic context in which you operate. (6)

“Adaptive Leadership” is non-traditional in the sense that it requires a degree of thinking beyond the obvious or looking beyond what is seen and instead thinking outside of and looking outside of the “traditional” box.

Dr. Peter Northouse, in his book on leadership points out that the subject of leadership has gained worldwide attention among researchers. Research shows that there exists a wide variety of theoretical approaches to explain the leadership process and its complexities. From his perspective, the leadership research from a variety of sources illustrate a leadership process that is more complex than the simplistic viewpoint that is presented in some of the popular leadership books. One of the reasons for this complexity, according to Northouse, is that there are as “many definitions of leadership, as there are people who have tried to define it” (*Leadership Theory* 1,2). He goes on to say that many people have an idea of what leadership is, “putting a definition to the term has proved to be a challenging endeavor for scholars and practitioners.” (*Leadership Theory* 1,2)

With so much leadership research and information available, it becomes increasingly difficult to focus on one general definition of leadership. Dr. Northouse views leadership as a

process where an individual achieves a common goal by influencing those being led. He claims that if leadership is defined as a process then it is not so much based on a leader's characteristics or traits but rather on the transactional event between the leader and the followers. He further points out that, "Influence is the *sine qua non* of leadership" (5). For Northouse, leadership does not exist without influence.

Leadership and Power: Northouse also discusses the relationship between leadership and power. He views power as a part of the influence process. Power provides the leader with the capacity or potential to influence. When people have the ability to affect beliefs, attitudes and actions, they have power. He further explains that ministers, doctors, coaches and teachers are examples of people who have the power of influence. This power is a resource that they use to affect change in others (9).

Power as a part of a leader's influence is very interesting because power can be used in the wrong way and for the wrong purpose. When one thinks of power, one can think of the ability or the authority to make someone do or not do something. In the leadership context, as Northouse explained, it is used as a part of influence to lead a group of people toward a common goal.

There is a similar challenge for defining Christian leadership as there is for defining leadership in general. Malphurs and Mancini in their book about building and developing leaders for all levels within the church offer this definition for Christian Leadership: "We define a Christian leader as a servant who uses his or her credibility and capabilities to influence people in a particular context to pursue their God-given direction" (20).

Unlike Northouse, who seems to make a distinction between the leader's character or traits and the transactional process, Malphurs and Mancini's definition combine all the various

elements. The process of leadership is not a process that is easily separated into parts but it is interrelated.

Leadership Development: Malphurs and Mancini also point out the importance of leadership development relative to church. They define the leadership development as a process that is intentionally focused on assisting established and emerging leaders for every level of ministry to evaluate and develop Christian character and to enhance, reinforce and sharpen their ministry knowledge and skills (23). The need for leadership development at every level of ministry and in various contexts is the reason for additional leadership research in other areas. There must be an assessment of what is, before there can be an assessment of what is needed.

Malphurs and Mancini also point out that the quality of leadership affects the quality of the ministry. They state that everything rises or falls on leadership. As the leadership goes so goes the organization because the quality of ministry is directly related to the quality of its leadership (25).

The quality and development of leadership is so crucial to the success or failure of the church/organization that it is necessary that leaders have access to relevant leadership training in conjunction with their leadership skills to create an environment for success. A successful environment provides training, nurturing and the challenging of others to maximize their potential and productivity.

In the definition of leadership above the word “influence” was key, but there is another word that is key to defining leadership and that word is context. One style of leadership does not always fit every situation. That is why close attention must be paid to the context.

Importance of Context: The sharing of leadership ministry experiences is valuable because there are some things that can be utilized even though the context offers different variables. In leadership, context is an important factor.

Context must be considered when researching and or developing leaders because the context affects how the leadership situation is going to be handled.

In reference to context, Will Mancini states that the original meaning of the word context is to weave together. With ministry, he adds that often leaders bring strategies, ideas, and plans to people that neglect context. “That is we fail to weave our strategies together with realities of cultures that are before, after and around what we do” (Mancini). He explains that context should be considered not neglected because context: carries localized assumptions about faith and God; creates localized nuances of and uses for language; includes a history of heroes and enemies for your community; transmits a collective conscious of successes and failures; reflects and reinforces your community’s deepest hopes and fears; shapes and is reshaped by the real-time shared experiences of its people (Mancini).

Conn and Ortiz in their book about urban ministry make the point that the urban context must be taken seriously when studying leadership and applying scripture to ministry. In the context of the city, scripture is viewed differently. They claim that leaders who come out of an indigenous experience are themselves valuable assets to long term ministry and they will become the valuable spiritual leaders in the community. Finding and developing these type of leaders is the most important thing we can do to grow the church in the urban context (382,386).

Leadership and Influence: Maxwell explains, “That in any given group there is a prominent influencer. The prominent group leader is easily recognized when there is an issue that needs to be decided; the person whose opinion seems most valuable is the prominent leader. The best

way, says Maxwell, to understand influence is to consider the times you have been influenced by a person or event. Then think of the little things or of people who have powerfully influenced you” (3,4). He explains, “No one can understand that mysterious thing we call influence ...yet...every one of us continually exerts influence, either to heal, bless, to leave marks of beauty; or to wound, to hurt, to poison, to stain our lives” (3,4).

There is no leadership without influence. An article about Benner and Nanus’ book on leadership, points out that there is a stark difference between management and leadership. To manage “means to bring about, to accomplish, have change of or responsibility for conduct. Leading is influencing, guiding in directions, course, action, opinion.” An essential factor according to the article is influence (“Power and Influence Blog, Influence and Leadership”). *Leadership and Church Size*: In reference to size as an aspect of leadership, Dr. Timothy Keller in his article states that, “One of the most common reasons for pastoral leadership mistakes is blinders to the significance of church size” (1,2). He adds that “Size has a great impact on the function of the church. There is such a thing as a size culture that profoundly affects decision-making, relationships, evaluation of effectiveness and the activities of ministers, staff, and lay leaders” (1,2). Keller explains that,

A large church is not simply a bigger version of a small church. The difference in communication, community formation, and decision-making processes are so great that the leadership skills required in each are almost completely different orders.” He adds that reading books about church size can be confusing because of the variety of difference in size categories. This variety of differences is due to the variables in a church’s history and culture that determine when a congregation reaches a new size. For example, says Keller, Everyone knows that at some point

a church becomes too large for one pastor to handle. People begin to complain that they are not getting adequate pastoral care. The time has come to add staff.” When does all this happen? Keller explains that in some churches it may take place when attendance reaches 120 while in another church it may not happen until a church’s attendance reaches 300. (1,2).

A leader must be prepared to look at what each leadership context offers and then determine how these various aspects impact what is to be accomplished.

It is the identity and the study of these leadership experiences in the urban ministry context that will be beneficial to current and new pastors who find themselves in similar ministry contexts. The sharing of these experiences is important for the development of current and new pastoral leaders.

Definition of Pastoral and Spiritual Leadership: Pulpit and Pew define pastoral leadership as the work that pastors do in directing people, training and motivating congregants to participate in the church’s mission, community and beyond. They point out that essentially everything that the pastor does - preaching, teaching, or vision casting - is a part of pastoral leadership (“How Do Pastors Practice Leadership?”). It seems that the pastor is pastor at all times and whatever the pastor does in church or outside of the church is pastoral leadership. In many urban contexts, the pastor is the voice for the community of people whether the community members are members of the church or not, or whether they are of the same or different faith. There are situations in communities when it is necessary to put aside these differences to solve or address common issues. Many times the pastor emerges as one of the leaders in the community.

Additionally, Lawrenz defines pastoral leadership as spiritual leadership. He makes several points about spiritual leadership. First, he makes the point that leadership is complicated

because people are complicated. He believes the leader has to determine when to tell people what to do and when to teach principles. He further explains that spiritual leadership is about life. In reference to this, Lawrenz explains that people need help with their lives in areas such as relationships, families, sins, addictions, jobs and money. He adds that spiritual leadership is about priorities, values, and managing time (Lawrenz). In consideration of what Lawrenz had to say about spiritual leadership, it brings to the forefront the whole idea of the pastoral leader being equipped to deal with all aspects of life, not just the spiritual.

In an article from *Christianity Today* about spiritual leadership, Henry and Richard Blackaby make the point that spiritual leadership and general leadership share some of the same principles, but spiritual leadership has certain distinctive qualities that must be practiced to be successful. The distinct qualities according to Henry and Richard Blackaby are that: the spiritual leaders responsibility is to move people from where they are to where God wants them; spiritual leaders depend on the Holy Spirit, spiritual leaders are accountable to God; they have the ability to influence all people not just the people of God and spiritual leaders use God's agenda not their own (Blackaby H. and Blackaby R.). Even though some spiritual and general leadership principles/theories overlap, the differences begin to present themselves when context is considered.

Kuhl in reference to pastoral leadership claims that in the 21st Century pastors are in the midst of a crisis. He points out that over the past two decades or so the topic of leadership has moved from enabling membership in their various leadership roles to leadership being the primary responsibility of the successful pastor. He also claims that pastors have consulted leadership resources that are not biblically based, but instead focused on the business leadership concepts. Kuhl continues by pointing out that the struggle for leadership instead of a struggle for

a theology to guide pastoral ministry is a key area of concern in Christian ministry. He then refers to a statement by George Barna that basically says that one of the indispensable characteristics of a ministry that transforms lives is leadership. Unfortunately, few churches actually have a leader at the helm (Kuhl).

Leadership Qualities and Characteristics: Another aspect of leadership research involves the identification of effective leadership qualities and characteristics. According to Myles Munroe, the essential qualities of leadership require that the leaders be disciplined which means obedience and establishing strict guidelines for oneself. The leader must have a vision, must be a seer. There is a need for common sense or wisdom that enables them to effectively use knowledge. The leader must also be decisive and courageous with a sense of humility and a sense of humor. Munroe adds that the leader must have indignation, the quality of anger as well as patience, endurance, and discretion with the ability to be friendly and open (133-140). The characteristics and qualities of a pastoral leader are crucial because of the need to be flexible and adaptable in a variety of situations.

Domokos states that, “Pastoral leadership must be and can be effective” (Domokos). He views effective pastoral leadership as authoritative and not dictatorial. He adds that “Effective pastoral leadership is spiritual and sacrificial requiring the ability to work with people, work through people, minister to people and lead people” (Domokos).

