

2018

## Working Priests: Improving the Care for Vineyard Bivocational Pastors

Aaron Peterson  
apeterson15@georgefox.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/dmin>

 Part of the [Christianity Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Peterson, Aaron, "Working Priests: Improving the Care for Vineyard Bivocational Pastors" (2018). *Doctor of Ministry*. 254.

<https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/dmin/254>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Digital Commons @ George Fox University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctor of Ministry by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ George Fox University. For more information, please contact [arolfe@georgefox.edu](mailto:arolfe@georgefox.edu).

GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY

WORKING PRIESTS:  
IMPROVING THE CARE FOR VINEYARD BIVOCATIONAL PASTORS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THE PORTLAND SEMINARY  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

AARON PETERSON

PORTLAND, OREGON

MARCH 2018

Portland Seminary  
George Fox University  
Portland, Oregon

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

---

DMin Dissertation

---

This is to certify that the DMin Dissertation of

Aaron Peterson

has been approved by  
the Dissertation Committee on February 14, 2018  
for the degree of Doctor of Ministry in Leadership and Global Perspectives.

Dissertation Committee:

Primary Advisor: Debby Thomas, PhD

Secondary Advisor: Darrell Peregrym, DMin

Lead Mentor: Jason Clark, DMin

Copyright © 2018 Aaron Peterson  
All Rights Reserved.

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2007 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publisher, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved worldwide.

To the working priests all over the world who are called and gifted to minister in what seems like two different worlds.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to the Hub, a church affiliated with the Association of Vineyard Churches, USA, and to the students, faculty, and staff of Verdugo Hills High School of the Los Angeles School Unified School District.

Thank you Jason Clark for hearing Jesus and speaking the invitation to me. Thank you Laura Simmons, MaryKate Morse, Clifford Berger, Loren Kerns, Chuck Conniry and Heather Rainey. Thank you to my cohort who lifted me up when I needed it. Thank you Glenn Williams, for adopting me as an honorary advisee. What a life-changing program!

Thank you Cierra Wallace for the editing help!

Thank you Debby Thomas for all the Skypes, edits, power walks in Oxford, coffees, and prayers. The Portland Seminary and I are lucky to have you.

Thank you to my children for allowing me to pursue this dream!

Thank you Lisa, for doing life together with me and for allowing me to take us on this wild and crazy ride. You will never fully know how much I've learned from you. In so many ways, you are the true embodiment of the perfect working priest.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	v
PREFACE .....	viii
ABSTRACT .....	xi
CHAPTER ONE: VINEYARD WORKING PRIESTS NEED BETTER CARE .....	1
Introduction .....	1
Three Short Fictional Sketches of the Main Types of Vineyard Working Priests .....	2
Discovering the Number of Vineyard Working Priests is a Mystery .....	13
Working Priest: A New Label .....	18
Why Are There So Many Working Priests in the Vineyard? .....	23
Summary .....	29
CHAPTER TWO: WORKING PRIEST BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL, AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS.....	31
Introduction.....	31
Biblical Foundations .....	31
Other Historical Foundations .....	34
Five Arguments Against the Working Priesthood .....	39
Working Priest Theology .....	50
Four Biblical Metaphors for Working Priests .....	60
Summary .....	72
CHAPTER THREE: WHAT OTHER US-AMERICAN DENOMINATIONS ARE DOING FOR WORKING PRIESTS .....	73
Introduction .....	73

Vineyard Working Priests Need Coaching .....	74
US Denominations with an Online Presence for Working Priests .....	93
Summary .....	96
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: THE UNIQUE CHALLENGES OF VINEYARD WORKING PRIESTS .....</b>	<b>98</b>
Introduction .....	98
Identity and Shame .....	100
Success and Failure .....	102
Exceptions and Margins .....	105
Working Priest Lack of Recognition .....	107
Working Priest Isolation .....	108
Working Priests Need Soul Care .....	110
Summary .....	111
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: IMPROVEMENTS FOR WORKING PRIEST CARE WITHIN THE CURRENT VINEYARD STRUCTURE .....</b>	<b>112</b>
Introduction .....	112
Vineyard Working Priest and the Need for Cultural Intelligence .....	112
Solutions from the Vineyard Working Priest Lunch .....	116
Seeing Working Priest as Called .....	117
Working Priest Ideas Discovered by Brenda Gatlin .....	118
The Association of Vineyard Churches, USA Structure .....	119
Area Leaders can Invite Working Priests to Share Area Leadership Responsibilities .....	122
Improving Care for Working Priests at the Vineyard Regional Level .....	123



