

Lancaster Theological Seminary

On the Way to How:
*Church Leaders' Attitudes on
Introducing Communication
as a Part of Leadership
Development and Training
in the Black Church*

A Major Project Submitted to the Faculty
in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Ministry

by

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On the Way to How
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Abstract

The role of communication in leadership in the Black Church has not been discussed often especially not in the larger conversation of how the traditional Black Church with a top-down leadership can be the most effective in the 21st century church. ‘On the Way to How: Church Leaders’ Attitudes on Introducing Communication as a Part of Leadership Development and Training in the Black Church” begins to address this robust topic by exploring how will introducing the role of communication as a part of leadership development be received by pastors and senior leaders that currently utilize a top-down leadership style.

This project studied the attitudes of senior pastors and senior leaders affiliated with the Pilgrim Assemblies International reformation in the Chicagoland area regarding the role of communication in leadership in order to create a workshop that encourages pastors and senior leaders to envision together new models of leadership. First, surveys were completed by senior pastors and their senior leaders to develop a baseline for the views on leadership and communication. From the survey responses and literature, a workshop was developed to introduce communication as a part of leadership. After the workshop, senior pastors and seniors leaders submitted evaluations to discuss their views on communication and leadership for the future. Their views suggest that the Black Church is in support of introducing communication as a part of leadership development and training. The three generations – Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials – that primarily make up Black Church leadership are all in agreement about intentionally integrating communication into leadership development training in their churches. Almost ninety percent of the churches that participated in the workshop identify as having a democratic communication leadership style as opposed to the authoritarian leadership style reported to still be prevalent in the 21st Century Black Church. The senior pastors and senior leaders view change as progress helping the Black Church move forward into the 21st Century. Unanimously, the participants would like to discuss leadership and communication topics further in the future.

Dedication

To my Dad, Nelson J.H. Grinnage - Thank you for being the person that has always supported me and allowed me to dream. I love you.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The role of communication in leadership in the Black Church has not been discussed often, especially not in the larger conversation of how the traditional Black Church with a top-down leadership can be the most effective in the 21st century church. The lack of research on this topic has been a catalyst for taking on such a robust topic for this Major Project.

Research Question and Topic:

While multiple ways exist to begin this robust conversation, this journey begins with the follow research question:

With the unique history of the Black Church and its leadership style, how would introducing the role of communication as a part of its leadership development be received by pastors and senior leaders that currently utilize a top-down leadership style?

For my Major Project, the topic of leadership development and training in the Black Church with an intentional focus on the role of communication will be explored. In 1992, Jerry B. Madkins, a professor and a pastor, argued that the Black Church leadership is in crisis.¹ He contended that the Black pastor's leadership role is facing more scrutiny as the educational demographic of the Black Church's congregations has changed.² In his article, "The Leadership Crisis in the Black Church: The Search for the Right Pastor," Madkin suggested that a traditional Black pastor is often considered to be a "divine authoritarian." In other words, Black

¹ Jerry B. Madkins. "The Leadership Crisis in the Black Church: The Search for the Right Pastor," *The Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center*, 19 no 1 - 2 (Fall - Spr 1991 – 1992), 102.

² Madkins, 102.

Pastors had unchallenged authority in the Black church with little to no input from others.³ As an alternative, Madkins went on to offer four other leadership styles than the standard leadership style that has historically been seen in the Black Church.⁴ The first leadership style is the autocratic leader.⁵ He or she expects their orders to be completed without hesitation.⁶ The second type is the participative leader that involves his or her team in the brainstorming process. With this type of leadership style, the final decision however always belongs to the one leader.⁷ The next type of leadership style is a democratic leader. With this leadership style, the leader will go with the majority's decision. The last type of leadership style suggested by Madkins is the laissez-faire leader, which is someone that has completely detached from their assignment and role.⁸

Like Madkins, I believe the Black Church is still in a leadership crisis over 30 years later. The authoritative leadership style Madkins described is still used in some Black Churches today. In organizations, the authoritarian communication style is described to be an effective approach that will get results, but only in the short term.⁹ While Madkins presented four alternative leadership stills, his work did not suggest how to begin designing and creating new approaches to

³ Madkins, 102.

⁴ Madkins, 104.

⁵ Madkins, 104.

⁶ Madkins, 104.

⁷ Madkins, 104-105.

⁸ Madkins, 105.

⁹ Craig E. Johnson and Michael Z. Hackman. *Leadership: A Communication Perspective*. 3rd Edition. (Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc., 2018), 42.

leadership to meet the intergenerational needs of the 21st Century Black. This Major Project intends to begin to address this situation by looking at the attitudes of senior pastors and senior leaders towards introducing communication as an intentional part of leadership development and training in the Black Church.

While several ways could be suggested to begin addressing this leadership crisis, this Major Project is focusing on what the role of communication as a part of leadership development will be. It is my hope that this work will be helpful to Black Churches that continue to have a traditional, top-down leadership structure. This project will study the attitudes of senior pastors and senior leaders affiliated with Pilgrim Assemblies International reformation in the Chicagoland area regarding their sense of the role of communication in leadership in order to create a workshop that encourages pastors and senior leaders to envision together new models of leadership and then ultimately build training programs to support their leadership teams in the future. The primary audience for this project is senior pastors and senior lay leaders. In a top-down structure, it is important to begin with these stakeholders when discussing any possible cultural and structural changes to the church in order to implement significant change in the church. Their support is needed to implement change in the church.

Significance:

When I began my time at Lancaster, I had an interest in exploring effective church leadership. I thought, “Is there a more effective way to do leadership training in the church than what I have seen?” While several ways exist, in order to begin to address this broad question, my research interest has taken on a more specific form with a focus on exploring leadership and

communication in the Black Church together. In order to successfully lead others, a leader must be able to effectively communicate.

In 2016, a study found effective and clear communication to be in the top 10 of leadership skills.¹⁰ Leaders must be able to communicate the vision of an organization and work consistently to ensure the vision is carried out.¹¹ The ability to do so makes for a great leader.¹² A leader's most profound challenge is building a successful organization.¹³ According to scholar Daniela Neamtu, executing strong communication within one's organization is "an important element in facing this challenge."

One of the ways to measure the effectiveness of a leader is through the leader's communication style.¹⁴ A leader's communication style is a "relatively enduring set of communicative behaviors in which a leader engages when interacting with others."¹⁵ The success or failure of a leader's ability to exercise influence over their followers to execute an organization's vision can be found to be connected to how well a leader communicates.¹⁶

¹⁰ Daniela Mihaela Neamtu, Cristian-Valentin Hapenciue, and Ruxandra Bejinaru. "Reflections of Data and Theory of Leadership Communication Strategies." *Ovidius University Annals: Economic Sciences Series* Vol XIX, No. 2 (2019), 562. <https://doaj.org/article/962776bc4a0f4bcf82da83e6a2211987>.

¹¹ Neamtu, 565.

¹² Neamtu, 565.

¹³ Neamtu, 565.

¹⁴ Craig E. Johnson and Michael Z. Hackman. *Leadership: A Communication Perspective*. 3rd Edition. (Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc., 2018), 40.

¹⁵ Johnson and Hackman, 40.

¹⁶ Johnson and Hackman, 40.

The significance of this project is that the inclusion of the role of communication in Black Churches' leadership development and training models will help build stronger relationships among senior church leadership and ultimately better meet the needs of the different generations of the 21st Century Black Church. Black Church pastors and their senior leaders, with the introduction of new formal training around the role of communication in leadership, would have the opportunity to imagine with their leadership teams another leadership communication style beyond the traditional authoritative approach still used by some Black churches with top-down leadership structures. There is a need, as noted by Dr. Madkins in his article, for a new leadership approach in the Black Church to meet the needs of the Black Church for its success in the 21st Century.¹⁷ While this Major Project cannot address this entire issue, it can help Black Church leaders to begin the conversations needed to examine this issue.

Project Type:

This project is taking a convergent mixed method approach on this complicated journey. With this approach, quantitative and qualitative data will be collected through surveys, observations, and evaluations to discover any themes that arise from the data. The first part of the project will use surveys to do a preliminary analysis of Chicagoland senior pastors and senior leaders affiliated with Pilgrim Assemblies International on their views on the role of communication in leadership. The responses will also provide information about the kind of training senior pastors and leaders have received and presently have set up in their churches. Their responses will aid in providing a baseline of the pastors' and their senior leadership teams'

¹⁷ Madkins, 102.

understanding of communication and leadership in the Black Church. Based on the survey responses and using data from the literature, a workshop will take place to encourage pastors and senior leaders to consider models of leadership communication styles and how to build future training programs to support them. The workshop will conclude with participants completing evaluations to determine whether the workshop achieved its objectives as well as have their attitudes on communication as a part of leadership development have changed. The evaluation will also inquire about some of the ways the senior pastors or senior leaders do or do not foresee implementing information about leadership and communication from the workshop into their church's leadership models.

Personal Interest in this Project:

This project has a personal meaning for me due to my background in the Black Church, church leadership, and my educational background. I was raised in a predominantly, African American Baptist church on the southside of Chicago called Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church. In the late 1990s, Tabernacle had an unfortunate church split and my family left with my former pastor, Bishop Rory R. Marshall. Marshall formed Nehemiah Urban Church Ministries, a nondenominational church on the southside side of Chicago. As a charter member of Nehemiah, it was not easy to leave after 13 years and become a member of Prayer and Faith Outreach Ministries (now known as Powerhouse Chicago). Each of these churches have greatly impacted my earliest views on leadership in one way or another. Each church has had a top-down leadership structure where the senior pastor is the final decision on all major decisions. This was

the only church leadership style that I had ever known until I attended McCormick Theological Seminary to pursue a Master of Divinity degree.

Prior to seminary, I had a myriad of church leadership experiences. I worked closely with two (2) Bishops at Powerhouse Chicago and Nehemiah Urban Church Ministries. Over my 10 years in ministry and church leadership, I also had the opportunity to talk with several pastors and ministers from different denominations and church leaders of different ethnicities. I discovered that no matter the denomination or the ethnicity of the church, we share many of the same concerns. Building the strongest churches and organizations possible have usually been at the forefront of those conversations. One of those concerns often being how does the 21st century church connect with the Millennial generation. Often, I have observed or heard that a lack of clear communication was at the center of these issues. As a result, those conversations have aided me in gaining an interesting perspective of what senior pastors go through in church leadership.

As a senior leader, I also gained another perspective about communication between senior leadership and other levels of leadership. I have seen up close how poor communication of expectations can cause a lack of follow through. I am anticipating that this Major Project can help with seeing a turnaround with this issue in the church.

Shortly after graduating from seminary, my pastor appointed me to be the ministry leader for our Ministerial Alliance Team. At the time, Ministerial Alliance consisted of approximately 60 to 80 ministers, elders, and staff pastors. As Ministerial Alliance leader, I was responsible for assigning ministers for Sunday services, mid-week services (Weekly Bible Study and Prayer Meeting, and all special night services. I facilitated monthly meetings for the ministers with and

without our senior pastor in attendance. Our monthly meetings were the time where we were able to focus on training and development for all ministers and elders in addition to the business of Ministerial Alliance. For example, one time I had the ministers and elders separate into groups to discuss a case study about a ministerial situation. As I walked around and overheard the different ministers talking, it was remarkable to hear how lively their discussions got. You could hear their passion, and you could observe the different experience levels that influenced their thoughts on the particular case study. Another time, we had different ministers give a 10-minute speech and provide them verbal feedback and written feedback using a sermon critique form that I developed. Having these engaging experiences with the ministers and elders in my church provided a glimpse of how effective working in groups could be for the senior pastors and senior leaders of Pilgrim Assemblies International.

As Ministerial Alliance Leader, providing emotional and spiritual support was a significant part of my role as well. For every minister, I was their first point of contact for any negative or positive event taking place in their life. The more I talked to the ministers, the more I was able to hear their concerns and have better understanding of who they were as individuals and what they needed as leaders in the church.

Another part of my role was working and communicating with senior leadership. Often, I have shared with the Ministerial Alliance Leaders that have followed me that part of their job is to manage the ministers and manage the pastor. In a top-down leadership structure, that may seem odd. Yet, it was not odd to me. Early on in my appointment, my pastor and I had many conversations about his desires and expectations for the ministers. I was also able to freely share my desires for them as well as my concerns. It was during this time that Archbishop Hudson

went from being my pastor to becoming a spiritual parent. Over time, I began to get a clear understanding of his heart and his goals.

In order to support my pastor, I learned that there was a time for me to simply do what my pastor requested no questions asked. Other times, it was important that I was not another yes person in his life. I found that it was important to ask questions. When necessary, I would respectfully challenge his approach to a situation. If Archbishop Hudson directed me to do something that I reasonably believed was going to negatively impact his overall goals, I would say something and often provide another suggestion to accomplish his same objective in a different way. These conversation with my pastor and moments of challenge as well as developing relationship with the ministers I led helped me understand how it is two perspectives in church leadership – one of the senior pastor and one of the senior leader. My experience taught me that we all have the same goals, but we all aren't always clear on how to get there. The only way that we begin to bridge that gap is that we begin by communicating.

My role as a senior leader involved collaborating with many of other ministry leaders throughout the church. Often, other ministry teams would need ministers to help staff their teams and their events. I was responsible for assigning ministers to assist them in whatever way was needed. With managing the ministers and elders, managing the expectations of my pastors, and assisting other ministry leaders, this role gave me the experience of pastoring a church within a church. Working with ministry leaders, outside of Ministerial Alliance, helped me to prepare me to connect with the Pilgrim senior leaders that were not ministers.

With all these experiences, it allowed me to gain perspective about how communication between senior leadership and other levels of leadership could impact the effectiveness of the

church. When miscommunication occurs among leadership, it can cause a lack of follow through with tasks. Unclear communication also has the potential to negatively impact relationships among leaders. I am anticipating that the Major Project can help in turning around these issues in the church and help the church move forward toward more favorable outcomes for the church.

Central Terms and Their Definitions:

Reformation – A reformation is a fellowship of churches coming together with a common purpose that have submitted to the leadership established by the reformation. While it is similar to a denomination, it is not the same thing. A reformation can have churches from different denomination as well. Each church has its autonomy regarding leadership and operations. For example, Powerhouse Chicago is a nondenominal church. It oversees its own operations and leadership structure. It has also committed to be accountable to the leadership of Pilgrim Assemblies International. In full disclosure, my senior pastor is also the presiding prelate of PAI.

Pilgrims Assemblies International (also known as PAI or Pilgrim) - Pilgrim Assemblies International is a reformation founded in Brooklyn, New York in 1990 by Archbishop Roy E. Brown. Its overarching purpose is to provide apostolic covering to Senior Pastors, local churches and ministries.¹⁸ Currently, the presiding prelate is Archbishop William Hudson III who is based in Chicago, IL. All the leaders and churches affiliated with Pilgrim have a top-down leadership structure. Since it is a reformation and denomination, it includes Black Church leaders and churches that are affiliated and unaffiliated with denominations.

¹⁸ Unknown. "Presbytery Handbook." (Powerhouse Chicago: 2018), 9.

Chicagoland area – The Chicagoland area includes the city of Chicago, Chicago Suburbs, and Northwest Indiana. Since Chicago is on the border of Indiana, Northwest Indiana cities are often considered to be a part of the Chicagoland area.

Communication – Communication is the use of symbols (ie. Words) to create meaning.¹⁹

Communication is needed to create a shared meaning and reality between a sender and receiver.²⁰ Communications scholar Dean Barnlund says human communication has five principles that are all relevant to this Major Project. The first principle is “Communication is not a thing, it is a process.”²¹ Communication is a forever changing process that doesn’t have a clear beginning and ending point.²² The second principle is “Communication is not linear, it is circular.”²³ Over 2000, communication was explained by a straightforward, back-and-forth linear process between a sender and receiver called an action model.²⁴ Barnlund developed the process into a circular model called the transactional model where sender and receivers continuously send messages simultaneously.²⁵ The next principle is “Communication is complex.”²⁶ Communication consists of multiple people as well as there being a discussion about the

¹⁹ Craig E. Johnson and Michael Z. Hackman. *Leadership: A Communication Perspective*. 3rd Edition. (Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc., 2018), 6.

²⁰ Johnson and Hackman, 6.

²¹ Johnson and Hackman, 8.

²² Johnson and Hackman, 8.

²³ Johnson and Hackman, 8.

²⁴ Johnson and Hackman, 8-9.

²⁵ Johnson and Hackman, 9.

²⁶ Johnson and Hackman, 10.

meaning of messages.²⁷ The fourth principle is “Communication is irreversible.”²⁸ Simply, you cannot ever undo a message once it is sent. The last principle is “Communication involves the total personality.”²⁹ Johnson and Hackman further described this principle by arguing that communication is “the defining characteristic of a human being.”³⁰

Leaders – Leaders are responsible for making decisions regarding the spiritual welfare and overall operation of the church. In most Black Churches, there tends to be a top-down structure with a multi-tier leadership structure. When the term leader is used, it may include all these tiers. This Major Project will primarily be working with Senior Pastors and their top-tier leadership (top 3 leaders).

Senior Pastors – Senior Pastors, also known as Lead Pastors, are at the top of the leadership hierarchy in a top-down structure. They are the official representative of the church and responsible for the overall direction of the church. They are the primary minister for all Sunday and midweek services. They invite or provide approval for guest ministers to preach services.

Executive Pastors – Executive Pastors are usually the next level of authority in the church. They are usually responsible for the administrative and executive issues in the church. They help keep the church running efficiently and smoothly. They manage particular areas of the church designated by the Senior Pastor or Chief of Staff.

²⁷ Johnson and Hackman, 10.

²⁸ Johnson and Hackman, 10.

²⁹ Johnson and Hackman, 10.

³⁰ Johnson and Hackman, 10.

Ministers and Deacons – Additional ministers and deacons are usually on the next tier of hierarchy. They may not be the leader for a particular area of the church. Ministers are focused on meeting the spiritual needs of the congregation, where deacons are considered to be business elders. Their focus is more on the business side of the church. They want to make sure the operations of the church run smoothly.

Ministry Team Leaders – Ministry Team Leaders are individuals who are responsible for managing the direction and effectiveness of a particular ministry. These leaders may or may not be a minister.

