

Lancaster Theological Seminary

**Bi-vocational Ministry: What Works from the Perspective of
Bi-vocational Ministers and Their Congregants**

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Bi-vocational Ministry: What Works from the Perspective of
Bi-vocational Ministers and Their Congregants

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DEDICATION

For my wife and partner Mary Catherine.

ABSTRACT

Bi-vocational Ministry:

What Works from the Perspective of Bi-vocational Ministers and Their Congregants

This project seeks to answer the question *what is working in bi-vocational settings from the perspective of both the bi-vocational ministers and their congregants?* This is being researched to better understand how the members of churches, in conjunction with their pastors, can better use their God-given gifts in bi-vocational settings. This is significant for two reasons. The first is that more and more churches and denominations, including the more mainline white United Church of Christ (UCC) churches, are either seeking or needing bi-vocational ministers. The second is that, as churches move forward, and hopefully embrace, bi-vocational church living, they can, and oftentimes do, discover their own ministerial callings. These callings are grounded not only in the biblical tradition but also in the Reformed Tradition.

This project is qualitative in nature. It conducted a survey in which ministers and congregations who are working and serving in bi-vocational settings were asked several questions on what, how, and why certain concepts are *a success* in their church settings. This was done mostly in the Central Atlantic Conference- UCC.

This is what I tested in my surveys and interviews: the views about bi-vocational living held by both the bi-vocational minister and their congregants and how these views contributed to the success of “bi-vocationalism.” The results appear to be able to give pastors, congregations, congregants, denominations, and seminarians- especially those in the UCC- Central Atlantic Conference- a better understanding of what makes for a successful bi-vocational ministry.

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Chapter One: Introduction and Significance

The study of having a pastor with two jobs is a topic that has been an interest to me as I am bi-vocational.¹ As the need for bi-vocational ministers rises, especially in the mainline white² United Church of Christ³ churches, it is important, practically, for the life and the future of the congregation locally, and for the Church globally, to look at the viability, and even the benefit, of having ministers with two jobs. Ultimately, it is important to better understand how churches can better embrace bi-vocational living.⁴ Bi-vocational living is theologically significant as well. For, done with intention, bi-vocational ministers help the gathered community become more in touch with their gifts of ministry, not unlike that of the early Church.

There are some voices which are not in support of the bi-vocational model of ministry. One of these more recent voices is Carol Harold Hewitt. In her 2013 work titled *A Bivocational Minister Warns Against Bivocational Ministry*⁵ Hewitt cites various reasons why she is not in support of bi-vocational ministry. These reasons include a future shortage of ministers, the

¹ The study of having a pastor with two jobs is a topic that has been an interest to me as I am bi-vocational. The term *bi-vocational* is just one term to describe a pastor with two jobs. Other terms used are *tent-maker*, *bivo*, *a pastor with two jobs*, and *dual-role ministry*. This is important to note as there are *part-time* ministers who do not have another job. This project can apply to them as well, but the major thrust of this paper is for those who either chose to be bi-vocational or for those who need to be bi-vocational given their financial status.

² African-American, or “black churches” have a long history of bi-vocational ministers. This study is predominantly about “mainline” Protestant, UCC, white churches. However, there are responses and narratives from African-American bi-vocational ministers as well. In addition, two of the eleven bi-vocational ministers who responded to the survey are not UCC but ELCA and Methodist.

³ “UCC Ministry Opportunities,” accessed May 24, 2018, <http://oppsearch.ucc.org/web/fastsearch.aspx>.

⁴ I use this term bi-vocational living quite knowingly. It speaks to the possibility that churches in relationship with their pastors could embrace this together. For years churches have hired full-time ministers with the expectation in many of those settings that the minister would “do ministry” for everyone. This has led to a moving away of the early Church’s example for all of us as being called to serve (Matthew), being a part of the priesthood of all believers (Hebrews; 1 Peter, Revelation) and living into being part of the body of Christ, each with our own individual gifts as a part of said body (Corinthians). This will be discussed later in the paper.

⁵ Carol Howard Merritt, “A Bi-vocational Minister Warns Against Bi-vocational Ministry,” *The Christian Century*, accessed May 26, 2018, <https://www.christiancentury.org/blogs/archive/2013-08/bi-vocational-minister-warns-against-bi-vocational-ministry>.

financial impact on students as they try and obtain a part-time job in addition to paying for seminary training, the commitment level to ministry when one has an additional part-time job, and the belief, held by both many of the local churches and their respective denominations, that there are enough resources to support full-time ministers. Hewitt concludes that rather than turn to the reliance on part-time and/or bi-vocational ministers, the denominations and the local churches ought to look at how their resources could be better used in support of the model of the fully-paid clergy.

There may very well be reasons to look at how bi-vocational ministry may have a negative impact on the Church as a whole, and to how bi-vocational ministry may bring some unintended consequences to the Church. Yet, the need for bi-vocational ministers is on the rise. According to a 2013 Presbyterian article, over one-half of Presbyterian ministers are serving churches that cannot afford a full-time pastor.⁶ According to the Fall 2015 Statistical Report from the UCC, roughly one-quarter of the UCC pastors are bi-vocational.⁷ More recently, in looking at the UCC Employment Opportunities page, as of May 24, 2018, of the 285 job openings listed, some 99, or roughly 35%, are for part-time positions.⁸ This trend has been going on for some time. *In 1950, a congregation with 60 members attending regularly could support a full-time minister. An attendance of almost 150 is needed today to finance a full-time minister.*⁹ And, that citing was from 1980! In my conversations with Dr. Erica Dollhopf, Ph.D., the Director at the Center for Analytics, Research and Data (CARD) at the United Church of Christ, the trend towards apparent bi-vocational ministry was on the rise, albeit nominally on the

⁶ Leslie Scanlon, "Full-Time Called Pastor as an Endangered Species," The Presbyterian Outlook, accessed May 26, 2018, <https://pres-outlook.org/2013/03/full-time-called-pastor-as-an-endangered-species/>.

⁷ "Archived Reports," Fall 2015 Statistical Profile, United Church of Christ, page 38; accessed June 1, 2018, http://www.ucc.org/research_archived-reports.

⁸ The UCC site here does not delineate between part-time and bi-vocational. Only a "part-time" statistic is mentioned.

⁹ John Y. Elliott, *Our Pastor Has an Outside Job* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1980).

surface. According to Dr. Dollhopf, the 2000 FACT survey asked UCC congregations if their clergy had another, secular job. She reported that *only a subsample of congregations surveyed were asked this question, so our UCC sample here is not very big, but from 150 responses:*

- 52 (34.67%) congregations reported yes, they have clergy who work a secular job.
- 98 (65.33%) congregations reported, no they do not have clergy who work as secular job.

Dr. Dollhopf then reported: *the 2015 FACT survey asked congregations what the employment status of their clergy leader was. Of the 855 UCC congregations that responded:*

- 537 congregations (62.81%) reported their clergy leader was full-time paid.
- 7 congregations (0.82%) reported their clergy leader was full-time unpaid.
- 299 congregations (34.97%) reported their clergy leader was part-time paid.
- 12 congregations (1.40%) reported their clergy leader was part-time unpaid.¹⁰

What is important to note with these statistics is two things. The first is that no specific bi-vocational ministry question was asked, only about having a secular job (34.67%; 2000) and clergy who were working part-time (34.97%; 2015).¹¹ The second, unfortunately, is that there are no specifics for conferences or associations. What can be inferred with these statistics, nonetheless, is that some of the part-time clergy (2015) were bi-vocational and the percentage increase of bi-vocational ministers (those who also had a secular job) serving in the UCC is much higher than the small (0.30%) difference in the two statistics listed. It would be this writer's anecdotal belief that the percentage is now over 40%.

This financial reality has its impact on the overall health on the clergy as well.

According to a 2012 survey done by the National Association of Church Business

¹⁰ These statistics were sent to me via e-mail from Dr. Erica Dollhopf, dollhopfe@ucc.org, on November 26, 2018.

¹¹ There is some discrepancy here. The aforementioned statistics from the 2015 FACT sheet mentions bi-vocational statistics, yet this was not stated in these numbers.

Administration, the national average salary of a church minister is \$28,000.¹² To put a face on this amount, over 70% of ministers feel they are “grossly underpaid” which, according to at least one source, has, in part, led to 70% of ministers struggling with depression and a full 50% stating they would leave the ministry if they could.¹³ This, in turn, has led to familial struggles and the belief that about 50% of ministers starting out in their professions will not “make it” more than five years. Only one out of ten ministers will retire as a minister. As a result, in part, every year 7,000 churches close while only 4,000 new ones are being formed.¹⁴ These rather bleak statistics can be summed up by CM Barnham in his book *Should Clergymen (sic) Take to Trade*:

*Those who are able to read the signs of the times perceive that things cannot continue as they are. The conditions of religious life are changing. We are face to face with a new and healthful impatience. The demand is for a living ministry, one less redolent of musty pulpits, less fettered by antagonistic opinions and antiquated superstitions, more in touch with human wants and woes. As business men (sic) best understand how to deal with men (sic) of business, the children of light will not be worse for possessing some small acquaintance with the ways of the world. Certain considerations demand immediate attention. Unless the laity largely increase their contributions to church funds, the clergy must do something more than mere clerical work, or they must starve. Unless the clergy augment their incomes by honest labour, after the laity have done their best, one half of them must practise celibacy; howsoever enamoured they may be of poverty, it will be disgraceful to ask the women (sic) whom they love to share their destitution. Unless the clergy are allowed a free hand, many of our rural districts must revert to heathenism; it is to be feared that some places are not far removed from this even now. Most important of all, are the churches to be served by men (sic) who do openly those things of which their consciences approve, or by crafty knaves who trade with a lie in their mouths and hypocrisy in their right hands?*¹⁵

All antiquated hyperbole aside, the church needs the more positive model of bi-vocational ministers and that of bi-vocational church living. Many authors have stated how important bi-

¹² Jack Wellman, “Average Pastor Salaries in United States Churches,” *Christian Crier* (blog), December 15, 2013, accessed May 26, 2018, <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/christiancrier/2013/12/15/average-pastor-salaries-in-united-states-churches/>.

¹³ Bo Lane, “Why Do So Many Pastors Leave the Ministry? The Facts Will Shock You,” *ExPastors* (blog), January 27, 2014, accessed May 26, 2018, <http://www.expastors.com/why-do-so-many-pastors-leave-the-ministry-the-facts-will-shock-you/>.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Barham, CN, *Should clergymen (sic) take to trade?* Francis, James M.M. and Leslie J. Francis. *Tentmaking; Perspectives on Self-Supporting Ministry*, 69.

vocational ministry can be, citing advantages as they speak with bi-vocational ministers,¹⁶ along with addressing issues that will and do need to be addressed for all of those ministers involved with bi-vocational ministry.¹⁷ But few, if any, articles or books went directly to the source- to speak with those clergy and those congregants who have been working in bi-vocational settings to see what was successful in their work. This is where my study comes in. But first, some history of bi-vocational ministry and the theological significance of same.

¹⁶ There has been some work written from the perspective of or by those who have done or are doing bi-vocational ministry (for example, James Lowery Jr.'s *Case Histories of Tentmakers*- but this is from 1976).

¹⁷ Ray Gilder, "The Demands and Benefits of the Bi-vocational Minister." <http://www.lifeway.com/Article/pastor-bivocational-minister-demands-benefits>, accessed April 23, 2019.

Chapter Two: A Literature Review in the Context of This Study

Bi-vocational ministry is needed. It is needed primarily because the model of having a full-time, fully paid ordained staff person, or persons, can no longer be financially sustained in many churches in the UCC as we move forward in the 21st century. In addition, bi-vocational living may further the life of the body of Christ by encouraging lay people to exercise their gifts for ministry.

The purpose of this literature review is to give a look at what has been written on the topic of bi-vocational ministry in a sequential way beginning from around 1980 to the present. Most of the studies are descriptive and prescriptive in nature. Descriptive by pointing out the ever-increasing need for bi-vocational ministry in the Church and the ways in which bi-vocational ministers are performing their roles. The studies are also prescriptive in that they show how bi-vocational ministers could improve their ministries, what to avoid, and what to embrace. Very little has been written about the laity, prescribing how they could better embrace their role and their gifts in the bi-vocational setting. Finally, very little has been written especially on the relationship between the bi-vocational minister and the laity in their churches and how the two, together, could be more successful in their ministry.

There have been a number of works which attest to this bi-vocational concern beginning in the 1970's and continuing to today, 2018. One of the first ethnographic studies done on the topic of bi-vocational ministry was completed by James L. Lowery who wrote *Case Histories of Tentmakers* in 1976. He had what he termed fifteen full-sized studies and nine mini-histories of

interviews with bi-vocational ministers.¹⁸ The questions he asked the bi-vocational ministers were as helpful then as they are now:

1. What do you do, and how did you get into this arrangement?
2. How does your ordained state affect you in doing your secular work?
3. What have you learned from the secular setting of your job that affects ministry?
4. How does your secular job itself affect your church ministry?
5. How does being a tentmaker affect the parish church setting you are in?
6. What other conclusions would you draw about ministry from your experience?

In 1980, John Elliott wrote *Our Pastor Has an Outside Job*.¹⁹ In one of the first studies of its kind to address the growing need for bi-vocational ministers, Elliott, who uses the term "dual role" for today's more common term of "bi-vocational," performed a study titled with the acronym CODE (Clergy Occupational Development and Employment). This was completed in the years 1975-1979, and it looked at bi-vocational ministers and the local churches in the western part of New York State. Elliott points out in his project that most ministers in this dual role felt empowered by their ministry while 7% of the clergy were dissatisfied with their positions and, interestingly, the corollary that the latter had entered this role "for money reasons only."²⁰ Some of the laity were asked questions, but these were about how they felt about having a dual-role pastor, not about their gifts and their roles in the ministry of the church in which they attended. That being said, "the laity did not have the same enthusiasm as the clergy, but they approached it from a different viewpoint. They were concerned about the church, the image of

¹⁸ James L. Lowery, Jr., *Case Histories of Tentmakers* (Wilton, CT: Morehouse-Barlow Co., Inc., 1976).

¹⁹ John Y. Elliott, *Our Pastor Has an Outside Job* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1980).

²⁰ Elliott, 30.

their pastor, and that the profession would suffer. Ministers would be spread too thin and their families would suffer.”²¹

In 1988 Luther Door contributed to the definition and future direction of bi-vocational ministry with the book *The Bivocational Pastor*.²² Since then, more detailed works have usurped its usefulness, yet it is still a good read on what the definition of "tentmaker" means and the impact on the larger Church. Its enduring contribution is that of lifting up the Apostle Paul as not only the original “tentmaker” but also the original bi-vocational minister as well. As Door writes: *The testimony of research is almost universal that bi-vocationalism was the normal practice in the early church.*²³

In 1998 a book, *Tentmaking: Perspectives on Self-Supporting Ministry*, was written that is filled with all sorts of information on bi-vocational ministry in Great Britain.²⁴ The sections, each containing a chapter by different authors, are 1) Biblical Perspectives; 2) Historical Perspectives; 3) World-wide Perspectives; 4) Denominational Perspectives; 5) Social Perspectives; 6) Theological Perspectives; 7) Personal Perspectives; 8) Perspectives on Local Non-Stipendiary Ministry.

In section number eight, Vincent Strudwick wrote a chapter entitled *Local Ordained Ministry: Yesterday’s Case for Tomorrow’s Church*.²⁵ I lift up this particular chapter because my study has implications for not only bi-vocational ministers who are paid but also for those clergy for those who are not paid. Strudwick attends to the historical conflict between ministers

²¹ Elliot, 31.

²² Luther M. Door, *The Bivocational Pastor* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1988).

²³ Luther M. Door, *The Bivocational Pastor* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1988), 22.

²⁴ James M. M. Francis and Leslie J. Francis, *Tentmaking: Perspectives on Self-Supporting Ministry* (2 Southern Avenue, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 0QF: Gracewing; Fowler Wright Books, 1998).

²⁵ Vincent Strudwick, “Local Ordained Ministry: Yesterday’s Case for Tomorrow’s Church (Chapter 8.3, Pages 364-371),” in *Tentmaking: Perspectives on Self-Supporting Ministry*, ed. James M. M. Francis and Leslie J. Francis (Herefordshire, England: Gracewing; Fowler Wright Books, 1998), 436.

who were paid with those who were not as he sites another: *Allen writes, 'The stipendiary system sets the clergy over against the laity. Christians are lost sheep, utterly helpless, unless a stipendiary can be found to go to them to look after them; they are babies incapable of looking after themselves; they are spiritual paupers here in their own land.'*²⁶ This conflict, this stated infantilization of the laity by the set apart, paid clergy, is somewhat oppressive. Anne Rowthorn points this out on page 24 of her book *The Liberation of the Laity*:

*It took hundreds of years for the Church to become clericalized, and the present generation of clergy cannot be blamed for the ills of the institution they inherited. To continue to oppress the laity, however, after having become aware of the oppression would make them blameworthy. Also, to say that the clergy have stifled the laity does not mean the former are any way bad people. Indeed, many clergy feel there is much wrong with the institutionalized Church, but they are at a loss to know what to do about it. They do not realize that in depersonalizing the laity they also have become depersonalized. The clericalization of the Church is a problem for all Christians.*²⁷

Bi-vocational ministry, along with bi-vocational living, can help move the Church to a less oppressive place for the laity by encouraging the use of the lay members gifts and talents. It may also free the clergy as well. Consequently, and maybe truly out of necessity, bi-vocational living may help the local church better embrace the concept of the “priesthood of all believers.”

In 1999, a book was written by Steve Clapp, Ron Finney, and Angela Zimmerman titled *Preaching, Planning, and Plumbing*.²⁸ This book appears to be some sort of transition in the literature as the authors did attend to the laity in their important role(s) in bi-vocational ministry. As is stated in the introduction: *We hope people from many different backgrounds will be reading this introduction and the pages which follow. This book is about ministry- not only the*

²⁶ Vincent Strudwick, “Local Ordained Ministry: Yesterday’s Case for Tomorrow’s Church (Chapter 8.3, pages 364-371),” 369, in *Tentmaking: Perspectives on Self-Supporting Ministry*, ed. James M. M. Francis and Leslie J. Francis (Herefordshire, England: Gracewing; Fowler Wright Books, 1998), 436.

²⁷ Anne Rowthorn, *The Liberation of the Laity*: (Wipf & Stock Pub, 2000).

²⁸ Steve Clapp, *Preaching, Planning, & Plumbing: The Implications of Bivocational Ministry for the Church and for You*, Christian Community Resources (Fort Wayne, Ind. (6404 S. Calhoun Street, Fort Wayne, Ind. 46807: Christian Community, 1999).

*ministry of persons who have been trained and licensed or ordained for set-apart work but also the ministry of all people who a part of the body of Christ.*²⁹

Clapp et al. appear to have begun this work only to be looking at bi-vocational ministers but *in the process of learning more about bi-vocational ministry, we repeatedly found ourselves dealing with questions like, ‘what is ministry’? What do we really mean by the ‘priesthood of all believers,’ a concept accepted by most mainline Protestant and Anabaptist churches? What does bi-vocational ministry teach us both about the set-apart ministry and about the ministry to which all people are called? How can people be helped to better identify and understand their spiritual gifts which they have received and determine how to use them in Christ’s service?*³⁰ Wow. This is speaking to my project. Of note, why has this work not been cited by the other books I have read on bi-vocational ministry?³¹

In attempting to attest to the laity side of bi-vocational living, Clapp et al. developed a *Spiritual Gifts Assessment* tool, consisting of 91 statements (e.g., *I am willing to accept responsibility for organizations or groups that lack a clear sense of direction or leadership*) which would help both the bi-vocational ministers and their congregants better embrace ministry together.³² This study was done within the Church of the Brethren. It did include a few statements the laity had given to the study but seemed to fall short in the end with its brevity of the laity’s input. This was done, it would appear, to attempt to answer the “laity question” only well after the work had been started. My study, on the other hand, attempted to include both the “set-part” ministers and the laity from the outset. It will also be done within the United Church

²⁹ Clapp, 7.

³⁰ Clapp, 7-8.

³¹ I did not find a citation of this source in all the books I have on bi-vocational ministry.

³² Clapp, 37-43. More about this Assessment Tool will be discussed in Chapter Nine and can be found in Appendix II.

of Christ for the most part. Nonetheless, this is an important work in the development of the field and ought to be included as an example in the work on bi-vocational ministry. In fact, it is lifted up in Chapter Nine.

Of late, many web articles, blogs, and journal articles have been written which speak to the pluses and the minuses of bi-vocational ministry, along with some of the changes in the field. For example, Leslie Scanlon, in his article *Full-Time Called Pastor as an Endangered Species*, writes about the growing need for bi-vocational ministers.³³ Philip Duncanson, in his article *The Bi-Vocational Pastor*, wonders if following Paul's example of bi-vocationalism is good or bad. He eventually sides on both; namely, that it depends on the situation. In other words, bi-vocational ministry can be a good thing as long as you attend to some things like learning a trade, being able to delegate work in the church, not neglecting one's personal and family needs, and having faith in God before choosing to become a bi-vocational minister.³⁴ And, Thom S. Rainer, in his article *Eight Characteristics of the New Bi-Vocational Pastor*, discusses "marketplace ministers" and sets these "new" bi-vocational ministers apart from the more "traditional" bi-vocational minister-whom he defines as someone serving in said capacity because the local church cannot afford a full-time pastor.³⁵ These marketplace ministers have certain characteristics which I believe are important for all bi-vocational ministers whether "new" or "traditional." Some of these characteristics include having good leadership skills, having a capacity for high work volume, having longer tenures in their church, and having an ability to deal with criticism. Rainer believes this move to a "newer" bi-vocational minister is a healthy one. I propose this belief on

³³ Leslie Scanlon, "Full-Time Called Pastor as an Endangered Species," *The Presbyterian Outlook*, accessed May 26, 2018, <https://pres-outlook.org/2013/03/full-time-called-pastor-as-an-endangered-species/>.

³⁴ Philip Duncanson, "The Bi-Vocational Pastor," *The Front Porch*, October 12, 2016, <http://thefrontporch.org/2016/10/the-bi-vocational-pastor/>.

³⁵ Thom S. Rainer, "Eight Characteristics of the New Bi-Vocational Pastor," *LifeWay Pastors*, January 18, 2016, <https://www.lifeway.com/pastors/2018/01/26/eight-characteristics-new-bi-vocational-pastor/>, accessed April 23, 2019.

his part also implies that he believes these characteristics contribute to a “successful” bi-vocational ministry.³⁶ To which I would concur.

Four of the main book authors, as opposed to web article writers, who have attended most recently to the topic of bi-vocational ministry are Dennis Bickers, Anthony G. Pappas, Mark Edington, and Robert LaRochelle. They will be my main study partners as the survey is instituted and interpreted. All four have built on the current literature of bi-vocational ministry and have added, one way or another, to the topic. The first two authors tend to the mechanics and the stresses of bi-vocational ministry, while the latter two tend more to what it means to be “successful” in bi-vocational settings. Let’s begin with Bickers.

Bickers has written several works beginning in the year 2000. In that year he wrote a book titled *The Tentmaking Pastor: The Joy of Bivocational Ministry*.³⁷ In this work, he speaks to both the joys and to the problem areas of bi-vocational ministry. As one of the leading authors on the topic of bi-vocational ministry, he offers the reader a concise explanation of the various themes of this type of ministry- from the need for balance in the ministers’ life, to the involvement of the laity, to asking if bi-vocational ministry is the right calling for a minister interested in such a role. It is a helpful book for anyone thinking about bi-vocational ministry in that he describes both the joys and the pitfalls of bi-vocational ministry.

Then, in 2007, Bickers wrote another work titled *The Work of the Bivocational Minister*.³⁸ After repeating some of what he discussed in 2000, he added to the topic with his understanding of the various settings of bi-vocational ministry, his understanding of the life in a typical week of a bi-vocational minister, his understanding to how bi-vocational ministry impacts

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Dennis W Bickers, *The Tentmaking Pastor; The Joy of Bivocational Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000).

³⁸ Dennis W Bickers, *The Work of the Bivocational Minister* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 2007).

the church, and how, especially, to his understanding of how various denominations are addressing this growing need. The denominations discussed in this work are the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), the American Baptist Churches (ABC), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the Church of the Nazarene, the Presbyterian Church (USA), and the Emergent Church. He stated the ways in which these denominations were attending to the growing need for the training of bi-vocational ministers, yet there was little mention to how denominations were attending to also educating the laity to become better partners for their bi-vocational ministers and their bi-vocational living. This is something my study unpacks.

In 2009, Bickers moved his focus to now include the experiences of the congregants. Quoting Kyllne Snodgrass, *We expect too much and the wrong kinds of things from pastors, much of which should be done by other church members.*³⁹ He now added being “missional” to his definition of the bi-vocational ministerial role. This moved him to write, *Rather than focus on pastoral care, missional churches understand that congregational care is more the biblical model. If the pastor is expected to provide all of the caring ministries in the church, it should not be surprising that the church is unable to grow. There are only so many people one person can care for. However, if the congregation accepts the responsibility for caring for one another, there is no limit to the growth potential of the church.*⁴⁰

³⁹ Dennis W. Bickers, *Intentional Ministry in a Not-so-Mega Church: Becoming a Missional Community*, ebook (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Publishing House, 2009), 19.
<https://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzU2MTUwN19fQU41?sid=93c35b14-5864-4657-912f-ba06cfc20f4d@sessionmgr102&vid=0&format=EB&rid=1>.

⁴⁰ Dennis W. Bickers, *Intentional Ministry in a Not-so-Mega Church: Becoming a Missional Community*, ebook (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Publishing House, 2009), 19.
<https://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzU2MTUwN19fQU41?sid=93c35b14-5864-4657-912f-ba06cfc20f4d@sessionmgr102&vid=0&format=EB&rid=1>.

In 2013, Bickers gives an updated discussion on bi-vocational ministry in his work.⁴¹ In addition to understanding bi-vocational ministry as he did in his previous books, he adds a discussion on the role of coaching in bi-vocational ministry. He believes that, with the help of coaching, bi-vocational ministers can better hone their craft. This is seen in the following quote:

This led to my decision in 2009 to do my Doctor of Ministry Project on coaching bivocational ministers for greater ministry effectiveness. My thesis was that coaching could be a useful tool for denominational leaders to use with their bivocational ministers. As a coach, one does not need to be an expert on bivocational ministry to be able to serve those ministering in that capacity.

This is interesting as this writer believes that, even though coaching by denominational leaders of bi-vocational ministers could help, nowhere does Bickers write about how bi-vocational ministers could themselves become “coaches” as a model to what he names as the missional church- something this writer thinks is needed. In fact, it is what is needed for bi-vocational ministers to be successful in their craft.

In addition to the role of coaching, Bickers speaks to the growing reality of the bi-vocational interim pastor, a topic which has had little attention.⁴² Also, his section on family challenges and the role of coaching to address same is especially salient.

In addition to Bickers, Pappas brings personal and practical insights to the discussion. In Pappas’ chapter *Four Myths About Bivocational Ministry* from his 2002 edited volume *Inside the Small Church*, he relied on interviews, exposes false claims, or four “myths”, made about bi-vocational ministers as they do their work. These are myth #1: “If only I had gone to seminary, I

⁴¹ Dennis Bickers, *The Art and Practice of Bivocational Ministry: A Pastor’s Guide*, Kindle (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 2013).

⁴² This is a good point. Interim ministry is a calling with needed skills. The interim minister training, offered by various denominations, is well worth the time and money. My first two calls were to interim positions. In the process of working those calls, I attended the first of two weeks of interim training at Princeton Theological Seminary. As I worked that week, I can remember telling myself “this is a training all ministers should have,” as it spoke to the concepts of organizational structures, Bowen Systems theory, conflict management and the like. All of these things would be helpful for the bi-vocational minister as well.

would be a better pastor.” Myth #2: “If only I were more committed, I would be a full-time pastor.” Myth #3: “If only I were a good pastor, our church would grow.” And, myth #4: “If only I had more time to give to pastoring, more would get done.”⁴³ This is important as it puts a face on the potential negative impact bi-vocational ministry can have on said ministers. He encourages the Church to value these ministers more as they are faced with particular stressors—the stress of having two jobs and feeling at times they are not doing ministry as well as they could if they were in a full-time pastorate, etc.

In 2002, Loren Mead gave a very useful “you can do it” to small churches. In Chapter 10, “Few Members, Many Gifts”, of the book *Inside the Small Church*,⁴⁴ Mead speaks to the many gifts the small church can bring to not only to its local setting but also to larger churches and denominations as well. In fact, he cites examples of how smaller churches, because of their need to have more involved laity, have contributed and sent many members to the ministry of the larger Church over the years. This is something he claims is usually not done in larger churches as the paid staff members traditionally do most of the ministries.

Building on earlier studies of clergy, more recent works have more readily recognized the importance of the congregation and have coined the term “bi-vocational congregation.” In a 2009 article,⁴⁵ Pappas writes about how the bi-vocational congregation offers a viable model for tomorrow's church. He makes some assumptions as he does. He writes,

⁴³ Anthony G. Pappas, “Four Myths About Bivocational Pastoring (Chapter 7),” in *Inside the Small Church*, ed. Anthony G. Pappas (The Alban Institute, 2002), 237.

⁴⁴ Loren B. Mead, “Few Members, Many Gifts (Chapter 10),” in *Inside the Small Church*, ed. Anthony G. Pappas (The Alban Institute, 2002), 237.

⁴⁵ Anthony C Pappas, Ed Pease, and Norm Faramelli, “The Bivocational Congregation: Tomorrow’s Church?” *Congregations* 35, no. 1 (2009): 11–15, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=sso&db=rft&AN=ATLA0001698666&site=eds-live&custid=s9005776>. (It is interesting to note here that this article has Pappas’ middle initial listed as “C.” As I have been unable to find another Pappas, it is my belief that this is a typographical error: this is the Anthony G. found throughout the literature.)

we begin with the initial premise that a bivocational congregation is a local church that operates upon (and may even self-consciously understand) two callings: the first is the calling of function and the second is the calling of mission. We believe the bivocational congregation is more likely to survive into tomorrow to do God's will and be God's people because it is essentially organized around spiritual realities in tune with God's redemptive work. These include: 1) healthy team functioning; 2) a high commitment to place and to being a ministering presence in that place; 3) a willingness to die to self, if need be, in the cause of serving others; 4) an acceptance of this expression of the church as a full expression of the church, not a second-rate, temporary, expedient form of the church; 5) a willingness to experiment and trust that a higher power has something wonderful in store for tomorrow.

Five case studies were conducted to make his points. A good, short article filled with a lot of information. My project builds on these case studies adding information on real-life churches who are doing or need to be doing this type of calling.

As much as Bickers and Pappas contributed to the groundwork of understanding the mechanics and stresses of bi-vocational ministry, it is those who define what “success” means who now provide momentum going forward. These authors, as mentioned above, are Edington and LaRochelle.

LaRochelle, a UCC author, wrote a book in 2010 titled *Part-Time Pastor Full-Time Church*.⁴⁶ Most striking about this work are its concrete suggestions to what the definition of "success" looks like. LaRochelle offers the following as a framework for “success” with the part-time or bi-vocational minister: pastoral needs are being met, the church sees and feels the minister's interest in the church, the church feels a positive energy in the life of the congregation, and the minister feels supported by the congregants. He goes out of his way to point out to congregations to be wary of the idea of "success" as being seen only in terms of “money” or “numbers.” Instead, he wants the reader to also notice “success” in terms of things like a good mix of ages in worship, the varieties of music offered, and a willingness for the congregants to

⁴⁶ Robert LaRochelle, *Part-Time Pastor Full-Time Church* (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2010).

express their talents and their gifts. He also speaks to the intentionality of bi-vocational mainline ministers vis-a-vis the more evangelical explanation of same: bi-vocationalism is not something to engage in in order to witness and to then, possibly, convert others in the non-church employment setting. Rather, it is being done for the benefit of the minister, his family, and the church in which he or she is serving. This is not to say that there should not, or will not, be times when the minister will be approached in a pastoral need way in the “other job,” but the intentionality of this ought to be monitored.

The most current work I have found on the definition of “success” in bi-vocational ministry is a 2018 book by Edington titled *Bivocational: Returning to the Roots of Ministry*. I love Edington. He makes it real.

Edington discusses leadership styles in bi-vocational ministry.⁴⁷ He claims that “success” can be best described as the clergy person eliciting an emphatic “yes” to the laity being empowered and embracing their skills and their gifts for ministry.⁴⁸ As he states:

In my visits with faith communities living out a bi-vocational pastorate, I observed one consistent leadership skill that distinguished ordained ministers thriving in the role: the ability to get others to say “yes.” There are a lot of ways of describing this skill—empowering the laity, lifting up the skills and gifts of all members of the community, mutual ministry—but no matter how it’s labeled, it boils down to being able to get others to step up and take their part in the shared work of ministry.⁴⁹

Saying “yes” is a key component to successful bi-vocational living. Again, this is what I tested in my surveys and interviews- the relationship between the bi-vocational minister and their

⁴⁷ Mark D. W. Edington, *Bi-vocational: Returning to the Roots of Ministry*, Kindle (New York: Church Publishing, 2018).

⁴⁸ This has been my model as well. I was a part of a new church start in 2004, beginning then, and remaining today as bi-vocational. It has been my practice to say “yes” to the laity- whatever they want, given some realities. Amen to the “yes.”

⁴⁹ Mark D. W. Edington, *Bi-vocational: Returning to the Roots of Ministry*, Kindle (New York: Church Publishing, 2018), Kindle Locations 610-614.

congregants. Specifically, how this relationship can, or cannot, evolve to make bi-vocationalism a success. Saying “yes” appears to be key.

Bi-vocational ministers have a lot of information they can access to better understand their roles. Very little information, let alone survey and ethnographic studies, are available for the laity vis-a-vis their relationship with their pastors and the gifts they each bring to the proverbial table. This is the purpose of my study: to bring some insights from and to the laity to the topic of bi-vocational ministry in the Church. It is my hope this study will be made available to congregations, to denominations, and to the larger Church. In so doing, a better understanding of bi-vocational living may be accomplished as clergy and the laity move forward together in their work.

Chapter Three: The Historical and Theological Significance

Much has been written on the history of bi-vocational ministry. It is not something new.⁵⁰ In fact, the apostle Paul was considered a *tent-maker*. *Tent-maker* is a term used to describe what Paul did for a living outside of the preaching and teaching of the gospel.

According to Luther M. Door, in his book *The Bivocational Minister*:

*A bi-vocational minister today needs a secular skill that is portable and marketable. Tentmaking was such a skill for Paul. Tentmaking probably included many kinds of work. It has been suggested that tentmaking could mean: 1. Permanent tent homes for use by families; 2. Portable tents for use by soldiers or people who traveled long journeys; 3. Umbrellas for use in the caravans to provide protection from the sun; 4. Hangings or curtains for use in theaters; 5. Weavings of all sorts from the goat's hair or other materials. Paul could do this kind of work on his own schedule with freedom to manage his time as he saw fit.*⁵¹

Now, it is important to understand some of the historical context here. Bi-vocational ministry is in the context of how church is being done. The early church, up until at least the Third Century, did not have a hierarchical view of organizational functioning. It was more horizontal, with the first communities being organized around who could contribute what gift to the functioning of the gathered community. In a sense, those who taught, those who presided over communion, and those who did “whatever” for the community were considered on equal par with everyone else. It was not until after the third century when a demarcation happened, whereby a separation between the “clergy” and the laity occurred and a move away from bi-vocational ministry occurred. According to Cooke,

In the earliest decades of Christianity, the functions of Christian ministry seem to have been for the most part a less than full-time occupation. Even some apostles who gave up a settled situation of employment and journeyed from community to community did, as

⁵⁰ Vincent Strudwick, “Local Ordained Ministry: Yesterday’s Case for Tomorrow’s Church (Chapter 8.3, Pages 364-371),” in *Tentmaking: Perspectives on Self-Supporting Ministry*, ed. James M. M. Francis and Leslie J. Francis (Herefordshire, England: Gracewing; Fowler Wright Books, 1998), 436.

⁵¹ Luther M. Door, *The Bivocational Pastor* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1988), 11.

Paul indicates about himself, spend part of their time in other work. This situation was one, however, that started to disappear as the common pattern as soon as the size of Christianity and the complexity of its community life developed. Increasingly, the responsibility of bishops and deacons tended to absorb their full attention; more and more presbyters were drawn into this same kind of full-time ecclesiastical employment. By the end of the third century there is, at least in the more populous sections of the Christian world, an established pattern of clergy who are already seen as "official" Christians in contrast to the remainder of the faithful.⁵²

This is important as those who might argue against bi-vocational ministry can now see that the use of bi-vocational ministers was around at the inception of the Church.⁵³

Why is this historical understanding important? First and foremost, it is important because the assumption, although challenged, has been for centuries that the clergy have been and are “more Christian” or “more holy” than the laity. The resultant consequences of this being that the laity have not been, let alone felt, in many churches and denominations, empowered to “minister” in ways the Bible has encouraged. In fact, bi-vocational living opens up an opportunity for the laity to become more involved with the ministries of their respective churches. Secondly, with the enactment of an ordained class, if you will, the Church has forgotten or supplanted the early Christian communities’ idea of community. As Cooke, a Roman Catholic, states: *recent ‘discovery’ of the priesthood and ministry possessed by the Christian people as a whole makes it quite obvious that the specialized ministry exercised by the ordained cannot be studied in isolation. Rather, theologians of every Christian church are faced with the task of distinguishing- if that is possible- the functions of ordained ministers from those of the entire community.*⁵⁴ This is true for not only Roman Catholics but for Protestants in the Christian Church as well. For, despite the latter’s institutional inclinations and attempts to

⁵² Bernard Cooke, *Ministry to Word and Sacraments; History and Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 63-64.

⁵³ Luther M. Door, *The Bivocational Pastor* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1988), 21-27.

