Leading the Church Through Crisis Including the Minister's Sudden Departure

Timothy James Pratt

A dissertation submitted to Auckland University of Technology in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business

2011

Faculty of Business and Law

Primary Supervisor: Dr. Roy Smollan

Table of Contents

Table of Figures

Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgments), nor material to which a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Timothy Pratt

Signed: _____

Acknowledgements

I have benefited from the input, support and guidance of many in the process of completing this piece of research.

My sincere thanks and appreciation is firstly expressed to the participants who gave freely of their time for the collection of data associated with this research. In particular, their commitment to temporarily enter challenging and emotionally charged environments in order to help church congregations unravel conflict and dysfunction, which had emerged is acknowledged. Parallel with this, I recognise the commitment of the parishioners who chose not to run from tensions within their churches, but rather opted to commit to the process of owning the hurts of their communities, so that reconciliation, wholeness and health might emerge.

My appreciation is also expressed to AUT who taught me the basics of management through their MBA programme and then provided a full academic scholarship that paid for my learning throughout the M. Bus. This work has required ethical approval by AUTEC, which was sought under the application number of 11/35. Following their guidance, this was obtained on the 22nd March 2011. AUT also offered free counselling services (if required) to all participants through its health, counselling and wellbeing centre. Lastly they provided my supervisor, Dr. Roy Smollan, who laboured with me as I struggled to research, analyse and write as a social scientist. His enduring patience and perseverance was of great value.

Alyssa Eastwood transcribed each interview with professionalism, speed and accuracy. She returned the text of each script within days of the recording having been emailed to her.

The process of undertaking the research and its write-up would not have been possible without family support who functioned all too well with an absentee father.

Lastly, thanks are expressed to God who constantly calls His creation to wholeness and harmony, yet despite human frailty, continues to reveal his grace and forgiveness.

Abstract

Transitional ministry is where a minister temporarily enters a church that is experiencing instability following but not necessarily caused by the unexpected departure of the previous pastor. This study has attempted to explore the experience within the context of a Christian denomination that has a Congregationalist polity. Empirical research of this phenomenon is extremely limited, therefore elements of grounded theory have been utilised to understand the situation transitional ministers entered, the goals of their ministry, the approaches to leadership they brought to the role, and the processes they adopted to progress the church.

Six transitional ministers were interviewed to gain rich, relevant data. Through the iterative processes of grounded theory, concepts emerged through open, axial and selective coding, which allowed for the development of theory from the substantiated contexts of the participants. This resulted in the generation of theoretical propositions, along with a model that seeks to explain the phenomenon.

Data analysis indicated that transitional ministry environments are preceded by conflict, organizational dysfunction and/or a loss of direction, which leads to financial and numeric decline of the congregation, such that it threatens the future viability of the church. This results in denominational staff being asked to intervene, which in turn leads to the appointment of the transitional minister.

The core category that emerged through the research is that transitional ministry is concerned with the restoration of health to the congregation. To achieve this, a philosophy of pastoral leadership including instilling hope, listening, learning, building trust, serving, engaging, envisioning, taking decisions, teaching and communicating are identified as being important.

Due to the nature of the congregational crisis, five different processes are then identified to assist transitional ministers achieve their objective. (1) They enter their churches by actively affirming their parishioners and offering hope for the

future of the church. (2) They establish structures that ensure the church is operational. (3) They identify and resolve underlying conflict, and/or dysfunction. (4) Having sought to facilitate healing within the congregation, they move to working with the church to envision its future. (5) They establish a Call Committee that recruits and nominates to the congregation the name of its next settled pastor.

Findings of this study were then compared with literature and research that focussed on leadership, organizational development, and ecclesiastical polity.

While this exploratory study is confined to the context of transition in a dynamic environment within the autonomous church, the model and propositions it has generated may offer some small measure of insight for religious practitioners of change management. At the same time, it may provide a basis for future empirical research in the specific area of transitional ministry but also the leadership of change within the wider social sector.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Church as Part of the Social Sector

The non-profit organization comes by a variety of names. It is often referred to as the voluntary, charitable, third sector (Herman & Heimovics, 1991), or social sector (Collins, 2005). According to Rudney (1987) organizations within the sector's boundaries include philanthropic (health, education, religion, social service and culture), mutual benefit (social clubs or professional associations) and advocacy groups that exist to lobby and exert influence. Collectively they range from community groups with no assets to multibillion-dollar organizations such as universities and hospitals with thousands of employees.

Characteristics common across the sector are that they typically have a constitution, are self-governed, predominantly use voluntary labour and have a mission other than maximizing profit for shareholders (Salamon, 1994). "The financial tail must not be allowed to wag the non-profit dog" (McFarlan, 1999, p. 5), as this may lead to foreclosure of capital gifts and reduce staff morale. It is the mission, cause or calling that is supreme. Possession of a compelling vision is probably of greater importance to social sector personnel than their for-profit colleagues, who may only focus on vision during times of crisis (Dimaggio, 1988). Furthermore their objective is also often more ambiguous and diverse than in the commercial sector (Peterson & Van Fleet, 2008). This is due to the different agendas of a variety of stakeholders (Drucker, 1990). Due to this, Lewis and Seibold (1998) developed generalized strategic models to assist in generating a shared sense of ownership for the organization's cause. They highlight issues related to authority, power and decision-making and promote a style of governance by participative democracy.

Despite fluctuations in economic and/or social support for their different causes, the sector has steadily grown since 1949. Indeed, by 1998 it represented 20% of the US domestic economy (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 1998). However, given its size and contribution to society, the level of managerial research into non-profits is insufficient (Kearns & Scarpino, 1996) in that it lags well behind public and commercial domains (Hall & Banting, 2000). Specifically Santora and Sarros (2001) observe that little research has been conducted on executive

leadership within the sector. However, McFarlan (1999) observes that the social sector leader has extraordinary freedom to set and execute strategy. This may explain Rothwell's (2001) assertion that an ill-chosen leader produces increased follower turnover, lowers employee morale and threatens financial viability. Furthermore only 14% of social sector executive leaders move to a second managerial role within the sector (Wolfred, Allison, & Masaoka, 1999). Noting a gap in literature to explain the reasons for this Tierney (2006), referred to the phenomenon as the non-profit leadership deficit.

While Rudney (1987) places religious organizations including churches within the social sector, it is important to distinguish between the differing forms of church polity when identifying shared character traits with those of the wider sector. In discussing ecclesiastical governance, Gray and Tucker (1996) note a sharp contrast between Congregationalist structures that consist of localised, autonomous decision making to those of Presbyterian communities where authority is divested to overseeing regional councils. A third structure they identify is the Episcopalian system which is considerably more hierarchical in that authority is derived through Bishops claiming to stand in an unbroken line, directly back to Christ. Throughout history, the Bishop as overseer has traditionally held two roles, the sacramental (ordaining, confirming and consecrating) and the political role of governance. As such, they govern the church and delegate authority downward through their clergy (Gray & Tucker, 1996).

Due to the above, at the local parish level, the autonomous, Congregationalist church is more likely to share common characteristics with the wider social sector, rather than churches with more centralised structures. This is because churches with Congregationalist structures are

> close to pure democracy in action …they vote on whether to accept new members… hire and fire the minister… [and] approve the budget…All matters of policy are decided by the congregation…the congregation govern the life of the church. (Gray & Tucker, 1996, p. 2)

This current research therefore seeks to stimulate further social sector research in the area of leadership and uses the local, autonomous, Congregationalist church as its context.

The Crisis of Leader Departure

Writing on reasons behind the departure of social sector leaders, Santora and Sarros (2001) noted three causes including serious misconduct, mortality and voluntary retirement/resignation. In the context of the church Hoge and Wenger (2005) identified seven reasons for ministerial departure including caring for family, entering another kind of ministry, sexual misconduct, burn-out, divorce, conflict with their church and conflict with their denominational hierarchy. Due to the exaggerated levels of authority afforded these leaders, as noted above by McFarlan (1999), their departure and replacement often imposes excessive disruption or crisis on organizational equilibrium. Without an executive, it is as if the organization becomes without leader (Chait, Holland, & Taylor, 1996) or rudder. It therefore quickly loses direction and momentum as the change of leadership is imposed on it.

Tushman, Newman and Romanell (1986) explained change as an incremental process of adaptation. However, for Gould (1978) the phenomenon of transition was more accurately described as an iteration of intense volatility, followed by a sustained period of relative harmony. It is the latter understanding that has meaning in the context of leader departure within the social sector. As a natural historian, Gould observed changes such as mass extinction, which led to a new beginning, as the organism reverts to its normative state of balance or status quo. Gersick (1991) applied this phenomenon of revolutionary change not only in scientific, but also in individual and corporate environments referring to it as punctuated equilibrium.

Early research exploring the impact of change on individuals was conducted by Kubler-Ross (1969) who identified five distinct, progressive phases as her participants negotiated their experience of dying. These included anger, denial, bargaining and depression, which precipitated an ultimate acceptance of the situation. A colleague later noted two regressive periods during the denial and depressive stages of grief (Imara, 1975). Similarly but in an entirely different

context, while studying the experience of Peace Corp volunteers Menninger (1975) observed the same phenomena and predicted the model had validity beyond the substantive context of his research. Like that of Gersick (1991), many studies have since confirmed that the response of an individual to change has similarities to the process encountered by nature and the collective or organization. Therefore, Grant (1996, p 6) explicitly states Kubler-Ross's work on "death and dying has produced generalized models of transitions such as organizational change".

Building on this assertion, Fisher (1999) developed the transition curve and advocated its relevance within both individual and corporate contexts. Putting to one side the potential of sustained denial or resistance, once a crisis has occurred, he argued that the focus of attention must turn to the necessary steps required in order to restore equilibrium. Taking a different path, Benefiel (2005) compares the organization in transition to the spiritual pilgrimage of those seeking enlightenment. She identifies five stages including the awakening, transition, recovery, dark night and dawn. It is only by going through the experience of the dark night (which could be seen to equate with the second regressive stage of depression in the grief process as identified by Imara (1975), that the organization is 'called' and able to move to a higher purpose, or towards growth and maturity. In the context of the current research, the experience of congregational crisis, including the departure of the minister has parallels with the dark night. Growth is understood to be achieved by overcoming the setback and is marked by the appointment of a new minister. This raises the challenge of who will lead this journey of transition.

Managing Processes After the Leader has Departed

In securing a substitute CEO/leader, Rothwell (2001) makes the distinction between simply finding a replacement and succession planning. Succession planning is the intentional and systematic process to provide continuity of leadership and is common in the commercial sector. However, he argues that the normal method of leader substitution in the social sector is that of replacement. This is especially so where there is an immediate and/or unplanned loss of the incumbent leader.

Following on from the work of McFarlan (1999), which acknowledges the extraordinary responsibilities and authority granted to the social sector executive, Santora and Sarros (2001) explain that in reaction to their departure, a sense of urgency prevails. The leadership gap must be filled and with haste, in order to restore organizational harmony. They posit that this leads to the mission of the organization being usurped by the immediate demand of finding a substitute leader.

Gilmore (1995) however, notes a high number of executive leaders who when appointed under urgency, leave within the first year. Therefore, Charan (2000) advises a board to move with caution in its re-appointment process. When considering the small to medium sized social sector organization, Allison (2003), goes on to observe that there are a number of obstacles, which can complicate the leader transition process. These include underestimating the risks of bad hire, board level ineffectiveness due to a lack of funds, a lack of appropriate management skills, restrictions on volunteers' time and the board focusing on the problem, rather than the opportunities it presents. Due to this, he argues that prior to reappointment there is merit in taking up to a year to assess the ongoing relevance of the current direction, operational infrastructure, relationships with stakeholders and contribution of board members, staff and volunteers.

Such an approach appears to contradict the succession planning models of the corporate sector, which seek to mitigate future uncertainty that might de-stabilise the process of maximising profits. Rather, Allison (2003) acknowledges the distinctive characteristics of the social sector, specifically their emphasis on mission, communication and empowerment of all stakeholders. He suggests that during the regressive stage of the crisis, the organization should voluntarily choose to undergo a period of absence from executive leadership. While acknowledging such an approach is counterintuitive for many organizations that rely on their leader as what Carlyle & Fredrick (1888) termed the great man, he suggests that either the volunteer board collectively rise to the occasion, or that they appoint an external interim leader to guide them through the reframing process.

The Interim Ministry Network (Interim Ministry Network, 2011) comprises a consortium of church leaders in the US, many of whom are Episcopalian. They consult with denominational staff or congregations and train ministers, who provide the sort of interim leadership that Alison (2003) advocates. The Interim Ministry Network (IMN) names this role Intentional Transitional Ministry (ITM). In its Training Manual (Interim Ministry Network, 1999) the association advocates that the role is of specific value for churches that find themselves in a number of differing contexts. These include situations where there has been: (1) the death or extended leave of a minister due to ill health, (2) a minister asked to leave due to professional misconduct, (3) a minister who has held the post for more than ten or less than three years, (4) evidence of significant decline in attendance numbers in attendance or congregational giving prior to the minister's departure, (5) significant conflict associated with a minister's departure, (6) evidence of the church moving in a new direction.

A leader within the IMN, Kydel (2009) sharpens the context of ITM by defining three different levels. His first context is similar to that of a supply minister or professional locum. He states, "the cleric is required to provide liturgical and pastoral support" however, "Fiscal, physical administration, programme development and implementation, mission (or outreach) and the like, must rest firmly on the shoulders of the congregation" (p. 23). His second level concerns a congregation that is in ministerial transition along with other significant changes in the life of the congregation, but where there is no evidence of significant trauma or conflict. His third scenario covers situations where there is evidence of "abuse, misconduct, deep conflict within the congregation, or following a very short (abandonment) or very long (over ten years) pastorate".

Research Objectives

This paper seeks to employ aspects of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to explore what is largely the un-investigated phenomenon of ITM, or Transitional Ministry (TM) as participants in the current research refer to it. Specifically, it is focussed on understanding what philosophical approaches to leadership Transitional Ministers (TMRs) adopted and what processes they employed to fulfil their task.

Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 4) explain, "Grounded theory is a research methodology in which theory emerges from, and is grounded in, the data". Therefore, like Reichard (2006), no literature has been used to frame the specific areas under investigation in the study. Rather the objective was to generate a model of TM along with a series of theoretical propositions concerning leadership and the process of TM as discovered within the substantive context of the current research, which was built around four objectives. It sought to:

- Describe the respective contexts that led to the engagement of a TMR.
- Define the goals of TM as understood by the TMRs.
- Articulate the approaches to leadership used by the TMRs.
- Articulate the processes employed by the TMRs.

This research is limited in that it is confined to the context of the current study. It is therefore hoped that it might stimulate further investigation into TM within wider ecclesiastical settings, and the testing and generalisation of emergent theories concerning leadership amidst change, with other populations such as the wider social sector.

Chapter 2: Research Design

Introduction

This chapter begins by briefly exploring the methodological differences between a positivist and an interpretivist epistemology. It emphasises the subjective approach of the interpretative researcher with a constructivist ontology that typically leads to inductive, qualitative research design. Due to the exhaustive theorisation on leadership that is mostly of a positivist persuasion, and as there is little empirical research undertaken on TM to date, the author outlines the qualitative approach his research has taken.

Participant criteria, sample selection and ethical considerations are next discussed. The researcher then progresses to outline his method of research through interviewing six participants. Following this, the twelve recursive stages of grounded theory are reviewed and the researcher explains how he sought to employ differing components of the theory to his analysis. The chapter concludes by considering issues related to the credibility of findings.

Methodological Position

Von Wright (1971) highlights what continues to be a clash between differing approaches to research. The positivist emphasises the epistemology most often associated with natural science. Their ontological paradigm is that reality is external and objective. With this approach, the researcher in a progressive and linear manner collects data to deductively explore what has occurred through the testing of hypotheses (Pugh, 1983). Such a method contrasts with the epistemology of the interpretivist. The latter is concerned with inducing the 'how' and 'why' of behaviour in order to generate theoretical constructs. The process is subjective and iterative, rather than objective or linear. Therefore the ontological perspective is hermeneutical (Grondin, 1994), in that it focuses on interpreting people in their social context, particularly in terms of what they write and say.

Weber (1947), a forefather of interpretivism described 'Verstehen' to be "an interpretative science which explores causes and effects of social action". Similarly, Schultz (1962), commenting on phenomenology, talks of exploring people's actions based on their social world and from their perspective. Typically, this leads to an ontological position that is constructivist. Here society is not viewed as an objective, external reality that is constant and the determinant of outcomes. Rather Becker (1982) sees culture as something that is dynamic and in a continuous state of evolution. It "is constituted in one way or another as people talk it, write it and argue it" (Potter, 1996, p. 98). In other words, meaning does not exist outside of the frames we build for it.

Generally, such philosophical perspectives tend to be associated with an inductive approach to research. As opposed to testing hypotheses, qualitative analysis has the objective of allowing concepts to emerge through a recursive process of collecting and comparing data. From this, the researcher develops understanding that is focused towards the generation of theory.

An interpretivist approach typically leads to inductive research methods and a qualitative design that is reliant on the importance of words and the meanings given them by respondents. This is in contrast to the positivist's approach. S/he will typically concentrate on quantifying and analysing generalised statistical data in a funnelling fashion that systematically moves towards that which is specific.

Some researchers, such as Locke (2001), suggest a qualitative approach is the preferred method for research of an organizational nature. His view is that it captures complexity, is linked to practice, facilitates the building of theory and relates to other well-developed fields. While believing research in the area of organizational leadership is mature, Parry (1998), notes deficiencies and similarly argues these can be overcome through an interpretivist/inductive approach. However, when reviewing ten years of articles in *Leadership Quarterly*, Lowe and Gardiner (2000), discovered only 39% of researchers utilised a qualitative method. Furthermore, only 8% employed Glaser and Strauss's grounded theory (1967), which Parry (1998) specifically endorses due to its process of social influence. He maintains that through a grounded method,

it is possible to unearth unidentified basic social processes. This is in accord with the views of Glaser (1998), who asserts that his research method uncovers ideas participants may well not understand or even be aware of.

Due to the above assertions, along with the scarcity of historical research available in the area of TM, a qualitative and grounded methodology has been employed in the current research. Related to this approach are an interpretivist epistemology and an ontological paradigm, which is inductive.

The Sample and Ethical Considerations

In line with qualitative researchers such as Marshall (1984), sample choice was from convenience. The researcher had worked in the social sector and specifically in the Christian church arena for the last 25 years. He therefore had ready access to officials of the chosen denomination. This assisted greatly with availability of participants and effectively bypassed concerns associated with sourcing respondents (Healey & Rawlinson 1993).