Leadership Development – leadership development is intentionally developing a process to further develop an individual or organization. Its goal is to “empower people to self-identify their behaviors and related attitudes (helping and hindering) through true learning, reflection, relationship, and feedback.”³¹

Bottom-up Leadership Style – Bottom-up leadership style is the democratic leadership style that Madkins described in his article, “The Leadership Crisis in the Black Church: The Search for the Right Pastor.” With democratic leadership, the leader’s decision is based on what the majority of subordinates determine is the best decision.³²

³¹ Skip Bell. "Learning, Changing, and Doing: A Model for Transformational Leadership Development in Religious and Non-Profit Organizations." *Journal of Religious Leadership* 9, No.2, (Spr 2010): 96. <http://arl-jrl.org/>.

³² Jerry B. Madkins. “The Leadership Crisis in the Black Church: The Search for the Right Pastor,” *The Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center*, 19 no 1 - 2 (Fall - Spr 1991 – 1992), 102.

Top-down Leadership Style – Top-down leadership is also known as an autocratic structure. It is found in traditional Black Churches where the senior pastor or “chief executive officer format not to allow other voices or opinions be heard.”³³

Training – Training is defined as intentionally helping a person or a group to gain a new skill set. As per Skip Bell, training is described as simply “teaching people in the religious or non-profit organization to do things.”³⁴

Qualifications:

I was raised in a Black Church on the South Side of Chicago. At age 24, I was appointed to my first ministry team leader position as the Membership Ministry Team Leader. From the beginning, this role had me working closely with my-then Senior Pastor, Bishop Rory R. Marshall of Nehemiah Urban Church Ministries. Nehemiah Urban Church Ministries is another Black Church on the South Side of Chicago. Little did I know that my Membership Ministry Team Leader appointment would be the beginning of a 12-year ministry connection.

Prior to my first ministry appointment, I pursued formal higher education. I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication with an emphasis in Journalism from Truman State University. Then, I went on to earn my first master’s degree – Master of Business Administration in Leadership from New York Institute of Technology. While Outreach Director for PowerHouse Chicago, I continued my education at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, IL and earned a Master of Divinity degree.

³³ Michael Evans. *Leadership in the Black Church: Guidance in the Midst of Changing Demographics*. (Fort Worth, Texas: Austin Brothers, 2018), 41.

³⁴ Bell, 95.

Lastly, I have as many years in ministry as I do in higher education professionally. I have 12 years of experience in Higher Education in the areas of Admissions, Financial Aid, International Students, and Transfer Students. I am also the Owner and Educational Consultant for Rite of Passage Project in Chicago, IL. In this role, I privately tutor high school students one-on-one. My mantra for my students is “If I did not teach it to you, I don’t expect you to know it.” For every student, I do an initial assessment. Then, I craft a customized plan for them. I also do small group workshops for organizations and the church. I anticipate the Major Project workshop having 25-30 participants. Thus, I look forward to bringing this experience with creating and facilitating workshops to this Major Project.

In addition to having experience developing workshops, I also have experience developing classes for ministers and leaders. At Powerhouse Chicago, I was the inaugural ministry leader for the Powerhouse Institute. Powerhouse Institute was started to begin creating classes for pastors, senior leaders, and congregants. In addition to working through the initial logistics of the program, I taught and developed two 4-week classes for the Powerhouse Institute – Introduction to Public Speaking Parts 1 and 2. It was intended for the ministers in my church. Yet, other leaders and congregants decided to take the class as well.

Research Methodology:

Once the Major Project Proposal for this project was approved in its Major Project Consultation, an application and supporting documentation was submitted to gain IRB approval to work with human subjects. Using a sample of convenience, ten (10) senior pastors of Black Church in the Chicagoland area that are affiliated with Pilgrim Assemblies Internationals, varied

by size and gender, were initially contacted to participate in the project. A fifty to sixty percent response rate was anticipated.

Senior pastors and senior leaders were asked to participate in multiple ways. Each participant submitted a consent form. The consent form listed the purpose of the project, procedures, and their rights. Additionally, the consent form described the steps taken to ensure confidentiality and make each participant as comfortable as possible. A draft of the Consent Form is in Appendix 3.

A Survey packet was sent via email to 10 senior pastors. Senior pastors were asked to complete a survey where all senior pastors would be asked the same questions about communication and leadership. Demographic information was obtained that would provide quantitative data for analysis. Ten of the survey questions are open ended questions about communication and leadership development from the leader perspective such as their formal training experience, their definition of communication, and their role as senior pastor. Biographical information and open-ended questions from participants was requested to set a foundation for the future research that will be done about the Black Church, leadership, and communication. The Survey Schedule for Senior Pastors is located in Appendix 1.

Once the survey was sent to the senior pastors, they were asked to provide names and contact information for their top three senior leaders. Surveys were sent to the senior leaders identified by their senior pastor. The senior leaders were also given questions to get a baseline of leadership and communication from their perspective. Like the senior pastors, the senior leaders' questions included demographic information that will be analyzed providing simple summary

statistics. Seven questions were open-ended questions about communication and leadership development. The Survey Schedule for Senior Leaders is in Appendix 2.

From the responses of the Senior Pastors and Senior Leaders, an initial analysis was completed to assess the attitudes held by the leaders to introducing communication as a part of leadership. Themes uncovered from the survey data were used to design a workshop for leadership development with a focus on the use of communication. The workshop aids the senior pastors and their leaders to imagine together what leadership in their churches would look like with a new intentional focus on communication.

At the conclusion of the workshops, evaluation forms were distributed to determine what new leadership ideas were developed at the workshop. The form gave room for the participants to share how their views on leadership and communication changed if at all. Lastly, the participants were asked whether the workshop achieved the objectives outlined at the beginning of the workshop.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In deciding to study the attitudes of Black Church pastors regarding the role of communication in leadership development, three distinct areas of research arose - the Black Church, organizational communication, and leadership development and training. Below are the conversation partners for this Major Project and their contributions.

Defining the Black Church

The Black Church is more than a religious institution. It is a distinct institution filled with a rich history whose history is necessary to acknowledge and understand before beginning to imagine new ways to execute leadership differently in the Black Church in the future. The next four conversation partners will describe different aspects of the history of the Black Church and its leadership.

“Understanding the Black Church: The Dynamics of Change” by Kelly Brown Douglas and Ronald E. Hopson offers an overview of the Black Church that is helpful in beginning the conversation about defining the Black Church at its origin. “Understanding the Black Church: The Dynamics of Change” took on the challenge of “examining the intricate value system of the Black church and the implications of that system in regard to social justice responses.”³⁵ Douglas and Hopson goes on to define the Black Church as “a multitudinous community of churches, which are diversified by origin, denomination, doctrine, worshiping culture, spiritual expression, class, size, and other less-obvious factors.”³⁶ They also continued to say, “...as disparate as black

³⁵ Douglas, Kelly Brown and Ronald E. Hopson. “Understanding the Black Church: The Dynamics of Change.” *The Journal of Religious Thought* 56 – 57, No.2 – No.1 (Spring 2000 - Fall 2001), 96.

³⁶ Douglas and Hopson, 96.

churches may seem, they share a special history, culture, and role in black life, all of which attest to their collective identity as the black church.”³⁷ The diversity of the Black Church is a part of its beauty and cannot be stressed enough when possibly developing a new approach to leadership for it. The diversity of the churches affiliated with Pilgrim Assemblies International today and since its establishment is an example of the diversity of the Black Church.

The origin of the Black Church dates back to the antebellum period in the 1800s.³⁸ Slaves decided not to subscribe to the belief that “God sanctioned slavery.”³⁹ In turn, establishing their belief to go against a system that dehumanized them was demonstrating their faith in “God’s affirmation of freedom and blackness.”⁴⁰

The uniqueness of the Black Church is another reason why it was advantageous to include “Understanding the Black Church: The Dynamics of Change” in this literary review. W.E.B. Dubious describes the Black church as “the social center of black life.”⁴¹ The Black Church is where African Americans first received affirmation of status and value.⁴² For example, the gardener could also be the head of the Christian Education department.⁴³ In fact, many black leaders got their start in the Black Church.⁴⁴ Ultimately, the Black Church has formed its own

³⁷Douglas and Hopson, 96.

³⁸ Douglas and Hopson, 96.

³⁹ Douglas and Hopson, 96.

⁴⁰ Douglas and Hopson, 96.

⁴¹ Douglas and Hopson, 98.

⁴² Douglas and Hopson, 98.

⁴³ Douglas and Hopson, 98.

⁴⁴ Douglas and Hopson, 99.

networks of power and influence to break down the barriers that have formed to stop the progression and succession of African Americans.⁴⁵

Next, “the Black Church, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Future” by Leonard Gadzekpo aids in going deeper into the core values of the Black Church. As opposed to white Christians, the belief system of black Christians has a special emphasis on the word freedom.⁴⁶ For whites, freedom simply meant the pursuit of one’s happiness without any potential constraints.⁴⁷ For Africans in America as a slave, freedom meant to be free from bondage.⁴⁸ Then, it meant having the freedom to pursue academic and employment opportunities.⁴⁹ Lastly, the definition of freedom for an African American has expanded to include “social, political, and economic justice over the last fifty years.”⁵⁰

The Black Church has had a prominent voice in the fight for social justice for African Americans. For example, the Black Church was at the root of the Civil Rights Movements of the 1950 and 1960s.⁵¹ The Montgomery Bus boycott was organized by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. after Rosa Parks was arrested for not giving up her seat on a Montgomery bus in 1955.⁵² The

⁴⁵ Douglas and Hopson, 98-99.

⁴⁶ Leonard Gadzekpo. “The Black Church, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Future.” *Journal of Religious Thought* 53, No. 1 (1997), 98.

⁴⁷ Gadzekpo, 98.

⁴⁸ Gadzekpo, 98.

⁴⁹ Gadzekpo, 98.

⁵⁰ Gadzekpo, 98.

⁵¹ Gadzekpo, 103.

⁵² Gadzekpo, 103.

Montgomery Improvement Association consisted of Black Baptists and other black Christians participating in nonviolent protest.⁵³

As alluded to earlier, the Black Church consists of several denominations across the United States. In fact, it would be difficult to create a completely exhaustive list. Historically, there are seven denominations at the foundation of the Black Church including the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ) Church, the Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church, the National Baptist Convention USA Incorporated (NBC), the National Baptist Convention of America Unincorporated (NBCA), the Progressive National Baptist Convention (PNBC), and the Church of God in Christ (COGIC).⁵⁴ Each of these denominations began out of the need to break away from the white Christian church and pursue real freedom.⁵⁵ Yet, the Pentecostalism did not form originally in the white tradition.⁵⁶ It was the only black denomination that did not.⁵⁷ Each of these denominations will be discussed in more detail by the next conversation partner.

The next conversation partner is *The Black Church in the African American Experience* by C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya. *The Black Church in the African American Experience* is an in-depth study of the churches and the clergy that makes up the seven major

⁵³ Gadzekpo, 104.

⁵⁴ Gadzekpo, 98-99.

⁵⁵ Gadzekpo, 100.

⁵⁶ Gadzekpo, 100.

⁵⁷ Gadzekpo, 100.

historic black denominations mentioned previously.⁵⁸ In this study, it mentions many of the historical facts that the previous conversation partners listed. Yet, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* also provides information about the history of leadership and organizational structure of the historic black denomination. The churches and leaders affiliated with Pilgrim Assemblies International come from different denominations of the Black Church. Some may have belonged to multiple denominations and reformation. Understanding the background of these denominations may help provide context to the survey responses and workshop evaluations from church leaders and pastors. While there is no way to cover all the denominations and reformations of the Black Church today, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* does provide a way to review the 7 denominations that have served many of the black churches that exist today.

The seven historic black denominations can be grouped in three categories – The Black Baptists, Black Methodists, and the Black Pentecostals. As mentioned previously, the Black Baptists and Black Methodists were born out of the need to develop a place of worship where Blacks were accepted and not ostracized. The Black Pentecostals was a part of a multiracial movement led by a Black man which whites later renounced.⁵⁹ Each of these groups were formed along geographic lines. Black Baptists were originated in the South whereas the Black

⁵⁸ C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya. *The Black Church in the African American Experience*. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1990), 1.

⁵⁹ Lincoln and Mamiya, 76.

Methodists were established in the South.⁶⁰ Black Pentecostals began on the West Coast in Los Angeles.⁶¹

The first Black Baptists churches began in the late 1700s.⁶² Out of this Black Baptist movement, three of the historic Black churches were born - the National Baptist Convention USA Incorporated (NBC), the National Baptist Convention of America Unincorporated (NBCA), and the Progressive National Baptist Convention (PNBC). In the 1600s, the Baptism movement was taking shape in the New England area of the United States.⁶³ The Baptist underwent a split into two groups – The “New Light” (Separate Baptist) and “Old Light” (Regular Baptists) Baptists.⁶⁴ These groups were primarily concentrated in the New England and Philadelphia areas, respectively. While there was some ideological division between these groups, they both took missionary trips to the South and had revivals where slaves were presented with evangelical Christianity and were allowed to worship.⁶⁵ The first Black Baptist has been dated back to 1743, and other Blacks were first welcomed into official membership in 1772 in Providence, Rhode Island.⁶⁶

⁶⁰ Lincoln and Mamiya, 20.

⁶¹ Lincoln and Mamiya, 77.

⁶² Lincoln and Mamiya, 20.

⁶³ Lincoln and Mamiya, 21.

⁶⁴ Lincoln and Mamiya, 22-23.

⁶⁵ Lincoln and Mamiya, 23.

⁶⁶ Lincoln and Mamiya, 43.

The National Baptist Convention's roots originate with slaves that formed congregations along the Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia coasts.⁶⁷ The earliest example appears to be the slave (later freed by his master), George Liele and his establishment of Silver Bluff Baptist Church in 1750.⁶⁸ The slaves would worship in groups in secret on their plantations, later to be known as the "invisible institution."⁶⁹ In the nineteenth century, it became more challenging for Blacks when the Baptists were divided on the issue of slavery.⁷⁰ There became a growing desire for churches to be racially separate and a "protest against unequal and restrictive treatment."⁷¹ By the time of Reconstruction, the racial dissension was intensifying which led to a greater push for the formal development of an independent church for Blacks initiated by Black Baptists.⁷²

On September 28, 1895, the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A. was officially established with Rev. E.C. Morris as its first president.⁷³ At the end of the 20th century, approximately one fourth of the Black population identified themselves as being affiliated with the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A.⁷⁴ In 1915, the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A. was

⁶⁷ Lincoln and Mamiya, 23-24.

⁶⁸ Lincoln and Mamiya, 23.

⁶⁹ Lincoln and Mamiya, 24.

⁷⁰ Lincoln and Mamiya, 25.

⁷¹ Lincoln and Mamiya, 25.

⁷² Lincoln and Mamiya, 27.

⁷³ Lincoln and Mamiya, 28.

⁷⁴ Lincoln and Mamiya, 31.

split into two factions over publishing concerns – the Morris faction and the Boyd faction.⁷⁵ The Boyd faction ultimately became the National Baptist Convention of America, while the Morris faction remained with the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A.⁷⁶ The Boyd faction became the National Baptist Convention of America.⁷⁷ The National Baptist Convention, U.S.A. underwent another split in 1961 to form the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc., the smallest of the three groups.⁷⁸ This final schism was born out of a serious difference in leadership that even led to a court case. J.H. Jackson, the former president of the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., expelled 10 ministers who took him to court over a difference in how a convention amendment was interpreted.⁷⁹ Jackson won in court, but there was a group against Jackson's leadership and supported another candidate for election.⁸⁰ The candidate's name never made it to the floor for an official vote. The meeting was abruptly adjourned.⁸¹ This opposing group took Jackson back to court and lost against.⁸² Ultimately, the group decided to meet outside of the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A and form their own convention – the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.⁸³

⁷⁵ Lincoln and Mamiya, 33.

⁷⁶ Lincoln and Mamiya, 33.

⁷⁷ Lincoln and Mamiya, 33.

⁷⁸ Lincoln and Mamiya, 36.

⁷⁹ Lincoln and Mamiya, 36.

⁸⁰ Lincoln and Mamiya, 36-37.

⁸¹ Lincoln and Mamiya, 36-37.

⁸² Lincoln and Mamiya, 37.

⁸³ Lincoln and Mamiya, 37.

As one may suspect, significant similarities exist in the leadership structures of all three Baptist groups. By understanding structure, it again provides a baseline for the leadership experiences the survey and workshop participants have experienced. According to Baptist polity, each church has complete independence of its operations.⁸⁴ Once voted in by a majority vote of their congregation, pastors usually have a significant amount of authority in running the operations of the church.⁸⁵ The Board of Trustees and the Board of Deacons also have advisory roles in the church as well as a governing amount of influence with the affairs of the church.⁸⁶ Ultimately, the congregation is the “supreme governing body, because it has the power to remove a pastor, trustee, or deacon.”⁸⁷ It helps the church keep a power balance.⁸⁸

The next major group among the historic Black denominations is the Black Methodists. The Black Methodists primarily include the African Methodist Episcopal Church (A.M.E.), the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (A.M.E.Z.), and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (C.M.E.).⁸⁹ Unlike the Black Baptists, Black Methodists originated in the North by freed blacks.⁹⁰ The earliest accounts of original Methodist churches with Black members can be traced

⁸⁴ Lincoln and Mamiya, 25.

⁸⁵ Lincoln and Mamiya, 42.

⁸⁶ Lincoln and Mamiya, 42.

⁸⁷ Lincoln and Mamiya, 43.

⁸⁸ Lincoln and Mamiya, 42.

⁸⁹ Lincoln and Mamiya, 48.

⁹⁰ Lincoln and Mamiya, 47.

back to the late 1700s in Frederick County, Maryland and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.⁹¹ Free Blacks and slaves had found a place where they were accepted with the Methodists' clear stance against slavery at their 1784 Christmas Conference.⁹² While the Methodists quickly reversed their position in 1785, the numbers of Blacks joining the Methodist movement continued to increase.

In 1787, licensed exhorter and former slave Richard Allen began a crusade to form a separate place of worship for Blacks.⁹³ He and a group of Black worshippers formally left from St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia after they were removed from a gallery that they did not know were not open to Blacks.⁹⁴ Allen's push to have a separate place of worship was not an easy one. Once Allen's campaign resulted in a place of worship being built, the Methodist did not support the "African Church" and wouldn't send a minister to formally lead the church.⁹⁵ Regardless of continued strife with the Methodist Church, Allen was able to ultimately get the building dedicated.⁹⁶ Bethel Church of Philadelphia became the official start of the African Methodist Episcopal Church denomination in 1816.⁹⁷

⁹¹ Lincoln and Mamiya, 50.