⁵⁴ Cooke (1976), 23. That being said, it is important to inquire about this distinguishment. Why cannot lay members of a Christian community preside over communion? Why could they not perform baptisms?

address same, there has still been an *a priori* separation of authority between the “ordained” and the laity. Again, this appeared to be something my study pointed out, especially in regard to the future of bi-vocational living and the responses of this growing trend in the denominations and seminaries. In other words, churches out of necessity may need to be empowered by the denominations to take up tasks and functions heretofore completely primarily by the ordained clergy.

This is important as there will be push back to my thesis that bi-vocational ministry has much to offer the modern church; some of the full-time ministers may view my positive spin on bi-vocational ministry as being a helpful empowerment process for the laity as a threat to their positions. That is not my intent. Rather, the historical understanding of the Christian community vis-à-vis the clergy is useful in order to see hope in the current crisis of decline in the mainline, white Protestant church. In fact, one might even argue that the move and the need towards bi-vocational ministry is an opportunity for the Church to move into a time where all are expected to contribute to the ministries of the Church. A crisis can be an opportunity for growth. This growth can also be seen as an opportunity for all members of the local church to embrace the various ministerial functions of being a gathered community.

This is where this study comes in. I attempted to discover the themes, concepts, and attitudes gleaned from several bi-vocational ministers and their congregants which make for a successful bi-vocational ministry as well as bi-vocational living. This is what I tested in my surveys and interviews- the relationship between the bi-vocational minister and their congregants as being an important variable for the success of bi-vocationalism. In doing so, the benefits of having a bi-vocational minister appear to extend beyond that of helping to fill a financial gap. As I have mentioned before, this may be an opportunity for the Church to move closer to its

roots. The model itself may turn out to be one where a bi-vocational minister will be better able to lead a congregation, with the help of the Spirit, in doing ministry and embodying the Gospel into the Twenty-First century.

There is theological leverage⁵⁵ for this idea of the Spirit's work vis-à-vis the wider community. This can be best found in four places in the biblical text, in no particular order. The first is found in Hebrews where the author(s) are writing about the priesthood. The second is found in Matthew, where all are called to be servants. The third can be found in 1 Peter and in Revelation where the *priesthood of all believers* is found. And the fourth is found in the writings of Paul when he discusses the role and function of the various members in the church with his body metaphor. I will begin with Paul in his letters.

As Paul writes in his first letter to the Corinthians (12:12-27; NRSV):

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. ¹⁴ Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵ If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many members, yet one body. ²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²² On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; ²⁴ whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, ²⁵ that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. ²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

⁵⁵ I borrow this term "theological leverage" from my thesis advisor Dr. David Mellott. He used this phrase in a recent (May 2018) D.Min. class where a mock major project presentation was being done.

I love this passage in that it lifts up all people in the gathered community. In fact, Paul even writes in verse 24b: *but God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member*. If this is indeed the case, then why have the clergy been lifted up over that of the laity?

The clergy have been lifted up for any number of reasons: from ecclesiastical power to the need for leadership in the church. But, again, this was not something the early Church did. Chalk it up to the institutionalization of the church, but the earliest forms of the “ordained clergy” were those whose particular gifts could help others discover their gifts in the gathered community. Think of it as a coach, my operative metaphor for ministry. A coach, let’s say on a football team, leads and guides the individual positions on said team to working together in a cohesive whole. Is the coach more important than the quarterback? Is the quarterback more important than the center? No, of course not- it just so happens the coach has particular skills in helping the team by helping the quarterback and the center discover their talents and gifts. As Paul Bernier points out in his book *Ministry in the Church; A Historical and Pastoral Approach*, when discussing the idea that ministry belongs to all and not just a select few:

*Where does the ordained or ministerial priesthood fit in this scheme of things? In this model, ministerial priesthood is understood as service to the common priesthood, and it needs to be rethought accordingly. The leadership exercised by the presbyterate in the church is to encourage and make possible the activity of the laity. This is a work of liberation that is long overdue. All should rejoice in being able to reverse having kept the laity as a passive flock for so long in favor of their active involvement in the work of Christ.*⁵⁶

The clergy are gifted to help the laity discover their gifts. Together, a church is born. But this has not always been the case. The clergy have at times been a stumbling block to helping the laity discover their gifts. As such, Bernier squarely puts the blame on the leadership

⁵⁶ Paul Bernier, *Ministry in the Church; A Historical and Pastoral Approach*, Fourth Printing (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications; A Division of Bayard, 2003), 281.

in the church. But those “ordained” only need to go to the Bible for a deeper understanding of how they have faltered, especially to the example found in Jesus.

Jesus never ordained anyone. Nor, did it appear he himself was ordained by the religious structures of his day. It is true that Jesus was called “rabbi” in a number of places in the New Testament,⁵⁷ but this appears to more of an informal title, one without formal authority. For example, in Mark 11:27 Jesus’ religious *bona fides*, his credentials, were questioned: *And they came again to Jerusalem. And as he was walking in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to him, and they said to him, ‘By what authority are you doing these things, or who gave you this authority to do them?’*” So, even Jesus himself was not some sort of “special clergy” of his day. The whole Church ought to pause, meditate, and discuss this biblical reality in the light of bi-vocational living.

It is true that Jesus was once called “a high priest” in the book of Hebrews 4:14-16 (NRSV):

¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. ¹⁶ Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

But, as Bernier points out, this was done by the author of Hebrews to point out that Jesus redefined the concept of the priesthood itself.⁵⁸ He constantly broke barriers and here the barrier of the priest being set apart from the laity was set aside.

⁵⁷ See Mark 9:5, 14:45; John 1:38, 3:2, 20:16.

⁵⁸ Paul Bernier, *Ministry in the Church; A Historical and Pastoral Approach*, Fourth Printing (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications; A Division of Bayard, 2003), page 13. He discussed this here very well. On page 13 he writes, *also with only one exception, no New Testament book refers to Jesus himself as a priest. He was not one of the priestly class, and never performed cultic actions in the temple in his own lifetime. The Letter to the Hebrews is the one exception in calling Jesus a priest; but it does so only to point out that his “priesthood” is so unique as to force a redefinition of the concept itself. His death itself was a public execution, a most unholy event. By it, Jesus broke the barrier separating the sacred from the profane.*

In this work of Jesus found in Hebrews, we can see the groundwork for the concept of the “priesthood of all believers” borne out for our purposes during the Reformation of the sixteenth century.⁵⁹ This is seen primarily in two places: 1 Peter and Revelation. In 1 Peter (2:5-9; NRSV) we read:

⁵ like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For it stands in scripture: “See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.” ⁷ To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner,” ⁸ and “A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall.” They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. ⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

In Revelation 1:5-6 we read (NRSV):

⁵ and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶ and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

And, in Revelation 5:9-10, we read (NRSV):

⁹ They sing a new song: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slaughtered and by your blood you ransomed for God saints from every tribe and language and people and nation; ¹⁰ you have made them to be a kingdom and priests serving our God, and they will reign on earth.

What do these two books say? They both point out to the Church that the concept of “priest” is extended to all; that all can be called to ministers in the Church. That in the life and work of Jesus, there is not a necessary human mediator between God and the people. That each of us, as a part of the Christian community are viewed as “priestly” by God and, as such, ought to be

⁵⁹ I say this here as the concept of “the priesthood of all believers” is not something only Protestants can claim; the Roman Catholic church has been wrestling with its meaning for some time- they too have wrestled, and still do, with the role of the laity on the life and the work of the ministries of the church.

treated as such. The mediator is now, and maybe always has been, found in our hearts and found in the presence of the Spirit, of the Living Christ.

Now, one might ask at this point, “why do we even need the ordained clergy?” This is a fair question but speaks to the crux of my study. Gifts are given to the various members of the gathered community and the clergy possess gifts they have been given via their theological education. These gifts are ones which speak to leadership, coaching, and educating the laity to their God-given gifts. The difficult concept here is that their gifts, in the bi-vocational setting, need to not be viewed as somehow “above” those of the laity. They also need to not be considered only in the traditional idea of Word and Sacrament. Rather, the clergy are those in the community who can identify, encourage, and support all the members’ gifts for the benefit and greater functioning of the community. It is a servanthood mentality, not a mentality which speaks to be “greater” than the next.

This brings me to my final biblical support for bi-vocational living, in the context of both the “ordained” and the laity, can be found in the book of Matthew, especially when Jesus is discussing his way of servanthood (20:20-28; NRSV):

²⁰ Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to him with her sons, and kneeling before him, she asked a favor of him. ²¹ And he said to her, “What do you want?” She said to him, “Declare that these two sons of mine will sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom.” ²² But Jesus answered, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?” They said to him, “We are able.” ²³ He said to them, “You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left, this is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.” ²⁴ When the ten heard it, they were angry with the two brothers. ²⁵ But Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. ²⁶ It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; ²⁸ just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

Servanthood is an important theological concept to keep in mind in bi-vocationalism. For in bi-vocational living, both the bi-vocational minister and the laity are called to serve one another and the larger community. Jesus points out in many places how the power structures of his day, and ours, are to be turned upside down. This is an important concept as the Church moves through this time of seismic change. For maybe, as the clergy and the laity revisit and embrace this servant mentality together, new life will be breathed into the local church.

Chapter Four: The Study

This is where my study comes in. My goal was to find bi-vocational ministers and their congregants and ask them a series of questions and inquiries. These questions and inquiries helped tease out what works and what does not work in bi-vocational settings. Again, I am doing this as there is little information available which looks at this relationship.⁶⁰ I am also making a couple of assumptions. The first is that most UCC- Central Atlantic Conference churches who are entertaining the idea of hiring a bi-vocational minister are doing so out of a perceived need, motivated by scarcity; in other words, they do not have enough money to continue to pay for a full-time minister. The second assumption is that, given enough time, congregations will be able to see that having a bi-vocational minister can move them from a place of scarcity to a place of abundance and that they will be able to be a better church in the context of the “priesthood of all believers.”

I began this study by first obtaining approval from my Major Project Proposal Committee and Lancaster Theological Seminary. Next, approval was obtained from the IRB (Institutional Review Board) for *The Study* below.

My initial “ask” was for the Conference to send out, in their weekly e-mail *Happenings*, the following statement:

As many of you know, the churches in the UCC are increasingly reliant on part-time and/or bi-vocational ministers. I am doing an exciting project for my Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) degree via Lancaster Theological Seminary. The project is taking a look at the topic of bi-vocational ministers and the churches they serve. Specifically, I would like to discover what makes for a “successful” bi-vocational living relationship with said pastors and their congregants in those UCC churches within the Central Atlantic Conference (CAC). This will be done by an initial survey and then by follow up

⁶⁰ Please see Chapter 2- A Literature Review in the Context of This Study.

interviews. If you are serving in a bi-vocational capacity, and would be willing to complete a survey, please e-mail me at dlundquist@lancasterseminary.edu with your contact information. Please also pass this message on to anyone you know who is serving bi-vocationally within the CAC of the UCC. Thank you for your service in this exciting, yet fearful, time of change in the Church.

Peace,

The Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist, pastor, Grace United Church of Christ, Flemington, NJ

A number of clergy responded to this inquiry but I felt more respondents were needed. So, in consultation with my advisor, another avenue was sought. As a result, in addition to the *Happenings* e-mail, the same statement was put on a UCC-Clergy Facebook page, with a couple of more respondents being obtained from there.

With these clergy participants email addresses, a survey (see below), via *Survey Monkey*, was sent out to them to complete. One of the final inquiries on the survey was for them to respond to being open to a follow up interview. If the pastors agreed to a follow up interview, it was then, and only then, that I asked if they would be willing to reach out to their lay leadership and inquire if they would be willing to fill out the survey as well. I also asked, in this follow up interview, questions of further exploration that were formulated from themes that came through on their initial survey. All necessary and appropriate releases were obtained.

The congregants of these pastors were also asked on their survey if they would be willing to participate in a follow up interview. If so, and if pursued, the questions asked of them would also be ones of further exploration which were formulated from the themes of their initial survey. Both the survey questions and the follow up interview questions are listed on subsequent pages of this chapter.

The initial goal was to obtain at least twenty clergy and their concomitant lay leaders. Eleven clergy were ultimately found with six follow up interviews completed. There were ten

lay leaders who responded to the survey, coming from two churches. The survey consists of nineteen questions/inquiries total. Each survey question was on one page to not have the reader feel too overwhelmed by seeing the next question or inquiry. The follow up interviews were recorded either in person or over the telephone with an independent voice device, with names deleted or changed to protect anonymity. The verbatims of the surveys and the interviews are listed in their entirety in Appendix I.

What was discovered from these surveys and interviews are what will be delineated in the next chapters. Again, my goal is to study and coordinate what the clergy and the lay leaders felt and/ or believed was “successful” in their bi-vocational life together. The “marks” of a “successful” bi-vocational life will be a combination of what is working in the local church setting with what has been considered “successful” in the current literature.

The survey for both the bi-vocational ministers and the lay leaders contained the following questions and inquiries:

THE QUESTIONS

(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upsides(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking "yes" you are willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking "no" you will be brought out of the survey.)

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church?
- The address of your church?

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name.
- Your e-mail address.
- Your phone number.

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lancasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

THE FOLLOW UP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions- Pastor

1. Can you tell me about how you became a bi-vocational minister?
2. Can you tell me how being a bi-vocational minister has impacted the ministries here at this church?

3. Can you tell me now your “other job” has influenced you as a bi-vocational minister?
4. Is there anything else you would like to share?
5. Would you be willing to have leaders of your church fill out the survey as well?
6. If so, would it be better to have you send the link to them or for you to give me the e-mail addresses, so I can send the link?

Interview Questions- Member/ Lay Leader

1. Can you tell me about how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister?
2. Can you tell me how having a bi-vocational minister has impacted the ministries here at your church?
3. Is there anything else you would like to share?

It is also important to note that, wherever possible, names and identifying markers were replaced with initials in order to maintain confidentiality. Now, for the study results.

Chapter Five: What Works for the Bi-vocational Minister or for Someone Considering Bi-vocational Ministry

There are a number of themes that appear out of my study which seem to speak to the success to the work of the bi-vocational minister and affirm bi-vocational living. The first is having the desire to be bi-vocational. The second is the reality of money. The third is owning and valuing “the other job” as a part of the bi-vocational life of the church. And the fourth is cultivating an ability to be available to the needs of the congregation, like visitation.

The ministers in my study who chose to be bi-vocational appeared to be more at ease and mature in their roles. They found that working full-time in a church was not something they wanted to do, with one minister choosing to pursue bi-vocationalism from the start of their⁶¹ process. In fact, they viewed it as rather limiting to their calls. They felt that having a job outside of the church not only was more life-giving to them as individuals but also brought positive energy into the life of the church. Those ministers who became bi-vocational because the local church could no longer pay the minister a full-time salary or because the only positions available were part-time did not view bi-vocationalism as a benefit to the church or to themselves. They had a negative view of bi-vocationalism because it was not a role they had initially desired. It was also something that then forced them to find another job, another variable they had not anticipated in their calls as ministers.

This reality of “being called” to bi-vocational ministry is a key variable for the bi-vocational minister. Many who chose to be bi-vocational do so because they want to serve in another job.

⁶¹ As part of trying to keep confidentiality, the use of “he, she, him, her” will not be done. Rather, the gender-neutral term “their” will be used throughout these chapters.

This was something which was reported as a good thing, even a mark, for the bi-vocational minister. As one minister stated,

So, going into bi-vocational ministry, it's how I've been called in my ministry, the continuation of my ministry. Being called first very strongly, I felt my relationship with Jesus Christ into, into full-time ministry, and I served in full-time ministry while completing my degree requirements, and then the nature of my call, my internal call shifted from, "Okay. Great. You followed me where I have led you," shifted from that to, "We have a relationship with Jesus." This is my internal dialogue. "We have a relationship. Now, you are mature enough now. You can choose how you want to continue in your ministerial journey and still maintain your relationship with me."⁶²

Here, this minister saw and was even called to ministry in a bi-vocational way. They felt “that call” from Christ as one which extended itself to that of another job and wanted to honor that sense of call by working bi-vocationally. Another minister put it this way,

I said maybe I'd like to look at bi-vocational ministry. The tentmaker, good old Saint Paul, I said. If it was good enough for him, I could do it too. That's it and so I, when I came up for ordination by the, then it was the Raritan classes in the RCA, I said that wanted to go part-time, I didn't want to give up my other job. I said I'd get my benefits and all that from my job, but I said this way I could be a little freer to minister and be where I'm needed. Where there still is a need for ministry but, yet they can't, they don't have the wherewithal.⁶³

Another bi-vocational minister put it this way,

And I just love that my students are excited about this and I also love that my students themselves come from all kinds of faith backgrounds. There are students who are Jewish, there are Hindu students, there are Atheists, there are Agnostics, there are Christians. It's everybody. And yeah, we can all come together regardless of our faith belief to work on this project is amazing. It's interesting. It's hard for us to do this in church, but it's not hard to do it out of church. So, it's almost like I can see the beloved community enacted in my research team and that is enormously gratifying to see that. I also think that's a gift from God to me that I can see what should be going on in the church outside of it. It makes me more committed to my calling, which I think it to bridge these two communities, the mental health community and the church. That part is great.⁶⁴

⁶² Interview: Church #1, Minister #1.

⁶³ Interview: Church #2, Minister #1.

⁶⁴ Interview: Church #3, Minister #1.

Here, this minister sees the value of their “other job” theologically; in this case, that of the beloved community. In seeing this, this bi-vocational minister is able to put into words the value each of their jobs brings to the other and how each job informs and expands the value of the other. This is a mark of successful bi-vocational minister.

These ministers epitomize something which is not often acknowledged- that some clergy, even some churches, would be better served by being bi-vocational. In having a bi-vocational minister, insights and skills from the minister’s other job can add value to the church. In having a bi-vocational minister, one who is called to this role, the laity as well would benefit from this role model as they too are living bi-vocationally as working and being a part of a church. Ultimately, they each, the laity and the bi-vocational minister, may even be called to such an arrangement.

If we, the larger Church, believe in said idea of a call, then some validation ought to be rendered to this idea. It may even be where the Spirit is leading the church, as bi-vocational ministry offers freedom to minister. This is important for the wider church to understand- many ministers want to minister in other settings- not just within the local church. It is also important in that many bi-vocational ministers find themselves better equipped to attend to the gospel of the local church as they are not receiving money from only their ordained calls.

This “attending to the gospel” is important. I work as a psychotherapist in my secular job and have, over the years, met with pastors and priests who have been referred to me for a number of issues. Time and again these clergy, all of whom were serving their churches full-time, would cite as one of the main reasons for their presenting problem, depression for example, that they could not preach what they wanted to preach for fear it would offend some congregants and then, consequently, put their jobs and their livelihood in jeopardy. One minister told me that they could not preach on their support of gay marriage for this fear. Another stated they could “never” preach

on social justice issues for worry about the same thing. For example, if they were to preach on immigration, they too run the risk of offending leaders of their church and, potentially, their position in said church along with their livelihood. Time and time again, these clergy would need to preach on only topics like kindness and vague notions of “peace” in order to not offend some in their churches. As such, they felt they were “dumbing down” the gospel message in order to keep their jobs. Being bi-vocational offers a freedom that many full-time clergy are not afforded. As the bi-vocational minister is not tied to just one source of income (the church), they are, potentially, capable of being more authentic in what they do, how they preach, and how they minister. This was put quite succinctly with one minister who completed the survey question about the joys of congregational life,

*We are a strong, if small, church community dedicated to the social gospel. We don't have to dumb down our social vision of ministry to appease a more conservative funding base. Also, after several years of deficit funding we have stabilized our budget!*⁶⁵

Not having to water down the message of the gospel is a mark of a successful bi-vocational church. As such, bi-vocational ministers need no longer be considered as “second class” ordained citizens of the clergy and, arguably, are better equipped to be present as ministers of the gospel. This is something the larger church needs to take into consideration as well- that the bi-vocational ministers have much to teach those who are working full-time, have many gifts to bring to their local churches, and are an asset to their denominations.⁶⁶ This is also something which “works” for the bi-vocational minister- being called to a bi-vocational life in which the minister can preach and minister in an authentic manner without overwhelming fear of a loss of their livelihood.

The second theme in the study which spoke to a successful bi-vocational minister is understanding the role of money in their personal lives. Money issues were cited at least thirteen

⁶⁵ Survey: Church #1, Minister #1.

⁶⁶ More about this will be discussed in the chapter on the larger church.

times. It was considered as mostly a concern. It was also oftentimes stated that churches were not paying enough.

A number of ministers spoke to the money issue. One minister, when discussing the history of their “second job,” stated,

Wow, let's see. I did concierge work, I did office work, I worked for a year and a half as a soil and water educator and a program manager for the local soil and water conservation district. I did some administrative consulting on — before I went to seminary, I had a full administrative career of almost 25 years, so I had the skill set to do that, so I did some consulting. Gosh, I worked at a coffee shop. I just did whatever it took to get the job done. I currently am a substitute teacher with the Loudoun County Public Schools, two days a week which is a way to make sure that we have money for the extras. Not that we can't afford nothing we don't have, not that we don't make enough money to do it, but it's nice to have that cushion and because most churches don't have the ability to pay their clergy what they would make in private industry, you have to have a second source of income.⁶⁷

This minister went on to report about how the other job impacted the ministries of the church by stating,

Well, it pulls me away from being able to be fully present at all times. I have to juggle my part-time job with my full-time calling. A prime example of that is on Friday of this past week I had to cancel a substitute assignment because I had some German visitors come in on an exchange program. If I were able to make enough money through my call, I wouldn't have to worry about going to sub and then try to figure out how I'm going to make up that money somewhere else.⁶⁸

Going on to say,

Things are important to us, we invest in them. Things that are important to us we've gotta put our money where our mouth is. When we think our child has athletic ability, we will mortgage the house for baseball, basketball, football, soccer, ice skating. And I'm not saying that people need to mortgage their house and church, but I do think we teach people how to give and how to give steadily and regularly, then we would not have some of the problems that we're having. So, it's not just on the seminary side, we have to teach our churches what to do, we have to teach our churches how to treat their pastors. And many times, we do a poor job of that. Needs to be included.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Interview: Church #6, Minister #1.

⁶⁸ Interview: Church #6, Minister #1.

⁶⁹ Interview: Church #6, Minister #1.

As much as this direct money issue is important, the indirect one is as well. In other words, the reality is that many churches and their individual congregants are either too selfish, too greedy, do not make giving to their local church a priority,⁷⁰ or do not have the financial resources to pay their ministers and need to close or merge with another church. God is with them no matter what. The bi-vocational minister needs to stop trying to rescue them from their own historical defects. The other reality is that many bi-vocational ministers are making more money with their other jobs than they are with the church. If the church is unable to pay a decent wage, a minister oftentimes needs to move on. The bi-vocational minister is better equipped to understand this. For some, this caused some concern in that it felt like the obligation to their second job was sometimes over and above their commitments to the church because it paid them more money. Others felt this gave them a more prophetic voice.

The third theme in the study which makes for a successful bi-vocational minister is the role of the bi-vocational ministers' second job. For many, it brought added insights and vibrancy.

One minister stated this well when they stated in their interview,

*Oh well, I guess I need to start, it's made me much more vibrant for sure. There's no doubt that the learning I do through the seminary and through the teaching, and through other outside church activities, feeds me and give me stuff to think about. On just that level alone, it's added much to the richness of our ministry here because I can connect us with much more things and infuse ideas that might not be thinking about or doing these things.*⁷¹

This minister went on to state, when asked about how their "other job" influenced their role as a bi-vocational minister and about how their second job added a richness to the church they were serving,

⁷⁰ I have wondered about this "priority of giving" issue. What if individual congregants gave more to their local church than they spend on things like cable, cell phones, and the like?

⁷¹ Interview: Church #5, Minister #1.

Yeah, it definitely adds to the richness. For example, I am working with (name removed) on her major project which has to do with cognitive processing disorders. That's not an area that I ever really thought about. Working with her on this project, I have been able to infuse thoughts about brain disorders in our work here. We're engaged, I don't know if you know the WISE Process in UCC for the UCC Mental Health Network, but it stands for, Welcoming Inclusive Supportive and Engaged with mental illness, substance abuse, and brain disorders. It's a process that is very similar to the open and affirming process where you do a year of self-directed study. Make like a declarative statement and then vote on at the end. We're deeply engaged in that process here. Working with (name removed) is a small example, has helped me to be more aware of people who are processing language a fraction a second behind when actually the language gets to them... That's one simple way. The whole listening seminar has played out here in many ways. We've become sort of locally appreciated and valued for having listening sessions on things that matter. An upcoming one is on the violence that's going on around the country and the state of politics is another. Those are two examples, but it has ... It keeps my brain fresh. It definitely has an impact.⁷²

Another minister put it this way,

Everything that we do, we bring to ministry. As a substitute teacher, my compassionate skills are enhanced greatly, also dealing with children enhanced my compassion skills greatly. I get to exercise my external gifts and bring it back to the church where they are of use. I get to practice troubleshooting, I get to practice management organization, I get to practice accounting skills, troubleshooting, I get to practice human resources management and development and bring that back to the church. Because again, everything that we do, everything that we are, every bit of us we bring to ministry. Just because I am in the church building does not stop me from being an administrative professional. I tell my assistant all the time, "I like you, but I don't need you, I can write my own letter, I type 75 words a minute." I can't say that unless I have that skill. It's a balance, they both feed and inform each other, and I honestly believe that they both work together to make me a better minister.⁷³

And, another bi-vocational minister said this in their interview,

So that was my organizing on the ground with the church as a bi-vocational minister, which was really awesome and a wonderful experience. And the words, I won't forget one of them from Cuba who spoke about the conditions that her family faced under what the restrictive regime that she experienced of Castro and then coming here to be in a place that she thought would be a free country only to have her son stopped by the police on suspicion of being Hispanic and how devastating that was. So that was all very interesting and very powerful. And I think it helped me connect more with those members of my congregation.⁷⁴

⁷² Interview: Church #5, Minister #1.

⁷³ Interview: Church #6, Minister #1.

⁷⁴ Interview: Church #4, Minister #1.

A lay leader put it this way, when answering the survey question about how having a bi-vocational minister impacts the spiritual and pastoral needs of the church, *Because of our minister's other vocation, he is very compassionate and caring of the members of our congregation.*⁷⁵

Another lay leader stated,

*We benefit when we hear of the pastors' other work, such as teaching situations and projects, in their sermons, informal conversations, and providing meaningful workshops. We get connected with their work and can pray for their success elsewhere. We feel we are a spiritually supportive community for their other vocations.*⁷⁶

And another lay leader said,

*A bi-vocational minister shows more empathy. He better understands what all the rest of us are dealing with. I feel it is better he doesn't spend 100% of his time stressing over church related issues. Our spiritual and pastoral needs are more than adequately addressed. There is no interference because of his second vocation.*⁷⁷

And a lay leader from this same church stated,

*I also think our minister having another profession helps inform his sermons. If this were his full-time job, he might be more in a bubble, so to speak, and I'm not sure that would provide as rich of an experience for the congregants. His sermons are often informed by things from his daily life, including and especially, his work as a therapist.*⁷⁸

Another minister stated,

The nature of my other job has had a tremendous impact on who I am as a part of God's beloved community to really brought that into a sharp of focus because of the nature of the students that I work with. There are many people in my particular school that I work in who are people of faith. Not UCC, but still, people of faith who find that they make a profound impact and difference in the world but working with and for those who can't work with it for themselves. In that sense, my job isn't just a job. It's also in itself a call. Those of us who work there know, we all know that this is a very unique student population to work with, and you need to be called there. We watch people come in for interviews, and we know if they're going to stay or not. We don't make bets, but we would ... "Ah, they're not going to be back tomorrow." If somebody is back the third day, we're pretty much pretty sure, "Yeah. Okay. They found a fit," because we have to do stuff like

⁷⁵ Survey: Church #7, Lay Leader #5.

⁷⁶ Survey: Church #1, Lay Leader #3.

⁷⁷ Survey: Church #7, Lay Leader #6.

⁷⁸ Survey: Church #7, Lay Leader #7.

*take care of personal needs like you would for a six, a four-month-old baby. Some of our students are right there, and so we have to care for our students, and some of them are 16, 17 years old in the same way you would care for an infant.*⁷⁹

Another minister stated the following, when asked during an interview about how their other job influenced them as a bi-vocational minister,

It influences a lot. I think one of the nice things about being in ministry, I think ministry and psychology (they work in the field) are very compatible. Or can be, I should say that. I think it definitely ... Even when I was in seminary, I took a lot of theology classes and my colleagues would say, you know, "How do you get all this stuff?" I'd go, "Oh, it's really similar to psychology." You know? One thing you're talking about God and one thing you're talking about people, but the same process. So, that part was lovely. I think it really helps to inform particularly the types of service I do, and my lessons are very deep, empathic. They're very, it allows you to have a really rich understanding of the biblical text. It allows you to be very creative about how you do sermons and Christian education. That part I love. I just feel like it's such a great work for me.

*The church is the best place for me to be all of who I am, even more than I can be. And so, that's what I love about the church. I feel like I can bring all of who I am to that and I always can bring all of who I am to that. So, that part is almost, that's probably the best God has given me in ministry. I just, that part I'll never get tired of and that's the part I love. I'm trying to think about, I want to do a sermon this week on being chosen, and comes out of our pastoral concern, not out of theological issues. Just watching people who've been wounded in their lives in so many different ways. I was thinking, actually, I was doing therapy and I was thinking about this couple and one of the things that I hear them saying all the time is, "I want somebody to pick me first every once in a while." Which is why I thought about we want to be chosen and just different ways of doing that. I'm not saying if I weren't a psychologist that wouldn't come up, but it just makes you look at things really different. It makes you look at and use the text very differently, which is the part I really love. I think it too forms ... Well, you didn't ask me that one. So, I think it also, I'm also a researcher, so I definitely, my research is reflected in the fact that I'm in ministry. My research is looking at suicide prevention, and HIV prevention, intervention programs in church context. So, obviously I married those two things together, as well. It's challenging to do that, but I also find it very emotionally and intellectually stimulating to do it. I love challenges and so it's definitely a challenge. So, I like that.*⁸⁰

Here, in all of these statements, interviews, and responses to survey questions is what this third theme is all about- a passion and an insight to the impact of the other job in the life of the bi-

⁷⁹ Interview: Church #1, Minister #1.

⁸⁰ Interview: Church #3, Minister #1.

vocational minister. For, it brings new perspectives and energy to the church which would not be there if the minister were not bi-vocational.

The fourth and final theme in my study which affirmed the work for the bi-vocational minister is that of being able to cultivate an ability to be flexible enough to be available to the needs of the congregation. In fact, it appears availability was a key concept in the study which impacted the bi-vocational living for all involved, including that of the church members and the congregation as a whole. It was mentioned in the data at least fourteen times, more than any other phrase or word, except for lay involvement. It was because of availability, or the lack thereof, that lay leaders cited as the most important variable vis-a-vis the bi-vocational minister. This was especially evident around the role of visitation.

Availability is defined as the idea that someone is there for the various concerns of church life. It also calls into question “for what” does someone need to be available? From pastoral visits, to e-mails, to chairing meetings, someone needs to feel they are called to attend to the ongoing needs of the organizational life of the church. Does this also mean the bi-vocational minister needs to be available to choose the color of the chairs? Does the bi-vocational minister need to be available to attend members’ children’s school events? Does the bi-vocational minister need to be there for all of the decisions a church strives to make? The traditional model of the pastor fulfilling all, or most, of the needs in a church needs to be discarded. This is especially true with the concept of availability.

The data speaks over and over to this concern. Those ministers and lay persons who disagreed with bi-vocational living as being a good thing for the church cited availability, in its various forms, as the primary reason for this. One minister, when asked about the upsides and

the downsides to having a bi-vocational minister in the church now, after having a full-time minister in the past (Q7) wrote:

*One obvious upside is that the church does not struggle to raise funds to the pastoral staff's compensation package. We also do not own a church building but rent space. Our comparative overhead is extremely low. A downside is there is no one available to engage in ministry to/with/in the community where the church meets.*⁸¹

Another bi-vocational minister, who somewhat disagreed with the idea that having a bi-vocational minister improved the overall functioning of the church (Q3 & Q4), stated,

*It impacts the spiritual and pastoral needs of the church negatively, simply because I am split in two, and my better paying job takes precedence. I have to still pay bills, and because of that, I cannot do all the things full-time clergy can.*⁸²

There is a poverty and a scarcity in this downside. Why is it a downside that the bi-vocational minister is not available to engage in ministry with the community where the church meets?

This implies that the bi-vocational minister is the only one who could engage the community, does it not?

A lay leader from the same church cited this well when answering question four, about how a bi-vocational minister impacts the spiritual and pastoral needs of their church, (that) *For me personally the bi-vocational minister has other irons in the fire to not necessarily address the need of a congregant in need of a hands-on interaction.*⁸³ This lay leader went on to state that their experience with having a bi-vocational minister, as opposed to a full-time minister in the past, was that the bi-vocational minister is *not available when necessarily needed, (is) sometimes pre-occupied with other aspects of life.*⁸⁴ Another lay leader from this same church described it

⁸¹ Survey: Church #1, Minister #1.

⁸² Survey: Church #6, Minister #1.

⁸³ Survey: Church #1, Lay Leader #2.

⁸⁴ Survey: Church #1, Lay Leader #2.

this way: *Some of the needs are unmet, even with others volunteering to try to meet those needs.*⁸⁵

This church is apparently struggling with the meaning and role of their bi-vocational minister(s). There is a desire for the needs of the congregation to be met by the ministers on staff- the needs of the congregation are not “fully met” even if lay persons are willing to meet those needs. Bi-vocational living can be a struggle for those who are used to the traditional model of ministry in which the ordained clergy attend to the majority of needs in a congregation.

Churches have a long history of defining what “needs” might be. Many churches have an historical expectation that the paid ministers attend to visitation in the hospital. In addition, many churches expect ministers to be at most, if not all, of the functions of the church. This can be difficult, especially if those needs are more “social” in nature. For example, it has been common for church members to expect their ministers to attend the graduations of the children of adult members. In addition, it is common, in a traditional sense, for ministers to be available to attend those community events where leaders of the community are gathering.

One minister took on this concern when answering survey question four, about how having a bi-vocational minister impacts the spiritual and pastoral needs of their church, by stating that these needs are impacted *not at all, unless you consider the pastor’s availability for Lions, Kiwanis, etc. meetings (as being) a vital outreach.*⁸⁶ This minister went on to state, in a bit of what could be considered a sarcastic manner, in response to the survey question seven, that there are no downsides to having a bi-vocational minister, as opposed to a full-time minister, unless said downside were to include their unavailability *for tea and cookies.*⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Survey: Church #1, Lay Leader #3.

⁸⁶ Survey: Church #2, Minister #1.

⁸⁷ Survey: Church #2, Minister #1.

And yet, there are needs of most congregations which extend beyond that of “inconsequential” social visits. What came to mind in the study were things like hospital visits and deaths. Some churches expect their ministers, whether bi-vocational or not, to be able to visit whenever anyone is in the hospital. This appears to be due to the idea that, whenever one is admitted to the hospital, some sort of crisis has occurred, and the minister needs to attend to this person.

This hospitalization issue appears to be quite salient for all involved, both for the bi-vocational ministers and for their congregants. One minister, who disagreed with their being a bi-vocational minister as having improved the overall functioning of the church, responded to question number four about the impact on the spiritual and pastoral needs of the church with having a bi-vocational minister by stating:

It's really hard to meet the needs of the congregation during crises; for example, there is a loved one or member in the hospital and they would like to have prayer before surgery- we might not be able to get away from our other jobs. I am a (certain position) so I can't (get away) to address people's emergencies.⁸⁸

This minister goes on to state in their interview that they have learned,

(I learned) to say no., I used to try to do it (addressing all the needs), but then I would be literally working my full-time job and coming home and doing church stuff every evening. I was working seven days a week on both ends, 12, 13 hours days with no breaks. And so, I had to stop that because I'm 61 now. So, I was like, "I'm not a spring chicken. I just can't keep that up." So, it just depends. I think when things are pretty calm, it definitely feels doable. But when it's not, like when there are multiple people sick, or there are multiple families or children or adults who need counseling, that can be something.⁸⁹

Other forms of visitation are also a problem for some bi-vocational ministers. Funerals, for example. This same minister stated,

We've also, we have a relatively young congregation, so we haven't funeralized a member yet. We have funeralized family members of members, and again, that's easier when you are funeralizing someone because then you can set the time bar when you're going to do

⁸⁸ Interview: Church #3, Minister #1.

⁸⁹ Interview: Church #3, Minister #1.

*it, because you do it when you're available. But trying to attend other people's funerals when you're not the, you know, you're not the clergy person in charge or that is very hard. Even though our members understand and don't complain, as a pastor you feel horrible when you can't be there with families during their most vulnerable times. So, that part I don't like a lot.*⁹⁰

This minister gives a clear example of how hard it is to be a bi-vocational minister and feeling how certain expectations cannot be met because of other job commitments.

Flexibility is key to this idea of availability. One minister, who was serving two churches as a bi-vocational minister, compared the two churches in which they were serving. The minister did state that both were “fighting it”, meaning they were struggling with not having a full-time minister like they had in the past, but that one was more flexible than the other:

*Both of them (were fighting the change), yeah. One was more flexible than the other, simply because of the type of community — it's a farming community and they understand that with the loss of younger people that they couldn't afford to fund a minister full-time, they could barely afford to fund a minister quarter-time. They were grateful that someone would come and give them private ministry, even though they could not pay them what they knew I deserved...The other church is a little bit more demanding. They are not as rural as the first church and they're financial situation is a little better than the first church. But they still can't afford to fund a full-time minister.*⁹¹

The latter church was more demanding while the former church was understanding and grateful. These concepts- demanding, understanding, and gratitude, appeared to be at work throughout the study. And, it speaks to an attitude the local church, in conversation with the ordained minister, brings as they lean into bi-vocational ministry. As one minister stated,

As I say, I was very fortunate plus again having some flexible leave time I was able, if somebody was hospitalized, I was able to take off and go to be there. Likewise, if there was a funeral or something of that sort I was able to be there. So that worked out well. Plus, the other thing it was funny because I used to get a lot of criticism, "Well, yeah, you aren't working, you're not doing anything pastoral." I said wait a minute. I said I'm in human resources and my job is labor relations. Who do you think gets somebody into a rehab program? Who do you think gets talked to when somebody's having financial problems and their wages are going to get docked? I said I probably do more so, more

⁹⁰ Interview: Church #3, Minister #1.

