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YOUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY: YOUTH AND ADULTS IN
TANDEM LEADERSHIP AND MINISTRY AS A CATALYST FOR A NEW
ECCLESIOLOGICAL MODEL AT WEST PHOENIX APOSTOLIC CHURCH

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ABSTRACT

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**Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy:
Youth and Adults in Tandem Leadership and Ministry As a Catalyst
for a New Ecclesiological Model at West Phoenix Apostolic Church**

The people of God must be empowered to lead others. This empowerment comes through discipleship and mentoring, which allows laity to assume roles of leadership and ministry. Discipleship and mentoring is based upon the early Church's inclusion of laity as those who ministered within their own home as a church (Acts 12:12, Romans 16:5, 1 Cor. 16:19) and who had received certain gifting (1 Cor. 12:8-12, 25-27). These gifts are given to everyone in different measure, for the perfecting, working and edification of the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:12). Within West Phoenix Apostolic Church (WPAC), ordained ministry is held in high regard and as such, young and old, male and female laity is limited from most hierarchy positions of leadership and ministry. This results in gaps that widen the separation between laity and ministry and impact the mission and building of community. This writer envisions a new ecclesiological model at WPAC where space and opportunity are created for laity to develop their individual gifting and calling through discipleship and mentoring.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Abbreviations	v
Introduction.....	1
Theoretical Framework.....	3
Background.....	7
Guiding Questions.....	13
Research and Literature.....	13
Involving Youth Through Discipleship.....	15
Youth and Passion.....	18
Postmodernism.....	19
Women in Ministry and Leadership.....	22
Objectives, Strategies and Implementation.....	25
What Worked.....	31
What Didn't Work.....	35
What Needs To Change.....	36
Evaluation and Learning.....	38
Significance.....	43
Conclusion.....	45
Bibliography.....	47
Appendices	
Appendix A Discover Your Gifts Questionnaire	51
Appendix B Class Lesson Survey	59
Appendix C Class Lesson Survey Answers	60
Appendix D Final Survey	64
Appendix E Final Survey Questionnaire Answers.....	65
Appendix F Attendance Table	68

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAFCJ *Apostolic Assembly of the Faith in Christ Jesus*

WPAC *West Phoenix Apostolic Church*

KJV *King James Version Bible*

INTRODUCTION

As a Pentecostal movement, the Apostolic Assembly of the Faith in Christ Jesus (AAFJC) organization displays the distinctives that identify with other Pentecostals. Those distinctives are: the experience of glossolalia (speaking in tongues), dynamic preaching and teaching, lively and upbeat music, and ecstatic praise and worship. These experiences are derived from the Holy Spirit that breathes life into the believers and brings about a renewed understanding of one's place within the Body of Christ. However, within this organization, which is founded as a male dominated hierarchy, there is a preference for ordained ministry that leaves very little options for laity as co-ministers. Consequently, this intervention was intended to create a space and an opportunity for young and old, male and female laity to develop their leadership and ministry calling. In developing their calling, each is empowered to become active and productive members of the Body of Christ while at the same time taking steps toward a better understanding and creation of a new ecclesiology for West Phoenix Apostolic Church (WPAC).

Through a series of lessons intended to create awareness of the capability to minister and lead among laity, a group of male and female, young and old were chosen to participate in this mentorship/internship study. The lessons were presented as Bible studies on themes that were intended as an inclusion of laity working alongside ordained ministry and as exposure to the leadership and ministry of the early church as found in the Holy Scriptures. The hypothesis was that after discipleship classes were given to the youth and after the completion of a modified internship, these participants would have an opportunity to lead and minister in tandem with the adults.

The significance of this intervention is seen in how an intentional effort goes a long way through the creation of space and opportunity for laity to become involved in the everyday

affairs of the local community and beyond. This intervention helped in building community through awareness that, short of an ordained ministry, the young ladies learned that they too can lead and develop their own ministry, while the young men were made aware that one doesn't need a license to preach. While the youth were basking in their newfound liberty to minister in and out of church, the older laity found themselves with a renewed sense of hope as mentors. This resulted in a truly defining moment of building community among male and female, young and old through an intentional inclusion and building of bridges across generations.¹

The problem and adaptive challenge confronted was multifaceted. Besides grappling with the organizational mandates concerning a male hierarchy of leadership, a seasoned pastoral staff already set in their ways with different cultural and educational backgrounds, it was found necessary to change preconceived notions and presuppositions concerning youth and women in ministry through a critical re-reading of Scripture. Added to this challenge was the need to appropriate Scriptures in one's own context and not just read the Bible as a history book.² Only in this manner could the participants see themselves through the examples of young men and women and older laity as contributors and active participants in the Kingdom of God.

The vision for this community of believers was the creation of a new ecclesiology that would create space and opportunity for male and female, young and old in order to lead and minister to the church and surrounding community effectively. This building of community among ordained ministry and laity would also create a bridge between generations as an inclusion of everyone and leaving no one behind through a placement of ministry and leadership positions. An added

¹ Gary L. McIntosh, *One Church, Four Generations: Understanding and Reaching All Ages in Your Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2002), chap.14.

² Justo González, *Teología Liberadora* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Kairos, 2005), 119–43.

benefit would be the easy replication of this intervention and or modification for future use by interested parties.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Within the Apostolic Assembly of the Faith in Christ Jesus churches (AAFJCJ) there is a growing trend affecting its adherents, which is seen in other older mainline denominations as well. That trend is seen in how youth and youth adults are leaving this organization in which many of these same youth were raised. The AAFJCJ organization is an “Oneness” Pentecostal movement that grew out of the Azusa Street Revival of 1906 and slowly began to take shape as more and more Latinos were baptized.³ This organization was incorporated in 1930 as a non-profit organization⁴ and established as a church with the intent of ministering to the Spanish speaking Latin Americans.⁵ As with other religious institutions founded upon a male dominant hierarchal system that favors adult men and excludes women from ministry or key leadership positions, the AAFJCJ organization is also structured upon that institutional model. The founders resolved to exclude women from positions of authority due to their working definition of St. Paul’s stance concerning the creation order (1 Corinthians 11:2-16)⁶ and women keeping silent (1 Corinthians 14:33-36). This ecclesiastical model is how the entire AAFJCJ churches are structured and strictly adhere to the following governing rule: decisions are made at the top and

³ *50 Aniversario De La Asamblea Apostólica De La Fe En Cristo Jesús 1916-1966* (Rancho Cucamonga, CA.: Secretaria de Educación Cristiana, 2000), 5-7.

⁴ Ismael Martin Del Campo, ed., *By Laws Constitution: Apostolic Assembly of the Faith in Christ Jesus*, 2015 ed. (Rancho Cucamonga, Ca.: Secretaria de Educación Cristiana, 2015),1.

⁵ Juan Francisco Martinez and Luis Scott, eds., *Iglesias Peregrinas En Busca de Identidad* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Kairos, 2003), 92-97.

⁶ All scriptures used unless otherwise stated are from the King James Version Bible of 1769.

trickle down to the rest of the organization in a pyramid style of leadership⁷. Yet according to Chan, this preferential option for ordained ministry is a concern in that the priesthood resides among an elect few as individuals and not as “communal property” of that believing community.⁸ The problem then is clear: instead of seeing ministry and priesthood as belonging to everyone, there is a shift from ministering among a collective to ministering as individuals with implied authority over others through special callings which include ordained ministry.⁹ It is this understanding that results in the AAFCJ organization’s polity in favor of an ordained ministry as opposed to a ministering laity.

St. Paul’s discourse found in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 has been understood by the AAFCJ to mean that women are at best, to be in subjection to the male hierarchy and at worst, seen by some as inferior and excluded from ministry. A re-reading of this passage demonstrates that St. Paul was addressing subordination in a certain “partnership”¹⁰ and not as lording over or exercising rights and privileges over women. Likewise, when quoting verses 5-6 the AAFCJ interprets this as the crux of the argument for requiring women to wear a veil but rarely focuses on the fact that women were praying and prophesying actively within the church community, hence the misunderstanding that women should not minister. The wearing of the veil by women is the headship expressed toward man in an equal partnership and not as inferior. It is this wearing of the veil that grants women authority and dignity along with rights and privileges as a

⁷ Ian Gray, “It’s Not Working: The Search For New Structural Models Within The Congregation” (McCormick Theological Seminary, 1999), 10.

⁸ Simon Chan, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology: An Essay on the Development of Doctrine* (Deo Publishing, 2011), 45–46.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁰ F. F. Bruce, *New International Bible Commentary*, 2nd Revised, Supersaver ed. edition (London : Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan, 1999), 1370–71.

child of God. Notwithstanding, culture plays an integral part concerning the application of this passage and the accepted norms within that society while at the same time maintaining the subjection order of both male and female.¹¹

Likewise, in 1 Corinthians 14:33-36, the AAFCJ affirms that St. Paul's insistence on women remaining silent in church is a mandate to exclude women from ministry. However, this would greatly conflict with the aforementioned verses that state women were actively prophesying during the time of St. Paul's address. Rather, a better understanding of the Corinthian context is required in noting that there were abuses by those who took advantage of this "freedom" within Christianity of speaking out of order through questions that resulted in a disruption of the worship service (I Cor. 14:27-29). This disruption could also lend itself to define the context of mothers caring for, quieting or consoling their minor children during the service. In essence, what St. Paul desired for the church at Corinth was that everything "be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40). This order was a demonstration of reverence and respect while conducting a holy service unto the Lord and not a forbidding of women to "speak" within the church setting. The challenge facing the AAFCJ organization is to understand that Bible passages do not contradict each other regardless of the cultural context and that what St. Paul was addressing fell in line with what the Prophet Joel and ultimately what St. Peter had stated (Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:16-18).

The prophet Joel's declaration of God's spirit being poured out in the last days on all humanity to include male and female, young and old, offers a glimpse of the true Church that is of, by and for the people. The prophet Joel saw the rise of a prophetic people who would be witnesses to God's great uniting power. That union would be an inclusion of all laity as

¹¹ Ibid., 1372.

commissioned by the Holy Spirit to take the Gospel to all people. Even with this understanding, there are a few Pentecostal organizations that continue to model their respective denominations on a male-dominated hierarchy and structure. For those who hold dear this concept, the prophecy of Joel is “not yet” and “not now.”¹² While only those who see the fulfillment of this prophesy as “already but not yet” have created a space and opportunity for leadership and ministry of male and female, young and old.

The Bible gives ample proof of both male and female in ministry positions and church leadership. The New Testament presents at length women who were influential in their own right and that occupied positions as leaders such as Anna the Prophetess (Luke 2:36), Euodia and Syntyche, two of the women who aided Paul in ministering to the Philippians (Philippians 4:2,3), also Phoebe who was considered a deaconess (Romans 16:1,2), Priscilla (Romans 16:3,4), who along with her husband Aquila accompanied Paul on a missionary journey to Syria (Acts 18:18). Phillip’s four daughters stand out as those young ladies who served as prophetesses. The office they occupied is not mentioned as being appointed by the apostles neither do they appear in any scripture as being ordained by the ministry and set aside for such an office. Regardless of the questions that arise concerning their ministry, the evidence points to the early church’s acceptance of Phillip’s daughters as those actively working in the office of prophet and acknowledged by Luke and Paul as such (Acts 21:8-9). If Pentecostal history has taught the Christian world anything, it is that women do have ministry and can do so as effectively or even

¹² “What Is the Concept Of ‘already but Not Yet’ ?,” *GotQuestions.org*, accessed September 21, 2016, <http://www.gotquestions.org/already-not-yet.html>. This is a take on the Kingdom of God as being already here as a spiritual kingdom and still, not yet as that physical kingdom to come in the eschaton.

better than men due to their caring nature and ability for empathy, while being sensitive to the prodding of the Holy Spirit.¹³

The concept of using youth in leadership and ministry also has a long history that includes Joseph, a 17-year-old youth who was called a dreamer but whose faith and prophetic visions God used to ensure the survival of the Hebrew nation (Genesis 37-50). God called others as youths to greatness, such as David, the second king of Israel (1 Samuel 17), Josiah, the boy who would be king (2 Chron. 34:1-3), Jeremiah, called to be a prophet before his birth (Jeremiah 1:5) and in the New Testament, Mary, the mother of Jesus who is believed to have been just a teenager at that time (Mathew 1:18). Timothy's age and ministry were evident in that he occupied a position of leadership others thought him too young to handle (1 Timothy 4:12).