Rinehart suggests 9 Essential Qualities of a Godly Leader:

1. A good leader seeks God’s directions. Prov. 16:1
2. A good leader is modest not arrogant. Prov. 16:5
3. A good leader is a peacemaker. Prov. 16:7
4. A good leader is fair and just. Prov. 16:8

5. A good leader surrounds himself or herself with honest, trustworthy counselors...and then listens to them. Prov. 16:13
6. A good leader is a good learner. Prov. 16:16
7. A good leader is humble. Prov. 16:18
8. A good leader is sensible and kind. Prov. 16:22-23
9. A good leader is slow to anger.

(Rinehart).

In summary, this chapter has provided an overview of the history of leadership and the evolution of leadership theories. Additionally, a general definition of leadership and a definition of pastoral leadership have been discussed. The importance and the awareness of the many variables that can affect leadership are introduced by the discussion about how context, influence, power, and size impact the leadership process.

It is very important that leadership research continues to look at all aspects of the leadership environment to develop accurate assessments that will result in valuable strategies that allow for adaptability and flexibility for different contexts.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

The purpose of this research project was to identify the common and unique pastoral leadership strategies/practices used by various practitioners in an urban ministry context. Specifically the study sought to identify leadership practices to contribute to the existing literature and to enhance the leadership training for current and future pastoral leaders.

This qualitative research project utilized the ethnographic oriented fieldwork methodology proposed by Moschella, who provides this definition; “Ethnography is a form of social research used by sociologists, anthropologists, historians and other scholars to study living human beings in their social and cultural contexts. Participant observation is a hallmark of this kind of social research. Ethnographers go to the places where people live, work, or pray in order to take in firsthand the experience of group life and social interactions....” (25). Moschella continues by explaining that ethnography involves the human culture. She says that the meaning of culture has evolved over a period of time. “It began as an agricultural metaphor for the cultivated mind, implying spiritual, artistic, and intellectual refinement.” She then adds, “That over time, the concept of culture began to be linked with anthropology”. Anthropologists began viewing the world as populated by cultures which meant distinct ethnic or geographic groups. Later on culture became associated with the meaning of social life and groups’ values and norms. This anthropological view according to Moschella caused postmodernists to determine that, “human culture is not one unified and coherent thing out there to study” (27).

According to Sensing, “Qualitative research is grounded in the social world of experiences and seeks to make sense of lived experience” (107). He explains that qualitative researchers focus on how people function in their settings and how they make sense of their environment, “through symbols, rituals, social structures, social roles and so forth” (57). The

main purpose of the interview, adds Sensing, “Is to gather a specific type of information. Interviewing allows the interviewer to enter into the other person’s perspective” (107). In the semi-structured interview process, Sensing says that, “An interview guide lists the questions or topics that the interviewer desires to explore. It ensures that the basic information is obtained from each person. There are no pre-determined responses, and that interviewer is free to probe and explore for more depth” (107). He further explains that, “the interview guide helps to use time effectively and enables the process to be more systematic and comprehensive and keeps the interviewer focused on the purpose of the interview” (107).

This research study utilized the ethnographic semi-structured type interviews that were conducted with eight pastors who are currently serving urban congregations in West Philadelphia. Each pastor (research participant), received an introductory letter from the researcher along with a confidentiality statement to be signed at the interview. The interviews were conducted at the research participants’ churches at their convenience. This provided an atmosphere of comfort and confidentiality as well as an opportunity for the researcher to observe and take notes on the physical and material settings. Each interview lasted about an hour.

Twenty-five pastors representing various denominations in West Philadelphia were contacted by letter requesting their participation in this research study. The letters sent to the various pastors requesting their participation in the research project included only the contact information for the researcher. Attached to the letter was a consent form for their review. The reason for including only the researcher’s contact information was to be able to directly respond to their questions and initiate a conversation. Direct contact enabled the researcher to schedule the interviews at each participant’s convenience and within the project’s timeframe. Each

research participant who responded stated that the research topic seemed very interesting and that they would be willing to participate as long as they and their church remained confidential.

Ten pastors responded, and eight pastors were interviewed. The other two pastors' schedules made it impossible to arrange interviews. Each research participant was given a copy of the questions at the interview (see Appendix A). The reason for this was to assist in maintaining the focus of the interview. The interviews were audio-recorded and then confidentially transcribed. The transcribed interviews and the researcher's notes are stored in a secure environment. The research participant's names, titles and names of their churches are confidential. The taped interviews were all transcribed and placed along with other relevant information in files. The analysis of the research participants' questions involved looking closely at each person's response to each question and then reviewing all the responses collectively to determine if there existed any commonalities and/or uniqueness. The last question required each research participant to define a pastoral leader based on their experience. This question was purposefully asked last to bring the interview to a close and to create a summary response. This worked very well as a closing question for each interview.

Ministry Context

All of the research participants were pastors from various denominations who are currently serving congregations in Urban West Philadelphia. According to State Senator Vincent Hughes' website, and the [www.city-data.com/city/Philadelphia-Pennsylvania](http://www.city-data.com/city/Philadelphia-Pennsylvania.html) html website, West Philadelphia consists of several diverse neighborhoods, ethnicities, and faith traditions. West Philadelphia is also known as "West Philly", a section of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Its boundaries are from the western shore of the Schuylkill River, to City Avenue to the Northwest, Cobbs Creek to the Southwest, and SEPTA Media/Elwyn Line to the South. This also includes Southwest Philadelphia and its neighborhoods. West Philly includes citizens living in the Zip Code areas 19104, 19131, 19139, 19143, 19151.

According to the 2010 Census, approximately 216,433 people live in the area called "West Philly" and the racial demographics are: *Non-Hispanic or African Americans: 164,921 (76.2%); *Non-Hispanic White/European: 37,010 (17.1%); *Hispanic or Latino: 4,328 (2.0%); *American Indian: 4,112 (1.9%); *Asian: 3,246 (1.5%); *Mixed or other: 2,183 (1.3%). There are more than 150 documented Houses of Worship in "West Philly" representing a variety of denominations and pastoral leadership styles.

Selection Criteria

To create a diverse pool of research participants and research findings, the base criteria for participants was that they were currently serving congregations within West Philly. The goal was to interview pastors from diverse faith communities.

Chapter Four

Research Findings

Each research participant interviewed for this project did so based on the promise of confidentiality and anonymity. It was obvious to the researcher that confidentiality and anonymity allowed the research participants to respond to the questions and provide additional information more freely. The researcher created a pseudonym for each research participant. Demographics and other information were presented only if it did not breach confidentiality. The semi-structured interview questions were designed to identify the research participant's pastoral leadership style and approach to urban ministry. The basic definition of a leader or leadership in general is someone who has the ability to influence, motivate an individual or group of individuals to achieve agreed upon or established goals and objectives. With this basic leadership definition in mind and the focus of this research project to identify urban pastoral leadership experiences, the semi-structured questions were utilized to elicit feedback for the development of the resource called, "Pointers for Pastors".

Research Participant Background Information

All of the research participants are Black and currently serving predominantly African American congregations. The congregations combined represented approximately 90% Black and 10% White and other. The research participant group consisted of six men and two women. Combined they have a total of 190 years of pastoral leadership experience in urban ministry. Two of the research participants have 40 plus years of pastoral experience and one has 30 years, two of them have 24 years, two nine years and one seven years of experience. All of the research participants grew up in Christian homes and/or grew up in the church. They each have received formal theological, biblical training. Three of them have doctorates; two of them are former

seminary professors and one of them also taught in other colleges and universities. One of them has a Master's Degree and oversees churches in the United States and in other parts of the world. Two of the churches represented are Baptist Churches, one church is approximately fifty years old and the other is more than 180 years old. Four of the churches are non-denominational and one is evangelistic. Three of the research participants founded their churches. One of which is about forty years old, the other is approximately twenty-four years old and one is approximately seven years old. All of the research participants are full-time pastors with one of them recently retiring.

The research participants in the study will be referred to as:

Pastoral Leader A

Pastoral Leader B

Pastoral Leader C

*Pastoral Leader D

*Pastoral Leader E

Pastoral Leader F

Pastoral Leader G

Pastoral Leader H

*Pastoral Leaders D and E are a husband/wife team, both were interviewed.

Interview Results: The following is an account of the research participants' responses to the semi-structured interview questions:

Question #1: What challenges are unique to you as a pastoral leader as opposed/compared to secular/corporate leaders? What are the advantages/disadvantages of these

differences? (Recruiting/hiring of employees: Volunteers vs. paid employees; Compliance with both the Bible and Government, etc.).

Pastoral Leader “A”: “One of the main challenges today is the lack of loyalty to the church that affects people’s level of involvement and how long they remain involved. We are living in a society/generation that is not particularly loyal to anything unless they feel they are getting something out of it. What is different now is that there was a time when it was more about what I could give and what I could offer.”

Pastoral Leader “A” went on to explain that there was a time when people were, “loyal to a certain brand or line of car, or certain places they ate or to their denominations, but now I think it is where can I get the best deal. The whole mindset affects loyalty. People don’t tend to stick to it, especially in terms of leadership.”

In comparison to the corporate world, Pastoral Leader “A” states that the level of accountability is different because, “I pay you, I have a certain level of authority over you that we do not see.....in the church. We say we volunteer, but it should be more than just volunteer; it should be Christ compelled.”

Pastoral Leader “B”: “You are always going to have a diversity of people in the church. First of all, you have to know who you are, what your vision is and then understand the people. You have to know the people and teach the people and help people become knowledgeable and aware so they can not only receive from the church but use their gifts in the church.” Pastoral Leader “B” explained that in the corporate world the motivations may be different, “Because people get paid to do a job but a person still has to be motivated to perform the duties, otherwise there are problems.”

Pastoral Leader “C”: “As a Spiritual Leader, we need to be in compliance with Bible and Government. As a Spiritual Leader you have to be able to create a culture and in creating [that] culture see people who are imperfect people who desire to do a perfect work knowing that there are imperfections in all of us, but we have to become this working unit and buy into a vision that will ultimately make us one as we aspire for the same objective.” Pastoral Leader “C” explained that, “They will come into the [corporate setting] and focus on a paycheck. In this realm, we think about [focus on] how we are going to impact the culture and the society in which we serve to try to get everyone to realize what they have been given to do individually with their gifts and talents and abilities to try to mold all these gifts and talents together to fulfill one common goal and vision.”