⁹¹ Interview: Church #6, Minister #1.

*pastoral work in a week than you do in the whole year.*⁹²

This minister appeared to be able to educate their congregants both to how their secular job offered flexibility in order to attend to the demands of the congregation and to how their secular jobs were ones of ministry as well. As such, they, the minister, were able to diffuse, at times, the irrational expectations of the congregants- that without a full-time minister they were unable to attend to the needs of the congregation. In this regard, those bi-vocational ministers who had flexibility in their other jobs found that bi-vocational ministry was easier. Those who were in their secular settings, which did not have flexibility built in, did not find their bi-vocationalism as easy. In fact, they found it a burden.

This visitation issue goes on and on. Another variable here seems to be the distance a bi-vocational minister is from the community they are serving. The further away, the more difficult it is to meet this need. As one minister stated in their interview, when asked if the congregants of their church were “bothered” by their having another job,

*Yes. Because they don't think that I'm always available to be there for them. If someone gets sick, I can't just go and visit them in the hospital, I have to actually schedule how I'm going to do that. The other thing is, I'm in a unique position that the church I currently serve is 106 miles from my house. The churches I previously served were 45 miles from my house, so for me to do an actual visit, it takes some planning, it takes some logistics work. Since I'm not in the building all of the time, it makes it a little difficult to be able to be fully present for the members when they actually need you most.*⁹³

The answer to this visitation dilemma, and to bi-vocational ministry in general, appears to be four-fold and a combination therein. The first is that the bi-vocational minister needs to find ways to be more available in the type of second job they have, or even in the second job they choose to have. The second is that the bi-vocational minister needs to educate the congregants to the reality of the early Church's concept, and that of the Reformed Tradition, that all people are

⁹² Interview: Church #2, Minister #1.

⁹³ Interview: Church #6, Minister #1.

ministers of a gathered community, including being ministers who also do some of the visiting. The third is that the bi-vocational minister needs to set clear boundaries and expectations. And, the fourth is what will be termed as “paying the rent.”⁹⁴

One minister, like the one mentioned above, who learned to say “no,” appeared to have set limits and boundaries on the expectations of visitation, was able to cite an extreme example of the congregants going too far in not calling on them. They shared during their interview, in response to the writer’s statement that it appeared the congregants in their church would visit because they knew they were not around, that they needed ongoing education to same. They shared,

*There were times I could have clobbered them because somebody was hospitalized or something, but we didn't want to get you upset. Well, that's what I'm here for. But see here again, but also too, if it was an emergency, they would get a hold of me. But if it was just the fact the person was being hospitalized for whatever, well, well give me a break.*⁹⁵

This minister was clear about sharing what was necessary for their being available and what was not. However, this is not always clear for all churches. This needs to be attended to as a successful mark of bi-vocational ministry. In other words, education and communication between that of the bi-vocational minister and their congregants is important.

Another mark here, one which is not stated necessarily from the data, is the aforementioned idea of “paying the rent”. This concept, as mentioned in a footnote, extends from a peer of mine, the Reverend Gordon Dragt, who is currently a retired clergy person and also a voting member of the church I currently serve. In his work with Middle Collegiate Church in New York City, he spoke to me about the idea of investing in congregants by the term “paying the rent.” In his book, *One Foot Planted in the Center, the Other Dangling Off the Edge*, and on

⁹⁴ I first heard this term from the writings of the Rev. Gordon Dragt.

⁹⁵ Interview: Church #2, Minister #1.

his website,⁹⁶ Dragt lists sixteen tips⁹⁷ for turning a church around. *Pay the Rent* was number seven. He states, *Pay the rent. Having a positive attitude; being a cheerleader for the congregation; and building relationships, trust, and goodwill will make the difference.* In our context, this speaks directly to the idea of availability. Once trust and good will is built, congregations are less apt to bring up concerns about the bi-vocational minister's struggle with availability. It appeared in my study, however anecdotally, that those ministers who were struggling with their bi-vocationalism cited distance, being tired, and the like as being blockages to their availability to congregants' needs, however irrational. These stated concerns of distance and that of time needs to be discarded on some level by the bi-vocational minister. No longer can said minister rely on the "numbers of hours" in their contracts and working "9-5" as being the operative boundaries of job availability. There are times when the bi-vocational minister needs to visit someone who is struggling even if this means leaving your other job and driving two hours to make the visit. There are times when the bi-vocational minister needs to preach on

⁹⁶ <http://gordondragt.com/16tips.php>; accessed 01-04-2019.

⁹⁷ From his website (<http://gordondragt.com/16tips.php> accessed 01-04-2019): *The Sixteen Tips for Turning Your Church Around*:

1. It's a Calling, not a job.
2. Be intentional. The journey from here to there won't happen automatically or by faint-hearted efforts.
3. Be a leader. Leaders lead.
4. Make the vision big. Keep the journey simple.
5. Just say yes: miracles of growth, new ideas, and including a greater diversity of people may follow.
6. Keep opening more doors into the church from the community and into the community from the church.
7. Pay the rent. Having a positive attitude; being a cheerleader for the congregation; and building relationships, trust, and goodwill will make the difference.
8. Don't go it alone. It takes partnerships to sustain the journey.
9. Transform the worship service into a worship celebration.
10. Use the arts, because it's biblical and it works.
11. Be an Evangelist and don't be bashful about it.
12. Leaders need to grow spiritually, too. Sustaining regular self-examination and spiritual growth is essential.
13. God blessed life with diversity, multiculturalism, multiracialism, and multi-sexual orientations. Get used to it.
14. Travel light. Don't let a heavy theology, liturgy, and spirituality weigh you down.
15. Some of the best clues to transformational leadership are in the Bible. Jesus is a great example.
16. Be prepared for hard work, perseverance, and an adventurous journey. Transformational leadership is not for the faint-of-heart.

Sunday and then visit someone in the hospital even if this means they will be working “more than the contracted number of hours that week.” It is an attitudinal change. It is part of what “paying the rent” means. Being a minister, and for the bi-vocational minister possibly even more so, is a lifestyle, not a job in which a clock is punched and a time card handed in.⁹⁸

The unanswered question around the topic of availability has to do with the extent the church members have for the bi-vocational ministers to attend to all the functions in the life of the church. In addition, availability also extends to the pressure the bi-vocational minister(s) place on themselves to meet all the needs of the congregation. Many bi-vocational ministers felt this pressure. One wrote when responding to question four on the survey, about how having a bi-vocational minister impacted the spiritual and pastoral needs of the church,

*Sometimes it is positive, because I bring my teaching background with me, and it is useful. There are times when I don't feel like I have enough time to do both well, I really have to plan carefully.*⁹⁹

Another stated it quite succinctly when they wrote,

*It means members have to step up and be part of the ministry work of the church as I cannot do everything or be there all of the time.*¹⁰⁰

For some, matters of “attending to the colors of the chairs in the study” are important; whereas for others, this would be considered a “trivial” matter. These expectations are important for the church and the bi-vocational minister to discuss and to come to some sort of understanding. Without some sort of an agreement on these matters, apparent friction can occur, leaving the church members wishing for the day when the minister was available for all things,

⁹⁸ I understand here that some reading this statement may say “hold on there!” Are you saying bi-vocational ministers are to always be working? Aren’t they already overwhelmed? No, I am not saying this. Boundaries, rest, Sabbath renewal, and self-care are all important things which need to be cultivated. What I am saying is that the bi-vocational minister will get a lot more support if they go out of their way at times to attend to the needs of their congregation. They, the bi-vocational ministers, cannot always say things like “I’m too busy,” “it’s too far,” etc. In fact, it is my experience the less complaining done in this area the more successful a bi-vocational minister will be.

⁹⁹ Survey: Church #8, Minister #1.

¹⁰⁰ Survey: Church #9, Minister #1.

whether considered trivial or not. It can also leave the bi-vocational minister wondering what their role in the church actually is- that of bringing the gospel to the church or being some sort of social director.

This ability to be available, or lack therein, leads also to a discussion of the theological and psychological temperaments and flexibilities brought to the issue. Theological flexibilities have to do with the role and presence of God. Psychological flexibilities have to do with a more personal concern about what availability means and for whom it is afforded. It also speaks to psychological pressures having to do with “presence” and “co-dependency.”

Theologically, God is present. God works in the lives of all people. And, as a result of this truism, the bi-vocational minister needs to “let go” of being unavailable at times- for God is present and available despite the minister’s inability to be so. Flexibility speaks not only to the availability of the minister, but it also speaks to the theological underpinnings of what the gospel means vis-a-vis the role of the minister. In other words, it asks for answering the question about role of the presence of God in the life of the church. Is God present without an ordained minister present? Is it only the bi-vocational minister who is doing God’s work, or is God present in the lives and the ministerial work of the laity as well?

Psychologically, other people’s problems are their problems, not the bi-vocational minister’s. This sounds crass, but it is true. The bi-vocational minister cannot rescue another- they can only help. This is very difficult to understand, especially the difference between healing and rescuing. In my thirty some years working as a psychotherapist, combined with now almost twenty years working as an ordained minister, all of which done bi-vocationally, I have come to realize this is a concept all ministers, including bi-vocational ministers, need to understand. Numerous congregants have addictions, personality disorders and the like. These

cannot be “helped” by traditional pastoral interventions. Being “Christian Nice” will not help the congregant nor will it benefit the pastoral role of the bi-vocational minister- it will not only wear them out but may contribute to ongoing dysfunction in the said congregant they were trying to “help” and, by extension, the life of the larger church. Being educated to this oftentimes unspoken reality in churchwork will help the bi-vocational minister be better equipped to what “being available” not only means but to what will truly help. As Jesus said to the woman at the well, who was almost stoned for her indiscretions, “Go your way, and from now on do not sin again (John 7:53-8:11-NRSV).” This also means to me, “I saved you once, now take responsibility for yourself as I may not be around to save you again.”

In addition to this understanding, there is also the issue of God’s providence, especially in the lives of others. As mentioned, many bi-vocational ministers struggle with being present for the pastoral needs of the congregation, even when they have been “paying the rent,” if you will. It is incumbent on the bi-vocational minister to check their egos and realize that God is present when they cannot be. There are many times when the bi-vocational minister is either unavailable with their other job, or too busy for whatever reason, to fully attend to the needs of a congregation. This needs to be accepted not just emotionally, but theologically as well. Traci Blackmon, the Executive Minister of Justice & Witness Ministries of The United Church of Christ and Senior Pastor of Christ The King United Church of Christ in Florissant, MO, said it best recently in a *Twitter Tweet* from December 26, 2018, *Busyness is not a measurement of piety. To be perpetually tired is to mock the sufficiency of God.*¹⁰¹ A successful bi-vocational minister learns to rely and call upon God’s sufficiency in their work.

¹⁰¹ <https://twitter.com/pastortraci/status/1078178270233927680>, accessed 01-01-2019.

What was missing in the study's data was a key concern for the study. There was little discussion on the meaning and the identifying of gifts in the community as a whole. If these were identified, the struggles around availability directly, and bi-vocational living in general would be greatly enhanced. This need to identify gifts in the whole congregation will be discussed further in the conclusion section of this study, chapter Nine.

In conclusion, it is instructive to look at the answers in the entirety from the bi-vocational ministers. As can be seen

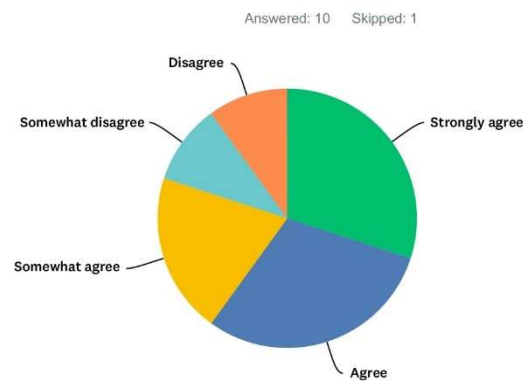
from the chart to the right, a full 80%, or eight, agreed on some level that having a bi-vocational minister improved the overall functioning of the church.

Only 20%, or two, of the bi-vocational ministers disagreed, with no one stating they strongly

disagreed. Now, this may be due to the self-selection of said ministers. Even so, nine bi-vocational ministers felt their bi-vocational status had improved and not diminished, as some may have thought, the overall functioning of their church.

These same ministers also felt that being bi-vocational helped their congregants to find ways to be more involved in the various ministries of the church. As can be seen by this next

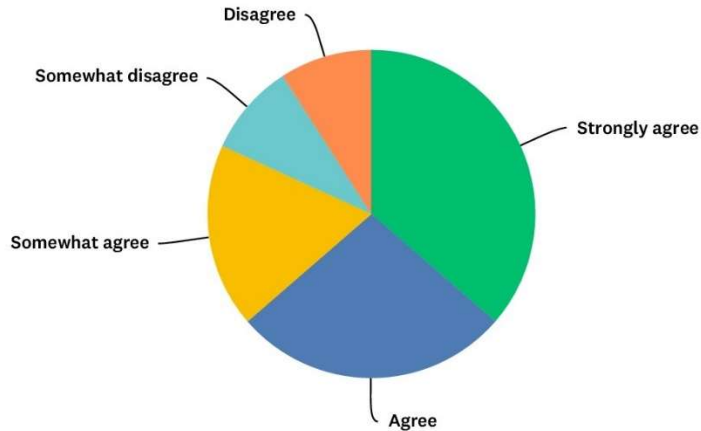
Q3 Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church.(If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly agree	30.00% 3
Agree	30.00% 3
Somewhat agree	20.00% 2
Somewhat disagree	10.00% 1
Disagree	10.00% 1
Strongly Disagree	0.00% 0
TOTAL	10

Q5 Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church.(If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



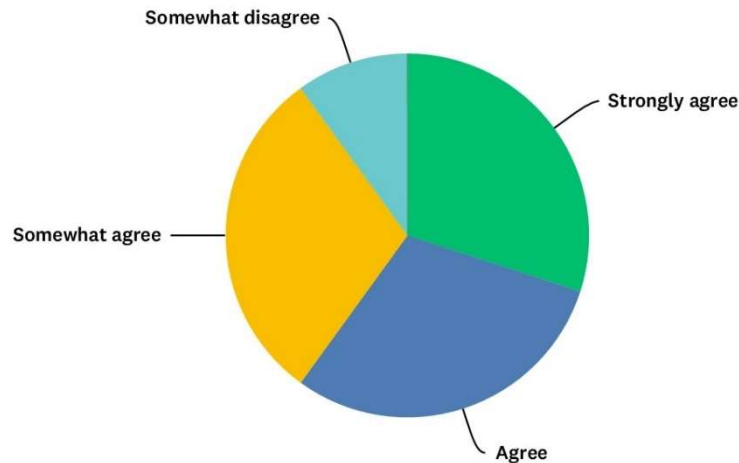
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	36.36%	4
Agree	27.27%	3
Somewhat agree	18.18%	2
Somewhat disagree	9.09%	1
Disagree	9.09%	1
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		11

chart, the one with Q5 (above), a full 81.81% agreed on some level with the question, with 36.36%, or four ministers strongly agreeing. Again, two of the ministers disagreed on some level with this question, with no one strongly disagreeing.

Finally, to question number six (see below), one that asked if bi-vocational living has been a good thing for the church, a full 90% agreed on some level that it had. Only one minister somewhat disagreed with this statement.

Q6 Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church.(If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Answered: 10 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	30.00%	3
Agree	30.00%	3
Somewhat agree	30.00%	3
Somewhat disagree	10.00%	1
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		10

All in all, the bi-vocational ministers were in the majority when it came to viewing bi-vocational living as a good think for their churches. This needs to be considered by all involved as the future of the church will include more and more bi-vocational minsters.

Below are some questions for the bi-vocational minister or for someone who is considering bi-vocational ministry.

**QUESTIONS FOR THE BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER
or
(FOR SOMEONE CONSIDERING BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTRY)**

- What preparation do you need to have to enter bi-vocational ministry?
- In what ways are you going to be “available” for both vocations?
- How does your theological and psychological awareness ground your work?
- In what ways are you clear about the need for money in your life?
- To what extent are you going to identify and use your gifts and the gifts of those in the church?

Chapter Six: What Works for the Congregant with a Bi-vocational Minister

Like that of the bi-vocational minister, there are a number of themes gleaned from the study which appear to work when it comes to the bi-vocational congregant and the success of bi-vocational living.¹⁰² The first theme is having the feeling of being called to being bi-vocational, in a somewhat similar manner to that of the bi-vocational minister. The second is understanding that each congregant has a unique gift which they can bring to the congregation. The third theme is being empowered to and, subsequently, being assertive with their God-given role as a concomitant minister in the life of the church.

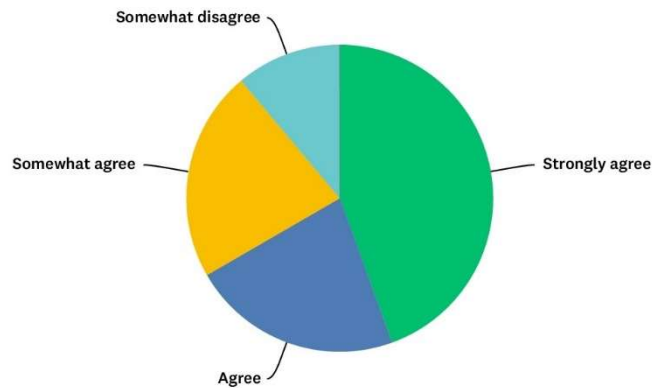
Before I unpack these ideas, I would like to share the charts from the study like the ones that were just shared from that of the bi-vocational ministers in Chapter Five. Doing so will help the congregants, or the lay leaders, to see if they are not only on the same page with the bi-vocational ministers but also how bi-vocational living impacts their churches.

In regard to question number three (see below), again the one having to do with whether or not having a bi-vocational minister improved the overall functioning of the church, a full 88.88% agreed on some level with that question, with 44.44% strongly agreeing. Only 11.11%, or one, of the lay leaders disagreed on some level with this question. No one disagreed or strongly disagreed. Compared to the bi-vocational ministers' responses to this question, the lay leaders agreed in the aggregate more than the ordained clergy. This is instructive as well for even a higher percentage of the lay leaders than that of the clergy felt this to be the case.

¹⁰² I say this here as there was a limited response from congregants. Despite numerous attempts to have ministers send the survey to the congregants, there was either a lack of the ministers doing so or, if they did, there was a limited response from said congregants. As such, there were responses from the lay leadership of only two churches.

Q3 Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church.(If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Answered: 9 Skipped: 1

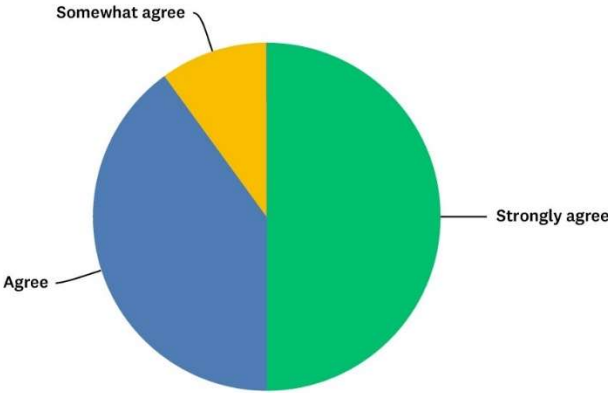


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	44.44%	4
Agree	22.22%	2
Somewhat agree	22.22%	2
Somewhat disagree	11.11%	1
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		9

In regard to question number five (see below), a full 100% agreed that having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in their church find ways to more involved with the various ministries of the church. Only one of the lay leaders somewhat agreed with this question, with five strongly agreeing and four agreeing. No one disagreed. In this question, one can glean that with having a bi-vocational minister, the congregants of said church allows, offers, and helps congregants at least have the opportunity to find their gifts and use them in the life of the church. At the most, it invigorates a church.

Q5 Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church.(If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0

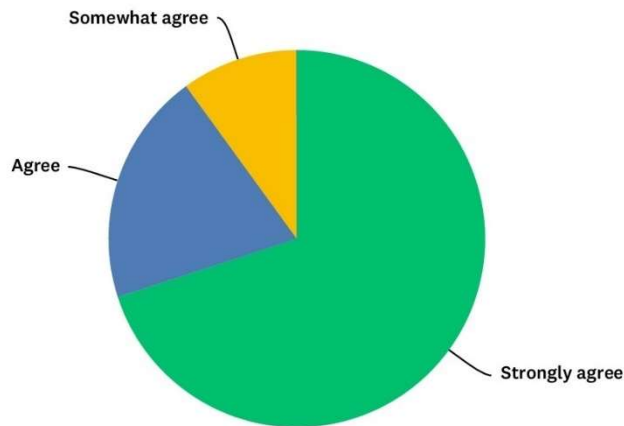


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	50.00%	5
Agree	40.00%	4
Somewhat agree	10.00%	1
Somewhat disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		10

And, finally, in regard to question number six (see below), the one which asks if bi-vocational living has been a good thing for the church, again, a full 100% agreed that it had. 70% strongly agreed with this question while 20% agreed and 10% somewhat agreed. Again, these percentages were larger than that reported by the bi-vocational ministers. As such, it appears congregants are open to, and willing to participate in, churches that have bi-vocational ministers.

Q6 Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church.(If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	70.00%	7
Agree	20.00%	2
Somewhat agree	10.00%	1
Somewhat disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		10

These charts speak to the gravity of the success of bi-vocationalism. Without the congregant, there is no church. Without the valuing of gifts of the individual congregant, there is no body of Christ. In short, without the uplifting of the congregant, there is no bi-vocationalism and, one might even say, there is no Church as we now define it. The congregant is needed for the life of bi-vocationalism. Not only needed, but when educated and embraced with their gifts, can actually improve the functioning of a church.

What initially works for the congregant in bi-vocational living appears to run in tandem to that of the bi-vocational minister. If the bi-vocational minister feels called to said ministry, it will “work” better for the congregants to feel they too are called to bi-vocational living. This

takes intentionality. Intentionality on the bi-vocational ministers' part in educating the congregation to the wonders and beauty of bi-vocational living, but also to the intentionality of the congregant in seeing and owning their role in the life of the congregation in a different and new way than may have been presented to them in the past. It asks the congregants to be more involved, to be ministers with the bi-vocational minister. It asks the congregant to no longer consume church programs but become actively involved in the ministering of said programs. It also asks, if not more importantly, for the minister to actively educate the congregants as being co-equals in the life and functioning of the church.

The bi-vocational minister will need to educate the gathered community. They will need to educate themselves as well as the congregants to the idea of the *priesthood of all believers*, as discussed in Chapter Three. Each person in the church is a minister with specific gifts they have been given by God. Yet, how often are the individual congregants encouraged to identify and then use these gifts? This is a question the bi-vocational minister must ask of the congregants. They must also preach and lead the congregants to embracing those gifts.¹⁰³

This is a huge change. It is a paradigm shift. The congregant needs to stop thinking that all the ministry work is to be done by the bi-vocational minister. The bi-vocational minister needs to let go of believing, if they do, that they are the only ones called to ministry in the church. Instead, the congregant needs to feel and believe that God has given all people, including the congregant, a gift bestowed onto them by the Spirit. As someone once said, *before you were born God gave you a gift and God expects you to use that gift to transform the world.*

This pursuit of the individual's gift(s) is oftentimes not named and not understood. The bi-vocational minister, because of their part-time status, opens up room for the congregants to

¹⁰³ Again, this will be elaborated in the concluding Chapter Nine of this study.

discover their gifts for ministry. Whereas the default may have been for congregants to view the full-time minister as the one which is paid to do all the ministry of the church, congregants in a bi-vocational church will not be able to view the paid minister the same way. As one minister stated, when responding to question twelve on the survey, *I think it allows more room for individuals to find their niche and their voice.*¹⁰⁴

One congregant stated, when they responded to question four on the survey, regarding the impact of having a bi-vocational minister on the spiritual and pastoral needs of the church, *for one, it requires the rest of us to take more ownership and be more involved. I think this diversity of leadership provides a better experience for everyone.*¹⁰⁵

“Diversity” is a wonderful term in the context of the congregants’ gifts. For it is a truism that some are better equipped to teach, while others are better equipped to visit, to take notes, to organize, to preach. The bi-vocational minister is not the only one who is equipped to do the ministries in a given church. In fact, the laity are also equipped to do the various ministries of the local church and need to be viewed as capable of such. Another minister put it this way, when responding to question eight on the survey, about what ways their local church is functioning in creative ways because of having a bi-vocational minister,

*There are many ways, e.g., more people doing visitations and keeping up with members in need, leading Sunday School programs, running mission outreach work like shelter involvement, taking initiative around new programs, etc.*¹⁰⁶

Bi-vocationalism for the individual congregant is something new for many. Yet, despite this relatively new concept for many churches, it is an opportunity. It is an opportunity not only for the congregant individually, in their own spiritual growth, but also for the Church universal

¹⁰⁴ Survey: Church #5, Lay Leader #4.

¹⁰⁵ Survey: Church #7, Lay Leader #7.

¹⁰⁶ Survey: Church #5, Minister #1.

in that it offers, if not forces, an opportunity for individual members of the local church to claim their part in the body of Christ. This is something that many churches have not afforded their individual members. This was stated rather succinctly by a minister who, in responding to question ten on the survey about joys in the congregation,

*So much involvement by many people, shared ownership for mission and the life of the church, a blossoming of possibilities that might otherwise have been missed, deeper commitment to community, pride in what we are doing together, etc.*¹⁰⁷

This can be done. Intentionality and leadership are the key concepts to a successful bi-vocational life. The bi-vocational minister needs to exhibit leadership for sure—specifically, in their willingness to cultivate a “yes” attitude. The bi-vocational minister needs to be intentional as well by encouraging the congregants to take risks and come up with new ideas. Together, intentionality and leadership encourages the lay leaders to be “yes” Christian congregants.¹⁰⁸ We are all in this together. We all need permission to try new things as we are moved by God’s Spirit. One minister, when asked how long it took for them to move their church forward to a deeper level of bi-vocationalism and away from the more authoritative model of the pastorate, said:

*It really didn't take much time at all. I mean we're still learning. We're eight years out. I have been teaching for eight years. There's still lots of stuff we're learning about how to do it better. I think the spirit caught on really early. This is a congregation of professors, and teachers, and nurses, movers, and shakers in the community. I think in some ways, they were really eager to be liberated, to live in to what they see as ministry. If that helps any.*¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Survey: Church #5, Minister #1.

¹⁰⁸ The most current work I have found on the definition of “success” in bi-vocational ministry is a 2018 book by Mark D.W. Edington titled *Bivocational: Returning to the Roots of Ministry*, (Kindle Edition; New York: Church Publishing, 2018). Edington discusses leadership styles in bi-vocational ministry. He claims that “success” can be best described as the clergy person eliciting an emphatic “yes” to the laity being empowered and embracing their skills and their gifts for ministry. As he states: *In my visits with faith communities living out a bi-vocational pastorate, I observed one consistent leadership skill that distinguished ordained ministers thriving in the role: the ability to get others to say “yes.” There are a lot of ways of describing this skill—empowering the laity, lifting up the skills and gifts of all members of the community, mutual ministry—but no matter how it’s labeled, it boils down to being able to get others to step up and take their part in the shared work of ministry.* Kindle Locations 610-614.

¹⁰⁹ Interview: Church #5, Minister #1.

This minister points out a key concept to successful bi-vocational living- that of having the congregants feel liberated. In many ways, the bi-vocational minister can help free the congregant into a new place and space where their gifts are embraced and used for the gathered community.

QUESTIONS FOR THE CONGREGANT WITH A BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR

- In what ways are you identifying and claiming your gifts?
- What do you think about ministry as a team?
- To what extent are you holding the bi-vocational minister and yourself accountable to the gospel?
- To what extent do you think financial giving to your local church ought to be a priority?

Chapter Seven: What Works for the Local Church with a Bi-vocational Minister

Like that of the bi-vocational minister and the bi-vocational congregant, there are a number of themes which appear to work when it comes to the bi-vocational church and bi-vocational living. The first is theme is cultivating the gifts of the individual members of the church with the result being a bi-vocational reality for the local church as a whole. The second theme is acknowledging that all members of the local church, including the bi-vocational minister, bring real issues to the life of the local church that need to be embraced and incorporated into the life of the local church. The third theme is shared leadership. And the fourth, and final, theme is the incorporating the gifts the children bring into the life of the local church.

What works for the bi-vocational church is first to have an expectation that each member of said church has not only a gift to bring to the local church specifically but also another job “out there” which contributes to the church’s bi-vocational reality. In other words, believing that all members of the church, including the pastor, are bi-vocational. The pastor may lead, guide, coach, encourage, but they too are part of a team and understands this in what they do. The pastor does not demand or encourage a more traditional “listen to me only” model of leading. They let go of such traditional ways of understanding ministry and learn to lean into God’s presence in all circumstances. They learn about and incorporate the individual members’ vocations into the life and work of the church. At the same time, the bi-vocational minister understands that the members of the church have other jobs outside the church and are likewise limited to what they can or cannot do for the local church.

The bi-vocational congregant, like that of the bi-vocational minister, ought to not shy away from incorporating their “other job” into the life of the church, for it brings not only an

added “realness” to the life of the wider church, like that of the bi-vocational minister’s “other job,” but also added gifts to the functioning of the church. For example, there are bi-vocational congregants who manage and organize in their secular job. They can be encouraged to embrace ways to manage and organize in the local church. Another example is that there are bi-vocational congregants who are involved in helping professions. They, likewise, can be encouraged to be part of the visiting aspects of the church. In doing so, the bi-vocational church includes all people, of all ages, with all their gifts into the life and worship of the congregation. This is another mark of successful bi-vocational living.

This idea of looking at all members of the local church as being bi-vocational was something which was pointed out by a number of ministers.¹¹⁰ This was done in positive and negative ways. The operative difference, as we shall see, is the relationship, even the attitude brought to the relationship between that of the ordained clergy and the congregation as a whole. When asked what the laity involvement was like in their church, one minister stated,

*They're pretty involved. It's not that. I think we have a really great model. Our model's very egalitarian, so we don't have this separation between ordained clergy and laypersons. Probably two-thirds of our ministries are headed by lay people, but even lay people have jobs. I am, I believe I'm the oldest person in my church. I'm 61, my husband's 60. We have one other person who's like 64. So, no one's retired. Everyone is bi-vocational, so everyone has a regular job. Our 64-year-old is a neonatologist. She amazingly comes to church on Sunday. She has call early. She rounds her patients and then comes to church and then goes back to the hospital. So, we have people who make enormous sacrifices and have phenomenal commitment to ministry, but is it taxing? Yes, because they are all bi-vocational.*¹¹¹

This attitude of “all being bi-vocational” is key. It is not simply the idea of “being bi-vocational” by default, because a church cannot afford a minister, but rather an ethos brought on by the

¹¹⁰ Now, this was not something which was done directly. In other words, the bi-vocational ministers in the study did not make a direct correlation between the roles of the members in the local church with that of their “day jobs.” Rather, it was cited as a simple reality- all were bi-vocational.

¹¹¹ Interview: Church #3, Minister #1.

realities of a particular church. These realities are that both the minister and the laity each have other jobs allowing the whole congregation to view each member as having dual responsibilities—that of their role in the church combined with their second, usually more secular job. It is a “we are all in this together” attitude.

This “together” attitude was pointed out by another bi-vocational minister, when they were asked if the congregants of their church had found ways to step up and do some of the ministry themselves,

With a little bit of prompting. Many of the churches operate from the quaint notion that the pastor is supposed to survive on whatever the church gives them and be available 25 hours a day, 8 days a week. In today's society, that is an unrealistic expectation all the way around. I encourage parishioners to, well, one thing I tell parishioners is that we're all ministers. I just happened to be the one who can marry or bury. It is their job to be the hand of Christ and go visit the sick and feed the hungry and go to prison. It's not just my job, it's all of our jobs 'cause we are all ministers. Sometimes they buy it, sometimes they don't.¹¹²

We are all ministers. Again, this is a newer paradigm for many churches. It was in those churches where this idea had either not been pressed, educated to, or understood where the reality of bi-vocationalism was more difficult. This difficulty was outlined well by another minister who had found it difficult to move from their full-time status in the church to a part-time status because of financial concerns,

Sure, yeah. So, the big thing I've been thinking about, and you can take it or leave it, but I think that where there are churches that have had bi-vocational ministry for a while that they might be okay. And where there are churches that have the resources and the structure I guess for a full-time minister or even a half-time minister, that those congregations might do okay. But the congregations that are used to the full-time and are now forced, for one reason or another, to have just the Sunday only quarter time let's say ministry, that transition I think is harder than many of us might have thought it was going to be. And I think that there's going to be a lot of congregations that are going to be making that transition.¹¹³

Another minister, when responding to question four on the survey, put it this way:

¹¹² Interview: Church #6, Minister #1.

¹¹³ Interview: Church #4, Minister #1.

Members have a clear understanding when their Pastor is available- after church on Sunday, and on Tues/Thurs. office hours, and in (an) emergency. They also know (the minister) works during the day. Members understand that the work of the church is the people, not just the Pastor. For example, there is a visitation team (not just the pastor doing the visits). Many new members only know this model of ministry.¹¹⁴

As can be seen by these various quotes, those churches which have had a bi-vocational minister for some time have learned to better equip all the church to the idea of bi-vocationalism. On the other hand, those churches who are in the middle of a transition from full-time to part-time working ordained ministers are the ones which will struggle with bi-vocationalism. It is in those churches where training, education, and understanding will be the most needed.¹¹⁵

One lay leader, when asked question number twelve of the survey about conclusions they may have about having a bi-vocational minister at their church, stated,

Having a bi-vocational minister is the better model. I feel all ministers of a congregation are bi-vocational. We have a job, in the church and outside the church. So, I feel bi-vocational minister strongly contributes to the feeling that the ministers is one of use or "more like us." He has the leadership position. But he is more a member of the team than always being the leader of the team. (In addition) the bi-vocational minister has to deal with all the same issues outside the church the congregation has to deal with. That results in (the bi-vocational minister) being more empathic to the real issues of each congregation member.¹¹⁶

This idea of "real issues" was also an ongoing theme, as mentioned, for the congregation. A number of ministers and lay leaders felt that the bi-vocational minister, because they had another job, was also having to deal with things like employment benefits, organizational work, balancing work and home-life just like the lay members of said church. This results in believing that they, the bi-vocational minister, was more in touch with some of the day to day, the real

¹¹⁴ Survey: Church #10, Minister #1.

¹¹⁵ This will be discussed more in the next chapter on bi-vocationalism and the denomination and seminaries.

¹¹⁶ Survey: Church #7, Lay Leader #6.

issues, those in the church were dealing with as well. A minister stated this well, when answering question twelve of the survey about conclusions in having a bi-vocational minister,

*Very challenging, stressful because (you) have your focus in two worlds and always feel like you're not doing enough in either of them. Hard to engage in self-care because ministry is full-time whether you are being paid part-time or not. One advantage is that by working in the "real" world, have a better feel for what's going on in the community, sometimes full-time ministry can be isolating.*¹¹⁷

What also made "it real" was that the bi-vocational ministers, almost across the board, brought their other job experiences to bear in the life of the congregation. Time and again, both the ministers and the lay leaders mentioned this as a mark in bi-vocationalism. It was also brought to bear not only in the life of the congregation but also in the personal development and sense of call with the ministers.

This "realness" spoke to a more theological grounding of what the gathered community is actually doing. It is about answering the question about what the gospel means- what it is and how it looks in the life of the church. One minister put this rather directly when they answered question twelve about the conclusions of having a bi-vocational minister. This bi-vocational minister stated that having a bi-vocational minister is ultimately *more in keeping with (the Apostle) Paul. (The) Minister can concentrate on the Gospel, less on 'How are we (the local church) are going to continue to pay me, so I can support my family.'*¹¹⁸

What also works for the bi-vocational church is that of shared leadership, the third theme of this chapter. In many of the traditional models of ministry, the ordained person maintains most of the stated if not the unstated leadership, even power, of the church. As much as the polity of the UCC tries to work against this reality, it is there in many local churches nonetheless.

¹¹⁷ Survey: Church #3, Minister #1.

¹¹⁸ Survey: Church #2, Minister #1.

What appears to work in the bi-vocational church is that the bi-vocational minister finds ways to distribute said power and leadership. As one minister stated,

*Historically, this was a very much a pastor-oriented congregation. There have been some Guys (sic) here who love that and really promoted that. When I got here, I knew one of the things I had to do to bring this church to a new level of vitality was to step back from that model and help them to step back from that traditional pastor type model and engage in the ministry in a much more active and authoritative way. Actually, they have always been very active, but they didn't necessarily take charge of anything without deferring to the pastor. Now, what I say matters very little around here. I love that actually. That's the way it should be.*¹¹⁹

One lay leader put it this way when answering question seven of the survey, the one about downsides and upsides to have a bi-vocational minister as opposed to having a full-time minister in the past,

*Leadership by the council is more important at (the name of the church) than at my previous church. Decisions regarding the wellness of the congregation are made with more input from the group rather than relying solely on the Pastor. The Pastor's voice is important, but not the sole arbiter like in my former church.*¹²⁰

A bi-vocational minister put it this way,

*It was, and I think that's, but there again it's the people's church. That's what liturgy means. People work. Okay, fine, that's what we want. It's not a one-man (sic) show out there.*¹²¹

This leadership component, if done right it appears, leads to new and involved laity. It truly is no longer a one-person show. This ownership quality was another mark of what works for the bi-vocational church. An example of this in one church is that of having a monthly “Laity Worship” where the members of the church perform all the functions of the service, from the sermon, to communion, to the prayers- all of it. This was mentioned as follows, when one

¹¹⁹ Interview: Church #5, Minister #1.