The denomination that is the context of this current study comprises 40,000 worshippers in around 250 congregations throughout New Zealand. It has a Congregationalist polity meaning that local congregations are self-governed (Toon, Cowan, & Patterson, 2004). It had contacted the IMN and introduced a programme of TM in 2006. At the time of data collection, 12 congregations had utilised the services of a TMR who had conducted a TM, meaning they had temporarily entered a church congregation to lead it through some form of crisis, including the unexpected loss of their previous minister in less than desirable circumstances.

All 12 TMRs were invited to participate in the research. However acknowledging time constraints, while also seeking to increase the anonymity of respondents, the decision was taken to undertake a multiple case study design involving no more than six participants. Therefore, the first six to favourably respond to a formal invitation were selected. This provided, albeit limited, a degree of randomness in the sample. Apart from the concern of one participant over

matters related to anonymity, none of the other invitees expressed hesitation to be involved. Rather they were favourably disposed towards offering their services, with some specifically noting their interest was due to TM being a relatively novel experience within the denomination. They were therefore eager to contribute to a greater understanding of the phenomenon.

All respondents were male and of European descent. While one respondent was in his late forties and had recently started his vocation as a minister, the remaining five were senior ministers, aged in their sixties and had spent most of their working lives in pastoral ministry. While three of the five retiring ministers had spent their entire career in the church, the other two had held previous positions in a managerial capacity involving people. Three of the participants stated that most of their pastoral work had been in a context of significant turbulence or dysfunction. Lastly, three participants had completed the training course established by the IMN, and a fourth was aware of its contents.

Due to sensitivities often associated with the reasons behind a minister's unexpected departure, it was considered important that matters relating to confidentiality and anonymity were taken seriously. This raised a number of ethical issues. Diener (1978) conveniently simplified the ethical debate in research by classifying the issues into four categories. These include the potential for harm to participants, a need for informed consent, concerns surrounding privacy and the potential for deception.

With respect to anonymity and as noted above, one minister initially declined the opportunity to participate in the research due to the reality that it was not entirely possible to rule out that either the situation or the personnel involved could be identified. Accepting this reality, all reasonable efforts to ensure anonymity have been taken. This includes the use of pseudonyms, codification of data and suppressing the name of the denomination. In addition to this, interviewing half of the total number of TMRs within the denomination further reduced the risk of identification. Thus where individuals are referred to throughout the balance of the paper, the titles TMR 1 through to TMR 6 have been employed as pseudonyms to distinguish the different participants.

During the interviews, there were a number of occasions where participants freely offered specific names or situations. On other occasions, it was clear that the TMR was uneasy in revealing specific details, or felt that he might have said too much about the person or situation. In such circumstances, names have been suppressed and/or no pressure was applied to extract further information. Additionally the researcher believed it important to take the precautionary step of forwarding a copy of his own interview transcript to each participant before its analysis. In this way, it was assured they were comfortable with what had been divulged.

Due to the turbulent situations surrounding TM, the impact on participants was also considered. There was potential that in some instances, the recalling of the TM experience might have led to emotional, psychological, spiritual and/or professional discomfort beyond that which the participant would normally experience. Due to this possibility, before consenting to participate, each invitee was made aware of free counselling services available to them through the university. This sought to ensure that the participant in a supportive environment, could process any unresolved issues that may have surfaced, either during or after the interview.

Given the small number of the total sample pool, an additional matter for consideration was to mitigate any potential negative impact on the participant because of denominational executives having access to the research. It was acknowledged that denominational personnel, who were often involved in the process of placing ministers, could easily identify specific settings within the research and draw conclusions concerning the minister that might adversely prejudice the TMR's reputation (Hoge & Wenger, 2005). However, it was concluded that there was no way to overcome the potential of this scenario arising. Participants were therefore informed through the information sheet, that the denominational staff would have access to research findings. It is noted however, that this had no impact on the willingness of any person within the sample to participate.

The Method

The process of gathering data was through semi-structured face-to-face interviews lasting an average duration of 75 minutes. This allowed sufficient time to enable the researcher to gather rich, relevant data from each of the participants. The data was digitally recorded and later transcribed so it could be used to generate theory.

Whilst some argue that qualitative interviews should be unstructured so as to extract the richest data (Mason, 1994), the researcher applied a middle ground between the unstructured and semi-structured approaches (Ruben & Ruben, 1995). Due to the fact that the researcher had served as a church minister, had a professional acquaintance with some of the respondents and had held similar roles in the social sector, the interviews were relaxed and conversational (Burgess, 1984). They included inviting response to open questions, allowing for relevant digression, asking direct and indirect questions, allowing for silences or "pregnant pauses" and soliciting further interpretation of responses (Kvale, 1996).

An interview guide was created (appendix 1) However, increasingly with each interview, as the researcher gained in understanding of the key issues relating to TM, its utility became general (Milkman, 1997), being used only to facilitate interaction around specific themes. The intention was not that the guide's contents be exhaustively covered; instead, it served to ensure deviations did not sabotage the richness of the data collection process. The semi-structured method of interviewing around specific topics also ensured the possibility of high-level cross-case comparability (Whyte, 1953).

As previously mentioned the researcher had previous experience within the context under study in that he had acted in a similar capacity to that of his participants. This presents a challenge first identified by Durkheim, who is cited by Bryman and Bell (2007) arguing that researchers values and subjective bias must not impinge on their work. Bryman and Bell continue by discounting this notion; instead they acknowledge a growing recognition by researchers that such a stance is not feasible, and in fact may be counterproductive to the overall quality and value of research. Others, such as those within the feminist

Leading the Church Through Crisis Including the Minister's Sudden Departure

movement go further on this issue. They suggest that only researchers with a definitive value base in support of their subject matter hold claim to work within the field (Mies, 1993). Such a stance defends the work of Ram (1994), whose subjects were members of his own family. It is through having personally experienced some of the challenges and shortcomings in the social sector, the church environment and change management with non-profits, that there exists an interest in the topic by the current researcher.

Analysis Employing Elements of Grounded Theory

Following transcription, data was analysed through an approach related to grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This form of inductive analysis begins with a 'bottom up' approach that argues theory should be 'grounded' or allowed to emerge through the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In other words, data is supreme and the researcher should move from that which is specific, towards that which is general. This affirms the perspective of those who take an inductive approach believing that theoretical development is contingent on situation.

Such an position could result in the view being taken that bringing any prior knowledge of the subject matter has potential to compromise the quality of research findings, through contamination of external subjectivities (Sousa & Hendricks, 2006). It is argued however, that it is almost impossible to come to a subject with no prior knowledge or experience (Kelle, 1995). Glaser and Strauss (1967) initially asserted that prior knowledge can and in fact should be utilised to assist in the process of "seeing" data that is important. They affirmed that the researcher's prior knowledge should be actively employed to assist in the development of appropriate and relevant categories. Later however, their respective understandings on this matter differed, when Glaser (1978) emphasized the inductive nature of the process and a need for codification of data to be exclusively within the contexts of participants' social constructs. Strauss and Corbin (1998) countered this, stressing the value of integration of emergent codification with wider external theoretical constructs. The understanding of the latter sees merit in theoretical sensitivity or the value of the researcher's personal ability to have relevant theoretical insights.

Grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) is a recursive and evolutionary process, circulating from specific data collection, labelling, coding and categorizing, all of which lead to the development of concepts and ultimately the formation of substantive and then generalised theory. It is only through constant comparison and refining of data with emergent concepts that theory is able to develop (Creswell, 1998). The level of conceptual abstraction becomes more marked through each iteration of the process (Glaser, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Due to the complexity of the method, Klenke (2008) advises it is not for the novice researcher or the social scientist constrained by time. Given that this study was in partial completion of a master's degree, the researcher does not claim to have comprehensively applied the method of grounded theory approach. Rather he has sought to utilise some of the overarching principles contained within the methodology. Regardless, Bryman and Bell (2007, p. 589) outline 12 iterative stages of the theory including:

- Framing of a general research question
- Theoretical sampling
- Data collection
- Coding which leads to concepts
- Constant comparison leading to the development of categories
- Attaining theoretical saturation
- Exploring relationship between categories leading to development of a hypothesis
- Theoretical sampling
- Collection of data
- Saturation of categories
- Testing of hypotheses and development of substantive theory
- Data collection and analysis in other settings to formulate formal or generalised theory

Despite the suggestion indicated by bullet points, this process is not linear but is cyclical. Due to this, the current study involved collecting data and then analysing its contents in an iterative fashion that began during and then shortly after the first interview, even before the first transcript was completed. During

and immediately following the interview, the researcher took field notes as personal reminders. The transcript was received shortly after the interview and its early analysis assisted with noting key physical aspects of the dialogue including intonations, emotions and gestures that emphasized what the interviewee appeared to be conveying.

Central to grounded theory is open coding of data as it is collected. Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 61) define this process as "breaking down, examining, comparing conceptualising and categorising data" to form a consistent account of the phenomenon. This involves labelling data and developing concept cards to explain or cluster comments in such a way that participants could identify with them. Importance is rated on the frequency with which a code or concept is raised. These codes comprise the building blocks of the method.

Analysis of the first transcript involved breaking down statements or phrases line-by-line and assigning labels to each idea. This was achieved by extracting key words/phrases or by using a different word that encapsulated what the researcher understood the respondent was seeking to communicate. For example, in line #798 of the transcript, TMR 2 said he saw his role "to be a spearhead." The researcher wrote in his field notes that the participant had gestured a pointing direction with his hands. This physical and verbal expression was labelled as 'visionary leader'.

Rather than using qualitative research software, the analysis was undertaken manually through use of a spreadsheet. Each label was numbered and associated with the line in the text where the original sentence was located in the transcript.

The process inevitably became more complex as the volume of data increased. A second reading of the first transcript identified early patterns or duplications of words, phrases or ideas that emerged through what the interviewee had said. These formed the early basis of developing concepts, which were noted as a memo (or comment) in the spreadsheet. Glaser (1998) referred to memos as the core stage in grounded theory methodology. It is from these that the researcher is able to track the development of their thinking from label to

concept and from category to theorisation. Three types of memos are noted, coding memos, which assist with the open coding or development of concepts. Theoretical memos relate to axial and selective coding (discussed below) and operational memos, which serve to assist in organising and tracking research progress.

As successive transcripts added to the body of data being gathered, the early hunches of the researcher were investigated with a greater depth of analysis through the comparison of the existing data with that which was fresh. This assisted in confirming, refuting or adapting the emerging concepts to verify they were credible. Through constant reflection on the accumulated contents of memos and codes, consistency of concepts began to emerge.

As more data was added, the researcher made memos that identified possible clusters of concepts into groups. This categorisation process developed a higher level of theoretical abstraction. It transpired that an excessive number of categories emerged and thus related groups were fused. This led to further clarification of what participants were communicating and led to a need for further refining of category titles and even altering the concepts that populated a category. The researcher also found it imperative to utilise his own theoretical sensitivity (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) in order to make sense of what was emerging in the data. For example it was not until data relating to leadership was clustered around the themes found in literature such as transactional (Burns, 1978), transformational (Bass, 1985), servant (Greenleaf, 1977), or charismatic (Weber, 1947), that patterns began to emerge.

The identification of relationships between categories is referred to as axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), which leads to the creation of a primary or core category (Locke, 2001). As these were developed, they were progressively cross-related or woven and integrated to gain a fuller understanding of the phenomena as a whole (Glaser, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). For example, the researcher progressively became aware that there was a clear relationship between the specific leadership style of the TMR, the goals they had for the period they were with a church and the processes they adopted. Through analysis of the interrelationship between these, it became apparent that the

core category lying behind the phenomenon of TM was the restoration of health to the congregation.

The third component of coding is the process of selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998). This is where significant categories and their relationship to each other are identified to generate theory. It is through this process that the various hypotheses contained in the findings of the current study were generated.

Comprehension of the phenomena related to this research was aided not just through the process of data collection with its analysis, but also specifically through the iterative process of testing emerging concepts that described the phenomenon in subsequent interviews. This sometimes resulted in discovering a need to reshape questions or in some instances the approach that was taken during the interview. While Kvale (1996), allows for pregnant pauses and soliciting further interpretation of response, the researcher also actively utilised reflective listening (Rogers, 1951). This was achieved through the researcher stating different words that sought to convey the same meaning as had been offered by the participant. As more interviews were conducted, the words of reflection became those of the emergent conceptualisations from previous data collection. For example in response to a question on the purpose of TM, TMR 5 responded with:

> Well you're only going to be there for a period of time, and I think that's really important you know, that that time needs to be stipulated at the beginning, and it needs to be adhered to. Only change it a little bit, if need be, so that's one side of it. The other side of it was that they knew I was coming for a reason, to help them get somewhere.

The researcher then mirrored the emergent concept by stating, "So … with a transitional ministry, you are there to do something intentionally?" The response to this was, "Yeah, yeah, you hit the nail on the head."

Grounded theory asserts that a recursive process between existing and new data is repeated until saturation is attained. This is the point at which no value is able to be added as a result of further data being included in the analysis (Parry, 1998). It is through attaining saturation that the true integrity or credibility

of grounded theory is achieved (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). By selecting a finite number of six participants, the researcher was accepting saturation might not be possible, however, in most cases this was attained by around the third interview. In subsequent interviews, the researcher utilised reflective feedback to verify his comprehension and the accuracy of his conceptualisations and categorisations of the data. This was then utilised to generate theory that related to the context of his research field.

Credibility of Research

Whilst some researchers seek to impose the quantitative research, quality control assessments of reliability, validity and generalisability on their qualitative counterparts (Mason, 1996), Denzin (1970), sought to transmute the method of triangulation (Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, & Sechrest, 1966), and superimpose it on qualitative research. Denzin stressed value in having multiple reference points such as having a number of observers, theoretical perspectives, sources of data or methodologies employed in qualitative research. This led to mixed or multiple methods of research, which are increasingly being adopted by researchers such as Lisak (2006), where quantitative and qualitative methods are utilised in tandem to verify findings.

For the interpretivist however, no single account of reality is feasible. Due to this, Lincoln and Guba (1985) argued qualitative research must be judged on entirely different criteria to quantitative research. These include the research being credible, transferable, dependable and confirmable. Sousa and Hendricks (2006) are less demanding on the generalisability of findings. They place importance on research that is trustworthy; meaning that it fits, is workable, relevant and modifiable. By fit, they mean the appropriateness of the concept as representative of the phenomenon. Workability relates to consistency of outcome. Relevance ensures the research captures what was important for participants and modifiability is the ability for the theory to evolve as new data is compared against old. In accord with a grounded approach, Mitchell (1983, p. 207) simply referred to the "cogency of theoretical reasoning" as the basis for generalization in qualitative research. Here the emphasis is not on formalising

theory to population, as is the case with statistical analysis or quantitative research.

Initially the researcher anticipated ensuring his research was credible by not only attaining theoretical saturation, but also by exploring Rousseau's (1985) cross-level data analysis. The cross-level data was to have been sourced through conducting a series of focus groups (Merton, Fiske, & Kendall, 1956) of randomly selected stakeholders in each of the congregations. The advantage of focus groups would be that they would have provided a forum where respondents could collectively work through the issues. This was seen as appropriate in a social sector environment, such as a local church, where participation and a shared sense of ownership are vital (Lewis & Seibold, 1998). Furthermore, it would allow participants to challenge each other and adapt their viewpoint as the dialogue ensued, before reaching a well-considered, collective understanding of the experience. To avoid the danger of misattributing codes at an organizational or individual level in the analysis, the interviews with the TMRs were to have been fully analysed before embarking on hosting the focus groups. Following this, the two approaches would have been synthesised. As previously noted however, while Klenke (2008), cautions the novice against taking a grounded approach, the researcher's supervisor added the caution of seeking to integrate it with some form of cross analysis. Therefore, accepting advice for this study, cross-level data analysis was abandoned.

While saturation was achieved in most parts of this study, in some areas, such as defining the processes adopted by the TMRs, this was not possible. This is due to the plethora of organizational development tools that are available for practitioners (Chapman, 1998) both within and outside of the ecclesiastical context. Due to the above, the extent of credibility in the current research is limited to align with Whyte (1953), in that it allows comprehensive meaning to emerge from comparing and analysing collective accounts of the phenomenon. Silverman (1993) asserts this as a reasonable source of validity. Furthermore this is in accord with Mitchell's (1983, p. 207) "cogency of theoretical reasoning".

Lastly, contextual generalisability was well beyond the boundaries of this current piece of work in that is limited in its scope by seeking only to identify, explore and explain the phenomena of TM, and particularly its leadership and processes, for only the six TMRs who were participants of this current research. No attempt was made to formalise or generalise theory beyond its immediate, substantive context. To do so would require further investigation, firstly to attain theoretical saturation of the phenomenon in the wider context of the church, such as congregations with differing polities. The emergent hypotheses should then be further tested in the more generalised contexts of the social sector. As such, like the research of Riechard (2006), this work should be understood as a pilot study requiring further development through future research. However, it is hoped this current work will provide an initial step to investigating what is largely uncharted territory.