Pastoral Leader “D”: “One challenge having members vs. employees is that with volunteers you can’t fire [anyone] you can only dismiss. Then you have to worry about who you are going to get to replace them. You don’t have people beating a path to your door to do ministry. You are limited but you try to get people to operate at optimum levels as though they were being paid.”

Pastoral Leader “E”: Explained that it is just different to get people to be committed at all levels because, “There is so much going on in their lives besides their spirituality so they are constantly distracted. We try to minister to every area of the member so they can have some stability.”

Pastoral Leader “F:” “One of the most unique challenges is finding people who have an idea of what we want [the church] to accomplish and then agreeing with that. Some people say, I see where you are going, let me help you get there. Others say I see where you are going, let me tell you how to get there.” Pastoral Leader “F” further explained that, “The challenge is to find

someone that wants to partner with the vision and be willing to come alongside of the vision and not alter the vision.

One of the real challenges for me, explained Pastoral Leader “F” was, “When I became the Pastor, trying to convince the people that I am not the previous pastor, I love [the previous Pastor] and I want to complete the vision...but I want to complete it the way the Lord wants me to complete it. That was a challenge and we are still transitioning.”

Some of the disadvantages according to Pastoral Leader “F” is that, “People have a lot to offer and they may not know how to offer it. Trying to redirect what they have to offer to fulfill them and the vision is a challenge. Some people know where they are going they just don’t know how to get there. It is a challenge trying to get people to understand this if it seems the vision is dead, just don’t give up.”

Pastoral Leader “G”: “I have been in the corporate setting for over 40 years now and it is totally separate from Church Leadership. First of all, to be a Pastor, you must have a pastor’s heart. With a pastor’s heart you could look over sometimes the rules and regulations that a corporation may have. For example, you may have someone who is [physically challenged] and may not be able to do everything that an employee in a secular job can do, but in the church you can use them in different areas. I believe that the pastoral leadership and secular leadership are different but you can use some of the secular leadership in the church.”

“Pastoral Leader “H”: “I own a business, I know how to motivate employees, and I was taught how to motivate volunteers at my previous church and I actually enjoyed it. You must use different ways to motivate volunteers. The most difficult thing in dealing with member is that you can’t always say what you see or feel. With employees you can be more direct. The motivations are different therefore the messages are different.”

Question #2: How do the specific demographics (age, race, income, etc.) of your congregation impact your duties and responsibilities as a pastoral leader?

Pastoral Leader “A”: “When I first came to the church, it was an older congregation and a need for a rebirth for the younger families. We had to look beyond the way we had always done things even in our worship. I don’t like to use the term traditional and contemporary, but we were trying to hold on to our tradition and heritage and [still] try to reach a generation that was totally disconnected from it. What we did was we tried to help the younger people to appreciate the tradition and at the same time the older people to understand the younger people and be more flexible in terms of the music and culture of the current generation.” Pastoral Leader “A” further explained that this was a challenge because, “We tend to like what we grew up with. The world is changing, the church is changing. We should not sacrifice our integrity but at the same time we need to embrace the present age whatever that means.”

Pastoral Leader “B”: “As a Pastor you have to be flexible enough to deal with and minister to all types of people. The church will always be full of diversity but it is good to focus in on families. A lot of families are affected by what happens in a church whether the whole family are members or not. If God called you to it, be patient things will work out.”

Pastoral Leader “C”: “We must make sure that there is a connection in the church, because there are various ages and maturity levels and some come from different demographics, some people have different economic flow, so the church must be at a place where she can house all these people coming together in their ethnicities.” Pastoral Leader “C” further explains that sometimes churches are polarized because, “They will only look at the demographic where the church is and determine that only certain people live in this area and they [the church] are not thinking about how we can bring all ethnicities together. Since we serve the same God, Why

should we be segregated ethnically or demographically?” Pastoral Leader “C” made the point that, “As a Pastoral Leader, I never wanted to be guilty of preaching a Black Gospel because the Gospel of Jesus Christ is for everybody. I believe everybody should be coming into the building!”

Pastoral Leader “D”: “We are an all-Black church so for me it makes us more relative because we know their story; we do not have to figure out their cultures, etc.” In reference to one of the disadvantages, Pastoral Leader “D” added, “I find myself as a Pastor competing with popular opinion. Whatever I preach teach or say, I find if the popular opinion of the Bishop or Evangelists, media voice says it, then it has more influence than we ourselves who are right here with the folk! I’m not sure if this is unique to our demographic, race or culture.”

Pastoral Leader “E” says in reference to finances that, “Many of our people don’t have regular jobs or they are on very low income so financially it does not add a lot to the ministry.”

Pastoral Leader “F” responded in this way, “Demographics impact in a great way! We have a wide range of age and some diversity we have a few African and Haitian members. We do things differently but we want to be inclusive so want to include people from the beginning. The younger generation, that is a challenge within itself. The millennials, everyone has a different opinion about how church should be done and that is an ongoing process.”

Pastoral Leader “G”: “In this church, the average age is around 30 years of age. The congregation is 99% African American and 1% Caucasian. The average income is low income. It is very difficult for the members and those that are on disability or welfare to financially supply and take care of the church, so we will always be just balancing the books.”

Pastoral Leader “H”: “The demographics, age, and race, are not a problem. We are a relatively young church age-wise and I have a young spirit. Almost all the members are working, not too many low income, but financially we still struggle with paying rent and paying bills.”

Question #3: In what ways does your journey/transition to becoming a Pastor influence your leadership style(s)? What appears to be the most helpful? What appears to be a challenge?

Pastoral Leader “A” responded to this question by saying that, “Early on the challenge is to lead in such a way that people feel they can trust you with themselves. Sometimes we [Pastors] go in, and we want to force a program upon people without knowing who the people are and establishing a relationship with them, so rather than making programs fit people; we make people fit programs. One size fits all type of leadership is not good. It takes time for people to allow you to transition from [just person], to pastor. It begins with a level of trust and establishing a relationship so that people trust where you want to take them and they are not threatened by you or where you want to take them, because you appreciate what they bring to bear on the heritage you are stepping into.”

Pastoral Leader “B” stated, “I consider myself to be very fortunate. I have been preaching since I was very young, and I came from a family of preachers. As a matter of fact one of my family members who was a preacher also was my mentor for a very long period of time. I believe you need a mentor. What is most challenging is establishing yourself as a leader where people respect and recognize you as the Pastor. You have to know who you are what God called you to do and you have to have a vision and articulate and teach your vision.”

Pastoral Leader “C” said that, “What is most challenging is being able to have sensitivity to the people but at the same time maintain a lifestyle for me and my family. There have been many preachers and pastors that I have seen over the years who have literally sacrificed their

families at the altar of ministry. They neglected their family while they were trying to pastor the church and not making sure that their first ministry, which is their family, was being taken care of.” Pastoral Leader “C” added, “For me I am currently working on a manuscript called ‘Ministry or Marriage’, what comes first. Many pastors will say the church comes first, well no! Because before there ever was a church, God created Adam & Eve, the family, before there ever was a mention of a church. So there is no doubt for me. Now in the beginning, when I first started pastoring, for the first five years I never took a vacation and it was horrible because I’m thinking, I’m going to save the world. The sixth year, I was home [in] the summer sitting in one of my favorite chairs and my family came down the steps with suitcases packed and I’m looking and asking ‘where are you guys going’ and my [spouse] said, ‘I don’t know where you are going, but we are going on vacation.’ They left me sitting there for a whole week and undoubtedly it got my attention and it impacted my journey with God and with [the] church and it impacted the ministry God gave me greatly because it changed my whole paradigm and at that point I made sure that every week at least one day a week I spend time with my family. Then I began taking vacations with my family.”

Pastoral Leader “D” answered the question by saying, “In the beginning (silence), just stumbled forward feeling in the dark not having a direct clue as to what pastoring would entail. I thought early on that I would be in a position to please everyone (sigh) it just didn’t happen. At some point in time I had to reach a place and say Lord, help me to care less without being careless, because trying to please everyone is an impossibility.” Pastoral Leader “D” explained that, “My leadership style adjusted based on the temperature of the congregation. If the congregation needed a modeling type pastor, I became that. If they needed the drill sergeant, I would become that. I found myself switching based on the season or based on trying to get to the

next level. If it [leadership style], became too familiar, I would pull back, but there would be constant shifting.”

Pastoral Leader “E” looked toward the ceiling and said in response to the question, “When I look at the early years on my relationship with the Lord and the excitement of learning God’s Word, hearing God’s Word, studying and evangelism, it established an excitement on the inside that motivated me to share that with everyone else. The problem many times is that people are not ready to receive it so you can only lead so far.”

Pastoral Leader “F” leaned back in the chair and stated, “The challenges in transition are unfortunate (pause), a lot of the people that I thought I could depend on kind of turned on me and it was difficult to accept in the beginning (pause), but I still had to make a decision, was I going to let them run me off or do what God had called me to do. Several times I had written up my resignation letter, getting ready to give it to God and I was going to give it to God first and then bring it to the congregation – but God was not in that day so I could not turn it in (laughed). I am determined because of what God has called us to do on this corner. We [the church] have done a lot of things and we were successful, but we are growing as a body of Christ and we want to do what the Holy Spirit is doing now.” Pastoral Leader “F” added, “I am trying to get some of the older mature ones [members] to come along. I thought I would be able to say something, emphasize it and move forward but I find I have to go back and teach again. It’s a challenge but it causes me not to become complacent and causes me not to give up.” In reference to the members of the church, Pastoral “F” explains, “I see their potential and they don’t see it. I see it and I have to pull the potential out of them. Sometimes they may not be my friend afterwards, but later on they will appreciate it. It is constantly something that causes me to grow and it’s

stretching me. Plus I see what God wants and when you can see what God wants to do with a person it is exciting!”

Pastoral Leader “G” stated, “The journey is tough. I personally do not live in the vicinity of the Church. I grew up in the inner-city, but I have not lived in the West Philadelphia area, so it is was difficult at first to adjust to the people and the behavior to properly do ministry in the church. Sometimes you can’t understand why people are not growing or why they are not committed or the way they grew up. So I had to have patience, understanding and empathy so that they can understand that God’s looking for more out of them.”