¹²⁰ Survey: Church #7, Lay Leader #1.

¹²¹ Interview: Church #3, Minister #1.

lay leader was answering question eight of the survey, one which asked about how the church has discovered creative ways to function while having bi-vocational minister,

*To give our (bi-vocational) minister a break, we launched “Laity Sunday” which is a day when the congregants run the whole service, right down to giving the sermon. It has turned out to be wonderful and enriches everyone. Although this is supposed to be the minister’s day off, he often attends and seems to be energized by it as are the rest of us.*¹²²

What was initially planned by the church as a practical way to attend to the emotional and familial needs of the bi-vocational minister turned into a theological reality of the lay members taking ownership of the worship life of the church.

This ownership theme was important as well- it was a part of the leadership theme. It was stated as some sort of default mechanism- if the minister is bi-vocational, or even part-time, the functioning of the church depended on the congregants by definition. One minister put it this way,

*(They- the laity) learn what’s important to them for ministry because if they aren’t involved it doesn’t happen.*¹²³

Another stated,

*It is not an easy life to live. It turns into a juggling act trying to find balance. It means sacrifices at times personally, with family, and even with the church. It means the church has to step up to be the church for ministry outside of worship to happen. It is made more challenging if you are battling inertia of (the) congregation. It is also one full of satisfaction knowing you are doing what God has called you to do and to see fruit from that work.*¹²⁴

A lay leader put it this way,

*Our congregation is fairly small and very close. We literally love each other and enjoy putting our faith to work for social justice and caring for others in our community. Everyone is made to feel welcome and is encouraged to participate in church mission projects and other events...*¹²⁵

¹²² Survey: Church #7, Lay Leader #2.

¹²³ Survey: Church #9, Minister #1.

¹²⁴ Survey: Church #9, Minister #1.

¹²⁵ Survey: Church #7, Lay Leader #7.

Another leader said the following in response to question number eight on the survey, the one which spoke to creative ways the church discovered their functioning while having a bi-vocational minister,

*(The name of the Pastor) is very consistent about making sure everyone understands that we need to work together to get our mission accomplished. He can't lead on everything. We have to use more of time and talents on projects. That greatly enhances our feelings of ownership for projects and our accountability for the results.*¹²⁶

Another lay leader from this same church stated, in response to the same question,

*We used to have two ministers who shared the responsibilities of our church, and that was wonderful with them both having different strengths. Now with just one, our church council and others have stepped up to govern, organize and participate in monthly lay services, manage the finances, drive mission, etc. It is a true congregation partnership.*¹²⁷

Another bi-vocational minister was even stronger in their response by stating, *if the church did not have the laity involvement that they have now, I don't think there would still be a church.*¹²⁸

A lay leader from this minister's church echoed this sentiment when they stated, in response to question number ten about the joys of congregational life now...*shared tasks and leadership.*

Very diverse, inclusive, justice-peace-liberal stance, local community immigration

work/ministry, giving to gun control groups and Southern Poverty Law Center. Shared

*fellowship events. Decisions made through consensus.*¹²⁹ Another lay leader from a different

church stated basically the same thing when they responded to question number twelve on the survey by stating that their church now had, *shared leadership and (shared)*

*preaching/worship.*¹³⁰ And, yet another bi-vocational minister put it this way,

So that part of it worked well. It, as I say, I had the same experience in M. It was, when I say it was positive for me, yeah, I was doing ministry, I was doing God's work and

¹²⁶ Survey: Church #7, Lay Leader #6.

¹²⁷ Survey: Church #7, Lay Leader #7.

¹²⁸ Interview: Church #1, Minister #1.

¹²⁹ Survey: Church #1, Lay Leader #1.

¹³⁰ Survey: Church #1, Lay Leader #1.

*hopefully letting people realize that Jesus is still with us. Not through me but through them. I think that's the critical thing is that people begin to realize that it's not, church isn't clergy, church is people.*¹³¹

This minister went on to say,

*Well, as I say, I think it forced the congregation to be more...they had to assume responsibility for making decisions. There were times that things had to be done, I wasn't around. So, you had to do it. Okay, you ordered this color tablecloth, well, great. Why do you have to have me involved with ordering tablecloths. Or it's Communion Sunday. Okay, fine. You know how to get things set up. Although I will say there were two times I wish I had. One time we had raisin bread, but the worst was the seeded rye. No, doesn't quite ... But there again, granted it's a simple decision but darn it they realized it, hey, okay, it's my church I gotta make these decisions. To me that's, or the, well, what hymns are we using? Okay, well work with the choir director. What it helped was they were able to take ownership.*¹³²

This encouragement to participate and take ownership was a key mark which spoke to what worked in the bi-vocational church. But what was interesting and somewhat newly stated here was the idea of what, practically, participation meant. Participation was two-fold in the sense that it was about deleting and then adding. What this means is that the model of lay members' involvement, for all intents and purposes, needs to stop being only on committees. In fact, in many churches which are celebrating bi-vocationalism, the traditional weekly meetings followed by the one monthly council or session meeting has been replaced with just one meeting per month. One bi-vocational minister described it this way in their interview,

*We completely streamlined our administrative bureaucratic structure. We have only one group that meets on a regularly basis. Everything else is Ad Hoc. Because what we found was that people were willing to step up, but they were getting burned out really quickly, so we developed ways for people to feel fully engaged without burning out. The Ad Hoc things come, they gather, they do their work, and they disband. It's had impact, even at that level.*¹³³

Limiting the number of meetings per month, even that to one, cannot be understated for adding

¹³¹ Interview: Church #2, Minister #1.

¹³² Interview: Church #2, Minister #1.

¹³³ Interview: Church #5, Minister #1.

life to bi-vocational living, even to church life in general. In addition to the aforementioned minister's statement about how this meeting change has had a positive impact in the church, the same thing has been going on in the church I serve since its founding in 2004. As part of its formation, it was discussed by the leadership about having the traditional model of worship, visitation, administrative tasks, number of meetings, etc. In the course of these discussions, it was decided to have just the one meeting, the council meeting, each month. A few glitches were experienced in the beginning. But now, the members of the council would not want to have any more meetings. It has opened up participation. If something comes up at the council meeting, someone steps up and attends to it and reports back at the next meeting. It has truly been a Godsend. It has brought new life to the leadership in the church.

This ethos of participation and leadership has extended itself to the life of many of the churches in the study. What has been one of the surprising findings, in addition to reducing the number of meetings, is that of the inclusion of children, the fourth and final theme of this chapter.

The tempo here, if you will, is not about children programs per se, but about children participating in worship and being able to embrace their gifts as well. Again, a paradigm shift is needed, as mentioned before. Where, in the past, children did little, if anything, in the life of the corporate worship, except for maybe their participation in a children's sermon followed by their leaving for a Sunday school time. Now what appears to work in the life of a bi-vocational congregation is to include them in the full life of Sunday morning. This means, for example, having them in the taking of the offering. This means, for example, having them hold the bread during communion. This means, for example, having them share their thoughts, ideas, and prayers during times of sharing. One minister described it this way,

*One of the other things that we need to do is, we wouldn't have to necessarily have so many bi-vocational preachers if we had programs that children could do, because if you have children in your church, you're gonna have adults in your church. It becomes an exponential thing. I was watching of all people, Oprah, and she was at the Potters House in Dallas with Bishop TD Jakes. I'm not saying that every church is going to be a Potters House church, but what I am saying is Potters House and other churches have programs where children are in integral part, there's something for children to do. When there's stuff for children to do, parents bring their children. If you can get the children, you gotta get the parents because we aren't sanctified daycare. And if parents come, they generally tell their friends about, and they could come again. I'm about exponential. You know, you tell somebody, and they tell somebody and so on and so. Just like the shampoo commercial.*¹³⁴

“When there’s stuff for children to do, parents bring their children.” This is true from a practical sense for sure. But it is deeper than this. For when a church includes the gifts of all people, including the children, new life is instilled in the church. As one lay leader stated, when responding to question ten on the survey, the one about current joys in the life of the church,

*My biggest joy is seeing the children, both mine and others, take ownership of their congregational experience. We have a culture that lets kids be kids and lets them participate at whatever level they wish and have built in kid-driven activities into the service. I love seeing little kids help with the collection or holding the bread during communion. I also love when they raise their hands to answer where they saw God this week, which is a part of our services every week.*¹³⁵

A minister weighed in on this when they said, also in response to question ten of the survey,

*The laughter of children, new music (we just purchased an electronic piano/organ). Lots of lay-led activities.*¹³⁶

This extends itself to other age groups as well. The young adults and those married with young children can be included as well. As one minister stated, in response to question eight on the survey asking about creative ways the church has discovered in response to having a bi-vocational minister,

*New ways to communicate- Facebook, Twitter, emailed newsletters, church web page.
New ways to encourage younger people to serve on church council, such as conferencing*

¹³⁴ Interview: Church #6, Minister #1.

¹³⁵ Survey: Church #7, Lay Leader #2.

¹³⁶ Survey: Church #10, Minister #1.

*into a meeting by phone when a babysitter is not available or bad weather keeps everyone home, yet the meeting can continue.*¹³⁷

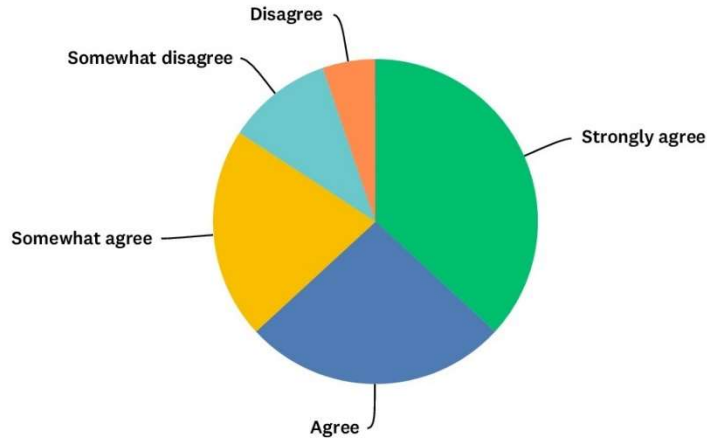
These new ways of inclusion lead to a new level of participation that is valued. It is valued because a church was forced to find new ways of doing church because of having a bi-vocational minister. These churches then discover that this was something not to be considered as a deficit but one which forced them to find their own personal and corporal gifts. This results in a new level of gratitude and thanksgiving followed by an ability to move into the future with hope and expectation.

By and large this has played out in the data. Again, when the survey data from both the bi-vocational ministers and the lay leaders is combined, we can see an agreement of sort. With question number three (see below), the one which asked if having a bi-vocational minister improved the functioning of the church we see the following: 84.21% of all who responded to the survey agreed that it had. Only 15.79% disagreed, with no one strongly disagreeing.

¹³⁷ Survey: Church #10, Minister #1.

Q3 Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church.(If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Answered: 19 Skipped: 2

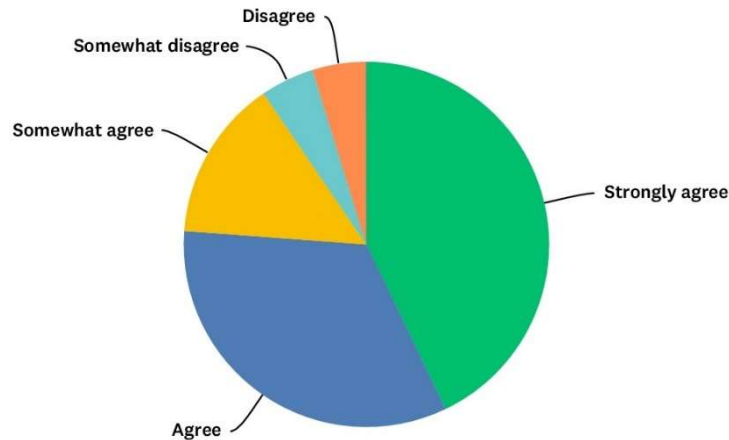


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly agree	36.84% 7
Agree	26.32% 5
Somewhat agree	21.05% 4
Somewhat disagree	10.53% 2
Disagree	5.26% 1
Strongly Disagree	0.00% 0
TOTAL	19

In regard to question number five (see below), the one which asks if having a bi-vocational minister increased congregant involvement in the ministries of the church, 90.48% agreed that it had, with 42.86% strongly agreeing with this question. Only 9.52% disagreed with this question on some level with, again, no one strongly disagreeing.

Q5 Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church.(If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Answered: 21 Skipped: 0

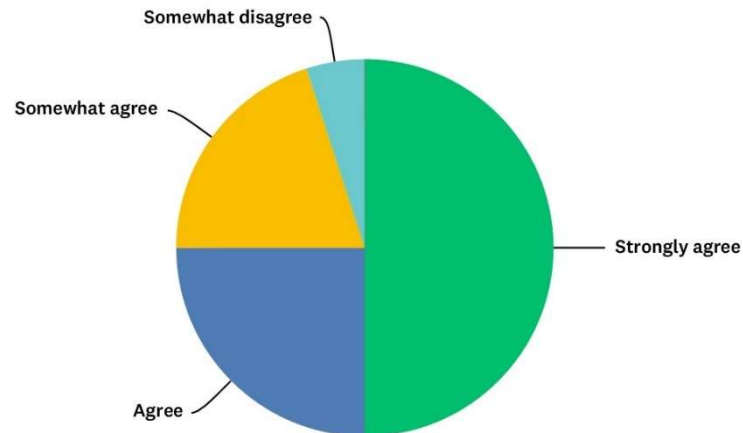


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	42.86%	9
Agree	33.33%	7
Somewhat agree	14.29%	3
Somewhat disagree	4.76%	1
Disagree	4.76%	1
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		21

Finally, with question number six (see below), the one which asks if bi-vocational living has been a good thing for the church, a full 95% agreed that it did, with 50% strongly agreeing. Only 5% somewhat disagreed with no one disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

Q6 Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church.(If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Answered: 20 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	50.00%	10
Agree	25.00%	5
Somewhat agree	20.00%	4
Somewhat disagree	5.00%	1
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		20

Bi-vocational living appears to be beneficial. One lay person, in responding to question twelve on the survey, the one which asks about conclusions with having a bi-vocational minister at your church, stated,

*I believe that having a bi-vocational minister is both a joy and a challenge for the minister and his family. We are very aware of his commitments outside of the church and try frequently to express gratitude for his vocation. Overall, this ministry model succeeds when there is open communication between the pastor, the church council and congregation. In the case of my church, it is a true gift and blessing to be a part of it.*¹³⁸

¹³⁸ Church #7, Lay Leader #7.

Another bi-vocational minister stated, when responding to question ten on the survey about the joys of congregational life, *great laity involvement. Lots of energy.*¹³⁹ This minister went on to state in their conclusions from question twelve, *as mentioned, the laity are very involved, including that of functioning at times in ways that the traditional, full-time, minister would have functioned.*¹⁴⁰ Another bi-vocational minister stated in their conclusion from question twelve, *it makes sense for a small congregation (mine is 12-15) and it fits everyone well. They need competent ministerial support on a budget; I am also a full-time teacher. Theologically, it's also a good fit; I am well trained, and I enjoy serving them.*¹⁴¹ Finally, another bi-vocational minister stated their positive conclusions in answering question seven by stating, *some folks do look back on the golden age of full-time pastors and church "secretaries" and miss that. But even those folks have become appreciative of the current status.*¹⁴² Followed by question twelve, *having a bi-vocational minister works well, streamlines church bureaucracy, and opens up enormous potential for great things to happen. And it is cheaper for the church as well.*¹⁴³

¹³⁹ Survey: Church #7, Minister #1.

¹⁴⁰ Survey: Church #7, Minister #1.

¹⁴¹ Survey: Church #8, Minister #1.

¹⁴² Survey: Church #5, Minister #1.

¹⁴³ Survey: Church #5, Minister #1.

QUESTIONS FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH WITH A BI-VOCATONAL MINISTER

- **In what ways do you think shared leadership between the clergy and laity ought to occur?**
- **To what extent are you increasing lay involvement, including children?**
- **In what ways would you go about identifying gifts in the members of your church?**
- **To what extent are you thinking about new ways of doing church?**

Chapter Eight: What works for the Denominations and Seminaries

Denominations and seminaries are in need to attend to the realities of bi-vocational living. The impact of bi-vocationalism, in light of how the denominations and the seminaries function, was discussed by many bi-vocational ministers in the interview section of this project. In fact, it was generally cited as a source of expressed frustration.

Like that of the previous chapters on the bi-vocational minister, the bi-vocational congregant, and the bi-vocational church, there are a number of themes which came through in the study which are in the purview of the denomination and the seminaries when it comes to the bi-vocational reality. The first theme is addressing a possible stigma in the church against those ministers who are bi-vocational or working part-time. The second theme is looking at how meeting times, denomination gatherings, and the like can better include bi-vocational and part-time ministers. The third and final theme is how to prepare seminarians as they enter the ordination process and towards their full inclusion in the ordained ministerial profession. All three of these were referred to as necessary components for the denominations and seminaries to attend to as the future will be filled with bi-vocational ministers.

As was referred to somewhat in Chapter Five, one of the themes which would help bi-vocational ministers is for the denomination and seminaries to attend to an apparent stigma in the Church having to do with bi-vocational work. This stigma appears to be two-fold: first, that many in the larger Church view a full-time ministerial call as “making it,” while those in part-time or bi-vocational calls were “settling” or “not making it” in the ministerial profession. And second, bi-vocational ministers have oftentimes been women and people of color resulting in the

possibility of an underlying sexism and racism intertwined with the first idea about those who “did not make it.”

The theme of the stigma of bi-vocational ministry was pronounced. One minister stated,

*I think, from what I've seen, bi-vocational ministry to churches and to pastors who are in full-time ministry is scary. It's something that's viewed as a failure. Churches who don't have enough to pay a full-time pastor and pastors who don't have churches who pay them enough to live on are failures. I think there's probably a great deal of truth even though ... to what I'm saying, even though if I sat people down and made them think about stuff, they would have no trouble saying, "Oh, no. Everybody is of sacred worth. Oh, no. This (bi-vocational ministry) is valuable ministry and still ministry," but I think that undercurrent, that undertone is they're not real, and it goes back to what we were talking about a little earlier about ... We're talking about the DS who wanted to close all the small churches in his district just because they're not valuable. They're not real, and they're just wasting resources that we could use elsewhere to support our real ministries, so I'm ...*¹⁴⁴

The words and phrases used here are powerful: “scary,” “failure,” “don’t have enough,” “not real,” “not valuable,” “wasting resources,” “real ministries.” When the leadership in the denominations is not supporting and advocating for bi-vocational ministers, this sort of “second class” status language permeates the culture. This is exacerbated by the commonplace questions like “how many members do you have?” or “how big is your budget?” in our Church-wide dialogues. Questions asked and the language used can be changed to better support the reality of bi-vocationalism and, thereby, reduce the stigma attached to same. For example, a question like “how is the spiritual life of your church going?” can go a long way in supporting the life of the bi-vocational minister and the bi-vocational congregation.¹⁴⁵

This idea of a “higher status” given to the full-time clergy was spoken to at length by another minister who experienced both working full-time and then as a bi-vocational minister,

¹⁴⁴ Interview: Church #1, Minister #1.

¹⁴⁵ On a side note: back in 2005, when I was starting a new church with another minister, we had a visit from one of the “higher ups” in the denomination who was coming for a visit to help. The “help” consisted of, in part, reminding us about needing to be a “Five for Five” church. There was no encouragement. There was no “thank yous.” To this day, I wonder what it would have felt like if there had been more encouragement and kindness exhibited here.

Well, my mind ... Don't quote me on this. My mind will say, "Oh, man. You're so stupid. Stop it. Just think for a minute." It would be hard not to be defensive for me if confronted that and ... because there are so many what I perceive as underlying assumptions about what ministry is. How do you unpack the depth of an obvious bias against part-time or bi-vocational ministry? How do you get all of the pieces that come together having to do with income, race, class, education, gender, sexuality because it ... I think it all ties in to form a picture of ... For instance, when I was in New York, New York Annual Conference as a local pastor, there was a local pastor group put together, and so I went to a couple of meetings as a local pastor. I was serving a Chinatown in lower Manhattan, and at the meeting, there were Asian women, Indian women, Indian men, African-American women, ba, da, da, da, da, one white man, and we had probably about 45-people meeting. That for me was an eye-opener of ... See, most of these people were also not full-time ministry or they were in multi-point churches, and they were out away from the real ministry that was going on, just relegated to those who couldn't afford something better, so I would say take a look at Christ and the gospel messages of how he went out to individuals and people to include them and how important it is, the small ministry is.¹⁴⁶

Another bi-vocational minister put it this way,

I think United Church in Christ in general, I love the UCC, but the thing I really don't like about them is they have no sensitivity to bi-vocational ministers at all. Even in the people who are training and going through the seminary process, the CEU's, all of that stuff is done during the day. They're expecting people to leave their jobs and they tell them, like, "Why? You're not paying them and we're not paying them either." And so, I don't think people should have to take a vow of poverty to do this and I think that's basically what it requires. So, I think in that sense, they're really insensitive to the fact. Particularly in the African American churches. When you're African American, you're much more likely to have people who are bi-vocational. I think that more and more people who go into the ministry are not 22 years old in seminary. They are 40. I went to seminary when I was 40. So, the idea of being, you know, only in ministry ... I had kids who were four, two and ... Let's see. Hold on. They were two, four and six. I wasn't going to be only in seminary and only, you know, going through my vocation only as a minister because I just couldn't afford to do that. Single women struggle with the same thing, or even people who are single parenting. I think there needs to be a lot more flexibility about that.¹⁴⁷

Could this “second class” status and the concomitant institutional structures and language used and discussed be due to historical sexism and racism issues? It most likely is and needs to be addressed by the denominations and seminaries.

¹⁴⁶ Interview: Church #1, Minister #1.

¹⁴⁷ Interview: Church #3, Minister #1.

Another theme, somewhat connected to the “higher status” issue, which could help bi-vocationalism and the larger church is for the denomination to look at how accessible its meetings, gatherings, etc. are vis-à-vis the schedules of a bi-vocational minister. By definition, bi-vocational ministers are working another job- sometimes by choice, oftentimes by necessity. Many denominational meetings are held during the day when the bi-vocationally ministers cannot attend. Other things, like conferences and trainings, are held with the built-in expectation that ministers who can attend are able to do so because their church is giving them the time off to attend. What about the bi-vocational minister whose “secular” job does not allow for said time off?

Another theme which came out during the study had to do with preparation. How well are the denominational judicatories and the seminaries preparing those who are entering the profession with the ever unfolding and increasing realities of bi-vocationalism? It was felt by the ministers who addressed this issue that this was not being done very well. One minister wrote some thoughts on bi-vocational ministry in this regard, especially when it came to the polity issues in the UCC:

But setting aside the normal ups and downs, I am more and more in the camp that says long-term, theologically benevolent, bi-vocational ministry in the U.C.C. may be not only hard but actually literally impossible – unless we take a Sharpie™ to our polity. In other words, if we continue piling our present version of the United Church of Christ onto the unicycle of bi-vocational ministry, we might meet a wall.

So, I offer some suggestions and please hold the tension if some of these suggestions contradict others:

- *U.C.C. churches like having one minister in charge of the ministry: call it ‘sole pastor’, ‘pastor and teacher’, ‘senior minister’, whatever you like. Organizationally and spiritually it seems to make sense and who had the budget for multiple senior pastors anyway. But guess what? If we’re serious about bi-vocational ministry, **having just one senior pastor is a terrible idea.** Bi-vocational ministry takes a lot out of you. I would gladly have a colleague with whom to share the preaching. At no extra cost to the church.*
- *Increased lay leadership and the realignment of authorized ministry: not only the prayers and readings but also preaching, that traditional bailiwick of (ordained) clergy, must be shared with lay members. Remember A City Upon a Hill was a lay sermon. Not*

too bad. “But if even the preaching is shared, what remains of ministry? Just the occasional sacrament?” I recommend we redefine ministry as discipling, or spiritual leadership development, and **appraise ministers exclusively on the basis of how much they engage others to faithfully do more.**

- Increased lay accountability: no doubt (name of church withheld) is a special place. But that doesn't mean it can inflate the value of Spring Yard Sale donations, in the thank-you letters sent for donor tax records. Actually that's fraud. So, every minister must choose between Pharisaical crusades for the letter of the law and acquiescence to the knowledge that a day of reckoning may arrive. And don't say “but they'll never bother with us” when we all know they already have: <http://www.ucc.org/obama-speech-in-2007-prompts-1>. But bi-vocational ministers don't have time or energy for this baloney. **Our churches need an alternate mechanism to ensure lay leaders adhere to all applicable regulations or we'll be fined and shuttered.**

- Training. Okay, here's the biggie. Most of us can picture the bi-vocational pathway for a person with a job they'll continue to work, a church they've been involved with, and a set locale: their church sponsors them as they undergo a course of study, preparation, and evaluation, and in time they serve bi-vocationally either where they are or in another church nearby. But it's utter chaos for a young person just starting out. Enter the MID process in or soon after college, follow the normative path through seminary, and you land in the first available pulpit wherever that may be. Good luck becoming bi-vocational out there – unless you have the constitution for chaplaincy AND there is a hospital nearby.

Okay, well why don't young people just get started on their non-ministry careers first and incorporate ministry later on? Because we must strike while the iron is hot. Home churches can't wait a decade for their MID to build family, life, and career, 9 times out of 10 in another place. And if we defer the would-be MID: “get another career; join a local congregation once you are established; start your process there” **I guarantee young people will hear “DON'T DO IT AT ALL”** and in a snap we lose a generation of U.C.C. ministers.

Instead, if we are serious about setting young people up in bi-vocational ministry, we need a program to engage them in meaningful ministry experiences at every station of their path – to the point of revisiting the prerogatives of authorized ministry to account for our new era. And almost certainly we will need substantive alternatives to the primacy of the local church of origin as custodian of the process AND the primacy of the local church of call as its conclusion: we need a way to support, mentor, challenge, encourage, and finally ordain young ministers that honors the limitations of our maxed out local churches. Folks, it's time to be as imaginative in our polity as we are in everything else (emphases by the interviewed minister).¹⁴⁸

Polity issues were tantamount for this bi-vocational minister. From lay leadership

accountability, to training, to ways the Member in Discernment (MID) process unfolds, this bi-

¹⁴⁸ *Thoughts on Bi-vocational Ministry* (Church #4, Minister #1).

vocational minister is encouraging the denomination to research the impact the increasing need for bi-vocational ministry is having on the whole process of ordination.

In addition to status and polity issues, another key concern stated was that of preparing the future minister to the need to have another job. One minister told this writer that a Master of Divinity student ought to be told on their first day of seminary that they better be thinking about how they are going to be able to get another job if they continue on their path to ordination. I know from my experience as a bi-vocational minister that without having completed a dual-degree program (M.Div./ M.S.W.), I would not be in the financial, emotional, and professional place I am in today. In fact, I remember working in my first church and an attendee of that church gave me a compliment and said something like, “that seminary you went to really prepared you well.” To which I responded, “yes, but a lot of what you see me be able to do I learned in Social Work school.”

Seminaries and Divinity schools need to offer these dual-degreed programs. As they offer more dual programs the seminarian and divinity student can better prepare themselves for bi-vocational ministry. There are now a number of seminaries and divinity schools which are addressing this issue. In looking into this concern, a cursory Google search came up with the following Seminaries and Divinity schools which are offering dual degree programs:

- Gordon Conwell Seminary:¹⁴⁹ M.Div. and M.A. in Counseling degrees.

¹⁴⁹ **Master of Divinity / Master of Arts in Counseling Dual Degree** (<https://www.gordonconwell.edu/degree-programs/Dual-MDIV-MACO.cfm>- accessed 12-19-2018: *Prepare for various careers in professional counseling and/or pastoral ministry through the Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Counseling dual degree. By integrating the theological training and ministry components of the M.Div. with the counseling training and practicum experience of the M.A. in Counseling, you'll expand the breadth of your foundation and the scope of your opportunities to serve. Students will be prepared to meet ordination requirements for many Protestant denominations in the U.S., as well as service in chaplaincy programs (military, hospital, national parks and others). Upon graduating, they will also be qualified to sit for the national Mental Health Counselor and/or Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT) licensure examinations.*)

- Harvard Divinity School:¹⁵⁰ M.Div. and degrees in Business, Law, Public Policy, etc.
- Howard University School of Divinity:¹⁵¹ M.Div. and M.B.A degrees.
- Princeton Theological Seminary:¹⁵² M.Div. and M.S.W. degrees.
- The University of Chicago Divinity School:¹⁵³ M.Div. and degrees in Law, Public Policy, and Social Service.
- Vanderbilt Divinity School:¹⁵⁴ M.Div. and M.Ed. in Community Development.

¹⁵⁰ **Dual Degrees** (<https://hds.harvard.edu/academics/degree-programs/dual-degrees-> accessed 12-19-2018: *MTS and MDiv students may take advantage of the opportunity to pursue degree programs concurrently in a number of schools of the University. HDS students have earned dual degrees from the Harvard Business School, Harvard Kennedy School, Harvard Law School, and Tufts University Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.*)

¹⁵¹ **Master of Divinity/Master of Business Administration** (http://divinity.howard.edu/academics_master_business_admin.html- accessed 12-19-2018: *The Master of Divinity/Master of Business Administration (MDiv/MBA) degree program is offered by the Howard University School of Divinity (HUSD) and School of Business (HUSB). It is tailored to meet the needs of today's leaders who wish to gain a strong theological education and management education to enhance their effectiveness in ministry, business, non-profit, and public sector careers. By combining the disciplines, students can earn both degrees in less time than completing the degree separately.*

¹⁵² **Joint MDiv and MSW Program in Ministry and Social Work** (<https://ptsem.edu/academics/degrees/master-of-divinity-> accessed 12-19-2018: *A joint program leading to the Master of Divinity degree from the Seminary and the Master of Social Work degree from Rutgers University's Graduate School of Social Work is available for students who expect to enter forms of ministry requiring competence both in the disciplines of theology and in those associated with social work. MDiv students interested in the joint program should inquire about the program early during their junior year and then apply in January of their middler year. In consultation with the registrar, the MDiv requirements are completed as usual in the first three years. Immediately following the granting of the MDiv degree, the student enters the summer session at the Rutgers Graduate School of Social Work with advanced standing and may complete all requirements for the MSW earlier than might otherwise be the case, ordinarily by the end of the fourth academic year.*

¹⁵³ **Dual-degree programs** (<https://divinity.uchicago.edu/dual-degree-programs-0-> accessed 12-19-2018: *The Divinity School offers dual-degree programs with the University's Irving B. Harris School of Public Policy Studies, Law School, and School of Social Service Administration. These programs serve students who wish to combine education in public religious leadership with professional training in public policy, law or social work. Dual-degree programs usually allow students to complete the two degrees together in less time than if they were pursued separately.*

¹⁵⁴ **New: Dual Degree with Peabody College's M.Ed. in Community Development and Action** (<https://divinity.vanderbilt.edu/degrees/CDADualdegree.php>- accessed 12-19-2018: *The dual degree program between Peabody College and the Vanderbilt Divinity School (VDS) allows students to pursue a Master's in Education (M.Ed.) in Community Development and Action (CDA) while also pursuing either an Master of Theological Studies (MTS) or a Master of Divinity (MDiv) degree from VDS. The joint degree program allows students to gain the advantages of both degrees and schools and draws on CDA and VDS' common interests in promoting ethical, effective, and sustainable community-level change. The joint degree program enables students to complete the M.Ed/MTS degree in 3 years, and the M.Ed./M.Div. degree in 4 years, saving one year in school for both scenarios.*

These opportunities are the life-blood for the future for bi-vocational ministers. The minister of the future needs to be able to have another job to primarily make ends meet financially. These dual programs attend to this financial need, true, but they also bring an added training to the bi-vocational minister and the church in which they serve. As such, these dual programs need to be something shared with everyone who is thinking about entering ministry.

In addition to how seminarian and divinity students are being prepared for the pastorate and ordination, the process needs to be more sensitive to those who are bi-vocational. As one minister said in their interview,

*I think just I think it's important that when ... I think it's important that the church recognize that many people in ministry are bi-vocational and to become a lot more sensitive to that end. Expectations of how people progress through the process of becoming ordained. And even how things are scheduled. When people want to participate more in the larger group, I think there just needs to be a sensitivity to that that's not there right now. And also, in terms of, even just expectations of pastors. It's very challenging for us, for example, to increase membership because we don't do this all the time. So, there are ways in which people typically increase membership that we can't do because we're working our other job. So, just to be sensitive to that.*¹⁵⁵

This same minister put it another way during another part of their interview,

*So, those are not things that are flexible or can be moved easily. So, when it comes to pastoral care concerns, participating more in the ministry of the organization itself, the body, it's hard to do that when you're bi-vocational. It's also hard for people who are in discernment. That's where I really worry. I think people in discernment, it takes them longer to get through the process because they're bi-vocational.*¹⁵⁶

Another minister, when thinking and talking about the future of the church stated this ongoing preparatory concern well when they said,

I was also blessed to be in a position where I didn't have to work on Monday and could do that (go to CPE). Not everybody is able to do that. I think that seminaries need to do a better job of being honest with the seminarians, and tell them, there's a greater chance that they're not gonna get a full-time job. That needs to be said during the "dating process" which students come as potential students, that needs to be said. And I know it sounds gloomish and doomish, but it's a stated fact. And tell them, if you do get a full-

¹⁵⁵ Interview: Church #3, Minister #1.

¹⁵⁶ Interview: Church #3, Minister #1.

*time (church) job, know that you're gonna have to have a second job. We have to educate our members and our churches that if you all aren't gonna pony up the money so that you can have a full-time pastor that doesn't have to have a second job, you can't complain when your pastor has a second job.*¹⁵⁷

There were many concerns stated by a handful of the bi-vocational ministers, but not all of them. This needs to be taken in account, as there are a number of variables in play, it appears, with those who voiced those concerns. Some had to do with the transitional nature of their church- as mentioned, those churches who had been bi-vocational for some time, or those churches who had intentionally moved in that direction, were less concerned than those who did not. Also, those bi-vocational ministers who appeared to feel like they were responsible for the many, if not all, aspects of a congregational life were more concerned about these denominational issues than those bi-vocational ministers who, for whatever reasons, did not feel as responsible. Whatever the case, it is instructive for the denominations, seminaries, and divinity schools to hear these concerns. After all, these concerns were most likely felt and attended to on some level by all bi-vocational ministers one time or another.

These concerns were best summed up by one bi-vocational minister who, in addition to their footnoted writing above, said the following in their interview when answering an open-ended question about bi-vocationalism,

Sure, yeah. So, the big thing I've been thinking about, and you can take it or leave it, but I think that where there are churches that have had bi-vocational ministry for a while that they might be okay. And where there are churches that have the resources and the structure I guess for a full-time minister or even a half-time minister, that those congregations might do okay. But the congregations that are used to the full-time and are now forced, for one reason or another, to have just the Sunday only quarter time let's say ministry, that transition I think is harder than many of us might have thought it was going to be. And I think that there's going to be a lot of congregations that are going to be making that transition. You might run into this. So, my question would be 'what are some adjustments that we as a denomination can be making so that that transition is as easy as possible'? And I came up with three ideas. And I don't really know how they quite go together.

¹⁵⁷ Interview: Church #6, Minister #1.

One of them is, and I think this first idea is one that maybe is already floating around, that we got to get away from the minister is the one that preaches the sermon first and foremost. Because sermon prep can take up a lot of time. And I'm not convinced that my members are that much better off on having heard me preach a sermon than they would be if we had read the Bible and sung some praise songs and had some prayers and had a time for people to share what the struggles are going on in their lives and had a time for people to share what some of the joys are that they have encountered. I don't know if it would've been a total disaster if we had had sermons every other week or however you want to do it, communion one week, sermon the next, whatever. That I think would be something that could be changed. Or lay sermons, the extent to which we could be as a denomination somehow building up the confidence of our lay members to preach the sermon. I think that would be one. Well, and then part of that is so what are you doing when you're not preaching your sermon? You're developing the leaders and building up the discipleship.

The next thought I had was the administration. And, again, this could just be my congregation, but I talked to other people and it seems like this is common. There's a lot of churches that are just a mess administratively when it comes to are your finances in order? Are your by-laws in order? Is your 501 c3 status in order? Are you getting your boilers inspected on a regular basis? Do you have ..., all these little things that churches think they're exempt. And they're usually not. Sometimes they are, but not always. And then I thought to myself, half the time I spend on administrative aspects, as a minister I wasn't relying on my trustees to do what they probably should've done anyway. So, I thought to myself, "All right, well what if the denomination, what if the United Church of Christ New Jersey Association could hire an accountant, a bookkeeper, a financial consultant?" I don't know what they call it. And this person is available for any congregation that wants their services, within reason. They're not going to do everything for you, but they can come and sort of help you set up a little system for how we're going to do this. They can come, work with you to figure out what exactly you need. We spent so much time trying to figure out payroll service, to get a automatic payroll. And if we could've had someone just walk us through that, it would've been so much ... Who knew what they were doing. So, then I thought if we could have someone who could do that, the minister could work with that person, that person could work with the church. Not every church would want it. But the churches that are open to it would then have this resource available to them. So that would be my second thought.