Chapter 3: Findings
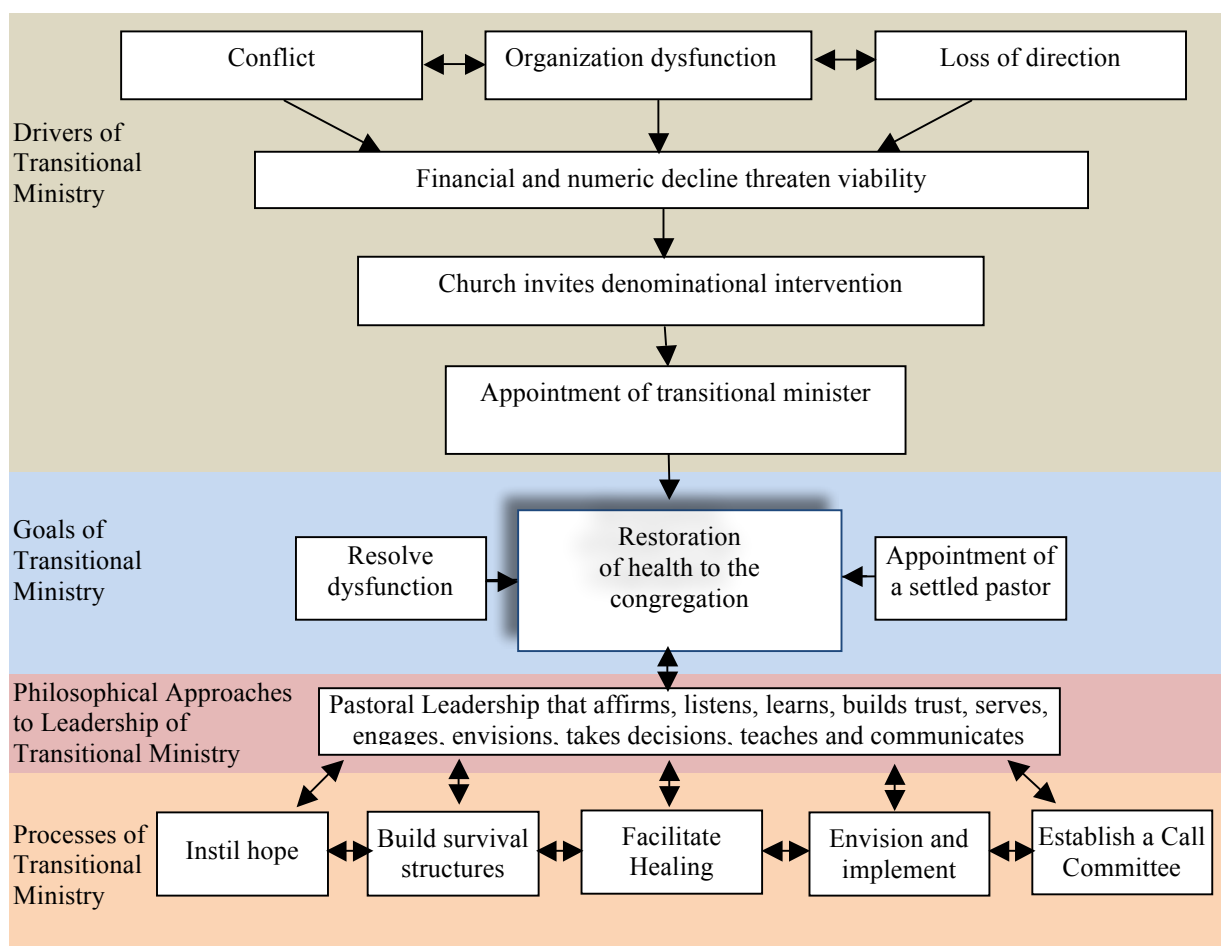
Figure 1: Model of Transitional Ministry

Introduction

Through data analysis, theory was developed inclusive of the model depicted in Figure 1, which portrays the phenomenon of TM. The model comprises four sections: firstly, it defines the drivers of TM, specifically the preface to, and the causes leading to the experience. The second area explains the goals of TM. Thirdly, it identifies the philosophical approaches to leadership adopted by the TMRs, while the last section outlines the processes of TM. This chapter utilises the reflections of participants in order to explore significant themes underlying the model and in so doing states a series of theoretical propositions related to TM.

The Drivers of Transitional Ministry

In all contexts related to this research, participants entered their pastorate either during, or shortly after a period of significant turbulence that had unsettled the equilibrium of the congregation. This instability included the departure of the previous minister, either voluntarily or by dismissal. Three factors were identified that precipitated the respective crises. As is discussed below, there was either, (1) conflict within the congregation, (2) generalised organizational dysfunction and/or (3) the church had lost a sense of purpose or direction.

1) Conflict within the congregation: The most common form of conflict consisted of congregational strife over actions taken by the previous minister. For example, TMR 5 commented that his predecessor was specifically appointed to bring change to the congregation, yet when the new minister started adapting the congregational culture, the changes and ultimately the pastor were both rejected. With time, mutual resentment escalated to the point that mediation was required. This led to the minister's resignation. TMR 1 reported that the leadership council of the church, hereafter referred to as the board, perceived their previous minister was excessively poor at administration and too liberal with expenditure. Following numerous demands for improvement that went unnoticed, unrest grew. Eventually the board intervened by reducing the minister's authority with the result that he immediately resigned. Disapproval of the behaviour of the departed pastor was identified as part of the context experienced by four participants.

A second type of conflict that was identified occurred due to divergence of opinion over theological matters. Sometimes this amounted to differences over theology, or its praxis, between congregational members and the departed minister. On other occasions, it existed between parishioners themselves. With regard to the latter, TMR 4 talked of how, based on their understanding of scripture, the board of his church had taken a decision that it was inappropriate to appoint a paid clergyman, or accept females as leaders within the church. This resulted in significant congregational unrest and administrative dysfunction due to a lack of personnel with appropriate skills to manage the church.

.

A third cause of conflict was caused by a coalition emerging within the church that was pressing for a particular principle or action that was contrary to the status-quo. One TMR referred to such a group by saying "they hijacked a members meeting" and eventually amended the constitution in a way that exclusively served the interests of their minority." Another TMR talked of a sub-group within the congregation who had "actively ambushed" their previous minister in order to have him removed.

The majority of participants expressed the view that their predecessors had become the focal point of the conflict. This eventually resulted in their leaving voluntarily, under duress, or by their being overtly dismissed. However, ministerial departure itself was not understood by respondents to be the tipping point that automatically warranted a TM. TMR 1 commented that in such situations, it was to be expected that "some would be sad while others would be glad." He continued by suggesting that a TM was only necessary if the departure of the incumbent had caused significant grief or contention, which was disruptive to the ongoing life of the congregation. For example, for most participants, the departure of the minister had led to considerable decline in the size of the congregation. Indeed TMR 5 commented that all the young families left at the same time as the departure of the minister.

By the time participants arrived in their parish, it was common for the intensity of the conflict to have abated. TMR 1 observed that denominational staff had informed him that the church was about to implode. He therefore stated that he expected to find parishioners, "fighting like cats and dogs." Instead, he discovered that the discontented had moved on, while those remaining were ready to deal with the situation.

2) *Generalised Organizational Dysfunction:* This term is used to refer to poor structures, leadership or management within the congregation. Apart from the case mentioned above where the minister resigned due to the perception of his board that he did not have sufficient administrative skills, one TMR referred to leaders in his church as "personable people with vision but [they] just didn't have any follow through." Of the church as a whole, he perceived they were under-resourced, under-educated and came from dysfunctional family units.

Two participants commented on dysfunction in the areas of church management. One explained how he discovered there were a number of matters on board minutes that arose month after month without being attended to, while the other found no minutes of meetings had been kept whatsoever.

3) Loss of Direction: The final cause of dissatisfaction leading to the engagement of a TMR was a sense of the church having lost its purpose. TMR 2 said, "the previous minister told him he just couldn't make it [the church] fly." Another lamented, "There were no leadership skills among them whatsoever." He went on to explain that the previous minister had suffered a breakdown in his lone struggle to keep the community alive. A third participant expressed concern that his church had become quite insular and had lost connection its their community.

The result of congregational conflict, dysfunction, or loss of direction was that the churches were also experiencing significant financial problems and decline in the size of the congregation. All but one participant commented that their parish incomes were well below budget. TMR 6 commented that on his entry to the role, the weekly congregational giving had reduced by $1000 a week. Similarly, attendances at services of worship were also affected. TMR 5 explained that all the young families had left the church and TMR 3 said that "it felt as if the church was decimated by the number of people who were leaving." Only one respondent did not refer to what was potentially terminally low attendance.

Due to the above respondents reported that parishioners were not happy and felt discouraged. TMR 3 found his congregation "bruised and disillusioned, at the bottom of the barrel." TMR 5 commented that the older folk were unhappy that the younger families had left. Another described the collective emotion of his church as "terribly disheartened... It seemed as if nothing was changing for good." Contrary to, or perhaps because of this, three respondents specifically observed that their congregations had got to a place of "being ready to move on." The tone of TMR 1's congregation on his arrival was "right let's get on with it then." This meant that all congregations accepted they needed help and therefore had asked denomination staff for assistance.

Respondents explained that the outcome of the consultation with denominational personnel was that it took control of the situation by offering financial support where this was required. More significantly, it also took on the role of commissioner, by installing a TMR to work through the crisis within his church. This process included the signing of a three-way agreement between the denominational executive, the church and the TMR. The agreement included clauses that empowered the denominational officials, or their representative, the TMR, to suspend the constitution, dismiss the board and if necessary recommend closure of the church. Data revealed that the majority of participants experienced some disquiet over the levels of authority they possessed. Indeed most were at pains to ensure, as TMR 1 explained, that they were not seen as the ""pawn of the denomination" but were in the role to serve as friend and confidante of the congregation.

Three participants struggled over the temporary nature of the agreement. Instinctively they wanted to settle, build rapport with the congregation and go about the task of crafting medium to long-run strategies. TMR 4 commented, "The biggest frustration is [that] you can't follow through on visions and dreams". However, TMR 2 wrestled with the transitory aspect of the agreement from day one and categorically rejected the notion that he was there for the short-run. The way he planned to restore health to the congregation was by offering it clarity of future direction through his ongoing leadership. It was for this reason that after 12 months of frustration associated with the TM, his current contract was mutually terminated and he was appointed as settled pastor.

Overall, the majority of congregations and TMRs found their relationships with denominational executives constructive. However, for a minority this was not the case. The chief area of concern was a perceived deficiency by the denominational executive in undertaking sufficient research, before drawing conclusions regarding the best way to proceed. Two participants perceived there had been a lack of objectivity by the executive, leading to a perception that he was taking sides prematurely with one of the factions within the church. This meant that they perceived the denominational staff member had inflamed the situation. In both cases, the result was a weakening of the association

between the denominational body and congregation. One TMR expressed a concern that he had wondered if the congregation might withdraw their association altogether.

Related to the above, the minority of participants perceived that denominational staff exerted excessive force, without due dialogue and negotiation with the congregation or TMR. TMR 5 explicitly referred to the denominational executive as, "having the church over a barrel." The perception of another respondent was that the executive appeared to take control and impose his agenda without an ability to be flexible, or even take the effort of persuading the church that his decisions were in its own best interests. He gave the example of denominational staff demanding that an interim board, largely comprising external appointments be established. He perceived that the result of this decision was that it caused ongoing angst, due to a lack of commitment by the appointees. Overall, he likened the transitional experience to that of a business being in liquidation, where authority and control had been effectively transferred.

Small levels of concern were expressed by other TMRs who perceived denominational staff lacked 'follow through' in carrying out various administrative tasks they had agreed to undertake. Generally however, these shortcomings were overlooked on the assumption that denominational resources were under-resourced.

Proposition 1.1: *TMRs enter pastorates either during or shortly after a period of significant turbulence that had unsettled the equilibrium of the congregation. This includes the departure of the previous minister either voluntarily or by dismissal.*

Proposition *1.2*: *The crisis is precipitated by either conflict within the congregation, generalised dysfunction and/or the church having lost a sense of purpose or direction.*

Proposition 1.3: *The crisis develops to the point that the congregation is struggling to remain viable.*

Proposition 1.4: *The crisis results in the church inviting denominational staff to intervene.*

Proposition 1.5: *Intervention by denominational staff results in a TMR being appointed through a triadic agreement between denominational staff, congregation and TMR.*

Proposition 1.6: *TMRs encounter challenges due to the brevity of the role.*

Proposition 1.7: The congregation and TMR *do not always perceive intervention by denominational staff as being helpful.*

The Goals of Transitional Ministry

A central or core category is critical to grounded theory due to its ability to unite the different categories conceived during analysis and to deliver an explanation of the phenomenon as a whole (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). During the selective coding of data, it became apparent that the core category of theory in the current research was that the purpose of TM was the restoration of health to the life of the congregation. Secondary goals included resolving the dysfunction or crisis, and/or appointing a settled pastor.

TMR 6 referred to TM as being on a different train track to normal pastoral ministry. He emphasized that it was a more narrow and specialised field of endeavour. In elaboration of this, he suggested that a precursor to TM often involved "congregational tension, which was highly disruptive to the effective heath of the community." In other words, TM exists because there is a significant problem in need of resolution. In a similar manner, TMR 1 stated that a mere resignation of a minister was not sufficient to warrant taking this approach. He thought there must also be dysfunction associated with a minister's departure.

Without exception, all respondents reported incidents that triggered the crisis. One participant referred to these as being "hugely disruptive and disappointing

to the congregation." Participants reported that the points of congregational dysfunction led to a loss of confidence by parishioners in their local worshipping community and in some cases a more generalised disillusionment in the institution of the church. Therefore, the first objective of the TMR was understood to include coming alongside a congregation during the period of distress.

For four of the six respondents, a second goal began by identifying the root of suffering within the parish. One TMR referred to this as "discovering the pressing thing that was causing so much anger and division." Participants explained the task involved understanding what or who was behind the turmoil. Concern was expressed that they constantly feared jumping to premature conclusions, without having grasped the complete nature of the situation.

Once the root of the problem was acknowledged, the second objective identified by respondents involved working with individuals, leaders and the congregation as a whole, in order to rectify the points of tension. Again, TMR 6 encapsulated this concept by referring to addressing "the irritants, the problems and pains that had plagued the community and/or the individuals within it, so that healing could come." Four of the six participants explained the goal in a similar manner. It was to bring healing which would restore confidence in the church so that they were able to walk independently, without the baggage of the past. TMR 1 candidly explained, "I'm simply trying to bring the church to a place where it can once again hear God's voice for itself."

By achieving this, it was understood that normality would be restored to the life of the church, which would then be in a position to prepare for the next settled pastor. TMR 3 compared the role to that of a doctor of medicine, who diagnoses the problem, conducts the necessary surgery and then nurtures the patient back to health and independence. Hence, the TMR is appointed to achieve a very specific purpose. In fact TMR 3 was insistent the role should be called "Intentional Transitional Minister." He explained, "The church knew I was going to change a lot of the way they did things." Respondents noted that bringing about intentional change was accepted as necessary for healing and growth to occur.

The third identified objective was for ongoing professional leadership to be restored to the congregation through the appointment of a settled minister. TMR 1 explained that his role was complete when the congregation could "walk on their own again." Respondents explained this meant they were appointed to the role for a specific period of time, which was predefined as part of the initial three-way agreement. Usually the term of TM was planned to last for around 18 months. Two participants stated that they made a habit of regularly reminding the congregation of this fact. For example, TMR 4 stated to his church on a number of occasions, "well I'm not going to be around long enough to do [whatever the particular project was] so who's going to pick it up?" It follows from this, that for the majority of TMRs, long term strategising was therefore not part of the job description. Most saw it as having potential to short-circuit the restoration of health to the community.

The exit strategy employed by participants consisted of assisting the congregation to establish a 'call committee', who were responsible to recruit, select and nominate to the membership, the name of their preferred settled pastor. The data showed there was considerable variation of involvement in this project. Some did no more than encourage the board to embark on the process; however, others were actively involved in leading the 'call committee'.

One participant rejected the task of preparing the church for its next settled pastor. He stated that from the beginning, his overt interest in the church was always to serve as its long-term minister. During the process of his being selected as settled pastor, a subgroup within the church had consulted with denominational staff due to generalised congregational disorder. The result of this was that the denominational executive intervened, believing a TM process was in the best interests of the church. This meant that if he wanted to accept the 'call' of the church, it would have to be in a transitional capacity. The TMR reported that following a turbulent period of 12 months and in conjunction with denominational staff, the transitional programme was abandoned and he became the settled pastor.

Proposition 2.1: *TM is principally concerned with restoring health to a congregation in the midst of crisis.*

Proposition 2.2: *TM involves identifying and resolving points of tension and/or dysfunction.*

Proposition 2.3: *TM is temporary. It will conclude with the appointment of a settled pastor.*

The Philosophical Approaches to Leadership of Transitional Ministry

The primary mode of leadership used by participants centred on working with people rather than on achieving tasks. Five of the six TMRs spoke extensively of a leadership style that placed having consideration of others as being critical. Only one claimed to lack a personality that was "pastoral" and that he was weak in the areas of relational skills. A number of specific behaviours characterised what the TMRs understood to be people centred leadership in a pastoral context. These included 1) affirming, 2) listening, learning, building trust and serving, 3) engaging, envisioning and decision taking, 4) teaching and communicating. These actions are explored below.

1) Affirmation: TMR 3 spoke of the importance of building up his congregation. He commented,

> I just felt that the church were pretty decimated, and they just needed hope; they just needed love, and so those first few months were really helpful for me, just to preach, just to love them. Give them some consistency; let them see the colour of my eyes, see that I wasn't coming in with a shotgun.

TMR 6 talked of the power of affirming his congregation by simply offering encouragement and showing genuine interest in their daily lives as they went about their work, hobbies, interests, family life and by nurturing them on their spiritual journey.

Not only was building up the individual seen as important, but also understood as essential was affirming the collective of the faith community. TMR 1

commented on the value of helping the congregation to see their future optimistically. He often publicly asserted, "I've got great bunch here". One TMR flatly refused to see any congregation as a hopeless situation. For him, the only basis for such a prognosis was if the demographic of the wider community was in significant decline. For him, it was vital to encourage the church to see their future positively.

2) Listening, learning building trust and serving: Important for the TMRs was a cluster of pastoral behaviours. Their philosophy began with listening. TMR 1 explained his approach to leadership consisted of "three tasks - listening, listening and listening." For him, this was imperative and foundational for all clerical leadership. Due to this, most participants explained that they would personally greet parishioners after Sunday services, for the sole purpose of connecting and building rapport. Regular and planned home visitation was also undertaken. TMR 6 stated that even in larger churches, where it would be impossible to know, let alone visit each member, he still saw home visitation as a priority. The rationale was that word soon travelled of how the pastor listened and wanted to hear where people were at and what they thought.

The underlying belief was that by listening to the congregation, the minister discovered or learned what was happening within the church. It was from this that they were able to discern what God was saying to the community. Underpinning beliefs that were expressed by the TMRs included "people know stuff that I do not know," "that there is much to learn from those who think differently to me," "I like to bounce stuff off different people in order to understand as best I can what is going on," and "a good pastor listens and sees."

Through this relational process, confidence between the church and its leader was established to a point where trust was given. TMR 5 said, "Its all about relationships, the church has to know you and you have to know the church." Similarly, TMR 1 stated, "My people centred style won the confidence of my churches …after a month [of my being at the church] they said, 'hey you probably know more than anyone about this church.' "

Another approach to building trust was explained by TMR 2, who referred to the New Testament passage of scripture, where Jesus is quoted as saying, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last and the servant of all." Indeed two respondents discussed what they understood as servant leadership. TMR 2 emphasized the merits of having a servant heart. He explained this by describing how he looked for board members who would lead by example through being prepared to "sweep the floor, lug chairs around to set the church up for Sunday worship and provide refreshments after the service." The emphasis was on modelling humility and setting the benchmark for others to follow. He said, "If I don't do it, I can't expect our members to." A second interpretation of servant hood involved having concern for others and putting them first. TMR 3 stated, "Leaders have to be servants not bosses."