Working Priests are Cared for through Partnerships with Large Churches .....	124
Adapting Regional Conferences to Accommodate Working Priests.....	126
Improving Care for Working Priests at the Vineyard National Level.....	128
Making Room at the National Level for Working Priest Voices .....	128
Summary.....	132
<b>CHAPTER SIX: A CARE AND RESOURCE PLAN FOR VINEYARD WORKING PRIESTS .....</b>	<b>133</b>
Introduction .....	133
Working Priests Fit in the Vineyard .....	133
Three Documents Inspire Vineyard Improvement with Working Priest Care .....	139
Website Helps Provide for the Eight Immediate Working Priest Needs .....	150
Summary .....	161
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>APPENDIX ONE .....</b>	<b>171</b>
<b>APPENDIX TWO .....</b>	<b>173</b>
<b>APPENDIX THREE .....</b>	<b>175</b>

## PREFACE

Labor Day Weekend 2017 marked a pinnacle in the life of this Vineyard working priest. In my tiny town, a fire was started. As this fire grew into the largest fire in Los Angeles city history, I found myself going from helping members of my church evacuate, to dashing over to the high school where I have taught for twenty-three years to open it up to serve as an evacuation center and helicopter crash landing pad.

Within twenty hours of being first on the crash scene and being able to pray with the heroic pilots, who were shaken-up and in shock, on my school's football field, I found myself leading a worship and prayer service for five churches and community leaders. What an amazing experience! While serving as a local high school teacher, a job that has been a "tent-making" presence in my family, sharing the good news of the kingdom as a missionary, and multitasking like a nursing mother, I felt the strong impact that my church and I are having on our community.

Vineyard working priests are having a great impact in their churches, communities and the larger Vineyard movement. The impact could be dramatically increased if Vineyard working priests were better cared for and resourced. This project is meant to be a gift to the Vineyard. I joined the Vineyard in 1983 when I was eleven years old. This dissertation is written from an insider perspective as one who grew up in the Vineyard, who loves the Vineyard, and who is a current pastor of a Vineyard church called the Hub Vineyard Church that was planted in 2003.

This project is the fruit of three years of academic research, surveys, interviews, and informal conversations. It is also the product of fifteen years of Vineyard church

planting and pastoring. I have attempted to combine a deeply personal issue with the highest academic standards and research methods.

It is December now and the fires are back. I am writing this preface after being evacuated from my home. This time due to the imminent danger that existed in my neighborhood, instead of leading a huge community worship gathering, I operated as a working priest in different ways. The following account of the evacuations and emergencies that took place on December 5, 2017 illustrate how working priests in the Vineyard operate.

On Tuesday December 5, 2017, I woke up at 2:30 am to pray and work on this dissertation. At 4:09 am, I took my dog to our backyard and saw flames and smoke and took a picture on my phone. I could tell that the Youth With A Mission Base (YWAM) was in the path of the fire, so I sent the picture to the person on the base who is in charge of base safety. I then sent a picture to my high school principal. Within one hour, the entire YWAM base was evacuated and I met them at the Hub, the Vineyard church my family and a couple of close friends pioneered in 2003, with coffee and donuts. My principal sent the picture to his boss at Los Angeles Unified School District and requested that the district cancel school for the day due to the danger. They did not.

From 5:20 am to 7:20 am, I worked with the Hub board and leaders to orchestrate approximately one hundred international students and leaders situated at our church, along with three cats, two guinea pigs, and a three-week old puppy. I left the church at 7:20 am to pass by my home to check on my children and then went to Verdugo Hills High School where I have taught history since 1995. Because I am the United Teachers of

Los Angeles Union Chapter Chair, I worked with the school administrative team to adapt our previous scheduled faculty meeting that day.

After our meeting, classes started at 9:10 am. Within one hour, our school was on mandatory “Shelter In Place,” and by 11:00 am, the emergency evacuation orders came. The school was to be evacuated to another high school. As I escorted my class to the busses for transport, I encountered students and parents who are part of my church. My wife came to pick-up two students in our Hub youth group and I stayed with my class to a safe evacuation site.