And then the third thought is about training new ministers, which is, I don't know what that's going to look like. I know we're moving away from the seminary. Only approach which I think makes sense. But if you're saying you need a call to be ordained, and what does a call look like? There's going to be a place where you're going to be the minister. What if that place doesn't exist? What does that mean? So, I think that we got to really open up the door on how we understand the role of the local congregation as the place where people come from who are going to be ministers eventually as the place where people get ordained and, honestly, as the place where people have their principal ministry. Because now as I'm in law school I'm sort of wondering, "All right," so I'm imagining myself in a public interest setting, "what will my ministry look like in a public interest setting?" And I just go back to Reverend JP here in New Jersey who's an immigration lawyer. And in many respects her immigration law practice is a ministry. It's

called CE, HH, where people go, and she works with them and finds ways for them to stay in this country and to keep their families together. And I think that ... I might be putting words in her mouth, but I think that it would be a great disservice to Reverend P if we were to say she's only a minister on Sundays when she's in her congregation preaching the word, and the rest of the days she's not a minister somehow. Shouldn't she be allowed to be ordained to a position like that? I wonder. Yeah, I wonder. So right now, in my understanding with our polity is you've got to find a traditional four-wall, white-steepled church. Yeah. To get ordained. Once you're ordained, you might be able to keep your ordination if you're in a different, alternative ministry let's say. But the traditional church is still conceptualized and privileged as the A1 ministry. And I think it's not practicable. But I also think that if we want to help other people see what this whole thing is all about, what better way than having ordained, full-on kit and caboodle ministers who are out in the community doing the work that we believe to be of God's kingdom.¹⁵⁸

There are numerous thoughts here- from ones having to do with polity, to the idea of how an ordained minister ought to function, to the concerns for the preparation for ordination. These thoughts were echoed by another bi-vocational minister,

I think I'm preparing the next generation of preachers who are, you know, we have denomination of requirements to go to seminary. I think that if we're going to require our ministers to go to seminary, then as a denomination we need to make sure those ministers get the financial support they need to go. Or, figure out a way to fund the seminary so seminarians don't come out of their graduate program with hundreds of thousands of dollars of debt. Because honestly, that is just modern-day slavery. If you're going to have alternate paths to ordination, make sure that they are equitable and across the board for everybody to take advantage of it. There are some conferences where you don't necessarily have to have an M.Div. in order to be ordained as a pastor. There are some conferences and associations that don't require you to have CPEs in order to be ordained. I have a friend who probably will not be ordained until after he retires from his daytime as a teacher because he cannot take off 16 weeks of one day a week to go do some CPE. It's impossible. While I understand the need for, and, I dreaded every day go Monday for 16 weeks, I was mad. I was also blessed to be in a position where I didn't have to work on Monday and could do that. Not everybody is able to do that. I (also) think that seminaries need to do a better job of being honest with the seminarians, and tell them, there's a greater chance that they're not gonna get a full-time job. That needs to be said during the "dating process" which students come as potential students, that needs to be said.¹⁵⁹

This interviewee brought to light a number of concerns faced by would-be ministers, especially

¹⁵⁸ Interview: Church #4, Minister #1.

¹⁵⁹ Interview: Church #6, Minister #1.

in the United Church of Christ (UCC), which out to be addressed by the denomination and seminaries. The first is the financial burden ministers face when having to go to seminary. The second is the lack of equity in the various paths, requirements, and expectations found in the different conferences and associations for Members in Discernment (MID). And the third is for seminaries to educate their students to the reality that many seminarians will not find a full-time pastorate following graduation and the completion of the ordination requirements. As such, the seminarians need to be thinking early and often about other ways to make a living. Again, the denominations, seminaries, and divinity schools, even the larger Church as a whole, ought to listen to these concerns. If they are not attended to, the Church will continue to decline and will, consequently, be of little use for the work of Christ.

QUESTIONS FOR THE DENOMINATIONS AND SEMINARIES IN THEIR SUPPORT OF BI-VOCATIONAL LIVING

- **To what extent are bi-vocational ministers treated differently than full-time clergy?**
- **Have you researched how bi-vocational ministry is affecting your ministers and the congregations?**
- **Have you adjusted your expectations for ministers and congregations in light of your research on bi-vocational ministry?**
- **In what ways are you educating seminarians to the financial realities of the pastorate?**
- **To what extent are you re-evaluating, in the light of the bi-vocationalism, the process of ordination?**

Chapter Nine: Conclusion; Future of the Church and Further Study

In the course of reading the surveys and especially doing the interviews with the bi-vocational ministers, a concern about the future of the church was important to many. These concerns centered around two main themes. The first was the structure of the physicality of the church itself. The second had to do with the financial burden on being a minister in today's day and age.

One bi-vocational minister expressed the future of the church this way, when they were asked if there was anything else they wanted to share at the end of their interview,

Well, let's put it this way, I think it's something that the church is going to have to give some serious thought to because I think this is the only way we're going to be able to minister to people. And I kept saying over the years, "We have to find new ways of doing church." That doesn't mean we do things different on Sunday. But what it means is that we have different structures of the church, corporate structures, as I mentioned that kind of turning like with OV Presbyterian and F. merging, forming the B. church with no edifice, no central edifice, but instead have sites for mission and activity. I think that's where the church is going to have to go.¹⁶⁰

As many know, a large proportion of a church's budget and a large portion of a church's efforts and conversations center around the concern for the maintenance of the building. As has been seen in numerous places, this will not be able to continue. New ways of meeting and gathering as the church will need to be pursued and attempted. In the church I currently serve we rent the weekly worship space. The monthly cost for this is \$600 per month. Six hundred dollars to maintain a physical space to worship and gather every Sunday. This undoubtedly is less than many other churches spend. In fact, there are quite a few of the current members who found this variable as one which attracted them to the church to begin with. As a result of this lower monthly cost, last year we were able to give \$30,000 to various concerns in the community and

¹⁶⁰ Interview: Church #2, Minister #1.

across the world. In other words, having a lower monthly gathering cost opened up wonderful ways to be able to bring the gospel message to others. Recently, a lay leader of another church called me to discuss what they had heard about as being “our success.” Success, in this context, was being able to do a number of valuable mission projects, meeting the budget, etc. This lay leader asked this writer how they might be able to do the same. To which this writer responded, “have you thought about selling your building in order to open up more financial opportunities for mission?”

In some sense, the ability to focus on the needs of the community, as opposed to paying for and exerting emotional, financial, and physical energy on a building can be considered the Spirit moving the Church to new ways of being. As one minister stated,

In a way we're to go back to the early church. I mean you had your metropolis and yes, each metropolis had a bishop, but then there was the chora, the farmlands outside, the villages and they would appoint an elder, a presbyter, a priest, to take care of these areas. Now on major festivals, yes, it will all come in to the metropolis but most of the time their worship, their ministry was out there in the chora. And that I think is what we need to go back to, whereas insisting that every church is its own little stand-alone, that may have worked in the 40s but it doesn't work anymore.

Let's be very honest, what is the one issue that will drive, to destroy those churches? The issue's solved because of this was selling the parsonage. The next issue comes, we need major repairs on the church. And how are we going to pay for it?

It's this darn edifice complex. If we could only get rid of these buildings and quit worrying about the building, I think we'd be better served. And I think that's the way the church has gotta go. It's like in Europe. Okay, the state owns it, good. You have your museum, you have your gothic church, it's yours. Have fun. I think that's where we have to go.¹⁶¹

In addition to this edifice issue, the other issue that speaks to the future of the church is the struggle with money. Simply put, there is apparently not enough money to continue funding many local churches as there was in the past. As mentioned in the chapter on what works for the

¹⁶¹ Interview: Church #2, Minister #1.

bi-vocational minister, money was also spoken about in the context of the future of the church.

As one bi-vocational minister stated,

Unfortunately, it (bi-vocational living) is THE future of the church, because churches don't have the same income stream that it had 50 years ago. Actually, not even 25 years ago. 25 years ago, if you went into ministry and you were full time, you didn't have to worry about anything. Very few churches now are offering full-time clergy positions, because they can't afford it. Part of that is because our message is not as relevant as it could be, part of it is because some of us are so stuck in 1974 that we can't think past that and we are losing our best and our brightest to mega churches that are giving generation X, Y and Z what they really want.

Now, that is not to say that full-time ministry has gone by the wayside by any stretch of the imagination. You just have to understand that if you want to be full-time pastor, there's a possibility that you're not going to make enough money, and you're going to have to have a second job. But that's also this country in a nutshell. There're very few people who can get by on one salary these days. Most married couples, both members of the party are working. It's very rare that you have what was considered a "Father Knows Best" model of a home life. Add to that, you know, double income, no kids, you don't need to be at home, you can go out and have that second job.

While it's admirable to think that we can go back to that, and that's kind of what is being said politically — yes, I pulled some politics in here — that we can go back to the 50's, all will be well- where dad goes to work, and mom stays home and vacuums in high heels and pearls, that's not going to happen. That never really happened, let's be honest. We can't go back to which never existed. I happen to be a man of color from the south. Everybody in my family worked. The only women who stayed home in my family were the women married to steel workers. And the steel workers worked double shifts so they could afford for their wives to stay home.

My maternal grandmother went to work every day. My paternal grandmother went to work every day. And both of my grandfathers had excellent jobs. I don't know what it is to have a stay-at-home family. My father's third wife, who was my stepmother, stayed home for a year after she had my younger sister. After that she went back, I don't know what a stay at... I don't understand that term. Likewise, there is no way that if you are, unless you went to seminary with no loans and you went to college with no loans, you're gonna have to have a second job, period, because they are very few places that ... Currently we are sitting in LC, Virginia — let me explain this way — which is technically the wealthiest county in America. It's a radically rich county and the one that you drove through to get here, there are facts. One and two, one and two, one and two. Median income is about \$109,000. \$109,000, I feel, makes you middle class. \$109,000 in Alabama means that you own a plantation, but you don't make \$109,000 in Alabama. Let's call a thing, a thing. That being said, even in the wealthiest two counties in America, one and two, both parents have to go to work even with a median income of both counties of \$109,000.

I don't know any preachers that make \$109,000. That said there are some, I don't fit the profile. But none of my preaching friends are making \$109,000. That being said, if you can't live on \$109,000 in the wealthiest county in America, and you can't because the

median house price out here is \$435,000. As a minister, you're not making that. You're doing good if you make a three-quarters of that. And you still have to figure out how you work that out and feed your family and pay back your student loan. And establish a college fund for your children if you have them.

Unfortunately, yeah, bi-vocationalism is the way of the — it's not even the way of the future, it is the now, and will be.¹⁶²

Unfortunately, or fortunately? That is the question. In many cases it is unfortunate given the anxiety for the future found in many churches. Many churches wish and try to get back to the “golden” days of full coffers and packed attendance. For them, it can be unfortunate to see their attempts fail year and year. And yet, it can be fortunate for those churches which have navigated bi-vocationalism for the better.

Bi-vocationalism is the future of the Church. It is the future of the United Church of Christ as well. The statistics speak to this reality. Yet, bi-vocationalism ought not be thought of in the term of scarcity but of opportunity. Bi-vocationalism offers the Church in general, and the local church specifically, the opportunity to embrace the gifts God has given to all. This study has brought this forth. In it, it has shown that bi-vocational ministers are called to the unique position of working in the church all the while working in another venue. It has also pointed to how the laity can embrace their gifts in ways that have not been experienced without this reality. The combination of the two brings opportunities to the local church in many ways never experienced. It can offer the body of Christ an ability to take to heart the biblical encouragement to share gifts with one another.

The idea of focusing on gifts in the bi-vocational setting needs to be encouraged more than it has in the past. Much has been discussed, and written, about how the bi-vocational minister can better function in their role. Some has been written about how congregants view their bi-vocational minister, but little in the literature asks and encourages all to make “gift

¹⁶² Interview: Church #6, Minister #1.

identification” a priority. This reality, if you will, is something which came out in doing this study, however indirectly. In other words, a question about gifts was not specifically asked, but its implications were felt, nonetheless. This could be seen in how some of the bi-vocational ministers felt they were overwhelmed, or when some of the congregants felt the bi-vocational minister was not available as often as desired. A focus on “gift identification” would help relieve many of these concerns. It needs to be done for a successful bi-vocational ministry setting.

One of the main resources which does speak to this “gift concern” is the book, as was included in the Literature Review, *Preaching, Planning, and Plumbing*, written by Steve Clapp, Ron Finney, and Angela Zimmerman. In the introduction of this book, the authors write,

The preparation of this book started with a study of bivocational ministry- a look at those persons who serve as pastors of churches but who have an additional vocation or occupation...In the process of learning more about bivocational ministry, we repeatedly found ourselves dealing with questions like:

- *What is ministry? What do we really mean by “the priesthood of all believers,” a concept accepted by most mainline Protestant and Anabaptist churches?*
- *What does bivocational ministry teach us both about the set-apart ministry and about the ministry to which all people are called?*
- *How can people be helped to better identify and understand spiritual gifts which they have received and determine how to use them in Christ’s service?*¹⁶³

It is this third question which is the most important to this study. How can bi-vocational ministers better identify their own spiritual gifts? How can bi-vocational congregants and churches understand their gifts? How can bi-vocational ministers, along with denominational

¹⁶³ Steve Clapp, *Preaching, Planning, & Plumbing: The Implications of Bivocational Ministry for the Church and for You*, Christian Community Resources (Fort Wayne, Ind. (6404 S. Calhoun Street, Fort Wayne, Ind. 46807): Christian Community, 1999).

leaders and seminary and divinity schools, help students and those in the ordination process begin to think more directly about this topic?

All members of the bi-vocational community can identify their gifts by looking at their talents and their strengths they possess in their daily living. The bi-vocational minister can identify their talents by simply asking themselves “what are they good at?” “Are they talented with preaching?” “Are they talented with visiting and counseling others?” “Are they talented with leading and coaching others?” In asking themselves these questions, they are not to believe they can do all things for the local church. Rather, they are to identify those areas in their lives where they are best equipped to be a part of the gathered community, own this, state this with their congregants, and ask others in the community where they can use their talents and their gifts, especially where the bi-vocational minister is less equipped. For example, if the bi-vocational minister is not talented with administrative tasks, they need to admit to same and ask others in the community who is better suited for same. In so doing, they are admitting to a need for others to step up and offer their talents for the betterment of the community.

Those “others” in said community are the congregants. They too can be encouraged to discover their talents they bring to the community. Many congregants work in jobs, their other vocation outside the church, in which they have many talents. Some are managers in their workplaces. Others are salespeople. Some are organizers and counselors. Others are cooks, dishwashers, servers. All of these talents can be used for the betterment of the community.

So, in identifying these gifts and these talents, one might ask “why does one even need a pastor?” For, is it not true that if all the members of the community were to identify their talents, there may not even be a need for a pastor? This is not the case. The educated clergy is needed in the bi-vocational setting to offer a theological grounding which can only be discovered and

honed via a seminary education. This grounding is found in the bi-vocational minister's understanding, discovered via their education, of the larger picture of how a community functions. Their education with systems, history, psychology, ethics, etc. informs them as the larger community discovers and owns their talents. A lay leader may be talented with finance, but the bi-vocational minister, with their education, brings to the table an understanding of money which might be less capitalistic and more theological in its use within the community. A lay leader may be talented with secular counseling, but the bi-vocational minister adds a theological understanding to the theological place and role of being with another which the secular counselor may not possess. This speaks to a new idea of the role of the bi-vocational minister. No longer ought the ordained minister be the "authority" in all aspects of the churches' life, but rather as a coach who understands and empowers the lay members of the local church into their God-given gifts, talents, and abilities.

This speaks to the main area for further study vis-à-vis this project. Lay members have much to offer the gathered community. Despite numerous attempts to get congregants to respond by asking their ministers to encourage them, there were only ten congregants who did so, all of which who came from only two churches.¹⁶⁴ Why might this be the case? It is my belief that the congregants have not been sufficiently educated, encouraged, and coached to their vital roles in the church. They still believe, generally speaking, that the pastor "knows how to do everything better than I do." Can a study be done someday which identifies how the talents of a successful church can be accredited to the lay leadership of said church?

Another area for further study would be to look at training vis-à-vis a vibrant bi-vocational ministry. It became apparent that the more vibrant bi-vocational ministries were those

¹⁶⁴ One of these churches was the church I serve.

whose communities started out in bi-vocational living or had been trained to move into this status over time. The latter may have been due to the personality, and personal training, of the bi-vocational minister more than any formal training. It is important to discover if bi-vocational work is more readily embraced from the outset. It is my anecdotal belief that it is.

In addition, in the context of the UCC, it is apparent that statistics are not available for specific conferences and associations. This study was specific, by and large, for the UCC-Central Atlantic Conference. It is my belief that the results of this bi-vocational study can be expanded to include all the conferences and associations within the UCC denomination specifically and in most mainline denominations generally. All in all, bi-vocationalism can be a vibrant model. In fact, done right, it may even be more vibrant than many of the more traditional models we find today, for it calls for and demands the involvement of the laity and their spiritual gifts.

The Venn diagram below has been put together as a visual tool of this study in the support of bi-vocationalism. The questions listed are placed under the four different players in bi-vocational living: the bi-vocational minister, the bi-vocational congregant, the bi-vocational church, and the denominations and seminaries. When asked and discussed in the various places and venues within the larger Church, these qualitative questions will help all involved to better ascertain the direction needed to take in make bi-vocational living vibrant and successful.

Questions to Ask

FOR THE BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OR FOR SOMEONE CONSIDERING BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTRY

- What preparation do you need to have to enter bi-vocational ministry?
- In what ways are you going to be “available” for both vocations?
- How does your theological and psychological awareness ground your work?
- In what ways are you clear about the need for money in your life?
- To what extent are you going to identify and use your gifts and the gifts of those in the church?

FOR THE CONGREGANT WITH A BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER

- In what ways are you identifying and claiming your gifts?
- What do you think about ministry as a team?
- To what extent are you holding the bi-vocational minister and yourself accountable to the gospel?
- To what extent do you think financial giving to your local church ought to be a priority?

FOR THE DENOMINATIONS AND SEMINARIES IN THEIR SUPPORT OF BI-VOCATIONAL LIVING

- To what extent are bi-vocational ministers treated differently than full-time clergy?
- Have you researched how bi-vocational ministry is affecting your ministers and the congregations?
- Have you adjusted your expectations for ministers and congregations in light of your research on bi-vocational ministry?
- In what ways are you educating seminarians to the financial realities of the pastorate?
- To what extent are you re-evaluating, in the light of the bi-vocationalism, the process of ordination?

FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH WITH A BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER

- In what ways do you think shared leadership between the clergy and laity ought to occur?
- To what extent are you increasing lay involvement, including children?
- In what ways would you go about identifying gifts in the members of your church?
- To what extent are you thinking about new ways of doing church?

Appendix I: The Survey and Interview Responses

THE QUESTIONS- Survey (Church #1; Minister #1) **(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)**

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Declining membership, which led to declining income, which led to declining pastoral compensation, which led to part-time ministry.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat agree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Pastoral ministry is limited to worship on the weekends, but it also encourages greater laity involvement.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat disagree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upsides(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

One obvious upside is that the church does not struggle to raise funds to the pastoral staff's compensation package. We also do not own a church building but rent space. Our comparative overhead is extremely low. A downside is there is no one available to engage in ministry to/with/in the community where the church meets.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We have two bi-vocational ministers, termed "Covenant Co-Pastors". We work more on the emerging church model with active lay and clergy switching roles in worship. Each pastor preaches once per month (as fits their schedule), one Sunday a month is bi-lingual English/Spanish worship, while the remaining one to two Sundays each month are open to other members. We also played a major role, through the expertise of one of our co-pastors, in establishing an active neighborhood immigrant resource center, open five days a week (or more).

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We are a strong, if small, church community dedicated to the social gospel. We don't have to dumb down our social vision of ministry to appease a more conservative funding base. Also, after several years of deficit funding we have stabilized our budget!

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We continue to express a great deal of frustration and experience anxiety over our membership size. It remains small yet committed.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

It fits the needs of the congregation, mostly financially. It also fulfills the needs of pastoral staff to be engaged in ministry in those places without the resources to pay a full-time minister.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking “yes” you are willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes- co-pastor.

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lanasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

Skipped question.

THE QUESTIONS- Survey (Church #1; Lay Leader #1)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We are small: about 20 actives with two bi-vocational ministers and two additional UCC ordained who also participate in worship and leadership (3/4 have doctorates).

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We are small and can’t afford a full-time minister. The two bi-voc. ministers offer perspective from their full-time work.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upside(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We have never had a full-time minister.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Everyone has at least a small role in the church that may have been done by a full-time minister if we had one. We also split preaching between our four ordained UCC ministers.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Shared tasks and leadership. Very diverse, inclusive, justice-peace-liberal stance, local community immigration work/ministry, giving to gun control groups and Southern Poverty Law Center. Shared fellowship events. Decisions made through consensus.

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

If several key parishioners left the church, we would probably shut down. Church growth is stagnant and much of this is due to bi-voc. ministers who spend no time on church growth.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Shared leadership and preaching/worship.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking "yes" you are

willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

No. (Narrative response omitted to maintain confidentiality.)

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lanasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

Skipped question.

THE QUESTIONS- Survey (Church #1; Lay Leader #2)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We are a small church and require a bit of hands on assistance of a Pastor.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat disagree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

For me personally the bi-vocational minister has other irons in the fire to not necessarily address the need of a congregant in need of a hands-on interaction.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upsides(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

See previous response.

Downside- not available when necessarily needed, sometime pre-occupied with other aspects of life.

Upside- the opposite of previous response. Availability.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We have a Pastoral Care Team that handles the other duties as assigned that the Pastor is unable to do.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat Agree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We have a free flow church. We have a different preacher every Sunday that works for some.

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Financials and growing the church.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We have two co-pastors, Pastor Emeritus, a bi-lingual pastor and several ministers in the church. Everyone has their own spin on the preached word.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking "yes" you are

willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

No. (Narrative response omitted to maintain confidentiality.)

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lanasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

Thanks for the opportunity to share! (Remaining narrative response omitted to maintain confidentiality.)

THE QUESTIONS- Survey (Church #1; Lay Leader #3)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We have been a small membership congregation with very limited financial resources.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat agree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Some of the needs are unmet, even with others volunteering to try to meet those needs.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upside(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

The only upside is that a bi-vocational minister is more affordable. In all other ways it is limiting.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We nearly maximize the level of involvement of members in official and spontaneous volunteering.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

It is joy when one of our part-time co-covenant pastors visits or comes to worship when not scheduled. It is a joy for so many people to take on responsibilities, especially keeping in touch with members and visitation, including in the hospital.

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

That we will not grow; that visitors will not get connected with one of our pastors, that we will not be able to pay our pastors what they deserve.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We benefit when we hear of the pastors' other work, such as teaching situations and projects, in their sermons, informal conversations, and providing meaningful workshops. We get connected with their work and can pray for their success elsewhere. We feel we are a spiritually supportive community for their other vocations.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking "yes" you are

willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

No.

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lancasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

(Narrative response left out to maintain confidentiality.)

THE INTERVIEW (Church #1; Minister #1) (MGH)

- Writer: All right. I'm here on a Saturday, October 20th, 2018, at about 10 of 2:00 with Pastor #1 who is the pastor of church number one of my bi-vocational ministry study, and I'm very appreciative of #1 spending time with me. I'm at his house somewhere in Maryland, and I'm going to just ... I've given #1 the list of questions for the interview, and I'm just going to start off by the first one and let him talk. So, #1, thank you for doing this, and I just want to ask you the first question. Can you tell me about how you became a bi-vocational minister? There're no time constraints or anything on this interview.
- #1: Right. Well, thank you for such an open-ended question. Of course, the answer is not really a simple one. I'm not in a church that just said, "Oh, we're poor so ... Okay, so you're stuck now." I know some churches that I've heard of anecdotally and pastors I've talked to, that's been the case. It's just been a steady decline in membership that led them to go in part-time.
- #1: Now, I ... It's weird talking a little bit earlier today. I've served full-time as a United Methodist pastor before completing seminary, so in my switch over from UMC to UCC, of course, I stopped serving in the United Methodist Church. No longer being eligible, no longer wanting to be eligible, and so I completed my process of ordination in the United Church of Christ.
- #1: As that, since I'm not appointable or appointed to a full-time church, it's on me as is in our polity to find my own call. Now, the call that I found is out in Virginia, and it's a part-time ministry. In fact, I'm one of two called pastors. Our title is "co-covenant pastor" and of course, we use the covenant language from UCC, that being special to us as covenantal people.
- #1: So, going into bi-vocational ministry, it's how I've been called in my ministry, the continuation of my ministry. Being called first very strongly, I felt my relationship with Jesus Christ into, into full-time ministry, and I served in full-time ministry while completing my degree requirements, and then the nature of my call, my internal call shifted from, "Okay. Great. You followed me where I have led you," shifted from that to, "We have a relationship with Jesus." This is my internal dialogue. "We have a relationship. Now, you are mature enough now. You can choose how you want to continue in your ministerial journey and still maintain your relationship with me."
- #1: Okay. This is how I'm envisioning it and envisioning my ministry empowered by Christ, so part of that led me to looking at the polity of the United Methodist Church versus my own understanding of the nature of the bible and of God, of Christ, of the church, and my relationship with it. So, that led me out of full-time

ministry into a relationship with the UCC where I was then called into part-time ministry.

#1: Now, coming out of full-time ministry as my primary job, my income stream, and then left without an income stream, so what do you do? Eventually, I found full-time employment with Prince George's County Public Schools working as a ... The job title is "paraprofessional educator" in a school with children who have multiple severe disabilities, so I worked in a very challenging school environment with severely disabled children, which is an amazing job opportunity.

#1: But because I need an income and I need benefits and all of that that goes around along with being able to maintain a residence in life, I continued that job while I was then called into a part-time relationship in a ministry in Virginia. Originally, as pulpit supply, and then as a ... what developed was a full relationship into which I was eventually then called and ordained through my relationship with them on, so the bi-vocational ... how did I become a bi-vocational minister is through that process. I guess that makes sense. I guess. That's pretty good, I guess.

Writer: Yeah, absolutely. So, was it a ... Which came first, the looking for the other job as the paraprofessional educator, or was it the ministry, or was it both at the same time?

#1: Simultaneous.

#1: Simultaneous.

#1: Because after being clear that the UMC polity structure was not one that I wanted to continue to minister under, I needed then to find one that was more in keeping with how I viewed the bible, the theology, and the role of church in hierarchy or lack of it, and did some looking around, and that's what led me to the United Church of Christ. What was your question again?

Writer: No, which came first?

#1: Oh, yeah, so it was simultaneous. As I'm redeveloping my call and reacquainting myself with a new church, church polity, and church structure, part of that was time requirement, so I needed at least to be a year ... a local church for a year before I could even be recommended to enter into a process. In the process, I still need to provide an income, so they grew together.

Writer: All right. Good. If at all, can you tell me how your other job has influenced you as a bi-vocational minister?

#1: The nature of my other job has had a tremendous impact on who I am as a part of God's beloved community to really brought that into a sharp of focus because of the nature of the students that I work with. There are many people in my

particular school that I work in who are people of faith. Not UCC, but still, people of faith who find that they make a profound impact and difference in the world but working with and for those who can't work with it for themselves.

#1: In that sense, my job isn't just a job. It's also in itself a call. Those of us who work there know, we all know that this is a very unique student population to work with, and you need to be called there. We watch people come in for interviews, and we know if they're going to stay or not. We don't make bets, but we would ... "Ah, they're not going to be back tomorrow." If somebody is back the third day, we're pretty much pretty sure, "Yeah. Okay. They found a fit," because we have to do stuff like take care of personal needs like you would for a six, a four-month-old baby. Some of our students are right there, and so we have to care for our students, and some of them are 16, 17 years old in the same way you would care for an infant.

Writer: Do the staff there or maybe some of the clients or patients...but do the staff (what do you call the clients?)

#1: Students. Students.

Writer: Students. Do they know that you're also serving as a minister?

#1: Yes. Yes. Part of my ministry is also serving there as a minister and as a UCC minister who's open and affirming and accepts a breath of differing theological understandings. We're all brothers and sisters in Christ. We're all one church trying to live at that in my work setting, embody it, being a person who doesn't spread gossip, who can be trusted. If you have anything that you need to say, it's not going to go any further than me if you say it to me. It's not my intention to be a minister there at all, at all. In fact, I'm very shy about that, but the fact that I am, I'm comfortable with people knowing also.

Writer: Great, so it's an unofficial role there?

#1: Right. Yeah. In fact, I'm very clear about the distinction between my job and my responsibilities there in my work environment as opposed to as a member of the clergy. I'm not a member of the clergy when I'm there. I mean, that's not my role with Prince George's County Public School. I'm a person of faith. I'm a man of faith, and I am ordained, but that's not my job function where I am.

Writer: How has your bi-vocational status impacted the ministries at your church?

#1: The church that I'm at was a plant... Oh, that sounds so funny. I was a poinsettia in a former life. They were officially recognized as a church and obtained their standing in the year 2000, and they went through some growth. There's a little history to get to by how bi-vocational ministry affected them. They had a couple of different called pastors who were serving full-time, but then also had some

very divisive moments in their church life and that they ... Factions in the church polarized. Half the church left. It's a pivotal time in the church, so as a result, they could no longer afford a full-time ministry, and went into a part-time ministry, and have remained there ever since.

#1: They organized more along an emerging church model conforming to UCC as much as they needed to, so as a result, now, we have an active lay participation. Also, how it affected the church as an active lay participation. It's been able to connect with the community fairly well even though we're still isolated and inside the church walls. They were able to start an immigration resource center in the community working with Guatemalans where there's a significant group of Guatemalans who had fled and were in the area. Still are in the area, and so they were able to, with some other ministry partners, formulate and put together a resource center.

#1: In spite of being having part-time pastors and being in bi-vocational ... My bi-vocational minister partner is a professor at George Mason, so that's his full-time gig, and then he also does trauma-healing work around the world, which is how I got to the church because while he was away, they needed somebody to fill the pulpit, and we just ... what was a nice, a nice mix, so there's not a competition for the pulpit. There's a sharing, at least from my perspective, and I'm sure from his also even though he's brilliant. I'm sorry. I just love the guy.

#1: Of course, budgets help drive a church in the decisions that leadership makes, and when I first started out with them, we were deficit budget. We have a small nest egg that we're eating at, and so the concern was in another five years, we simply just won't exist. Let me back up budget-wise just a little bit to say that part of the design of the church in the year 2000 and more ... In an emerging church model, they do not own a building. They don't have the responsibility for a space that's theirs as a church. They rent space, and they have been in various locations since 2001 and now are renting space from a church, an episcopal church in Northern Virginia.

Writer: You mentioned, if I heard you correctly, something that I'm finding important in this study is that because of the bi-vocationalism of the church, bi-vocational life of the church that the lay people have had to become more involved. Was that ... if you can answer this. I'm not sure. Was it a journey? Did it happen overnight? Was there resistance? Did it take three years?

#1: This is, I think, is more intentional. Even though I wasn't there when they set it up ... My history with them is recent. What I gathered is they did have strong clergy leadership to begin with having full-time staff, clergy person, and event, but the intention was to have a more active laity so that everything wasn't on the pastor, and I think that's also part of the split that happened. Again, I haven't found anyone who either has the clarity or the willingness to speak in detail about what the causes of the rift were because the people who were around now were still

very active in the church at the time, and I don't think they have a great deal of clarity over exactly what happened and why.

#1: I think it's more like they didn't know they were carrying a bomb, and then it blew up. They just are PTSD and still dealing with what happened, so there's not a lot of clarity there, but the ... We also have a couple other clergy people who are members of the congregation, wonderful, wonderful people who are allowed to participate. We're trying to build up other leaders in lay leadership and in the pulpit, so it's ... It's an intentionality.

#1: Part of that is coming from the budget, and what I mean by that is when it looks like we are eating our budget too quickly, one of the budget saving things that was put in place is we will only have our called pastors preach once a month, and then we'll have volunteers preach on the other two or three, depending on the Sundays a month, so that actually cut down the pulpit part. The other two would volunteer, preacher volunteers, so that's come a long way in helping develop laity ...

Writer: How has that been received by the congregation?

#1: Oh, wonderfully. Just wonderfully. I mean, I might have been the one person who might have been the most grumpy about it. I had to work through issues myself like, "Oh, man."

Writer: So, that means in your structure in your local church that you wouldn't get paid on the Sunday that you're not preaching? You would be giving a pulpit supply on those?

#1: True.

Writer: Okay.

#1: True, that's accurate. That's exactly what's going on, but from my perspective, I'm the pastor, and so I'm there anyway.

Writer: All right. Good.

#1: And support the other people when they're preaching.

Writer: We're almost done, really. Is there anything else that you would like to share?

#1: Yeah.

Writer: Great, what?

#1: I think, from what I've seen, bi-vocational ministry to churches and to pastors who are in full-time ministry is scary. It's something that's viewed as a failure.

Churches who don't have enough to pay a full-time pastor and pastors who don't have churches who pay them enough to live on are failures. I think there's probably a great deal of truth even though ... to what I'm saying, even though if I sat people down and made them think about stuff, they would have no trouble saying, "Oh, no. Everybody is of sacred worth. Oh, no. This is valuable ministry and still ministry," but I think that undercurrent, that undertone is they're not real, and it goes back to what we were talking about a little earlier about ... We're talking about the DS who wanted to close all the small churches in his district just because they're not valuable. They're not real, and they're just wasting resources that we could use elsewhere to support our real ministries, so I'm ...

Writer: I'm supposed to avoid leading you in my questions, so I'm a little careful. I think this next one is a little leading. You're describing that in a clericalization, right, of ... that the clergy have this sort of status that's important, and without that full-time clergy, the status of the church is lost somehow. After you've experienced, I think both of those, full-time ministry and other places, and now, the bi-vocational ministry, what would you say to people who think like that?

#1: Well, my mind ... Don't quote me on this. My mind will say, "Oh, man. You're so stupid. Stop it. Just think for a minute." It would be hard not to be defensive for me if confronted that and ... because there are so many what I perceive as underlying assumptions about what ministry is. How do you unpack the depth of an obvious bias against part-time or bi-vocational ministry? How do you get all of the pieces that come together having to do with income, race, class, education, gender, sexuality because it ... I think it all ties in to form a picture of ... For instance, when I was in New York, New York Annual Conference as a local pastor, there was a local pastor group put together, and so I went to a couple of meetings as a local pastor.

#1: I was serving a Chinatown in lower Manhattan, and at the meeting, there were Asian women, Indian women, Indian men, African-American women, ba, da, da, da, da, one white man, and we had probably about 45-people meeting. That for me was an eye-opener of ... See, most of these people were also not full-time ministry or they were in multi-point churches, and they were out away from the real ministry that was going on, just relegated to those who couldn't afford something better, so I would say take a look at Christ and the gospel messages of how he went out to individuals and people to include them and how important it is, the small ministry is.

#1: I tried to stay away from clichés like, "Remember the butterfly effect?" I think they lost their impact, but each one of us is ... and each church is unique in call to function and the way that we are called in our communities, in our relationship with Christ, and it's not for someone else to judge what that is, but to celebrate our diversity because our diversity is not only color. It's race, it's class, and it's size. I don't think we think about that. Diversity includes the sizes of our churches, so

that's ... Thank you for giving me the opportunity to think a little bit about that and talk a little about it.

Writer: Yeah, yeah. I hate to say it, but what's the size of your church?

#1: Well, you can look it up. We're 29 members on the roll, and we have 18 or 20 people there on Sunday. More than half, and we have ... On our annual celebrations, we have about 40, between 40 and 50, so it's not bad for that number of members.

Writer: Yeah.

#1: Those are real numbers.

Writer: Yeah.

#1: I mean, that's not, "Oh, George came once 12 years ago. We'll keep them on the roll."

Writer: Now, how is the leadership set up? When we talk about having their involvement with the study, did you have a ... Is it a council?

#1: We have a council, a church council, and we meet monthly.

Writer: Okay. Okay, so I can send you the link to the survey again, and then you can talk to them and give ... You could give them my email address, and the way you're saying earlier that you'd like to have it both ways. They could reach out to me, and then they could also ... You could also give them the link directly.

Mark: Yeah. I think they ... The way I will present it to them, because I'm colored by our relationship, and the questions, and stuff, I think they would be more than open. A couple of them. You would regret that I gave you their number or contact because they'll just go on, and on, and on, and on, and on, and on, and on, and on.

Writer: Right. You'd have to choose which ones I guess that ...

#1: No, I'll give you the worst.

Writer: Yeah. I don't know how I'm going to be able to do all the follow-up interviews with congregants. I might just use their survey answers because there's a lot of narrative in those survey answers.

#1: Yeah.

Writer: How many are on the council?

#1: Because we're emergent, we don't have bylaws. We will never create it with bylaws, and so our council basically is our moderator or this year, it's co-moderators, or treasurer and secretary, and then whoever else shows up from the meeting.

Writer: Yeah. Right. Yeah. Good. Okay.

#1: We try to work by consensus, and the way ... Consensus means a gazillion things to a gazillion people, but if nobody objects to something, then we'd agree to do it. That's pretty much our consensus model. We usually have ... Whack. If we have 12 people in worship, we'll have 11 people at the council meeting. You know?

Writer: It's interesting. You talked about renting space. We rent space as well, and in fact, it's almost part of the ethos now that we'll never own a building. One time, a building opened up five miles away, and so council had a discussion about if we should go look at this. We have bylaws, so there's usually like 12 people at the meeting, 12 to 13 to have an odd number, and usually, of course, it's 12-0, 12-1 when it comes to voting, right?

#1: Yeah.

Writer: The motion was, can we have a couple people go look at the building to see if it's possible at all under some circumstance that we could maybe afford to move forward with what it would be if we ...

#1: If we.

Writer: See if we were to consider, to consider it.

#1: Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

Writer: It was voted down, seven to six.

#1: Yeah. Ooh.

Writer: Something like that.

#1: Oh, no.

Writer: Yeah.

#1: Just enough to split the truth. That's funny.

Writer: All right. Thanks a lot, #1.

THE QUESTIONS- Survey (Church #2; Minister #1)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

At my first church, the previous minister resigned, and they couldn’t afford a full-time pastor. I made the tent-making preferences known well before which caused the Classis to withhold ordination, so when the need arose, they “called” me.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Not at all, unless you consider the pastor’s availability for Lions, Kiwanis, etc. meetings (as being) a vital outreach.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly Agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upsides(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Downside- unavailable for tea and cookies.

Upside- congregants needed to take up slack.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Minister not available to handle trivial matters, up to congregants to decide. Leads to more individual involvement.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly Agree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Congregation "mission" orientated.