⁹² Lincoln and Mamiya, 50.

⁹³ Lincoln and Mamiya, 51.

⁹⁴ Lincoln and Mamiya, 51.

⁹⁵ Lincoln and Mamiya, 51.

⁹⁶ Lincoln and Mamiya, 52.

⁹⁷ Lincoln and Mamiya, 52.

The next group of Blacks separated from the Methodist church took place in New York City in 1796.⁹⁸ Peter William, a former slave and employee of “white-controlled John Street Methodist Episcopal Church in New York City,” encouraged a group of the Black members to leave John Street and form a separate place of worship for Blacks.⁹⁹ By 1801, the group had built and incorporated a place of worship called African Methodist Episcopal Church of the City of New York.¹⁰⁰ Initially, this group shared the same name as the original African Methodist Episcopal group led by Richard Allen.¹⁰¹

Due to territorial conflicts, the new denomination decided not to be under Bishop Allen’s African Methodist Episcopal.¹⁰² The new African Methodist Episcopal denomination became African Methodist Episcopal Zion in 1848.¹⁰³

The last historic Black Methodist group is the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. One of its obvious distinctions from the other Black Methodist groups is in its beginnings. This group was founded in the South after the Civil War and the legal abolishment of slavery.¹⁰⁴ The Blacks that would eventually form the C.M.E. church was originally associated with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.¹⁰⁵ Regardless of the end of slavery, Blacks were still

⁹⁸ Lincoln and Mamiya, 56.

⁹⁹ Lincoln and Mamiya, 56.

¹⁰⁰ Lincoln and Mamiya, 56.

¹⁰¹ Lincoln and Mamiya, 57.

¹⁰² Lincoln and Mamiya, 57.

¹⁰³ Lincoln and Mamiya, 58.

¹⁰⁴ Lincoln and Mamiya, 60.

¹⁰⁵ Lincoln and Mamiya, 60.

thought to be less than white and were expected to continue to accept that view of themselves.¹⁰⁶ Thus, Methodist Episcopal, South had whites who wanted to remove Blacks from the church and Blacks who wanted their own independent space to worship.¹⁰⁷ In 1866, they laid the groundwork for Blacks to withdraw at their General Convention.¹⁰⁸ By 1870, another General Convention was called specifically to officially form the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in America.¹⁰⁹ In 1954, the denomination's name would change to Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.¹¹⁰

The Methodist polity and approach to leadership has some clear distinctions from and similarities to the Baptist polity discussed earlier. Each church has its own leadership and name. Yet, all Methodist churches are connected and submitted to one “centralized governmental authority.”¹¹¹ It has a clear top-down structure with the General Conference at the top.¹¹² Next, the General Conference elects bishops that will oversee episcopal districts that include two or more annual conferences.¹¹³ “The bishop presides over the yearly meetings of the annual conferences, appoints the presiding elders, assigns pastors to local churches within his or her

¹⁰⁶ Lincoln and Mamiya, 61.

¹⁰⁷ Lincoln and Mamiya, 61.

¹⁰⁸ Lincoln and Mamiya, 61.

¹⁰⁹ Lincoln and Mamiya, 63.

¹¹⁰ Lincoln and Mamiya, 60.

¹¹¹ Lincoln and Mamiya, 68.

¹¹² Lincoln and Mamiya, 68.

¹¹³ Lincoln and Mamiya, 68.

jurisdictions, and ordains candidates for the ministry who have been approved by the annual conference.”¹¹⁴

The Black Pentecostals is the last group among the historic Black denominations. The Pentecostal movement is the youngest of the three historic movements and the only movement originally led by a Black man. The Pentecostal movement traces back to the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, California led by William J. Seymour.¹¹⁵ The Pentecostal movement was intentionally multiracial from its beginning and has ties to the Holiness movement of the late nineteenth century.¹¹⁶ Unlike the Methodists and Baptists, Pentecostals could not be traced back to England or a need for a separate place to worship. Yet, the Holiness movement does have a direct connection to the Methodist movement going back to 1867.¹¹⁷ A group of Methodists formed some interdenominational associations with a new focus on sanctification within Methodist areas and events as well as other denominations over the next twenty years.¹¹⁸

One of those denominations is the Church of God in Christ (COGIC), the last historic Black denomination. Church of God in Christ was founded by Charles Harrison Mason, a former Baptist preacher ousted from the Baptist church due to new beliefs about sanctification.¹¹⁹ Mason

¹¹⁴ Lincoln and Mamiya, 68-69.

¹¹⁵ Lincoln and Mamiya, 77.

¹¹⁶ Lincoln and Mamiya, 76 and 77.

¹¹⁷ Lincoln and Mamiya, 78.

¹¹⁸ Lincoln and Mamiya, 78.

¹¹⁹ Lincoln and Mamiya, 80.

continued to preach this new message and gained many converts.¹²⁰ By 1906, the denomination's first church was established in Memphis – St. Paul Church of God in Christ. Next, the first Pentecostal General Assembly of Chicago of God in Christ assembled in 1907, which is considered to be the official founding date of the church.¹²¹ Mason continued on as its senior leader with the title of Chief Apostle which gave him “absolute authority in matters of doctrine and church organizations.”¹²²

Structurally, the Church of God in Christ's constitution made its General Assembly “the legislative and doctrinal authority of the church” in 1972.¹²³ The General Assembly is also the “supreme judicial body of the church.”¹²⁴ The General Assembly includes the General Board (12 elected bishops by the General Assembly), “all jurisdictional bishops, all pastors and elders, jurisdictional supervisors of women's works, two district missionaries and one lay delegate from each jurisdictional assembly, and designated foreign delegates.”¹²⁵ The presiding bishop is elected in four-years terms and serves as the chief executive officer of the denomination.¹²⁶

With the multiple levels of leadership hierarchy across the denomination nationally that oversees the activities of the local church, local churches have some autonomy of its

¹²⁰ Lincoln and Mamiya, 80.

¹²¹ Lincoln and Mamiya, 81.

¹²² Lincoln and Mamiya, 81.

¹²³ Lincoln and Mamiya, 85.

¹²⁴ Lincoln and Mamiya, 85.

¹²⁵ Lincoln and Mamiya, 85.

¹²⁶ Lincoln and Mamiya, 85.

operations.¹²⁷ Since many of its pastors serve for life, many COGIC pastors have significant influence and independence more so than the Methodists and Baptists.¹²⁸ COGIC churches also tend to be family-led which causes the pastoral leadership of their churches to often be passed down within the family from generation to generation.¹²⁹

The seven black historic denominations are the birthplace of many primarily Black denominations and reformations, including Pilgrim Assemblies International. All these denominations have some form of top-down leadership influence. The Methodists and Pentecostals are clearly a top-down leadership structure. The Baptists are ultimately congregation-led, but their pastors and Board of Trustees still have significant influence over the congregation. Understanding the history and leadership structure of the denomination depicted by *The Black Church in the African American Experience* at the end of 20th century have the potential to provide a point of reference for the survey and evaluation responses from leaders in the 21st century Black church.

Our next conversation partner for this project is *The Black Preacher in America* by Charles Hamilton. Hamilton admits the Black preacher and the Black Church are synonymous.¹³⁰ Yet, his book is committed to looking at the role of the Black preacher specifically.¹³¹ Since most of the people participating in this project will be preachers, it is critical to take a further look at

¹²⁷ Lincoln and Mamiya, 87.

¹²⁸ Lincoln and Mamiya, 87.

¹²⁹ Lincoln and Mamiya, 87.

¹³⁰ Charles Hamilton. *The Black Preacher in America*. (New York, NY: William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1972), 5.

¹³¹ Hamilton, 5.

the definition and role of the black preacher in the Black Church. *The Black Preacher in America* provides insight to the foundation of 20th century black preachers that serves as an example for preachers today. For clarity and to provide some additional context for *The Black Preacher in America*, Hamilton defines the Black preacher as “an individual who fills a pulpit, who leads a congregation, who plays many roles in the community.”¹³²

In discussing the role of the Black Preacher, one of the issues Hamilton discusses is the relationship between the Black Preacher and the Black community. The relationship Hamilton depicts between the Black Preacher and its community/and or congregation appears to be an intimate one. It appears to blur the lines of professionalism and crosses over into genuine connection and care of the community and congregation concerns. Hamilton contends:

There has developed over several centuries a very close, almost familial tie between the black preacher and his people. They have come to rely heavily on each other, and they have come to know the strengths and weaknesses of each other.¹³³

The last pertinent issue to this project that *The Black Preacher in America* discusses is the history of education and training for Black Ministers. Hamilton conveys this issue of lack of professional training for Black ministers is not a new one.¹³⁴ Hamilton also references that 92 percent of the African American men entering ministry were “professionally unprepared.”¹³⁵ In the Black church, the lower standards for licensing Black ministers than other professions as well as its emphasis on a “call to ministry” contributes to the discrepancy in formal training being

¹³² Hamilton, 5.

¹³³ Hamilton, 25.

¹³⁴ Hamilton, 88.

¹³⁵ Hamilton, 88.

required of ‘ministers.’¹³⁶ It also causes aspiring ministers to have a lack of motivation to seek out any kind of formal training to prepare for their call to ministry.¹³⁷ As alluded to previously, this continues to be an issue in the Black Church and is at the center of the reason for this Major Project.

The story of the Black Church is a rich, intricate, and lengthy one. The leaders of the Black Church had to fight with their slave masters, the mainstream denominations that introduced them to the Christian faith, and within their own culture to stand on what they believed. In considering the future of church leadership in the Black Church, it is critical to consider these struggles that have endured and are still overcoming to exist today. Together, “The Black Church, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Future,” “Understanding the Black Church: The Dynamics of Change,” *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, and *The Black Preacher in America* will be helpful resources in ensuring that historical commitments of the Black Church will be considered and observed in the findings of this project.

Leadership in the Black Church

“The Leadership Crisis in the Black Church: The Search for the Right Pastor” is one of the key conversation partners that started the conversation about the need for a change in leadership communication style. Jerry B. Madkins, a professor and a pastor, argues that Black Church leadership is in crisis.¹³⁸ In his article, he offers another option for how Black Church

¹³⁶ Hamilton, 89.

¹³⁷ Hamilton, 89.

¹³⁸ Jerry B. Madkins. “The Leadership Crisis in the Black Church: The Search for the Right Pastor,” *The Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center*, 19 no 1 - 2 (Fall - Spr 1991 – 1992), 102.

leadership could look to prepare for the needs of the 21st Century Black Church.¹³⁹ Madkins says the Black Church is going through a “tremendous metamorphosis as Black society re-examines its traditional understanding of the American way of life and how African American are to fit into the larger society.”¹⁴⁰ As Madkins paints a vivid picture of the crisis. It reads:

No longer will the well-educated, mobile, and sophisticated Black man or woman believe or do everything the pastor suggests. As never before, Black pastors are being required to justify their decisions, actions, and even their existence.¹⁴¹

As Madkins brings his article to a close, he says:

The attempt of the Black Church today to be a change agent, to change people’s lives for the sake of Jesus Christ, must lead not only to conversion, but lead after their conversion. This will not happen without a correct style of leadership.¹⁴²

Helping a church begin to discern how to achieve the “correct style of leadership” that Madkins references is what this project is hoping to achieve with the workshop. Madkins research is also critical to this project because it provided an early glimpse into the mention of leadership communication styles that will be outlined shortly by another conversation partner.

The next resource about Black Church leadership is *The Lord Gave Me This: Understanding Historic Leadership Development Practices of the Black Church to Prepare Tomorrow’s Leaders* by Terrell Carter. Carter outlined his process to search for effective

¹³⁹ Madkins, 103.

¹⁴⁰ Madkins, 103.

¹⁴¹ Madkins, 103.

¹⁴² Madkins, 112.

ministry training practices for the Black Church.¹⁴³ Carter began his research journey with the following question – “Based on the unique needs of African American Baptist pastors and leaders studied, what is the most effective process to provide them with ministry and leadership development training in order for them to become more effective in performing their duties within their ministry contexts?”¹⁴⁴

In turn, *The Lord Gave Me This: Understanding Historic Leadership Development Practices of the Black Church to Prepare Tomorrow’s Leaders* discusses some of the current issues surrounding leadership development and training in the Black Church. For instance, it describes the distinctions of the educational training that African American church leaders have received. Due to some of the historical facts of the African American experience shared earlier, one would imagine that African Americans’ access to education was limited. The church is no exception to that. African American church leaders were taught through nonformal means.¹⁴⁵ They would practice preaching and storytelling in a similar fashion of sharing oral history down through the generations.¹⁴⁶ This process has been going on for generations and is respected in the Black church.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ Terrell Carter. *The Lord Gave Me This: Understanding Historic Leadership Development Practices of the Black Church to Prepare Tomorrow’s Leaders* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2016), 1.

¹⁴⁴ Carter, 39.

¹⁴⁵ Carter, 9.

¹⁴⁶ Carter, 9.

¹⁴⁷ Carter, 9.

As Carter described his two-year research project, he also provided a glimpse into some of the hindrances that may occur in inquiring and challenging the leadership development of the Black Church. Carter did his research project in three phases. His project consisted of two separate processes and two separate groups.¹⁴⁸ The first phase was primarily done by emailing pastors within his personal network a survey asking about their educational experience as a Baptist pastor or leader in St. Louis.¹⁴⁹ The participants consisted of 8 pastors and 7 ministers.¹⁵⁰ The second phase included sending out questionnaires to members of the two diverse Baptist districts and members of the Missionary Baptist Ministers Union of St. Louis.¹⁵¹ There was not much participation with this group.

According to the survey responses, most people and their mentors show value in having some kind of standard educational program.¹⁵² In the focus group with the pastors, most of them admitted that they did not have a training program for their leaders at all.¹⁵³ They expected or sent their leaders somewhere else for training.¹⁵⁴ Their responses contribute to the very significance of this Major Project. It provided a preview of the responses from the Black Church Pastors of Pilgrim Assemblies International in the Chicagoland area.

¹⁴⁸ Carter, 42.

¹⁴⁹ Carter, 42.

¹⁵⁰ Carter, 42.

¹⁵¹ Carter, 43.

¹⁵² Carter, 51.

¹⁵³ Carter, 54.

¹⁵⁴ Carter, 54.

Communication & Leadership in Organizations

While the Black Church is a unique institution with rich history and culture, it is also an organization. In researching, there were no resources that specifically introduced the role of communication as a part of leadership development and training in the Black Church. Yet, secular resources exist that can assist the Black Church in discerning how to implement communication as a part of leadership. These next two resources are going to help lay some of the foundational work around defining leadership and communication in organizations that will be needed for the workshop.

Leadership: A Communication Perspective begins with defining leadership and the human communication process that is going to be helpful in helping Senior Pastors and leaders understand the role of communication that will be discussed in the workshop. While there are over 200 definitions of leadership published, authors Craig E. Johnson and Michael Z. Hackman define leadership in relation to communication as “human(symbolic) communication that modifies the attitudes and behaviors of others in order to meet shared group goals and needs.”¹⁵⁵ Leadership is often referred to as simply power or influence. Communication is not often clearly named at the base of how leaders and managers influence others to achieve their goals. For preachers, words are one of the most significant tools that they have. As a leader, it is also critical to understand and teach other leaders that words and language are two of the most critical tools they have to accomplish their goals.

¹⁵⁵ Craig E. Johnson and Michael Z. Hackman. *Leadership: A Communication Perspective*. 3rd Edition. (Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc., 2018), 11-12.

Johnson and Hackman also introduce academic language around the leader and follower relationship. While I have observed leadership discussed or presented in team meetings on a high- level in church leadership meetings, there has not been a lot of time spent talking about the role of a follower in relation to its leader. Some would argue that understanding the leader/follower relationship is common sense. I was taught that the best leaders are those that also follow. Yet, I had never heard of a name for it – leader follower.¹⁵⁶ It would have made this principle more powerful if I and other leaders had language for it.

Leadership: A Communication Perspective goes further into detail about different leadership communication styles that Madkins began outlining earlier. In the church, I have seen mostly the authoritarian communication style that Madkins also discussed in his article although he only referenced it as a leadership style. Johnson and Hackman describe it as one of the first leadership communication styles. The authoritarian communication style is effective and will get results, but only in the short term.¹⁵⁷ That is my concern with the Black Church now and the kind of leadership that has become the norm in top-down churches. The democratic leadership style allows for leadership and decision making to take place in a collaborative way.¹⁵⁸ It provides space to empower individuals to take initiative, critically think through a situation, and bring solutions.

The last primary leadership communication style, laissez-faire, describes a leader that is transitioning out of a role or no longer engaged in their leadership assignment. Johnson and

¹⁵⁶ Johnson and Hackman, 20.

¹⁵⁷ Johnson and Hackman, 2.

¹⁵⁸ Johnson and Hackman, 40.

Hackman described similarly to how Madkins described it. It is described as “nonleadership by some” or when “leaders withdraw from followers and offer little guidance or support.”¹⁵⁹

Without understanding of different communication styles, the leaders developed in the Black Church may be limited.

A leader’s effectiveness will be judged in part how he or she impacts the culture of their organization.¹⁶⁰ Impacting change in an organization is never going to be easy especially when the organization has strong roots attached to its assumptions and values.¹⁶¹ The Black Church is that kind of organization. Implementing changes will not be easy. Edgar Schein even suggests “6 primary mechanisms and 6 secondary mechanisms can be used to establish and maintain culture.”¹⁶² He labels the primary mechanisms as attention, reactions to critical incidents, resource allocation, role modeling, rewards, and selection.¹⁶³ He labels the secondary mechanisms as structure, systems and procedures, rites and rituals, physical space, stories, and formal statements.¹⁶⁴ Having these tools can be beneficial in pondering “how” to develop new training materials in a challenging organizational culture or even how to begin that conversation.

The next resource that can be helpful in defining communication and leadership in organizations is *Organizational Communication: Balancing Creativity and Constraint*. It would

¹⁵⁹ Johnson and Hackman, 41.

¹⁶⁰ Johnson and Hackman, 258.

¹⁶¹ Johnson and Hackman, 258.

¹⁶² Johnson and Hackman, 258.

¹⁶³ Johnson and Hackman, 258-259.