3) *Engaging the congregation, envisioning and taking decisions*: The next leadership behaviour that was considered important to the participants, centred on engaging the congregation. Four respondents expressed concern over what they saw as a growing trend amongst ministers who viewed their role as being, an isolated visionary and decision maker for the church or "the people who call all the shots." TMR 1 illustrated the same point by speaking of the situation where he was working at the time of the interview. He described the disastrous impact for the previous pastor and congregation when the minister had "led from the top by dreaming a vision for the church and enforcing it on parishioners, by making all the decisions and micromanaging the church."

Some however, acknowledged that this autocratic style was a feature of their ministry as younger pastors. For example, TMR 4 referred to what he described as his possessing a "charismatic style of leadership many years previously when working in blue-collar suburbs." However, he was adamant that such an approach was not suitable for TM due to the temporary nature of the role. Therefore, he believed he should not lead from the front but should engage the congregation in the decision making process. TMR 6 commented, "you cannot force parishioners or tell them how it has to be done, they will resist." TMR 3 went further when commenting, "rather than lording it over the congregation, I want to be accountable to them." Most TMRs sensed that autocratic leadership was counterproductive.

Their general preference was that goals should emerge from within the community. One participant explained how he saw the congregation as "a huge resource in determining the will and mind of God." Another commented on how he loved "collaborative participation." He said, "As people cast visions, their hearts get tugged and they engage." TMR 3 went to great lengths in explaining how the approach worked in his context. He would regularly host prayer meetings, during which he encouraged the congregation to reflect and listen for the voice of God. After a period of silent contemplation, he invited parishioners to share what they had been thinking about, or what they thought God had been saying to them. At first, he reported they were very reticent to speak and so he would share his experience during the period of silence. Over the following weeks, increasingly people began to share fresh ideas; programmes and ways the church might better serve their wider community. TMR 4 explained a similar process of encouraging the congregation to envision their future. He spoke of inviting them to imagine a large, well-resourced church from the city, which had decided to "reach out" to the surrounding community. He then asked members what they would they do and how would they do it. Over time, he reported of possibilities beginning to emerge from within the congregation. He also explained how he encouraged parishioners to make personal statements such as "I'd like to," rather than saying 'the church should." He continued by saying that he believed this built a sense of personal ownership.

Citing Tom Peter's (1984) book In Search of Excellence, TMR 1 talked of the need for decisions to be made at the coalface. He asserted that while the pastor may be responsible for the general direction of the church, scripture suggests an inclusive approach where people are given ownership and control. He then spoke of the gospel account of the feeding of the 5000 and commented that while Jesus instructed his disciples to feed the masses, he did not metaphorically prescribe at which supermarket they should shop. TMR 5 shared a similar understanding. He liked to float ideas with parishioners at member's meetings and then invite feedback. He explained the process as follows "I might say, well this is what I think we should do, how does this sound to you?" He went on to refer to the story of a wagon master whose sole responsibility was to indicate the direction of the day's journey. Those on the wagon train instinctively

knew what had to be done. He then asserted that in an ideal setting, this is how a community should function. His role was therefore not seen as being to constantly drive and tell people what to do, but rather to persuade, equip and then leave followers to achieve the desired outcomes, while offering the necessary support and motivation.

Despite considerable data affirming an inclusive approach to decision making, all participants in the sample, talked of occasions where it was important to be decisive. TMR 6, who showed the strongest participative style of leadership, referred to three steps to his approach. They were "to listen, to learn and to lead." He continued by emphasising the latter step involved formulating a strong course of action "that had integrity for, or was right by the pastor as well as the church." Two examples of such an approach were the unilateral decision taken by one respondent to start the Sunday service at the advertised time, which was 25 minutes earlier than had become the norm. Another TMR decided to overhaul entirely the Sunday worship experience in order to reflect the stated desire of the church to attract new and younger people.

Overall, it was acknowledged that the minister did have a prophetic role and that there was a place for ministerial decision taking. However, this was understood in terms of the pastor coming alongside the church board and the congregation where the minister's role was to encourage, envision and persuade but rarely to dictate.

TMR 2 was a notable exception to having such an emphasis on a democratic style of leadership. He understood his role was to lead the church back to health by him envisioning, articulating and executing a new desired future state for the congregation.

4) Teaching and Communication: Most TMRs emphasized that their role included teaching a wide variety of spiritual and organizational development principles in plenary, small group and one-on-one settings. While seeking to spiritually inspire and educate the congregation through weekly preaching and other means such as prayer meetings were important for the TMRs, they also placed emphasis on communicating to the congregation how the church might

become more effective in its structure and mission. For example, one participant spoke of explaining, to an influential member of his congregation, a system of management he believed would assist the church. By referring to the respective roles and responsibilities of the Principal with the Board of Trustees in a school, he outlined a method of governance that he believed the church should adopt. He explained how, having successfully convinced this 'gatekeeper' of the merits of his proposal, the parishioner then went on to champion the proposal throughout the congregation.

Communication was not just seen in terms of education and teaching. It was also understood as a two-way process. During the crafting of organizational direction, dialogue was utilised to ensure all members were informed and able to contribute to the development of the church's future vision. The TMRs described a process that involved both the sending and receiving of messages. Three participants spoke of their regularly holding non-decision making forums in order to facilitate this process.

Once direction was clear and decisions had been taken, TMR 2 stressed the need to repeatedly proclaim and project the vision with clarity, in order to inspire, reinforce and embed the goal/s in the minds and hearts of the community.

Communication was also employed to motivate people towards achieving objectives. During or after Sunday services, TMR 4 talked of occasionally putting a large chart containing agreed action points before the congregation. He would visually cross out tasks that had been completed, place a tick on tasks that were up to date and a cross by those that were behind schedule. He stated this gave parishioners a sense of progress and accomplishment.

Finally, communication was employed as a means of responding to resistance. TMR 5 talked of informing people of decisions taken by the board. Following explanation of the plan and its rationale, he then actively invited the congregation to come and talk with any member of the leadership team, if they were unhappy rather than talking negatively in private.

Proposition 3.1: *TMRs place importance on building up affirming both people and church.*

Proposition 3.2: *TMRs place importance on listening, learning, building trust with and serving members of the congregation.*

Proposition 3.3: *Typically TMRs place importance on engagement and participation with followers in the decision-making process.*

Proposition 3.4: *Having understood the views of the congregation, TMRs place importance on intentionally taking decisions.*

Proposition 3.5: *TMRs place importance on spiritually and organizationally educating the congregation.*

Proposition 3.6: *TMRs place importance on rigorous two-way communication before and during decision-making processes.*

The Processes of Transitional Ministry

While there was generalised clarity around the goal of bringing a renewed sense of health to the community, this was not understood to be a straight forward, let alone linear process. Most participants explained that they entered the situation with no set idea of specific tools they would employ to complete the task. They spoke of having a blank piece of paper with little pre-planned. TMR 5 commented the specifics were "all very fuzzy." TMR 1 said that it was "all a bit hotchpotch" and TMR 6 stated he did not have specific stages he worked through but that the process "was intuitive." Most participants talked of the process they employed as emerging out of what was happening in the life of the community on a day-to-day, week-by-week basis. Only TMR 3 expressed confidence that he had a fair idea from the outset of where his course would track.

Whilst correlations were evident between the causes and goals of TM, there was also consistency between the philosophic approaches to leadership held by

the TMRs, and the processes they adopted as they fulfilled the role. Although not always chronologically progressive, up to five distinct stages were identified as the process TMRs embarked on, to restore health to their communities. These included 1) instilling hope, 2) building survival structures, 3) facilitating healing, 4) envisioning and 5) preparing the congregation for a settled long-term minister. Each of these stages is discussed below.

1) Instilling hope: All participants perceived when entering an environment or culture where people felt discouraged, discontented and/or disheartened, that the first essential task of intervention was to build a sense of hope for the future. To achieve this they talked of preaching confidence-building sermons where they spoke specifically on the theme of hope and where they also framed the future of the community in an optimistic light. This confidence-building process continued through their working week, as they talked one-on-one with individuals. As previously noted, TMR 1 made it a habit to verbally enthuse, "we've got a great bunch of people here," while TMR 6 refused to accept that any congregational situation was hopeless and constantly encouraged his people to view their future favourably.

Not only was instilling hope a foundational step, but also it was employed throughout the entirety of the TM. Most participants constantly wove into their sermons and/or congregational forums, themes surrounding the future aspirations and direction of the church. An example of this is the time taken during services of worship by TMR 4 to tick off tasks or milestones as they were attained, in order to affirm and build confidence in the fact that progress was being made.

2) Build survival structures: In all settings, participants were responsible for the ongoing routine tasks required to make sure the church was operational. One participant referred to this as "putting in place survival structures to ensure the church was functional." This included leading and preaching during Sunday services, conducting at official or religious ceremonies, overseeing the administrative responsibilities of the congregation, managing paid/volunteer staff and tending to identified areas of weakness or shortcoming.

In the majority of cases, Sunday services were considered hard work for participants, rather than their being an uplifting time of celebration and worship. It was commonly reported that services were amended in order to make the gathering more appealing. This was achieved through the likes of: ensuring services started on time, initiating an open discussion to generate a relaxed, family feel, or appointing a more contemporary leader to take responsibility for the church music.

A common operational function was to build the competency of the congregation's board. In some instances, the entire incumbent board had been asked by the denominational executive to stand down prior to the TMRs arrival. Following this experience, TMR 3 hand picked a potential group of new leaders and met with them on a weekly basis for over six months before recommending their names to a members meeting as the potential new governing body. More commonly, the TMR worked with and developed the existing team. TMR 6's approach was, if possible, to avoid dismissing any leader. He said he preferred to come alongside the volunteer to develop and mentor them in their role. TMR 5 referred to a 'staff-led-model' of ministry and explained how he used aspects of this approach to clarify the distinction between governance and management. He talked of implementing this model within his church to empower staff (paid and volunteer), through the congregation and/or board preauthorising personnel to get on with the tasks of implementing church programmes.

Smaller, yet not irrelevant operational issues that required attention were the management functions within the board. As previously noted, these included matters relating to minute keeping.

At an entirely different operational level, TMR 1 commented how shabby the church buildings had become. Because of this, he initiated a programme to re-carpet and re-paint the auditorium.

3) Facilitating healing: This stage ascertained the points of dysfunction within the congregation and relied on the TMRs utilising their pastoral skills of building

rapport and listening to the congregation. The process began with introductory chatting to become familiar with parishioners and to build mutual trust as opposed to immediately seeking to identify, explore and unpack the major points of congregational tension. TMR 4 referred to this as being "on the ground, one-on-one with people."

With time, the process progressed towards seeking to learn of, and to unearth the root of the concerns of the church. TMR 3 talked of placing a timeline round the walls of the hall and of inviting members to fill in when they joined the church. Along with this, they entered details such as the minister at the time, the size of the congregation, or what programmes were important. When completed, the TMR explained that the mural offered the congregation a map of its history that had led it to its current points of challenge. However, for most participants uncovering the areas of conflict and/or dysfunction was achieved by talking with a wide cross-section of people in order to build a picture of the history of the church and how it came upon this particular dark place in its journey. As ideas began to surface, TMR 1 explained they were "bounced off other people" to bring about clarity to the situation. Through this iterative process, the TMRs explained that the challenging issues, divisions and destructive behaviour of individuals were identified. Effort appeared to be taken by participants to ensure that the complete story was understood. As such, TMR 6 talked of ensuring he "engaged with those who were perceived to be the offenders or those who were compounding the problem as much as with those who were perceived as its victims." It was through this process that TMR 1 commented how the congregation informed him that it seemed as if he knew more of the church than they, who had been there for many years.

Following an extensive period of learning, the TMRs then talked of weighing up for themselves the primary cause of the congregation's dysfunction. Next, it seemed as if they instinctively formed a remedial action plan to bring about healing, resolution and/or a picture of the future shape of the church. At this point in the process, respondents adopted differing approaches in order to affect a healthy change in their congregation's situation. These included absorbing the angst of some parishioners, working with the congregation to

facilitate their understanding of the organization's dynamics, confronting troublesome individuals and/or initiating changes.

TMR 6 talked of absorbing the frustrations, anger and hurt of parishioners. This occurred by allowing them to talk, vent and "let it all come out," as he listened without reaction or defending the actions of others. He also talked of occasions where blame was misplaced and transferred onto him as TMR, effectively making him the scapegoat. He saw his role in this situation was once again to absorb and accept their behaviour, without becoming defensive. He understood this process to be the Christian way of living, "not to return evil for evil." He continued by saying that through this approach anger, pain and suffering was released which allowed healing to occur as people were liberated from their past burdens. He explained that this cathartic process opened up people's minds to the possibility of new ideas and of hope for the future.

Other participants talked of the importance of guiding members within the congregation to see for themselves the core of their distress. The TMRs explained that their objective in taking this approach was to empower parishioners to make their own decisions as to how they should respond. One TMR talked of his church's experience where there had been deep division between pastor and congregation. Following a time of congregational reflection and prayer, he invited them to share their insights and reported to his surprise, that this resulted in a meaningful time of confession, prayer, healing and reconciliation concerning the divisions of those who were present. Another participant spoke of a similar encounter, when during a service the board chair and he as TMR, publicly confessed their respective historical failings and sought the forgiveness of each other. This was followed with congregational prayer that a new spirit of unity might develop between the two parties. After the service he was told by many people how significant the ceremony had been for them, some of whom were shedding tears of emotional baggage,

Although the majority expressed a dislike for the task, most TMRs also talked of a need and a time for confrontation. Even TMR 6 who focussed on absorbing the pain of others, acknowledged there were occasions when to take a pacifistic stance would only serve to reinforce the perpetrators' sense of rightness. He

also commented "avoiding confrontation could be cowardly." TMR 3 referred to confronting people as necessary 'tough love." Participants expressed considerable stress associated with this aspect of the role. They said they found confronting individuals to be exhausting and draining.

While most felt they possessed strong skills in the area of self-differentiation or distancing themselves emotionally from the situation, they also acknowledged their role involved giving, or sacrificing oneself. Two specifically commented that they just did not have the energy to undertake another TM project, as it was too intense at a personal level for them. Another, who spoke favourably of his TM experiences, commented how he would often "come home in the evening and climb into my cave and think about the situation all night." He said that if one was to talk to his wife, she would say he was hard to live with during the middle of TM assignments. A third commented that he ended up in hospital and could only put it down to the stress of the situation.

Two participants, who had no knowledge of the IMN Training Course, bypassed the step of resolving congregational distress as part of their TM. For them, congregational health was not realised by resolving negative historical aspects of congregational life, but by concentrating on a new mission and action plan that would invigorate the community. As previously noted, TMR 4 achieved this by inviting the congregation to imagine themselves as missionaries in their community and posed the question, "what would they do?" He then invited parishioners to respond with "how might we do this?" and "who will take responsibility?" This inspired people towards a new vision and resulted in documenting an action plan that was used to drive forward momentum in the church. TMR 2's approach took a different path, in that he was considerably more autocratic and charismatic as he "spearheaded" a vision for congregational growth, involving new conversions to Christian faith.

4) Envisioning and Implementing: Five TMRs spoke or referred to these tasks as part of their tool kit. The purpose of this was to guide the congregation away from themselves towards service in their respective communities. Four of the TMRs developed processes of envisioning that encouraged the congregation to participate in the creative process. One posed the question to his congregation,

"How can we be the light of Christ in our community?" Another suggested the church put effort into showing the community what it did, or "how they added value." This was achieved by putting together a simple promotional flyer of church activities for delivery to letterboxes. The motivation was not so much to promote the church per se, but rather to encourage the congregation to consider what benefits it offered those in its community. In another church, during a congregational forum led by a TMR, the desire to appeal to younger families was expressed by parishioners. Sunday services were therefore reformed to make them attractive to their target demographic. As forward movement began to occur in each of the above examples, the TMRs reported that people were "buoyed and encouraged" which further built momentum and served to overcome disillusionment. TMR 4 summed it up by exclaiming, "This got their tails up."

As previously stated, TMR 2 understood his task was to provide strong direction for the church. He explained how over a period of two weeks, he found himself having four separate, spontaneous discussions that all centred on the word 'spearhead'. As he reflected on this unusual topic of conversation, he sensed this was what God was calling him to do. His view was that the best way to get the church back on its feet was through his sourcing, articulating and executing a new direction that the congregation could identify with. His view was that by personally bringing clarity to their future purpose, this would rally members together, reinvigorate and lead them to growth and health. Specifically this involved seizing on opportunities to actively promote the church and proselytise so that the congregation would grow in numbers with new Christian disciples.

Two participants felt strongly that the utility of envisioning was only valid in tandem with, or explicitly after, having dealt with the points of distress and dysfunction in the congregation. TMR 6 argued that it was "too easy to short-circuit the process and claim health, while the metaphorical cancerous growth remained." In response to the possibility of envisioning without first resolving, he retorted, "It's ridiculous, a dentist can not do the bridging work, until he has first dealt with the abscesses." He went on to question any value of assisting the church in developing its longer-term vision whatsoever. His rationale was that most ministers of churches within his denomination tended to be lone-ranger or

entrepreneurial personalities by nature and did not care for being constrained by the intent of their predecessors.

5) Establishing a Call Committee: With the exception of TMR 2, who terminated his role as TMR to become the long-term settled pastor, having a clear exit strategy was a definitive part of the process for most participants. This was understood to be the conclusion of the transitional phase in that particular era of the church's journey. As such, the TMRs saw this task as being of considerable importance. It marked the church's return to health.

This aspect of TM was characterised with the establishment of a 'Call Committee' that was responsible for recruiting, selecting and then nominating to the church, the name of the next settled pastor. It was reported that the denomination's headquarters provided extensive resources for churches undertaking this course of action including a detailed recruitment procedure manual, along with the provision of consultancy services through its executive staff.

There was however considerable variation as to the level of involvement by TMRs in the 'call process'. Some participants rarely mentioned details of their involvement, apart from noting that they initiated getting the church to nominate names from the congregation to form a 'Call Committee'. In other settings, the TMR appeared to chair the committee and was very much responsible for leading the process. This included writing the pastor's position description, documenting the church profile, determining the desired character traits sought for in preferred candidates and even sifting through C.Vs. One respondent commented that due to the specific points of dysfunction in his context, he wanted to ensure that the church did not relapse at that critical point of its TM journey and so he retained full control of the 'call process'.

Only one TMR reported leaving the church without the assurance of there being a successor.