BACKGROUND

In the conclusion to their work on social analysis, authors Joe Holland, Peter Henriot, S.J. stated, "In order to respond effectively to situations of injustice in today's world, and to people's related spiritual hunger, we must strive to understand the social reality in all its complexity."¹⁴ It is this effort to understand the issues within the congregation that drove this writer to discover the elements limiting or preventing this church from a ministry that is truly of, by, and for the people.

WPAC began in 1982 through the efforts of the founder and Pastor (recently retired), Bernardo Iglesias. Back then, this new yet growing congregation was known as South Phoenix Apostolic because of its location. It wasn't until 1986 that this church community relocated to

¹³ Robert Culver et al., "A Traditional View: Let Your Women Keep Silence," in *Women in Ministry: Four Views*, ed. Bonnidell Clouse and Robert G. Clouse (IVP Academic, 2010. Location 481-483. Kindle Electronic Edition.

¹⁴ Joe Holland and S.J. Peter Henriot, *Social Analysis: Linking Faith and Justice*, Revised & enlarged edition (Maryknoll, N.Y.:Orbis Books, 1983), 89.

where it presently stands and was named WPAC where it has thrived for 32 years. Presently, this writer is the recently installed senior pastor of this congregation. Having served under the founding pastor for a period of 26 years, and after being absent from this church to pastor another church 45 minutes driving distance away for a period of 6 ½ years, this writer has come back home.

As the son of the founding pastor, this writer feels the pressure and tension mounting as some in the congregation voice their opinions as matters of fact that their former pastor taught them specifically on certain tenets that must not be defaced, diluted, or distorted. Some feel that any deviation from the former way of doing things is being unfaithful not only to the organization, but to the founding pastor. This train of thought is understandable in that this church has persevered throughout the years during some of the hardest financial times faced by Latin American immigrants. As a church organization that ministers to Hispanic migrants,¹⁵ the official church census fluctuated during those times since members would follow the agricultural circuit in the southwestern and northern states. These field laborers would leave the state for a season and return when agriculture picked up again. Despite this yearly pilgrimage to find work by some in WPAC, the church was able to endure over the years. To better understand the challenges faced by the West Phoenix Apostolic Church (WPAC) congregation, a better description of the varying facets and gaps causing separation and impacting the mission and building of community is in order.

- Church structure: The AAFCJ organization is a male-dominated, pyramid style hierarchy that is governed through a board of directors whose decisions are handed down through rank and file from the national, to district, and sector levels until arriving at the local

¹⁵ “Apostolic Assembly of the Faith in Christ Jesus, Official Website of the Apostolic Assembly of the Faith in Christ Jesus / U.S.A. & International,” accessed March 21, 2016, <http://apostolicassembly.org/>.

churches. While change is normally implemented at the top, very rarely does change move up the ranks; thereby making it harder to create change at the local level that isn't seen as subversive or going against the foundational tenets. This presented an opportunity to create a new ecclesiological model that is faithful to the organization while also being true to the mission of the church through laity and ordained ministry working in tandem in the body of Christ.

- **Women in leadership:** Women are not considered for any ministry or upper leadership positions. Because this organization is male-dominated there are little opportunities for women in leadership positions outside of the women's auxiliary. While females are granted opportunities to lead other females, the manner in which this rule has exacerbated the stigma of female leaders is seen presently when they choose not to lead even within mostly female groups as such. Since females make up more than half of this church's congregation, they are the driving force behind the volunteerism that is currently present. There are 168 females among the women's auxiliary of which 9 are young married adults. Of all the cell and small group ministries among adults (10 groups), males head all but two. Of the 129 youth within that department, 66 are females. There are only 2 youth involved as leaders in small group ministries of which 1 is headed by a young lady. There is remarkable disparity between male and female-led cell ministries as one can see. This tendency is due to the structure of the AAFCJ churches that have taught extensively on limiting women in areas of leadership. The effect this has had over the years' results in a limited desire by some of these ladies to participate actively.
- **Changing demographics:** This neighborhood went from White dominant to Hispanic and now a small yet growing Black community is making their presence known. A small

percentage of the church youth are not fluent in Spanish but understand it, while for another small group, Spanish is their only language. This dichotomy makes it essential to translate or “code switch” from English to Spanish in what amounts to Spanglish for those not well versed in the skill of translation. Taking this into account, it was agreed by this writer to begin holding a worship service on Sunday entirely in English for those second and third generations who could not speak Spanish. That was 14 years ago and resulted in the establishment of one English worship service (at 9:00 a.m.) added to the Spanish worship services (held at 12:00 and 4:00 p.m.). The challenge here is that there is a very palpable preoccupation between both congregations that is demonstrated in their conversations as “they” and “us” instead of “we.” Both congregations make little or no effort to attend each other’s activities because of the language barriers that exist. The English and Spanish speaking members prefer everything in their own dominant language. While the Spanish dominant speakers are willing to sit through a translated worship service, the English dominant speakers are not. Hence the need to establish worship services in both languages. The use of a bilingual laity in leadership positions becomes necessary in order to bridge the language barrier between both congregations.

- Socioeconomic status: At one time, the majority of congregants at WPAC were Hispanic farm laborers who followed the agricultural circuit around the Southwest. With declining agriculture and a heavy dependence on importing fruits and vegetables from neighboring states, many field laborers have opted to either move to another state or take up another profession, thus resulting in some lower income families working in the service sector while a few, through education have found decent employment.

- Education: Levels of education vary Among WPAC families as some first, second, and third generation Hispanic Americans have opted for higher education as a way to provide for their households. The decline in manual labor has become the impetus for immigrant families to encourage their children to seek higher education. These numbers are growing as work options are dwindling. Future means of survival for these families lies in the hope that their children will attend college and if possible, a university. This option for education is what presents a problem for the youth of WPAC in that young men and women have degrees in education, but in church, are not considered experienced enough to head a small cell group ministry. After leaving the “dance floor” and walking up the “balcony”¹⁶ one finds that within this entire organization, what is exacerbating the problem is the growing number of college graduates contrasted against a decline among the established ministry to further their theological education, resulting in a growing number of congregants in possession of better educations than the majority of the pastoral staff.
- Limited participation by youth and laity: Found within the Constitution of this organization are the requirements for ministerial accreditation that stipulate a candidate must be 18 years of age. Herein is the problem: in theory, it is an excellent opportunity for male youth, but in practice, few pastors push their youth into ministry until they are past their teen years and are found more “seasoned” with age. Since women are excluded from ministry, the opportunities for young ladies to lead a ministry are limited or nonexistent.

¹⁶ Ronald A. Heifetz, Marty Linsky, and Alexander Grashow, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World*, 1 edition (Harvard Business Review, 2009), 7-8.

These are the contributing factors for the steady exodus of this organization's youth between the ages of 14 through 19 and young adults in their early twenties. This exodus stems from a blurred image of how the concept of "church" is defined, such as who can lead and who is excluded from leadership. In other words, youth and young adults question their relationship with the church, and this enquiry often leads to feelings of displacement, disconnection, and purposelessness. It is this lack of clarity and understanding concerning one's place in the body of Christ that has resulted in low youth attendance, limited youth participation and an overall lack of retention among young Hispanic adherents of the Apostolic Assembly churches. These "nomads, prodigals, and exiles", as David Kinnaman describes, are church "dropouts".¹⁷ Some of these youth have expressed their disappointment with the organization due to a lack of opportunities for involvement not only at the local, but also the institutional level. This problem is exacerbated when local church leadership fails to promote youth involvement and/or minimizes the importance of youth life and laity involvement in church affairs. Although the Constitution governing this organization specifically states that churches are to create departments for the youth and other auxiliaries, there are no prescribed formats or models to create a thriving ministry involving youth, thereby resulting in each congregation's need to create their own youth ministry.¹⁸

¹⁷ David Kinnaman, *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving Church and Rethinking Faith*, Ebook edition (Baker Books, 2011), Location 176-1332.

¹⁸ Martin Del Campo, *By Laws Constitution: Apostolic Assembly of the Faith in Christ Jesus*, 2015 ed. (Rancho Cucamonga, Ca.: Secretaria de Educación Cristiana, 2015), 226.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

The questions that determined the significance of this project were centered on the priesthood of all believers to include young and old, male and female in leadership and ministry positions.¹⁹ Those questions included: What are the gaps causing separation between the young and old? What programs or polity are more of a hindrance than help when trying to build community? Can this intervention plant a seed that will grow in the direction of equity? Is this a viable first step in the direction of a complementarian ministry? Does the congregation and participants believe this is a serious effort on behalf of the pastoral staff to integrate everyone in a ministry? Is this just another program or is it THE program that will guide the postmodern church with success in shared ministry? Is there an age limit on usefulness as a Christian? Can the Church be found guilty of preaching against racism, classism, and sexism while actively engaged in doing that which she forbids?

RESEARCH AND LITERATURE

According to some authors, so much emphasis is placed on the Holy Spirit by Pentecostals that very little thought has gone into normalizing a clear and concise Pentecostal ecclesiology.²⁰ Simon Chan states a lack of written ecclesiology among Pentecostal movements presents problems that have to do with “reigning ideologies”²¹ that although the writer refers to these concepts as being the *charism* that move amongst Pentecostals, these ideologies could also branch off into other areas of concern. This lack of a written ecclesiology is the crux of the

¹⁹ Veli-Matti Kärkäinen, “Spirit, Laity and Ministry,” in *Toward a Pneumatological Theology: Pentecostal and Ecumenical Perspectives on Ecclesiology, Soteriology, and Theology of Mission*, ed. Amos Young (Lanham, MD: UPA, 2002), chapter 9.

²⁰ Veli-Matti Kärkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology: Pentecostal and Ecumenical Perspectives on Ecclesiology, Soteriology, and Theology of Mission*, ed. Amos Yong (Lanham, MD: UPA, 2002), 110.

²¹ Simon Chan, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology: An Essay on the Development of Doctrine* (Deo Publishing, 2011), 5.

matter that lead to Scriptural misunderstandings, and that have the tendency to leave no common ground on ecclesiology at any level. Hence, the problem that is evident among members of the AAFCJ is that there are individual interpretations at every level of church government on ecclesiology. For example, within this organization, a key element that is missing and which is practiced by other Pentecostal organizations, is the inclusion of young and old, male and female laity as those liberated by this experience of the Holy Spirit to freely minister and lead in any capacity within that community of believers. Because of this, the AAFCJ organization is looked upon by some, as oppressive toward women and by others as not willing to allow the Spirit of truth to direct and guide the church into the 21st century.²² As an organization, the AAFCJ is far from being on par with those churches that have female representation at its highest level. Neither “egalitarian”²³ nor “complementarian”²⁴ hierarchical views are practiced within the AAFCJ churches even as a Pentecostal movement.

The challenge to include laity composed of male and female, young and old among leadership and ministry is not unfamiliar within early church history. Since the only places of worship were the Jewish synagogues and new converts to Christianity were being expelled, they found that individual homes were sufficient to hold their own worship services (Acts 2:46). With the exponential growth experienced in the early days of Christianity, first three thousand were added to the believers (Acts 2:41), and immediately after, around five thousand (Acts 4:4), it becomes

²² Gaston Espinoza, “Third Class Soldiers”: A History of Hispanic Pentecostal Clergywomen in the Assemblies of God,” in *Philip's Daughters: Women in Pentecostal-Charismatic Leadership* (Princeton Theological Monograph Series Book 104). Pickwick Publications, an Imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishers. Kindle Edition, 99.