¹⁶⁴ Johnson and Hackman, 259-260

be easy for one to assume that organizational communication is simply about how an employer communicates with its employees. As a leader in the church, being able to communicate with one's employees are critical. My personal interest in leadership and communication stems from my personal observations of how poor communication skills have impacted my church and the church in general. For example, I observed a lack of communication among fellow congregants destroy relationships as well as between ministry leaders and their team members. I have also seen a senior pastor have a perception of one of his leaders that turned out to be wrong due to a lack of communication. Thus, exploring the definition of organizational communication appeared to be a good place to start in the arena of communication. *Organizational Communication: Balancing Creativity and Constraint* challenged my basic assumption of organizational communication. Eric Eisenberg and his colleagues define organizational communication as “the interaction required to direct a group toward a shared goal.”¹⁶⁵

While the conciseness of this definition is appreciated, it also creates new questions. For example, what does this interaction need to look like in the church for it to be more effective? What impact does relationships in the church have on the interaction that Eisenberg outlines? What does shared goal mean in terms of the church? Some Christians would immediately think about the Great Commission described in Matthew 28:19-20 to answer that question. Some preachers would immediately think about the words of Luke 4:18-19. In turn, I begin to contemplate whether our varying viewpoints have an impact on how the shared vision of the church is viewed among people especially young people.

¹⁶⁵ Eisenberg, Eric M. et al. *Organizational Communication: Balancing Creativity and Constraint*. 8th Edition. (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2017), 4.

Organizational Communication: Balancing Creativity and Constraint outlines four approaches to organizational communication that have gained the most traction. They are as follows: communication as information transfer, communication as transactional process, communication as strategic control, and communication as a balance of creativity and constraint.¹⁶⁶ Each one of these approaches have pros and cons. Yet, communication as a strategic control caught my attention first. In my perspective, it appears to have the most realistic approach to leadership. It sees communication as a way to influence and reimagine one's environment.¹⁶⁷ This approach is going to be critical and speaks to the heart of significance of this Major Project. Additionally, this approach takes on the assumption that clarity is not always the primary focus.¹⁶⁸ Instead, this approach understands that communicators have multiple goals and different ways to get them done.¹⁶⁹ As a leader and a preacher, I understand the people on leadership teams and congregants have varying viewpoints and have to speak to and consider that in our communication of shared goals. It is not as simple and communication as information transfer or communication as transactional process implies at times.

Another helpful approach for the workshop found in *Organizational Communication: Balancing Creativity and Constraint* is the balance of creativity and constraint. Being in church leadership for 12 years, I have seen the rigidity that can sometimes exist in churches. Yet, I was my most effective when I felt like I had the room to be creative and challenge the status quo.

¹⁶⁶ Eisenberg, 31.

¹⁶⁷ Eisenberg, 36.

¹⁶⁸ Eisenberg, 36.

¹⁶⁹ Eisenberg, 36.

Eisenberg defines communication as “the moment-to-moment working out of the tension between individual creativity and organizational constraint” (40). While some would argue that tension has a negative connotation, I believe that tension is where there is room for creativity to address the unexpected issues that occur when trying to accomplish the goals of a shared vision.

The next two resources have been valuable in supplying language and more tools to explain the importance of effective communication in the leader/follower relationship. The first article still has more of a secular focus. The second has more of a Christian leadership focus that is still relevant to this section. In the Black Church, the training I have received has mostly been very high-level without many details. For example, I remember a guest Bishop giving a 90-minute presentation on putting together a sermon. He based his presentation solely on his experience with sermon preparation. I also remember hearing his frustration with his associate ministers and how they didn’t take the time to do sermon preparation. During and after the presentation, no resources were offered for me or the other attendees to do further research. These articles do an excellent job of filling in some of the blanks that can help the Senior Pastors and Senior Leaders in the workshop.

In "Reflections of Data and Theory of Leadership Communication Strategies," Neamtu makes the case of how leadership and communication are interdependent. She opens her arguments by providing strategies for leaders to get the maximum results from their employees. Neamtu stressed the importance of a leader knowing information about his or her employee.¹⁷⁰ In the Black Church with a top-down leadership structure, there tends to be a soldier mentality

¹⁷⁰ Neamtu, Daniela Mihaela, Cristian-Valentin Hapenciue, and Ruxandra Bejinaru. “Reflections of Data and Theory of Leadership Communication Strategies.” *Ovidius University Annals: Economic Sciences Series* Vol XIX, No. 2 (2019), 558. <https://doaj.org/article/962776bc4a0f4bcf82da83e6a2211987>.

between leader and follower that has origins linked to U.S Slavery. In turn, there is less focus on what the employee needs to thrive and more focus on the goal that the leader seeks to have his or her followers accomplish. While that may have been effective at another time in history, Neatmu argues that not understanding the employee's environment and difficulties hinders their organization's ultimate success.¹⁷¹

In addition to understanding an employee's skill sets and areas of opportunities, a manager must be willing to help an employee do their job and provide any special training needed to do their effectively.¹⁷² As a result, Neamtu's arguments confirms that employers need to be invested in the long-term gain of their employees if they want to get the best level of productivity out of them. Sometimes employers need to consider and give in to their employees if they expect to get the best out of their employees.¹⁷³ People are human with emotions and needs that cannot be ignored if leaders want a successful team and ultimately organization. Sometimes emotions are ignored in the church.

In "Communication That Develops: Clarity of Process on Transformational Leadership through Study of Effective Communication of Emotional Intelligence," there is a continuation and more detailed explanation of the role of the leader and the significance of how communication is used to develop their current team and future leaders. Leaders have the power and responsibility to set the tone for his or her team. They do that by using communication to

¹⁷¹ Neamtu, 558.

¹⁷² Neamtu, 558.

¹⁷³ Neamtu, 559.

“influence and educate.”¹⁷⁴ For Christian leaders, it is our job to “shepherd others on their journey through spiritual formation.”¹⁷⁵ A pastor has the responsibility of the spiritual formation of his or her flock. This flock includes the congregation and leadership teams. Over time, the needs of their flock will change. This is not a change that pastors can avoid. Instead, they should embrace it as a leader that wants to see his team grow and expand.

Next, authors Momeny and Gourgues’ introduction to Transformational Leadership and Emotional Intelligence was beneficial in constructing training for church leaders. Transformational leadership focuses on motivation and morality between a leader and his or her follower.¹⁷⁶ A successful transformational leader has a strong set of internal values and motivates others to remember the greater good more than their personal interests.¹⁷⁷ Since Black Church leadership usually consists of more unpaid staff than paid staff, transformational leadership could be helpful in exploring how to motivate volunteers and paid staff alike with building the kingdom of God as the central focus.

By taking this approach, it does not exempt leaders from the responsibility of caring about the emotions of others as well as their own. This is where emotional intelligence becomes

¹⁷⁴ Leonard Scott Momeny and Michael Gourgues. “Communication that Develops: Clarity of Process on Transformational Leadership through Study of Effective Communication of Emotional Intelligence.” *Christian Education Journal* 16, no. 2 (Aug 2019), 227. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739891319829484>.

¹⁷⁵ Momeny and Gourgues, 227.

¹⁷⁶ Momeny and Gourgues, 230.

¹⁷⁷ Momeny and Gourgues, 231.

a significant factor in the success of a leader. A leader must be sensitive and aware of their emotions and even biases to be able to have a productive conversation with their follower.¹⁷⁸

Lastly, Momeny and Gourgues' description of a communication process that discusses three communication events demonstrating the progression of a leader/follower relationship could be valuable to senior pastors and their lay leaders as they discuss their relationship with each other. The first communication event is fear which parallels the natural "feeling out" process that takes place when two people first meet.¹⁷⁹ The second communication event is inclusiveness. This is where the communication between the leader and the follower demonstrates that their relationship has shifted to being mutually beneficial not simply transactional.¹⁸⁰ The final communication event is freedom of communication, where the leader and follower have transitioned to a comfortable stage of open communication.¹⁸¹ In the surveys with senior pastors and their senior leaders, this Major Project will hope to uncover the fear that may exist in the follower and leader relationship in the Black Church. The workshop is parallel to the second communication, because the intention is to begin the conversation to having a mutually beneficial relationship. The third communication event will take place in the future.

Training and Development

The last two conversation partners, "The Science of Training and Development in Organizations: What Matters in Practice," and *Employee Training & Development* give concrete

¹⁷⁸ Momeny and Gourgues, 231.

¹⁷⁹ Momeny and Gourgues, 233.

¹⁸⁰ Momeny and Gourgues, 235.

¹⁸¹ Momeny and Gourgues, 236.

steps to design managerial training, leadership training, or on-the-job training. In turn, it provides a possible framework for church leaders to consider in the workshop as they are reimagining the leadership training and development possibilities in their churches.

“The Science of Training and Development in Organizations: What Matters in Practice” takes its readers on a journey of what things organizations should consider if they are going to develop a successful training program. Its focus was to help organizations figure out their own answer to the question, “How do we do this?” The Black Church is a cultural institution, but no two churches are the same as we know. According to scripture, churches and believers have the same mandates. Yet, each church has its own individual journey to achieve those mandates. This project is not trying to tell a church exactly how to achieve their mission. Instead, this project is more concerned about each church having the tools needed to discover how they will be the most effective in achieving their goals.

This article takes its audience back to the beginning of the training and research history with some basic, original theories. In the 1970s, *the Annual Review of Psychology* described training literature as “voluminous, nonempirical, nontheoretical, poorly written, and dull.”¹⁸² By 2001, scholars Salas and Cannon-Bowles took another look at the literature surrounding training and argued that advancement had taken place in the field.¹⁸³ There was a need now for “evidence-based prescriptions for the design and delivery for training.”¹⁸⁴

¹⁸² Eduardo Salas et.al. "The Science of Training and Development in Organizations: What Matters in Practice," *Organizational Training and Development* 13, No.2 (June 2012): 74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1529100612436661>.

¹⁸³ Salas et. al, 74-75.

¹⁸⁴ Salas et. al, 75.

Additionally, Salas discusses the development of training effectiveness models. In doing so, his article outlined how to bring training theory and application together. In 1991, a framework was introduced by scholars to bring training theory and application together. I was captivated by this section, because it gave me a place to start on my journey of how to bring the science of training and the church as an organization together.

The next significant tool that this article provided was practical tools regarding what needs to happen before, during, and after training development. Prior to designing the training, the first step is performing a training need analysis - “conducting a proper diagnosis of what needs to be trained, for whom, and within what type of organizational system.”¹⁸⁵ The survey with the senior pastors and their senior leaders will model this step. Also, it is important that the learning climate is prepared for the actual training.¹⁸⁶ For example, the expectations of the training needs to be clear.¹⁸⁷ The workshop will be a model to this step. Once the stages of the needs analysis and preparing the learning climate are set, the next step is to take the data collected and “science of learning” to design the training needed.¹⁸⁸ During the training, there needs to be an emphasis on making sure the trainees have the right mindset, effective instructional principles are used, and effective implementation of technology.¹⁸⁹ The final stage begins with putting the knowledge and skills learned in training to work, which this Major

¹⁸⁵ Salas et. al, 80.

¹⁸⁶ Salas et. al, 83.

¹⁸⁷ Salas et. al, 83.

¹⁸⁸ Salas et. al, 84.

¹⁸⁹ Salas et. al, 80.

Project hopes to help senior pastors and senior leaders carry out in the future. This is referred to as transfer of training. Lastly, it is critical to actually evaluate the effectiveness of the training. These final steps will also happen in the future. As mentioned previously, this Major Project is ultimately meant to start this conversation about a process.

As its title suggests, "The Science of Training and Development in Organizations: What Matters in Practice" introduced the theories and practices that organizations should potentially consider involving employee training and development. Yet, my last conversation partner, *Employee Training & Development*, portrays a more detailed picture of training and development that is going to be critical for churches to know as they discern a leadership development and training model that will work best for their church. The definitions and illustration that the author, Raymond A. Noe, shares definitions that apply to organizations. The definitions and illustrations that *Employee Training & Development* provides does not reference the church, but the information still has the potential to help black churches as they are working their way forward as an organization into the 21st century.

Noe makes the argument that training is a necessity for the growth of any business regardless of the industry.¹⁹⁰ Training employees can help them have a better understanding of their job and provide better customer service to clients as a result.¹⁹¹ Also, "training must play a strategic role in supporting the business."¹⁹² Noe's argument is essential to keep in mind as

¹⁹⁰ Raymond Noe. *Employee Training & Development*, 8th Edition. (New York, NY: McGraw Hill Education, 2020), 6.

¹⁹¹ Noe, 6.

¹⁹² Noe, 6.

ministers, lay leaders, and senior pastors are being prepared to be effective in the 21st century church.

Noe outlines a model for strategic training and development that could inspire senior pastors and their churches as they are discerning training and development for their leaders. The first step is to make sure a business strategy is established.¹⁹³ The following step is to select the appropriate strategic and training objectives for the organization.¹⁹⁴ The third step is to transition the objectives into an actual development and training action plan.¹⁹⁵ The last step is to clearly determine how the effectiveness of the action plan is to be measured.¹⁹⁶

Training and leadership development in the church is my passion. As I have shared, I was the leader of 80 ministers and elders at one point. It was heartbreaking to see how many of them did not have all the tools that they needed to be successful. At times, it was apparent that they did not always know what they did not know. Once the research outlined in this paper is applied, I am excited to learn what could happen positively and negatively. Regardless of the outcome, it will help the Black Church grow and prepare to move forward in this new world.

¹⁹³ Noe, 70.

¹⁹⁴ Noe, 70.

¹⁹⁵ Noe, 70.

¹⁹⁶ Noe, 70.

Chapter 3: Survey Responses from Senior Pastors and Their Senior Leaders

Almost three years ago, conversations began about studying leadership and communication in the Black Church. Due to the interviews with the leaders of Powerhouse Chicago, the intent was to start with Powerhouse Chicago. As the discussions continued with classmates, colleagues, and the Senior Pastor of Powerhouse Chicago, it became evident that this Major Project would be more productive to the leadership and communication in Black Churches conversation if it was expanded to other Pilgrim Assemblies International churches. With all the conversations had in advance of formally contacting the President Prelate of Pilgrim Assemblies, the next step was to implement the plan to begin dealing with this challenging, uncharted territory of studying leadership and communication in the Black Church.

Unexpected Roadblock

Once the Major Project Consultation was completed and the Major Project Proposal was approved, the next step was time to contact ten senior pastors in the Chicagoland area affiliated with Pilgrim Assemblies International to implement the first step of the plan. In the culture of top-down leadership structure, it is usually best to start with top, senior leadership to get cooperation from other leaders.

Thus, Archbishop William Hudson III was contacted first to get his support and make connecting with the Chicagoland senior pastors of Pilgrim Assemblies International a much easier and smoother process. Archbishop Hudson was sent an email with the details of this Major Project and a formal request for his support and his participation. The email opened with an overview of the project as well as an outline for the project procedure. The email continued with

three main requests. Archbishop Hudson was asked to participate as a Pilgrim Assemblies International senior pastor in this research study. He was asked to have his team or himself send an informal communication to the Chicagoland Pilgrim senior pastors informing them that his spiritual daughter may contact them to participate in this research project. His approval was requested to receive a copy of the contact information for Chicagoland Pilgrim Assemblies International senior pastors. Archbishop Hudson was sent a personal message to alert him that he was sent a detailed request with information about this research project.

Shortly after the email was sent, this project began to cope with its first unexpected turn – no immediate response from Archbishop Hudson. Organizing this research project with Pilgrim Assemblies International was not a new idea. While details were not discussed prior to Institutional Review Board approval, it was still known that a request for help and support would be coming. Therefore, it was anticipated that Archbishop Hudson would give approval for the contact list for the Chicagoland PAI pastors to be released and possibly send his pastors a personal message or email introducing the project. As long as Archbishop Hudson did not have a scheduling conflict, his and his senior leaders' participation was expected.

After a couple subsequent emails and text messages to Archbishop Hudson with no response, this project had to begin to take another approach to contact Pilgrim senior pastors. The next step was to contact the State Bishop of Illinois for Pilgrim Assemblies International, Bishop Edward Rockett. In full transparency, Bishop Rockett was not contacted initially due to his position in Pilgrim Assemblies International's leadership structure. Instead, he was contacted due to my relationship with him as my ministerial colleague in Pilgrim and growing up in church together at Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church.

Upon receiving a message for help with this research, Bishop Rockett agreed to a phone meeting. The phone meeting discussed the first challenge this research project was having – no longer having a clear path to contacting senior pastors affiliated with Pilgrim Assemblies International in the Chicagoland area and gaining their support for this project. The meeting with Bishop Rockett also included a discussion about an overview of the project, general project procedures, the origins of the project, and the benefits to senior pastors and senior leaders that chose to participate. After hearing the merits of this research project, Bishop Rockett was confident that he would be able to contact ten senior pastors and secure their participation.

As Bishop Rockett began contacting the senior pastors, I began using my personal and working relationships to contact a few Chicagoland Pilgrim pastors. While a couple of Pilgrim pastors had enthusiasm for the project, they unfortunately had scheduling conflicts and were unable to participate in the workshop. As State Bishop of Illinois, Bishop Rockett came across a similar and slightly better reception from the senior pastors in the Chicagoland area. In follow up conversations, Bishop Rockett received confirmations from two Pilgrim pastors that were willing to participate in the study.

While waiting for more positive responses from more pastors, Archbishop Hudson still had not responded. At this point in this process, Archbishop Hudson's lack of communication had become concerning and very unusual. As Presiding Prelate of Pilgrim Assemblies International, it is understandable and common knowledge that Archbishop Hudson keeps an extremely busy schedule. Yet, he has a reputation of being very approachable. I do not normally have trouble getting in touch with him or getting a response (negative or affirmative) to a request.

With this surprising twist, it was necessary to consider another method to contact Archbishop Hudson. Perhaps, Archbishop Hudson would be more perceptive if the mode of communication was changed to an in-person, oral approach as opposed to written. Archbishop Hudson's assistant was contacted to schedule an in-person or online meeting with Archbishop Hudson. After a few days, Archbishop Hudson's assistant responded and said she would follow up once she reviewed his schedule and could determine if he had any small gaps of time where he could squeeze in a meeting. A couple weeks lapsed and there was still no response from Archbishop Hudson directly or his assistant.