Proposition 4.1: *The process of TM is not linear but is rather contingent on situation and is intuitive.*

Proposition 4.2: *TM begins with the TMR seeking to instil hope in the midst of the congregational crisis.*

Proposition 4.3: *TM involves assuming operational oversight for the liturgical and administrative functions of the church.*

Proposition 4.4: *TM involves internal analysis of the congregation, primarily through listening and learning to a wide cross-section of parishioners***.**

Proposition 4.5: *TM involves identifying and resolving historical points of dysfunction within the congregation.*

Proposition 4.6: *TM involves includes working with the congregation to develop a picture as to what their future purpose and ministry might look like. This stage also involves helping the congregation to initiate programmes that steer them towards that purpose.*

Proposition 4.7: *The final stage of TM involves establishing a Call Committee.*

Summary of Findings

In the context of the current research, there were three major causes behind TM. It was the result of either congregational conflict, organizational dysfunction or a loss of meaning and direction within the life of the church. In most cases, this led to financial and numeric vulnerability that threatened the ongoing existence of the community.

As a direct result of this, denominational personnel were called in to intervene and act as commissioner. This resulted in the appointment of a TMR. Three major objectives were then identified as the role of the TMR. Firstly, the core category and central theme of the research findings was that TM exists to facilitate the restoration health to a congregation. Secondary goals included identifying and resolving points of congregational tension or dysfunction, and then appointing a settled pastor.

Typically, TMRs adopted an approach to leadership that was heavily focussed towards having consideration for parishioners as opposed to being driven by the completion of tasks. This meant that core philosophies associated with leadership included affirming, listening, learning, building trust and serving others. They also placed high value on engaging parishioners in the envisioning and decision making processes. Underpinning all the above was a belief that two-way communication was a priority.

All participants started their ministry by instilling a sense of future hope in the congregation. Ensuring survival structures were in lace so the church was operational and 'open for worship' closely followed this. From here concentration was placed on seeking to restore health to the community. Four of the TMRs initially sought to achieve this by identifying and resolving specific causes of internal conflict and dysfunction within the church, while two opted immediately, to move to the task of reinvigorating the church by developing a new sense of direction and purpose. For the four who tended to the task of sourcing and bringing healing to points of congregational tension, three also saw value in envisioning a future for the congregation, either parallel with, or after they had resolved the internal dysfunction. One TMR did not see envisioning as a valid task for a TMR and preferred to leave a blank page for his successor to build on.

Most participants struggled over the temporary nature of the role and half of the respondents had misgivings over the contractual clause that excluded them from considering the possibility of switching to the role of settled pastor in a church where they had served as TMR. Despite this, only one participant made such a move.

Chapter 4: Discussion

Introduction

Through the data collected, the previous chapter sought to support the model of transitional ministry put forth in this paper. This raises a question as to how the model compares with research and literature related to the subject.

The first two sections of the model, namely the drivers of transitional ministry (TM) along with its goals, define the role and professional relationships of the transitional minister (TMR). This chapter begins by merging these two sections of the model and compares the theories developed from the current research to similar roles and relationships in religious settings. Attention is then directed towards the leadership approaches of the TMRs and these are compared to a variety of theories related to the subject including transformational leadership and its derivatives. The chapter concludes by comparing the stages of TM with organizational development processes. Notably parallels and contrasts with systems analysis, the Interim Ministry Network (IMN) model of Interim Transitional Ministry (ITM) and Kotter's model of organizational change are discussed.

The Drivers and Goals of Transitional Ministry:

Due to the dysfunctional context the respondents entered, their goals were very specific. The central theme that emerged through the data was that the role of the TMR is principally to restore health to a congregation. It is seen below that while bearing some similarity to the roles of an interim pastor, interim consultant, settled pastor and even the role of ITM as understood by the IMN, the goals and role of the TMR in the current research were unique.

The Uniqueness of the Role of Transitional Minister

The Interim Minister

Following senior leader departure in the commercial sector, the normative approach to filling the position is through succession planning. However, Rothwell (2001) posits that in the social sector, the less intentional approach of leadership replacement is more common. Ministerial replacement in Congregationalist churches typically involves the establishment of a 'call committee' who will search for a new minister. Alongside this process, Mead (2009) states that it is common practice to appoint an interim minister who is employed in a locum capacity, during a pastoral vacancy. Kydel (2009) goes on to state that the function of the of this role is to 'hold the fort' by providing maintenance services of preaching and offering pastoral care

According to a publication by the denominational body where the sample of this current research was sourced, the function of the Interim is "to preach, provide pastoral care, attend/chair meetings but generally not get involved in the process of calling a new permanent pastor… It's a caretaker role, important but not strategic". (Source withheld due to protection of the denomination's anonymity)

Others are less optimistic as to the utility of the role. For example Miller (2009) portrays interims as retired clergy 'rolled in' only to preach recycled sermons, and converse with the elderly during 'coffee hour'. She continues by observing that this leads to congregational attendance, giving and energy all significantly declining. Even more doubtful as to the merit of the locum minister is Martin (2009). He compares the position with the physiologically enforced state of the biological world between periods of activity known as 'diapause', or as he goes on to explains, "is more often referred to as sleep" (p. 35).

Contrastingly, the respondents of this research did not think that the mere departure of a minister was sufficient grounds to warrant a TM. For them, the resignation or dismissal of a minister also needed to have caused excessive

grief and/or congregational dysfunction in order to validate the utility of their services. In this context, they understood their role was to help the church accept the humanity and fragility of their past spiritual leader, should s/he have been dismissed for misconduct. Conversely, the task involved working with parishioners to develop alternative or fresh approaches to worship and service than was the custom of their previous pastor.

All respondents understood their role was to achieve quite specific and vital tasks, which directly related to points of conflict, organizational dysfunction or a loss of direction within the congregation. It is for this reason that TMR 3 was adamant his role was not that of a locum but should be titled 'intentional interim minister'. As opposed to filling a gap between settled ministers, participants saw their role as bringing about deliberate change in the life of the congregation. While the TMRs may not have been sure what that change would entail when entering the context, they were nevertheless sure that the objective was to bring restoration of health and balance to the congregation. Due to this, the two typical tasks of the interim or locum minister, that of providing liturgical services and pastoral care (Kydel, 2009) were not understood by the TMRs as the sole, or even core tasks of their role. Rather these served as only two of many tools they employed as a means to an end. It follows that for them, preaching and visitation were not generalised or routine, but were intentionally targeted to instil hope, identify points of tension, restore health, engage the congregation in the envisioning process and articulate future direction.

The Interim Consultant

Allison (2003) discounts Santora and Sorros' (2001) notion of the social sector's tendency towards a state of panic that is often associated with executive replacement. Instead he cites the example of the Presbyterian church in the US, and proposes a response that is In line with the sector's unique set of characteristics which focus on mission (Dimaggio, 1988) and engaging all stakeholders (Drucker, 1990). He advocates that prior to embarking on the task of leader recruitment; a non-profit should engage in an extended evaluation of all aspects within the organization including its mission, effectiveness and its relationships. While this may be achieved internally, in small organisations such

as local churches, he advises the appointment of an interim consultant for around 12 to 18 months.

However the key difference between the roles of the interim consultant, with that of the TMR, is that in all cases the latter were not entering a situation where the leader had merely departed, thereby creating an open opportunity for organizational review. Rather, their context was considerably more volatile, perhaps best represented by Gersick's punctuated equilibrium (1991). The setting they entered was one of crisis, conflict, dysfunction and angst, with the reality that the future of the congregation was in question. In the midst of this backdrop, the organization was also suffering the loss of their pastor, who according to McFarlan (1999), as a social sector leader, possessed exaggerated power and responsibility. Being leaderless, the depth of the crisis was further compounded. It is due to this unique context that the TMRs placed so much emphasis on seeking to identify and resolve the root causes of congregational tension, rather than their merely undertaking a procedural organizational review.

Essentially Allison's (2003) model appears to be concerned with incrementally changing (Tushman, et al., 1986) and improving, an otherwise functioning and operational organization. However, without exception the TMRs all entered a situation that was dynamic, dysfunctional and possibly fatal for the organization. Indeed this is why TM in the current study had as its core objective, the restoration of health in the life of the congregation, rather than a mere organizational audit.

The Settled Minister

A third distinction can be made between the roles of the TMR with that of the traditional, settled minister. The TMRs saw their role as being on a different track to that of a traditional minister. According to Miller (2009), the conventional tasks of the cleric include presiding over the liturgy, preaching, teaching, baptising, facilitating premarital counselling, officiating at weddings, visiting the sick, burying the dead and comforting those who mourn. Contrastingly, the data revealed that the goal of the TMRs was not to lead and manage the ongoing day-to-day mission and life of the congregation. Indeed TMR 6 commented that

one of the disruptive but necessary impacts of TM was that many of the less important aspects of congregational life were "frozen." The focus of TM was rather exclusively to affect an intentional, positive change in the specific areas of congregational dysfunction, and then to leave.

Listing additional or alternative tasks for the settled, but contemporary Congregationalist minister are providing leadership, envisioning and oversight of programmes (Kaiser, 2006). Interestingly participants specifically referred to each of these three roles. Firstly, they were clear on their leadership responsibilities. While this is discussed in detail below, the TMRS displayed transformational behaviours (Bass, 1985), such as participative decision making (Goldsmith, 2007), putting others ahead of themselves (Greenleaf, 1977), and possessing charisma (House & Aditya, 1977). Likewise, as is discussed below, the envisioning aspects of the role were utilised in differing ways depending on the approach to leadership adopted by each TMR. While some envisioned from the front with a charismatic form of leadership (House & Aditya, 1977), others did so by listening to and engaging the congregation and/or by persuasion (Spears, 1995). Kaiser's third area of oversight for church programmes was initially achieved by participants ensuring operational survival structures were in place, and/or ensuring the church was open for worship. Over time, most also developed short-run action plans or programmes to facilitate the re-engagement of their congregations with each other and their community.

Therefore, it appears there are stronger parallels between the tasks of the TMRs with those of Kaiser's (2006) contemporary pastoral leadership than is the case with those of the traditional cleric (Smith, 2009). This is perhaps due to Kaiser's drive that present-day settled pastors should be considerably more purposeful in their overall approach to ministry than their conventional counterparts, hence the title of his work, 'Winning on Purpose'. Thus, both TMR and Kaiser's contemporary settled pastoral leaders strive for intentionality.

The Intentional Interim Minister
A fourth comparison of roles is between the roles of the TMR in the current study with that of the ITM as advocated by the IMN. Smith (2009) refers to ITM as having relevance in any context involving congregational change, where the

transition is large enough for its impact to have been recognised by the congregation. She continues by suggesting that appropriate contexts included congregations where cliques have developed or where there has been substantial numerical growth and goes on to state that change is not always due to "departure or disaster" (p, 6). Contrastingly, these were the exclusive catalysts for TM identified by participants in the current research.

Another member of the IMN, Kydel (2009) proposes three tiers of ITM. The first equates with the general definition of Interim Ministry, while his second has similarities to that of Smith (2009), where there is a recognised shift in the life of the congregation, to the extent that the congregation would benefit by the transition being managed. However, it is Kydel's (2009, p. 23) narrowest third tier which covers situations where there has been "abuse, misconduct, deep conflict or following a very short or very long pastorate" that most closely resembles the contexts the TMRs found themselves engaging with. Yet even in this, his sharpest category, Kydel includes instances where there is no evidence of crisis other than that it has been a particularly short or enduring pastorate. For the participants however, the departure must have included significant unrest or grief within the congregation to justify a TM.

Thus, both Smith (2009) and Kydel (2009) define the role of ITM in terms that are considerably broader and more ambiguous than was encountered by the extremely limiting boundaries of participants, which were confined to crisis and the departure of the minister.

The Uniqueness of Relationships between Denominational Staff, Transitional Minister and Church

A second characteristic that is unique in defining the role of TM in the current research is the triadic relationship between the congregation, the TMR and the denominational executive. Gray and Tucker (1996) state that unlike denominational bodies, which have centralised polities, Congregationalist churches are sovereign. They have their own constitution and believe the will of God is best discerned through the expressed views and opinions of individual members. It is therefore a principle of Congregationalism that ministers do not

govern churches unilaterally. They may preside over the congregation, but it is the members, who collectively have final authority. Furthermore, Gray and Tucker go on to explain that Congregationalists rigorously guard their independence, therefore, the role of the denominational body, if one exists, is to act as little more than an association for organizations who voluntarily choose to associate with them for the purposes of mutual benefit. Due to this, typically the congregation alone has responsibility to hire and fire its ministers.

Contrastingly, the interrelationship between denominational staff, church and pastor in the sample of this research, portrays a considerably different approach to the normative process of Congregationalist governance. In all instances, the church had surrendered its autonomy and had invited denominational executives to intervene and act in the capacity of commissioner. Due to this, the denominational executive or its representative (the TMR) was empowered to control various components of the church, including an ability to suspend the constitution, dismiss the incumbent church board, and/or ultimately recommend church closure.

Such hierarchical power being vested in anyone, other than the collective of the local members, is more akin to the hierarchical, ecclesiastical structures, which Gray and Tucker (1996) identify as being Episcopalian. Therefore, the level of authority divested to denominational personnel and/or its TMRs appears to contradict Congregationalist theology, which according to Toon, Cowan and Patterson (2004, p. 135) "believes that Christ is the sole head of His church, and the members of the congregation collectively are all priests to God". Therefore, parishioners must take collective responsibility to hear and discern the mind of God, rather than abdicating this role to either the TMR or others associated with the denomination.

With respect to the above, it was noted that respondents typically experienced discomfort concerning the authority granted them. In referring to bases of power, French and Raven (1959) distinguish between differing centres of authority, including those, which are coercive or legitimate. While the former imposes a course of action, a referent base of power is more closely related to the approach of the charismatic leader who gains authority by communicating

shared ideals with followers (Conger, Kanungo, & Menon, 2000), thereby gaining their trust to lead (House & Aditya, 1977). It was not through autocratic means granted to TMRs in the formal three-way agreement, that their authority was gained, but rather as Congregationalist ministers; they were more accustomed and comfortable with their power being derived through their emotional connection with parishioners. This might explain TMR 6's statement that leadership was a given thing and why he was so insistent that he never stood on the status of his position.

A second issue related to involvement of denominational personnel, was that in some cases the congregation felt belittled or humiliated by what they perceived as 'big brother' tactics. This was best expressed by TMR 5 who referred to the denominational executive as "having the church over a barrel." It appears the relationship of denominational staff with the congregation has similarities with those identified by Halpert, Stuhlmacher, Crenshaw, Litcher and Bortel (2010) who observe that during negotiations, the smaller partner can feel vulnerable, powerless and even angry towards the larger entity with whom they are in dialogue. This explains the concern experienced by TMR 1, who thought that his church might withdraw from association with the denominational umbrella.

French and Raven (1959) can again explain such perceptions of the control of denominational staff. Churches that felt this way perceived the relationship had become coercive, with denominational staff possessing an inequitable balance of power that was overly controlling. Rahim's (1985) organizational conflict inventory offers an alternative approach to overcome this perception. He advocates that the powerful partner should work alongside the weaker, seeking to resolve conflict and mutually ascertain the best way forward. De Dreu, Koole, and Steinel (2000) assert that superior outcomes for longer-term partnerships are achieved by adopting such a stance during discussions.

A third issue connected with the relationship between the denomination's staff, the church and TMR, was the triadic nature of the 'call agreement'. The design of the document is contrary to the normative 'terms of call' for other pastoral settlements in Congregationalist settings (Pastoral Relations Office, 2009). Whilst denominational personnel will often serve in a consultative capacity, it is

Leading the Church Through Crisis Including the Minister's Sudden Departure

normal that 'call agreements' are reached exclusively through bilateral memoranda of understanding between church and pastor. This is due to church membership having the final authority in a Congregationalist context, including the employment of a minister (Toon, et al., 2004). Contrastingly, once again, the process of the TMRs, appears to have more in common with Episcopalian polity where the Bishop representing the denomination, has authority and delegates power to the clergy under them (Gray & Tucker, 1996), including directing where they are to be stationed.

A further difference to the normative 'call agreement' is that the three way TM agreement, specifically predefined a fixed term of between 12 and 24 months and precluded the possibility of the pastor and church considering transiting from a TM to that of a settled, long-term pastorate. Standard practice in Congregationalist churches is that the minister is appointed on an open-ended basis (Pastoral Relations Office, 2009). This clause appeared to be controversial, in that while there was acceptance of the potential to compromise or short-circuit the cathartic process of TM by TMRs transitioning to become the settled pastor, participants were not convinced prohibition was necessary. Neither were they convinced that it was always in the best interests of the church or pastor. TMR 2 felt the denominational executive, against the will of the congregation or himself, had imposed this contractual clause. Furthermore, he believed it proved to be counterproductive to the entire time he served in the role. He constantly wrestled with how it was possible to build a church without his being in a position to offer it stability, and clarity as to its future through his enduring presence. For him, the denomination's prescribed cure of a dysfunctional church was worse than the cause.

Despite this, in both the IMN training Course for ITMs (Interim Ministry Network, 1999) and the wider literature on this topic (Ornell & Smith, 2009), strong concern is expressed against a person becoming the settled minister of the same church where s/he has been the TMR. However, in neither context do the respective authors give reasons for the prohibition. Indeed two participants commented that they respectively queried this principle while attending the IMN training course. In both cases, they could not recall the specific reasons offered by the tutors to justify the restriction; however, they did recall that they were not

convinced it was always detrimental. Certainly, for TMR 2, after 12 months of TM, and in agreement with denominational staff, he terminated his TM agreement and became the settled pastor.

The Approaches to Leadership Adopted by Transitional Ministers

Leadership Continua of Behaviour

Considerable research has been undertaken on the behaviours that differentiate between leadership that is task driven and initiates structures, over that which emphasises having consideration for those one is responsible for (Yukl, 1971). All but one of the participants had a strong empathy for working with and through the congregation, as opposed to following a more autocratic mode of operation. Most participants expressed styles of leadership, that as TMR 1 put it were, "people centred" and therefore had similarities with McGregor's Theory Y (1960), which encouraged the empowerment of subordinates.

That said, as is seen below, each respondent possessed a different level of emphasis for having consideration of, and trust in the members of their congregation. This differentiation can be interpreted through Tannenbaum and Schmidt's continuum of leadership behaviour (1958), which spans seven steps from decision taking, through suggesting solutions and culminating in the delegation of responsibility to others.