During the four-minute bus ride to North Hollywood High School, I texted and called members of our church who were also being evacuated, including my family. When we arrived at the school, I assisted with reuniting students and parents until 3:45 pm. Because my entire neighborhood was under mandatory evacuation orders, I hitched a ride with a coworker to her house and waited to get picked up. I was eventually reunited with my family at 6:00 pm at my in-laws’ home a safe distance away from the fire. That evening I continued to Facebook message, call, and text people in the Hub to assure everyone was safe.

This experience, although abnormal, is indicative of the heart and practice of Vineyard working priests. This project seeks to show what an important impact Vineyard working priests are having in their neighborhoods throughout the United States, make the case for how necessary it is for the Vineyard to improve her care of working priests, and show an effective strategy of how the Vineyard can move forward in assisting working priests.

## ABSTRACT

The number of Vineyard bivocational pastors in the US Vineyard church is unknown, and although pastoring bivocationally is common, there is a current lack of resources available to meet their unique challenges. The Association of Vineyard Churches, USA has improved from where it used to be, but they are currently not where they want to be in terms of caring for Vineyard bivocational pastors. This dissertation explores the current bivocational situation in the Association of Vineyard Churches, USA and argues that the Vineyard needs to take better care of Vineyard pastors who work jobs outside their churches. This project shows in detail how the impact that pastors currently have will greatly increase with better care and resources.

Chapter One introduces the problem of the lack of care and resources for Vineyard bivocational pastors. A case is made to change the label from “bivocational” to “working priest.” This chapter concludes describing the plethora of reasons why so many Vineyard pastors are working priests.

Chapter Two develops a working priest theology. The first section shows the important role that working priests have played throughout the Old and New Testaments and church history. Then there is a discussion of the five common disputes Vineyard working priests face today. The current working priest theology is pragmatic, and, after a brief synopsis of this theology, a more developed theology is put forth. Using the four biblical images of exiles, tentmaker, missionary, and nursing mother, the theology of the working priesthood is moved forward.

Chapter Three is a type of literature review. As there are not many scholarly works about working priests, this chapter summarizes the popular and academic

resources available, and describes how each informs the Vineyard of methods to improve the care and resourcing of Vineyard working priests.

Chapter Four describes the unique challenges Vineyard working priests face. This chapter shows that although working priests are a major force in the Vineyard, working priests must overcome difficult hurdles that pastors who do not have a second job do not experience.

Chapter Five offers detailed steps the Association of Vineyard Churches, USA could take to better care for and resource working priests in the movement within its current structure. This chapter shows that changes can take place at the area, regional, and national levels that would improve care and consequently increase the impact of working priests.

Chapter Six shows how working priests fit into the Vineyard and what the Vineyard could create to care for working priests. Using three documents as an outline, this chapter describes in detail how a newly created working priest website will great help both the Vineyard and her working priests.

## **CHAPTER ONE: VINEYARD WORKING PRIESTS NEED BETTER CARE**

### **Introduction**

The Association of Vineyard Churches, USA is poised to increase the impact working priests<sup>1</sup> have in their communities. “Working priest” is this author’s term for what is commonly known in Vineyard circles as “bivocational.” This can be done by improving how the Vineyard cares for and resources them. This project shows: the current situation for Vineyard working priests; the biblical and historical precedents of working priests; what other denominations are doing to help working priests; the unique challenges working priests face; and several steps the Vineyard can take to better serve her working priests.

It is important to note that this project seeks to bring awareness to the large phenomenon of working priests serving in the Vineyard and other denominations. A strong case is made for the Vineyard to start the long burdensome cultural shift of embracing her working priests through better care and resources. This paper is not about measuring the health of churches or the pastors who lead them. The author is aware that there are potentially many bivocational pastors who, like potentially a significant number of non-bivocational pastors in the Vineyard, are simply not healthy. This paper is not about what the Vineyard considers healthy or effective leadership. This timely paper is a call for the Vineyard, and by extension other denominations, to recover the relevant notion of the working priest. Working priests possess great untapped potential and this paper sets out specific steps to help the Vineyard and working priests alike, develop and reach this potential.

---

<sup>1</sup> The term “priest” and “pastor” will be used interchangeably throughout this project to refer to Vineyard local church pastors.