²³ Alvera Mickelsen, “An Egalitarian View: There Is Neither Male Nor Female In Christ” in *Women in Ministry: Four Views*, ed. Bonnidell Clouse and Robert G. (IVP Academics, 2010), Kindle Electronic Edition, location 1950-2388.

²⁴ Stanley J. Grenz and Denise Muir Kjesbo. *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry* (IVP Academic, 2010) chap. 1. Kindle Electronic Edition.

obvious that there were not enough commissioned apostles or ordained ministry to tend to each new convert's needs. There is a greater implication for laity in ministry when meeting in the homes (Philemon 1:2; Romans 16:5; Colossians 4:15). It is here that everyone had an opportunity to serve each other through the individual gifting received of God. Each member exercised their individual gift for the benefit of others when coming together to form one body (1 Cor. 12:8-12). This is greatly contrasted today where instead of one going to church to hear the voice of many, now many come to hear the voice of one. There was unity among each other and efforts were made to promote a spirit of equity in every aspect including the needs that presented themselves (Acts 2:45, 4:35). Such was the case when a concern was raised about the negligence of certain widows. The resolve was found in asking the congregation to pick amongst them seven men that filled the three prerequisites of 1) having a good report, 2) full of wisdom and 3) full of the Holy Ghost (Acts 6:3). The responsibility fell upon the body of believers, and not the apostles, to select who would serve them. Those in leadership positions need to remember that the offices of the ministry were given by measure to many and not just to one (Hebrew 4:11). The purpose is explicitly stated as being: "for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Hebrew 4:12), where all become active participants.

INVOLVING YOUTH THROUGH DISCIPLESHIP

The impetus for youth involvement comes from the theoretical arguments of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Kenda Creasy Dean, and Tony Jones, as those theologians who besides advocating for inclusion of all believers within the church community were also ardent supporters of more youth involvement through an effective discipleship and mentorship approach. Other theologians who expound on certain elements that hinder the building of a youth-involved community include David Kinnaman, Aly Hawkins and Diana Butler Bass.

Roger Stronstadt is quoted as saying: “Far too many Pentecostals have been led to receive the blessing of the Holy Spirit in the prayer room and have never been taught to take the empowering of that gift into the streets and market places of society.”²⁵ The concept of discipleship was and continues to be a concern addressed by God as the Creator toward his creation; humanity (Deut.6:4). From the moment that God told Moses to “teach the children diligently” there arose a sense of urgency to continue training up the children in ways that allows them to become productive members of church and society.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was such a man consumed with a passion for youth and discipleship that on April 5, 1945, he became a modern day martyr for his actions in resisting Adolf Hitler and his Nazi regime. This resistance was rooted in how Bonhoeffer, fulfilling his calling in ministry, saw the way Germany’s youth were looking to a leader and how that leader was capitalizing on key elements to draw these youths into his own regime and ultimately to their deaths.²⁶ According to author Andrew Root, Bonhoeffer demonstrated his interest for youth work through discipleship. His success as a youth pastor came not from simply including youth in his ministry but rather by making his whole focus on ministry about youth.²⁷ Bonhoeffer’s actions were rooted in wanting to provide youth with the necessary tools needed through discipleship formation that would not waiver in the face of opposition and adversity. This was also in accordance with his discourse concerning “costly grace” and “cheap grace.” Bonhoeffer went to great length to point out that “grace” cost Jesus his life and that this implies one live for Christ with the understanding that

²⁵ Veli-Matti Kärkäinen, “Free Churches, Ecumenism and Pentecostalism,” in *Toward a Pneumatological Theology: Pentecostal and Ecumenical Perspectives on Ecclesiology, Soteriology, and Theology of Mission*, ed. Amos Young (Lanham, MD: UPA, 2002), 61.

²⁶ Andrew Root, *Bonhoeffer as Youth Worker: A Theological Vision for Discipleship and Life Together* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2014), 111-116.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 42.

this was and is the only way to fully become a true disciple.²⁸ But if youth are limited from exercising ministry and leadership, where would they practice discipleship? Bonhoeffer believed that one couldn't "come as you are" and remain in that original state of taking advantage of "costly grace." Rather, the course to follow was discipleship; a change of nature and character more in line with doing God's will. In essence what Bonhoeffer was saying was that true disciples were made free from sin and its consequences in order to follow a disciplined life in Christ. For Bonhoeffer discipleship was "adherence to the person of Jesus, and therefore submission to the law of Christ, which is the law of the cross."²⁹ In short, discipleship denotes change. That change would be to follow through not only as a solitary disciple, but also as a member of a community of believers. In *Life Together*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer describes what it means to be a part of the Christian community and how he set the example, while holding underground seminary classes in spite of Hitler's push to join the German Church and the State.³⁰ As a proponent of inclusion by all within the community of believers, Bonhoeffer held that all were to share in their worship services.³¹ Lack of participation and acceptance within the church community is what fuels a desire by some youth to leave church behind and seek other venues that are more gratifying. John H. Westerhoff agreed with Bonhoeffer's belief concerning community for: "One Christian is No Christian, for we cannot be Christian alone-we are created for community."³² For Bonhoeffer, youth ministry is based on four concepts concerning

²⁸ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, trans. Chr. Kaiser Verlag Munchen, R.H. Fuller, and Irmgard Booth, 1st edition (New York: Touchstone, 1995), 43-56.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 87.

³⁰ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Christian in Community*, 1st edition (Princeton, N.J.: Harper One, 2009), 11.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 48-50.

³² Westerhoff, *Will Our Children Have Faith?*, 42.

community. Community is: 1) “not a human creation” rather Jesus Christ is the creator, 2) a gift to be cherished, 3) becomes the backdrop for working with others, and 4) through confession, creates a place where one can be real.³³ A greater sense of awareness points in the direction that youth ministry and the Community of Christ must be Christ-centered and not dependent on human efforts.³⁴ Churches that employ discipleship of youth are in effect fulfilling “Christ’s command to love and serve these young persons.”³⁵ To serve the church youth is to allow them to serve the church as well. When one fails to understand that service is a factor that translates to “usefulness,” any self-perception that he or she is not being used in their area of gifting will result in their questioning their own participation and ultimately view other options.

YOUTH AND PASSION

Theologian Kenda Creasy Dean states that youths are looking for passionate churches that love them and that in turn are worth dying for. The author chillingly stakes her claim on the importance of passion to the point that if this element is missing from the local church, then young people will see that “if Jesus isn’t worth dying for, then he’s not worth living for either.”³⁶ Throughout her book, Dean explains that youth are sold out for anything they find passion in, such as their involvement with drugs, alcohol and even activities that endanger their very lives. The question of how to channel this passion towards the church is answered through an incarnation by the body of believers, as a way of making Christ’s love visible and palpable to

³³ David Ng, *Youth in the Community of Disciples* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1984), 54-59.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 61.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 62.

³⁶ Kenda Creasy Dean, *Practicing Passion: Youth and the Quest for a Passionate Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2004), 32.

these youths.³⁷ Youth are also members of the body of Christ and are as vital to the body as any other member. Passion is the result when the Church both ministers and is ministered by the youth. This passion is translated as a mutual love, self-worth and usefulness by these youths who feel that they belong and that this is their church. It is this incarnation that gives youth and laity purpose and creates a passionate ownership of church and mission. Dean reminds her readers that Cassie Bernall, a victim of the Columbine school shootings in Colorado, forfeited her life when asked if she believed in God because her answer was motivated by passion and was willing to die for what she believed in.³⁸

POSTMODERNISM

Postmodernism has presented the church with new challenges to present-day church communities concerning discipleship of youth and young adults. In his book, Tony Jones incorporates a prophetic warning to his target audience concerning the importance of knowing and recognizing that we are living in a postmodern era. His premise: we can no longer “do” church through a modern-era scope that is outdated and in essence useless. Jones stressed the importance of reevaluating and modifying how an effective youth ministry must keep in mind the obvious changes between different ages separated by modern and postmodern ideologies.³⁹ The strength of the argument, “if it worked back then, it will work today,” is also its weakness when one doesn’t take into account that times truly have changed. In order to reach and teach youth and young adults true discipleship, the Word must be relevant to each hearer. The old tactics for evangelism that were confrontational, demeaning, or just plain condemning, do not

³⁷ Kenda Creasy Dean and Ron Foster, *The Godbearing Life: The Art of Soul Tending for Youth Ministry*, First Edition (Nashville: Upper Room, 2005), 28.

³⁸ Kenda Creasy Dean, “Something To Die For,” in *Practicing Passion: Youth and the Quest for a Passionate Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2004), 32.

³⁹ Tony Jones, *Postmodern Youth Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan/Youth Specialties, 2001), 1.

work today. Youth ministers are dealing with intelligent and bright individuals that are more conscious of their world surroundings than the previous generations. Jones is a staunch proponent for recapturing a prophetic voice that goes against dangerous structures and mindsets that undermine the gospel.⁴⁰ As such, a product of this backing is seen as student-led worship that is strictly put together by the youth and has produced a growing number of youth interested in all features of that service. This facet alone is drawing youth to not just the music or leadership but as behind the curtains supports of those activities.⁴¹ This is what the author says is missing in some churches; an element of genuine relationships brought together by the community they've helped build.

Authors David Kinnaman and Aly Hawkins use the “in-but-not-of” phrase to remind their readers that we as Christians are to remain firm on the concept first mentioned by Jesus as being in this world but not of it (John 17). Sadly, young and old, male and female also view their participation as “in-but-not-of” the church. When the new generations of youth do not find what they need within their local church walls, they leave in search of something else.

One of the underlying issues causing this predicament is technology. Kinnaman states that today's youth have accessibility at their fingertips and are well acquainted with the latest electronic fads while at the same time finding themselves within an age-old traditional ecclesiological structure.⁴² This is what churches are up against. The church is not able to compete with technology but can and should use it for their missiological goals.⁴³ Moreover, this

⁴⁰ Ibid., 42.

⁴¹ Ibid., 84.

⁴² Kinnaman, *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians are Leaving Church and Rethinking Faith*, location 535-572.

⁴³ Ibid., location 575.

results in a growing youth department whose education is superior to most pastoral staffs but yet are deemed unqualified to lead and minister.

Other authors such as Fernando Arzola Jr. believe that it takes more than just youth programs to make a lasting impact on youth today and one might add laity as a whole. Arzola stresses the importance of developing a true prophetic youth ministry that stands apart from other youth ministries that employ explicit or implicit dogmatic agendas that have more to do with numbers than the love of one's neighbors.⁴⁴

In a postmodern world where confusion abounds concerning church growth, discipleship and retention, there is a glimmer of hope found in some churches that instead of decreasing are showing signs of life. Such is the case with author Diana Butler Bass. The author states that changes are already happening among churches that share a certain imagination by both the pastor and the congregation.⁴⁵ This writer believes that not only the ability to imagine is the crux of the matter but rather daring to move in that direction of imagination is what converts theory into practice. All creative imagination if not acted upon is discarded as a daydream and results in wasted time and truncated potentials.

The new concept ascribed to these congregations that have recovered from a decline is called "practicing Congregations" and are described as being "intentional" in their programming and search for something that will "revitalize" the body of Christ, though not for membership growth or some hidden agenda, but as a means of ministering to each and every need.⁴⁶ Bass contends that it becomes necessary to broaden one's horizons by looking outside of one's denominational

⁴⁴ Fernando Jr. Arzola, "Urban Youth Ministry Archetypes: Beginning the Discussion" in *Toward a Prophetic Youth Ministry: Theory and Praxis in Urban Context* (Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic, 2008).

⁴⁵ Diana Butler Bass, *The Practicing Congregation: Imagining a New Old Church* (Herndon, VA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004) 5.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 7-20.

or congregational borders for that something special that will lead to a lasting revival that is both seen and felt. For this author, Bass presents a strong argument to consider other ecclesiastical models that are more in line with the Gospel message through a creation of opportunities that include all believers in ministry and leadership. While not every program or ministry will work with everyone, there needs to be a conscious effort in seeing the local church community's needs and providing a ministry to address these needs or face losing those members that will find other venues willing to be ministered by and to minister to them.