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Congregation getting older and increasingly infirm- how do we reach out for "younger" members.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

More in keeping with Paul. Minister can concentrate on the Gospel, less on "How are we going to continue to pay me so I can support my family."

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking "yes" you are willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking "no" you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes. (Narrative response omitted to maintain confidentiality.)

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lancasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

Good luck! At last count, 60% of Delaware-Raritan Classis (RCA) "Contract Ministers" are part-timers.

THE INTERVIEW (Church #2; Minister #1) (PM)

Writer: All right, I'm here with #2 on Sunday, right?

#2: Yes. Sunday.

Writer: Sunday at about five minutes to one o'clock in Delaware. I'll just let you start talking, #2. Can you tell me how you became a bi-vocational minister?

#2: Oh, how I became a bi-vocational minister. Well, when I was going to seminary, New Brunswick Seminary, because of, let's put it this way, I could've taught most of the seminary courses because it was graduate work in Christian Origins. As soon as I got there, they tapped me and said, "Look. Would you mind riding the circuit on Sunday, doing pulpit supply?" I said, "Yes. It'll help pay for seminary."

This was, as I say, was in the mid-80s. We had, believe it or not, my wife and I had been married 17 years, but we had just started the process, we had just adopted our first child. Chris was a little over a year old and he was from Chile. He's an Apache Indian and, of course, that changed the way we did things. All of the sudden like, "Oh, we gotta watch those pennies." Then, too, we also made it to the joy ... My wife said, "I'm tired of sticking my head in the hood, breathing all this phosphine gas, I'm going to law school."

So, she was in law school and somebody had the itch to go to seminary so here we go. And (my wife) said ride the circuit. It'll help pay the cost of seminary which it did. So, I had a fairly broad circuit of churches I'd be servicing on Sunday but some of them were fairly small and looking at it, I said, there's nothing here. And some of these churches, all I'd be doing is running fundraisers to try and pay my salary. I said that, not that it would be a guilt trip on my part, but it would, as I said, where's an issue, where's outreach, where's anything that's more positive?

I said maybe I'd like to look at bi-vocational ministry. The tentmaker, good old Saint Paul, I said. If it was good enough for him, I could do it too. That's it and so I, when I came up for ordination by the, then it was the Raritan classes in the RCA, I said that wanted to go part-time, I didn't want to give up my other job. I said I'd get my benefits and all that from my job, but I said this way I could be a little freer to minister and be where I'm needed. Where there still is a need for ministry but, yet they can't, they don't have the wherewithal.

"No, no, you can't do that. That's not possible." etc., etc. Well then finally an opening came in Third Reformed Church in Raritan. The previous pastor there was doing graduate work, so they considered him part-time. That way they said,

okay, we can justify putting you there. So, they ordained me, and I was there for 23 years.

The one thing, as I say, that allowed me to, in some ways I was very blessed. The people I worked with for the state knew what I was doing and if a call came in that was pastoral, that could very easily sit there and wouldn't handle it they would an official state call. They'd do it as a personal call. So, and so, etc. So, it's very good that way.

Writer: Did they announce it over the PA system?

#2: As I say, I was very fortunate plus again having some flexible leave time I was able, if somebody was hospitalized, I was able to take off and go to be there. Likewise, if there was a funeral or something of that sort, I was able to be there. So that worked out well. Plus, the other thing it was funny because I used to get a lot of criticism, "Well, yeah, you aren't working, you're not doing anything pastoral." I said wait a minute. I said I'm in human resources and my job is labor relations. Who do you think gets somebody into a rehab program? Who do you think gets talked to when somebody's having financial problems and their wages are going to get docked? I said I probably do more so, more pastoral work in a week than you do in the whole year.

In this regard I was always very blessed. And also, I had, again, some people that understood the situation and so here again ... Now this is going to sound terrible but like for instance a lot of the, cause the department I work for, it was treasury, now we had employees that worked for the state division of investment who are handed 84 billion dollars. So, they were bankers. And then we had building maintenance workers who were cleaning out the johns and the offices and everything in between. With the, especially a lot of the lower paid, some of them would come in and the Jesus language was what they knew. And I was able to talk to them in the Jesus language. And that made it understandable and intelligible to them. That was tremendous to help get them to understand their situation. And it wasn't that some big white boss is trying to get after me. No, the big white boss is trying to help you.

I mean, that was one of the positive things that came. As I say, most are true with the congregation. Here again a lot of times they would go out if somebody was not seen in the church, somebody would go visit and I like that for the simple reason that they saw that person like a neighbor. Nobody was getting ready like when the pastor calls, oh, we have to cook, clean the house, put the ... No, none of that. They saw the real situation so then they could come and tell me so that I could go in and say, okay, now we have a problem, or no, just the cold. The person will get over it. But where there were difficulties, yes, we know something's wrong here. That's when we gotta get there and do something.

It worked out very, very well in a lot of ways. While it may not have had, it's like Stephen ministry.

Writer: Yeah, right.

#2: I'm sorry for yapping.

Writer: No, no, no. Keep going.

#2: So that part of it worked well. It, as I say, I had the same experience in Manville. It was, when I say it was positive for me, yeah, I was doing ministry, I was doing God's work and hopefully letting people realize that Jesus is still with us. Not through me but through them. I think that's the critical thing is that people begin to realize that it's not, church isn't clergy, church is people.

Writer: So, if I heard you correctly did the people at your secular, quote unquote, job know you were a minister?

#2: Mm-hmm (affirmative)-, mm-hmm (affirmative)-, mm-hmm (affirmative)-.

Writer: And you did some pastoral ministry there?

#2: I did pastoral ministry there. In fact, it's funny, my boss's son got married, it was a mixed marriage, he was a ... He said, "She wants a rabbi, I want a minister." So, he got you. It was funny cause John says, "I'll pay you what I pay the rabbi." I get this check for si-, "John, you nuts?" "Well, that's what I paid the rabbi, I paid you." You got the wrong road to damnation.

Writer: Oh, I know we should have those rabbis' salaries, that's for sure.

#2: But as I say it was worked out very, very well and cause then I was, I got involved because I was involved, with my role was with the contracts with and I got involved with employee benefits and pensions. And then the union called me so I spent a good 10 years working with for CWA because, for negotiations with regard to pension issues. But even there in CWA they understood too.

I'm eternally indebted to the receptionist, to coworkers who would understand and if I was on the phone and I'd sit there and chase them away, I wasn't being nasty, they wouldn't say okay, it's something that's ... I'd say if it weren't for them, I couldn't have done it.

Writer: And on the other hand, it sounds like because you were bi-vocational, people, the congregants, would go visit. They would do things because they knew you weren't around.

#2: This is it. You don't want to bother me. There were times I could have clobbered them because somebody was hospitalized or something, but we didn't want to get you upset. Well, that's what I'm here for. But see here again, but also too, if it was an emergency, they would get a hold of me. But if it was just the fact the person was being hospitalized for whatever, well, well give me a break.

Writer: So that church that you were at for 23 years, you were part-time there? Bi-vocational?

#2: Yep. And as I say, that church merged with United. But that was, when it merged with United that's when I retired. Although it was funny because I continued in Manville even though I was living down here I was going to ... Which was fun.

Writer: So, you started, they didn't have to get used to you being bi-vocational, right? You were bivocational from the start?

#2: Yeah, yeah, no, as I say, that was my thing and I went in deliberately from that perspective.

Writer: Did they have a full-time person before you?

#2: No. Because he was a grad student. He was pursuing his PhD at Princeton of all places.

Writer: All right. Good.

#2: I don't know, it was LD was his name and I think he's down in Florida, last I knew he was in Florida somewhere at a church.

Writer: The second question, I think you've answered all of them quite frankly, can you tell me how being a bi-vocational minister impacted the ministries at your churches?

#2: Well, as I say, I think it forced the congregation to be more, they had to assume responsibility for making decisions. There were times that things had to be done, I wasn't around. So, you had to do it. Okay, you ordered this color tablecloth, well, great. Why do you have to have me involved with ordering tablecloths. Or it's Communion Sunday. Okay, fine. You know how to get things set up. Although I will say there were two times I wish I had. One time we had raisin bread, but the worst was the seeded rye. No, doesn't quite ... But there again, granted it's a simple decision but darn it they realized it, hey, okay, it's my church I gotta make these decisions. To me that's, or the, well, what hymns are we using? Okay, well work with the choir director. What it helped was they were able to take ownership.

Now Manville was a little bit different. Now Manville was kind of based on some of the European model. There the minister, I had, see with the RCA I was automatically president of the consistory. In Manville it was the chief elder who was president of the consistory. I just was sitting there. I just signed the minute book. Which was good because there again, I wanted them to make the decisions for what was going on in the church.

Writer: That's more UCC?

#2: Yeah, oh yeah. But there again, some of it was ... the chief elder had a definite role in the church. It wasn't, and that even Sundays there was a role.

Writer: Nice.

#2: It was, and I think that's, but there again it's the people's church. That's what liturgy means. People work. Okay, fine, that's what we want. It's not a one-man show out there.

Writer: That's great. You may have answered this one already too. Can you tell me how your other job has influenced you as a bivocational minister?

#2: Well, there it is, I was already ... It's funny. You thought about how weird things get is, I was, let's see, went to grad school and was in Christian Origins. All that fancy stuff. What's interesting is there was a guy who followed me. I didn't know him at the time because we didn't have classes together, but I knew of him. He followed me the same blinking program cause I was kind of treading some new territory and he's now teaching in the Brunswick Seminary.

Writer: This was before you get to seminary you got this Christian Origins degree?

#2: Yep. At, as I said, I was working in Brown and Penn. I left Brown because of, oh, what the heck was his name? The Jewish guy. Oh yeah, he ... But-

Writer: You were teaching there?

#2: No. I was doing graduate school work there. And then I, that's when I moved to Penn.

Writer: Okay.

#2: And so, I worked with BK, a member of the Classics Department. That guy, papyrologist(?) too, working in a museum, cleaning that stuff out. But it became very apparent by the late 60s, early 70s that there were no academic jobs in the area opening up. At that particular time that was kind of a very down time for academics.

Plus, I had a two-year ROTC commitment. Now are you ready for this one? The Army does not lie. I was commissioned in 1966. Two years before I was, when I was at military basic training, that's when Johnson announced the first 100 thousand Vietnam. Guess where I was going to go? And I said to the ROTC when it came time to the contract, I said I really wanted to finish grad school. "Don't worry, you will." They honored it. I was not called up til 1972.

So, I go to report down, report in. And at that point they were starting to bring some people back from Vietnam. So, the Army, all of the armed forces were loaded with officers, loaded with people. So, we sat there, sat for ninety days and wondered.

But meanwhile it kind of, my, now where do I go? It was funny. So, I, believe it or not, I went off and got a cheap Master of Library Science degree at Rutgers. The interesting thing is the guy that I mentioned at New Brunswick Seminary, he also got a cheap one. Somebody was looking out for me.

So, I was, I drove a truck for Princeton University Press, all that sort of stuff. He used to kid me because I was the only person able to read the books. But it was funny because the damaged books etc, you could take so I got a lot. You oughta see my library. But to make a long story short though, I then, one of the things that, cause as I say, I stayed active in the Army Reserves. One of the guys that worked for the state, he said, "Look, you can be a staff for me. Go take the civil service exams." I'm like sure, so I did.

Make a long story short, I wound up as a special agent for the department of treasury which meant they sent me off to senior police academy. So, I was a rooting, tooting ... I worked as a special agent for taxation for about five years. During that time, I was involved in starting up a PBA local.

So, when I was taken over to human resources, they knew what my background was as far as union organizing and how the unions work. Plus, how I got involved really with employee benefits. Because there again it was part of negotiations. Like, how do you ... What's going on here? What do they mean by this, what'd they mean by that? And so, I wound up with getting involved with health bennies and all that other stuff. And then I went over to pensions, I was working in pensions basically doing the benefits. I was the disability review officer for the state pension system. So that there again caught my pastoral counseling. What are you doing on the telephone?

I was involved with that and then I went, as I say, because of negotiations, contract negotiations that the union said, "You wanna come work for us?" And then here again got a fat cop bill passed that allowed me to get pension credit the state system. That's how I kept 25 years. Yeah.

Writer: Oh my.

#2: So, I get all those bennies and all that stuff.

So, I worked, as I say, but then it was crazy cause I had to go back to the union, through the state for 30 days. It's like, what the heck we gonna do with you?

Writer: To qualify?

#2: Yeah. Cause I have to go back on the health benefits to be covered. So, where there's a will there's a way. As I say cause here again, now, I'd gotten involved, one of the things is getting, I got involved in politics, local politics. So, way back I ran for Hopewell Township Committee. Well I was a Republican(?) so I didn't get elected, ha ha, but it was funny, the year we moved I was helping ... I can't remember the guy, I can't remember the guy's name. He was the vice-president of Princeton... IT guy. And he got elected.

Ever since then it's been democratic control in Hopewell Township. When I was there, no hope in hell. It was so difficult. Then when I got up in Flemington, I was also involved so I ran for county clerk, I ran against MD in Lebanon(?). She's not a bad person. I ran for Freeloader. And the part that was kind of crazy cause the he, his name was H.

Writer: R?

#2: Not RH. It was his family name, but his grandfather was CC. And I worked with his mom. It was some church stuff. And I ran against him and I told her that I have to that "I don't want to go against your son, he's a good guy."

And then of course, my favorite was running, this was when he was still assembly, against M... Oh, lovely, lovely person. What's funny is he's a patent attorney. My wife's a patent attorney. She never heard of him.

Writer: So, the last question here looks like cause you're not at a church where, well you're at church now where you're bivocational in a sense, right?

#2: Yeah, yeah.

Writer: Do you think your leaders of that church would be willing to fill out a survey? If I sent you a link.

#2: Ah, yeah. I mean, let's put it this way, I'm one of the under people. Wait a minute.

Writer: Maybe. Is that what you're saying?

Peter: Yeah. As I say, Peg could do it, Peggy ... could do it. And she's an elder. I know Mary ... could do one but the trouble is she's getting on in years. Probably Marsha and Paul could do one.

Writer: I'll just send you the link and you can give that to them then.

So, then what, is there anything you want to share? Anything else you want to share about bivocational ministry? Sounds like it's been a great-

#2: Well, let's put it this way, I think it's something that the church is going to have to give some serious thought to because I think this is the only way we're going to be able to minister to people. And I kept saying over the years, "We have to find new ways of doing church." That doesn't mean we do things different on Sunday. But what it means is that we have different structures of the church, corporate structures, as I mentioned that kind of turning like with Ocean View Presbyterian and Frankford merging, forming the Blackwater church with no edifice, no central edifice, but instead have sites for mission and activity. I think that's where the church is going to have to go.

In a way we're to go back to the early church. I mean you had your metropolis and yes, each metropolis had a bishop, but then there was the chora, the farmlands outside, the villages and they would appoint an elder, a presbyter, a priest, to take care of these areas. Now on major festivals, yes, it will all come in to the metropolis but most of the time their worship, their ministry was out there in the chora. And that I think is what we need to go back to, whereas insisting that every church is its own little stand-alone, that may have worked in the 40s but it doesn't work anymore.

Let's be very honest, what is the one issue that will drive, to destroy those churches? The issue's solved because of this was selling the parsonage. The next issue comes, we need major repairs on the church. And how are we going to pay for it?

It's this darn edifice complex. If we could only get rid of these buildings and quit worrying about the building, I think we'd be better served. And I think that's the way the church has gotta go. It's like in Europe. Okay, the state owns it, good. You have your museum, you have your gothic church, it's yours. Have fun. I think that's where we have to go.

Hey, what are you doing there (cat referring to a cat)?

Writer: All right.

#2: That's, yeah, O. Hey.

Writer: Hi O. He knows his name.

#2: Yeah.

Writer: Well, thank you. This has been wonderful.

#2: I hope, I hope ... Let me grab a plastic bag for you (to put lunch leftovers in).

THE QUESTIONS- Survey (Church #3; Minister #1)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We founded the church, so they didn’t hire us per se, but they were aware that we were bi-vocational from the beginning.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Disagree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

It’s really hard to meet the needs of the congregation during crises; for example, there is a loved one or member in the hospital and they would like to have prayer before surgery- we might not be able to get away from our other jobs. I am a (certain position) so I can’t (get away) to address people’s emergencies. We would have a lot more time to plan for spiritual growth lessons and activities if we were both not bi-vocational.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upside(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Always had bi-vocational ministers.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Shared responsibilities; church understands that the pastor may not address all of the pastoral care needs of the congregation, may send associate ministers (who are also bi-vocational) and lay persons to attend funerals, provide comfort, teach Bible study and preach.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Disagree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

*-Watch people grow and develop spiritually.
-Being able to help with outreach to the community.
-Making a difference by being an open and affirming church.*

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Have small membership so afraid wont' be able to do all the ministry outreach we would like to do and afraid wont' be able to sustain church financially. If we had a full-time minister, could have greater impact in community surrounding the church and focus more on increasing membership.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Very challenging, stressful because (you) have your focus in two worlds and always feel like you're not doing enough in either of them. Hard to engage in self-care because ministry is full-

time whether you are being paid part-time or not. One advantage is that by working in the “rea” world, have a better feel for what’s going on in the community, sometimes full-time ministry can be isolating.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking “yes” you are willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lanasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

Respondent skipped this question.

THE INTERVIEW (Church #3; Minister #1) (SM)

#3: Hello?

Writer: Dan Lundquist calling.

#3: Hi. This is SM.

Writer: Can you hear me okay?

#3: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Writer: Alright, great. Thanks for being willing to do this.

#3: No problem.

Writer: I have a series of questions that I'm going to ask you and I'm not going to talk very much at all. I'm just going to listen to you tell your story.

#3: Okay.

Writer: Before we begin though, do you teach at...?

#3: Yes.

Writer: Oh, wow. I have a friend that goes there, a friend's daughter that goes there. My daughter goes to...

#3: Oh, okay.

Writer: And I have a buddy of mine I went to seminary with, he's in the church right across the street there. That ... Church?

#3: Yeah. Uh-huh (affirmative). Yeah, I know where that is. I walk by there all the time.

Writer: Yeah. So, that's a small world. Okay. Now, I am recording this call, so just so you know that.

#3: Okay.

Writer: The first question is can you tell me about how you became a bivocational minister?

#3: Sure. I've always been bi-vocational. So, I started my career in psychology in 1985. Was the year I graduated, I guess. I got my call into ministry around 1996. I went to seminary in 1997 and I was involved with the church then, but I first started actively participating in ministry as a minister in 2000. So, I've always been bi-vocational.

Writer: Can you tell me how being bi-vocational has impacted the ministries at your church?

#3: I think when ... So, I've been like everything. So, I started in an AME church and people who are under ministerial staff, but are not pastoring, almost all of them are bi-vocational. So, it wasn't unusual in that context. We were not paid. We were just dependent on the church. The church I belonged to, there were five associate ministers and we all were in charge of several ministries. It was just a given there, it was part of your training. Then I belonged to a Baptist church for about seven years. I did get a small stipend for a family life ministry that I developed and chaired. I'm also a licensed psychologist, so I also did counseling there. So, I got the stipend I guess for both of those ministries.

And everyone there ... That was a large church, a ministerial staff of about 20 people, and everyone there was not paid except the youth minister, the children's minister, the associate pastor and myself. The other, what, 15, 20 people were not paid. So, that was very typical. How it impacted on the ministry, in those roles it didn't because we weren't pastoring the churches. So, we just focused on our specific ministries and we were required to be at all leadership meetings, board meetings, and most services, et cetera.

Then, my husband and I founded our own church in 2008. So, it's been 10 years and that's where I see the biggest impact. I think when you're pastoring the church and you have another vocation, it's very challenging. Particularly around pastoral concerns. So, for example, if someone is in the hospital having surgery and that coincides with when I teach a class, I can't go be with that person for surgery because I can't cancel my class, so.

Writer: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

#3: Or if I ... Normally, if someone needs to be funeralized, we are able to work that out. That's been really the grace of God and we've been lucky. Also, because it's two of us, my husband and myself, that helps a lot. I can't imagine trying to be bi-vocational and pastoring a church by myself. That would be, to me, I know how people do it, but that's like almost impossible. Because at least with two people ... And we also have a very good ministerial staff. Someone from the ministerial staff, or we, my husband or myself can go to most funerals.

We've also, we have a relatively young congregation, so we haven't funeralized a member yet. We have funeralized family members of members, and again, that's easier when you are funeralizing someone because then you can set the time bar when you're going to do it, because you do it when you're available. But trying to attend other people's funerals when you're not the, you know, you're not the clergy person in charge or that is very hard. Even though our members understand and don't complain, as a pastor you feel horrible when you can't be there with families during their most vulnerable times. So, that part I don't like a lot.

It's also very taxing. I mean, I think, you know, you're often torn between being in multiple places at the same time. Again, we have a relatively younger congregation, so the average age is, the median age in our congregation is 40. So, we have people with young children. We have couples struggling with marital issues. I have a call in right now to a couple who's struggle. I can't see them in counseling because I just have no time. So, I'll have to wriggle out. I feel bad about that, but literally, I know they have a lot of issues and that's another part of my decision. So, I have to think to myself, "Is this something I can do short term?" No. So, if it's not short-term counseling, then I can't do it.

I've had to learn to say no. I used to try to do it, but then I would be literally working my full-time job and coming home and doing church stuff every evening. I was working seven days a week on both ends, 12, 13 hours days with no breaks. And so, I had to stop that because I'm 61 now. So, I was like, "I'm not a spring chicken. I just can't keep that up." So, it just depends. I think when things are pretty calm, it definitely feels doable. But when it's not, like when there are multiple people sick, or there are multiple families or children or adults who need counseling, that can be something. Or just like if we want to be involved. We're a very social justice focused church, so sometimes when we want to be involved around in something around social justice ... Let's say there are meetings around, like when there were meetings in our state around marriage equality, those meetings are during the day. So again, we had to figure out who could go to those hearings, who could go protest in the state capital.

A lot of the protesting things that we do, we can do because it's typically on the weekend, but if there are hearing and things like that ... We also have a big focus on environmental justice. Fortunately, the person who's in charge of that, our outreach minister is excellent, and she goes to all the hearings, but we can't. We would like to be more of a presence there, and we really can't. I think United Church in Christ in general, I love the UCC, but the thing I really don't like about them is they have no sensitivity to bi-vocational ministers at all. Even in the people who are training and going through the seminary process, the CEU's, all of that stuff is done during the day. They're expecting people to leave their jobs and they tell them,

like, "Why? You're not paying them and we're not paying them either." And so, I don't think people should have to take a vow of poverty to do this and I think that's basically what it requires.

So, I think in that sense, they're really insensitive to the fact. Particularly in the African American churches. When you're African American, you're much more likely to have people who are bi-vocational. I think that more and more people who go into the ministry are not 22 years old in seminary. They are 40. I went to seminary when I was 40. So, the idea of being, you know, only in ministry ... I had kids who were four, two and ... Let's see. Hold on. They were two, four and six. I wasn't going to be only in seminary and only, you know, going through my vocation only as a minister because I just couldn't afford to do that.

Single women struggle with the same thing, or even people who are single parenting. I think there needs to be a lot more flexibility about that.

Writer: Yeah. Good. What's the laity involvement like at your church?

#3: They're pretty involved. It's not that. I think we have a really great model. Our model's very egalitarian, so we don't have this separation between ordained clergy and laypersons. Probably two-thirds of our ministries are headed by lay people, but even lay people have jobs. I am, I believe I'm the oldest person in my church. I'm 61, my husband's 60. We have one other person who's like 64. So, no one's retired. Everyone is bi-vocational, so everyone has a regular job. Our 64-year-old is a neonatologist. She amazingly comes to church on Sunday. She has call early. She rounds her patients and then comes to church and then goes back to the hospital. So, we have people who make enormous sacrifices and have phenomenal commitment to ministry, but is it taxing? Yes, because they are all bi-vocational.

Writer: I like how you say that they are all bi-vocational. Like we are all in this together, bi-vocational.

#3: We are. Everybody's bi-vocational. That's why I said, you know, even our lay leadership ... I think people do really well with working around that issue, but I also think where it's most challenging is when people have pastoral care concerns. And that's when you sort of feel like, "I can't be two places at once." Part of it's just the nature of what I do. Part of it might be, I don't know, if I had a regular 9:00 to 5:00 job ... How do I put this? So, the beauty of what I do as a professor is that I have a tremendous amount of flexibility in my schedule in some ways. So, on the other hand though, when I have to be at school, I have to be at school.

So, a lot of the things that maybe someone with a regular 9:00 to 5:00 job could rearrange a meeting, I can't rearrange a meeting. Or if I wanted to ... This is another great example. If I wanted to become more involved in United Church of Christ, my association, all of the boards and ministry meetings are during the day, which I just find ... That's the things that really tick me off. So, I could never do that. Or it would depend on the semester. Because they're like meeting on Tuesdays at 2:00. Okay, I don't have the kind of job where I can leave, because I have class and trust me, people pay a lot of money to go to GW, so I can't cancel a class once a month. Plus, it's also unprofessional. I just wouldn't do that.

And we don't have ... You know, in higher education, we don't have substitute teachers, and I teach in the PhD program. So, that in particular, it's not just teaching a class. I supervise doctoral students and do research, clinical work. I spend a lot of time in meetings and doing supervision. So, those are not things that are flexible or can be moved easily. So, when it comes to pastoral care concerns, participating more in the ministry of the organization itself, the body, it's hard to do that when you're bi-vocational. It's also hard for people who are in discernment. That's where I really worry. I think people in discernment, it takes them longer to get through the process because they're bi-vocational.

Writer: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah, interesting. I work as, my other job is I work as a therapist. I have a private practice.

#3: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Writer: I just gave up going to all those meetings. I couldn't do it.

#3: Yeah, you just can't do it. You can't keep rearranging your clients. I don't have a practice now, but I had one for years. Some clients can't be changed. It's not good to do that, you know? It depends on what's going on with them. But some clients, that moving things around is very disconcerting for them and part of why therapy works so well is that it's something that's very predictable in the life, so. I worked with kids and teens mostly, so I'm like, "No, I'm not changing them." So, that's that, you know?

Writer: Right, right. Yep. So, speaking of that, how does your quote unquote other job influence you as a bi-vocational minister?

#3: It influences a lot. I think one of the nice things about being in ministry, I think ministry and psychology are very compatible. Or can be, I should say that. I think it definitely ... Even when I was in seminary, I took a lot of theology classes and my colleagues would say, you know, "How do you get all this stuff?" I'd go, "Oh, it's really similar to psychology." You

know? One thing you're talking about God and one thing you're talking about people, but the same process. So, that part was lovely. I think it really helps to inform particularly the types of service I do and my lessons are very deep empathic. They're very, it allows you to have a really rich understanding of the biblical text. It allows you to be very creative about how you do sermons and Christian education. That part I love. I just feel like it's such a great work for me.

The church is the best place for me to be all of who I am, even more than I can be. And so, that's what I love about the church. I feel like I can bring all of who I am to that and I always can bring all of who I am to that. So, that part is almost, that's probably the best God has given me in ministry. I just, that part I'll never get tired of and that's the part I love. I'm trying to think about, I want to do a sermon this week on being chosen, and comes out of our pastoral concern, not out of theological issues. Just watching people who've been wounded in their lives in so many different ways. I was thinking, actually I was doing therapy and I was thinking about this couple and one of the things that I hear them saying all the time is, "I want somebody to pick me first every once in a while." Which is why I thought about we want to be chosen and just different ways of doing that.

I'm not saying if I weren't a psychologist that wouldn't come up, but it just makes you look at things really different. It makes you look at and use the text very differently, which is the part I really love. I think it too forms ... Well, you didn't ask me that one. So, I think it also, I'm also a researcher, so I definitely, my research is reflected in the fact that I'm in ministry. My research is looking at suicide prevention, and HIV prevention, intervention programs in church context. So, obviously I married those two things together, as well. It's challenging to do that, but I also find it very emotionally and intellectually stimulating to do it. I love challenges and so it's definitely a challenge. So, I like that.

I just told my graduate students yesterday, they were laughing at me saying, "You know, this research, the type of research that we do is not for the faint-hearted because it takes a real commitment and it's hard." We're trying to look at ... One of the projects we're working on is getting information from young African American men in the LGBTQ community and figuring out how they seek help for mental health concerns, so we can develop a prevention program to tailor for them. We have about 15 people now who have completed the study. It has taken us a year to get 15 people.

Writer:

Wow.

#3:

And we've had to try to different things. But the team is so excited. We literally have, we were talking that we have to write an article on just how

to do it because it's so hard. And everyone has said to us, "Well, don't do that age group. Get adults." But we're doing teens. I know it's easier to get adults, but the kids who are the most at risk, who we're trying to do prevention, is the teenagers, not adults. We're like ... And I just love that my students are excited about this and I also love that my students themselves come from all kinds of faith backgrounds. There are students who are Jewish, there are Hindu students, there are Atheists, there are Agnostics, there are Christians. It's everybody. And yeah, we can all come together regardless of our faith belief to work on this project is amazing.

It's interesting. It's hard for us to do this in church, but it's not hard to do it out of church. So, it's almost like I can see the beloved community enacted in my research team and that is enormously gratifying to see that. I also think that's a gift from God to me that I can see what should be going on in the church outside of it. It makes me more committed to my calling, which I think it to bridge these two communities, the mental health community and the church. That part is great.

Yeah. I think, just like I said earlier, the research is important. You can bring that mindset to it. We're doing a survey right now, my church, about just how we can better meet the ministry needs of the people. So, this is just a good example of where I can just look up a survey and send it and I can use technology from my job to do it and it's not hard. I do it. So, those are the things I think you can just ... I think if you want to and think ... One last thing about UCC is it's flexible. And I think you can easily marry all parts of who you are in that sense. It's good. Does that answer your question?

Writer: Yeah, that's great. Does the university or I guess your secular, again quote unquote jobs, do they know you're a minister in those settings?

#3: Yeah, yeah. Yes. I used to keep it kind of quiet.

Writer: Yes.

#3: I used to teach at Howard University. At Howard ... it was very embracing. Like no big deal. When I first went to George Washington, I was kind of keeping it on the down low almost because I was in seminary at the same time. And so, I didn't really ... So, when I first got there, I think the older faculty didn't quite know what to make of that. I got a lot of, not openly negative comments, but a lot of comments around like, "So, how are you going to do this?" And people didn't really understand what being in seminary meant. So, for example, people would make really ignorant comments like, "So, why's it taking you so long to get this degree? You're just reading the Bible, right?" You know? So, I had to do a lot of educating about that.

One of the things that shocked them, I told them my M.Div. degree has more hours in it than my PhD does. So, we weren't just sitting around reading Bibles. They were shocked about that. They were like, "Really?" And I was like, "Yeah. I have more credit hours in a master's degree than I do in this PhD." So, people, you know ... But then, as I went along, in my research and began combining them more, I think people, as time went on, people became more aware of the importance of using faith communities as possible conduits for healing people using psychological means.

I just think that's evolved in general. Not just because of me, but just in general. Even when we write grants to federal government now, we don't get so many, people aren't so surprised or sort of critiquing how you're going to do this. I think people are still, in the grant world in particular, they don't really quite understand what can go on in the faith community. So, you still get questions that, it's like the fact that they don't understand the nature of a faith community.

So, for example, one of the projects we're designing, we're having ministers do sermons four times a year. Let's say on suicide prevention. A grant reviewer might say, "Well, that's not dosed high enough." Or, "That's not enough exposure." Without realizing that a sermon is designed to be very persuasive once. So, you have to explain that. You have to say, "Well, actually, these sermons are designed to be persuasive one time. That's the point of it." Or they might say, "Well, you're doing this with kids. Are they going to be coerced because they're kind of a captive audience?" And you say, "Well, we wouldn't call that coercion, but you're right, they are a captive audience, that's why it works." You know?

So, it's kind of like trying to help them understand that there's multiple interpretations of how you can view this phenomenon, I guess is what I'm saying. Particularly in the black church, these speeches, they're called speech events. They are supposed to be very powerful and most evocative. That's the point. So, it becomes a goal to help people understand that. Or we had this big argument about who's a member. So, epidemiologist counting is very important, like who's in this group or this community or population? I would have to say to them, "So, we can't necessarily go by that because some people come every week and they've never joined. Other people come once a month but get a lot out of that once a month." So, it's not necessarily their frequency that will make the difference. It's more the quality that makes the difference.

So, you know, helping people to understand that is just a different paradigm to use and it's been somewhat challenging.

Writer:

Yeah. Do people ever come to you for pastoral needs in the secular settings?

#3: Yeah, sometimes. Well, students come and sometimes just want to talk about their faith beliefs, which I just listen to neutrally as I would listen to anything else. I'm not there to proselytize, so I just I just listen. I think, in my colleagues, sometimes people come when we have like ... Well, I guess yeah. I was thinking. I'm not sure this is because I'm in ministry, but there are people who will come to me to talk about personal things, which may or may not have to do with their faith. I think where I really saw it was when we have huge crisis, like 9/11. So, a lot of people came to me about faith issues then. Or when we have a natural disaster. So, if we have a hurricane or the recent election. People were very upset. So, that's when people will tend to come to you.

Some of those people are not necessarily in faith communities, but I think it becomes a theodicy at those moments. You know, "Where's God in all of this?" So, yeah. So, I've been pleasantly surprised who comes. So, again, everybody knows what I'm doing. I don't necessarily talk a lot about it. I talk about it as much as I talk about anything else. I don't make it a point to talk about it, but I don't hide it either.

Writer: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Alright. Where we're heading towards the end. Would you be willing to have me send a link that you could send to some leaders in your church who could fill out the survey?

#3: Sure. I already did that. They didn't do it?

Writer: No. I-

#3: Lay or ministers?

Writer: Yeah. Lay leaders. Yeah, lay leaders.

#3: Oh, yeah. Uh-huh (affirmative). Yeah, sure. Uh-huh (affirmative).

Writer: Okay, I'll send you that link. And the final question is, is there anything else that you would like to share?

#3: I think just I think it's important that when ... I think it's important that the church recognize that many people in ministry are bi-vocational and to become a lot more sensitive to that end. Expectations of how people progress through the process of becoming ordained. And even how things are scheduled. When people want to participate more in the larger group, I think there just needs to be a sensitivity to that that's not there right now. And also, in terms of, even just expectations of pastors. It's very challenging for us, for example, to increase membership because we don't do this all the time. So, there are ways in which people typically increase

membership that we can't do because we're working our other job. So, just to be sensitive to that.

Writer: Okay. Alrighty. Well, doctor, thank you. I appreciate this.

#3: You're welcome. No problem.

Writer: I'll send you the link that you can send off to some lay leadership.

#3: Okay. Sounds good.

Writer: You have a good day.

#3: You too.

Writer: Blessings.

#3: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Take care. Bye-bye.

Writer: Bye.

THE QUESTIONS- Survey (Church #4; Minister #1) (JD)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

In 2014 I was called to be the full-time minister. However, because of budget considerations I moved to part-time in December 2016, and remained part-time for one and a half years.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Respondent skipped this question.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Because I could only be there on Sundays, and really just had to focus on the worship and a little bit of the administration, the visitation fell on the Deacons’ shoulders and they stepped up faithfully and competently to the task.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upsides(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

The one big thing that I did not have time for that I had been more intentional about when I was full-time, was leadership development. I felt this piece was missing when I became bi-vocational and I think it hindered how we as a church weathered the transition. Apart from that, the other big adjustment was not related to the transition per se, but whereas the congregation entertained hopes of significant numerical growth when I was full time, we began to "right size" such expectations when I was part time.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Lay leaders took the driver's seat in organizing a number of different activities, like yard sales and wellness workshops, all of which turned out very well. A women's group was also launched.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

(No longer at the church where I had been serving bi-vocationally!)

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey).

(See above).

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Theologically- very beneficial as a way to generate lay members becoming more involved and developing ownership over the church.

Practically- hard to keep up the denominational connections. My energy went to a) my regular job 2) my church and finding members to represent us in denominational gatherings was

challenging. Also keeping my committees in motion and making sure that the administrative piece was consistently in order was tough.

Personally- it was very very tiring. If I could have preached less often, perhaps just twice a month, it would have been substantially less burdensome, I think.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking “yes” you are willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Not as this time.

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lanasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

Thank you for your hard work on this- it is a blessing for our denomination!

THE INTERVIEW (Church #4; Minister #1) (JD)

Writer: All right, I'm here with #4 on Saturday, October 27th. I think it's about 12:50 pm, and we're going to do our interview on bi-vocational ministry. And I'm going to talk as little as possible #4. All right? Just feel free to go with it and tell your story. And basically, the first question here is can you tell me about how you became a bi-vocational minister?

#4: Sure, happily. So, I started at the Federated Church of Livingston in March of 2014. And that was my first call into ordained ministry. I was ordained June of that year and installed September 2014. So that was, at that time, it was a full-time ministry. It was a small church and the church had made the decision that they wanted to take what resources they had remaining and invest in hiring a full-time minister. They had been without a full-time minister for the last three years. They had had just an interim who really was only a pulpit supply. He was just there on Sundays. I think he was probably even then in his 80s. He had been retired and then he came, and he did just this pulpit supply at the time. It probably wasn't intended to last that long, but that's how long it lasted. And they said, "We're going to put all of our resources and we're going to hire a new person full time and we're going to see if we can grow our congregation."

So, I worked with them for a few years and we did our darnedest. When I got there, I realized fairly quickly that there were a number of things that needed to be resolved before it was realistic to expect that we could grow numerically. And, let's see, probably 2015, really beginning of 2016, I was focused on fixing these things that needed to be fixed. And many of these might have been things that would have happened if they had hired an interim who had been trained to do the interim work rather than just a pulpit supply interim. So, we didn't have a budget. We needed to get our budget. We had back taxes that we had not paid. The IRS was sending us letters. We needed to pay the back taxes. We did not W-9 our employees. We needed to do that. We didn't have job descriptions for everybody. We had building and grounds issues, leaking roofs, flooding basements, all of these. Everything you could imagine that a church might encounter, we had to fix. So that was the first couple of years.