Of the six respondents, TMR 2 leaned furthest towards an autocratic or directive style, believing it was his responsibility to hear the word of God for the congregation and to take decisions. TMR 5's approach of, "This is what I think, how does this sound to you." moved the continuum in a more people centred direction. Rather than telling the congregation what to do, he would typically invite discussion on what was essentially his idea. Put another way, he suggested solutions to the church and allowed them to reach a decision as to the best course of action. TMR 1 talked of the value of decisions being made at the coalface. That being said, he was of the view that the pastor had responsibility to steer the congregation in the right direction by setting the big picture and allowing followers to decide 'how' the objectives were to be

achieved. This correlates with Tannenbaum and Schmidt's (1958) sixth stage of explaining the issue, defining the parameters and then asking the team to decide on the solution. Three participants each described the most intensified or empowered role for the congregation, which correlates with the continuum's final stage of delegation. TMR 4s comment of "loving participative, collaboration," TMR 3's strong concern "not to lord it over his congregation but rather be accountable to them," and TMR 6's desire that his recommendations must "100% reflect the wishes of the church" are all examples of transferring responsibility to the congregation.

A further leadership continuum is Bass and Avolio's Full Range Model (1997). This theory spans behaviour associated with leadership which they describe as being laissez-faire, through transactional (which motivates followers through extrinsic rewards), to transformational (in that its focus is on intrinsically motivating followers). Given Dimaggio's (1988) assertion that a characteristic of social sector groups is that they are primarily driven by a sense of commitment to a cause, it comes as of little surprise that Miller (2009) observes a laissez-faire style of pastoral leadership leads only to organizational decline. This may explain why the TMRs rejected their role as that of an interim minister - in that the maintenance roles of the interim, including preaching and pastoral care (Kydel, 2009) were insufficient to inspire a congregation, hence the need for their role to have longer term purpose and intention.

Furthermore most TMRs appeared to see limited utility in their taking a transactional or autocratic approach to leadership (Burns, 1978). This may be due to a perception by participants that parishioners do not typically view themselves as subordinates, and because there is limited opportunity to encourage congregational commitment through external reward or punishment, as is proposed in the plethora of motivational theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943), Expectancy Theory (Vroom, 1964) or Path Goal Theory (House, 1971). Contrastingly, the general approach taken by the TMRs seems to be a transformational, or democratic and participative style of management, which as previously noted, Lewis and Seibold (1998) highlight as being essential in social sector organizations of which, according to Rudney (1987), the church is a part.

Contingent Leadership

In line with contingent leadership theory (Fiedler, 1964; Hersey & Blanchard, 1988) there was evidence of the TMRs contextualizing their approach to leadership or of adapting it to their particular situation. TMR 4's comment regarding adopting a charismatic style in his younger years where he was in settled pastorates, but being adamant that such an approach was not suitable for TM is evidence of this. Of more interest however, is that most participants amended their approaches to leadership during the TM itself. Furthermore, the shifts from leader-centric decision taking through to allowing the congregation to develop options and decide actions themselves (Tannenbaum & Schmidt, 1958), or what Hersey and Blanchard (1988) describe as telling through to delegating, did not occur in a sequential manner, rather, they were context dependent.

For example, it was not until late in his TM and after six months of training volunteers, that TMR 3 released his control over the church and delegated authority to others through the appointment of the new board. Likewise, in his final task as TM, he closely guarded the process of calling a settled minister. In both cases, he perceived these matters as being historically central to the churches dysfunction and therefore thought they should not be prematurely delegated. Yet, in other areas, which were much earlier in his role, such as the congregational forums, he taught people to listen to the voice of God for the church. Here his role was to coach, support, encourage, empower and ultimately release the congregation to listen, hear and act on the direction they felt God was leading the church. In this regard, the participant not only exercised a contingent approach to leadership but also confirmed Bass and Avolio's (1997) contention that it is possible to operate from different stages of a leadership continuum at the same time and that a transactional approach to leadership does not have to be exclusive to one that is transformational. Furthermore, the practices of situational leadership exercised by the TMRs confirms the assertion of Chapman (1998) who argues that organisational development practitioners within the social sector must be highly adaptable as they progress through their assignments.

Transformational Leadership

From transforming leadership (Burns, 1978) developed the theory of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985). Arrays of concepts have been employed by various authors to describe this approach, which seeks to appeal to the inner core of the follower. Defining behaviours include empowering, collaborating and functioning as team (Goldsmith, 2007), building trust, commitment, and loyalty (Bass, 1985), setting an example, self sacrifice, effectively communicating challenges and solutions, supporting, encouraging, coaching (Bass & Avolio, 1990) along with Yolk's (2010, p. 287) "inspiring, developing and empowering followers". By comparison, the leadership styles adopted by the TMRs in this research included instilling hope, listening, learning, building trust, serving, modelling, engaging and envisioning, teaching, decision making and communicating. Thus, there appears to be considerable similarity between the leadership approaches that were of importance to respondents with what has been defined transformational leadership. This phrase can therefore be employed as an overarching term to describe the predominant leadership intent of TMRs.

Transformational Leadership is a concept that has branched in numerous directions (Yukl, 2010). Notably three of its streams were seen to have parallels with the current research. They include spiritual, servant and charismatic leadership.

Spiritual Leadership

While much of the research on spiritual leadership has come from a Judeo/Christian tradition, Kriger and Seng (2005) argue its concepts are based in the collective value systems of the major religions. Whilst not derived from a Christian tradition, Benefiel's (2005) contribution to spiritual leadership identifies progressive stages of an organization's spiritual journey including the awakening, transition, recovery, dark night and dawn. Interestingly each of these five steps are evident in the within the confines of the congregation's journey of TM. Furthermore by connecting Kubler-Ross's (1969) work on individual change through the stages of grief, with Fisher's (1999) personal and organizational transformation which focus's attention on taking intentional steps

to restore balance or equilibrium and placing them alongside Benefiel's (2005) spiritual plain, the objectives of TM emerge. This results in the goal of TM being to work with an individual and/or their congregation to acknowledge that the early excitement of growth is often followed by the involuntary experience of regression and finding oneself, or one's community in a dark place. Due to this, the task of the TMR is to work with the person and congregation beyond the paralysis of sensing finality, towards the beginning of a new endeavour.

Two further components of spiritual leadership have relevance for TM. Firstly, Fry (2003) talks of spiritual leadership consisting of transcendence or a sense of calling. While three of the TMRs specifically referred to having such an experience with regard to their TM context, all six participants exhibited high levels of energy and enthusiasm for their cause, which is arguably the outcome of a sense of call. Their commitment to the task was resolute despite setbacks and challenges such as suffering insomnia or being hospitalised due to the stresses of the situation. While possessing a strong sense of call is characteristic of spiritual leadership it is also a trait of the charismatic leader who will take significant personal risks on behalf of the community (Bligh, 2004). Each participant appeared to deliver well beyond the call of duty. This is in accord with Duchon and Ploughman (2005) who explore the impetus behind spiritual leadership, the TMRs appeared to be driven by a deep, intrinsic, spiritual motivation to assist the congregation, believing it was the right thing to do.

Furthermore, TMR 6's expression of unwavering belief in and hope for the local church encountering crisis, his unrelenting sense of optimism as to its future, and his example of self-sacrifice, collectively 'called' the congregation at a spiritual level to go beyond what would ordinarily be expected of those involved in a membership based organization. When participation is voluntary, the decision of members to continue attendance in their parish, let alone to commit to resolving its points of tension and/or to actively engage in offering voluntary service within their worshipping and wider community during its time of crisis, could also be explained in terms of Fry's (2003) phenomena of transcendence. The spiritual leadership offered by the TMRs appears to have, in turn, called parishoners to engagment and productivity. This is in line with Harter, Schmidt

and Hayes (2002) who state that spiritual leaders evoke high levels of commitment and output from followers. It also questions Gibons (2000) criticism concerning the productive outputs of spiritual leadership.

Fry's (2003) second aspect of spiritual leadership is its sense of fellowship. This was evident in the actions of three respondents to arouse a desire by those in the community of faith, to be together and to listen to one another. Specifically they talked of hosting family forums where the community came together to talk, to listen, and to "share their hearts together."

Servant Leadership

The data suggested that not only were the TMRs spiritual leaders, they were also servant leaders as defined by Spears (1995), whose exegesis of Greenleaf's (1998) essays identifies listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualisation, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people and building community as the core of what it is to be a servant leader. These skills or qualities were particularly evident in the narratives of the participants who talked of community building, of healing and of direction emerging through listening to the pains, stories and dreams of those within the community. Each talked extensively of inclusive and participative engagement with the congregation through forums, where together the church family listened to each other, identified with one another and envisioned their future.

The first four and final two behaviours identified by Spears (1995) and as noted above, were the core of not only the objective of TM in restoring health to a community, they were also the heart of the process the majority of participants adopted as they worked through the transition with the congregation. The middle three concepts of servant leadership including persuasion, conceptualisation and foresight, depict the different approaches the respective TMRs adopted as they sought to bring about healing to the congregation. While some tended to be more persuasive in their practice of carrying members with them, others were more inclined to have foresight and to be visionary or as in the case of TMR 2 to actively lead from the front.

As with criticism of spiritual leadership (Gibons, 2000) it is assumed that with servant leadership, the concern for others comes at a cost to performance (Graham 1991), which appears to be exclusively measured in terms of financial revenue. However, the practice of leadership has never been restricted to the narrow confines of commerce. Certainly as part of the social sector, the effectiveness of the mission is not accounted for by maximisation of profit; rather it lies in achieving the goals of organizations' respective causes (Salamon, 1994). In the context of a church, where Christ affirms that eternal life is the result of "Loving the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and loving your neighbour as yourself" (Luke 10:27, New International Version), it follows that measuring effectiveness of performance must involve consideration of worship, welfare and of being community. Indeed as previously stated, McFarlan (1999) asserts that measuring productivity through maximisation of profits may in fact reduce morale and be counter-productive to the organization. Given that members were mobilised to worship, care for one another and to serve their wider communities through the servant approach of the TMRs, it is argued here that servant leadership, at least in this context, did not reduce productivity. Rather it served as a catalyst to activate parishioners to deliver significantly higher levels of output than had been the case in their recent past.

Charismatic Leadership

The leadership emphasis of one participant in particular diverged from the servant model in that it emphasized the elements of charismatic leadership, which are identified by Bligh (2004) as one who emerges in a time of crisis offering an innovative solution that will combat a community dilemma. Similarly, TMR 2 thought the best way to restore the church to viability was by his personally sourcing a new direction that the organization could identify with. His view was that by actively promoting the church and making new Christian disciples, the congregation would be reinvigorated. Additionally his sense of conviction that he was called by God to achieve this task of spearheading the congregation has parallels with Weber's (1947) early notion of extraordinary, supernatural, charismatic leadership.

TMR 6 strongly countered this approach of casting aside the congregation's problems and dysfunctions in order to focus only on envisioning of directing the organization towards its future believing, "A dentist can not do the bridging work, until he has first dealt with the abscesses." Two other participants shared this sentiment believing that the weaknesses or negatives must first be identified and rectified prior to strengths or opportunities being explored. Furthermore, TMR 6 was particularly resistant to the idea of him being a charismatic leader who personally provided what Bligh (2004) refers to as "innovative solutions". He felt that to envision the future of the church was largely futile. Based on previous experience and a lifetime of observing pastoral leaders, his perception was similar to that of Anderson and Mylander (1994) who believed that the incoming settled pastor would typically see him or herself as "the great man" (Carlyle & Fredrick, 1888), or the charismatic leader who had supernatural power (Weber, 1947). Because of this, he anticipated they would therefore want to set future direction for the church themselves. Therefore, he saw little point in predetermining what the future might entail.

While not as flamboyant in their approach as was TMR 2, other participants appeared to possess characteristics of charismatic leadership in that they too delivered creative solutions, which resonated with the community (Conger, et al., 2000). TMR 3 talked of becoming aware of goals that had been set by members in a family forum. He went on to explain how he developed and articulated those actions as a vision for the church. By reflecting the goals back to the church and as members affirmed what was essentially their own initial direction, he then, quietly went about the task of executing a strategy that mobilised the congregation towards engaging with its community in fresh ways. While less directed from the front, his style nonetheless had a charismatic dimension in that it echoes House and Aditya's (1977) observation that charismatic leaders promote a vision that is seen to be right by followers and so they willingly follow.

Accountable Leadership

Four TMRs referred to what they termed a 'staff-led' or 'ministry-led' model of church leadership. One participant discussed using aspects of this approach at a structural level to bring clarity to the distinction between congregational

governance and management. The origin of the 'staff-led' or 'ministry-led' approach is Kaiser's accountable leadership theory (2006). In developing his model, Kaiser builds on the work of Carver (2006), who advocates that the role of the non-profit board is to proactively constrain the Chief Executive. From this foundation, Kaiser argues that the church board is responsible to set boundaries by prohibiting, rather than prescribing the behaviour of the minister. This preauthorises a pastor to lead, conditional on the direction being within whatever the board determines as its boundaries. From this proposition, he argues that the minister acts as "Chief Vision Officer" (2006, p. 101). S/he is responsible to cast a clear and compelling vision for the church and to take control of the congregation. As the board creates and revises its goals, the pastor is responsible to set the tone and guide the discussion. This includes leading prayer, applying scriptures and inspiring confidence. Correspondingly, the role of the congregation is to minister, which means they are responsible to deliver the operational services and programmes of the church.

Kaiser asserts that his approach empowers and enables the senior minister to direct the church and therefore overcomes a problem he sees in many Congregationalist structures where there is no mandate to lead until specific permission has been granted by the congregation or board. As such, accountable leadership (Kaiser, 2006) promotes a pivotal and primary role for the minister in determining the vision for the church. Essentially, it appears to be Episcopal polity (Gray & Tucker, 1996) but with ministerial accountability through boundaries which are pre-set by the board. However even at the accountability stage of the process, Kaiser sees that the minister is to lead the board and proactively guide them in determining what the boundaries should be. This opens the potential for the ministers to have significant influence in setting their own boundaries, with the result that they can impose a coercive style of leadership that is typical of military settings, and is identified in the university behavioural studies discussed by Yukl (1971), Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) and McGregor (1960).

Essentially accountable leadership (Kaiser, 2006) appears to advocate a model of Christian leadership that Anderson and Mylander (1994) referred to as 'the great man' (Carlyle & Fredrick, 1888), a charismatic or visionary leader (Weber,

1947) who is characteristically autocratic and, like the Episcopalians, claims his or her authority by being in a line of succession back to Christ (Gray & Tucker, 1996). This means s/he is the possessor of what French and Raven (1959) referred to as legitimate and coercive power. As such, the model of leadership contrasts sharply with Congregationalist polity (Toon, et al., 2004) that is the context of this study. It also contrasts with the transformational theories that form the basis of the leadership approaches outlined by the majority of TMRs in the current research. TMR 1 referred to his experience of those who had implemented Kaiser's (2006) autocratic approach to leadership, when commenting of the disastrous impact for the previous pastor and congregation he was working with at the time of the interview. It was from this context that he referred to Tom Peters' (1984) assertion that decisions needed to be made at the coalface.

Excepting the approach of TMR 2, the relationship between the 'staff-led' or 'ministry-led' model with TM is two fold. Firstly both approaches to leadership share a concern that ministry should be intentional and have clear objectives. Secondly the TMRs utilised accountable leadership as a structural tool to clarify the role of the board from that of staff, rather than as an approach to leadership.

The Processes of Transitional Ministry

The processes respondents employed to fulfil their ministry logically followed from the linkage between the congregational situation, which created the goals for TM, and combining these with the TMRs' respective approaches to leadership. By comparing the tools and skills they used with some of the literature on organizational development (OD), a number of parallels and differences can be observed. Chapman (1998) identifies a plethora of possible OD techniques available to consultants in the social sector; however, the discussion below is restricted to three comparisons, which have been chosen because of their significance to TM. These include processes related to systems analysis, the IMN model of ÍTM (Interim Ministry Network, 1999), and Kotter's model of organizational change (Kotter, 1996).

Comparisons with some of the Tools of Systems Analysis

Early in their process, participants sought to identify points of tension and dysfunction within the congregation. This has similarities with systems analysis, which is often employed by consultants as an initial diagnostic tool. The most basic form of organizational assessment involves undertaking SWOT analysis (Haberberg, 2000), where internal organizational strengths and weaknesses are analysed along with external opportunities and threats. The majority of data revealed that it was more common for participants to focus their analysis on an audit of internal strengths and weaknesses rather than assessing the relationship of the congregation with its external environment. For all participants the first intervention involved affirming and instilling hope through emphasising what was good and right in the congregation. It is likely that the preoccupation on internal analysis was because the crisis that precipitated the TM was typically sourced within the church community itself. It was only after identifying internal strengths that they began to move their attention outwards by considering what appeal or benefits the church had to offer the community.

Cooperrider and Srivastva's (1987) Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is an analytical tool that exclusively explores the internal strengths of what is positive in the organization as opposed to focussing on its weaknesses. The first phase of AI is discovery. This involves pairing individuals within the community and inviting them to explore the strengths of individual members along with the assets and successes of the community as a collective. Cooperrider and Srivastva argue that it is only from this internal, positive affirmation that collective dreams and concrete goals for the organization can emerge, along with the motivation to see objectives realised. This positive approach was particularly evident in the narrative of three participants who used congregational forums to build up, affirm and inspire the church to believe in itself and take positive action to create its future.

Finegold, Holand and Lingham (2002) emphasise that the desire of AI is to avoid branding the organization as sick; it therefore intentionally avoids any assessment of organizational weakness. Contrasting this, the majority of participants deliberately focussed their early efforts to identify areas of congregational fragility. The reason for this was to enable the TMR to identify

the church's points of dysfunction that were causing blockages so these could be resolved, thereby enabling the church to progress. It was not until the latter task of envisioning and beginning to explore the congregation's external interaction with its wider environment that most respondents turned their attention to exploring congregational strengths. However, it was noted that the two participants who had no knowledge of the IMN training course, altogether bypassed any process of purposefully identifying points of congregational dysfunction and internal weakness. As with AI, they moved to identifying internal strengths and external opportunities early in their respective ministries.

Further parallels can be seen between the analytical processes undertaken by participants with Weisbord's (1978) six-box model of systems analysis. This model is concerned with formal and informal interactions within an organization and explores the leadership, purpose, structures, rewards, technology and relationships of the group. Leadership is central due to its influence on the other five boxes. One starts with any key output of the organization and analyses to what extent those related to the collective are satisfied with it. As with Wiesbord's model, and perhaps due to the generalised inflated influence of the leader in social sector organizations, participants stated that the departed minister formed a natural focal point for their analysis. Furthermore, they talked of working with congregational members, either individually or corporately, to explore their perceptions of satisfaction or otherwise with not only the previous minister, but also with volunteer leaders, the church's mission, structures and relationships between members themselves. Concurring with Weisbord, their approach was not systematic but was intuitive. It began and ended as conversations and circumstances demanded. In addition to exploration of areas noted above, respondents also unpacked with their congregations matters identified in Pascale and Athos's 7Ss (1981) including strategies, systems, style, shared values and skills within the congregation.