WOMEN IN MINISTRY AND LEADERSHIP

As a male-dominated hierarchy, the AAFCJ organization acknowledges patriarchal involvement, while matriarchal contributions and influences have resulted in limited information and have all but disappeared from organizational records. For instance, among the founders of this organization (AAFCJ) is a woman by the name of Romanita Valenzuela, born in Saint John, Arizona and who after having experienced the Azusa street revival took the Pentecostal message to her family in Mexico in 1914. There, Romanita preached the Gospel in true fashion as what Estrelida Alexander used in her phrase “when women electrified by the Azusa Street Revival set out to change the world with their message of hope.”⁴⁷ Romanita was the wife of Genaro Valenzuela, one of the first pastors associated with the AAFCJ that arose in 1912. However, there exists no record of Romanita ever being commissioned or ordained on par with other organization's founding mothers who were influential in both the spreading of the gospel and church implantation.⁴⁸ It was actually recorded that in this 1914 meeting Nicolasa Garcia (her

⁴⁷ Karen Kossie-Chernyshev, “Looking Beyond the Pulpit Social Ministries and African American Pentecostal-Charismatic Women in Leadership,” in *Philip's Daughters: Women in Pentecostal-Charismatic Leadership*, Estrelida Alexander and Amos Young, eds., (Pickwick Publications, 2014), Kindle Electronic Edition, 63.

⁴⁸Estrelida Alexander, “Beautiful Feet” in *Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism*, eds. Donald E. Miller, Kimon H. Sargeant, and Richard Flory, (Oxford University Press, 2013),255.

purported sister) and her nephew Miguel Garcia were baptized with the Holy Spirit. No mention is made of Romanita and is lost to history if but for her missionary spirit in propagating the Good News. Other Pentecostal authors such as Agustina Luvis Nuñez affirm this concept of women as the propagators of the Gospel as well and whose efforts have been minimized, ignored or simply forgotten.⁴⁹

Within the first two Conventions (1925 & 1926) no women appear in the minutes of the Ministerial Rosters but are mentioned as participating in the night services.⁵⁰ The title of deaconesses first appeared at the 1928 General Convention and among the first recorded meetings of preceding conventions concerning pressing issues, one finds the names of some deaconess' included within the ministry.

- Nicolasa García, mother of Miguel García
- Dolores González, mother of Rodolfo C. González.
- Maria Apolinar Zapata.⁵¹

Nicolasa Garcia received her signed license on January 15, 1937 as found in Jose Ortega's memoirs.⁵² 1944 was the year that the first Constitution was approved.⁵³ Sometime after that, those names disappeared and the title of deaconess no longer surfaced. There is no reference or

⁴⁹ Agustina Luvis Nuñez, "Sewing a New Cloth: A proposal for Pentecostal Ecclesiology Fashioned as a community gifted by the Spirit with the marks of the Church: from a Latina Perspective" (The Lutheran School of Theology, 2009).

⁵⁰ Ismael Martin Del Campo III, to Eduardo Iglesias, Ismaelmdc3@gmail January 21, 2016, "Women in Ministry Research," personal e-mail.

⁵¹ *50 Aniversario De La Asamblea Apostólica De La Fe En Cristo Jesús 1916-1966*, (Rancho Cucamonga, Ca.: Secretaria de Educación Cristiana, 2000), 23.

⁵² Jose A. Ortega, *Mis Memorias: En La Iglesia y La Asamblea Apostólica de la Fe en Cristo Jesús*, (Guadalajara: Impresa Jalisco, 1998), 49.

⁵³ *50 Aniversario De La Asamblea Apostólica De La Fe En Cristo Jesús 1916-1966*, (Rancho Cucamonga Ca.: Secretaria de Educación Cristiana, 2000), 34.

otherwise found as a paper trail. The lack of deaconesses being mentioned in neither the first nor later Constitutions but only in the minutes of those first conventions creates an assumption that in the late thirties a Convention Agreement, known as an (*acuerdo*) might have taken place limiting or refusing to accept women in ministry.

Hence, the pivotal work that Nuñez presents as a need to create a “Pentecostal ecclesiology from the perspective of Hispanic women.”⁵⁴ Nuñez asserts that Pentecostal history proves how women of distinct organizations worked exhaustively in all aspects of ministry in taking the Gospel to great distances as missionaries and that it is women who comprise the majority of Pentecostal adherents within congregations.⁵⁵ Women have occupied such an important role in the church through the gifting of the Holy Spirit that it becomes a disservice to everyone involved when not given the recognition and or opportunity to continue leading and ministering to each other. The Prophet Joel saw God’s spirit poured out without prejudice upon both sons and daughters, young and old alike (Joel 2:28-29). This pouring out was meant to be a gifting that would enable everyone to exercise that gift for the benefit of all. This activity among laity is what constitutes them as active participants within a church setting, because as Karkkainen explains, “there are no functionless members of the body of Christ.”⁵⁶ The catalyst that brings together the fellowship are the *charisms* that each exercises through “actions and words” as “communication” and “service” by laity and not exclusively by an ordained office (pastor,

⁵⁴ Agustina, Luvis Nunez, “Sewing a New Cloth: A Proposal For Pentecostal Ecclesiology Fashioned As A Community Gifted By The Spirit With The Marks Of The Church: From A Latina Perspective,” (PhD diss., Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago, 2009), 3.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 97-98.

⁵⁶ Veli-Matti Karkkainen, “Towards a Participatory Ecclesiology: Promise and Change,” in *Toward a Pneumatological Theology: Pentecostal and Ecumenical Perspectives on Ecclesiology, Soteriology, and Theology of Mission*, ed. Amos Young (Lanham, MD: UPA, 2002), 119.

minister, deacon, etc.).⁵⁷ According to the author, when addressing the concerns of an exclusive priesthood, David E. Edwards explains that to Pentecostals, an acceptance of an institutionalization of church and structure is to “institutionalize the presence of Jesus.”⁵⁸ Pentecostalism branched out of Protestantism, which stood against the Catholic Church and hierarchy because of the rights and privileges granted to “ordained” ministry. Ironically, some organizations in time instituted that same “rejected” hierarchy and structure within certain organized churches.

OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

This writer chose to modify and build upon the study and interventions conducted by Norman Glassburn’s work on young adults,⁵⁹ Helen C. Lee’s women in leadership,⁶⁰ along with Sampurna Rao Gude’s inclusion of the congregation,⁶¹ and Gary L. Wolfer’s efforts to pool the congregation’s gifting.⁶²

Guided by the premise that if space were created and an opportunity given to laity young and old, male and female through discipleship classes and leadership training, they could minister to

⁵⁷ Ibid., 120-21.

⁵⁸ Veli-Matti Karkkainen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology: Pentecostal and Ecumenical Perspectives on Ecclesiology, Soteriology, and Theology of Mission*, ed. Amos Yong (Lanham, MD: UPA, 2002), 129. Karkkainen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology*, 129.

⁵⁹ Norman Glassburn, “Ministry to Young Adults,” (Dmin thesis, McCormick Theological Seminary, 1987).

⁶⁰ Helen C. Lee, “Developing Women’s Leadership In the Midwest Presbyterian Church,” (Dmin thesis, McCormick Theological Seminary, 1992).

⁶¹ Sampurna Rao Gude, “God’s People Together in Ministry: A Vision For A Ministering Congregation,” (Dmin thesis, McCormick Theological Seminary, 1993).

⁶² Gary L. Wolfer, “Choosing Mission and Ministry By The Gifts of The People.” (Dmin thesis, McCormick Theological Seminary, 1993).

the church and surrounding community accordingly. The discipleship and leadership training was formatted into a modified mentorship/internship period as described by Brian G. Fisher in his doctoral dissertation. Internship was created as a tool for “discernment and ministerial calling” as a way of allowing the participants to gain the necessary experience in order to operate in the same ministries as their mentors.⁶³

The support staff in this ministry intervention consisted of 6 members chosen from a pool of past and present youth educators such as Sunday school teachers and facilitators. The church community was included as participants as well. The twelve participants chosen from among the youth and young adults between the ages of 16 and early 20s, were chosen based on outstanding leadership skills as determined through a discovery of gifting questionnaire.⁶⁴ Added to this group were the adult leaders who served as mentors to these youths in order to help develop their individual gifting. These leaders were picked due to their active involvement within their respective ministries and as those willing and able to take on a mentee. The mentees were then paired with a mentor actively working in their same gifting and ministry.

The youth met for a period of six weeks to discuss the plan of study. The lessons were given by the core support staff as a way of involving others in the teaching process. Each staff member (four females and two males) was assigned a topic on the issues and challenges faced by this church community. This writer served as the facilitator guiding the project discussions while the staff was at liberty to employ the means and tools necessary, such as peer teaching and teamwork as the first step towards developing their leadership and ministry. Each staff member researched

⁶³ Brian G. Fisher, “The Contribution of the College Ministry Internship Program at Grace Bible Church in College Station, Texas to the Former Interns’ Discernment and Development of Ministerial Calling” (DMin. thesis., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2010).

⁶⁴ See Appendix A

and developed a class presentation using any media and means they chose such as: video, drama, lecture, interviews, forums, focus groups, etc. The time allotted for each presentation was 45 minutes and 15-20 minutes were allotted for a question and answer session. Class discussions set the stage for this intervention while answering the questions that frame this project using the “Socratic” method of interaction between student and teacher through a series of questions and answers.⁶⁵ The five components to this method which were used included:

1. Experience: as shared by all through a personal statement on the day’s topic.
2. Examination: which requires gathering information on the topic through other means such as the Bible, study guides or electronic media available on that topic.
3. Reflection: time allotted for each to enter into dialogue with self, God and others through small group gatherings or breakout sessions.
4. Action: which involves developing a plan to live out this newfound information as a way of reinforcing discipleship.
5. Evaluation: as the final step in improving the learning/action process, was conducted through the administering of the gifting questionnaire as means of discovering strengths and weaknesses in their own calling and ministry.

The main objective in giving the following six lessons was an effort to correct certain elements that either through misinterpretation and/or culture, have resulted in a foggy image of what being a community in Christ means. Misinterpretation is that which stems from an incorrect biblical interpretation and application that contradicts a Kingdom value such as equality, equity, love, service, and having a high esteem for others, etc. The 6-week classes were meant to 1) strengthen the idea that all have ministry and calling and 2) expose both youth and adults, male

⁶⁵ Arzola, *Toward a Prophetic Youth Ministry*, 55.

and female to the concept of the priesthood of all through the use of both male and female teachers and laity as a demonstration of how the Holy Spirit endows everyone with gifting for leadership and ministry.

The first lesson was hosted by a male presenter and was based on discovering and pooling the inventory of gifting among youth using a 100-question worksheet readily available on the Internet to determine strengths and weaknesses in their individual gifting and calling.⁶⁶ A total of fifteen youth participated in the intervention: six males and nine females. Upon handing out the questionnaire, some of the participants expressed that they had a preconceived notion of where their ministry and gifting lay. However, after receiving the initial results of their answers, these same participants discovered two or three new areas of gifting, which through mentorship exposed them to new areas of ministry. The effectiveness of this questionnaire in reflecting possible ministries was based on the sincerity and interests of the respondent. Once the questionnaires were collected the core staff tallied the three highest scores for each participant as the three possible ministries to engage in and develop. It was also discovered that some of these respondents were actively engaged in their own highest scoring ministry but had little or no knowledge of their second and third highest possible ministry choices. The decision by the core staff was to place each participant within the second or third highest scored ministry in order to further develop those areas and expose these youths to other vital ministries within the church and community. The ministries that were discovered and included in this intervention were hospitality, helps and service, missionary, music, leadership, and teaching.