And, meanwhile, the reserves out of which we were paying my salary are diminishing and diminishing and diminishing. And we're hopefully building up our pledge and offering system, but it's still a small congregation so there's only so much money that you're going to be able to generate that way. We had a couple of other congregations that we were renting to. And that helped a lot in terms of building our revenue, our resource stream. So, around the beginning of 2016 we came to a

crossroads whether we would sell the parsonage. I was not living there at the time. We were renting it out to a family, which is actually another point of contention because then there was this question of whether we should be paying some sort of tax on the fact that we were renting it out if that was not a ministry-connected purpose. But if we were going to sell it anyway, then it seemed like maybe that would be all right. And there was this question if we sold the parsonage, then we would have money to continue to fund me as a full-time minister and we would have one less, honestly one less runned-down building that we would be responsible for maintaining, which was also appealing to us.

So, we sort of moved in that direction. I say we, myself and basically the leadership team, but as we got closer and closer people got less and less comfortable with selling the parsonage and they remembered the old days when the minister used to live in the parsonage and they would go over. They would have dinner there and the kids would play together. And when it came time for the vote, everyone, not everyone but a large enough minority because we needed a two-thirds vote to sell the parsonage, and there were enough people that didn't want to do it. So, the decision was made not to sell the parsonage. Well if you're not going to sell the parsonage, then you don't have enough money to pay a full-time minister. So, the result of that was that I went to bi-vocational. I was then just there on Sundays.

And it happened to work out that my friend who was running a community center was hiring. So, I got to work there as a community organizer. And I was the minister at the church on Sundays. And since it was my friend, if anything came up that I needed to leave, he would let me. As it happened it didn't turn out to ... I don't think I had to do that too often. But it was nice to have that flexibility built in. So then, starting in January of 2017, I was just Sundays at the church. And even there it was just three Sundays a month because I was full time at the other work and I thought I would want a weekend off each month. So that's how we left it for a little while. So that brings us to ...

Writer: Yeah, how you became bi-vocational.

#4: Yeah... That was a long answer to a sort of very quick question.

Writer: So, can you tell me how being bi-vocational impacted the ministry at your church?

#4: Okay, sure. So being bi-vocational forced me to give up a whole bunch of things that I would've told you were very important. I would get to the church ... I should take a step back. One of the things that I realized would be a helpful ministry for the church would be to focus on the

administrative elements of our life together. So, as I alluded to, a lot of that has to do with the staff, staff supervision, et cetera. So, one of the things that I did keep doing even as bi-vocational, literally just in church on Sundays, but I made sure we had our trustees' meetings on Sundays. I made sure we had our deacons' meetings on Sundays. Because in my experience, the deacons and trustees' leadership were not quite ready to hold themselves accountable to their own visions. And if I wasn't there, they would slide a little bit and talk about the same things they had already talked about or not move forward on the things that they had decided they wanted to move forward on.

So, I arranged it so that I would be meeting with the sexton Sunday mornings. I would be meeting with the deacons once a month. I would be meeting with the trustees once a month. Then I would preach as well. And then any activities that we were trying to do would also be on a Sunday. For example, we had minister JO come and gave a talk on substance abuse. So of course, things like that would be on a Sunday as well. I then read an article in I want to say Christianity Today, but it could've been The Christian Science Monitor, about how the things that build the ministry of the church might not be the minister preaching on Sunday morning. When people are gathered together in worship and there's prayers and there's music and there can be reading the Bible and reflecting on the Scripture, there might have been better things that I could have been doing even with my limited time as a bivocational minister.

Though I decided that the transition was already stressful enough for people to not have me present except for Sunday mornings that I didn't want to go jiggering with too many other things and say, "Okay, I'm only here three Sundays a month and on those three Sundays I'm not going to be preaching but we're going to be going out and knocking on doors or building up some sort of a community outreach ministry." I thought to myself, "This is not going to go over well." So, I stuck with just the sermon on Sundays. Now, me not being there meant that the deacons stepped up and took on the visitation ministry, which was a real blessing because we had people that got sick and we had people that were lonely and needed visits. And the deacons really, not only did they do it themselves when necessary, but they also coordinated other people to do that, which was wonderful, and I was so appreciative that that happened.

And when people had ideas to plan events, I could only give them my blessing, if it seemed like it would be a generative idea and let me go ahead. And there was very little practically I could do to help. And they didn't need me most of the time anyway. So, we had some very successful yard sales, for example, that I had nothing to do with at all where folks just came together and organized it and made it happen. And I was basically just trying to ask the broadest of questions to make sure that all

the bases were covered. So, yeah, so I think that the ministry changed because the members of the congregation really had to step up more. And I couldn't do the things that maybe I didn't need to do as much as I had thought I needed to do all along.

The one thing that I will say was not idea was I did not have the capacity really to be reflecting with the leaders in an intentional way about their development as leaders, which I wish I could've done more of. So, I wish I could've sat down with the yard sale people afterward and said even just, "How did the experience go for you?" in a semiformal, structured way. I wish I could've spoken with my deacons who had gone and visited and reflected even more in the theological sense on their visitation and how they experienced God's movement in those moments. I think that might have been powerful if I could've figured out how to do more of that. And I feel bad that I didn't.

Writer: When did you leave that bi-vocational setting?

#4: Yeah, so I was there all of 2017 and through May of this year, 2018. And a few things happened sort of in the mix. One of them was that we did sell the parsonage and we finally sold the parsonage in January of 2018. So, then there was the opportunity for the church to hire someone full-time. Maybe not forever but at least for a little bit. Or if the church wanted, they could hire someone half-time perpetually really. I think there would be enough money to do that. That was one thing. Another thing was that folks were a little bit ready to have someone there every Sunday. So once a month we had a supply minister come and that was not always the same person. And that was I think stressful and a little bit trying for people. So, they wanted the consistency. They had now the resources to do it. And meanwhile, I was thinking of going in a different direction to prepare myself in a long-term manner to be bivocational. So, I was simultaneously applying and then accepting to go to study at law school. So that all happened March, April, May. So, I finished up there in May. And now they have someone who I think is in a transitional capacity to work with them and figure out what their next steps are going to be.

Writer: So, if I'm hearing you correctly, you and the congregation lived bi-vocationally for a year and a half.

#4: Yeah.

Writer: Okay. Now this is a very hypothetical question, right? Do you think if they didn't have the resources and that they did it for let's say three more years that things would've, they would've become more adept or more capable of doing?

#4: Yeah, I think if they had ... Let me sort of throw a few more items in the hypothetical. If it were me or someone else who had been there every Sunday, let's say a few Sundays off for vacation, but if the norm was that they would be there four Sundays a month. And I think if it were a person who were able to spend a little bit of time on the administration and on the leadership development, yeah, I think it could've worked. I really do. It's small. It's 25, 30 people on a Sunday. There's nothing going on during the weeknights because the people don't want to drive at night when it's dark anyway. Or they're working until 8:00 or 9:00 or they have young kids. So there really wasn't much pressure to be doing things during the week, except for the visitation. I don't know, I really think it could've worked. Perhaps we wouldn't have been able to aggressively court perspective new members in the same way because what's the follow up look like?

It was critical that we had a half-time administrator who was in the office Monday through Thursday, four hours a day, who could handle for the most part whatever came up intermittently. See, I think the challenge was more the transition into bi-vocational ministry than bi-vocational ministry itself. But the challenge was formidable. And I think I probably underestimated how much people would mourn not having a full-time person and would hold that against me or the situation as a whole. We had one person who retired in May I think of 2016 and then was going through a bit of a personal crisis in January, February, March of 2017 as they were dealing with this change in identity. And they didn't feel that I was able to work with them as they were going through that. Because it's not the kind of crisis that you're necessarily going to interrupt the minister on a Sunday morning to discuss. It's not urgent. But it was real.

Writer: Yeah, you had mentioned, or you had written in that journal letter that you had sent to me ...

#4: Yeah, yeah.

Writer: ... some of those things, right?

#4: Yeah, yeah.

Writer: Are you able to speak to those now or do you feel not ...

#4: Sure. Yeah, yeah. The particular pastoral concerns?

Writer: Or whatever that letter was about when it came to bi-vocational ministry.

#4: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. So yeah, so I felt really bad because I had people come up to me five minutes before church and they would say, "My mother-in-law is in the hospital." And then I would either try to quickly

minister to them in the three minutes that I had before. Or I would say, "Let's talk afterward." But that's awkward because, well, the trustees are meeting afterward. So, I finished my sermon and then grabbed this person, drag him into my office for 15 minutes and pray that the trustees get distracted and don't get impatient. Whatever it is. So, I don't know, maybe that's something that would've been, people would've grown accustomed to that the trustees don't meet right after church, but they meet at 12:30 and get a sandwich. Don't expect that we're going to be quick necessarily on the Sundays that we do that. So that was one.

And the other ... Well, I don't know, I just felt I guess as I got toward a year in, I just felt pretty drained spiritually and sort of just energetically drained. Because my day off then was often my sermon writing day effectively. So, five days of work, a day of sermon writing, a day of ministry, and then one weekend off once a month. So, I think that was probably the biggest concern.

Writer: Yeah, which segues into the question about your other job at that time.

#4: Yeah, sure.

Writer: I guess you're still in it now, correct?

#4: No. No, no, no.

Writer: No, you're not. You're done with that as well?

#4: Yeah.

Writer: Okay. Your other job and how that impacted and/or influenced being bi-vocational.

Reverend James: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Writer: And positively or negatively really.

#4: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So, I was working at Catholic Charities as a community organizer. I was working with mostly Spanish speaking immigrants. And we had a few different areas. We did community gardens, we did immigrant rights, and then we did housing issues and concerns. And I had been an organizer in the past for a couple of years before the seminary. So, some of the lessons that I learned I brought with me into ministry. And as I continued to learn those lessons, continued to apply them. The area where that most came into force was, I really wanted the church to reach out to the community in a social justice capacity all along, full-time and then when I was part-time. Because I thought that if you're trying to attract

new people into your church, you can't assume these days that new people grew up going to a church. So, the message therefore cannot be for that demographic, "We have the thing that you're looking for." Because you can't assume, and you know all this, you can't assume that they're looking for anything in particular. And if they never grew up in a church, the last thing they want or think that they want is to go into the church.

So, you might say, "All right, well you can invite people into the church." And that's true but if you only have 30 people, your world of people that can be invited to the church is numerically limited. And you might find a few that way, and we did. But you might not. So, I said, "All right, well what if we go out into the community and we organize on some issue that we feel strongly about as people of faith, but an issue that is also interesting to people that are not people of faith necessarily. And they will say, 'Who are these people that are out doing this and why are they doing it?,' and they might get interested and they might come." They might not come. But they might come. And even if a small percentage of the people that we talk to and are involved with and are working with come, they've come for the right reasons. And they might say, "Listen, there's this wonderful social justice church, and I never thought I would be a Christian but here I am." So that was my concept. And as with anything, you never know where it goes.

And the issue that we got excited about was something I had no idea. But if you work at a big box store, large retail establishment like Home Depot or Target or supermarket, there's a good chance that you do not have a consistent work schedule from one week to the next. So, there's a good chance that you do not always work the morning shifts or the evening shifts, but some Mondays you work mornings and some Mondays you work evenings. And then there's this whole thing called clopenings where you close on Monday and you left the store at midnight and they have you scheduled to come back in at 6:00 AM the next morning in order to open the store. So, we had a few people in the church that were affected by that. And then I got to asking ministers who are colleagues of mine and they had the same thing going on at their church. So, we put together a committee of clergy and we thought this was going to be our vehicle to reach out into the community, say "Here's an issue that we're working on. Does it affect you?"

I would ride the bus to work some days and I had a little survey. And while I was on the bus, I asked people if they could fill out this survey and did they know of anyone and does this impact them? And 20% of the survey respondents, out of 100 people that I got to, said yes this impacted them. They were in such a job right now or they had recently been and expected at some point they would be again. So here you have an issue that is fairly widespread. Maybe I was just in the dark in not really

knowing that this was an issue beforehand, but maybe not. Who knows? It's an issue that we could be doing more about. And I thought, "Let's focus on this, build up some consensus, get the word out that way." And then people might say, "Who are these guys working on this issue? Maybe we should check out their church." So that was my idea. But once I was bivocational, I didn't have time to work on that. And we weren't doing that at the Catholic Charities. So, then that got put aside.

And then I got another issue at Catholic Charities, which was, at the risk of getting a little technical, but cities and towns have an option to sign agreements with immigration customs enforcement that they will help immigration customs enforcement to detain alleged violators of immigration policies. So, we wanted the town where the church was not to sign such an agreement because we had immigrants who were members of our church. So, I brought a couple of them to city council to express their feelings that as residents and citizens even of the community they didn't want the town to pass such an agreement. So that was my organizing on the ground with the church as a bi-vocational minister, which was really awesome and a wonderful experience. And the words, I won't forget one of them from Cuba who spoke about the conditions that her family faced under what the restrictive regime that she experienced of Castro and then coming here to be in a place that she thought would be a free country only to have her son stopped by the police on suspicion of being Hispanic and how devastating that was. So that was all very interesting and very powerful. And I think it helped me connect more with those members of my congregation.

And, again, I wish I had had that time for the leadership development because I did not bring this up as an issue for us as a church to officially endorse, sponsor, resolve, for the church to send a letter to the city council because I knew I had a couple people that weren't going to see eye to eye with me and my immigrant members. And I knew I also probably didn't have the energy to work intensively with those members to either bring them to see the things the way I saw them or at least to help them feel loved, respected and trusted enough that they would be comfortable with the rest of us going forward with this, that they weren't getting left behind or getting pushed aside or getting ignored, that they were still full-on participants and their voice counted and that if they didn't get their way this time it doesn't mean that they weren't going to get their way next time. But I just didn't have the wherewithal to make all that happen. So, we snuck off to the city council on our own.

Writer:

Yeah, you talk about this energy level and this other job. So, when do you rest, when do you have days off, when do you put the energy? Or if you don't have the energy, where do you find the energy? So, at Catholic Charities, we're you there full-time?

#4: Yeah.

Writer: 9:00 to 5:00?

#4: Yeah, it ended up being a little bit less structured than that. Our default was 10:00 until 6:00, though we had evening meetings at least once or twice a week. So, on those day then it was 12:00 until 8:00 or 1:00 until 9:00, which enabled me to run up to Livingston maybe once every other month during the week or if there were church sort of things going, denominational things going on that I could participate in a little bit.

Writer: Yeah, how far away was the Catholic Charities from the church?

#4: Yeah, so I was living in New Brunswick and that's where my Catholic Charities job was. And then the church up in Livingston. So, it's 45 (minutes) to an hour.

Writer: Each way, yeah.

#4: Yeah.

Writer: Yeah. All right, so we're getting towards the end.

#4: Yeah.

Writer: Now you're no longer at the church.

#4: Right.

Writer: Right? So, I wouldn't be asking you for your leaders of your church to fill out the survey as well.

#4: You should call them. I'm sure they would be willing to.

Writer: Who's the minister there now?

#4: The minister there now is Reverend CAP.

Writer: Okay.

#4: Reverend Doctor CAP. Well, you know what? She is bi-vocational because she also works at New Brunswick Theological Seminary.

Writer: Oh. UCC?

#4: No. She's American Baptist Church (ABC).

Writer: Okay.

#4: Yeah.

Writer: Is it dually affiliated the church?

#4: Yeah.

Writer: Yeah.

#4: Yep.

Writer: Yeah, all right. So, I could contact her and see if she ...

#4: If you were to contact her and say, "Listen, do you mind putting me in touch with some of the lay leaders," I bet you she would.

Writer: Okay.

#4: Or you can just call and speak with the administrator who's named S.

Writer: Yeah, I'd go through her and see if she'd send the link out to them.

#4: Yeah, yeah. Worth a try.

Writer: Worth a try, great. Good. So, then the final question really is...is there anything else you would like to share about that whole experience?

#4: Sure, yeah. So, the big thing I've been thinking about, and you can take it or leave it, but I think that where there are churches that have had bi-vocational ministry for a while that they might be okay. And where there are churches that have the resources and the structure I guess for a full-time minister or even a half-time minister, that those congregations might do okay. But the congregations that are used to the full-time and are now forced, for one reason or another, to have just the Sunday only quarter time let's say ministry, that transition I think is harder than many of us might have thought it was going to be. And I think that there's going to be a lot of congregations that are going to be making that transition. You might run into this. So, my question would be what are some adjustments that we as a denomination can be making so that that transition is as easy as possible? And I came up with three ideas. And I don't really know how they quite go together.

One of them is, and I think this first idea is one that maybe is already floating around, that we got to get away from the minister is the one that preaches the sermon first and foremost. Because sermon prep can take up

a lot of time. And I'm not convinced that my members are that much better off on having heard me preach a sermon than they would be if we had read the Bible and sung some praise songs and had some prayers and had a time for people to share what the struggles are going on in their lives and had a time for people to share what some of the joys are that they have encountered. I don't know if it would've been a total disaster if we had had sermons every other week or however you want to do it, communion one week, sermon the next, whatever. That I think would be something that could be changed. Or lay sermons, the extent to which we could be as a denomination somehow building up the confidence of our lay members to preach the sermon. I think that would be one. Well, and then part of that is so what are you doing when you're not preaching your sermon? You're developing the leaders and building up the discipleship.

The next thought I had was the administration. And, again, this could just be my congregation, but I talked to other people and it seems like this is common. There's a lot of churches that are just a mess administratively when it comes to are your finances in order?, are your by-laws in order?, is your 501 c3 status in order?, are you getting your boilers inspected on a regular basis?, do you have ..., all these little things that churches think they're exempt. And they're usually not. Sometimes they are, but not always. And then I thought to myself, half the time I spend on administrative aspects, as a minister I was relying on my trustees to do what they probably should've done anyway.

So, I thought to myself, "All right, well what if the denomination, what if the United Church of Christ New Jersey Association could hire an accountant, a bookkeeper, a financial consultant?" I don't know what they call it. And this person is available for any congregation that wants their services, within reason. They're not going to do everything for you, but they can come and sort of help you set up a little system for how we're going to do this. They can come, work with you to figure out what exactly you need. We spent so much time trying to figure out payroll service, to get a automatic payroll. And if we could've had someone just walk us through that, it would've been so much ... Who knew what they were doing. So, then I thought if we could have someone who could do that, the minister could work with that person, that person could work with the church. Not every church would want it. But the churches that are open to it would then have this resource available to them. So that would be my second thought.

And then the third thought is about training new ministers, which is, I don't know what that's going to look like. I know we're moving away from the seminary. Only approach which I think makes sense. But if you're saying you need a call to be ordained, and what does a call look like? There's going to be a place where you're going to be the minister. What if

that place doesn't exist? What does that mean? So, I think that we got to really open up the door on how we understand the role of the local congregation as the place where people come from who are going to be ministers eventually as the place where people get ordained and, honestly, as the place where people have their principal ministry. Because now as I'm in law school I'm sort of wondering, "All right," so I'm imagining myself in a public interest setting, "what will my ministry look like in a public interest setting?"

And I just go back to Reverend Joyce Phipps here in New Jersey who's an immigration lawyer. And in many respects her immigration law practice is a ministry. It's called Casa Esperanza, House of Hope, where people go, and she works with them and finds ways for them to stay in this country and to keep their families together. And I think that ... I might be putting words in her mouth, but I think that it would be a great disservice to Reverend Phipps if we were to say she's only a minister on Sundays when she's in her congregation preaching the word, and the rest of the days she's not a minister somehow. Shouldn't she be allowed to be ordained to a position like that? I wonder. Yeah, I wonder. So right now, in my understanding with our polity is you've got to find a traditional four-wall, white-steepled church.

Writer: Word and sacrament.

#4: Yeah. To get ordained. Once you're ordained, you might be able to keep your ordination if you're in a different, alternative ministry let's say. But the traditional church is still conceptualized and privileged as the A1 ministry.

Writer: Interesting.

#4: And I think it's not practicable. But I also think that if we want to help other people see what this whole thing is all about, what better way than having ordained, full-on kit and caboodle ministers who are out in the community doing the work that we believe to be of God's kingdom.

Writer: Even though it might not be named as such.

#4: Yeah. So, then there's things that go with that. So, then there's got to be some structure of accountability. Because as it is now if a minister goes off the rails, we have a way to deal with that. If an immigration lawyer who says that this is their ministry is now scamming people out of all their money, we got to be able to find a way to say they are not at this point acting on our behalf.

Writer: Right.

#4: But I think we could figure all that out.

Writer: Yeah, interesting. That's more of a model actually that I've seen as I'm studying bi-vocational ministry. I forget the exact name of it but it's something like minister in setting, that the British have used.

#4: Okay.

Writer: Which is a little different because some of these folks would be hired as a chaplain, let's say, in a corporation.

#4: Okay, yeah.

Writer: Which is a little different, right?

#4: Sure, sure. Right, right, right.

Writer: You could ... Like for me, I'm a therapist.

#4: Yep.

Writer: But most people don't know I'm a minister.

#4: Right.

Writer: But I still consider myself that that's a ministry.

#4: Absolutely.

Writer: Right.

#4: Yep.

Writer: But that's a little different definition. Because if you were using that British model, it would be that most people would know that I'm a minister.

#4: Right, right.

Writer: Thanks...

#4: Sure. Sure. Interesting.

Writer: Which leads me to-

#4: I think it all is on a spectrum.

Writer: Yeah. Good word, spectrum.

#4: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Writer: So that leads me to I guess one of the final questions again. At Catholic Charities, did they know you were an ordained minister working there?

#4: Great question. So, our location was a somewhat self-contained unit of five of us, director, site director, and then four organizers.

Writer: In New Brunswick?

#4: Yeah. And then we worked with our neighborhood in New Brunswick. But we were under the umbrella of Catholic Charities though the area director ... What'd they call it? The executive director and the area coordinators did not have very much to do with the running of our site on a daily basis. So, the higher ups did not know I was ordained. But the people in our site and the people we worked with in the community did know. And I actually think it was very helpful because many of our community members were people of faith. And I think that many of them were disappointed that the Catholic church was not more active in social justice issues. So, to be able to connect with our community leaders on a faith basis and a social justice commitment that was informed by that faith basis was very powerful.

Writer: So, you didn't shy away from that moniker in your work at community organizing?

#4: No.

Writer: You embraced ... If someone treated you as a minister, you embraced that role?

#4: Yeah, yeah. Now, given that many were Catholic, I was not sort of in a what would be the word? - sacramental position.

Writer: Right. Like being a priest or something.

#4: Yeah, so there wouldn't have been a moment where I would have been ...

Writer: Last rights or something.

#4: Yeah. What would ... Liturgical is the word. There wasn't a liturgical moment per se. But definitely pastoral.

Writer: Yeah.

#4: Yeah.

Writer: Yeah, good.

#4: Yeah.

Writer: All right, #4, anything else?

#4: No. I appreciate that you're doing this, and I'll say it for the record. Thank you for taking this on.

Writer: Yeah, thank you for spending the time with me, a good 41 minutes of talking. That's great.

#4: Wow.

Writer: All right. All right.

#4: See you.

Thoughts on Bi-vocational Ministry by JD

Today is Sunday, this must be Church

The bi-vocational challenge in the U.C.C.

Rev. JD

The notion of “bi-vocational” ministry has become more and more fashionable in the U.C.C. It used to be a curiosity that your mentor might absentmindedly scoop up, examine, and gingerly replace, remarking in passing that all seminarians should consider it. Yet nowadays I can scarce attend a revitalization workshop, boundary training, or association rally without bumping into *Bi-vocational Ministry*, the inevitable future of our church. At least I can report that now, a recently bi-vocational minister, I am finally fashionable.

But do the excitement and optimism for our churches' bi-vocational ministry future mask unpalatable realities? Has “bi-vocational ministry” become something of a panacea, that when churches crumble and ministers default, we dispel all cares as with an incantation? Have we lifted up the rock, upon which we suppose we will build our church, to familiarize ourselves with the grime and slugs on the underside?

I'll spare you but the broadest brush strokes. In 2014 I started full-time at my current church. We had some cash reserves to cover my salary, but I knew I would need to revitalize (read, increase stewardship) to endure. By 2½ years I had completed the requisite building and grounds triage and achieved some incipient new member momentum but then our reserves ran dry. I transitioned to working elsewhere full-time M-F and now I'm in church only Sundays, in fact only 3 Sundays a month.

Some weeks are easier than others. If the boiler is not on strike and the squirrels in the roof keep to themselves, my members are happy and healthy and the choirmaster and music committee chair honor their armistice, then bi-vocational ministry seems manageable. And when

someone hits a rough patch and I can only sit on my hands until Sunday, and even Sunday whatever I muster is jammed between worship meeting paperwork, my disappearing act wears thin.

But setting aside the normal ups and downs, I am more and more in the camp that says long-term, theologically benevolent, bi-vocational ministry in the U.C.C. may be not only hard but actually literally impossible – unless we take a Sharpie™ to our polity. In other words, if we continue piling our present version of the United Church of Christ onto the unicycle of bi-vocational ministry, we might meet a wall.

So, I offer some suggestions and please hold the tension if some of these suggestions contradict others:

- U.C.C. churches like having one minister in charge of the ministry: call it ‘sole pastor’, ‘pastor and teacher’, ‘senior minister’, whatever you like. Organizationally and spiritually it seems to make sense and who had the budget for multiple senior pastors anyway. But guess what? If we’re serious about bi-vocational ministry, **having just one senior pastor is a terrible idea**. Bi-vocational ministry takes a lot out of you. I would gladly have a colleague with whom to share the preaching. At no extra cost to the church.

- Increased lay leadership and the realignment of authorized ministry: not only the prayers and readings but also preaching, that traditional bailiwick of (ordained) clergy, must be shared with lay members. Remember A City Upon a Hill was a lay sermon. Not too bad. “But if even the preaching is shared, what remains of ministry? Just the occasional sacrament?” I recommend we redefine ministry as discipling, or spiritual leadership development, and **appraise ministers exclusively on the basis of how much they engage others to faithfully do more**.

- Increased lay accountability: no doubt (name of church withheld) is a special place. But that doesn't mean it can inflate the value of Spring Yard Sale donations, in the thank-you letters sent for donor tax records. Actually that's fraud. So, every minister must choose between Pharisaical crusades for the letter of the law and acquiescence to the knowledge that a day of reckoning may arrive. And don't say "but they'll never bother with us" when we all know they already have: <http://www.ucc.org/obama-speech-in-2007-prompts-1>. But bi-vocational ministers don't have time or energy for this baloney. **Our churches need an alternate mechanism to ensure lay leaders adhere to all applicable regulations or we'll be fined and shuttered.**

- Training. Okay, here's the biggie. Most of us can picture the bi-vocational pathway for a person with a job they'll continue to work, a church they've been involved with, and a set locale: their church sponsors them as they undergo a course of study, preparation, and evaluation, and in time they serve bi-vocationally either where they are or in another church nearby.

But it's utter chaos for a young person just starting out. Enter the MID process in or soon after college, follow the normative path through seminary, and you land in the first available pulpit wherever that may be. Good luck becoming bi-vocational out there – unless you have the constitution for chaplaincy AND there is a hospital nearby.

Okay, well why don't young people just get started on their non-ministry careers first and incorporate ministry later on? Because we must strike while the iron is hot. Home churches can't wait a decade for their MID to build family, life, and career, 9 times out of 10 in another place. And if we defer the would-be MID: "get another career; join a local congregation once you are established; start your process there" **I guarantee young people will hear "DON'T DO IT AT ALL"** and in a snap we lose a generation of U.C.C. ministers.

Instead, if we are serious about setting young people up in bi-vocational ministry, we need a program to engage them in meaningful ministry experiences at every station of their path – to the point of revisiting the prerogatives of authorized ministry to account for our new era. And almost certainly we will need substantive alternatives to the primacy of the local church of origin as custodian of the process AND the primacy of the local church of call as its conclusion: we need a way to support, mentor, challenge, encourage, and finally ordain young ministers that honors the limitations of our maxed out local churches. Folks, it's time to be as imaginative in our polity as we are in everything else.

In sum, let our 500th year commemorations remind us among other things one very pivotal insight of the Reformation: **the structure of our church must be the servant of our Gospel.**

THE QUESTIONS (Church #5; Minister #1)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Necessary budget cuts and an offer by staff to have all staff become part-time led to this change. That created the opportunity for me to take on something else.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

There is more opportunity for others to be involved in functions that had been assumed by the pastor or defaulted to the pastor. Lay leadership has expanded in very beneficial ways.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upsides(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Some folks do look back on the golden age of full-time pastors and church “secretaries” and miss that. But even those folks have become appreciative of the current status.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

There are many ways, e.g., more people doing visitations and keeping up with members in need, leading Sunday School programs, running mission outreach work like shelter involvement, taking initiative around new programs, etc.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

So much involvement by many people, shared ownership for mission and the life of the church, a blossoming of possibilities that might otherwise have been missed, deeper commitment to community, pride in what we are doing together, etc.

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

In moments when we stop and think about it- which are rare, I know some are still concerned about various counts, like members, attendance, offerings, the same things shared by most congregations these days.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Having a bi-vocational minister works well, streamlines church bureaucracy, and opens up enormous potential for great things to happen. And it is cheaper for the church as well.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking “yes” you are willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lanasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

(Narrative omitted to maintain confidentiality.)

THE INTERVIEW (Church #5; Minister #1) (MK)

Writer: Ready. We're on.

#5: We're on. Are we recording?

Writer: We're recording right now. Yep.

#5: Wow. I feel so special.

Writer: Were you sitting there the whole time when I started calling at two o'clock?

#5: Oh yeah. I have been here since three minutes till 2:00. What usually happens is that our office phone rings and I can intercept it from my phone, but none of the phones rang.

Writer: That's weird 'cause I probably called 10 times.

#5: Oh man. It could well be on this end. Our phone system is screwy sometimes.

Writer: Yeah. That's okay. I'm glad you're still there.

#5: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Writer: How you been doing? You're pretty busy all the teaching and stuff.

#5: Yeah, the intensive week is, we're two weeks out from that now. That's good and it went well. Yeah, it's just a busy time of the year. Of course, I don't know if you are doing a vigil for the Tree of Life Synagogue and all that stuff, but there's a community vigil here I'm trying to be a part of. On two boards of organizations that serve kids. Yeah, it's been busy. I feel like I am on a hamster wheel. It's all good.

Writer: Well, we're going to do this interview, right??

#5: Sure.

Writer: I'm going to ask you a few different questions, but I'm not going to be talking at all or very little.

#5: Okay.

Writer: As you taught us a couple years ago now, I'm just wanting to hear your story.

#5: My story, my ministry story.

Writer: Yeah, I want you ... Here's the first question- can you tell me about how you became a bi-vocational minister?

#5: Yes. Well, at first it was basically a pragmatic situation. When I completed the D.Min. myself, D. moved to be the dean. They needed someone to teach the seminar, so they invited me to do that. I happily took that opportunity and instantly became bi-vocational at that point. Then, subsequently, we needed to do some budget cutting here at the church. I offered to cut my, theoretically cut days here from five to four, and allowing for the teaching. Of course, that was an illusion, right? Nothing ever change here, but that's much by my own doing. The congregation would probably like me to take much more time off. That's how it happened. I was invited.

Then I also was invited to teach in the social work department at M. College.

Writer: How often did you teach there?

#5: I teach the organization course probably every other cycle. Every two years or so and I now supervise, on an ongoing basis, I supervise orphaned social worker students and their field placement. Where, when they're in placements that don't have a social worker. I'm the social work backup.

Writer: Okay.

#5: I do that every week.

Writer: Can you tell me how being a bi-vocational Minister has impacted the ministries at your church?

#5: Oh well, I guess I need to start, it's made me much more vibrant for sure. There's no doubt that the learning I do through the seminary and through the teaching, and through other outside church activities, feeds me and give me stuff to think about. On just that level alone, it's added much to the richness of our ministry here because I can connect us with much more things and infuse ideas that might not be thinking about or doing these things.

Historically, this was a very much a pastor-oriented congregation. There have been some guys here, who love that and really promoted that. When I got here, I knew one of the things I had to do to bring this church to a new level of vitality was to step back from that model and help them to step back from that traditional pastor type model and engage in the ministry in a much more active and authoritative way.

Actually, they have always been very active, but they didn't necessarily take charge of anything without deferring to the pastor. Now, what I say matters very little around here. I love that actually. That's the way it should be. As part of the process of making that transition, we have completely streamlined our ... I don't know if you can hear the phone ringing, but it is ringing now. We completely streamlined our administrative bureaucratic structure. We have only one group that meets on a regularly basis. Everything else is Ad Hoc. Because what we found was that people were willing to step up, but they were getting burned out really quickly, so we developed ways for people to feel fully engaged without burning out.

The Ad Hoc things come, they gather, they do their work, and they disband. It's had impact, even at that level.

Writer: That's great. Now you might have answered this sort of already, but the third question is, how has your, "Other job," influenced you as bi-vocational minister?

#5: Yeah, it definitely adds to the richness. For example, I am working with (name removed) on her major project which has to do with cognitive processing disorders. That's not an area that I ever really thought about. Working with her on this project, I have been able to infuse thoughts about brain disorders in our work here. We're engaged, I don't know if you know the WISE Process in UCC for the UCC Mental Health Network, but it stands for, Welcoming Inclusive Supportive and Engaged with mental illness, substance abuse, and brain disorders. It's a process that is very similar to the open and affirming process where you do a year of self-directed study. Make like a declarative statement and then vote on at the end. We're deeply engaged in that process here. Working with (name removed) is a small example, has helped me to be more aware of people who are processing language a fraction a second behind when actually the language gets to them.

That's one simple way. The whole listening seminar has played out here in many ways. We've become sort of locally appreciated and valued for having listening sessions on things that matter. An upcoming one is on the violence that's going on around the country and the state of politics is another. Those are two examples, but it has ... It keeps my brain fresh. It definitely has an impact.

Writer: Yeah, yeah. Now with your social, the people at the seminary of course, know you're a minister.

#5: Yeah.

Writer: Do the people at the social work school know you're minister?

#5: Yep, yep.

Writer: Do they come to you for any pastoral needs?

#5: That's a great question. Come to me, no, but I am asked every year around Thanksgiving 'cause it's when the HBSC cycle plays out at the college, I'm asked to come in and talk about spiritual development and that's always a really rich conversation. In incidental contact, I think people do appreciate I'm a pastor as well. Especially some of the students that I have now are very, very religious and they make sense of the world through religion. They've bounced ideas and questions off of me in that regard. About how I am being a Christian.

Go ahead.

Writer: Part of your biographical statement to them is that you are also a minister.

#5: Absolutely, yeah. I'm fully who I am, wherever I am.

Writer: I mean this might go a strange question, but do people at the seminary come to you for pastoral needs?

#5: Definitely students, there's no doubt about that. Just because, I mean it's more in an advisory role that I end up engaging with doctoral students around pastoral needs. Otherwise, no. I mean, no staff or faculty, I can't remember any conversations, that I would call pastoral with any of them.

Writer: Okay. How long do you think it took you for moving that your church from the traditional pastor to this more involved authoritative way of doing things?

#5: It really didn't take much time at all. I mean we're still learning. We're eight years out. I have been teaching for eight years. There's still lots of stuff we're learning about how to do it better. I think the spirit caught on really early. This is a congregation of professors, and teachers, and nurses, movers, and shakers in the community. I think in some ways, they were really eager to be liberated, to live in to what they see as ministry. If that helps any.

Writer: Oh yeah. That's great. In that regard, one of the words I keep throwing around is bi-vocational-ism. Would you be willing to send a link that I could send you to send to your leadership, so they can fill out a survey as well?

#5: Sure. Absolutely.

Writer: All right, I'll send you that link after. Then they can compare and contrast what they say, with what you say, and other ministers say.

#5: Yep.

Writer: I guess (name withheld), my final question is a very opened ended one. Is there anything else you would like to share about bi-vocational-ism, bi-vocational living, any of the topic?

#5: Just that I think you're really on to something in approaching this as an affirmative posture for the church. I think it's going to become increasingly necessary. It's already there in a lot of ways. I can't wait to see what you come up with actually.

Writer: All right. All right. I did say that was the final question, but I have one more.

#5: Sure.

Writer: Do you find the denomination helpful with their meeting schedules or is there something from like the larger church that bi-vocational ministers would like to say, or change?

#5: When you said meetings, do you mean-

Writer: Association meetings.

#5: No, I feel like ... I mean, I'm really lucky, Dan, to have tremendous latitude to set my schedule. Except for the intensive week on campus, I really have complete charge of where I go and what I do. I can usually get to whether, day meetings, night meetings, whatever, weekends. I don't have any concerns about that.

Writer: All right. Okay, good. All right, M. Well, that's pretty much it.

#5: Excellent. I'm sorry it took so long to connect. Did you ever hear from GJ?

Writer: Yeah. I met with him the other day down in Virginia.

#5: Okay. Oh, good. Okay. Awesome. How about DW?

Writer: No, I emailed her after you introduced us and I never heard back.

#5: Aw. Are you still looking for people?

Writer: Yeah. I got a couple more. I put a blurb on Facebook and got a couple response from that. I've got about nine or 10 ministers right now that I'm doing interviews with.

#5: Okay. You're happy with that?

Writer: Yeah. If you still have a couple more, especially now that I am figuring out how to do this without having to drive 12 hours a day.

#5: Absolutely. Yeah. Yeah. The other guy is RAT. Did you ever hear from him?

Writer: No, I never heard ... Maybe, I'll reach out to him. 'Cause I talked to him, we were both starting new churches way back when, and he called me.

#5: Oh, okay. Yeah. Tell him that I said he has to do this 'cause I did him a favor last week. I babysat some Germans that he has been entertaining. Tell him he owes me and he can pay you. R. teaches German at multiple levels of academia as another career.

Writer: Where is he located, so when I look him up I can find him?

#5: He lives in H. still I believe. H., Maryland.

Writer: Okay.

#5: His primary church is in F. It's (name withheld) in F.