This first chapter of this study lays out a general overview of the growing issue regarding pastors in the Association of Vineyard Churches, USA who lead a local church while earning an income from a job outside of their church. First, three short, fictional sketches of the three main types of Vineyard pastors whom hold second jobs, serve to illustrate several current challenges. Second, there is a detailed explanation of the problem that working priests currently face. Third, there is a brief description of the research process that informed this study. The fourth part of this chapter is a definition and explanation of the term working priest. The chapter closes with reasons why the title “working priest” is the most appropriate label for pastors who hold a second job apart from their church.

### **Three Short Fictional Sketches of the Main Types of Vineyard Working Priests**

#### Story 1: The Accidental Working Priest

Jim<sup>2</sup> is a professional businessperson who planted a Vineyard Church in southern California. He continues to work at his office job that supports his pioneering ministry, as well as his wife and four young children. Leading this church while working his “day” job, Jim realizes he needs camaraderie, coaching, and spiritual direction. Pastoring a congregation and earning a paycheck from an occupation outside the church creates complexities in Jim’s personal and professional lives. Not having the ability to take time off from his outside job precludes Jim from the Vineyard Area *esprit de corps*,<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> These three fictional stories are based on several interviews, surveys, and friendships to serve as general examples of Vineyard working priests. All names have been changed and are not meant to represent any one specific pastor.

<sup>3</sup> A sense of fellowship, pride in the group, and a feeling of a common spirit and bond within the group of pastors.



professional growth opportunities, and spiritual health enjoyed by non-bivocational Vineyard pastors.

Jim needs access to resources that will help him grow as a pastor. Because time is the scarcest resource for working priests, Jim struggles to care for himself. Currently, the current culture of the Vineyard pressures Jim to view bivocationalism as a temporary status and not a calling. In fact, Jim is not seen as a legitimate pastor until he is able to quit his second job. Jim needs a support network.

### Story 2: The Missional Co-Pastoring Working Priests

Phil and Maria co-pastor a Vineyard Church in Arizona. Besides leading their church and raising their three young children, Phil and Maria both work jobs in the community. Phil is a plumber and Jan is a middle-school science teacher. Unlike Jim who views his outside job as a temporary tent-making venture until his church can afford him to quit, Phil and Maria are intentionally working priests. Co-pastoring and working jobs outside their church are a strategic way to reach their community for Jesus. However, like Jim, they face unique challenges as Vineyard working priests. Phil and Maria feel disconnected from the larger Vineyard movement<sup>4</sup> as their jobs preclude them from attending monthly area meetings, regional gatherings, and national conferences.

### Story 3: Working Priests Who Secure Second Jobs as a Transition to Retirement

William has been a Vineyard pastor for more than twenty-five years, without working another job. Now he is ready to retire. For the past two years, William has found part-time jobs to supplement his income and to prepare him and his wife for retirement

---

<sup>4</sup> The national leadership of the Association of Vineyard Churches, USA refers to the Vineyard as a “movement.” It is not the purpose of this project to debate the difference between a denomination and a movement.

from church ministry. He has no retirement package from the Vineyard church he has faithfully pastored for so many years. Consequently, he realizes he needs to pastor as a working priest as an off-ramp from being a senior pastor of a Vineyard church.

William has been invited to serve in various capacities beyond the local church he leads. For example, his Area Leader has given him responsibilities in the area and William works with Vineyard Missions as a partnership leader. These connections beyond his local church foster a sense of kinship with the local and national Vineyard. However, William experiences some roadblocks to ministry that the Vineyard pastors who do not have a second—and sometimes third job—experience. Sometimes because William works another job he is unable to attend regional and national Vineyard functions. Also, even though he personally feels connected to the greater Vineyard, because he is not fully-funded by his local church, Williams is viewed as a second class pastor by his Vineyard colleagues who do not work a second job.

While each of these three stories illustrates distinct types of Vineyard pastors and their different reasons for being bivocational, the vignettes collectively represent the face of the working priest in the Association of Vineyard Churches, USA today and the near future. Their unique motivations for working jobs outside their churches come with a set of unique needs. This dissertation shows these needs and offers several solutions to meeting them.

#### Detailed Description of the Problem Working Priests Face

As one working priest commented, “The Vineyard, as of now, does not do a good job of recognizing and tending to their bivocational pastors!”<sup>5</sup> The number of Vineyard

---

<sup>5</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, July 19, 2017.

bivocational pastors in the US Vineyard church is unknown, and although pastoring bivocationally is common, there is currently a lack of resources available to meet their unique challenges. Vineyard working priests need better care and more resources from the Association of Vineyard Churches, USA.