The second lesson was also presented by a male instructor and was well received. This lesson was an exercise in defining ministry based on Jesus' example as found in St. Luke 4:17-19 and

⁶⁶ Ken Ellis, "Youth Spiritual Gifts Test," *Online Youth Spiritual Gifts Test*, accessed September 16, 2016, <http://www.kodachrome.org/spiritgiftiyouth/>.

how the Church is to embody this ministry while answering the following questions: What does it mean to be anointed in order to preach the Gospel to the poor? Are certain church members excluded from being sent to help heal the brokenhearted? Who is authorized to preach deliverance to the captives? Could recovering of sight to the blind have physical as well as spiritual implications?

The third lesson given was aimed at presenting and defining the Kingdom of God through Jesus' interactions with women, children, the sick and those deemed social outcasts, as found in the Gospels (Mat. 6:33; Mk. 1:15, 10:15; Luke 6:20; John 3:3, 5). This lesson was presented by an unmarried young female who stressed the importance of women as necessary in the areas of ministry. The lesson further reinforced the valuable contributions everyone can make as a way of building community and not bound by sexism, racism, ageism or classism.

The fourth lesson entailed discipleship as seen through an exploration of the life of Jesus as found in Luke 10:25-28. A young mother in her mid 20s presented the lesson. This session used Rev. Roberto Rivera's explanation and application of Jesus' words "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and love your neighbor as yourself" as a "holistic approach".⁶⁷ The instructor provided worksheets to determine other areas of ministries that would tie into the lesson plan. The participants were at liberty to write down any ministry or need that came to mind and afterwards presented them to the class.

The fifth lesson addressed how to become an intentional church that retains its members through preventive measures as presented by Allan F Harre.⁶⁸ A mother of three presented this

⁶⁷ Arzola, *Toward a Prophetic Youth Ministry*, 45.

⁶⁸ Alan F. Harre, *Close the Back Door: Ways to Create a Caring Congregational Fellowship* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1984), 29-39.

lesson. The guiding questions for the lesson included: What are the causes for abandoning the church? And, what are we doing to reduce these numbers? The presenter noted that the three most common reasons for exiting a church are 1) a lack of genuine love and concern, 2) lack of Christian education (discipleship), and 3) a lack of relevant ministries that address the needs of the community.

The sixth and final lesson was centered on becoming a user friendly church as described by George Barna through his research that addressed the various ways some successful churches in this country are growing. This growth has come about through a focus on what they are not doing as a way of avoiding pitfalls in ministry while creating a space for everyone.⁶⁹ A mother of four in her mid 30s presented this lesson.

Ordained ministry was invited to enter into mentorship along with laity as a means of developing each other's individual gifting. This created a space and opportunity for male and female, young and old to build community together. These mentors met with youth and laity for a period of two hours per week for the duration of six weeks. During that time, mentors interacted with their assigned mentee and employed hands-on training and other means of positive reinforcement such as oral and written information.

The use of present and past leaders as mentors facilitated this training in the different church ministries that currently exists from the social to the spiritual, such as: ushers and greeters, master of ceremonies, church auxiliaries, evangelism, preaching, and teaching. The idea was that by allowing certain hands-on training, the participants would cultivate their individual gifting. This would in turn serve as a push for the creation of space and opportunity for everyone desiring to serve others.

⁶⁹ George Barna, *User Friendly Churches: What Christians Need To Know About The Churches People Love To Go To* (Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, 1991), 175-183.

This intervention began on the first week of June 2016 and due to the district's preprogrammed camp events, was pushed back two more weeks to end on the 14th of July 2016.

Once the participants discovered where they would best serve the church, each was matched with existing ministries or potentially new ones. Since service to God and the community by everyone was the goal of this intervention, a few ministries were created that have increased youth and adult interaction.

WHAT WORKED

The class surveys showed that many of the participants were exposed to a new way of seeing church and their own responsibility as members of this church community. The surveys were handed out and collected immediately after each class.⁷⁰ The purpose for using the specific questions found in the survey was to gauge the effectiveness of each lesson given. I have included some of the answers to these surveys as a marker of how the youth understood the proposed lessons.⁷¹

Of the twenty-two surveys distributed for the first lesson, thirteen English and nine Spanish were returned. This lesson identified the gifts of the Holy Spirit given to everyone in certain measure for the benefit of all using the pertinent passages on gifting (1 Peter 4:10; 1 Cor. 12; 14; Romans 12:2-8; Ephes. 4:7-13). Comments from the survey included key phrases on self-esteem and the belief that there should be inclusion of both male and female within leadership and ministry.

“This [lesson] made me feel important, without regard if I am female or male.”

“One doesn't need a title to exercise the call of God.”

⁷⁰ See Appendix B

⁷¹ See Appendix C

“The Experience of the adults plus the strength of the youth...”

“We all have gifts.”

“We can all develop a work, leadership or a ministry.”⁷²

“Spiritual gifts are given to the young and old.”

There are two answers received that, although, concise, spoke volumes about the efforts to create space and opportunity for male and female, young and old. “It gives me hope that it’s not too late for me and I have a future in the church.” Another respondent answered: “The female group felt included in the ministerial gifts. It wasn’t guys can do this and girls can’t, more like girls can definitely do this too.” These responses were tallied and evaluated by the core group for key words that pointed to measurable success.

The second lesson was based on defining the ministry of Jesus (St. Luke 4:17-19). Of the eighteen surveys returned, ten were in English and eight in Spanish. Once more the responses included key words and phrases such as “empowerment” and the concept that “anyone” can lead because God doesn’t place an age restriction on leadership and ministry. One answer that came back on the question that asked: How has this lesson helped build your idea of community among young and old? The answer that was picked up immediately by the evaluators was: “In that the barriers of indifference are broken.”⁷³

The Kingdom of God was the third lesson given, which stressed the importance of women as necessary in the areas of ministry. fifteen surveys returned of which seven were in English and eight in Spanish. The guiding questions for this lesson included: What is the Kingdom of God?

⁷² Some answers were given in Spanish. I have translated these to English taking care not to distort the original intention of such. “Me hizo sentir importante, sin importar si soy mujer o hombre.”, “no se necesita título para ejercer el llamado de Dios.” “Experiencia de los adultos, mas las fuerzas de los jóvenes” “Todos tenemos dones” “Todos podemos desarrollar un trabajo, Liderazgo o ministerio...”

⁷³ An answer received from one respondent and translated to English: “En que se quiebra la barrera de indiferencias.”

How do we gain access to his Kingdom? What is our role in his kingdom? How can we contribute to the growth to the Kingdom of God? And what happens next? Two questions were asked concerning the ministry of Jesus and his approach to those considered untouchables. 1) What types of people were considered untouchables or social outcasts? And 2) Why do you suppose that Jesus used women in his ministry despite the fact that these actions were outside of social and cultural norms? This brought the class to attention when they realized that many in that very classroom might be considered social outcasts in the time of the early church. The final comment of that presentation echoed a sentiment that resembled a battle cry.

We can't use the excuse that we're too young, unqualified. Ladies: that fact that you're a woman. No. We can't use those as [excuses] anymore. Each of you here has been given an opportunity, an open door to explore and develop your gift. Take advantage of it! Take your rightful place, pick up your swords, and go conquer other territories to expand the Kingdom of God!

The core group pointed out the following answers as a sign of peaked interest among the responders.

“Very much needed. Woman play a vital role in ministry and are able to contribute...and are not excluded from doing Kingdom work.”

“The lesson helps build community between male and female.”

“...We are all equal in His eyes.”

“It encourages girls to take pride in being a woman. It gives us hope and confidence to take charge of our lives and not let men make us feel small or unimportant.”

“All young and old, male and female can be used in the Kingdom of God.”

“That God wants to use us equally regardless of (being) male or female...”

When asked: In what ways has this lesson helped or hindered your beliefs on ministry and leadership? Some of the answers received expressed a change in thought process that both male and female have the right of equality.⁷⁴

The fourth lesson was on discipleship and presented Arzola's model for youth ministry.⁷⁵ Of the thirteen surveys returned, nine were in English and five were in Spanish. These surveys reflected the new attitudes by the youth in creating a sense of urgency to serve the church and community and in essence develop their leadership and ministry calling. Three of those responses are shown here:

“As we are made aware that there are more needs out there, there's even more opportunity for leadership and ministry to get involved in.”

“This {class} helped with coming up with ideas for programs needed for church.”

“This lesson emphasized the need to go and help our community.”

Becoming an intentional church was fifth lesson given. Twelve Surveys were returned with nine being in English and three in Spanish. The answers received included an acknowledgement that age should not be a barrier to building community and that both young and old must work together in this effort to serve others. Two of the respondent's answers spoke of the awareness created by the lesson as a point of departure.

“We have been endowed with gifts, a purpose and commission; no age or gender required.”

⁷⁴ Some of the answers to question 4 were translated for clarity: “This has helped reinforce that we all can work without placing importance on our [gender].” “This lesson clearly explains that in order to minister in the Kingdom anyone can do it.” “This has helped me to not be prejudiced...” “... Women can do the things men do ...” “God made women and men equally...” “A reforzar que todos podemos trabajar sin importar nuestro sexo.” “Esta lección explica a claramente para ministrar en el reino cualquiera puede hacerlo. “Me ha ayudado a no tener prejuicios...” “...la mujer también puede hacer las cosas que el hombre hace...” “Dios hizo al hombre y a la mujer en igualdad...”

⁷⁵ Fernando Arzola Jr, “The Holistic Approach,” in *Toward a Prophetic Youth Ministry: Theory and Praxis in Urban Context* (Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic, 2008), chap. 3.

“Building community among young and old takes a leader to bridge the gap of communication by creating dialogue that begins tear[ing] down generational borders.”

The sixth lesson was on becoming user-friendly churches. Of the sixteen surveys returned, twelve were in English and four in Spanish. The answers included a realization that presently there are four generations within this congregation and each one as important as the others. Some of the answers stressed the need for the youth to learn from the adults as a way of continuing the spread of the Gospel. Other answers included a renewed way of thinking about leadership and ministry being more than just a title that authorizes one to do a service.

As seen by some of these answers, a high number returned favorable outcomes on each lesson. This researcher believes that the apparent success in these lessons was due to the use of female and male laity as instructors that taught a given subject that was enforced by their very presence.

The final survey given shed more light on the overall experience by both mentor and mentee.⁷⁶ The questions chosen for this survey were formulated to allow each participant the opportunity to answer openly about any success or shortcomings of this intervention and also to offer suggestions for improving this work.

WHAT DIDN'T WORK

The final surveys given at the end of the intervention indicated that some of the mentors were unclear about their functions in a modified internship program. While all mentors were instructed to interact with and offer their mentee all information necessary for them to basically fill that position, only a few mentors went above and beyond that call to clearly identify their leadership position and responsibilities, while the remainder limited their actions to what resulted in verbal instruction with very little hands on training.

⁷⁶ See Appendix D.

WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?

There are a few things that need to change in order to assure a better response by all participants. The first thing to change involves the hours of the lessons given. There was a disconnection between the youth due to school and work schedules. Both mentors and mentees were not fully committed to attending all sessions of the intervention as seen through the survey response. Lesson meetings were held on Tuesday at 7:00 p.m., which is the time most working adults are just settling into their homes and winding down. This time frame is also a challenge for those who take college classes during the summer months with class times that are similar to the regular school year. A change in scheduling from a Tuesday night class to a Saturday morning class instead might prove beneficial to both mentors and mentees.

The second proposal for change is found in the overlap of the AAFCJ District calendar of events and the local church calendar. As stated earlier, this intervention took place during the summer, which is also the time for Arizona District camps that include the following auxiliaries: men, women, youth and juniors. Camps are between 3 and 5 days long depending on the auxiliary. The overlapping of local and district activities had the effect of postponing the weekly lessons and mentorship sessions. Better planning would put the intervention at the beginning of the fall season or in between winter and spring at the beginning of the year and before the spring break.

The third proposal would be to have all the participants sign a commitment sheet to create a sense of responsibility. This would help in assuring that the surveys would not fluctuate between high and low attendance. Participant attendance was kept in order to track the success and interest in this six-week intervention.⁷⁷ The first week showed a high response by all participants

⁷⁷ See Appendix F Attendance Chart.

but then decreases throughout the remainder of the weeks. Overall, the numbers show that attendance never fell below 50%, which is in itself a good marker of success.