Pastoral Leader “H” responded by saying, “I came up through the ranks serving in ministry and that affects what I do now as a Pastor. I know what should be done, what to expect and how to move ahead. My journey helped me in this position. I have leadership skills from business and from being a staff person in ministry and from working with volunteers. Soldiers must know how to be off-duty but be prepared to work when it is time to get back on duty.”

Question #4: What specific pastoral leadership experience(s) would you share with current pastors?

In response to Question #4, Pastoral Leader “A” had this to say, “As I explained earlier, you have to go into the church and get to know the people and getting the people to know you and your preaching and teaching and your counseling and letting the people feel they are in your hands and that they can trust you and that you really care for their souls as their under-shepherd.” Pastoral Leader “A” added, “The people need to believe that where I am taking them is where God wants them to go. It is not about the leader. The leader has influence especially in the Black Church! Not much happens in the Black Church without leadership but more important is the leader sharing a biblical understanding of leadership. Leadership is not just person-centered but

biblically centered. The mission and direction must be biblically centered otherwise the church will rise and fall with the leader and not transcend the leader. Good leadership is positioning and preparing the people to continue the work when the [current] leader is no longer there and another leader comes.”

Pastoral Leader “B” stated, “Know who you are; know the people; love the people, teach the people and be patient. If God called you to it, it will happen. You have to be patient and you have to pray and know what God called you to do. Teach the people about God and develop them spiritually so they can understand who God is and what church is all about.”

Pastoral Leader “C” sat up in his chair, clasped his hands and said, “One of the first things I say to any young pastor is to be patient! Don’t think that somehow or another that you are going to be a T. D. Jakes or Creflo Dollar or a Joel Osteen overnight, that is not what is going to happen! Now it is possible that some men and women may start that way. The first thing to do is be patient, take your time because there are so many of us that speed along and begin to think in a year or two I should be having two worship services. I should have people coming in here from the North, South, East, and West, but that is not necessarily going to be the case. We need to take our time to hear from God; pace ourselves and as the Spirit of the Lord directs us [instead] of thinking that we are to be competitive. This is not a competitive situation. I always use this remark; there are enough sinners to go around for everybody, so there are plenty of folks out here that need Jesus Christ. Find out what your specific gifting is and stay in your lane.”

Pastoral Leader “C” added, “The Word says He gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelist, some pastors and teachers, but I found along the way that there are some people who are supposed to be evangelists and they are pastoring. So the thing is just because you were called to be a preacher does not mean you were called to be a pulpit pastor. We need to make

sure that we allow the Spirit of God to bring definition to our lives and show us where we fit in the Body and what God has given us to do so that we will be able to find fulfillment in what we do rather than exhaustion and burnout because we are in the wrong place.”

Pastoral Leader “D” said that, “You have to be at a place where you are willing to compromise if it will further the cause. There are three types of members, sheep, goats and wolves. You feed the sheep, milk the goat and chase away the wolves! I am more of the mindset now, that if I talk to a new pastor I would say run, you don’t have to get stuck (laughed)! It is okay to please people as long as it is not the main goal. Try to please God first and maybe people will be pleased in the process. Try not to allow the growth of another church to push you along where you are trying to keep up with the Joneses. Be satisfied where you are and don’t be too content. Maximize where you are and let the Lord put you on the next level.”

Pastoral Leader “E” said, “As a pastor be yourself! Do not let others come in and dictate to you as to who they think you should be. Stay focused on what God has called you to do. Stay focused on what God has initially placed in your heart and whatever yearning, desire, enthusiasm and excitement you have. Get to the point where you continually enjoy what you do. Do not get to the point where you dislike the people. Find joy in pastoring in spite of all the challenges that tend to go with it.”

Pastoral Leader “F” responded by saying, “I would tell them to pay specific and intimate detailed attention to what their current pastoral leadership is doing. Learn as much as you possibly can from them. If necessary watch, observe, and carry their water for them. Be totally dependent upon the Holy Spirit. He is the author of the church and He knows what He wants done. You must have an ear for the Holy Spirit. Don’t mimic what others are doing or have done, the Holy Spirit may be telling them something different. In [pastoral] transition, people will tell

you, we've always done it this way, but listen to the Holy Spirit. Sometimes we have to adjust what we learned in school or wherever we learned it to see if it fits in God's plans." Pastoral Leader "F" added, "Encourage the people to have an ear for what the Holy Spirit is saying and doing and it will take you a long way. It will keep you from a whole lot of problems."

Pastoral Leader "G" stated this about his former work experience, "Prior to becoming a Pastor, I worked for approximately five years with [troubled] youth. This helped me to learn how to deal with young people and understand their living conditions and the inability of their parents to give them proper guidance. This has been really helpful in ministry."

Pastoral Leader "H" stated, "That when serving as an Interim, a Pastor explained to him that whatever you do, do not rely on one person. Do not look at one person leaving [the church] to break you. I have kept that in mind, so when people come and go (pause) the only person that goes [leaves] that would bother me would be my wife! This [advice] has been very helpful."

Question #5: How does your family experience/environment influence your leadership and vice versa?

Pastoral Leader "A" stated, "I grew up in a Pastor's house, my father was a pastor in ... and I got a taste of that kind of relationship of a pastor's family and the relationship to the church. I feel there are some things that the Pastor cannot bring home to [the spouse] and children in terms of protecting them from things that the [Pastor] has been called to do that they may not have been called to do. At the same time allow the family to see that the congregation has embraced the family as they embrace the Pastor. Particularly, you want the children to grow up with a healthy attachment and love for God's people. I think a lot has to do with how people treat the family and sometimes it has to do with the negativity and bitterness that the family may

sense from the Pastor. The family does not want their [loved one] to be hurt and whoever hurts [them] they will not feel kind towards them.”

Pastoral Leader “B” stated, “I remained single so therefore my immediate family environment did not affect my leadership style. My family supported me and some of them were pastors and preachers so they encouraged and mentored me.”

Pastoral Leader “C” stated, “When it comes down to a man or woman of God, if your family is not with you and if you are not seeing their approval in what you are doing, then it is time to stop, backup and re-evaluate where you are headed and what you are doing! I have seen and I’m sure you’ve seen as you go from place to place if you want to see the temperature of the place [church] you just look to see how the [spouse] is responding. If they are not responding well, I can tell that there is something that this man or woman is doing wrong. So we need to make sure that our families are on board and also that we don’t do such a great job of pastoring the church that we don’t do a great job of pastoring our families.”

Pastoral Leader “D” had this response, “It [family] has and should have a tremendous influence. Took me a long time to learn it and probably still learning it- there were times in years past that I got home at 10:00 or 11:00 o’clock at night. Now if I get home at 7:00 PM its good! Never enough time. My spouse would say to me you’re getting home too late. That feedback affected my leadership style to the point that if I could not effectively delegate it I would just have a definite cut off point and pick it up tomorrow.” Pastoral Leader “D” added, “I’m like a Pitbull, if the Lord gives me an assignment/mandate there is no turning back! Sometimes I needed the outside influence [spouse] to say okay that is enough. Input from the family is important. If the family is neglected because of the church, this needs to be adjusted.”

Pastoral Leader “E” say that, “Sometimes the family experience can bring about negativity. What helps is communications and understanding and trying to determine what can be done to bring about the proper balance.”

Pastoral Leader “F” had this to say, “My family encourages me. Every Sunday you don’t always preach that 100% message. You go home; you don’t want to ask, but you ask did you get anything out of the message today? They respond and say, ‘I got this.’ One of my children, grown with their own family, came to me and said ‘I appreciate what you said today.’ That is encouraging, that helps. At least I know I am reaching someone. They [family] have been my worst critics and best supporters. I could not do what I do without my family.” Pastoral Leader “F” added, “Oftentimes I am reminded that if you are married pay close attention to what your spouse is saying. We may say that God called me, but He called our [spouses] right alongside of us. What I miss, my [spouse] gets. Thank God for them. When you have your family you have your cheering section that is praying for you because they have to deal with you (smile).”

Pastoral Leader “G” stated, “I am thankful that my spouse is humble.... and is not aggressive toward the individuals in the church. My children are fairly older and they live out of state. My immediate family has suffered because of my responsibility at the church. I have not been able to live up to seeing them and visiting them as much as I probably could but thanks be to God, in the last couple of years God sent me a minister and now I have the ability to see my family more often.”

Pastoral Leader “H” explained, “I’m a motivator! I motivate people. It starts at home. If I can’t influence my spouse to come along with me, then I can’t influence anyone. That goes for my children too! People will be able to see that my family follows my leadership. They will see us together. That affects ministry and helps to draw other families.”

Question #6: If you were responsible for developing a training program or seminar for current and new pastoral leaders in an urban context, what would it have to include? What are the specific reasons for these inclusions?

Pastoral Leader “A” had this response: “I would include knowing the community. In the Black Church, the Pastor is not just the Pastor of the Church, but the Pastor of the community whether or not all the people of the community are members of their church. The Pastor is still the primary voice in the community that people look to, even though not as strongly as they once were because there are competing voices now, but they still look to the Pastor and the Church in the community for leadership. The Pastor must know the community and try to help the community have a more positive feeling about the church because in the settings of today there is not always a positive feeling for the church, whether it is over parking spaces and that is because the people that go to church may no longer live in the community or never lived in West Philadelphia. Maybe a generation ago they lived in the community, and they were invested in the community. The Pastor has to [now] convince the people in the church that they ought to care about the community even though they don’t live in the community.” Pastoral Leader “A” continued by explaining that, “It is also important to know the politicians, who the elected officials are so that there is a relationship. This way the politicians know who we [Pastors] are when we show up at meetings. When politicians see that pastors are in the meetings it makes them more accountable.”

Pastoral Leader “B” stated, “I would include training for knowing the community and how to minister in the community and to develop the people in the community. Learn how to meet people where they are and identify their needs and the needs of the community. Training would also have an emphasis on ministering to families and how to develop a counseling center

so people can get the help they need.”