Comparisons with the IMN Model of Transitional Ministry

The IMN was initiated to assist congregations in the process of change (Mead, 1986). As such it advocates a model of TM, which is referred to as Intentional Transitional Ministry (Smith, 2009). The model comprises six steps, which include the church: telling its historical story, identifying its current

characteristics, exploring future directions, developing its leadership, restoring denominational linkages and preparing for the next minister (Interim Ministry Network, 1999).

The first step of the IMN model begins with an ITMR facilitating the process of the church telling its story. This is seen as the beginning of the phase of internal assessment and involves parishioners recalling and reflecting on their communal history. Two participants spoke expressly of undertaking this step. TMR 5 saw the church owning its history as important in order to unravel what he identified as a destructive institutional culture that had developed within the congregation. This led him to adapt an assessment and healing resource called Setting our Church Free (Anderson & Mylander, 1994). This programme explores historical issues from a spiritual perspective and seeks to bring about spiritual healing through acts of confession, repentance, and prayer for reconciliation and spiritual protection. It was in this context that he and the chair of the board mutually confessed the relational failings of their predecessors and forgave one another.

The second IMN analytical step continues to assess the congregation. It involves exploring with the church, their current collective personality and seeks to identify what is important for them. This stage was mirrored by the majority of participants and is identified in the task of their listening and learning to understand what was at the root of the tension and angst within the church. However, the IMN appears to be more positive and progressive in this area than was the case for the TMRs who tended to be focussed on identifying the challenges or problems within the church. This divergence of approach may be explained through to the adoption of the positivistic, Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987) as part of the IMN process (Voyle, 2009). It is more likely however, that the extremely narrow context of crisis and dysfunction, which precedes TM, explains the difference.

Although implemented to differing degrees, most participants engaged with the IMN's third step of exploring future directions. Only one participant had concerns over the benefits of this part of the network's process. While the majority stood mid-spectrum on the issue of developing vision for the church,

TMR 2 sat at the opposing end to TMR 6, by holding the view that 'spearheading' the church was the calling given to him. Generally, respondents were comfortable with the innovative aspects of the role, however at a practical level they struggled over not being in a position to follow through with execution, due to the transitory nature of the position. This reality appears to present a contradiction to the IMN model, which on one hand advocates the task of envisioning, yet on the other insists that ITMRs must not evolve into becoming the settled pastor of the church (Ornell & Smith, 2009).

Leadership development constitutes the fourth step of the IMN process. Working in this area was a large part of the experience for most TMRs. In five of the six churches, there was a significant change of personnel who held positions of power within the congregation. While one participant talked of incrementally amending the constituency and tasks of his board, a second struggled with sourcing any volunteer leaders at all. For TMR 3 it was the central task of his two-year ministry with the parish. It may be that the reason this task was so prominent, to both the IMN and TM, is explained by the fact that religious organizations fall within the social sector (Rudney, 1987), who as Salamon (1994) highlights, utilise voluntary labour leading to the potential for board ineffectiveness because of a lack of management skills and time.

Rebuilding denominational linkages between congregation and its hierarchy is the fifth step of the IMN process. The data suggested that this was not a key task for participants of the current research. In the minority of cases where associations between the denominational body and church were poor, it appeared that the souring of the relationship was a result of the early negotiations concerning the TM itself, when the church perceived denominational staff took control of the congregation.

The relative inconsequentiality of this step for participants could be attributed to the context of this research being confined to a Congregationalist setting where the role and authority of the denominational body and its staff is not large (Gray & Tucker, 1996).

As previously stated, the temporary nature of the minister's role in the church is non-negotiable for the IMN. Therefore, the final step of the IMN model involves exiting the congregation. As previously stated, the network is strongly of the view that the TMR should not transition to become the settled minister (Ornell & Smith, 2009). Interestingly, while three participants stated they were not convinced of the necessity of this stipulation and struggled over the implications of the non-enduring nature of their positions, only one became the long-term minister. As with ITM, most participants either fully engaged in the process of guiding the congregation through the call process, or at the very least provided initial direction, as was required and in tandem with support from the denomination's executive, to assist the 'call committee' in finding a successor.

Finally, three participants particularly referred to their intentional use of the IMN model as a resource for their ministry. They commented that whilst they covered the vast majority of its steps throughout their TM, the procedure was not sequential. For example, TMR 5 observed that the first step of the IMN model was to explore the church's historical identity; however he noted that for him, this step did not take place until his last weeks in the role.

Comparisons with Kotter's Model of Leading Change

The IMN, training course (Interim Ministry Network, 1999) includes consideration of Kotter's (1996) model of change leadership. However, when comparing this with the process respondents embarked on, a number of differences become apparent. The primary distinction is that while Kotter's emphasis was on crafting and executing an intentional programme of change, the emphasis for the majority of TMRs was to bring about organizational healing,

Kotter's (1996) model begins with the need to create a sense of urgency that becomes the catalyst to motivate followers to action. However, the data revealed that in every case, participants entered congregations that were already in the midst of crisis, with both attendance and budgets challenging not only the status quo, but also the viability of the church. Circumstances were such that the church was well advanced on what Lewin (1951) referred to as unfreezing the situation.

While Kotter's first step was irrelevant for participants, his second stage of establishing a team to lead the change initiative is pertinent. In two instances where a transition team was appointed within the church, this was required by the denominational staff member prior to the arrival of the TMR and consisted largely of personnel external to the church rather than from people within the system as advised by Kotter. In at least one instance, the TMR perceived the team to be dysfunctional. A reason external consultants might not always be of assistance to social sector organizations, such as the church, is due its diversity of constituencies (Drucker, 1990) and the importance of the mission to organizational members (Dimaggio, 1988) which as Lewis and Seibold (1998) argue, demands that governance should be by participative democracy. Schein (1987) agrees with this when talking of process consultation, which seeks to ensure any external input is always client focussed and participative, thereby ensuring ownership rests within the organization.

The third stage of Kotter's model moves towards the development of a future vision. However, this was not the case for the four participants who adopted the IMN model (Interim Ministry Network, 2011) that advocates, "telling our story" and "identifying our present identity". Before envisioning, they thought it important to identify and resolve outstanding internal dysfunction. Kotter (1996) does not cover this step in any detail other than at a very cursory level in his initial stage of creating a sense of urgency. Rather he moves, as did two participants, directly to envisioning the desired future state.

Kotter's model proposes that a leadership team should envision the change initiative; however, this was not generally the case for respondents. This may be explained by the Congregationalist nature of the sample where decisions are typically taken by the whole membership, as opposed to a church with a Presbyterian polity, which Gray and Tucker (1996) identify, typically work through leadership councils. Consequently, as would be expected in Congregationalist settings (Toon, et al., 2004), envisioning in the current research was achieved through participation with all members for five of the participants. Lewis and Seibold (1998) assert that this method of decision taking is appropriate in a non-profit context, due to its need of engaging followers. This

is especially relevant given the extremely small size of the churches. The only exception to taking a fully democratic approach was by the TMR who recently left commercial management to embark on pastoral ministry. He adopted what appears to be a more charismatic and autocratic approach by determining the vision of the church in isolation (Weber, 1947). Gray and Tucker (1996) suggest this would be the standard approach of an Episcopalian structured church.

In line with Kotter, all TMRs emphasized the ongoing importance of communication. Lewis, Hamal and Richardson (2001) highlight that is especially important within the social sector, due to the volume and diversity of the stakeholder base as identified by Drucker (1990). For the TMRs who sought to bring resolution to problems, this involved communicating 'why' changes needed to occur. It could be argued that this bears similarity with Kotter's first step of creating a sense of urgency. However, for the balance of participants, the focus of their communication regarding organizational change was contained to answering 'what' and 'how' rather than questions related to 'why'.

For Kotter, the next phase of embarking on a change initiative is its execution. New behaviours and actions are encouraged with the results being monitored and early wins acknowledged. While this process did occur amongst participants who initiated new programmes within their church, the emphasis of TM was not so much on tangible outcomes, but rather softer, adaptive cultural changes as to how the congregation interacted with each other. Where new programmes were initiated, there was evidence of early wins being celebrated. TMR4's physically signing tasks off during a church service, is an example of this.

Next Kotter warns against declaring success prematurely. Two members specifically spoke of the danger of the congregation relapsing into their areas of dysfunction. One was extremely cautious in appointing a new leadership team and took in excess of six months before feeling confident that a new way of thinking and acting had been embedded into the new group of volunteer leaders.

In conclusion, it is seen that Kotter's model has only moderate relevance for TM. It is likely that this is due to the TM environment being softer with its emphasis on restoring relational and spiritual health rather than affecting a concrete change initiative.

In summary, this chapter began by comparing the role of the TMR with similar roles identified in literature. These included the interim minister, interim consultant, settled minister and intentional interim minister. From this, the uniqueness of the TMR's role was identified. Next discussed was the relationship between the denominational body, the church and the TMR where a number of challenges were identified, principally due to the church having a Congregationalist polity. Thirdly, specific approaches to leadership were addressed and it was seen that while TMRs adopted contingent leadership practices, many of their philosophical views on leadership were transformational and in particular had parallels with the approaches of spiritual, servant, and charismatic leadership. Lastly, comparisons between the processes utilised by TMRs during their ministry with some of the tools employed by process consultants were considered. These included systems analysis, the process of ITM as advocated by the IMN and Kotter's model of leading change.

Chapter 5: Limitations and Conclusions

Limitations of Research

This study has sought to utilise elements of grounded theory in order to generate theory leading to the development of a model for TM. Therefore, it is the depth of the gathered data, rather than the size of the sample that gives credibility to the findings. This raises a number of limitations.

The researcher holds the view that his personal interest and experience in the subject matter, is of advantage to the quality of his research. There is however, potential that he may have inadvertently biased findings. This is due to the fact that he has acted in a similar role within the context of a church, had professional knowledge of some of the participants and at the same time as undertaking the research, was contracted to a non-profit organization to fill a position which was very similar in nature, to those of the participants. This may have subliminally influenced the type of questions he asked and/or his emphases during the process of data analysis. Despite this, the researcher has sought to remain objective at all times, to the best of his ability,

A second limitation is the constituency of the sample. Three issues are evident. Firstly, even though the objective was not to ensure reliability of findings through mass population of statistical data, nevertheless, sample size was limited to only six respondents. Second, while theoretical saturation was attained throughout the vast majority of the analysis, the participants all came from a somewhat homogenous, small, national denomination that possessed a Congregationalist polity. This opens the possibility that a wider cross-section of participants from differing ecclesiastical backgrounds may have uncovered an expanded range of responses. Of particular interest in this area are the findings, which refer to the congregation's relationships with their denomination. Third, the sample omitted inclusion of parishioners, who may have possessed widely differing views and understandings of the phenomenon, than those who were leading the transition.

A further limitation concerns the ambiguity of measuring the success of TM. When first embarking on their respective ministries, the TMRs talked of their having a role in bringing about change within the church, however, only one claimed to have had a clear picture of what that change "might" involve. It was only as participants journeyed with their church that their purpose became clear. Due to this, neither defining, nor claiming success appeared to be of importance to the respondents. Arguably, this was because they understood their temporary role was complete and therefore, success was automatically considered to have been attained when the congregation started the process of appointing a settled minister. However, a more plausible explanation was that the event of reaching the destination held little importance for the TMRs. What mattered was the process of journeying with the congregation through its transition. Measuring success at this level is far harder to quantify and while the TMRs believed they acted in good faith and to the best of their ability, the current research had not attempted to consider subjective evaluations of the TMRs leadership from the perspective of the congregation or denominational staff.

Lastly, this study intentionally limited itself to exclusively interviewing TMRs and as such, it has not captured the views of parishioners, board members, pastoral associates or denominational executives. Furthermore, its boundaries were confined to describing the TMRs' respective approaches to leadership and the processes they employed throughout their ministry with the congregation; therefore, it remains for future study to widen the parameters of the investigation and/or to assess whether there is potential to generalise findings within wider ecclesiastical and/or social sector boundaries.

Future Research

Given that prior research in this area of study is extremely limited, the current investigation serves as a pilot from which a variety of potential pathways for future examination emerge.

Firstly, due to the limited size and subjective nature of the sample, future research should explore related themes with the same methodology as that of the current study, but within dissimilar settings. Obvious contexts might include churches based in differing countries who have employed a TMR, but also those that have alternative polities such as Presbyterian or Episcopalian. In addition to this, consideration should be given to investigating the differing approaches to leadership and the various processes adopted by consultants, acting CEOs and change managers, within the wider social sector. Another option would be to utilise traditional, objectivist research methods such as questionnaires and or structured interviews. The above recommendations have the sole objective of testing and formalising the theory developed in the current research in more generalised contexts.

A second line of future research is to explore the subject matter from the perspective of the parishioner. This could be achieved through an inductive method of analysis such as grounded theory. However, questionnaires, structured interviews, or even the researcher's initial desire to gain cross-level data analysis by hosting a series of congregational focus groups, could also be employed. Additionally, this could allow opportunity to explore issues related to perceptions of what constitutes a successful TM in greater depth than was achieved in the current study. This research would serve to enrich the depth of data gathered which in turn has potential to enhance the leadership styles and processes of those who serve as TMRs.

While the current study was confined to exploring issues relating to change leadership in dynamic environments, a third possibility is to grapple with transition in settled churches and/or stable wider social sector organizations. Future research in this area could branch in two different directions. Firstly, it could explore and compare differing approaches to leadership that are perceived as being beneficial in the differing environments, and secondly it could look at what precipitates change and how this is successfully managed in relatively stable environments and again compare findings with this study. Such work would also be enhanced by cross level data analysis that integrates the perceptions of the leaders with those of followers.

Finally, while the current research has identified three possible pathways to restore health to a congregation enduring crisis involving the departure of its minister, it has not established which, if any is the best course to take. This can best be examined through longitudinal studies involving congregational members over an extended period, starting before, but also during and after the crisis.

Implications for Practitioners

The model reveals the three drivers, including the departure of the minister, that precipitate TM. These consist of conflict within a parish, organisational dysfunction and/or a loss of direction that intensifies to the point that low attendance at services and reduced giving forces the congregation to become aware of its crisis. The result is that the church invites denominational staff to intervene. This leads to the appointment of a TMR who has the principal goal of restoring health to the congregation through resolving the dysfunction and ultimately appointing a successor. The TMR brings to the role a philosophy of pastoral leadership that instils hope, listens, learns, builds trust, serves, engages, envisions, takes decisions, teaches and communicates. Due to both the nature of the crisis and their approach to leadership, the process TMRs embark on involves affirming, building survival structures, facilitating healing, envisioning and implementing and lastly establishing a Call Committee who will recommend the name of a settled minister to replace the TMR. A series of implications based on the model are outlined below.

1) The Drivers of Transitional Ministry: In the current research, congregational crises had reached the point where significant turbulence was threatening the future viability the respective churches. This resulted in direct intervention being required by denominational staff that ultimately engaged the services of a TMR who possessed considerable authority to act as the commissioner of the parish. A number of recommendations rise from this.

It is possible that the disruptive intrusions associated with TM, which effectively freeze many of the normal routines of church life, could be avoided if trigger points that lead to the dysfunction are identified and resolved before the situation escalates to the level of crisis. While acknowledging that parish

reviews might not be welcome in the majority of Congregationalist churches, many denominational bodies offer the support of independent, senior consultants who provide confidential advice to parish board members and pastors. While this support service often exists, it is possible that pastors and particularly new, volunteer board members are unaware of the resource. Therefore, it is suggested these services should be promoted on a regular and consistent basis. This has potential to establish a fresh culture within the denomination where standard practice would be to seek help before crisis point is reached.

In a minority of cases, there was evidence that the congregation perceived the actions of denominational staff as being impulsive and/or coercive. The criticism was that they did not take enough time to understand fully the situation before intervening. As previously mentioned a simple solution to this is for denominational executives to undertake professional development courses in conflict resolution, negotiation skills and understanding transformational leadership. Perception however, is not always reality; it may be that by nature independent congregations and those who lead them either voluntarily, or professionally, resist any form of what they perceive as hierarchical intervention. If so, this culture could be intentionally amended through the repeated telling of 'good news stories'. These reports should focus on giving examples where denominational consultants have successfully worked with congregations encountering strife, either personally or through the appointment of a TMR. Not only does this publicize the roles of consultants, it also promotes acceptance of congregational imperfection and failure, thereby instilling more accurate understandings of relationships within and between congregation and denominational staff.

Additionally, perceptions of denominational staff authoritarianism could be overcome by amending the three-way call agreement to exclude denominational staff as a formal party to the contract. Such an approach is not consistent with Congregationalist polity but rather appears to have been inadvertently imported as a process from the IMN, which predominately works in Episcopalian structures. Furthermore having legitimate authority was irrelevant for most TMRs; indeed, they were embarrassed over the power given

them. As senior ministers in age, they arrived at a people-centred or transformational approach to their leadership, where they viewed power as being something that was earned through the building of trust.

2) The Goals of Transitional Ministry: There appears to be considerable difference of opinion in literature on TM and with current findings as to what the purpose of TM is and therefore how it is defined. This raises a number of issues.

Firstly, literature compares TM to interim ministry; however, the utility of interim ministry itself is brought seriously into question by different authors. It appears as if the purpose of a supply minister is to assist a church by providing very basic support services from the point of the minister's resignation, through to the appointment of a new settled pastor. The criticism of some authors, such as Martin (2009), is that interim ministry leads to the decline of church attendance and giving. If however, congregations were to adopt processes related to intentional succession planning for their senior staff, rather than merely replacing its leader under urgency, this regressive stage in the life of church could be circumvented in all situations other than where the departure of the pastor is abrupt and unexpected.

Secondly, the TMRs themselves did not see their role as that of an interim, who provided minimal services to keep the congregation operational. They were adamant they were in the church to achieve a clear purpose and to bring change to the congregation. However, the current research goes further than this in that it advocates that TM is not just to facilitate change as is advocated by the IMN; rather, it asserts that TM exists to bring about change only in circumstances where the change is precipitated by, or involves major crisis. To disrupt the day-to-day processes in the life of a congregation by introducing TM is unnecessarily intrusive, unless there is dysfunction that demands direct intervention in order to restore health to the church. It is therefore recommended that TM should only be considered of value as the subsequent stage after denominational consultancy services have failed.

Thirdly, the process of restoring health to the congregation involved considerable stress for most TMRs. This is despite their awareness of self-differentiation and the need to have a non-anxious presence. Their transformational philosophies of leadership including spiritual, servant, and charismatic approaches to pastoral work demand self-sacrifice and deep commitment that resulted in high levels of psychological distress for the majority of participants. It appeared as if there were insufficient mechanisms to assist TMRs through the demands that were made of them. Therefore, denominational bodies that engage TMRs should consider how to adequately support their ministers who enter environments where there is a depth of trauma and conflict.