Without more positive responses from the senior pastors, it was beginning to appear that the support needed for this research project was not within Pilgrim Assemblies International after all. Following approximately 6 weeks of trying to contact Archbishop Hudson and being in contact with Bishop Rockett about the few responses he had received from senior pastors, Archbishop Hudson was sent a final personal communication to attempt to get his help and support. Archbishop Hudson responded quickly, and a phone meeting was scheduled for the following day. In this meeting, every roadblock that this project had experienced had been shared with him. Archbishop Hudson was greatly surprised.

Once the different miscommunication issues were discussed, Archbishop Hudson apologized and took complete accountability for the communication breakdown. Then, he began to brainstorm on how to resolve the problem of a lack of participation and support for this project. Archbishop Hudson did more than what was in the original request for support and participation. He sent out a personal text message to some of the PAI Chicagoland senior pastors. He also suggested some Pilgrim pastors that he believed would be willing to participate in this

kind of research project. Approximately five minutes after our phone meeting concluded, Archbishop called back with the names and contact information for senior pastors that agreed to participate in this research project. Later that evening, an email was sent out by Archbishop Hudson's team to some additional Chicagoland PAI senior pastors inviting them to participate in this project. A few more senior pastors responded to the email agreeing to participate in the project.

Within twenty-four hours of Archbishop Hudson's involvement with the Major Project, the number of senior pastors committed to participate with a signed consent form had increased to ten which was a higher number than anticipated for this project. When each senior pastor was contacted, they were kind, professional, receptive, humble, and ready to do whatever was asked of them to participate in this project. This abrupt shift in the participation and attitude demonstrated in real time how influential senior leadership in top-down leadership structures can be. Additionally, the first roadblock this project endured also portrays how ineffective communication can destroy an organization as well as the relationship between the senior leader and his or her subordinate leaders. If there had not been a persistence to contact Archbishop Hudson, this project may have turned out very differently and not in a positive way.

Survey Submissions

Once the unexpected roadblock of communicating with the senior pastors was overcome, the next step was to begin collecting data from the senior pastors and senior leaders. While there has been research about leadership and communication, there have not been any studies on

leadership and communication in the Black Church. Therefore, this data is going to provide a baseline and context for this project as well as information that can be used for future studies.

In preparing the workshop, the data from the survey also helped to provide an audience analysis for the workshop. An audience analysis is a critical step of preparation for an oral presentation of any kind.¹ An audience analysis is the process of gathering data about a speaker's audience to get a sense of what motivates or what is significant to one's audience.² The surveys were beneficial in giving a baseline prospective of workshop participants and a sense of who they are at their core primarily in ministry, leadership, and communication.

Senior Pastors' Surveys

The senior pastors' survey began with identifying information that allowed them to be matched to their consent form. As agreed upon on their consent form, their name or identifying information will not be shared without their expressed consent.

After the identifying information, the survey begins with a request for some demographic information from each participant.

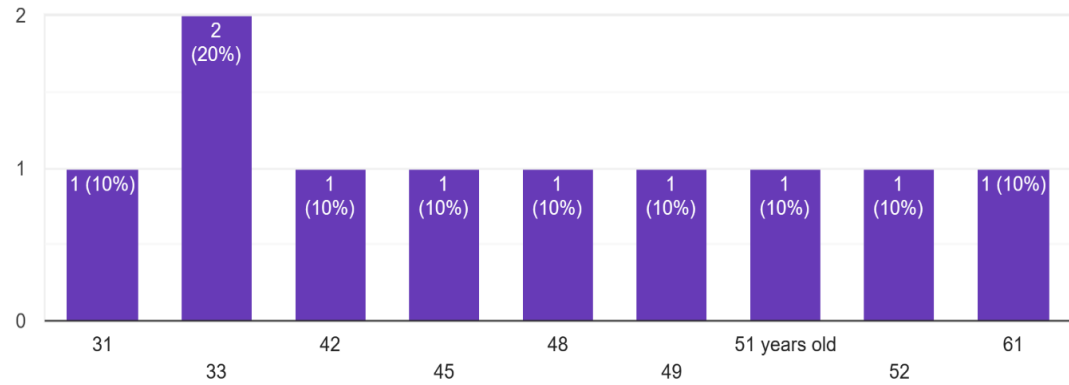
¹ Dan O'Hair, Hannah Rubenstein, and Rob Stewart. *A Pocket Guide to Public Speaking*. (Boston, MA: Bedford/St.Martin's, 2016), 34.

² O'Hair, Rubenstein, and Stewart, 34.

1. What is your age?

What is your age?

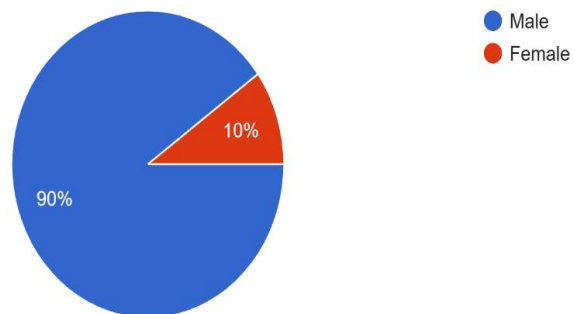
10 responses



2. What is your gender?

What is your gender?

10 responses



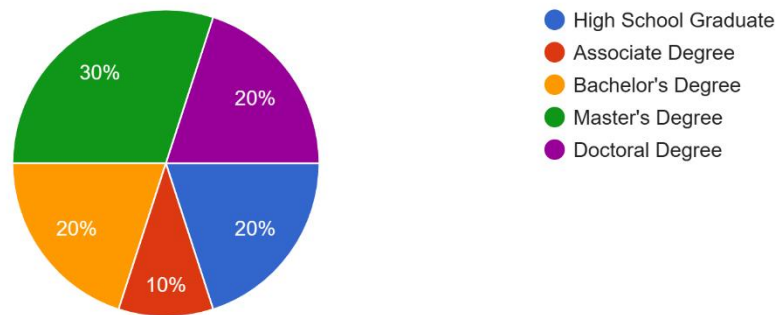
3. *What is your current denomination, if any?*

<i>Name of Denomination</i>	<i>Number of Senior Pastors</i>
<i>Nondenominational</i>	6
<i>Baptist</i>	3
<i>Pentecostal</i>	2

4. *What is the highest level of education?*

What is your highest level of education?

10 responses



5. *How many years have you been pastoring?*

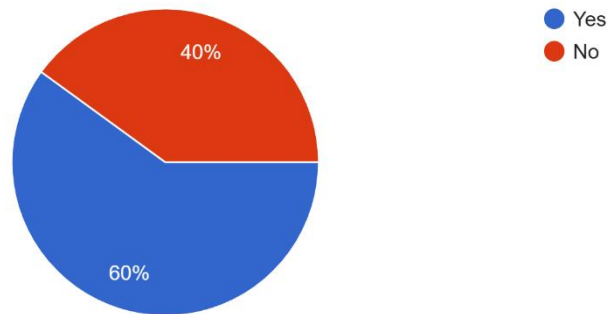
The senior pastors range from less experienced pastors to more experienced pastors. Their years of experience range evenly from one year to 20 years of experience.

Number of Years Pastoring	Number of Pastors
0-5 years	2
6-10 years	4
11-15 years	2
16-20 years	3

6. *Is your current role of Senior Pastor, your first senior leadership role in the Black Church?*

Is your current role of Senior Pastor, your first senior leadership role in the Black Church?

10 responses



7. *If not, what were your other senior leadership role(s) in the church and how long did you serve in them?*

For the senior pastors that have had other senior leadership roles, they brought a variety of experiences and perspectives in which they see the church. Two senior pastors served as a youth pastor for approximately ten years. Thus, they have had the experience of working with young people that may be Generation Z as well as Millennials which are the future of the 21st century church. Two other senior pastors worked in the church office as the office business manager and clerk. They brought the perspective of interacting with the issues the church experiences daily as well as possibly interacting with people daily and hearing some of the issues that the church may do better at addressing. This is a valuable experience when discussing the future of the church and meeting the needs of the 21st Century church.

The next set of questions are mostly open-ended questions that were constructed to provide a glimpse of the senior pastors' views and experiences with leadership and communication.

8. *How would you define your leadership role as senior pastor?*

The senior pastors' views on their leadership role varied. For example, one described his or her role by his or her titles – “Senior Pastor, Founder, CEO and Visionary.” Two of the other senior pastors defined their role from a more emotional viewpoint. They saw themselves as compassionate, encouraging, and motivational. For other pastors, their depiction of their leadership role used language that was concise and read like a mission statement. One said, “As the senior pastor, it is my job to be the primary spiritual leader, developer, vision-caster, and champion of culture.” With the different viewpoints, it was important to consider their views in facilitating the workshops. The difference in viewpoints also provided an area of opportunity to consider in future leadership development work with this group or other senior pastors.

9. *How did you first learn about being a leader in the church?*

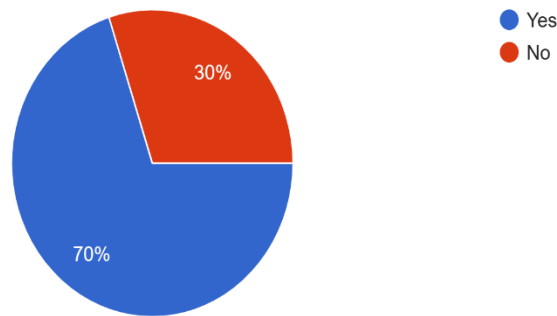
Most of the senior pastors referenced some kind of familial connection in their first experiences learning about leadership. They were influenced by their grandparents that were pastors or very active in their church. In turn, they were able to observe up close an example of what pastoral leadership looked like in their parents' generation. Many of them also discussed growing up in church and

observing leaders. One pastor's experience had more of a spiritual component, because their experience came through visions and dreams.

10. Have you undergone any structured training about being a pastor or a church leader?

Have you undergone any structured training about being a pastor or a church leader?

10 responses



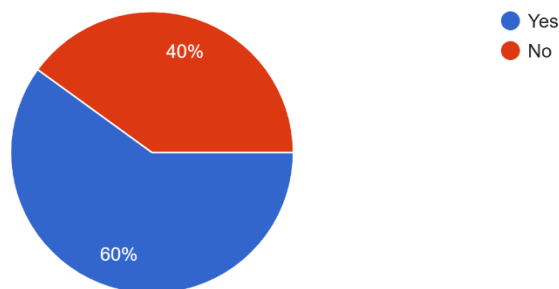
11. If yes, can you tell me more about it?

Of the seven pastors that have undergone some kind of structured training, four pastors attended seminary or some kind of training institute. The remaining senior pastors attended seminars, conferences, and pastoral leadership classes.

12. Does your church offer any formal, structured training for pastors, ministers, or church leadership?

Does your church offer any formal, structured training for pastors, ministers, or church leadership?

10 responses



13. How is that lived out in your church?

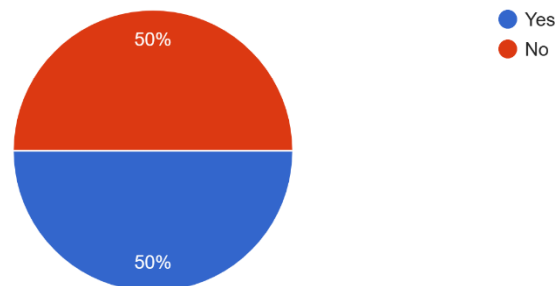
This was another question where the answers ranged from simply leading by example to a very detailed leadership development plan. One of the senior pastors described it this way:

Various roles have different paths to senior leadership. For all that are looking to join to clergy, we start them off by teaching Sunday school. We use that as a training ground and understand their ability to relay the messages and connect with the congregants. From there we bring them to the role of minister and hold to the position that all clergy should attend some level of seminary to be able to ascertain what God is saying through His word.

14. Do you have any written materials about it?

Do you have any written materials about your church's leadership and development that you can share?

10 responses



15. What does effective leadership look like to you?

The pastors' answers can be put into three categories. One senior pastor argued that effective leadership began with being relational. Next, the senior pastors placed emphasis on developing other leaders. They also described effective leadership as leading by example, being honest, having strong integrity, and passion. Only one pastor included communication in their definition. The pastor responded, "Effective

leadership is both verbal and nonverbal carrying out the attributes of honesty, integrity, creativity, communication, commitment, excellence and cutting edge.” The pastors’ responses showed how often communication is not considered in the definition of effective leadership.

16. How do you think that effective leadership should be measured?

The majority of the pastors agree that effective leadership should be measured by results. Is the leader consistent? Is the leader developing other leaders? Do people want to follow the leader? Is the leader consistent? For the senior pastors, these are some of the questions that need to be asked to measure the effectiveness of a leader.

17. How do you define communication?

All the senior pastors understood that communication is a two-way process that involves sharing a clear message. This was helpful in designing the workshop that will be discussed more later. Their responses suggested that the majority of the pastors had a fundamental understanding of human communication.

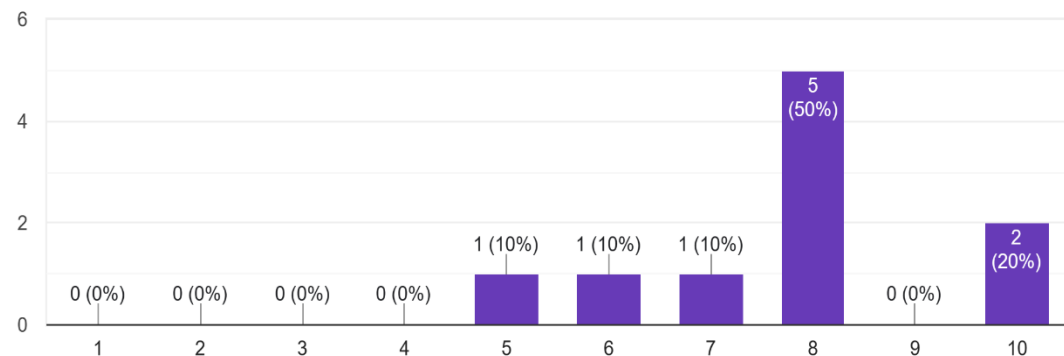
18. What makes for good communication between leaders? What makes for poor communication between leaders?

Clear communication was a continuous theme for what makes for good communication. The senior pastors emphasized how important clear communication. In fact, one of the senior pastors defined good communication as over communication. In the reverse, bad communication was depicted as communication that left many questions unanswered. A participant explained poor communication as “when there is no clarity and it is shown through the poor results.”

19. *On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being highest), how would you measure the strength of communication between you and your senior leaders (top 3)?*

On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being highest), how would measure the strength of communication between you and your senior leaders (top 3)?

10 responses



20. *What do you like about the communication between you and your senior leaders? What would you like to be better about your communication with your senior leaders?*

In alignment with the results from the previous questions, they had many positive things to say about the communication between them and their senior leaders. Many were happy with the results they produced as a team. One pastor admitted that his or her communication with his or her leaders could be better. The pastor acknowledged, “What I can do better is be more direct and use more clarity at times so after the directives are given there are no more questions to asked about the instructions. I can do better with spending more time with clarity so that we can be more productive in the results.”

Senior Leaders' Surveys

Like the senior pastors' surveys, the senior leaders' surveys began with a request for some demographic information from each participant. Prior to the survey's request for demographic information, its questions ask for personal identifiable information that will not be released without the participants expressed consent.

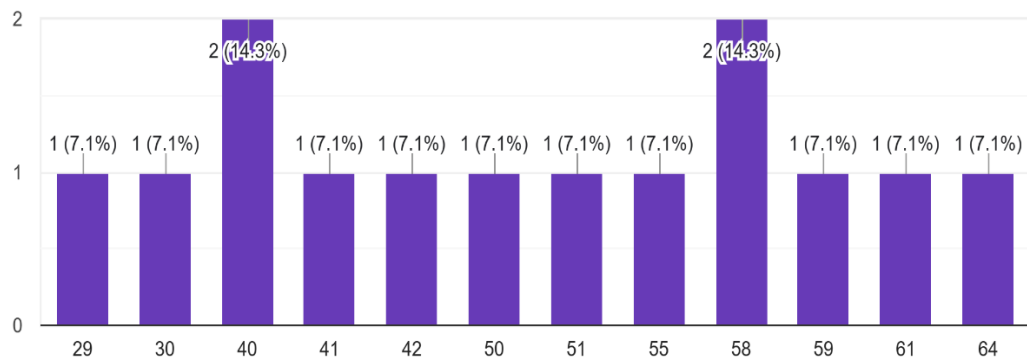
1. What is your current denomination, if any?

<i>Name of Denomination</i>	<i>Number of Senior Pastors</i>
<i>Nondenominational</i>	6
<i>Baptist</i>	3
<i>Pentecostal</i>	1
<i>Christian/Holiness</i>	1
<i>Apostolic</i>	2

2. What is your age?

What is your age?

14 responses

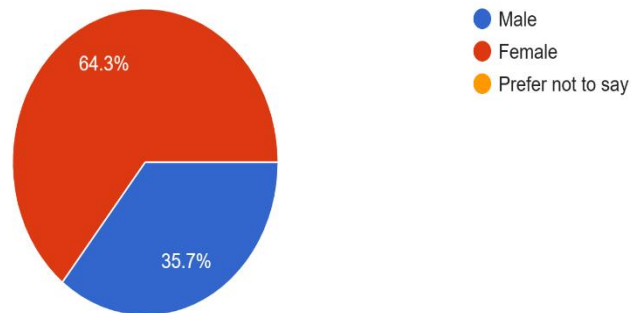


Like the Senior Pastors, the age of the senior leaders extended across three generations. In turn, both groups share the same generational concerns

3. *What is your gender?*

What is your gender?

14 responses

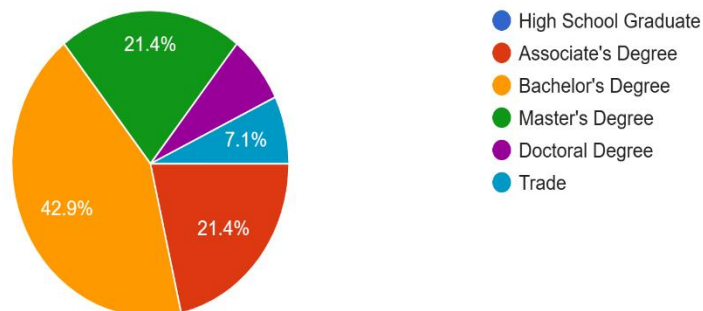


Unlike the singular female among the senior pastors, females are the majority of senior leaders participating in this project. There were 9 females and 5 males.