The fourth proposed change is found in the language barrier. Although I used a Spanish translator for those who didn't speak English, there was still the element of a loss of interest when bouncing from one presenter to the translator. In retrospect, I now feel strongly that each lesson should be presented in that audience's native tongue. In order to carry this out, a need arises to host two different interventions in both languages so that each participant gathers all the pertinent information and is able to better process the data. An added benefit in providing the classes in both languages is that the participants are comfortable in both listening and asking questions for clarification.

A fifth proposed change to this intervention would include a training workshop with all mentors as an effort to explain in detail the objectives and learning outcomes. These efforts would define the parameters of the intervention through presentations and examples of how a mentorship program works. This would also help clarify any questions and doubts concerning mentorship, while at the same time build up the identified weaknesses within the structure and also enforce the strengths of the intervention.

The final proposed change would be to include more adults as a listening audience in order to allow them the exposure that their youths would receive as well. This would greatly help the efforts of everyone speaking the same thing and putting into practice those new learnings. This too would serve as a tool in building community between young and old, male and female and ordained ministry and laity.

EVALUATION AND LEARNING

Eric Law describes a church's culture as that of an iceberg with what is visible to the eyes as only a fraction of the underlying issues that warrant change.⁷⁸ These visible signs above the water are the things that Law states that in most cases do not need change as they define who we are and how we worship. The visible top of the iceberg is composed of those elements that can easily change, as they are external. The problem addressed by change theory is found in that part of the iceberg that is underneath the waterline otherwise known as the "internal" workings of that organization. According to Law, the internal workings of an organization include "assumptions, values, patterns and myths." These are the elements at work that define why things are done as they appear. The internal workings that implicitly create a way of thinking and doing just and fair things employs the same process for doing things that hinder the building of community and in essence, stall the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

When I first considered this intervention, the first instinct was that this would include both easy and hard transitions to create change since it was coming from the top down. Upon extensive research in the areas of concern and through an evaluation of the situation in ministry and context, I discovered that the changes would instead be more difficult and would include both a challenge and a risk. The challenge was to implement change to be more in line with the message of the Gospel and to get others on board as well. Physical and spiritual changes that are culturally motivated are the hardest to change because of the tenacity with which those within that culture hold onto these values regardless of how right or wrong they may be.

⁷⁸Eric Law, *Sacred Acts, Holy Change: Faithful Diversity and Practical Transformation*, Second Printing edition (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2002), chap. 4.

The risk involved the potential to lose a generation or two because of the proposed changes. Either the older generations would feel neglected or the younger generations would feel abandoned in that their suggestions and concerns were not being addressed. The need for a balanced intervention became the catalyst that guided this entire process.

I also discovered that healthy change doesn't come from the top down, but rather, change if it is to be implemented and accepted by the local organization must begin as a grass roots movement. Change would have to come from the same people that were being affected by the status quo. Doing things as they've always been done before didn't guarantee that this church community was in fact a true representation of a community of believers exercising their rights of equality through their participation in leadership and ministry. Change would have to come through the "stakeholders" of this church. I also learned that change theory was not something that could only be addressed in the meetings concerning the participants. I found that "change" occupied most of my days while ministering and serving the community. Rarely did a sermon or teaching not make mention of the Kingdom of God and the need to establish it within the local church. The Kingdom of God became a recurring theme with a final appeal in the form of a working definition: in this Kingdom there should be no racism, classism, ageism or sexism. This Kingdom, if it is to be God's kingdom, must be void of oppressors and oppression and must meet the social, emotional and spiritual needs of the community at large. Within this kingdom there is a "just distribution and use of power."⁷⁹

The most important thing I learned was that change that is in line with the Gospel is difficult but necessary. The easy way out would be to keep doing things as they've always been done without any concern for the well-being of the church community. However, being complacent in

⁷⁹ Dennis L. Maher, "The Application of Community Organizing Models To The Development of a Presbytery Urban Mission Strategy," (Dmin thesis, McCormick Theological Seminary, 1986).

God's kingdom is not an option. We can learn from the example of Jesus Christ when he demonstrated his concern for women, children, the infirmed, the social outcast and the marginalized peoples. That preoccupation he had for these masses was not limited to salvation in the afterlife, but rather a life here on Earth that was free from hunger, discrimination, hatred and everything that afflicts humanity. In short, Jesus was concerned about building community.

The final surveys were evaluated and the answers categorized using Ackerman's Organizational Development theory, which addresses developmental, transitional and transformational changes.⁸⁰ Those answers classified as developmental address the incremental change that came about through teacher/student interaction that took place during the lessons. The key words used to determine this type of change in thought processes included phrases such as: "I believe," "I think," "I realized," "I thought," "I understood" and "I learned." The transitional changes reflected the action words that highlighted the new services or ministries that came about through the support and training by mentors. The transformational changes are the respondent's perceptions on the establishment of new ministries that came out of the teachings as a course correction in the gifting of male and female, young and old.⁸¹

Developmental changes produced a slightly higher than anticipated change in thought processes concerning women in ministry with the respondent's answers containing words such as "awakening" and "realization." Also, there was a change in perception concerning culture and how that culture has contributed to a preferential option for male hierarchy. There are three answers that address this change in rationale:

⁸⁰ Linda S. Ackerman, "Development, Transition or Transformation: The Question of Change in Organizations," in *Organization Development Classics: The Practice and Theory of Change, The Best of the OD Practitioner* eds. Judith C. Hoy, Donald F. Van Eynde, and Dixie Cody Van Eynde, 1st edition (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997), chap. 4.

⁸¹ See Appendix E for a list of survey answers in the developmental, transitional and transformational categories.

“I initially thought that we were going to be taught lots of positive vibes and then just be let off on our own to see if we [would] do something, but we were held accountable with the help of a mentor. I now understand that young ladies are allowed to serve in more ministries than the ones I was aware of.”

This intervention made me realize that women can and do have a place in ministry and leadership.”

“I knew that we were all called to serve, but due to culture and possibly customs, ministry was always denied to women, but with this intervention, a door has opened for precisely that.”

Transitional changes were noted as being those first steps in the direction of a noticeable change through actions. Some respondents expressed seeing a growth among the youth and were excited to see these efforts expanded. Others were more willing to use themselves as the marker of growth in that they had a greater desire and passion to serve.

Transformational changes were the greatest visible demonstration of the intentional efforts by both the project core staff and the participants in creating new ministries headed by male and female, young and old. Some of the projects were headed by and included youth, such as the health fair where two young ladies organized the event and included other youth and adults and a neighborhood cleanup that was headed by the youth department and included the adults as a joint effort. These are true signs of building community among young and old. In another example, a young lady who was mentored by the superintendent of Christian education had this to say:

“Through the intervention I was able to work alongside the Christian Education department and bring in my ideas in hopes of improving what we currently have.”

Some comments by the mentors are included as well:

“The project allowed the mentor to use previous experiences to develop a community outreach program. This community outreach allowed the mentee to develop her leadership style and strength.”

“The youth and adults were able to work together in new and established ministries. The youth were allowed to initiate new ministries. New leaders were discovered. Cultural barriers were dismantled in teaching our youth that we are

all equal; removing the limitations that they had.”

A few of the answers that best describe the transformation that is taking place include but are not limited to:

“My expectation was for cultural and age barriers to be broken. I feel this intervention has begun to do exactly that. The youth have been given so many opportunities to create and develop new ministries. Likewise women have been used to teach and lead prayer. The older generations have also been given new ministry of developing the youth.”

“This intervention had a positive effect on our church. Throughout this program cultural and legalistic foundations were shaken and barriers were broken, doors that at one point were closed for women and young people were now opened. There is still some fear and uncertainty to walk through those doors due to culture but this program will pave the way for change.”

Those within this intervention setting have expressed their desire to continue doing more for the community as a response to the lessons and opportunities given. Young and old, male and female have approached me with heartfelt thanks for inclusion of either themselves or their youth in this intervention. A 70-year-old female expressed her gratitude for being allowed to mentor a 21-year-old female in lesson and sermon preparation. Her words were: “thank you for allowing me to serve, I thought my gifts were never going to be used again.”

This intervention has resulted in a step in the right direction to create more participation and involvement of male and female laity both young and old within leadership and ministry. As a first step in the direction and belief in the priesthood of all believers, the teaching and mentoring efforts have paved the way for continued growth resulting in a transformation of this local church while remaining true to the organizational tenets of belief. Using laity in leadership and ministry at the local level has proven to be beneficial and has injected the congregation with a new purpose and usefulness. With a new view on leadership and ministry, females will engage in positions that in practice are already taking place among other local congregations. Prayerfully,

this intervention will serve as a first step in creating awareness of this need to include both male and female laity as co-ministers. The most compelling comment that speaks of this challenge and the need to address this concern comes from one of the mentors that stated: “Because of these efforts to change, I don’t have to look for another church that will give my daughter an opportunity to lead.” This begs the question: How many people have abandoned this church and organization, not for doctrinal belief, but rather for a lack of a created space and opportunity to lead and minister? This is one question that has and should have a haunting effect on leadership.

SIGNIFICANCE

A question was asked concerning the implementation of such a project at an organizational level. The answer may be found in stating that much prayer and thought must guide an endeavor of this magnitude. One reason is that when dealing with issues such as what surfaced at WPAC, these same issues are multiplied many times over as an international organization and will present many challenges. Taking into consideration the things that need to change in order to assure a better intervention, the implications of this project are that change is not easy, but not impossible either.

The success of this intervention was the result of a concerted effort by the pastoral staff and congregation as an effort to represent a true church in line with the Gospel message of service by all to all. An added benefit is that entered into as a group effort, the longevity of this intervention is assured. The catalyst for change was found in being inclusive of all members of the present church as a whole through teaching and training in leadership and ministry and through the planning and execution of praise and worship services. This resulted in a church that draws on the inventory of the gifting pool readily available through the process of discovering

and developing laity in their capacity and gifting. In order for this to happen, church leadership must be willing to explore through the Bible what the early Church founders believed was a true representation of God's Kingdom on earth. That representation is seen as all being gifted and called to serve in various capacities while avoiding issues and gaps causing separation and impacting the mission and building of community. The end product is laity empowerment alongside ordained ministry.

All these elements present usable and repeatable actions by other religious leaders seeking to implement a model where young and old, male and female are considered a "royal priesthood" (1 Peter 2:9). This intervention may prove useful in part or tailored to specific needs in order to create a new and living church with a renewed vision for her adherents. The implication of this project is that transformation of community comes from within and not by a human mandate but by the workings of the Holy Spirit.

Of great significance was the fact that the former and founding pastor was on board with the interventions and changes that occurred during and afterward. This is attributed to the many talks guided by a step-by-step explanation of the elements impeding the building of community in tandem with the pertinent Bible passages, thus resulting in a corrected vision for the future of the church in line with Kingdom values. This is significant because the interventions were seen by WPAC as being sanctioned by those they considered their spiritual parents. Any fears of diluting, defacing or distorting key tenets or being disloyal to the organization or the founding pastor subsided. Change does not come easy but is facilitated when all the stakeholders are in agreement.

CONCLUSION

The intended purpose for this change in ecclesiology at the local level was an attempt to answer what this writer thought were the problems that were hindering the building of community at WPAC. However, upon further inquiry, other issues were revealed that had more to do with the created culture and Hispanic heritage of the AAFCJ organization. The problem of low participation within laity was not due to indifference but rather a selective mindset of who was authorized to partake within each service due to a preferential option for ordained ministry. Likewise, the lack of female participation even within the women's auxiliary and local leadership stemmed from years of cultural and scriptural misunderstandings concerning the priesthood of all believers.