Pastoral Leader “C” responded by saying, “The first thing it would have to include would be to help people identify their gifts. Secondly, people need to know what it means to have a vision because we have to understand that vision is not only for the church that the people belong to, but every individual should have a vision for themselves and for their family. Thirdly, teach on evangelism. Be able to reach into the society and culture. Jesus said, go into all the world and make disciples of all nations, we think [church] only geographically, local but I believe we [church] is also supposed to impact systems and become more systematic in the way we do things. We need to look at the world around us. There are various areas that we should influence. We should be able to influence family, education, government. We should influence media, arts, and the entertainment business is and of course the religious areas. Unfortunately, the Church is remiss in touching these areas. Advocacy groups are doing well because they are united in what they do.” Pastoral Leader “C” added, “If I were to teach a seminar to young pastors I would instruct them to think about those areas of influence I just mentioned and not just the Church. The greatest issues or problems with the modern day Church is that we spend the greater portion of our time evangelizing each other. We are always looking to do what we need to do in the confines of the church building.”

Pastoral Leader “D” stated that it would have to include a; “Black cultural part to make the urban context relative to the struggles, the influences and inequities that we face as Black people. If this is not included, I would not be interested.”

Pastoral Leader “E” explained that since the neighborhood is transitioning that the training would have to include, “How to minister to people who have really been damaged and hurt. We have a lot of dysfunctional families and spiritual dysfunctional families. People come

into the church that has been deeply hurt. They have generational curses that we do not get a chance to open up, but we see the effect on their lives. We need to be able to minister to someone and go beyond the surface. There is a need to have a good biblical counseling program that teaches how to do inner healing because a lot of people are hurt. I found out that hurt people, hurt people and healed people, heal people. There is a need for a training program that teaches how to touch lives and get to the core of the person to develop better members and leaders for the church and community.”

Pastoral Leader “G” states that, “The first part of the training would be to train them to learn what community they are involved in, what community they are pastoring in and what type of members they have. What do the members think, what are their needs and start working from there. The first part would be called the “Needs of the Community’. Once we identify the needs then we can start addressing those needs. I truly believe that if you do not address the needs it will be very difficult for them to hear the Word of God.”

Pastoral Leader “H” stated, “Outreach, I would teach the importance of outreach and how to strategize. Develop a good sound Christian Education program. Discipleship classes telling people what they need to know when they join the church and what is and what is not expected.”

Question #7: What has been your most challenging pastoral leadership experience?
Please describe in detail. What did you do? What did you learn?

Pastoral Leader “A’ stated that what is most challenging about pastoral leadership is, “Keeping people enthused and excited about the work of the ministry because so often people can be excited for a season or for a little while, but to try to sustain that enthusiasm over a long period of time is a challenge. There is also the challenge of getting young people involved and remaining involved in the life of the church. It is increasingly more difficult and that may be

because of the age of the Pastor. I'm not sure but I do not think that is part of it. I do think that young people attract young people, and I do not think that is unique to my church but most churches have that challenge, especially with that young adult age, to keep them involved in the life of the church. They may leave and come back in later years, but keeping them involved and creating ministries to keep them involved is a challenge." Pastoral Leader "A" added, "Another challenge for me is loyalty and devotion to the church. People that we could depend on in the past, once they go off the scene I do not see the same level of devotion and loyalty to the church, in terms of giving, giving is often sporadic and again there is a general falling away [from] the things of God. Another challenge has to do with the neighborhood. There are many unchurched people in the neighborhood that we are not reaching out to. People come into the Church with no church background and then there is the challenge of getting the Church to receive them. We say we want the Church to grow and we say we want to bring in new members, but the challenge is to prepare our people to receive people that may not necessarily look like them, so they can become part of the Body. This would allow them to bring in a fresh wind, but we do not realize it because we are stuck and want to maintain what we have."

Pastoral Leader "B" stated this, "My most challenging experience is having someone that you have known for a long period of time that you trusted and allowed them to be based on that trust, a significant leader in the ministry only to have that person betray you and the ministry. Be very careful who you trust and ensure that you have checks and balances in place to protect yourself and the Church."

Pastoral Leader "C" stated that the most challenging experience is to, "Have someone that you have poured into over a long period of time and helped them to become stabilized and find their place in God and then to have that same person turn their back on you and stab you in

the back. I would be lying to you if I tell you that it was not painful, it really hurt! This person seemed so loyal until I challenged and corrected them. They took exception to that and walked away. The only way to get beyond that was to forgive the person. I see the person now and I am cordial but it still hurts.”

Pastoral Leader “D” stated, “What is most challenging to me probably is where to cut it off. When I see a person being treated unfairly, I want to make a difference. I find myself with the propensity to be the champion for the underdog, the folks that were pushed to the side and not included. I have to help them; I have to see if I can make a difference! But sometimes the ones you do the most for appreciate it the least and will turn on you the quickest and this has happened a couple of times. I learned to find the cutoff point; when I’ve done all that, I have been assigned to do and all that my heart commanded me to do then that is the cutoff. Again I have to care less without being careless.”

Pastoral Leader “E” said that in ministry, “You need boundary balance. It seems that we want more for the people than they want for themselves. They only allow you to go so far, but you feel compelled to help them because we feel this is what we are supposed to do, but you cannot go up against a person’s will! Boundaries have been a challenge over the years. A person persuaded against their will is of the same opinion still.”

Pastoral Leader “F” stated, “I think my greatest challenge was when I did my first pre-marital counseling session. I was under the impression that you sit down and ask a couple of questions and because they are in love we could just go ahead and move forward with this. I found out that people have issues and that when you bring two different people together that have to fit into the same space you have to sit down and listen and ask questions that lead to other questions and then get down to the rest of the things that may prevent a healthy marriage.

A lot of people get married without any counseling and then they come to you when they have issues, this is a real challenge also.”

Pastoral Leader “G” responded by saying, “The church that I came into was so broken! When I started pastoring, they had no faith in the pastor or leadership. My toughest job was to get them to forgive number one, and they had to learn forgiveness and number two they had to learn again how to respect a true man or woman of God. After they did that, I had to teach them how to be healed from their brokenness, once that happened the people started to come around. I believe honestly that for the first three years, there was not much love from the membership for the Pastor because of the number of times that they had been hurt.”

Pastoral Leader “G” stated that, “I had one situation with a member that in the end I realized that I should have handled it differently. I allowed too many people to get involved and it actually appeared that I was lying and the member and the family left the church and the truth never came out.”

Question #8: What do you hope to accomplish as a pastoral leader?

Pastoral Leader “A” responded this way, “I hope to bring people into a closer relationship with God. How do you do that? The aim of ministry never changes, raise the God consciousness in the lives of the people, and I think that is done through worship, preaching and through the ministry of the church and the outreach of the church (pause) to promote God to bring people to a relationship that has to be deeper than just church membership.”

Pastoral Leader “B” had this to say, “I hope to get people to understand who God is so their lives can be transformed. I also want to develop a counseling center so people can have all of their needs addressed. I have and want to continue to develop leaders to lead churches. I have

some very good leaders here, who would make good pastors, but they don't seem to want to leave, I made a mistake somewhere (laugh)!"

Pastoral Leader "C" said, "First of all, I wanted to be able to create a legacy and posterity in the earth through my children and my spiritual sons and daughters and I thank the Lord that I have been able to accomplish that. Now one of my blood children is pastoring the church. However, I had to learn this because sometimes we think that we are to Pastor until we are 80 or 90 years old and one day just fade away and finally turn it over. This is what some pastors do. It is unfortunate that some pastors chain themselves to their desks and dare anybody to try to pry the lock to get them out of it. I had to learn some lessons from a dearly beloved brother who went on to be with Lord. He said to me the one thing you have to learn is that God has other things for you to do besides just pastoring, and I watched his example how he turned his church over to a dear friend and started traveling around the world for God."

Pastoral Leader "D: Sat straight up and immediately responded by saying, "The making of more disciples. Getting members to become ministers with a desire to be like Christ which makes pastoring a whole lot easier."

Pastoral Leader "E" stated, "There is a need to develop faithful people who will carry out responsibilities. Teach each person to work on their relationship with the Lord for to exhibit the fruit of the Spirit is far more important than a person doing a great job in ministry."

Pastoral Leader "F" stated, "I would like to mimic Jesus and make disciples that are really intimate in a relationship with Christ and understands what the Kingdom is about. It is not just going to church and trying to do the right thing, but live in a way that complements Him!"

Pastoral Leader "F" added, "I would like to be able to reach people and then direct their lives in a

biblical way so that no matter what confronts them, they will be able to get through life. I want to prepare Christians to live in an ungodly world.”

Pastoral Leader “G” said, “As a Pastoral Leader, I want everyone under the sound of my voice and the voice of the members to get a real true knowledge of Jesus Christ. I want them to be taught the Bible and to be led in the right direction and to let them know that the world is not their friend! I want them to know that with the power of the Holy Spirit they can become exactly who God wants them to be!”

Pastoral Leader “H” said, “I’m looking to develop men and women for God, everyone is not sent to stay here. It is a joy to develop leaders and see them committed and going to school, and getting married and doing ministry.”

Question #9: Based on your Pastoral leadership experience, how would you define a Pastoral Leader? What are the necessary qualifications?

Pastoral Leader “A” in response to this question stated, “Courage to lead in places where people may not want to go and to make a decision that may not be popular. Be wise in judgement and firm enough in what you have been called to do. Take risks in faith; make tough decisions trusting God through it all. Look at the biblical models of leadership. A leader is a person that takes people to a place that they have never been before! That takes courage and faith. I have to admit, I had to develop my faith. I did not have much faith early on; if I did I would have done some things differently. No Pastor should go to a church and look at it as a stepping stone to someplace else, but look at it as a church and believe this is where God wants you to be (pause) not to be one place with an eye somewhere else. Be totally committed even if it is for life, to the place where God has placed you.”

Pastoral Leader “B” said, “Know who you are and what God called you to do. Have a vision and teach the vision and teach the Word of God. Establish yourself as the Pastor and make sure people respect that. Know your people, love the people, and teach the people, help people live. Help people develop their lives.”

Pastoral Leader “C” said, “It is critical to think forwardly and futuristically. The millennials want God; they are just more radical with this whole world of technology. We have to be able to adjust to utilize these things to help them understand the Gospel. I would tell Pastors to read, read everything you can get your hands on! Read constantly and not just the Bible. Some stuff you read may not necessarily be written by a Christian so eat the meat and then throw the bones away. Lastly, you need humility. You need to be teachable and coachable. To be a good leader, you must be a good follower. You must know what it means to serve because the leader must be chief servant of all. Do not put yourself or allow others to put you on a pedestal. A pastoral leader must be a great giver. Every Pastor needs a spiritual [mentor] not just a covering but someone who has the authority to hold you accountable in every area of your life.”