The first challenge of identifying exactly how many bivocational pastors there are currently in the Vineyard is simply too large for the scope of this dissertation. After reaching out to various local pastors, Area Leaders, Regional Leaders and even National Leaders for two-and-a-half years for information regarding who is a working priest in the Vineyard, the task of coming up with anything more than an informed hypothesis is insurmountable at this time.<sup>6</sup>

The Association of Vineyard Churches, USA is not a unique denomination when it comes to not knowing who her working priests are and how many there are. According to Dennis Bickers, who has studied working priests in the United States for the past thirty years, no U.S. denomination knows how many working priests serve within the denomination.<sup>7</sup> Because the exact number of working priests is unknown, this project makes two educated assumptions.

Assumption #1: The number of Vineyard working priests is significant and most likely higher than many Vineyard leaders think.

The first assumption is that there is a significant amount of Vineyard bivocational pastors who are currently leading local Vineyard churches throughout the United States. This assumption is based on personal conversations with pastors outside of the Vineyard,

---

<sup>6</sup> Michael Gatlin, e-mail message to author, December 6, 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Dennis Bickers, e-mail message to author, September 1, 2017.

magazine articles, personal emails, blogs, numerous conversations with Vineyard leaders, and solid academic research for over two years. The knowledge gained from the formal and informal investigating of the last thirty months suggests that somewhere around fifty percent of the 611 US Vineyard churches' pastors are bivocational.

Michael Gatlin stated, "At a recent meeting with all of the regional leaders, we went from region to region and the estimates were anywhere from 25–50 percent in each region were bivocational pastors. That's huge!"<sup>8</sup> Also, the Vineyard Area Leader serving in Lancaster, Ohio leads an area where fifty percent of the Vineyard pastors are working priests. He writes, "When many of us think of pastoring we think of those who are fully funded. But the reality is many pastors, even most, are bivocational."<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the assumption of this project is that there are probably approximately 300 bivocational Vineyard pastors in the United States.<sup>10</sup>

The Vineyard in the United States also has La Vina churches, which are Spanish-speaking Vineyard churches. Because only one La Vina pastor responded to my survey, this dissertation focuses on English-speaking Vineyard churches in the United States. The one La Vina pastor who responded is confident that most La Vina pastors are working priests. He wrote, "FYI, I'm pretty sure most of the Latino churches have bivocational pastors."<sup>11</sup> Mark Fields also confirmed this to the author during a phone interview.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Gatlin, e-mail message.

<sup>9</sup> Joel Seymour, e-mail message to author, November 8, 2016.

<sup>10</sup> It is important to specify the United States. First, because this project is for primarily working priests in the United States and second, the amount of working priests dramatically increases outside of the United States. For example, as the U.S.-Uganda Partnership leader, it is the experience of the author that currently one hundred percent of the Vineyard churches in Uganda are led by working priests.

<sup>11</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 31, 2017.

<sup>12</sup> Mark Fields, phone interview by author, December 5, 2016.

Assumption #2: The number of working priests is increasing and the Vineyard will continue to follow this trend.

The amount number of bivocational pastors in other denominations is astounding. Nathan Kirkpatrick of Duke Divinity School said, “30% of [US-American] American congregations are served by paid, part-time clergy (2% are served by unpaid clergy).”<sup>13</sup> In 2013, the Rev. Carol Howard Merritt in 2013 wrote in *The Christian Century* that the number of working priests could be as high as seventy percent of pastors. Rev. Peter Bush, in his 2007 essay for *The Presbyterian Record* titled, “The New Normal,” writes, “Nearly half of all congregations have a part-time or a multi-vocational minister.”<sup>14</sup> In 2007, out of the 1,000 Mennonite Church USA congregations, about 500 of them had less than sixty members.<sup>15</sup> This is relevant because most churches with sixty members are not able to fully fund a pastor. Consequently, pastors of churches this size tend to seek other forms of income. Karl Vaters points out that in a typical city in the United States with one million people, there are most likely four mega church pastors who are not working priests and approximately 1,000 pastors who are working priests.<sup>16</sup> Vaters goes on to

---

<sup>13</sup> Nathan Kirkpatrick, “It’s Time to Recalibrate Expectations for Clergy,” *Faith & Leadership*, Faith & Leadership, August 5, 2014, accessed November 21, 2017, <https://www.faithandleadership.com/it’s-time-recalibrate-expectations-clergy>.