In order to avoid pitfalls of the past, now with a corrected vision in sight, these newfound opportunities created for a ministering laity will be actively upheld by the local leadership as the impetus that keeps this momentum going. This requires the documenting of these new changes at the local level so that as time passes, a written manifesto concerning shared leadership is easily found as the beginning of a transformational change ensuring continuity and longevity. No longer documented as an *acuerdo* but rather a steadfast and committed decision to continue to work in tandem leadership and ministry by laity both young and old, male and female.

This writer realized that a genuine transformation comes through the changing of one's own mindset and not through the pushing of agendas to make others conform. Change begins with a dream of a more just and equitable future for all within the believing community. The dreamer has the responsibility to share that dream in order to allow others to catch a glimpse and glimmer of hope. That hope represents an arrival of the Kingdom of God in the *eschaton* and in the here and now where everyone has a voice and can act upon their individual gifting (Luke 17:21). It is

God after all, who gives the visions and dreams to the modern day prophets of change; both male and female, young and old as those that will bring these dreams to fruition by the power of His Spirit (Joel 2:28).

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APPENDIX A

YOUTH SPIRITUAL GIFT TEST

As found on: <http://www.kodachrome.org/spiritgiftiyouth/download.htm>

God has blessed each believer with Spiritual Gifts. Do you know what Spiritual Gifts God has given you? This Youth Spiritual Gifts Test will help you determine what Spiritual Gift(s) and/or Special Talent(s) God has given you. The test evaluates 20 Gifts and Talents. Do NOT look ahead to see what these Gifts and Talents are because that will influence your results!

Instructions:

This Youth Spiritual Gifts Test consists of 100 statements (pages 2-6) that you are to respond to by entering in a number for each on the Analysis Sheet (page 7). Depending on how you feel about each statement, enter a number between 1 and 10 where 1 means that the statement does not describe you at all and 10 means that the statement describes you perfectly.

This test is designed for Christian youth, teenagers, and new Christians. If you have been a Christian for at least a few years, you should use your personal experiences as the basis for your Responses. If you consider yourself to be a new Christian, then your Responses should be based on how well each statement describes the desire of your heart (even if you have not yet done what the statement talks about).

Please keep in mind that this test was written by people, not by God, and as such it is certainly imperfect. It should be used as a starting place to begin to discover how God has gifted you, but not as an absolute indicator. The test may not always indicate your true Spiritual Gift(s). It is just one tool in what should be a life-long search for how God has blessed you so you can be a blessing to others.

Read this VERY CAREFULLY!

1. Before you start the test, find the Analysis Sheet (page 7) and fold it along the gray line that runs down the middle of the sheet. Fold it so that you can see the 100 numbered boxes, but can NOT see the names of the Spiritual Gifts and Talents.
2. Place the five Test pages (pages 2-6) on top of the folded Analysis Sheet and a little to the right so that you can see the Response 1-20 column.
3. As you take the Test, enter a Response (number from 1 to 10 indicating how well the statement describes you) in each of the pre-numbered boxes.
4. After entering your Responses in the boxes numbered 1-20, flip to the second Test page and position it over the Analysis Sheet so that it covers up the column of Responses you just entered.
5. Now enter your Responses for this page of the Test in the next column of pre-numbered boxes.
6. Continue this process for all five Test pages. The test should take less than an hour to complete.
7. Respond to each Statement quickly with your first feeling. Don't be too modest, however, unless you can walk on water, you will probably enter more low numbers for Responses than high numbers.
8. Are you ready to start? Take a deep breath and begin . . .
9. When you are done, read the Analysis Instructions on page 8.

1. I enjoy using my artistic talents to make things that bring glory to God.
2. It is easy for me to decide whether a person is being honest or dishonest.
3. I have given hope to others by telling them about God's love, the promises of God, or the gospel.
4. I am attracted to non-believers because of my desire to win them over for Christ.
5. I hold fast to my personal belief in the truths of the Bible even when others ridicule or make fun of me.
6. I can give sacrificially because I know that God will meet my needs.
7. I truly believe that my prayers for one who is sick or injured are heard by God and are answered - often by God's healing touch.
8. When I serve the Lord, I really don't care who gets the credit.
9. Our home is always open to whoever God brings to us.
10. I find myself praying when I possibly should be doing other things.
11. I have had insights of spiritual truth that others have said helped bring them closer to God.
12. Others are willing to follow my guidance to accomplish tasks for our church.
13. I can look beyond a person's handicaps or problems and see a life that matters to God.
14. I firmly believe that God can miraculously alter circumstances.
15. I am able to relate well to people of different cultures.
16. Christian music always lifts my spirit and makes me want to praise and worship God.
17. I sometimes feel that I know exactly what God's will is in a particular situation.
18. Studying the Bible and sharing my insights with others is very satisfying for me.
19. I have felt the presence of God and an inner confidence when an important decision needed to be made.
20. Sometimes, I express my love for God by writing poems, songs, prayers, or devotionals.
21. I like to make gifts for others that will remind them of God or Jesus.
22. I can quickly recognize (and turn away from) temptation and sin.

23. When I am with someone who is discouraged, I try to lift up their spirit.
24. I have led others to a decision for salvation through faith in Christ.
25. I am totally convinced God will fulfill his word even if He is not doing so yet.
26. God has used me to meet someone's financial or material need.
27. When I pray for the sick, either they or I feel sensations of tingling or warmth.
28. God's Spirit in me sometimes leads me to do a simple thing for someone that touches them deeply.
29. I enjoy greeting and welcoming people into my group of friends, my church, or my home.
30. I seem to recognize prayer needs before others do.
31. I think I am able to understand difficult or confusing portions of the Bible better than most others my age.
32. I am able to delegate tasks to others to accomplish God's work.
33. I often feel compassion toward those who have physical or mental problems.
34. Other people can point to specific cases where my prayers have resulted in what seems impossible actually happening.
35. I would be willing to leave comfortable surroundings if it would enable me to share Christ with other people.
36. Singing, dancing to, or playing songs of praise to God or for pure enjoyment is brings joy to my heart.
37. I sometimes have a strong sense of what God wants to say to someone in response to a particular situation.
38. Others have told me that I have helped them learn Biblical truths.
39. Sometimes God gives me an insight into the proper course of action others should take.
40. I am able to take Biblical lessons and write them down in a way that others can understand more easily.
41. I like to work with my hands to make things to serve God.
42. I find it easy to tell the difference between spiritual truth and error, good and evil.
43. I have motivated others to get involved in ministry or take steps in their spiritual

growth.

44. I can sometimes tell when the Spirit has prepared a person to received Jesus Christ.
45. My hope in God, against all odds, is inspiring to others.
46. I believe that everything I have belongs to God, so I cheerfully give back a tithe (10%) of all that God gives me.
47. I enjoy praying for sick people because I know that many of them will be healed as a result.
48. I enjoy doing routine tasks that enable others to do their ministry for the church more effectively.
49. I go out of my way to try to make everyone feel welcome and comfortable at church events and in my home.
50. When I hear a prayer request, I pray for that need for several days at least.
51. I have a good understanding of the gospel.
52. God has given me an ability to "rally the troops" in giving aid to others.
53. When I hear of someone who is lonely, sick, or shut-in, I feel an urge to spend some time with them.
54. God has used me personally to perform supernatural signs or wonders.
55. I have a desire to learn another language so that I can minister to those in a different culture.
56. People have said they see the love of Jesus on my face when I sing, dance, or play music.
57. Sometimes I have a burning desire to speak God's word even if I know it will not be well received.
58. Leading a Sunday School class is something I have a strong desire to do.
59. When a person has a problem I can sometimes guide them to the best Biblical solution.
60. I love to study God's Word and write down what I have learned.
61. I am able to show the glory of God's creation through my art.
62. I can judge well between truth and error of a statement someone makes about religion.
63. I have talked with someone who was troubled or discouraged to restore their

confidence in God.

64. I would rather talk to others about my faith in Jesus than anything else.
65. I trust God completely, even when the situation seems impossible.
66. I have felt God's Spirit leading me to give money to a specific person or cause.
67. Sometimes I have a strong sense that God wants to heal someone through my prayers or touch.
68. I would rather work (for God) in secret than have my work recognized publicly.
69. I like to help with social events at my church.
70. Praying for others is one of my favorite ways of spending time.
71. I sometimes find I know things that I have never learned, which are confirmed other Christians.
72. It is a thrill to inspire others to greater involvement in church work.
73. I enjoy visiting people in hospitals and retirement homes, and feel I do well in such a ministry.
74. The Holy Spirit leads me to pray for impossible things that really come true.
75. More than most, I have had a desire to see peoples of other countries won to the Lord.
76. People have told me they were moved spiritually by my singing, dancing, or playing music.
77. People have told me that I have communicated timely messages that must have come directly from the Lord.
78. I devote considerable time to learning new Biblical truths in order to communicate them to others.
79. I feel that I have special insight from God in choosing the best way to go in a difficult situation.
80. People have said that they were touched spiritually by things I have written.
81. I feel compelled to use my hands to craft things that show the beauty of God's creation.
82. I can quickly recognize whether a person's teaching is consistent with God's word.
83. With my positive attitude, I can help others in difficult situations see that the glass is 'half full', not 'half empty'.

84. I'm troubled when people ignore the importance of salvation.
85. I truly believe that God has a plan for me, to prosper me and not to harm me, to give me hope and a future.
86. I strive to find ways to give to others without calling attention to myself.
87. I have prayed for others and physical healing has actually occurred.
88. I look for tasks at our church that need to be done, and often do them without even being asked.
89. When people come to our home, they often say they feel at home with us.
90. Others have told me that my prayers for them have been answered.
91. God has given me words to say in witnessing to others that have surprised even me.
92. I can motivate others to obey Christ by the example of the way I live my life.
93. Sometimes I am overcome with emotion for the person I am praying for.
94. People have said that God used me to bring about supernatural change in lives or circumstances.
95. People of a different race or culture have been attracted to me and I have been able to share my faith with them.
96. I enjoy using my musical talents to sing, dance to, or play Christian music much more so than secular music.
97. God has used me to reveal specific things that will happen in the future.
98. When I talk to others about the Bible, they seem interested and want to learn more.
99. People with spiritual problems sometimes come to me for advice.
100. I sometimes prefer to write down my thoughts about God rather than speaking them out loud.

Youth Spiritual Gifts Test - Analysis Sheet								
Response 81-100 Enter 1 - 10	Response 61-80 Enter 1 - 10	Response 41-60 Enter 1 - 10	Response 21-40 Enter 1 - 10	Response 1-20 Enter 1 - 10		Sum of first 5 columns	Rank in order highest to lowest	Name of Spiritual Gift / Talent
81	61	41	21	1				Craftsmanship / Artisan
82	62	42	22	2				Discernment / Distinguish Spirits
83	63	43	23	3				Encouragement
84	64	44	24	4				Evangelism / Evangelist
85	65	45	25	5				Faith
86	66	46	26	6				Giving
87	67	47	27	7				Healing
88	68	48	28	8				Helps / Service
89	69	49	29	9				Hospitality
90	70	50	30	10				Intercession / Prayer
91	71	51	31	11				Knowledge
92	72	52	32	12				Leadership
93	73	53	33	13				Mercy / Compassion
94	74	54	34	14				Miracles
95	75	55	35	15				Missionary
96	76	56	36	16				Music
97	77	57	37	17				Prophet / Prophecy
98	78	58	38	18				Teaching / Teacher
99	79	59	39	19				Wisdom
100	80	60	40	20				Writing

Analysis Instructions

Analysis:

1. First, look over the Analysis Sheet to make sure you have entered a number from 1 to 10 in each of the 100 pre-numbered Response boxes. If you left any of the boxes empty, go back to the corresponding question(s) and enter your Response.
2. Now, unfold the Analysis sheet. Calculate the sum of the 5 Responses in each horizontal row and enter it in the Sum column. You need to do this for each of the 20 rows of Responses. Each sum should be a number between 5 and 50.
3. Next, look over the 20 numbers you have just entered in the vertical Sum column. Look for the highest number you can find (for example 47). Now, place an "A" in the Rank column for the row with the highest Sum. If there is more than one row with this same high number, place an "A" in the Rank column for each.
4. (If you placed an "A" in 3 or more Rank boxes, then skip this step) - Look for the second highest number (for example 43). Place a "B" in the Rank column for each row with this number.
5. (If you placed an "A" or "B" in 3 or more Rank boxes, then skip this step) - Look for the third highest number and place a "C" in the Rank column for each row with this number.
6. Now look at the names of the Spiritual Gifts / Talents beside the Rank boxes where you entered "A", "B", or "C". These are the Spiritual Gifts and Talents that it seems God has given to you.
7. You can find out more about your Spiritual Gifts and Talents by reading the Spiritual Gifts Reference Material on the following pages. If you are reading this document on a computer with Internet access, clicking on any Bible verse reference will open a window containing that Bible verse. After reading the verse, you can close the Bible window to return to this document.