Pastoral Leader “D” said this, “A Pastor is someone whose heart is as close as possible to the heart of God. Do what the Scriptures impose upon you and live up to it. This is hard because what the Scriptures require of us is far different than popular opinion. So in a nutshell, trying to be humble like Jesus and never forgetting we are saved by his grace.”

Pastoral Leader “E” stated, “You must love the Lord with all your heart, mind and soul and everything else will fall into place. Have a commitment to serving and loving people. If you don’t love the people you will separate yourself from the people.”

Pastoral Leader “F” said that, “You must have love for the people. If you don’t have love, you can’t minister to people. If you can’t pastor people, you can’t connect with the people. You

must demonstrate love without being a dictator. In a garden, you have different types of fruits and vegetables – but it is all part of the garden. You can't sit down and have a fruit salad with just an apple.”

Pastoral Leader “G” responded by saying, “A Pastoral Leader is one that has totally surrendered [his/her] life to God and will only take direction from God. I truly believe that we have to be an example. As for me, I know that no matter what your past is like; God can get you started all over again and use you. God actually turned my life all the way around. So you must surrender your life to God and you must sacrifice all that you have to be a true Pastoral Leader.

Pastoral Leader “H” stated, “A Pastoral Leader must know the Word of God and have a full understanding of it. Be a leader, if you are going somewhere without followers you are just taking a walk! Be able to influence. If you can't influence you are not leaders. Be able to communicate and have a relationship with the Lord.”

Chapter Five

Conclusion and Implications

This research project identified and analyzed pastoral leadership practices in the urban context of West Philadelphia. Even though context is a very important factor in any leadership situation, it does not necessarily have to be the only or the determining factor for consideration. The scope of this research project, (urban West Philly) does not preclude the application and/or adaptation of these research findings to other contexts. Presumably, the leader has the authority to modify and/or adapt leadership strategies or theories that he or she determines will best suit their leadership context. The goal in any leadership process should be to effectively utilize whatever approach is available in view of context and other factors. An individual's background and circumstance influence and impact the leadership context. The recognition of this reality in conjunction with other factors is important for the development of leadership strategy. Rima refers to the individual's background and circumstances as self-leadership. He explains that self-leadership is similar to an important construction project, because many times the problems are a result of issues and elements that are not easily seen. Rima says that leadership is somewhat similar and that before one can anticipate exercising effective leadership to "withstand the hostile elements of culture," there is a need for serious preparatory work to be done in the unseen areas of the leader's life that will create the proper foundation in which effective leadership can be built upon (17).

This research project, by identifying and analyzing pastoral leadership practices, discovered the need to acknowledge and recognize what Rima calls self-leadership and its impact on the leadership process. This is an important observation because context impacts the leadership strategy to be used in ministering to God's people. People are complex and unique

and often to minister to people one must carefully and spiritually, on an ongoing basis, assess both the individuals and their interrelationships within the group or congregation. Because of this, pastoral leaders must be able to effectively adapt to a variety of challenges.

The urban context presents a plethora of challenges for the pastoral leader. Therefore, pastoral leaders must be self-aware, understand the environment, and then be able to effectively minister to multiple persons simultaneously. The goal of ministering may be spiritual, but the road to the goal is full of other challenges and issues that must be dealt with and cannot be overlooked. The pastoral leader must be prepared to handle ministry in a manner that allows them to remain stable and whole. This requires that they have support and other avenues of restoration and renewal. If the pastoral leader has a family, there must be a balance between church and family. If not both, then all suffer. What the research shows is that a pastoral leader must be a multi-gifted multi-tasker type of individual with the ability to identify, recruit, motivate, train (sometimes hire) individuals to whom assignments can be delegated to avoid burnout and exhaustion.

All of the research participants expressed the fact that they were well prepared theologically for pastoring but not for the leadership aspect of pastoring. Pastoring was more of an on-the-job training situation, but the theology helped them tremendously with their foundation for becoming a pastoral leader. This is one of the areas that the findings of this research project can address especially for new pastors that feel that their leadership training is inadequate.

There are a variety of leadership styles that require the pastoral leader to possess the ability to sometimes employ a combination of leadership strategies when required. As one research participant explained, in ministry one size style of leadership does not adequately fit every situation. Therefore, the pastoral leader has to be able to assess the situation and determine

the need. This research project illustrated not only the importance of pastoral leaders but it also sheds light on the magnitude of the pastoral leader's responsibilities in addition to the preaching, teaching and overall functioning of the Church. Many of the research participants' churches do not have all they desire to have but are able to be effective with what and who God has given them.

Some of the research participants expressed their concern about the fact that people no longer seem loyal to the church, and that there are so many things competing for their time and interests that priority is assigned to their most pressing issue(s). Additionally, due to the lack of loyalty and commitment, some of the members and leaders seem to have no problem with being distracted and abandoning their responsibilities. Most of the research participants also shared that many people do not or just cannot support the church financially like they used to, but these pastors are still trying to develop ways to help individuals and families survive. They all expressed the opinion that somehow God works it all out. Some of the commonalities among the research participants were their determination, commitment and the sense of knowing that God called them and placed them where they are.

Future Implications

This research information along with existing leadership research will be used to assist in the creation of non-denominational urban pastoral leadership training programs. The goal is to add to the existing literature and enhance the existing pastoral leadership training models for current and new pastors.

There is a lot of information about leadership and this information is viable and relevant, but more targeted information about pastoral leadership in the urban ministry environment is lacking. Information about urban ministry and urban churches exists, but it does not adequately

identify and record pastoral leadership experiences. Another goal of this research project was to develop a resource for current and future pastors. This resource is called, “Pointers for Pastors. It will include the following: (See Appendix “D”)

- I. “Pastor Be A Good Listener”
- II. “Pastor Know Thy Self”
- III. “Pastor Know The People”
- IV. “Pastor Know The People In The Community”
- V. “Pastor Identify, Recruit, and Develop Leaders”
- VI. “Pastor Learn From Your Challenges and Your Experiences”
- VII. “Pastor There Is A Need To Balance Family and Ministry”
- VIII. “Pastor You Need A Vision”
- IX. “Pastor Have A Sense of What A Pastoral Leader Is”
- X. “Pastor Share The Responsibilities of Ministry – Delegate!”
- XI. “Pastor Have A Personal Prayer Life”
- XII. “Pastor Have A Personal Life”

One of the main goals of this qualitative research project was to develop a resource for pastoral leaders that would add to the existing literature and enhance current pastoral leadership training models.

Ethnographic research provides the opportunity to observe and to talk with people in their environment. With this thought in mind, the ethnographic type of interview is a window into the life and experience of each research participant. Each research participant that was interviewed, in response to the questions asked, shared their life experiences as pastors and pointed out what happened, how they responded and what they learned. After spending many hours in prayer,

meditation, reflection and review of all the research and interview data the thought of pastors sharing their experiences and pointing out what they determined to be important enough to share the title, “Pointers for Pastors” came to mind. “Pointers for Pastors” is a reference that represents approximately 190 years of pastoral leadership experience through the eyes of the research participants to be shared with others.

All of the research participants expressed appreciation and gratitude for the opportunity to be included in this research project. The confidentiality clause allowed them to freely express themselves. Otherwise, they may have been reluctant to participate in this research study.

Results and Contributions

Shifting demographics in urban areas and the growth and accessibility of technology have accelerated changes throughout our society. It is the function of management in any organization to at least adapt to, or at best, anticipate change. An effective leadership model for urban pastors addresses an area of weakness that has already had far-reaching complications. A lack of specific administrative training and organizational management hampers a pastor as much as any other organizational leader. A continuous erosion of membership bases and financial stability produces inevitable results. Fewer souls saved and fewer laborers for the harvest. The trend cannot be reversed with information and training that is outdated, inadequate and/or irrelevant for urban ministry. Flexible effective and relevant models of pastoral leadership training are necessary for success.

Contributions

The findings of the research project contributed to the existing knowledge literature and scholarship by identifying pastoral leadership ministry practices in the urban context for the purpose of enhancing leadership training models for current and future pastors. Additionally,

there are plans to publish “Pointers for Pastors” and to use it to assist in the development of pastoral training seminars and workshops. The researcher has begun to explore how this information can be used in the training of other ministry leaders.

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Appendix A

Research Questions

1 .What challenges are unique to you as a pastoral leader as opposed to secular/corporate leaders? What are the advantages/disadvantages of these differences? (Recruiting/hiring of employees: Volunteers, vs. Paid employees; Compliance with both the Bible and Government, etc.)

2. How do the specific demographics (age, race, income, etc.) of your congregation, impact your duties and responsibilities as a pastoral leader?

3. In what ways does your journey/transition to becoming a Pastor influence your leadership style(s)? What appears to be most helpful? What appears to be a challenge?

4. What specific pastoral leadership experience would you share with current and new pastors?

5. How does your family experience/environment influence your leadership and vice versa?

6. If you were responsible for developing a training program or seminar for current and new pastoral leaders in an urban church context, what would it have to include? What are the specific reasons for these inclusions?

7. What has been your most challenging pastoral leadership experience? Please describe in detail. What did you do? What did you learn?

8. What do you hope to accomplish as a Pastoral Leader?

9. Based on your Pastoral leadership experience, how would you define a Pastoral Leader? What are the necessary qualifications?



Appendix B

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John 12:32

Pastor Douglas M. Carpenter, Sr.
Co-Pastor Felisa E. Carpenter

Date:

Name:

Dear: Pastor _____:

My name is Pastor Douglas M. Carpenter, Sr. I am currently conducting research for my Doctor of Ministry from the Lancaster Theological Seminary in Lancaster, Pa. The focus of this research is "Pastoral Leadership Strategies from an Urban Perspective" (West Philadelphia). The attached Research Participant's Consent Form for your review will provide you with some additional details.

This letter is to request that you be a part of my research project by being a Research Participant and allowing me to interview you at your church at your convenience. To develop this project I will also need your church history, number of members and ethnic diversity of members, ministries, outreach ministries, etc. if possible.