4. *What is your highest level of education?*

What is your highest level of education?

14 responses



5. *What is your current senior leadership role?*

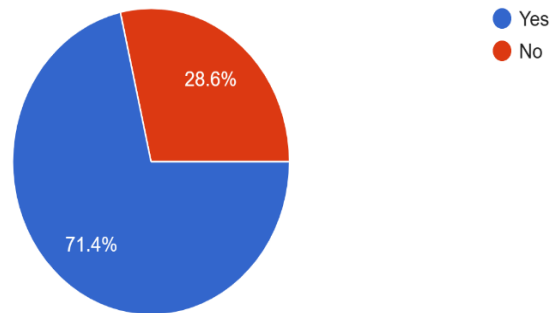
The senior leaders are approximately an even split of ministers and non-ministers.

The titles provided from participants are five ministers, three administrators, two First Ladies, one trustee, and one Chairman of the Deacon Board.

6. *Is this senior role your first senior leadership role in the Black Church?*

Is this senior role your first senior leadership role in the Black Church?

14 responses



7. *If not, what were your other senior leadership role(s) in the church and how long did you serve in them?*

For the four senior leaders that have previous leadership experience, their prior roles vary. Some of their positions include Men's Leader, Intercessory Prayer Leader, Head of Security, Minister of Music, and a Trustee.

8. *How would you define your leadership role?*

The senior leaders' responses can be divided into three categories. Five participants shared how they felt about their role. They didn't include any information about their position or its responsibilities. Some of these participants described their

leadership roles as “challenging,” “complex,” and “challenging but rewarding.” Five participants were more specific and consisted of more formal job descriptions. One of the business administrators defined their role as “performing administrative duties and responsibilities as it pertains to cash management, record keeping, etc. as it pertains to the church and its members.” The remaining five responses were very broad. These leaders depicted their roles as serving wherever their service is needed.

One leader said:

I would define my leadership role as one of having to be a jack of all trades so to speak. As I mentioned above, I am called on to help with many, many tasks, primarily because our church is small and we are still building, so a lot of tasks and duties fall on either myself or our Pastor especially if it is pulpit-related or just ensuring the services overall flow smoothly....

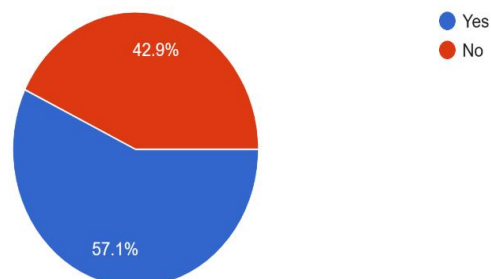
9. How did you first learn about being a leader in the church?

Similar to the senior pastors, seven of the senior leaders shared that they first learned about from the church and their families. Senior leaders’ family members were also former or current church leaders whom they were able to observe growing up and shape their views on leadership.

10. Have you undergone any structured training about being a church leader?

Have you undergone any structured training about being a church leader?

14 responses

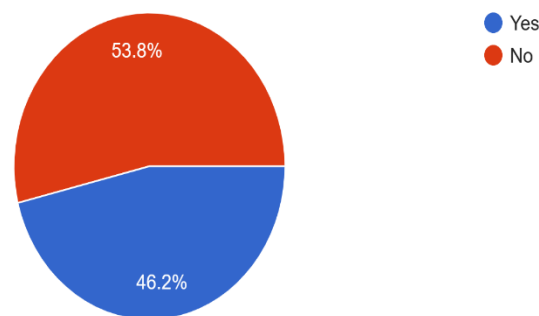


11. If yes, can you tell me more about it?

For the eight senior leaders that have received some kind of structured training, most of them received it in their local church or another local church. One leader shared, “Chicagoland Christian Center trains and equips the saints for leadership via evangelism.” Another senior leader provided a more detail description of their training experience in their local church. They wrote, “My Pastor has given the ministerial staff, and leadership staff structured training virtually and in person. Topics related to discipleship, biblical training, intercessory prayer.” The remaining two senior leaders received seminary training, where one studied theology and is pursuing a master’s degree currently.

12. Does your church offer any formal, structured training for pastors, ministers, or church leadership?

Does your church offer any formal, structured training for pastors, ministers, or church leadership?
13 responses



13. What does effective leadership mean to you?

As Johnson and Hackman mentioned previously, over 200 published definitions of leadership exist in the world.³ Thus, it is not surprising that every participant had a different definition of leadership. Their responses ranged from simple to very intricate. One simple definition was “impacting and positively influencing people.” Another more detailed response read as follows:

Effective leadership breaks down into 3 aspects: Inspiration-showing people a better way, aspirations- showing your team that the goal is achievable, and Dedications- showing your team how to accomplish the goal.

14. How do you think that effective leadership should be measured?

Four of the senior leaders desire to have clear, measurable objectives and hold leadership accountable to how well they achieve those objectives. Nine leaders wanted to be able to observe a change with their teams and congregations. One senior leader described measuring effective leadership such involve the following:

Effective leadership can be measured by observing a person’s ability to help team members execute the vision of the organization. Effective leaders have influence. They have the ability to negotiate. Effective leaders delegate tasks instead of attempting to accomplish tasks alone. The effectiveness of a leader can be measured by observing their ability to communicate. Effective leaders have excellent interpersonal skills.

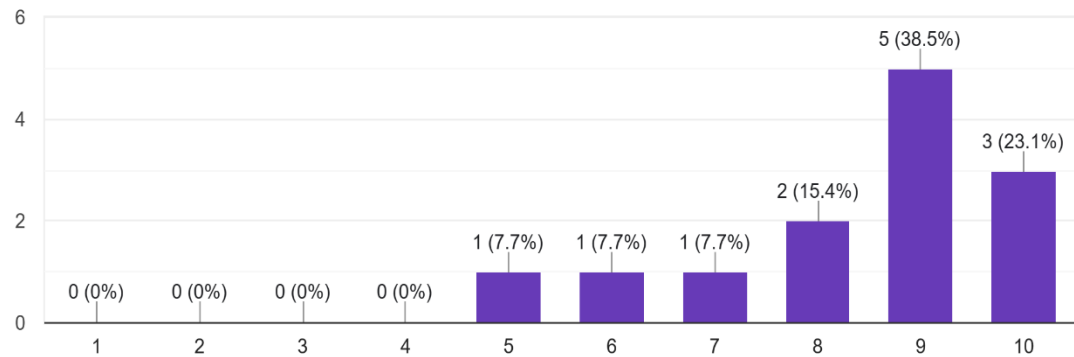
The remaining two participants did not provide a response.

³ Craig E. Johnson and Michael Z. Hackman. *Leadership: A Communication Perspective*. 3rd Edition. (Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc., 2018), 11-12.

15. *On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being honest, how would you measure the strength of communication between you and your fellow senior leaders?*

On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being honest, how would measure the strength of communication between you and your senior pastor?

13 responses



16. *What do you like about it? What would you like to be better?*

As the graph from the previous question suggests, a vast majority of the participants are happy with their communication with their senior pastor. Many of the senior leaders had words of affirmation and praise for their senior leaders. Yet, a few senior leaders did express that they would like to see their communication improve. Only one leader wrote specifically what could be better - “There could be some improvements in how the timeliness of communication goes - i.e. if someone needs to lead prayer, I feel that should be communicated at least 12 hours in advance if at all possible, unless an emergency comes up.”

Key Takeaways

After the survey responses for the senior pastors and senior leaders were reviewed, some key takeaways were discovered that were helpful in developing the speaking presentation of the

workshop. It also influenced the overall structure of the workshop that will be discussed in Chapter 4.

First, the demographic information received from the survey responses demonstrated that the survey participants are a fair representation of the current state of the 21st century Black Church leadership. Here is a snapshot of some of demographic information captured:

Survey Participants		
	Senior Pastors	Senior Leaders
Number of Participants	10	15
Age Range	31-61	29-64
Gender - Female	1	9
Gender - Male	9	5
Number of Generations	3	3
Number of Denominations	3	5

From the chart above, the participating senior pastors and senior leader have a thirty-five-year age range among them. The youngest participant was born in 1994. The most seasoned participant was born in 1959. As a result, this study includes senior pastors and senior leaders from three different generations. These generations are prevalent among Black Church leaders currently. The similarities and differences in the different generations were considered in designing the workshop in anticipation that the workshop was going to be effective in connecting with the workshop participants.

This study's oldest participant was born at the end of the Baby Boomer (1946-1964).⁴ One of the things that was considered about Baby Boomers was they historically respond to repetition.⁵ As a result, concepts presented repeatedly will get attention and become truth to them.⁶ Lastly, Baby Boomers are loyal to employers, which has the potential to carry over into their roles in the church.⁷ With the loyalty of this generation, implementing repetition was intentionally considered in the development of the introductory part of the workshop in order to increase the changes that this generation would open to something different.

The next generation among the senior pastors and leaders are Generation X. Generation Xers were born from 1965 to 1980.⁸ Generation X started in the midst of the Civil Rights movement. They saw the Black Church be the “anchor of the Civil Rights movement.”⁹ They saw the Black Church be the pillar of the Black Community. In turn, there was a time where there was no differentiation between the Black Church and the Black Community.¹⁰

Outside of the church, Generation X is 60% more college educated than the previous

⁴ Rita Blair, “Creative Communication Strategies for Multigenerational Students.” *Journal of Systemics, Cybernetics and Informatics* 17 No. 5 (2019): 32. <https://doaj.org/article/e7142d5de38743b8a77fc4afb5fea6e7>.

⁵ Blair, 33.

⁶ Blair, 33.

⁷ Blair, 34.

⁸ Blair, 32.

⁹ Leonard Gadzekpo. “The Black Church, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Future.” *Journal of Religious Thought* 53, No. 1 (1997), 103.

¹⁰ Gadzekpo, 103.

generation.¹¹ This was one of the reasons that Professor Jerry Madkins advocated for a change in Black Church leadership style. Black pastors were no longer the most educated people in the Black Community.¹² Also, Generation X does not like authority or specific work structures.¹³ Next, they are not as loyal to leadership as the Baby Boomers due to witnessing their parents lose jobs.¹⁴

The last generation of senior pastors are Generation Y, also known as Millennials. Millennials were born from 1981 to 1995.¹⁵ Among the three generations, Millennials are the most educated with a short attention span.¹⁶ They tend to respect employers that encourage their career and educational growth.¹⁷ Millennials also prefer to learn collaboratively within a group.¹⁸ In turn, they do not subscribe positively to an authoritative lecturer or pastor where their voices are not heard in the conversation.¹⁹ As the facilitator of the workshop, I was intentional about

¹¹ Rita Blair, "Creative Communication Strategies for Multigenerational Students." *Journal of Systemics, Cybernetics and Informatics* 17 No. 5 (2019): 33. <https://doaj.org/article/e7142d5de38743b8a77fc4afb5fea6e7>.

¹² Jerry B. Madkins. "The Leadership Crisis in the Black Church: The Search for the Right Pastor," *The Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center*, 19 no 1 - 2 (Fall - Spr 1991 – 1992), 102.

¹³ Rita Blair, "Creative Communication Strategies for Multigenerational Students." *Journal of Systemics, Cybernetics and Informatics* 17 No. 5 (2019): 33. <https://doaj.org/article/e7142d5de38743b8a77fc4afb5fea6e7>.

¹⁴ Blair, 33.

¹⁵ Blair, 32.

¹⁶ Blair, 33.

¹⁷ Blair, 33.

¹⁸ Joshua L. Mitchell. *Black Millennials & the Church: Meet Me Where I Am*. (Vallet Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2018), 62.

¹⁹ Mitchell, 62.

making sure my tone was professional and conversational to gain their respect as well as keep their attention.

In addition to the participants being multigenerational, the gender inequality in this study is representative of the church. According to the National Congregations Study in 2018-2019, only sixteen percent of Black Protestants churches had Black women senior pastors.²⁰ There was only one female pastor among the senior pastor and nine women who were senior leaders. It is a well-known fact that the field of ministry is primarily known as an “all-boys” club. While women are being more accepted across denominations, their voices are still sometimes overlooked in the church and other arenas. Making sure the thoughts and feelings of black women that started at dinner tables, salons, and other places where black women often congregated were heard was at the root of womanist theologian.²¹ As an African American woman, Katie Cannon had the courage to stand before the American Academy of Religion in a room where all the women were usually white and African Americans were black and present womanist theology.²² Cannon used her platform to give African American women a voice in a room where their voices hadn’t been previously. As an African American woman, I was intentional in using my platform as a Doctoral student and facilitator of the workshop to make sure that the only African American woman pastor participating in the workshop along with the nine female senior leaders were heard.

²⁰ Adelle Banks. “Women Making Strides in Leadership of Black Denominations Amid Hesitancy.” *The Christian Century* 138, no. 21 (Oct 20, 2021): 22.

²¹ Eboni Marshall Turman. “Black Women’s Wisdom: Womanist Theology and How It Has Evolved.” *The Christian Century* 136, no. 6 (Mar 13, 2019), 30.

²² Turman, 30.

In taking a more in depth look at the responses to survey questions pertaining directly to leadership, training, and communication, more information was discovered about the senior pastors' and senior leaders' perspectives prior to the workshop. Seventy percent and almost sixty percent of senior pastors and senior leaders have undergone some kind of structured training respectively. Also, sixty percent of pastors offer some kind of leadership training in their church. In *Black Preacher in America*, Charles Hamilton noted that ninety-two percent of the African American men entering ministry were "professionally unprepared."²³ More recently, in *The Lord Gave Me This: Understanding Historic Leadership Development Practices of the Black Church to Prepare Tomorrow's Leaders*, Terrell Carter did a focus group with a group of senior pastors in St. Louis, Missouri and received a different response. While the senior pastors saw the value in training, many of them did not offer training to their leaders.²⁴ With the transition from Hamilton's and Carter's studies, the responses from Chicagoland Pilgrim Assemblies International's senior pastors and senior leaders are demonstrating a potentially significant shift from 20th century church leaders to leaders today. More than simply adhering to the request of Archbishop Hudson, the senior leaders' and pastors' responses suggest that a genuine interest and openness to discussing leadership and training may exist already for these leaders.

²³ Charles Hamilton. *The Black Preacher in America*. (New York, NY: William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1972), 88.

²⁴ Terrell Carter. *The Lord Gave Me This: Understanding Historic Leadership Development Practices of the Black Church to Prepare Tomorrow's Leaders* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2016), 51 and 54.

Chapter 4: The Workshop - Role of Communication in Leadership

Once the information from the survey responses was reviewed and analyzed, the subsequent step was to begin developing and executing the workshop. In this chapter, the development and implementation of the workshop will be discussed. The rationale will also be shared for the different stages of the process.

In developing a workshop for church leaders, a natural question one asks is “How do you teach leaders?” What is the best way to present new information to leaders and it be clearly received? As an educational consultant that creates lesson plans for students regularly, this is a question that is considered often. Since this workshop was meant to be a brief, introductory workshop on the role of communication as a part of leadership development, the first step was to consider what teaching and speaking format was most effective for this audience.

From the survey responses, it was evident that there was a potential to lose the senior leaders’ and senior pastors’ attention if the workshop’s design and execution was not handled properly. Baby Boomers would need to have repetition in the workshop to make new information a possibility of them accepting and being open to considering the new information being presented.²⁵ For Generation X, they are not as loyal as the Baby Boomer’s generation.²⁶ Their generation fought against status quo due to the Civil Rights movement.²⁷ This may be a part of the reason that they do not like formal structure or authority. These two characteristics also may make them more open to something new in the Black Church, like introducing communication as a part of

²⁵ Rita Blair, “Creative Communication Strategies for Multigenerational Students.” *Journal of Systemics, Cybernetics and Informatics* 17 No. 5 (2019): 33. <https://doaj.org/article/e7142d5de38743b8a77fc4afb5fea6e7>.

²⁶ Blair, 33.

²⁷ Blair, 33.

leadership development in the Black Church. Millennials are different from Generation X, but they appreciate employers that encourage their growth. They prefer to work in a group, and it is important to create a setting where their voices are heard and welcomed. In order to meet the needs of these diverse participants, the workshop was divided into two parts – lecture and group discussion.

Part One - Lecture

With the parameters of the workshop and the information received from the surveys, creating a lecture with the visual aid of a PowerPoint presentation appeared to be an effective way to implement the workshop. The lecture format was chosen, because it can be an efficient way to share a significant amount of information with a group of people.²⁸ Another benefit of this format is that a lecture style is “the least expensive, least time-consuming” option that is also known to help a presenter establish credibility.²⁹ While I have been a part of Pilgrim Assemblies International for years, I did not know everyone that participated in the workshop. Thus, establishing credibility early in the presentation was essential to the success of the workshop.

Along with the lecture format, a PowerPoint presentation was used as a form of audiovisual instruction. Audiovisual instruction can be used in multiple ways. In this case, it was being used to help in communicating the information being presented in the workshop clearly.³⁰ For those with a short attention span, it could help keep them engaged at a glance.

²⁸ Raymond Noe. *Employee Training & Development*, 8th Edition. (New York, NY: McGraw Hill Education, 2020), 304.

²⁹ Noe, 304.

³⁰ Noe, 306.

The workshop began with establishing some house rules for the workshop and providing some of the information about myself that was asked of them in their survey. Establishing house rules and providing information about myself was created with the intent to also provide a level of comfort and ease for the workshop participants. The primary house rule was that the participants were not going to talk during the workshop. Instead, they were free to ask questions and share experiences at any time. This workshop was going to be an exchange of ideas. As the facilitator, I was clear with them that I was not sharing information to influence them. I wanted to share information and get their thoughts on it.

In Chapter 1, my background and qualifications to facilitate this project were provided in detail. The participants did not receive all the in-depth information shared previously. Instead, they did receive a glimpse of it. My credentials were broken into three areas – ministry, career, and education. On the PowerPoint, the following bullet points were shared:

Ministry:

- Member of Powerhouse House Chicago – 15 years
- Been in Church Leadership Since 2005
- Ordained elder since 2017
- Retired choir kid, former Outreach Leader, and former Ministerial Alliance Leader

Career:

- Background in Higher Education – Admissions, Financial Aid, Etc.
- Business Owner and Educational Consultant

Education:

- BA Communication, MBA in Leadership, and Master of Divinity

This information was provided to them briefly, so they could briefly assess the different ways in which they may be able to connect with me as the facilitator of the workshop. For example, one of the senior leaders mentioned that they were a minister of music on their survey. In turn, this

may be a place of connection that will make them more willing to talk about and trust the information being shared.