The Youth Spiritual Gifts Test is also available on the Internet at <http://www.kodachrome.org/spiritgifttyouth> . The Internet version performs an automatic analysis so you don't have to do any calculating.

This Printable test can be downloaded at <http://www.kodachrome.org/spiritgifttyouth/download.htm> .

If this Youth Spiritual Gifts Test has been a blessing to you and you are able to make a donation, it would be gratefully accepted. You may make a donation at <http://www.kodachrome.org/spiritgifttyouth/donate.htm> .

This material is made available by Ken Ellis.
Please send any comments to spirit-gift@kodachrome.org .

APPENDIX B
CLASS LESSON SURVEY

Survey Lesson: _____

1. What are your thoughts concerning the need for this lesson? *¿Cuáles son sus pensamientos concerniente a esta lección?*

2. In what ways is this lesson relevant in meeting the goals of creating a space and opportunity for leadership and ministry? *¿En qué manera es relevante esta lección para alcanzar las metas de crear un espacio y abrir oportunidades para liderazgo y ministerio?*

3. How has this lesson helped to build your idea of community among young and old? *¿de qué manera le ha ayudado esta lección en edificar su idea de comunidad entre jóvenes y adultos?*

4. In what ways has this lesson helped or hindered your beliefs on ministry and leadership? *¿De qué manera le ha ayudado o estorbado esta lección en sus creencias sobre el ministerio y el liderazgo?*

5. The aim of this lesson was to present the course material without certain bias. How did this lesson meet or not meet these expectations? *La meta de esta lección fue de presentar la materia de manera sin prejuicio y sin parcialidad: en su opinión, ¿Logro alcanzar esta lección esas metas?*

APPENDIX C

CLASS LESSON SURVEY ANSWERS

The surveys showed that many of the participants were exposed to a new way of seeing church. These surveys were given in both English and Spanish. The answers in Spanish were translated in an effort to reflect the true meaning of the comment. Although not exhaustive, these are the answers that best described the positive effects of the intervention.

Survey Lesson 1: Discovering your gifts. Male presenter.

22 surveys returned. 13 English and 9 Spanish

Comments from the survey included key phrases such as leadership, inclusion of both male and female, and empowerment.

“This made me feel important without regard if I am female or male.”

“A title is unnecessary in exercising the call of God

“The experience of the adults plus the strength of the youth...”

“We all have gifts.”

“We were all called to minister in diverse manners.”

“We can all develop a work, leadership or ministry...”

“Empowerment.”

“Spiritual gifts are given to the young and old..”

“It gives me hope that it’s not too late for me and I have a future in the church.”

“The female group felt included in the ministerial gifts. It wasn’t “guys can do this and girls can’t, more like girls can definitely do this too.”

Lesson 2: Defining the ministry of Jesus (St. Luke 4:17-19). Male presenter.

18 surveys returned 8 Spanish and 10 English

“I believe that the youth and adults have the capacity to initiate ministries in the church and this lesson confirms just that.”

“Prime example of how your ministry can begin at any age”

“...anyone is capable”

“It is what we are called to do; complete his mission.”

“Anyone can be a leader or be relevant to the church.”

“This lesson is needed to understand the empowerment that has been given to us through the example that Jesus left...”

How has this lesson helped build your idea of community among young and old?

“In that the barriers of indifference are broken.”

“No matter what age we are, God can use us.”

Lesson 3 the Kingdom of God Female presenter

15 surveys returned 8 English and 7 Spanish.

“Very much needed. Woman play a vital role in ministry and are able to contribute...and are not excluded from doing Kingdom work.”

“The lesson helps build community between male and female.”

“...We are all equal in His eyes.”

“It encourages girls to take pride in being a woman. It gives us hope and confidence to take charge of our lives and not let men make us feel small or unimportant.”

“All young and old, male and female can be used in the Kingdom of God.”

“That God wants to use us equally regardless of (being) male or female...”

One of the questions asked: In what ways has this helped or hindered your beliefs on ministry and leadership?

“This reinforces that all of us can work without regard for our gender.”

“This lesson explains clearly that to minister in the Kingdom, anyone can do it.”

“This has helped me in not having prejudices...”

“...Women can do the same things men can do...”

“God made male and female equal...”

Lesson 4 Discipleship: The Prophetic Youth Ministry.

13 surveys returned. 9 English 5 Spanish Female presenter.

“No matter our age, we are all created equally and have needs within; spiritual, emotional, physical, intellectual, social and moral needs.”

“Youth and adults can work together and utilize their skill set to provide services to others.”

“As we are made aware that there are more needs out there, there’s even more opportunity for leadership and ministry to get involved in.”

“This {class} helped with coming up with ideas for programs needed for church.”

“This lesson emphasized the need to go and help our community.”

“This has helped me to understand that I need to do more for my community.”

“Youth and adults have needs and we can work together to resolve them.”

Lesson 5 becoming an intentional church Female presenter.

12 Surveys returned 9 English 3 Spanish

“We are letting too many people leave church without even trying to make them stay.”

“We have been endowed with gifts, a purpose and commission; no age or gender required.”

“Building community among young and old takes a leader to bridge the gap of communication by creating dialogue that begins tear[ing] down generational borders.”

“We all need to work together to better our ministries.”

“There shouldn’t be a gap dividing the two.”

Lesson 6 User Friendly Churches Female Presenter

16 surveys returned 12 English and 4 Spanish.

“I realize that we need the present generation to keep sharing the Word of God.”

“Be more open minded to different people and their backgrounds.”

“We need more events that can have both youth and adults interact with one another. There are four generations that we need to bridge.”

“Motivates us to learn from the adults so we can start working in the Kingdom of God.”

“Ministry and leadership is much more than a title.”

APPENDIX D

FINAL SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Youth/Adult Ministry and Leadership Survey Encuesta sobre ministerio y Liderazgo Jóvenes/Adultos

1. Were your expectations met with this intervention? Please explain. ¿Fueron sus expectativas alcanzadas con esta intervención? Por favor explique.
2. Would you recommend this intervention to others? Please explain. ¿Recomendaría esta intervención a otros? Por favor explique.
3. What changes would you make to this program? ¿Que cambios haría a esta programa?
4. Has this study allowed you to think differently about ministry and leadership and if so, in what ways? ¿Le ha permitido pensar de manera diferente este estudio sobre el ministerio y el liderazgo? Y si lo ha logrado, ¿de qué manera?
5. Write your comments on the outcome of this intervention. Escriba sus comentarios y resultado de esta intervención.

APPENDIX E

FINAL SURVEY ANSWERS

The final survey answers were evaluated and placed into three categories that point to the degrees of change in the thought processes, through action and ultimately through the receptivity of these interventions by the local congregation. The three categories are 1) developmental, 2) transitional, and 3) transformational. Some of the answers were:

DEVELOPMENTAL:

“I also think it opens the door for you to be active and be [a] part of something.”

“I learned more about what gifts I possess and I have attained insight into what kind of actives I can participate in at church in order to bring out those gifts.”

“One of the topics that I felt was crucial hearing and relearning was that everyone has a divine calling from God be we just need to make that effort.”

“I believe bridging the gap between age groups is not far off. The gap is narrower than first perceived.”

“This was an awakening for me. I thought that God could use only people of high category, but I have discovered that God doesn’t work like that. Now I believe that we are all called to work for God.”

“I initially thought that we were going to be taught lots of positive vibes and then just be let off on our own to see if we [would] do something, but we were held accountable with the help of a mentor. I now understand that young ladies are allowed to serve in more ministries than the ones I was aware of.”

“It has helped me understand leadership from a different perspective.”

“I learned the importance of teaching others. It is not about doing the job [it’s] about helping others to do the job.”

“This intervention made me realize that women can and do have a place in ministry and leadership.”

“I knew that we were all called to serve, but due to culture and possibly customs, ministry was always denied to women, but with this intervention, a door has opened for precisely that.”

“I learned that the ministry of leadership takes a lot of patience, time and mental energy.

This intervention has allowed me to develop my ministry in a greater way to

impact people's lives.”

“Through this intervention I was able to understand that even if we have a calling in our lives towards a specific ministry, this does not mean that we going to be automatically good within it. It is our duty to exercise these talents and develop them to be able to apply them within our ministry.”

TRANSITIONAL:

“I began to feel motivated about participating in projects that helped me develop my skills.”

“This study allowed me to realize that I have more than just one ministry and that we [sic] need to start expressing them.”

“This expanded my expectations concerning women and leadership. Personally, I realized that ministry and leadership isn't about being in front of a group, its primarily about being under the leadership of God and forming part of the ministry of Jesus Christ.”

“I believe it [intervention] can be an opportunity for them [youth] to discover their talents and gifts from God.”

“There has been a spiritual growth in our youth. With the youth and adults working together the ministries will develop in a more excellent manner.

“It's helped me understand leadership from a different perspective. It has given me a greater desire to serve with a greater passion. It is my conviction that the best way to create new leaders/active members of our congregation is by giving them the opportunity to learn side by side to [sic] others who have done such leadership/activity.

“This will all work if we stop thinking that only through titles can anyone exercise a service at church.”

“This intervention helped me see that there's really a ministry out there for everyone and having accomplished our first health fair through the help of my mentor has really given me the confidence to expand the ministry the Lord has for me.”

TRANSFORMATIONAL:

“Through the intervention I was able to work alongside the Christian Education Department and bring in my ideas in hopes of improving what we currently have.”

“I decided to take part in the welcoming committee at church and the upcoming health fair. I feel encouraged to serve others and maybe even start some projects of my own in the future.”

“The project allowed the mentor to use previous experiences to develop a community outreach program. This community outreach allowed the mentee to

develop her leadership style and strength.”

“The youth and adults were able to work together in new and established ministries. The youth were allowed to initiate new ministries. New leaders were discovered. Cultural barriers were dismantled in teaching our youth that we are all equal; removing the limitations that they had.”

“With the experience of the adults and the innovative ideas of the youth...a new level of excellence in service for God’s honor and glory will be reached.”

“My expectation was for cultural and age barriers to be broken. I feel this intervention has begun to do exactly that. The youth have been given so many opportunities to create and develop new ministries. Likewise women have been used to teach and lead prayer. The older generations have also been given new ministry of developing the youth.”

“I noticed that after the program the youth had begun to work on a social assistance project...I believe that the youth have been ready to form part of the church’s strength, they only needed a small push and more confidence in the abilities found within them.”

“Prior to starting this intervention I debated with myself about giving up certain ministries that I felt a calling upon. Through this intervention I was able to gain confidence not only in myself, but in my faith that God truly has a calling upon my life.”

“This intervention had a positive effect on our church. Throughout this program cultural and legalistic foundations were shaken and barriers were broken, doors that at one point were closed for women and young people were now opened. There is still some fear and uncertainty to walk through those doors due to culture but this program will pave the way for change.”

APPENDIX F
ATTENDANCE CHART

	Participants	Difference	Participation
Week 1	22	0	100 %
Week 2	18	 -4	81%
Week 3	15	 -6	68 %
Week 4	13	 -9	59 %
Week 5	12	 -10	54 %
Week 6	16	 -6	72 %