If you are able to accommodate my request, please as soon as your schedule permits, contact me at the church (215) 472-9551 or on my cell phone (267) 252-2058 or by email crpdgls@verizon.net.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

In The Lord's Service.

Blessings,

Pastor Douglas M. Carpenter, Sr.

230 ½ S. 51st Street . Philadelphia, PA 19139 . Mailing Address: PO Box 19177, Philadelphia, PA 19143
1-888 GOD'S JOY (Toll Free) . 215 472-9551 (Local) Fax 215 472-1397
Email Address: PHILAPRAYER@aol.com Web: PHILAPRAYER.ORG

Appendix C
Research Participant's Consent Form

Hello, my name is Pastor Douglas M. Carpenter, Sr., and I am a Doctor of Ministry student at the Lancaster Theological Seminary in Lancaster, PA. I am conducting a Research Study entitled: "Strategies for Urban Church Leadership: An Ethnographic Study of Pastoral Ministry Leadership Practices in West Philadelphia Churches" and I am also requesting that you be one of my Research Participants. My Project Supervisor is Rev. Dr. Marty Kuchma, he can be reached at (717) 393-0654 should you have any questions about the study. I can be reached at the church (215) 472-9551 or by cell phone at (267) 252-2058.

If you consent to be a Research Participant you will be asked to respond to several questions in oral - taped interview (about 45 minutes to an hour) preferably, conducted at your church. I may also contact you for follow-up and clarification.

Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time. There are no anticipated risks involved in this study. Additionally, by using pseudonyms your name, the name of your church and all other information will be kept confidential in all of the research, reporting and writing pertaining to this study.

It is my plan to conduct a written account of what I learn based on these interviews and other research. This written research project will be submitted to my Project Supervisor. Upon approval it will be presented at a Symposium at the Lancaster Theological Seminary. One of the goals of this project is to develop a Resource on Strategies for Urban Church Pastoral Leaders.

In the event that I publish this study and/or refer to it in a published writing, I will continue to use pseudonyms and may alter some details to further protect your anonymity.

This project has also been reviewed and approved by the Franklin and Marshall College Institutional Review Board. Questions concerning your rights as a participant in this research

may also be addressed to Ken Krebs, Ph.D., Office of the Provost, 102C, Old Main,
kkrebs@fandmu.edu, (717) 291-4283.

Your signature below indicates that you are consenting to be a Research Participant for this study as described above. You will receive a copy of this signed consent form at the interview.

Blessings and Thanks!

Participant's signature: _____

Date: _____

Participant's Printed Name: _____

Researcher's signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's Printed Name: _____

Appendix D



“POINTERS FOR PASTORS”

By: Pastor Douglas M. Carpenter, Sr.

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Please Note: The “Pointers” from the author are presented in a slightly different format than the others.

From The Author

This book, *Pointers for Pastors*, is the result of the findings of a research project focused on identifying and recording the experiences of urban pastoral ministry leaders. The main goal of the research project was to develop some type of book or reference manual/guide for pastors. As promised to each pastor, their names and the names of their churches will remain confidential. Due to the confidentiality agreement, what you will read on the following pages are some of their quotes, followed by a pointer. These pointers are the author's summary interpretation based on the pastors' responses to interview questions along with my experience and thoughts resulting from twenty plus years of urban pastoral leadership experience. This book was designed to be used as food for thought and not as commands or directives.

It is my prayer that what you read in the following pages will in some way be helpful to you. It is a "quick reference resource" and it is similar to, for example, the purchase or lease of a new car when you usually find two manuals in your glove compartment. One manual is a very thick, detailed owner's manual. The other manual is a much thinner quick reference owner's manual. The quick reference manual is used for moments when a warning signal appears on your instrument panel requiring you to immediately assess the situation to assist in determining what needs to be done and how to proceed. What you are about to experience is not the thick, detailed owner's manual, but the thinner quick reference manual.

To all of the pastors who helped with this study, I thank you for your time, courage and willingness to share and participate in this research project. It was very encouraging to know that all of you thought this was a good, valuable, interesting, worthwhile project. Many thanks to my wife, children, and other family members, church members, and friends who supported me in so

many different and important ways. I would also like to thank my seminary Project Advisor.

Last, but not least, I thank God for his love, mercy, grace, guidance and patience.

Enjoy!

Pastor Douglas M. Carpenter, Sr.

Pastor Pointer Number One

“Pastor Be A Good Listener”

James 1:19 "My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry." (NIV)



Pastor Pointer Number One

Shhh! Be Quiet! Listen!

A pastor must be or become a good listener. The pastor as a listener can help to create the atmosphere in which communication will take place. As a listener, you are letting the speaker(s) know that they are, and what they are saying is important enough that you are willing to take the time and minimize distractions so that you can focus, hear and understand. For the pastor as a listener, it is important for you to hear what is said, and to also hear what is not being said. In other words, pay attention to the non-verbal, the body language, changes in expressions, voice levels, etc. Then, listen to yourself as you react to what is being said. Pay attention to your thoughts and interactions to what is being shared. Good listening skills will provide you with the ability to ask relevant questions as well as determine what aspects of the situation require additional or deeper exploration for some type of response and/or advice.

Okay, you can speak now!

Pastor Pointer Number Two

“Pastor Know Thyself”

2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here." (NIV)

“I consider myself very fortunate. I have been preaching since I was a child about eleven years old, and I came from a family of preachers. As a matter of fact one of my family members who was a preacher was my mentor for a long time. What is most challenging is establishing yourself as a leader where people respect and recognize you as the Pastor. You have to know who you are, what God called you to do and you have to have a vision and articulate your vision.”



Pastor Pointer Number Two

It is most important in any relationship to know one's self. Knowing one's self gives an individual the foundation for understanding the lens or lenses through which they see and perceive other people. It is very hard to help someone if you are not grounded or do not have a good sense of who you are, your personality, your theological constructs, your views on life and life events, your strengths, your weaknesses, your breaking point, your experiences, your fears, your reservations, your tolerances, your expectations, your dreams, visions, aspirations and your faith in God.

A pastor must know him or herself because this allows them to understand what they bring to the current context. This helps the pastor to understand their personal thought process, how they assess the situation(s) and determine the course of action. In order to benefit the ministry, Pastors must have an accurate view of themselves. The Pastor must seek out and encourage complementary gifts, skills, viewpoints, personalities and life experiences within the

administration of the body. The Biblical principles of iron sharpening iron and seeking Godly counsel must be prominent in order for the body to thrive. Just as Jesus valued the impetuous disciple Peter, an imperfect Pastor must not be guilty of requiring perfect members. The Pastor's leadership style is influenced by the lens through which they see, perceive, act and react. If the same influences become limitations, the Pastor's lens may adversely impact the leadership process.

Pastor Pointer Number Three

“Pastor Know The People”

1 Corinthians 12:14 "Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many." (NIV)

“We must make sure that there is a [people] connection in the church, because there are various ages and maturity levels and some come from different demographics, some people have different economic flow, so the church must be at a place where she can house all these people coming together in their ethnicities. Sometimes churches are polarized because, they will only look at the demographic where the church is and determine that only certain people live in this area and they [the church] are not thinking about how we can bring all ethnicities together. Since we serve the same God, why should we be segregated ethnically or demographically? As a pastoral leader, I never wanted to be guilty of preaching a Black Gospel because the Gospel of Jesus Christ is for everybody. I believe everybody should be coming into the building!”



Pastor Pointer Number Three

It is most important to know the people that God has called you to minister to. People are complex and their needs are usually more than just spiritual. It takes time to talk with them, observe and fellowship with them in various settings in and around and possibly outside the church. Knowing the people provides the Pastor with a sense of the individual and congregational needs. This is most important for developing relevant ministries within the church to create an environment for fellowship, learning, worshipping, and serving. The Pastor must be a people person and interested in leading and influencing people to reach goals and aspirations for themselves, their families, and the church community. The Pastor must attempt to

know the people as God knows them. The Pastor must trust that God has placed the necessary parts within the body and not lament a lack of giftedness. It takes a trained eye to determine which rough stones are actually diamonds.

When the Pastor knows the people, he or she then knows what to pray for and how to better serve them. Knowing the people and identifying their spiritual gifts and natural talents creates the pool of ministry leaders and workers for the church.

Pastor Pointer Number Four

“Pastor Know The People In The Community”

Matthew 9:36 "And what pity he felt for the crowds that came, because their problems were so great and they didn't know what to do or where to go for help. They were like sheep without a shepherd."(TLB)

“In the Black Church, the Pastor is not just the Pastor of the Church, but the Pastor of the community whether or not all the people of the community are members of their church. The Pastor is still the primary voice in the community that people look to, even though not as strong as it once was because there are competing voices now, but they still look to the Pastor and the Church in the community for leadership. The Pastor must know the community and try to help the community have a more positive feeling about the church because in the settings of today there is not always a positive feeling about the church.....”



Pastor Pointer Number Four

Currently, many church members do not live in the community surrounding the church but some do. The community affects the church and the church affects the community. In many instances, the Pastor is often a voice in and for the community. Ministry is not just in-reach but it is also outreach. There are many things that happen in the community that the church should assist in addressing, and at the same time engage in evangelistic efforts. The church should have a tangible presence. If a church leaves a community and the community does not realize it or does not care, then what was the church doing? The Pastor must not be so internally focused that the church has no external presence, power, or significance. The challenge for the Pastor is to ensure that the church's presence in the community is viewed as being beneficial and not

intrusive. A community many times, needs more than just the Bible. It needs to experience the love, mercy, and grace of which the Bible speaks. The collective church must become a walking epistle. In reality, the community belongs to the church and the church belongs to the community.

Pastor Pointer Number Five

“Pastor Identify, Recruit, and Develop Leaders”

Ephesians 4:11-12 " And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."(KJV)

“One of the most unique challenges is finding people who have an idea of what we [the church] want to accomplish and then agreeing with that. Some people say, I see where you are going, let me help you get there. Others say I see where you are going, let me tell you how to get there. The challenge is to find someone that wants to partner with the vision and be willing to come alongside of the vision and not alter the vision. When I became the Pastor, trying to convince the people that I am not the previous pastor, I love [the previous Pastor] and I want to complete the vision....but I want to complete it the way the Lord wants me to complete it. That was a challenge and we are still transitioning. Some people know where they are going they just don't know how to get there. It is a challenge trying to get people to understand this if it seems the vision is dead, just don't give up.”