Next, the workshop transition into how this project was created. As the story was being told, the following bullet points were on the screen to help tell the story:

- Dared to Ask – How can we be more effective in church leadership?
- Interviewed 10 Church Leaders Anonymously – Fall 2018
- Wanted to start a conversation between senior pastors and their leaders
- How would discussing leadership and communication be received?
- Black Church is a unique institution all its own.
- Pilgrim inspired this conversation, so I wanted to start at home.

The participants' body language showed they were engaged in learning how this project came to take place and the relevance of this workshop. One of the participants gave positive feedback in the form of an Amen, the positive traditional call and response commonly used in the church. At this point in the workshop, it was emphasized again that this was going to be a mutual exchange of ideas. This time was meant to begin a conversation between senior pastors and senior leaders. In order to do that, it was beneficial for them to hear the same information about communication and leadership at the same time. While they may or may not agree with the information that was presented, I was confident that it was going to start some kind of conversation about the role of communication in leadership as well as help answer the research question for this Major Project.

After discussing the origins of this Major Project, the lecture changed to sharing information from the conversation partners discovered on the research journey for this project. In introducing this section, the research for this project was compared to the necessary studying and exegetical work done during sermon preparation by ministers. As a minister, the Bible is often the first text studied. In preparation for training and development for the leadership of our

church, the same meticulous research is needed to find reputable resources to help develop the system that is suitable for a particular church.

With the diversity among the workshop participants, it was important to start by explaining the history and core of the Black Church. It could not be assumed that every participant knew the history of the Black Church, although they were a member of a Black Church. The participants were all in different stages of life and had different experiences of what the Black Church had been to them. A Baby Boomer was going to have an extremely different viewpoint than a Millennial.

While explaining the history of the Black Church, the following bullet points were displayed on the PowerPoint:

- The Black Church dates back to the antebellum period of the 1800s.
- It began as an invisible movement against the oppressive version of the God that they were trying to be forced to believe.
- To this day, freedom and justice is one of the core values of the Black Church.
- For many, the Black Church was the first place that many blacks were affirmed and could lead.

The points were chosen to highlight some of the key points and commitments of the Black Church. The Black Church is a unique institution. While other denominations may need to have conversations about the role of communication as a part of their leadership development and training programs, there is still nothing like the Black Church. The Black Church began as a silent movement to go against the status quo of its time.³¹ Before the senior pastors and senior leaders heard information about leadership and communication that may be different from their church's status quo, it was important to show them that the Black Church has a history of going

³¹ C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya. *The Black Church in the African American Experience*. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1990), 24.

against status quo. It was their ancestor's willingness to challenge what they had been told at different points in history that has progressed the church forward over the years. Perhaps, it was time for another shift. Due to the top-down leadership styles of their churches, the senior pastors and senior leaders would have to be the ones to start that shift.

Before breaking the participants into groups, it was vital to discuss the possible differences in leadership experiences and perspectives. Between the senior pastors and senior leaders, five denominations were represented. With their potential differing viewpoints, it was necessary for the participants to understand the core leadership differences among the different denominations. The Black Church historically originated with seven denominations.³² Those denominations can be narrowed further into three main groups - Black Methodists, Black Baptists, and Black Pentecostals.³³ The next PowerPoint slide used the bullet points below to outline the primary differences clearly and concisely among these three groups:

Black Baptists

- Have complete autonomy on local church operations.
- Pastor has most autonomy once voted into power by congregation.
- The Board of Trustees and the Board of Deacons also have advisory roles in the church.

Black Methodists

- Connected and submitted to one "centralized governmental authority."
- The bishop assigns pastors to local churches.

Black Pentecostals

- The different levels of leadership hierarchy across the denomination nationally primarily oversee the activities of the local church.
- Local churches have some autonomy over their operations.

³² Leonard Gadzekpo. "The Black Church, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Future." *Journal of Religious Thought* 53, No. 1 (1997), 98-99.

³³ C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya. *The Black Church in the African American Experience*. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1990), 20.

After reviewing the three Black groups, the lecture began explaining leadership communication styles. From the survey responses, it was evident that the participants had a clear definition of human communication that involves a sender and receiver sharing a clear message. Thus, the workshop could start addressing communication with a discussion of leadership communication styles as opposed to starting with a definition of human communication. According to Craig E. Johnson and Michael Z. Hackman, three leadership communication styles exist – Authoritarian, Democratic, and Laissez Faire.³⁴ The following bullet points were used to show the differences between these leadership communication styles:

- *Leadership: A Communication Perspective* goes further into detail about different leadership communication styles.
 - Authoritarian
 - Absolute authority
 - Gets results and effective only in the short term
 - Democratic
 - Allows for leadership and decision making to take place in a collaborative way.
 - It provides space to empower individuals to take initiative, critically think through a situation, and bring solutions.
 - Laissez-faire
 - Transitioning out of a role or no longer engaged in their leadership assignment.

In discussing leadership communication styles, nonverbal cues (ie. Head nods) showed the participants continued engagement. In addition to the affirmative nonverbal cues, more participants began saying, “Amen!” and “Yes!” When discussing the laissez-faire communication style, it really struck a chord with the audience. Many senior leaders and senior

³⁴ Craig E. Johnson and Michael Z. Hackman. *Leadership: A Communication Perspective*. 3rd Edition. (Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc., 2018), 40-41.

pastors began to add their thoughts to the conversation. One of the senior pastors shared a situation that is currently taking place with her leadership.

When the lecture made the last shift prior to group work, the engagement continued into the topic of organizational communication. In defining organizational communication and sharing its significance in the church, the following points were shared with the audience:

- Eric Eisenberg and his colleagues defines organizational communication as “the interaction required to direct a group toward a shared goal.”
- Organizational Communication: Balancing Creativity and Constraint is the balance of creativity and constraint.
- Eisenberg defines communication as “the moment-to-moment working out of the tension between individual creativity and organizational constraint.”
- While some would argue that tension has a negative connotation, I believe that tension is where there is room for creativity to address the unexpected issues that occur when trying to accomplish the goals of a shared vision.

Once the information about organizational communication was presented, the participants were invited to share their thoughts or questions about anything explored in the workshop thus far. Their responses to this section of the workshop confirmed how much they were engaged and open to this conversation. They were not staying away from the uncomfortable conversations. One of the more experienced pastors referenced Eric Eisenberg’s definition of communication. This pastor was intrigued and questioned Eisenberg’s use of the word tension. This was the first time that one of the participants challenged any of the information presented. As the pastor challenged Eisenberg’s definition, it was done in a way that demonstrated that he wanted a better understanding of Eisenberg’s definition. The pastor was not immediately against Eisenberg’s definition. The pastor’s desire to understand a perspective different from their own demonstrated their willingness to at least learn more about communication as a part of leadership development

before dismissing the thought. Observing this mentality from senior pastors is encouraging when considering the future of the 21st Century Black Church.

Group Discussion

For the second part of the workshop, participants were assigned to Zoom Breakout Rooms to discuss communication and leadership. For the workshop, ten senior pastors and twenty-one senior leaders attended. The participants were separated by pastors and given forty-five minutes to discuss in their rooms. Each group was given a set of questions to aid in guiding their conversation. They received the following questions:

- Which of the following describes your church's leadership communication style? (Please check the one that applies the most.)
- What is or would be the pros and cons of a democratic communication leadership style for your congregation?
- What does or would a democratic communication leadership style look like specifically in your church?
- What is or would be the pros and cons of an authoritative communication style for your congregation?
- Do you think your church would be open to introducing a different leadership communication style from what you currently have?
- Why or Why Not?
- After your group conversation, are the majority of you open to introducing or expanding your leadership communication style?
- Why or Why Not?

Once every participant was assigned to a room and the groups were settled, I visited every group to observe their conversations. While the workshop began with not a significant amount of verbal feedback, the passion that started with the last two topics carried over into the breakout rooms. When I entered the rooms, an open exchange of ideas between the pastors and senior leaders took place. The senior pastors were not dominating the conversation as one may assume

would happen due to their church's top-down leadership structure. Instead, a sense of ease was in the atmosphere. Many of the groups agreed with one another about leadership communication styles. Some of the groups did not need the entire forty-five minutes to come to a group consensus about the group questions provided.

Below are some of the responses and observation that came from the different groups:

- *Which of the following describes your church's leadership communication style? (Please check the one that applies the most.)*

Belonging to a church with a top-down leadership structure, one would assume that the authoritarian leadership communication style would be in automatic alignment with the leadership culture of the churches participating in this study. Instead, that was not the case. Only one church identified as having an authoritarian leadership communication style. The remaining churches identified as having a democratic communication leadership style which was demonstrated in their separate group discussions.

- *What is or would be the pros and cons of a democratic communication leadership style for your congregation?*

Before asking the senior pastors and senior leaders about their feelings regarding leadership and communication, this question was meant to encourage them to fully consider the pros and cons of intentionally adopting this leadership communication style for their church. In discussing democratic leadership communication style, several of the groups mentioned having several voices at the table. In some instances, it was seen to be a good thing and a bad thing in other instances. One group saw different voices at the table saw it as a pro, because it would be mean a “Diversity of

opinion” and “Give others the feeling of ownership and a level of accountability.”

Here is how another group saw having more voices as a con:

“Some people may get too carried away with being able to make Choices. As a result, that may cause the church to run amuck.

At the end of the day, there is a reason why a senior pastor is put in place over the flock - God placed them over us to protect, pray, cover, correct, rebuke as needed, etc.”

- *What does or would a democratic communication leadership style look like specifically in your church?*

This was another question designed to help the senior pastors and seniors to think practically about what the democratic leadership communication style would look like in their actual local church. In other words, would it be possible for them to apply a democratic leadership communication style and live it out in their local church?

These questions have to be considered and answered by the church’s leadership before the church’s congregation. Otherwise, applying a democratic leadership communication style would not have a chance of getting off the ground in the church.

Primarily, the groups discussed the ways that people would be more included in major decisions in the church. One group discussed the democratic leadership communication style in their church would equate to more meetings, discussions, and possibly more church votes. Another group suggested that this approach would “allow individuals on the team to assist in making decisions.” Two groups discussed how democratic leadership communication style would mean more respect and open communication between leaders and subordinates.

- What is or would be the pros and cons of an authoritarian communication style for your congregation?

Like the previous question, this question was meant to assist leaders and pastors in giving thoughtful consideration about what the authoritarian leadership communication style would look like in a practical sense in their church.

Consistently, one of the pros of this approach was how efficient it is. They argued that the Authoritarian approach brought order and structure. One of the groups described the pros of this approach this way, “Authoritative communication style does tend to get things done in an effective and efficient way because it eliminates the time of conversation.”

In the group work, their conversations suggest a concern that communication and comradery in their churches would suffer with the authoritarian leadership communication style. Two groups thought that leaders would be seen as unapproachable. As a result, people really would not know their leaders. It would be a very transactional relationship, because the authoritarian leadership communication style is more about results than people. Two other groups mentioned that this leadership communication style had the potential to cause trauma and bullying.

- *Do you think your church would be open to introducing a different leadership communication style from what you currently have?*

All the churches selected yes, except for one church. The church that said they were not open to introducing a different leadership communication style has already implemented the democratic leadership communication style into their church.

- *Why or Why Not?*

There was a consensus that all the churches were open to change. For many of the groups, change meant growth and progress. One of the churches described their perspective this way, “We are open in our communication with each other and are open to different and new ideas to help run the ministry more smoothly.”

- *After your group conversation, are the majority of you open to introducing or expanding your leadership communication style?*

This question received a unanimous “yes” from the groups.

- *Why or Why Not?*

From their responses, these leaders are ready for change. They believe that considering change is in the best interest of their church and their congregations.

One group simply said, “It is all about progress.” One of the churches in the middle of a pastoral leadership transition explained their reason for a willingness to change the following way:

“We all agreed that our communication will best be received if we fully adopt the democratic style of communication. As we transition from one pastor to the next, we have to take what we have and apply it as best we can to move forward.”

Once the groups came back together, they shared the answers to the questions each group received with each other. The same passion and engaging dialogue remained when everyone was back and sharing with the larger group. Prior to the separate group work, one senior pastor shared a personal, in-depth story of a current issue that they were having with one of their church leaders. After the group discussion, two more senior pastors shared their stories with the larger group. They discussed how challenging it had been for them transitioning into their pastoral role,

because they were their father's successor. As a result, congregants and leaders sometimes had difficulty remembering they were no longer their former pastor's child. Instead, they were now their pastor. In the beginning, it made it difficult for them to implement change.

Another discussion that occurred with the larger group was the challenge some people had declaring whether they had a democratic or authoritarian leadership communication style in their church. It started when one group admitted that this was not the easiest question for them to answer. The group was not sure whether their leadership communication style was completely democratic. The senior pastor and his senior leaders had to spend some time really discussing it before they felt comfortable and in agreement declaring that their leadership communication style was democratic.

Once the group concluded their remaining responses, the larger group was asked did any other groups have this same struggle. Every group did not say that it was a struggle, but a couple of people admitted that they had the same conflict in their group conversation. This was a critical turning point in the workshop, but it demonstrated that the Black Church with top-down leadership is in a time of transition. It suggests that the churches identified as having a democratic leadership communication style may not be completely democratic. When the leaders were asked whether their churches were authoritarian or democratic, they were asked to share which term most defined who they were in their leadership communication style. When they selected democratic, they were not saying that their leadership communication style did not include an authoritarian style at all. Instead, it suggested that the majority of their leadership communication style is democratic. This is the opposite of what Madkins suggested was the case

for the traditional Black Church with top-down leadership at the end of the 20th century.³⁵ More recently, Michael Evans argues in *Leadership in the Black Church* that authoritarian leadership still plays a prevalent role in the 21st century. Change is taking place in the Black Church.

Major Takeaways

This workshop started with a lecture that received a few nonverbal and ended with a robust passionate conversation about the future of the Black Church. Overall, the workshop demonstrated the top-down Black Church may be in a transition. The workshop suggested the senior pastors and senior leaders have a more positive attitude toward leadership style changes.

While the churches agree that they subscribe to a top-down leadership style, all the churches describe their current leadership communication style as democratic not authoritative with the exception of one. This is important because it signifies potential openness to changing to a more democratic leadership communication style which is opposite of the authoritarian approach that has denominated traditional, top-down Black Churches for years.

From the workshop, the data concretely suggests that the Black Church may be open to incorporating a new leadership communication style. Eight seven percent of the churches participating in this project already identify as using a democratic leadership communication style. The results from the workshop also propose senior pastor and senior leaders are a positive attitude toward the collaborative approach of a democratic leadership communication style.

³⁵ Jerry B. Madkins. "The Leadership Crisis in the Black Church: The Search for the Right Pastor," *The Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center*, 19 no 1 - 2 (Fall - Spr 1991 – 1992), 102.

The last major takeaway pertains to leadership development and training within the Black Church. While the perception may be the church is behind on training, sixty percent of the participating churches offer structured training already. Fifty percent of them have training literature available that they are willing to share. The research suggests the Black Church may be doing more formal training and development than previously assumed and reported. In *The Lord Gave Me This: Understanding Historic Leadership Development Practices of the Black Church to Prepare Tomorrow's Leaders*, Terrell Carter explains how he performed a research study with a group of senior pastors in St. Louis.³⁶ The senior pastors professed to valuing education for their leaders, but did not having a formal training process for leaders.³⁷

The top-down Black Church is in a new area. Regardless of experience, age, or generation, there is an understanding that change is needed for progress to take place. The Black Church is not as committed to the traditions of the positions of the past. Instead, the consensus is that it is ready to move forward and do what is in the best interest of its church. Leaders are willing to ask questions and discuss issues that are different from their own understanding of issues. This project was a part of the first step in making sure the Black Church's willingness to consider new ideas is allocated to the world.

³⁶ Terrell Carter. *The Lord Gave Me This: Understanding Historic Leadership Development Practices of the Black Church to Prepare Tomorrow's Leaders* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2016), 54.

³⁷ Carter, 54.

Chapter 5: Evaluations and Future of Leadership and Communication Conversations

After the workshop ended, the final stage of the project was individual evaluations. Each workshop participant was sent an individual evaluation with fourteen questions about the workshop including self-identifying questions with information that will not be shared without their expressed consent. Eight senior leaders and eight senior pastors completed the individual evaluations.

In “The Teaching of Leadership,” Norma Cook Everest converses about the significance of measuring the teaching of leadership well past “outcomes-based objectives for classroom and institutional measurement.”³⁸ As a teacher of leaders, it is important to not try to create leaders in the form of who I think they should be.³⁹ Instead, Everist argues that teachers of leaders have “a responsibility for instructing, training, equipping, inspiring, empowering, forming leaders in the world.”⁴⁰ It is important to not lose sight of the mission of teaching leaders.⁴¹ She suggested the following “progression of questions” to aid in that:

1. How well did I teach?
2. Did the participants hear and understand?
3. Did the participants incorporate the material and change?
4. Are these people now better equipped to be leaders of faith communities?
5. Are those leaders able to serve people so that they might know and experience God’s gracious love and be engaged in ministry in the world themselves?⁴²

7. ³⁸ Norma Cook Everist. “The Teaching of Leadership.” *Journal of Religious Leadership* 11, No 2 (Fall 2012),

³⁹ Everist, 7.

⁴⁰ Everist, 7.

⁴¹ Everist, 7.

⁴² Everist, 7-8.

Since Everist's vision for teaching leaders is in alignment with the training vision on this project, these questions were considered when developing the questions for the individual evaluation for this research project workshop. More than evaluating performance, this evaluation was developed to help with future training and development for leaders. As Cook alludes to in her article, the expectation is that this project will be the start of "training, equipping, inspiring, empowering, forming leaders for service in the world."⁴³

Here is a summary of the responses from the individual evaluation questions:

1. What was your favorite part of tonight's workshop?

This question was asked in hopes of getting some insight into what part(s) of the workshop connected with the participants. Did they connect more with a particular subject matter, teaching approach, both, or something completely different?