3) The Philosophical Approaches to Leadership of Transitional Ministry: The current study largely dismisses transactional or task based leadership as being of utility for TMRs. Rather it recommends a 'people-centred', transformational approach that seeks to build rapport by listening, learning and working to earn the trust of parishioners. Furthermore, it advocates engaging the congregation as much as is possible in all envisioning and decision-making processes.

To this end, this study refutes the utility of TMRs adopting an autocratic approach to leadership. In particular it questions the merits of the isolationist model of ministerial envisioning and decision making that is advocated by Kaiser's (2006) accountable leadership, or as it is more commonly referred 'the ministry led model'. Putting to one side his seeing merit in the domineering function of the pastoral leader, Kaiser's model offers value for TM in two areas. Firstly it affirms that pastoral leadership should be intentional and secondly it offers clarity concerning the structural distinction between congregational governance and management.

Lastly, leadership of TM is dependent on situation and takes into account areas of congregational weakness and dysfunction. This means that TMRs should empower their parishioners in proportion to the ability of members. As skills are honed in differing areas of congregational life, TMRs will move from telling and directing towards delegating.

4) The Processes of Transitional Ministry: The current research identifies the primary task for all TMRs is to enter their congregation by affirming and building a sense of hope for the future of the community. Likewise, the second task for all TMRs is to ensure the church is operational and 'open for worship'.

While it is acknowledged that longitudinal studies are required to determine the success of the differing pathways from this point forward, the current findings offer three clear routes that TMRs can elect to adopt as they journey with a congregation through their crisis. Firstly, they can seek to restore health by identifying and resolving points of congregational tension and/or dysfunction. Secondly, they can seek to restore health by envisioning a future mission for the church. Thirdly, they can seek to restore health by identifying and resolving points of congregational tension and/or dysfunction and then envision its future mission.

Lastly, the current study questions the need for the clause in the TMR contract that excludes the possibility of TMRs transiting to a settled role in the same church where they served as TMR. In Congregationalist churches, such decisions should be determined exclusively between minister and congregation.

In conclusion, this study contributes to literature by employing grounded theory to analyse empirical data with the purpose of generating theory related to the little investigated phenomenon of TM. Having formed a series of propositions that emerged through the data, a model of TM was then developed. This identifies the core of TM as being the restoration of health to a congregation. The model moves on to indicate the approaches to leadership considered important for those who play the role of TMR and outlines what processes to utilise in realizing their objective. As there appears to be so little empirical research available on the subject, it is hoped that this exploratory investigation will stimulate further consideration of issues related to leading change in both church congregations and the wider social sector.

References

Allison, M. (2003). Into the fire: Board and executive transitions. *Nonprofit Management and Leadershhip . July*(1), 14-28.

Anderson, N. T., & Mylander, C. (1994). Ventura, CA: Regal Books.

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. New York: NY: Free Press.

Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1990). Developing transformational leadership. *Journal of European Industrial Training, 14*(1), 21-27.

Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1997). *Revised manual for the multi-factor questionaire*. Palo Alto, CA: Mind Garden.

Becker, H. S. (1982). Culture: A sociological review. *Yale Review, 71*(1), 513-537.

Benefiel, M. (2005). The second half of the journey. *Leadership Quarterly, 16*(1), 723-747.

Bligh, M. K. (2004). Charisma under crisis. *Leadership Quarterly, 15*(2), 211-240.

Bryman, A., & Bell, E. (2007). *Business research methods* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Burgess, G. (1984). *Thte research process in educational settings*. Basingstoke, UK: Taylor and Francis Printing.

Burns, J. (1978). *Leadership*. New York: Harper and Row.

Carlyle, T., & Fredrick, A. (1888). *On heroes, hero-worship and the heroic in history*. New York, NY: Stokes & Brother.

Carver, J. (2006). *Boards that make a difference: A new design for leadership in nonprofit and public organizations* (3rd ed.). Hoboken, NJ Jossey-Bass.

Chait, R. P., Holland, T. P., & Taylor, B. E. (1996). *Improving the performance of governing boards*. Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.

Chapman, J. (1998). Do process consultants need different skills when working with non-profits? *Leadership and Organization Development Journal, 4*(4), 211- 218.

Charan, R. (2000). How to lower the risk in CEO succession. *Leader to Leader, 17*(1), 26-32.

Collins, J. (2005). *Good to great and the Social Sectors*. New York, NY: Harpercollins.

Conger, J. A., Kanungo, R. N., & Menon, S. T. (2000). Charasmatic leadership and follower effects. *Journal of Organsiational Behaviour, 21*(1), 747-767.

Cooperrider, D. L., & Srivastva, S. (1987). Appreciative inquiry in orgaisational life and development. In W. Pasmore (Ed.), *Research in organizationa change*. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

De Dreu, C. W., Koole, S. L., & Steinel, W. (2000). Unfixing the fixed pie. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 79*(1), 975-987.

Denzin, M. K. (1970). *The research act of sociology*. Chicago: Aldine.

Diener, E., & Crandall, R. (1978). *Ethics in social and behavioral research*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dimaggio, P. (1988). Nonprofit managers in different fields of service. In M. Oneil (Ed.), *Educating managers of nonprofi organizations* (pp. 51- 69). New York, NY: Praeger.

Drucker, P. (1990). *Managing the nonprofit organization*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Duchon, D., & Ploughman, D. A. (2005). Nurturing the spirit at work. *Leadership Quarterly, 16*(5), 807-833.

Fiedler, F. (1964). A contingency model of leadership effectivness. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology*. New York, NY: Academic Press.

Finegold, M. A., Holand, B., & Lingham, T. (2002). Appreciative enquiry and public dialogue. *Public Organizational Review, 2*(3), 235-252.

Fisher, J. (1999). *The change and transition cycle*. Paper presented at the Tenth International Personal Construct Congress, Berlin.

French, J. R., & Raven, B. (1959). *The basis of social power: Studies in social power* Michigan, IN: University of Michaigan Press.

Fry, L. (2003). Towards a theory of spiritual leadership. *Leadership Quarterly, 14*(6), 693-727.

Gersick, C. (1991). Revolutionary change theories. *Academy of Management Review 16*(1), 10-36.

Gibons, P. (2000). *Spirituality at work.* Paper presented at the Academy of
Management Annual Meeting, Toronto.

Gilmore, T., & Ronchi, D. (1995). Managing predecessors: Shadows in
executive transitions. *Human Resource Management 34*(1), 43-59.

Glaser, B. G. (1978). *Theoretical sensitivity*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B. G. (1998). *Doing grounded theory: Issues and discussions*. Mill
Valley, CA: Socialology Press.

Glaser, B. G. (2002). Conceptualization. *International Journal of Qualitative
Methods, 1*(2), Article 3.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory:
Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago: Aldine.

Goldsmith, M. (2007). Building a better team. *Buisness Week September*.

Gould, S. (1978). *Ever since Darwin*. London: Burnett Books.

Grant, P. (1996). Supporting transition. *Organizations and People, 3*(4), 15-31.

Gray, J. S., & Tucker, J. C. (1996). *Presbyterian polity for church officers* (3rd
ed.). Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press.

Greenleaf, R. K. (1977). *Servant leadership*. New York, NY: Paulist Press.

Greenleaf, R. K. (1998). The servant as leader. In L. Spears (Ed.), *The power of
servant leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett Koehler.

Grondin, J. (1994). *Introduction to philosophical hermeneutics*. New Haven, CT:
Yale University Press.

Haberberg, A. (2000). http://www2.wmin.ac.uk/haberba/SwatSWOT Retrieved
13 August, 2011

Hall, M., & Banting, K. G. (2000). *The nonprofit sector in Canada*. Kingston, ON:
McGill/Queens University Press.

Halpert, A., Stuhlmacher, A. F., Crenshaw, J. L., Litcher, D., & Bortel, R. (2010).
Paths to negotiation success. *International Association for Conflict
Management and Wiley Periodicals Inc, 3*(2), 91-116.

Healey, M. J., & Rawlinson, M. B. (1993). Interviewing business owners and
managers. *Geoforum, 24*(3), 339- 357.

Herman, R. D., & Heimovics, R. D. (1991). *Executive leadership in nonprofit
organizations*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Hersey, P., & Blanchard, K. H. (1988). *Management of organsiational
behaviour: utilising human resources* (5th ed.). New Jersey: Prentice
Hall.

Hoge, D. R., & Wenger, J. E. (2005). *Pastors in transition: Why clergy leave church ministry*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

House, R. J. (1971). A path goal theory of leader effectiveness *Administrative Science Quarterly, 16*(1), 321-338.

House, R. J., & Aditya, R. N. (1977). The social study of leadership. *Journal of Management, 23*(1), 409-473.

Imara, M. (1975). Dying as the last stage of growth. In E. Kubler-Ross (Ed.), *Death the final stage of growth*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Interim Ministry Network. (1999). *Transitional Ministry Training Handbook*. Baltimore, MD: Interim Ministries Network.

Interim Ministry Network. (2011). http://www.imnedu.org/home Retrieved 2 September, 2011

Kaiser, J. E. (2006). *Winning on purpose*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press.

Kearns, K. P., & Scarpino, G. (1996). Strategic planning research: Knowledge and gaps. *Nonprofit Management & Leadership, 6*(4), 429-439.

Kelle, U. (1995). Theories as heuristic tools in qualitative research. In I. Maso (Ed.), *Openess is research*. Assen: Van Gorcum.

Klenke, K. (2008). *Qualitative study in the research of leadership*. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing.

Kotter, J. (1996). *Leading change*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School.

Kriger, M., & Seng, Y. (2005). Leadership with inner meaning. *Leadership Quarterly, 16*(5), 771-806.

Kubler-Ross, E. (1969). *On death and dying*. New York: Touchstone.

Kvale, S. (1996). *InterViews*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Kydel, J. (2009). What do we do first? In M. Smith (Ed.), *Transitional ministry*. New York, NY: Church Publishing.

Lamb, C. W., Hair, J. F., & McDaniel, C. (1998). *Marketing* (4th ed.). Cincinati, Oh: South-Western College Publishing.

Lewin, K. (1951). *Field theory in social sciences*. New York: Harper and Row.

Lewis, L. K., & Seibold, D. R. (1998). Reconceptualising organizational change impementation as a communication problem. *Communication Yearbook, 21*(1), 93-151.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverley Hills: Sage.

Lisak, D. (2006). The psychological impact of sexual abuse. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 7*(4), 525- 547.

Locke, K. D. (2001). *Grounded theory in management research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lowe, K. B., & Gardiner, W. L. (2000). Ten years of leadership quarterly. *The Leadership Quarterly, 11*(4), 459-514.

Marshall. (1984). *Women managers*. Chicester: John Wiley.

Martin, G. (2009). Why can't things stay the same? In M. Smith (Ed.), *Transitonal ministry: A time of opportunity*. New York, NY: Church Publishing.

Maslow, A. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review, July*(1), 370-396.

Mason, J. (1994). Linking qualitative and quantitative data analysis. In A. Bryman & R. G. Burgess (Eds.), *Analysing qualitative data*. London: Routledge.

Mason, J. (1996). *Qualitative researching*. London Sage.

Maykut, P., & Morehouse, R. (1994). *Beginning qualitative research: A philosophic and practical guide*. London: Falmer Press.

McFarlan, F. W. (1999). Working on nonprofit boards: Don't assume the shoe fits. *Harvard Business Review, 77*(6), 65-76.

McGregor, D. (1960). *The human side of enterprise*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Mead, L. (1986). *Critical moments in ministry*. Washington, D.C.: Alban Institute.

Mead, L. (2009). Foreword. In M. Smith (Ed.), *Transitional ministry: A time of opportunity*. New York, NY: Church Publishing

Menninger, W. (1975). The meaning of morale:A peace corps model. In D. Moyniham (Ed.), *Business and society in change*. New York, NY: American Telephone and Telegraph Co.

Merton, R. K., Fiske, M., & Kendall, P. L. (1956). *The focussed interview*. New York: Free Press.

Mies, M. (1993). Towards a methodlogy for feminist research. In M. Hammersley (Ed.), *Social research philosophy*. London: Sage.

Milkman, R. (1997). *Farwelll to the factory*. Berkeley,CA: University of California Press.

Miller, N. (2009). What does an interim pastor do? In M. Smith (Ed.), *Transitonal Ministry*. New york, NY: Church Publishing.

Mitchell, J. C. (1983). Case and situation analysis. *Sociological Review, 31*(1), 186-201.

Ornell, K., & Smith, M. D. (2009). Why have a letter of agreement? In M. Smith (Ed.), *Transitional Ministry*. New York, NY: Church Publishing.

Parry, K. (1998). Grounded theory and social processes. A new direction for leadership research. *The Leadership Juarterly, 9*(1), 85-106.

Pascale, R., & Athos, A. (1981). *The art of Japanese management*. New York, NY: Warner Books.

Pastoral Relations Office. (2009). *Calling a congregational minister*. Oak Creek, WI: National Association of Congregational Christian Churches.

Peters, T. J., & Waterman, R. H. (1984). *In search of excellence*. Sydney: Harper & Row.

Peterson, T. O., & Van Fleet, D. D. (2008). A tale of two situations: An empirical study of behavior by not-for-profit managerial leaders. *Public Performance & Management Review, 31*(1), 503-516.

Potter, J. (1996). *Representing reality: discourse, rhetoric and social construction*. London: Sage.

Pugh, D. S. (1983). Studying organizational structure and process. In G. Morgan (Ed.), *Beyond method*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Rahim, M. A. (1985). A strategy for managing conflict in complex organizations. *Human Relations, January*(1), 84-103.

Ram, M. (1994). *Managing to survive: Working lives in small firms*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Reichard, R. J. (2006). Towards a grounded theory of female leader development in the military. *Leadership Review, 6*(Winter), 3-28.

Rogers, C. (1951). *Client-centered therapy: Its current practice, implications, and theory. .* Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Rothwell, W. (2001). *Effective succession planning* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: American Managment Association.

Rousseau, D. M. (1985). Issues of level in organizational research. In I. Cummings & B. Staw (Eds.), *Research in organizational behaviour*. London: JAI Press.

Ruben, H. J., & Ruben, I. S. (1995). *Qualitative interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rudney, G. (1987). The scope and dimension of nonprofit activity. In W. Powell (Ed.), *The nonprofi sector*. New Havan, CT: Yale University Press.

Salamon, L. (1994). *The emerging sector*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Institute for Policy Studies.

Santora, J., & Sarros, J. (2001). CEO succession in nonporofit community-based organizations. *Career Development International., 6*(2), 107 -110.

Schultz, A. (1962). *The problem of social reality*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhof.

Silverman, D. (1993). *Interpreting qualitative data*. London: Sage.

Smith, M. D. (2009). What is Transitional Ministry. In M. Smith (Ed.), *Transitonal Ministry*. New York, NY: Church Publishing.

Sousa, C., & Hendricks, P. (2006). The diving bell and the butterfly. *Organizational Research Methods, 9*(3), 315-338.

Spears, L. (1995). *Reflections on leadership*. New York, NY: J Wiley and Sons.

Strauss, A. (1987). *Qualtitative analysis for social scientists*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. M. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. M. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Tannenbaum, W. H., & Schmidt, R. (1958). How to choose a leadership pattern. *Harvard Business Review, March-April*(1).

Tierney, T. (2006). The leadership defecit. *Stanford Social Innovation Review, 26*(3), 5-21.

Toon, P., Cowan, S. B., & Patterson, P. (2004). *Who runs the church?: 4 views on church government*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Tushman, M. L., Newman, W., & Romanelli, E. (1986). Convergence and upheaval. . *California Management Review, 29*(1), 29-44.

Von Wright, G. H. (1971). *Explaination and understanding*. London: Routledge.

Voyle, R. (2009). What is the appreciative inquiry approach to trasition. In M. D. Smith (Ed.), *Transitional Ministry*. New York, NY: Church Publishing.

Vroom, V. (1964). *Work and motivation*. New York, NY: John Wiley and Sons.

Weber, M. (1947). *The theory of social and economic organization*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Weisbord, M. (1978). *Organizational diagnostics*. Reading: Addison-Wesley.

Whyte, W. F. (1953). Inteviewing for organizational research. *Human Organization, 12*(2), 15-27.

Wolfred, T., Allison, M., & Masaoka, J. (1999). *Leadership lost: A study on executive tenure and experience*. CompassPoint Nonprofit Services. San Francisco. CA.

Yukl, G. (1971). Toward a behavioral theory of leadership. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 6*(4), 414-440.

Yukl, G. (2010). *Leadership in organizations*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Appendix A: Interview Guide

Interview Guide

1. Introduction
   1.1. What motivated you towards accepting a role in Transitional Ministry (TM)?
   1.2. How did you become a TM?
      1.2.1. Had you completed any training associated with TM?
   1.3. When did you complete this transitional role and how long was it for?
   1.4. What did/do you see as unique or different in the role from
      1.4.1. Settled pastoral ministry?
      1.4.2. Locum or supply ministry
   1.5. What did you understand to be the role/s and objective/s of your TM
      1.5.1. Were the goals achieved?
      1.5.2. Reflecting on the experience, were these goals constructive?

2. Leadership
   2.1. What is your philosophy of leadership?
      2.1.1. Why do you see this as important?
      2.1.2. To what extent do you perceive your leadership roles in different contexts are guided by this philosophy?
   2.2. What are the features of your leadership style in the TM setting?
   2.3. What do you perceive was the effect of your leadership style in the TM setting?
      2.3.1. On the congregation?
      2.3.2. On achieving your goals of your TM
   2.4. If you could relive the experience, would you amend your leadership style in that context?
      2.4.1. How?
      2.4.2. Why?

3. The process
   3.1. What steps, processes or tasks did you embark on to achieve your objectives with the church?
   3.2. Which steps were particularly significant in your situation?
      3.2.1. Which were successful and why?
      3.2.2. Which were problematic and why?
   3.3. Reflecting on the experience, what would you do differently in your next TM?

4. The challenges
   4.1. What (if any) were the obstacles or challenges that arose, which were external to the congregation, e.g. denominational, logistical, personal?
      4.1.1. Were these adequately addressed?
         4.1.1.1. If yes, how?
         4.1.1.2. If no, how could they have been addressed?
   4.2. What (if any) were the obstacles or challenges that arose which were within the congregation?
   4.3. Were these adequately addressed?
         4.3.1.1. If yes, how?
         4.3.1.2. If no, how could they have been addressed?