Pastor Pointer Number Five

The Pastor that knows the congregation and knows the community begins to develop a sense of the type of relevant ministries for the church. It is important to identify the spiritual gifts within the congregation to help in the recruitment and development of leaders for ministry. The Pastor must create a “good soil” environment where the members can be fruitful and understand what God expects from them and how God has created them to be active, effective members of the Body of Christ. This type of environment results in the members beginning to gravitate toward areas of ministry. This gravitation and exploration assists the Pastor in guiding individual

members to further explore and develop their gifts so they can be identified and recruited to become productive blessings to the Body of Christ.

Pastor Pointer Number Six

“Pastor Learn From Your Challenges and Experiences”

Roman's 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (KJV)

“You need boundary balance. It seems that we want more for the people than they want for themselves. They only allow you to go so far, but you feel compelled to help them because we feel this is what we are supposed to do but you cannot go up against a person’s will! Boundaries have been a challenge over the years. A person persuaded against their will is of the same opinion still.”



Pastor Pointer Number Six

A Pastor should be prepared not to look at all challenges and experiences as a personal attack or lack of leadership ability. The best thing to do is to look at each challenge/experience whether positive or negative as a learning experience for personal growth, development and maturity that will result in becoming a more effective leader. The way a Pastor handles challenges and experiences can affect the trajectory of the church. The Pastor must be meek but not weak. He or she must be an example of resiliency and strength. Pastors are pastoring and learning at the same time, so they must be aware of that. A Pastor who stops learning stops growing. Challenges and experiences are part of the learning process for Pastors. A Pastor can learn something from every challenge and experience if he or she is willing to look at them from different perspectives. Sandpaper is rough but if used correctly it can really smooth things out!

Pastor Pointer Number Seven

“Pastor There Is A Need To Balance Family and Ministry”

1 Timothy 3:5 "If they don't know how to control their own families, how can they look after God's people." (CEV)

“When it comes down to a man or woman of God, if your family is not with you and if you are not seeing their approval in what you are doing, then it is time to stop, backup and re-evaluate where you are headed and what you are doing! I have seen and I'm sure you've seen as you go from place to place if you want to see the temperature of the place you just look to see how the [spouse] is responding. If they are not responding well, I can tell that there is something that this man or woman is doing wrong. So we need to make sure that our families are on board and also that we don't do such a great job of pastoring the church that we don't do a great job of pastoring our families.”



Pastor Pointer Number Seven

When God calls you to Pastor, God actually calls you and your family to the pastorate. Of course, God is not looking for them to do what you do but they affect what you do. It is important that when a Pastor is called to a church that the Pastor does not forget that ministry to the family is important. You should not sacrifice one for the other, there must be a balance. Balance is not so much about fifty-fifty as it is about what works. Balance is about communication, inclusivity, quality time for family and establishing boundaries for ministry and family. The Pastor must use wisdom when determining what to share with the family about the church and what to share with the church about their family. Balance is a result of not losing focus and learning how to delegate and learning when to quit for the day. The interaction

between Pastor and family speaks volumes about the Pastor to the congregation. The pastoral family is always in the fishbowl, so Pastor, make sure that you do what you need to do to keep the water as clean as possible!

Pastor Pointer Number Eight

“Pastor You Need A Vision”

Proverbs 29:18a "Where there is no vision, the people perish ... " (KJV)

“I would like to mimic Jesus and make disciples that are really intimate in a relationship with Christ and understand what the Kingdom is about. It is not just going to church and trying to do the right thing, but live in a way that complements Him! I would like to be able to reach people and then direct their lives in a biblical way so that no matter what confronts them, they will be able to get through life. I want to prepare Christians to live in an ungodly world.”



Pastor Pointer Number Eight

Never take a trip to a place that you have never been before with only a tank full of gas. All Pastors need more than just a tank of gas to say yes to the journey. As a Pastor, you need not only a sense of where you are going, but also an idea of how you are going to get there – You need Vision! Remember that God has called you to take people with you on the journey. People will follow if you give them a sense of where they are going, how they are going to get there and why! The Pastor must be able to articulate the vision in such a way that it creates an atmosphere of excitement, motivation and expectation. The Pastor must always be in communication with God about the vision and must be determined to fulfill it as God directs and guides.

As the Pastor you are the leader and God is holding you accountable for fulfilling the vision and for making sure that the people are knowledgeable and prepared to move forward. As a Pastor, treat the vision like it is your personal vision, just remember at all times that it is God’s vision for the church through you!

Pastor Pointer Number Nine

“Pastor Have A Sense of What A Pastoral Leader Is”

Jeremiah 3:15 "And I will give you pastors according to my heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." (KJV)

“Courage to lead in places where people may not want to go and to make a decision that may not be popular. Be wise in judgement and firm enough in what you have been called to do. Take risks in faith; make tough decisions trusting God through it all. Look at the biblical models of leadership. A leader is a person that takes people to a place that they have never been before! That takes courage and faith. I have to admit, I had to develop my faith. I did not have much faith early on, if I did I would have done some things differently. No Pastor should go to a church and look at it as a stepping stone to someplace else, but look at it as a church and believe this is where God wants you to be (pause) not to be one place with an eye somewhere else. Be totally committed even if it is for life, to the place where God has placed you.”



Pastor Pointer Number Nine

A Pastoral Leader is one who has received and accepted a call from God to pastor God’s people. It is a person who is willing to be used by God to touch and bless the lives of others while their life at the same time is being challenged and blessed. A Pastoral Leader is one who is willing to make the commitment and to sacrifice whatever is necessary so that God’s will will be fulfilled. This person is willing to study, to pray, to teach, to preach, to love, to have patience, to show mercy and to do their best in every situation. A Pastoral Leader knows that he or she is also a work in progress and with their call from God, God’s blessing and anointing upon their lives

and a consistent attitude of humility that they can accomplish much for God's Glory. Above all, Pastoral Leaders are servants.

Pastor Pointer Number Ten

“Pastor Share The Responsibilities of Ministry – Delegate!”

1 Corinthians 12:28 – “Here is a list of some of the parts he as placed in his Church, which is the body: Apostles, Prophets – those who reach God’s Word, Teachers, Those who do miracles, Those who have the gift of healing; Those who can help others, Those who can get others to work together, Those who speak in languages they have never learned.” (TLB)



Pastor Pointer Number Ten

In theory and practice, the leader of any organization is usually held accountable for the success or failure of it. The Pastor as Leader in the church usually has other leaders, people that responsibilities can be assigned to. God has spiritually gifted the Body of Christ for the work of ministry. You as the Pastoral Leader need not think that your accountability for the church requires you to have to literally do everything. Your leadership accountability requires you to oversee everything and to ensure assignments are handled. Identify the giftedness within the church and determine what you can delegate to whom without having to micro-manage them. This will help prevent you from being overwhelmed and from suffering burn out. As the Pastoral Leader, yes, you are accountable but God has also provided you with others who are gifted enough to share the responsibilities for ministry. In the Old Testament Scripture in Exodus 18:13-27(KJV), you will read where Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, advises Moses about delegation of responsibilities for self-preservation. In the New Testament, in Acts 6:1-7(KJV), in reference to the early days of the New Testament Church you will find the Apostles searching for those who were gifted enough to deal with the daily administration of the church functions, so they (the Apostles) could focus on the study, the teaching and the preaching of the Word of God.

This delegation of responsibility resulted in the church's growth. So, "Pastor Share the Responsibilities of Ministry – Delegate!"

Pastor Pointer Number Eleven

“Pastor Have A Personal Prayer Life”

Mark 1:35 – “The next morning he was up long before daybreak and went out alone into the wilderness to pray.” (TLB) – Luke 6:12 – “One day soon afterwards he went out into the mountains to pray, and prayed all night.” (TLB) – 1 Thess. 5:17 – “Always keep on praying.” (TLB)



Pastor Pointer Number Eleven

One of the many responsibilities of the Pastoral Leader is to pray with and to pray for others. The Pastor is also to be a person of prayer. Prayer is a part of your communication with God and this communication helps to build your relationship with God. If we look at Jesus as a ministry example, we find that he did not just pray with and for others but he also had a prayer life. A prayer life can help the Pastor keep focused and provide a sense of peace and calm and/or offer a sense of renewal and refreshment. Prayer means and provides different things for different people. When you stop to consider the ministry of Jesus Christ, and his personal prayer life, this should strongly suggest that those involved in ministry should have a personal prayer life. Do not get so caught up in praying with and for others that you neglect your own spiritual well-being. Yes, others will pray with and for you, but you still need time for your personal prayer life. Do like Jesus did, get away to a quiet place and pray!

Pastor Pointer Number Twelve

“Pastor Have A Personal Life”

Genesis 2:2-3 – “And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.” (KJV)



Pastor Pointer Number Twelve

Have a personal life. Pastors by nature of their calling can get so involved in helping and doing for others that they forget to take care of themselves and enjoy other aspects of their own lives. What are the things that you like to do? Where are the places that you like to go? What are some of the things that you used to do that you enjoyed and would enjoy doing again? What does God expect of you? What do you expect of yourself? If you are feeling pressured or stressed, where is it coming from? Take the time to stop, breathe, exhale, and smell the flowers! Take care of you! Then you can help take care of others! Allow God to work in you and through you! Take a break, God did! ENJOY THE JOURNEY!

About the Author

Pastor Douglas M. Carpenter, Sr. has been pastoring, with his wife, Co-Pastor Felisa E. Carpenter for over eighteen years now, the Philadelphia Prayer Praise & Worship Center Church, Inc., a church that God allowed them to found in their home in urban West Philadelphia. Pastor Carpenter loves God, the Word of God, God's church, the people of God, and the people that need God. He has an unusual and some would say, sometimes humorous way of getting God's message across.

Pastor Carpenter has a B.A. degree in Organizational Management from Eastern University, St. Davids, PA, a Master of Theological Studies from the Palmer Theological Seminary of the Eastern University, St. Davids, PA, and is currently pursuing a Doctor of Ministry at the Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, PA.

He and his wife are the proud parents of a daughter, Delayna, a son, Douglas, Jr. and a God-son, Michael T. Wearen.

“To God Be All the Glory”