All of the above is true. Half (8) of the responses expressed that the Breakout Sessions were their favorite part of the workshop. One of the senior leaders wrote, "I also really liked the breakout room sessions because that gave us as senior leaders a chance to talk with our Senior Pastors at greater length." Following the breakout sessions, the participants enjoyed the open conversations which took place before and after the breakout rooms. Four responses included something about the open conversation separate from the breakout rooms. Next, three participants mentioned enjoying the workshop overall. Lastly, two responses referenced the lecture and overall openness of the workshops as their favorite parts.

⁴³ Everist, 7.

2. *What was your least favorite part of tonight's workshop?*

Fourteen people said there was nothing they would change or did not respond to the question. Two people did respond with time as their least favorite part of the workshop. One person specified that there was not enough time to go in depth.

3. *Did you have enough time in your breakout room?*

Every participant agreed that there was enough time in the breakout rooms.

4. *What did you like about the presenter?*

More than half (9) the participants wrote that the presenter was knowledgeable or knew her subject matter thoroughly. One of the senior leaders submitted:

“I liked that the presenter was very thorough in her subject area and clear about her expectations of what she expected out of us as a group. She was also very pleasant to speak with as well as professional throughout this entire process. Overall, she did a great job!”

Secondly, seven participants mentioned how they appreciated the presenter's passion and kindness for the project. Lastly, three of the participants referenced the clear expectation set by the presenter.

5. *How could your presenter have done better?*

All the participants either did not suggest anything could be better or specifically said nothing could be better.

6. *Could you see yourself implementing something you learned or discussed on tonight in your leadership style?*

All participants said yes.

7. *If no, why not?*

There were no responses.

8. *If yes, what thing(s) could you see yourself implementing?*

Three participants saw themselves implementing the training they received for their personal growth. One senior leader felt empowered to assert themselves positively when communicating an idea. Another senior leader saw themselves growing in using more of a democratic approach as they assist their senior pastor.

Three more participants planned to implement the information from the workshop training into future trainings about communication and leadership. The final participants said they would look into implementing changes in communication and leadership. Yet, it was not clear whether they plan to share the information from the workshop with others or will they use the information for their personal growth as a leader.

9. *Would you like to discuss leadership and communication more in the future?*

Every participant has agreed that they would like to discuss leadership and communication further.

10. *If yes, what kind of thing(s) would you like to discuss more?*

In general, the participants wanted to talk further about how to communicate more effectively. Seven participants shared very specific topics. Two of the most surprising topics was Conflict and Resolution: What Does That Look Like for A Senior Leader” and “Transitioning from the Past to the Present.”

What is the Next Step?

In 1992, Jerry Madkins expressed a concern that the Black Church was having a leadership crisis heading into the 21st Century.⁴⁴ He argued that the Black pastor was no longer the most educated person in the room.⁴⁵ Going forward, senior pastors that are used to having absolute authority will have their decisions challenged greatly in the 21st Century Church.⁴⁶ Twenty-six years later, Michael Evans argued that Black Church pastors are resisting change and continue to hang onto traditions from the church's past.⁴⁷ Evan says this generation is vigorously demanding that Black Church senior pastors let the authoritarian leadership style go and embrace a leadership style that is more inclusive and collaborative of more voices at the table.⁴⁸ According to their arguments, the Black Church's leadership approach and its challenges for the 21st century has not changed much in twenty-six years. Yet, the findings of this Major Project in each of its three sections challenge that notion. Instead, the findings from each stage of this Major Project suggest the Black Church may have an affirmative attitude toward doing leadership development and training differently than in times past. The newfound information also hints at possible action steps that can be taken in the future.

⁴⁴ Jerry B. Madkins. "The Leadership Crisis in the Black Church: The Search for the Right Pastor," *The Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center*, 19 no 1 - 2 (Fall - Spr 1991 – 1992), 102.

⁴⁵ Madkins, 102.

⁴⁶ Madkins, 102.

⁴⁷ Michael Evans. *Leadership in the Black Church: Guidance in the Midst of Changing Demographics*. (Fort Worth, Texas: Austin Brothers, 2018), 6.

⁴⁸ Evans, 10-11.

In the first stage of this Major Project, senior leaders and senior pastors were given surveys to establish a baseline of their views on leadership and communication. The surveys were also given to create an audience analysis to help develop the lecture part of the workshop. The survey responses gave the first indication that perhaps the Black Church is in a time of transition that has not been fully reported yet. According to *The Lord Gave Me This: Understanding Historic Leadership Development Practices of the Black Church to Prepare Tomorrow's Leaders*, Black Protestants' education levels are usually lower than the general population.⁴⁹ Fifty-seven percent or less have high school diplomas.⁵⁰ Eighteen percent of Black Protestants have a college degree as opposed to the twenty-seven percent of the general population has a college degree.⁵¹ For this Major Project's survey participants, their educational attainment looked vastly different:

Highest Level of Education (Percentages)		
	Senior Leaders	Senior Pastors
Trade	7.1%	0%
High School	0%	20%
Bachelor's	42.9%	20%
Master's	21.4%	30%
Doctorate	7.1%	20%

The next indication that the Black Church may be in a transition was the percentage of senior pastors and senior leaders that has undergone some kind of structured training. From

⁴⁹ Terrell Carter. *The Lord Gave Me This: Understanding Historic Leadership Development Practices of the Black Church to Prepare Tomorrow's Leaders* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2016), 3.

⁵⁰ Carter, 3.

⁵¹ Carter, 3.

the survey responses, seventy percent of the senior pastors and fifty-seven percent of the seniors also underwent some kind of structured training. Many of the senior leaders and senior pastors expressed first learning about church leadership by observing their family members or learning directly from their church leaders. This approach is expected, because it is in alignment with the Black Church's oral tradition originating in Africa that has been used to teach preachers and leaders for years.⁵² Many Black Church leaders do not go to seminary for a variety of reasons including the curriculum is not geared toward Blacks.⁵³ Yet, these leaders took the next step and underwent some kind of structured training. In turn, this may have influenced their positive response to a new training model.

In Part 2, the senior pastors and senior leaders were introduced to how communication can be a part of leadership. After being introduced to the different leadership communication styles and organizational communication, some of the group discussion responses were surprising. In the first question, groups were asked to identify whether their leadership communication style was authoritarian or democratic. Except for one group, they all declared democratic. When asked if they thought their churches would be open to learning about a new leadership communication style, they all answered yes except for one group. Lastly, it was surprising that all groups said that the majority of the group members were open to introducing or expanding their leadership communication style. Among these three questions, I was expecting a generational divide in their responses or when observing their conversation. Yet, it did not happen. All three generations were in agreement. They all agreed with

⁵² Carter, 3.

⁵³ Carter, 15.

exploring change and going against status quo. When the individual evaluations were submitted in part 3 of this Major Project, this unanimous support for discussing leadership and communication more in the future continued.

Future of Leadership and Communication

The evidence has shown that a potential openness and willingness for Black Churches that currently utilize a top-down leadership style exist to introduce the role of communication as a part of its leadership development. The next step is to consider what the research and data show as possibilities for the future of the role of communication as a part of leadership development in the 21st century. The willingness to engage in the collaborative approach of democratic leadership communication style encourages the inclusion of new individuals' voices in church leadership that have not been readily included in church leadership – women. The support and implementation of democratic leadership communication creates a safe, attractive space for millennials that has the potential to attract Black Millennials back to the church and retain the ones that are already active in the church. The data derived from the project can also provide support for change and the training and development programs needed to implement changes.

With the collaborative democratic leadership, the project supports there being more room for voices at the Black Church leadership table that have once been marginalized. One of the most identifiable voices that has been limited from the table of Black Church leadership is the voice of women. Within the seven mainline Black denomination, woman have been known to make up the majority of the Black Church's membership with men dominating the

role of church leadership.⁵⁴ At the end of the 20th century, less than five percent of black clergy were believed to be female.⁵⁵ Yet, the male church leaders would depend on women to successfully execute the major programs involving politics, economics, and music that often led to the promotion and success of that male church leader.⁵⁶ The Black Church could have only minimally survived without the support and work of Black women, but leadership continues to be mostly male.⁵⁷ As a result, women had to begin to create their own spaces, such as women's conventions and organization, for leadership and growth where they would be celebrated.⁵⁸ Implementing democratic leadership communication styles in the Black Church has the ability to lessen the needs for these separate places in the future as well as harness more unity between black male and black female clergy.

Inviting women to the leadership table does not just bring a female perspective. With that female perspective, it may also bring a womanist perspective. Womanist theology is a "theology that affirms the significance of black woman's God-talk, survival, and flourishing for determining the substance of faithful Christian discourse and praxis."⁵⁹ Womanist theology is about more than empowering and affirming women as one may suspect. Instead,

⁵⁴ C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya. *The Black Church in the African American Experience*. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1990), 275.

⁵⁵ Lincoln and Mamiya, 289.

⁵⁶ Lincoln and Mamiya, 275.

⁵⁷ Lincoln and Mamiya, 275.

⁵⁸ Lincoln and Mamiya, 275.

⁵⁹ Eboni Marshall Turman. "Black Women's Wisdom: Womanist Theology and How It Has Evolved." *The Christian Century* 136, no. 6 (Mar 13, 2019), 30.

womanist theologians are committed to making sure men and woman are heard and seen. Additionally, womanist theologians are committed to “supporting all oppressed communities in the work of liberation.”⁶⁰ Women and womanist theologians are needed at the leadership table to progress the church forward and expand the Black Church’s viewpoints on how to serve the community as whole.

Another group that the willingness of implementing democratic leadership style in the Black Church attracts is millennials. Millennials are the largest generation in history currently, and they are also currently leaving the church and separating themselves from any religious affiliation.⁶¹ For the future of the church, it is going to be critical for the Black Church to discover ways to retain and regain millennials. One of the ways to theologically engage Millennials is by creating a safe space for them where their opinions are heard and considered to be valuable.⁶² Millennials prefer spaces where the teacher creates a place where individuals can have explorative conversations as opposed to spaces led by authoritative lecturers.⁶³ If the Black Church began to lean their leadership practices more toward democratic leadership, the Black Church would have a greater chance to appeal to and Millennials.

⁶⁰ Turman, 30.

⁶¹ Joshua L. Mitchell. *Black Millennials & the Church: Meet Me Where I Am*. (Vallet Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2018), 15 and 22.

⁶² Mitchell, 62.

⁶³ Mitchell, 62.

With the endorsement of Black Church leaders, the project data suggests an opportunity exists to create leadership development and training programs to begin to implement change in Black Church leadership. Creating a training program in leadership development and training with an intentional focus on communication is uncharted territory for the Black Church. Yet, the data collected and the process this Major Project executed can serve as a launching point for Black Churches to develop a training program unique to their church.

In “The Science of Training and Development in Organizations: What Matters in Practice,” Eduardo Salas discusses the steps needed to develop a successful training program for an organization. Salas recommended steps for before, during, and after training development aided a model for this Major Project and can help for the future of leadership communication studies.

Prior to designing the training, the first step is to perform a training need analysis - “conducting a proper diagnosis of what needs to be trained, for whom, and within what type of organizational system.”⁶⁴ The survey completed by the senior pastors and their senior leaders prior to the workshop helped with this step. The surveys provided a demographic understanding of the participants and their baseline experiences with leadership, communication, and training that allowed the workshop to be tailored to the participants’ experiences.

⁶⁴ Salas et. al, 80.

Next, it is important that the learning climate is prepared for the actual training.⁶⁵ The expectations of the training needs to be clear.⁶⁶ The overall expectations for the project was established with the project's consent form and reiterated at the start of the workshop. Once the stages of the needs analysis and preparing the learning climate are set, the following step is to examine the data collected and design the training.⁶⁷

The final stage begins with putting the knowledge and skills learned in training to work, also known as the transfer of training.⁶⁸ Unfortunately, it is one of the limitations of this Major Project. Due to the parameters of a Major Project, this project is unable to follow the senior pastors and senior leaders as they take the next step in developing trainings for their churches. While workshop participants submitted individual evaluations about the workshop, the second limitation of this project is that evaluations could not be submitted to measure the long-term effects of the training the leaders and pastors received. This final evaluation step is only something that can be done in the future. This Major Project was ultimately meant to start the conversation about a new leadership development and training process.

Final Thoughts

The positive reaction to this project encourages expanding this project to investigate what additional information can be discovered about this uncharted territory of

⁶⁵ Salas et. al, 83.

⁶⁶ Salas et. al, 83.

⁶⁷ Salas et. al, 84.

⁶⁸ Salas et. al, 84.

communication as a part of leadership development in the Black Church. This Major Project achieved what it was developed to do. It discovered the attitudes of Black Church leaders about the role of communication in leadership development. More importantly, it started the conversation about leadership and communication in the Black Church. Overall, the results from this project suggest promise for the future of senior pastors and senior leaders in the 21st century Black Church.

APPENDIX 1: SURVEY SCHEDULE FOR SENIOR PASTORS

- *What is your age?*
- *What is your gender?*
- *What is your current denomination, if any?*
- *What is your highest level of education?*
- *How long have you been pastoring?*
- *Is the role of Senior Pastor, your first senior leadership role in the Black Church?*
- *If not, what were your other senior leadership role(s) in the church and how long did you serve in them?*
- *How would you define your leadership role as senior pastor?*
- *How did you first learn about being a leader in the church?*
- *Have you undergone any structured training about being a pastor or a church leader?*
- *If yes, can you tell me more about it?*
- *Does your church offer any formal, structured training for pastors, ministers, or church leadership?*
- *How is that lived out in your church? Do you have any written materials about it? If so, are you willing to share them?*
- *What does effective leadership look like to you?*
- *How do you think that effective leadership should be measured?*
- *How do you define communication? What makes for good communication between leaders? What makes for poor communication between leaders?*
- *On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being highest), how would you measure the strength of communication between you and your senior leaders (top 3)?*
- *What do you like about it? What would you like to be better at?*

APPENDIX 2: SURVEY SCHEDULE FOR SENIOR LEADERS

17. *What is your age?*
18. *What is your gender?*
19. *What Is your current denomination if any?*
20. *What is your highest level of education?*
21. *What is your current senior leadership role?*
22. *Is this senior role, your first senior leadership role in the Black Church?*
23. *If not, what were your other senior leadership role(s) in the church and how long did you serve in them?*
24. *How would you define your leadership role?*
25. *How did you first learn about being a leader in the church?*
26. *Have you undergone any structured training about being a church leader?*
27. *If yes, can you tell me more about it?*
28. *Does your church offer any formal, structured training for pastors, ministers, or church leadership?*
29. *What does effective leadership mean to you?*
30. *How do you think that effective leadership should be measured?*
31. *On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being honest, how would you measure the strength of communication between you and your fellow senior leaders?*
32. *What do you like about it? What would you like to be better at?*

Consent to Participate in Research

On the Way to How: Church Leaders' Attitudes on Introducing Communication as a Part of Leadership Development and Training in the Black Church

Investigator

The investigator for this research project is Elder LaJeanne Grinnage, a Doctor of Ministry student at Lancaster Theological Seminary in Lancaster, PA and an ordained elder at Powerhouse Chicago where Archbishop William Hudson III is the senior pastor. If you have any questions, you can contact her at (773) 962-1567 or lgrinnage@lancasterseminary.edu.

Project Supervisor

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk with someone other than the LaJeanne Grinnage, please contact the project supervisor for this research project - Dr. Beverly Wallace. You can contact her at 404-271-2941 or revbwallace@gmail.com.

Introduction and Purpose

You are invited to participate in a research study called *On the Way to How: Church Leaders' Attitudes on Introducing Communication as a Part of Leadership Development and Training in the Black Church*. You were selected as a possible participant because you are senior pastor or senior leader in a Pilgrim Assemblies International affiliated church with experience in top-down leadership.

For this research project, the topic of leadership development and training in the Black Church with an intentional focus on the role of communication will be explored. Specifically, this project will be studying the attitudes of senior pastors and senior leaders affiliated with Pilgrim Assemblies International reformation in the Chicagoland area regarding the role of communication in leadership to create a workshop that encourages pastors and senior leaders to envision together new models of leadership and then ultimately build training programs to support their leadership teams in the future.

Procedures

Senior pastors will be contacted to complete a survey with their thoughts on communication and leadership. As the senior pastors are being contacted to participate in the project, they will be asked to provide names and contact information for their top 3 senior leaders. Based on the survey data and using data from literature, a workshop will be created for all survey participants (pastors and senior leaders) to attend to envision together new models of leadership and how to build future training programs to support them. The workshop will take place in early 2023. The exact date and location will be provided in a separate communication at a later time.

Benefits

Understanding how the role of communication is currently viewed by senior pastors and senior leaders has the potential to help build stronger relationships among senior church leadership and aid in meeting the leadership needs of the different generations of the 21st Century Black Church. Black Church pastors and their senior leaders, with the introduction of new formal training around the role of communication in leadership, would have the opportunity to imagine with their leadership teams another leadership communication style beyond the traditional authoritative approach still used by some Black churches with top-down leadership structures.

Risks/Discomforts

I do not anticipate the survey questions causing any discomfort. If you are uncomfortable at any point, you are free to decline to answer question(s).

Confidentiality

Your responses will be handled with care and kept as confidential as possible. If results of this study are published or presented, parts of your survey responses may be quoted. Yet, your individual name and other personally identifiable information will not be shared unless you give explicit permission below.

To minimize the risks to confidentiality, all survey responses and notes will be saved in password-protected files. Notes will also be saved for future research done by myself. Pseudonyms will also be used, if necessary. I will retain these records indefinitely. If you have any questions about confidentiality, please feel free to ask at any time.

Compensation

There will be no monetary compensation for taking part in this study.

Rights

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You are free to decline to take part in the project. You can decline to answer any questions and are free to stop taking part in the project at any time.

Further Questions

"This project has been reviewed and approved by the Franklin & Marshall College Institutional Review Board. Questions concerning your rights as a participant in this research may also be addressed to Marcus W. Thomsen, Professor of Chemistry, HAC 414, Old Main, marcus.thomsen@fandm.edu, (717) 358-4126.

CONSENT

You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep for your own records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in this study.

Participant's Name (*please print*)

Participant's Signature

Date

[Optional/If applicable]

If you agree to allow your name or other identifying information to be included in all final reports, publications, and/or presentations resulting from this research, please sign and date below.

Participant's Signature

Date

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