Writer: Okay. All right. I just drove by there the other day.

#5: Aw.

Writer: All right, M.

#5: Good luck Dan.

Writer: Hey. Thanks. The interviews are going to be over 100 pages.

#5: Wow, wow, wow. Good luck with that.

Writer: Yeah, right. Thanks a lot for doing this and thanks a lot for being in my life, and for teaching me those couple years ago. You're a great guy.

#5: Oh, you too, Dan. I enjoyed time with you. I feel a kindred-ness with you. I like that and that's always good.

Writer: Yeah. The social work stuff is a nice connection as well too.

#5: It is, absolutely. All right, if I can help in any way, let me know.

Writer: Keep it up, my friend.

#5: All right, you too. Take care.

Writer: All right, see ya, bye.

#5: Bye.

THE QUESTIONS (Church #6; Minister #1)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

The church hired a bi-vocational minister because they could not afford to pay a minister full-time yet wanted to have an ordained clergy member as pastor.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat disagree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

It impacts the spiritual and pastoral needs of the church negatively, simply because I am split in two, and my better paying job takes precedence. I have to still pay bills, and because of that, I cannot do all the things full-time clergy can.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat disagree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upsides(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

With an older congregation, there are more urgent spiritual needs, and many times, not being able to attend to those needs in real time can cause resentment from those members.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

They haven't. It has become a Sunday only and high holy day congregation.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Joining together on Sunday morning for worship and socialization between old friends and weekly lunch.

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

The church has no younger people coming, and they are afraid the church is going to die when they do.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Respondent skipped this question.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking "yes" you are willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking "no" you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? *Respondent skipped this question.*
- The address of your church? *Respondent skipped this question.*

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lanasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

Respondent skipped this question.

THE INTERVIEW (Church #6; Minister #1) (GJ)

Writer: Alright, I'm here in Panera Bread with #6, and its, what time is it?

#6: It is 5:30.

Writer: 5:30 on Sunday afternoon, and thank you #6 for meeting me to do this.

#6: No problem.

Writer: And I'll let you talk away, tell me how you became a bi-vocational minister.

#6: Well first, back in the end of 2010, beginning of 2011, I quit my government job to go to seminary. Got out of seminary, couldn't find a job in ministry because I was not ordained. It took me two years to get to the ordination, through the ordination process. This one gotta get paid, so once I did get my first two calls, the pay was so dismal that I had to have a second job just to survive, in spite of being married.

Writer: What was your second job?

#6: Wow, let's see. I did concierge work, I did office work, I worked for a year and a half as a soil and water educator and a program manager for the local soil and water conservation district. I did some administrative consulting on — before I went to seminary, I had a full administrative career of almost 25 years, so I had the skill set to do that, so I did some consulting. Gosh, I worked at a coffee shop. I just did whatever it took to get the job done. I currently am a substitute teacher with the Loudoun County Public Schools, two days a week which is a way to make sure that we have money for the extras. Not that we can't afford nothing we don't have, not that we don't make enough money to do it, but it's nice to have that cushion and because most churches don't have the ability to pay their clergy what they would make in private industry, you have to have a second source of income.

Writer: Tell me how being bi-vocational has impacted the ministries at your church.

#6: Well, it pulls me away from being able to be fully present at all times. I have to juggle my part-time job with my full-time calling. A prime example of that is on Friday of this past week I had to cancel a substitute assignment because I had some German visitors come in on an exchange program. If I were able to make enough money through my call, I wouldn't have to worry about going to sub and then try to figure out how I'm going to make up that money somewhere else.

Oh, the other thing I do is weddings. I'm like a pastor-for-hire. Not in the church, but you know, 'cause once you're able to do weddings, you can do weddings.

Writer: Do the congregants in the churches where you've been bi-vocational, have they been bothered by you having another job or-

#6: Yes. Because they don't think that I'm always available to be there for them. If someone gets sick, I can't just go and visit them in the hospital, I have to actually schedule how I'm going to do that. The other thing is, I'm in a unique position that the church I currently serve is 106 miles from my house. The churches I previously served were 45 miles from my house, so for me to do an actual visit, it takes some planning, it takes some logistics work. Since I'm not in the building all of the time, it makes it a little difficult to be able to be fully present for the members when they actually need you most.

Writer: Have they ever found a way to step up for themselves and do some of that themselves?

#6: With a little bit of prompting. Many of the churches operate from the quaint notion that the pastor is supposed to survive on whatever the church gives them and be available 25 hours a day, 8 days a week. In today's society, that is an unrealistic expectation all the way around. I encourage parishioners to, well, one thing I tell parishioners is that we're all ministers. I just happened to be the one who can marry or bury. It is their job to be the hand of Christ and go visit the sick and feed the hungry and go to prison. It's not just my job, it's all of our jobs 'cause we are all ministers. Sometimes they buy it, sometimes they don't.

Writer: How old are those churches?

#6: I've been blessed the past few churches that were all founded in the mid to late 19th century. 1868 was one, 1870 was another and 1825 is the furthest.

Writer: So, is it fair to assume that they've had a history of having full-time people?

#6: Up until the last 25 years, yeah. The church where I currently serve has always had a full-time minister. I don't know if that's necessarily viable for the future, but that is their desire, so while they think they can afford it they will do it. But when I did the two-point charge, they had not had full-time pastors for, again, about 25 years.

Writer: Had not?

#6: Had not.

Writer: So, they were used to this part-time thing for 25 years.

#6: And they still fight it.

Writer: Both of them?

#6: Both of them, yeah. One was more flexible than the other, simply because of the type of community — it's a farming community and they understand that with the loss of younger people that they couldn't afford to fund a minister full-time, they could barely afford to fund a minister quarter-time. They were grateful that someone would come and give them private ministry, even though they could not pay them what they knew I deserved.

Writer: That was one church with more of an attitude like that.

#6: Yes. The other church is a little bit more demanding. They are not as rural as the first church and they're financial situation is a little better than the first church. But they still can't afford to fund a full-time minister.

Writer: Now you mentioned that you're a substitute teacher.

#6: Yeah.

Writer: Do they know that you're a minister there?

#6: Yeah, because I am lucky enough to be a substitute teacher at my husband's school. I am pretty much the in/out sub.

The way it works at our county is, if you are a good sub and the teachers like you, the principal likes you, they can request you. I'm a known commodity. I've been a part of this community, this educational community for 13 years. Once I was approved to be a sub, I was approved at 10:30am, and by noon I had my first request from the school. The school also has supported us, both my ministry outside of the school, because teaching is a ministry. Teaching our children is a ministry, a very important ministry. They have been so supportive of us both inside the school and many of the teachers have been supportive of me in our churches.

Writer: Do people come to you at school for pastoral needs?

#6: Yes.

Writer: Can you say more about that?

#6: The benefit of being the spouse of a teacher who is ordained clergy (the spouse), they know that, because I know them, that they can talk to me freely without any boundaries, without any hesitation, and that I will give them the same consideration that I would give one of my parishioners, because they are my parishioners. I've dealt with everything from the loss of a baby to false allegation to, just this weekend, a teacher was accused of misconduct in school. His mom happens to be a teacher of (Name left out) County, and the family is friends of

ours, so I've had to be, I've had to be there to catch her because they can't go to their faith community right now``.

Writer: Wow.

#6: I worked at a coffee shop for a year and a half while and while I was out being Rev. Jonathan Edwards out in the world, the owner of the coffee shop called me to tell me that his brother was found dead of a heroin overdose. So, I went from being the assistant manager of the coffee shop to the family pastor because, again, there's some shame associated with that, that I don't understand, because drug addiction is A to Z.

I became their family pastor, and not just for the family but for the staff because this was a co-owner who died. I'm always providing that spiritual support, the actual support, no matter where I am. I really do believe that's one of the reasons I was called to ministry, because I do ministry wherever I go.

Writer: Does that make bi-vocationalism a helpful thing it that sense for you?

#6: It does, because I'm always in ministry. If I could do it my way, I would be at a church office every day, because I love being in the environment of the church. But I'm also blessed enough to be able to impact lives wherever I go. So that makes it a lot easier because I've pretty much liked the jobs I've had outside of church work. Doing something that I enjoy doing, which is talking to people, listening to people's stories, just being present with them is a blessing.

Writer: Yeah, good. You may have answered this already, but can you tell me how your other job has influenced you as a bi-vocational minister? I guess you sort of answered that, right?

#6: Everything that we do, we bring to ministry. As a substitute teacher, my compassionate skills are enhanced greatly, also dealing with children enhanced my compassion skills greatly. I get to exercise my external gifts and bring it back to the church where they are of use. I get to practice troubleshooting, I get to practice management organization, I get to practice accounting skills, troubleshooting, I get to practice human resources management and development, and bring that back to the church. Because again, everything that we do, everything that we are, every bit of us we bring to ministry. Just because I am in the church building does not stop me from being an administrative professional. I tell my assistant all the time, "I like you, but I don't need you, I can write my own letter, I type 75 words a minute." I can't say that unless I have that skill. It's a balance, they both feed and inform each other, and I honestly believe that they both work together to make me a better minister.

Writer: Yeah, great answer, great answer. Now your administrative assistant is where, at school or church?

#6: At church. I work for the secretaries at school. (laughs) Actually I work for the secretary at the church too. (laughs) The running joke is, when I hire them, my old assistant had to explain to him that his job is to manage me, because I told her, "Your job is to manage me, and if you can manage me, you can manage anybody." She managed me, and she passed the reins on.

Writer: What do you think about the whole idea of bi-vocational living, bi-vocational wisdom in the future of the church?

#6: Unfortunately, it is THE future of the church, because churches don't have the same income stream that it had 50 years ago. Actually, not even 25 years ago. 25 years ago, if you went into ministry and you were full time, you didn't have to worry about anything. Very few churches now are offering full-time clergy positions, because they can't afford it. Part of that is because our message is not as relevant as it could be, part of it is because some of us are so stuck in 1974 that we can't think past that and we are losing our best and our brightest to mega churches that are giving generation X, Y and Z what they really want.

Now, that is not to say that full-time ministry has gone by the wayside by any stretch of the imagination. You just have to understand that if you want to be full-time pastor, there's a possibility that you're not going to make enough money, and you're going to have to have a second job. But that's also this country in a nutshell. There're very few people who can get by on one salary these days. Most married couples, both members of the party are working. It's very rare that you have what was considered a "Father Knows Best" model of a home life. Add to that, you know, double income, no kids, you don't need to be at home, you can go out and have that second job.

While it's admirable to think that we can go back to that, and that's kind of what is being said politically — yes, I pulled some politics in here — that we can go back to the 50's, all will be well where dad goes to work and mom stays home and vacuums in high heels and pearls, that's not going to happen. That never really happened, let's be honest. We can't go back to which never existed. I happen to be a man of color from the south. Everybody in my family worked. The only women who stayed home in my family were the women married to steel workers. And the steel workers worked double shifts so they could afford for their wives to stay home.

My maternal grandmother went to work every day. My paternal grandmother went to work every day. And both of my grandfathers had excellent jobs. I don't know what it is to have a stay-at-home family. My father's third wife, who was my stepmother, stayed home for a year after she had my younger sister. After that she went back, I don't know what a stay at... I don't understand that term. Likewise, there is no way that if you are, unless you went to seminary with no loans and you went to college with no loans, you're gonna have to have a second job, period, because there are very few places that ... Currently we are sitting in

Loudoun County, Virginia — let me explain this way — which is technically the wealthiest county in America.

It's a radically rich county and the one that you drove through to get here, there are facts. One and two, one and two, one and two. Median income is about \$109,000. \$109,000, I feel, makes you middle class. \$109,000 in Alabama means that you own a plantation, but you don't make \$109,000 in Alabama. Let's call a thing, a thing. That being said, even in the wealthiest two counties in America, one and two, both parents have to go to work even with a median income of both counties of \$109,000.

I don't know any preachers that make \$109,000. That said there are some, I don't fit the profile. But none of my preaching friends are making \$109,000. That being said, if you can't live on \$109,000 in the wealthiest county in America, and you can't because the median house price out here is \$435,000. As a minister, you're not making that. You're doing good if you make a three-quarters of that. And you still have to figure out how you work that out and feed your family and pay back your student loan. And establish a college fund for your children if you have them.

Unfortunately, yeah, bi-vocationalism is the way of the — it's not even the way of the future, it is the now, and will be.

Writer: Alright. Now I'll just open it up. Is there anything else as you've been talking you thought of or you wanna say, you wanna ...

#6: I think I'm preparing the next generation of preachers who are, you know, we have denomination of requirements to go to seminary. I think that if we're going to require our ministers to go to seminary, then as a denomination we need to make sure those ministers get the financial support they need to go. Or, figure out a way to fund the seminary so seminarians don't come out of their graduate program with hundreds of thousands of dollars of debt. Because honestly, that is just modern-day slavery.

If you're going to have alternate paths to ordination, make sure that they are equitable and across the board for everybody to take advantage of it. There are some conferences where you don't necessarily have to have an MBA in order to be ordained as a pastor. There are some conferences and associations that don't require you to have CPEs in order to be ordained. I have a friend who probably will not be ordained until after he retires from his daytime as a teacher because he cannot take off 16 weeks of one day a week to go do some CPE. It's impossible. While I understand the need for, and, I dreaded every day go Monday for 16 weeks, I was mad.

I was also blessed to be in a position where I didn't have to work on Monday and could do that. Not everybody is able to do that. I think that seminaries need to do

a better job of being honest with the seminarians, and tell them, there's a greater chance that they're not gonna get a full-time job. That needs to be said during the "dating process" which students come as potential students, that needs to be said. And I know it sounds gloomish and doomish, but it's is a stated fact. And tell them, if you do get a full-time job, know that you're gonna have to have a second job. We have to educate our members and our churches that if you all aren't gonna pony up the money so that you can have a full-time pastor that doesn't have to have a second job, you can't complain when your pastor has a second job.

Things are important to us, we invest in them. Things that are important to us we've gotta put our money where our mouth is. When we think our child has athletic ability, we will mortgage the house for baseball, basketball, football, soccer, ice skating. And I'm not saying that people need to mortgage their house and church, but I do think we teach people how to give and how to give steadily and regularly, then we would not have some of the problems that we're having. So, it's not just on the seminary side, we have to teach our churches what to do, we have to teach our churches how to treat their pastors. And many times, we do a poor job of that. Needs to be included.

One of the other things that we need to do is, we wouldn't have to necessarily have so many bi-vocational preachers if we had programs that children could do, because if you have children in your church, you're gonna have adults in your church. It becomes an exponential thing. I was watching of all people, Oprah, and she was at the Potters House in Dallas with Bishop TD Jakes. I'm not saying that every church is going to be a Potters House church, but what I am saying is Potters House and other churches have programs where children are in integral part, there's something for children to do. When there's stuff for children to do, parents bring their children. If you can get the children, you gotta get the parents because we aren't sanctified daycare. And if parents come, they generally tell their friends about, and they could come again. I'm about exponential. You know, you tell somebody, and they tell somebody and so on and so. Just like the shampoo commercial.

We do a poor job of that, and I believe that if we could learn to do a better job of that, our churches would be healthier. We also have to teach people how to be loyal. Church loyalty gone out the window, because we're such a polarized society. It's a whole lot of stuff. And prayerfully we can figure some of this stuff out. And if we can, maybe we can make it better, but I don't think we're ever gonna go back to a day, we're not gonna go back to 1955 where there was a full-time minister who had a parsonage, we're not going back to that, because the economy won't support that. But what we can do, if we're going to require our ministers to have a second job, we better make that first look damn good.

Writer: Alright, thank you.

#6: You're welcome.

Writer: Alright, very nice, #6.

THE QUESTIONS (Church #7; Lay Leader #1)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

I don’t know.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

The needs of the congregation are being met fully. I worry about (the pastor’s name) wellness more than the impact to the church. Is he being stretched too thin? Are his needs being met?

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upsides(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Leadership by the council is more important at (the name of the church) than at my previous church. Decisions regarding the wellness of the congregation are made with more input from the group rather than relying solely on the Pastor. The Pastor's voice is important, but not the sole arbiter like in my former church.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Teams for Sunday services, establishment of laity Sundays each month, deacons for congregant care.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat agree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Laity Sundays are an outstanding opportunity to gain insights from the congregation. It's wonderful to hear these voices!

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Respondent skipped this question.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Respondent skipped this question.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking "yes" you are

willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

No.

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lancasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

THE QUESTIONS (Church #7; Lay Leader #2)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Our present minister founded the church with another minister. The other minister eventually left to do other things, and our current minister continues to serve while working his full-time job elsewhere.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

For one, it requires the rest of us to take more ownership and be more involved. I think this diversity of leadership provides a better experience for everyone. I also think our minister having another profession helps inform his sermons. If this were his full-time job, he might be more in a bubble, so to speak, and I’m not sure that would provide as rich of an experience for the congregants. His sermons are often informed by things from his daily life, including and especially, his work as a therapist.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upsides(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

N/A.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

To give our minister a break, we launched "Laity Sunday" which is a day when the congregants run the whole service, right down to giving the sermon. It has turned out to be wonderful and enriches everyone. Although this is supposed to be the minister's day off, he often attends and seems to be energized by it as are the rest of us.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat agree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

My biggest joy is seeing the children, both mine and others, take ownership of their congregational experience. We have a culture that lets kids be kids, and lets them participate at whatever level they wish and have built in kid-driven activities into the service. I love seeing little kids help with the collection or holding the bread during communion. I also love when they raise their hands to answer where they saw God this week, which is a part of our services every week.

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

I mostly worry that our minister will get enough time for his personal life and his family, and not be burnt out. I also worry about the same thing for some of the key volunteers.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

I think diversity of experience is always a good thing. It leads to a more well-rounded view of the world, and of life. And having two jobs teaches you to value the small things more. I think all of this is good. It keeps us humble and grateful, which brings us ultimately closer to Christ.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking “yes” you are willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

No.

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lanasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

Smiley face.

THE QUESTIONS (Church #7; Lay Leader #3)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Don’t know.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

He brings experience from his other vocation that bears on his pastoral role.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upside(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

N/A.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Respondent skipped this question.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

1) Sunday worship; 2) Active involvement in the community; 3) Fellowship with other members.

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

1) Financial vulnerability; 2) Maintaining a meaningful music program.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

I have found it valuable to have a minister with more diverse experience in the world outside the church than is normally found with full-time career clergy.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking “yes” you are willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

No.

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lancasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

Respondent skipped this question.

THE QUESTIONS (Church #7; Lay Leader #4)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Respondent skipped this question.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat agree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

It puts more of the onus for church community development on the congregation.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upside(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Respondent skipped this question.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

The congregation is very adept at utilizing email and social media.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strong community involvement and coming together for worship and fellowship on Sunday mornings.

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Dependence on older congregants to meet the financial and leadership needs of the church, plus some uncertainty as to the future stability of the space rented for worship.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

I think it allows more room for individuals to find their niche and their voice.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking “yes” you are willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

No.

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lancasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

Respondent skipped this question.

THE QUESTIONS (Church #7; Lay Leader #5)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

The church, as a new-start church, began with a bi-vocational minister.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Respondent skipped this question.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Because of our minister’s other vocation, he is very compassionate and caring of the members of our congregation.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upsides(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Respondent skipped this question.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Having a laity Sunday once a month enables our minister to have a Sunday off once a month.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Respondent skipped this question.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Having an amazing and thought-provoking preacher, along with a congregation who cares about each other. Also, offering two different (Bible) studies- one a book club focusing on spiritual books- the other a more traditional Bible study.

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Because we are a small congregation, my biggest fear is financial- will we be able to continue doing what we do, besides having rent to pay and salaries, will we be able to have the financial resources to give to the various mission projects that we now do.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Respondent skipped this question.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking “yes” you are willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (*Respondent skipped this question.*)
- Your e-mail address.
- Your phone number.

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

No.

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lanasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

Respondent skipped this question.

THE QUESTIONS (Church #7; Lay Leader #6)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We didn’t “hire” (the name of the Pastor). He was one of the Founders of the church.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

A bi-vocational minister shows more empathy. He better understands what all the rest of us are dealing with. I feel it is better he doesn’t spend 100% of his time stressing over church related issues. Our spiritual and pastoral needs are more than adequately addressed. There is no interference because of his second vocation.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upsides(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

No full-time minister in this church. But I've experienced that in other churches. Full-time ministers tend to be more controlling...and perhaps less understanding. The only downside of a bi-vocational minister is there are less time slots (opportunities) to schedule discussions with the minister. The other job takes us some of his time.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

(The name of the Pastor) is very consistent about making sure everyone understands that we need to work together to get our mission accomplished. He can't lead on everything. We have to use more of time and talents on projects. That greatly enhances our feelings of ownership for projects and our accountability for the results.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Disagree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Our congregation is fairly small and very close. We literally love each other and enjoy putting our faith to work for social justice and caring for others in our community. Everyone is made to feel welcome and is encouraged to participate in church mission projects and other events. We have some trouble with lack of stewardship by all our members. But that is probably the case in all churches...20% of the congregation donates 80% of the revenue.

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

None.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Having a bi-vocational minister is the better model. I feel all ministers of a congregation are bi-vocational. We have a job, in the church and outside the church. So, I feel bi-vocational minister strongly contributes to the feeling that the ministers is one of use or "more like us." He has the leadership position. But he is more a member of the team than always being the leader of the team.

The bi-vocational minster has to deal with all the same issues outside the church the congregation has to deal with. That results in him being more empathic to the real issues of each congregation member.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking "yes" you are willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking "no" you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

No.

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lanasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

The Survey Monkey has a small error. It says there are eleven questions, but there are twelve. When you expect to be finished, another question appears.

THE QUESTIONS (Church #7; Lay Leader #7)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Respondent skipped this question.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

I see our pastor able to administer to both the spiritual and pastoral needs to all, as if he is full-time.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upsides(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Respondent skipped this question.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We used to have two ministers who shared the responsibilities of our church, and that was wonderful with them both having different strengths. Now with just one, our church council and others have stepped up to govern, organize and participate in monthly lay services, manage the finances, drive mission, etc. It is a true congregation partnership.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat agree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

All of it! The atmosphere of our church is loving, vibrant, open, safe, musical, spiritual, non-judgmental, genuine; it's the real deal.

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

That we may not grow and even shrink in numbers and financial support.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

I believe that having a bi-vocational minister is both a joy and a challenge for the minister and his family. We are very aware of his commitments outside of the church and try frequently to express gratitude for his vocation. Overall, this ministry model succeeds when there is open communication between the pastor, the church council and congregation. In the case of my church, it is a true gift and blessing to be a part of it.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking “yes” you are willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

No.

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lanasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

(The name of the church) rocks.

THE QUESTIONS (Church #7; Minister #1)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

I have always been bi-vocational.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

By definition it causes a conversation to occur about how the laity can attend to the needs of those in the church.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upsides(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

This is not applicable as I have always been bi-vocational.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We now have a Laity Sunday where the attendees of the church perform all of the functions of a monthly church service.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Disagree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Great laity involvement. Lots of energy.

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

The giving/financial support is good but is overly concentrated in a few families.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

As mentioned, the laity are very involved, including that of functioning at times in ways that the traditional, full-time, minister would have functioned.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking “yes” you are willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lanasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

Respondent skipped this question.

THE QUESTIONS (Church #8; Minister #1)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

They needed a minister, and a nearby church for whom I had served as supply gave them my name.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Sometimes it is positive, because I bring my teaching background with me, and it is useful. There are times when I don’t feel like I have enough time to do both well, I really have to plan carefully.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upsides(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

It's been a long time since they had a full-time minister. The upside of bi-vocational for them is that we cost less.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

They are pretty independent, and don't need a lot of hand holding. They need good support, but I do not have to be everywhere for them.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

A great congregation that operates very much as a family. They are pretty involved in the community.

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Not getting new members, and eventually having to close the doors.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

It makes sense for a small congregation (mine is 12-15) and it fits everyone well. They need competent ministerial support on a budget; I am also a full-time teacher. Theologically, it's also a good fit; I am well trained, and I enjoy serving them.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking "yes" you are

willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Respondent skipped this question.

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lancasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

Respondent skipped this question.

THE QUESTIONS (Church #9; Minister #1) (Methodist)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

I am not hired but appointed by the bishop. I serve in the United Methodist Church. I was approved as a licensed local pastor in 2007 and have been serving a church or two at a time since then.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Somewhat agree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

It means members have to step up and be part of the ministry work of the church as I cannot do everything or be there all of the time.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upsides(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

They haven't had a full-time minister in a while but the previous pastors did not work other careers/jobs, so their schedules were more flexible than mine because of my secular career.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

(They- the laity) learn what's important to them for ministry because if they aren't involved it doesn't happen.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Working in the calling where God has asked me to be. I love leading worship and preaching.

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

We are too small to do much, congregation is getting older and not bringing in new people.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

It is not an easy life to live. It turns into a juggling act trying to find balance. It means sacrifices at times personally, with family, and even with the church. It means the church has to step up to be the church for ministry outside of worship to happen. It is made more challenging if you are battling inertia of (the) congregation. It is also one full of satisfaction knowing you are doing what God has called you to do and to see fruit from that work.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking "yes" you are

willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

No.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Respondent skipped this question.

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lanasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

Respondent skipped this question.

THE QUESTIONS (Church #10; Minister #1) (Lutheran)
(All non-narrative questions were given the six options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree)

Q1:

Do you agree to the stated terms? By clicking “yes” you are willing to answer the questions to the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q2:

Let’s begin! Tell me how your church came to hire a bi-vocational minister. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Prior misconduct issue caused turmoil and membership and financial loss; I was brought in PT (part-time) to see if the church could recover and continue, and it did and continues God’s ministry.

Q3:

Having a bi-vocational minister at your church has improved the overall functioning of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q4:

How does having a bi-vocational minister impact the spiritual and pastoral needs of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Members have a clear understanding when their Pastor is available- after church on Sunday, and on Tues/Thurs. office hours, and in (an) emergency. They also know she works during the day. Members understand that the work of the church is the people, not just the Pastor. For example, there is a visitation team (not just the pastor doing the visits). Many new members only know this model of ministry.

Q5:

Having a bi-vocational minister helps the congregants in your church find ways to be more involved with the various ministries of the church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q6:

Bi-vocational living has been a good thing for your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Agree.

Q7:

If your church had a full-time minister in the past, could you share the downside(s) or the upside(s), if any, to having a bi-vocational minister in your church now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

I feel that if called to FT (full-time), many members who step in now to help may feel it is the "pastor's responsibility" now. In the model we have now PT (part-time), many members actively carry out the church's mission.

Q8:

What creative ways of church functioning has your congregation discovered while having a bi-vocational minister? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

New ways to communicate- Facebook, Twitter, emailed newsletters, church web page.

New ways to encourage younger people to serve on church council, such as conferencing into a meeting when a babysitter is not available or bad weather keeps everyone home, yet the meeting can continue. I live 45 minutes away, so members are very faithful shoveling snow, or asking the Girl Scouts to help! They also understand that if they want to schedule a meeting with me, not cancel at the last minute. I do lots of talking on the phone.

Q9:

Financial concern was the primary reason for hiring a bi-vocational minister at your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Strongly agree.

Q10:

What are the joys of your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

The laughter of children, new music (we just purchased an electronic piano/ organ). Lots of lay-led activities.

Q11:

What are the fears in your congregational life now? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

I just retired after over 20 years, and they are beginning the call process. There are weeks when no supply pastors are available to serve on Sunday.

Q12:

What conclusions, theologically, practically, personally, etc., can you share about having a bi-vocational minister at your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

This is a very exciting, yet challenging model of ministry. Our congregation has over twenty years of experience with it and have shown it can work with great joy.

Q13:

Per Survey Monkey and Institutional Review Board policies, you are given the option now to withdraw from the survey. Do you agree to continue with the survey? By clicking “yes” you are willing to be brought to the final inquiries in the survey. (By clicking “no” you will be brought out of the survey.)

Yes.

Q14:

Would you be willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q15:

Thank you for being willing to have your survey answers compared with others in your church. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- The name of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- The address of your church? (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q16:

Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

Yes.

Q17:

Thank you for being willing to participate in a follow up interview. Please answer the following information so I can contact you. (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

- Your name. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your e-mail address. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)
- Your phone number. (Leaving blank for confidentiality.)

Q18:

Are you the pastor of your church? (If you prefer not to respond, skip this question to continue the survey.)

No. Just retired from the congregation.

Q19:

Thank you for your participation. I greatly appreciate it! Here is my contact information. Rev. Daniel J. Lundquist; Grace United Church of Christ; 18 Court St., Flemington, New Jersey, 08822. E-mail: dlundquist@lanasterseminary.edu. Phone: 609-558-5971. Any other comments, please leave below.

Respondent skipped this question.

Appendix II: Example of a Spiritual Gifts Assessment Tool

On page 37 of the Clapp book there is a tool titled *Spiritual Gifts Assessment*. This is an example of what is needed to help all involved in bi-vocational living answer the aforementioned questions. The *Spiritual Gifts Assessment* begins with the following directive:

Respond to each statement which follows using this numerical system:

5 = This is highly descriptive of me virtually all of the time.

4 = This is descriptive of me most of the time.

3 = This is descriptive of me some of the time.

2 = This is descriptive of me only rarely.

1 = This is not descriptive of me.

It is very important for you to respond to these statements in terms of how you actually are rather than in terms of how you feel you should be. Don't be shy about acknowledging strengths, and don't feel badly because some statements are not descriptive of you. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers- only honest descriptions. Don't spend too much time thinking about a particular item. Go with your first impression or leave the item blank and return to it later.

- 1. I am able to convey ideas and insights in a way that motivates people to want to learn more.*
- 2. I speak the truth about what I feel is right even when that is unpopular and hard for other people to accept.*
- 3. I am willing to accept responsibility for organizations or groups that lack a clear sense of direction or leadership.*
- 4. In the midst of other activities, I find myself focusing on the needs of another person and praying for that individual.*
- 5. I feel that an important purpose in my home is to be a place to care for others, including people who are not part of my family.*
- 6. I find satisfaction in working behind the scenes to help others make the most of their gifts and abilities.*
- 7. I find pleasure in sharing my material resources with persons in need.*
- 8. I cultivate relationships with persons who do not know Christ so that I can lead them to Him.*
- 9. I can empathize with people who are going through difficult times and find meaning in involving myself in their healing processes.*
- 10. I enjoy developing my skills in communicating through music, drama, or other art forms.*
- 11. I am fulfilled when I am able to build or create something that helps the church or other people.*
- 12. I am able to recognize what people truly want to communicate both from what they say and from what they do not say.*

13. *I find pleasure in learning about how organizations function.*
14. *People say they learn a lot from my teaching, and they seem motivated to want to learn more on their own.*
15. *I am willing to accept personal suffering and criticism if it will result in myself and others growing closer to God or doing the right thing by God's standards.*
16. *I've given leadership to groups which have sensed God's presence or gained a sense of purpose even in the middle of difficult times.*
17. *A day does not seem complete to me unless I have spent times praying for the needs of other individuals, of the church, and of the world.*
18. *I enjoy doing all that I can to help new people feel that that they belong.*
19. *I like to encourage others by serving wherever and whenever there is a need.*
20. *I find significant meaning in knowing my financial support makes a difference in the ministries of the church or of another service organization.*
21. *After I lead people to a closer relationship to God, I guide them into deeper discipleship and service.*
22. *I find meaning in motivating others to have more concern about the health of their souls.*
23. *I can communicate my sense of God more through music or other artistic means than through conversation.*
24. *I can fashion raw materials into finished projects.*
25. *I can continue to maintain a positive relationship with people even when it's necessary to express substantial disagreement or to raise questions about what they're doing.*
26. *I can grasp the overall purpose or goals of an organization or group and work out plans for accomplishing them.*
27. *I can draw other people into considering how their relationships with God or a sense of meaning and purpose should affect their daily lives.*
28. *Even in the face of criticism or pressure, I challenge people to examine their lives and change their direction when needed.*
29. *I can decisively manage people and resources in positive ways to bring a vision or mission into reality.*
30. *The names of people who are especially in need of God's help are never far from my mind.*
31. *I enjoy providing food and lodging for people in need.*
32. *I like to use my natural and my learned skills to enable the work of others.*
33. *When I know that someone else is in need of resources which I have, I don't worry about replenishing what I give.*
34. *When I tell others what God has done in my life, they respond with renewed faith of their own.*
35. *I can motivate others to (take) their faith more seriously in their lives.*
36. *People accuse me of being temperamental like an artist.*
37. *I feel that I honor God with things I make by hand.*
38. *I can empathize with and help people who are resentful, angry, or confused.*
39. *I have skill in coordinating the gifts of people for greater effectiveness.*
40. *I love to help others gain greater skill in understanding and expressing themselves.*

41. *I can motivate others to use their faith in making decisions in both their private and their public lives.*
42. *I usually have a clear sense of what needs to be done in an organization and can motivate others in that direction.*
43. *People frequently express appreciation to me for my having continued to remember them in my prayers.*
44. *I readily reach out to persons needing physical or emotional encouragement.*
45. *When I see a wide range of needs, I want to help with as many as I can.*
46. *I have been successful at earning or discovering significant amounts of money for the Lord's work.*
47. *I want people around me to know I am a Christian and hope that may provide opportunities to help them draw closer to Christ.*
48. *I am able to strengthen people who are wavering in their sense of purpose in life.*
49. *Through my artistic expressions, people have gained deeper insights into themselves or into the spiritual life.*
50. *I can design and build things to help the church or other organizations better serve people.*
51. *I show my concern by helping people find practical solutions to spiritual, relational, or personal struggles.*
52. *I like to improve the efficiency of organizations with which I work.*
53. *I enjoy finding practical guidance in the Bible and sharing that help with others.*
54. *I feel compelled to confront people when they display behaviors or attitudes which are destructive.*
55. *I can enthusiastically organize people to achieve goals which I feel are important.*
56. *I have had times when I was so absorbed in my prayers for the needs of others that I lost all track of time.*
57. *I like to help new people get acquainted with others in the church and in other settings.*
58. *I believe there is spiritual significance in the routine tasks I do for others.*
59. *Because I want to see significant things happen in ministry, I give more than a tithe (over 10%).*
60. *I continually seek to find different or better ways to share my faith with others.*
61. *I enjoy reaching out to people in settings like hospitals, nursing homes, or prisons.*
62. *I like the challenge of communicating with variety and creativity.*
63. *I can visualize how something should be constructed before I build it.*
64. *People tell me that my patient and understanding listening helps them clarify their thoughts.*
65. *Once I know what the goal is, I have skill at developing the strategy to meet it.*
66. *I always find myself learning more as I have opportunity to teach others.*
67. *I have had times when a concern was so heavy on my heart that I had to speak out no matter what the price.*
68. *Others seek me out to give leadership to various causes or organizations.*
69. *When I am deep into prayer for others, I often find myself communicating in images or feelings more than in words.*
70. *I feel that entertaining others in my home, at the church, or in other settings is one of the best ways that I am personally able to nurture genuine community.*

71. *I enjoy doing a variety of odd jobs around the church or other organizations to help meet the needs of people.*
72. *I am able to motivate others to financially support worthy causes.*
73. *I have the patience to work with another person over a long period of time in order to eventually bring that individual to faith in Christ.*
74. *I find great meaning in reaching out to persons at their times of greatest need no matter what the problem.*
75. *I enjoy developing my skills in the arts through music, crafts, drama, or other media.*
76. *I am gifted at putting things together and making them work.*
77. *I can generally help people see their problems from a new perspective and work toward a solution that is right for them.*
78. *I am good at and find pleasure in organizing many kinds of projects.*
79. *On the whole, I would rather teach a class or group than simply be a spectator.*
80. *I can confront people with problems in their own lives, in the church, or in society in a way that causes them to rethink their positions rather than simply be angry.*
81. *I can lead others through the development of a vision for their work together.*
82. *Praying for others several times a day feels almost as natural to me as breathing.*
83. *I feel a true calling to help new people become fully integrated into the life of the church or other organizations.*
84. *While I am often not the one giving direct leadership, a great many things in the organizations to which I belong would not get done without my willingness to do what is needed.*
85. *I give generously to God's work and genuinely do not seek or want any recognition or reward for what I do.*
86. *I feel that God often brings me into contact with people who need to discover or to rediscover Christ.*
87. *When people are going through difficult times, I am able to encourage them to maintain their faith and to do all they can to respond positively to the problems they face.*
88. *I feel that I have been especially gifted in terms of music, drama, painting, or another art form.*
89. *I have the ability to build or make things which will facilitate the work of the church or of other service organizations.*
90. *I am able to help people face the truth about themselves and their relationships with others when necessary to help them work through their problems.*
91. *I am generally known as an efficient person who keeps track of things and follows through well.*¹⁶⁵

The answers to these statements are then categorized into the following spiritual gifts connected to the correlating number:

- *Teaching (statements 1, 14, 27, 40, 53, 66, 79).*
- *Prophecy (statements 2, 15, 28, 41, 54, 67, 80).*

¹⁶⁵ Clapp, pages 37-43.

- *Leadership* (statements 3, 16, 29, 42, 55, 68, 81).
- *Intercession* (statements 4, 17, 30, 43, 56, 69, 82).
- *Hospitality* (statements 5, 18, 31, 44, 57, 70, 83).
- *Helps/ Service* (statements 6, 19, 32, 45, 58, 71, 84).
- *Generosity* (statements 7, 20, 33, 46, 59, 72, 85).
- *Evangelism* (statements 8, 21, 34, 47, 60, 73, 86).
- *Encouragement* (statements 9, 22, 35, 48, 61, 74, 87).
- *Artistic Expression* (statements 10, 23, 36, 49, 62, 75, 88).
- *Craftsmanship* (statements 11, 24, 37, 50, 63, 76, 89).
- *Counseling* (statements 12, 25, 38, 51, 64, 77, 90).
- *Administration* (statements 13, 26, 39, 52, 65, 78, 91).¹⁶⁶

The results from this tool are then shared with all those in the bi-vocational setting.

¹⁶⁶ Clapp, pages 46-47.

Appendix III: Selected Bibliography

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