<sup>14</sup> Peter Bush, “The New Normal,” *Presbyterian Record*, Presbyterian Record, April 1, 2007, accessed November 28, 2017, <http://www.presbyterianrecord.ca/2007/04/01/the-new-normal/>.

<sup>15</sup> Diane Zaerr Brenneman, “The Bivocational Pastor: Toward A Healthy Part-Time Arrangement for the Fully-Valued Pastor and the Fully-Engaged Congregation” (D.Min. diss., McCormick Theological Seminary, 2007), 3.

<sup>16</sup> Karl Vaters, *The Grasshopper Myth: Big Churches, Small Churches and the Small Thinking that Divides Us* (N.p.: New Small Church, 2012), 169.

state, because Mennonite churches are so small, the Mennonites in the United States needed at least fifty percent of their pastors to be willing to be working priests.<sup>17</sup>

Though exact numbers are still unknown, the overwhelmingly agreed upon hypothesis is that there is a large numbers of working priests in the United States. Due to current trends and the results of the research for this project, this author believes that more and more pastors will be bivocational. As many churches remain small being a working priest is not strategic for the majority yet, but it will be soon enough.<sup>18</sup> This is the case because many small churches do not have the budget for a non-working priest. After studying many churches in the United States, Thom Rainer, president and CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources says, “Bi-vocational ministry is a clear and definitive trend in church life”<sup>19</sup> that more and more denominations are starting to embrace. As culture continues to shift more churches will be pastored by working priests. This is going to be true for Vineyard churches as well.

The second part of the Assumption #2 is that the number of Vineyard working priests serving in the Vineyard USA will increase as the 21<sup>st</sup> century progresses. There is unanimous agreement with this hypothesis among Vineyard pastors and leaders.<sup>20</sup> For example, one Vineyard pastor said, “My assumption is that it’s only a matter of time until the majority of pastors are bivocational.”<sup>21</sup> Another writes, “I think that bi-vocational<sup>22</sup> is

---

<sup>17</sup> Brenneman, 4.

<sup>18</sup> Bob Harper, e-mail message to author, November 9, 2016.

<sup>19</sup> Thom Rainer, “Eight Reasons Why Some Full-Time Pastors and Staff Should Go Bivocational,” ThomRainer.com, January 19, 2015, accessed November 21, 2017, <http://thomrainer.com/2015/01/eight-reasons-fulltime-pastors-staff-go-bivocational/>.

<sup>20</sup> No one this author has communicated with in the Vineyard has contradicted this line of thinking.

<sup>21</sup> Glenn Schroder, phone interview by author, December 5, 2016.

going to be the way churches go in the future. We need young people to lead, and they will most likely have to be bivocational. We need to hop on board and get moving towards showing people that it can be done, and done well with support from the movement as a whole.”<sup>23</sup> Yet another Vineyard pastor writes, “I believe bi-vocational pastoring is an aggressively increasing trend. Our next generation of pastors are also bivocational, young with families and have a real passion of this church.”<sup>24</sup> Another working pastor agrees: “I believe pastors are meant to be bivocational. And I also think more and more pastors will be bivocational as time goes by.”<sup>25</sup> This is not just a Vineyard phenomenon.

Many denominations in the United States are realizing that the number of working priests is only going to increase. For example, a leader in the United Methodist church says, “The future may well look more like a bi-vocational ministry for a substantial number of our clergy.”<sup>26</sup> This means that if there are around 300 working priests today, there is potential to have 400 or more within the next five years.<sup>27</sup> Todd Wilson, the director of Exponential Network, an alliance of church-planting networks, simply states, “We’re not going to get where we need to go in terms of an actual church-planting

<sup>22</sup> This paper uses the term “working priests,” but when quoting books and interviews it will use the term working priests use to self-identity.

<sup>23</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, July 19, 2017.

<sup>24</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 26, 2017.

<sup>25</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 29, 2017.

<sup>26</sup> Gilbert, “Vote Ends Guaranteed Appointments,” Gbhem.org, May 1, 2012, accessed October 5, 2017, <https://www.gbhem.org/article/vote-ends-guaranteed-appointments>.

<sup>27</sup> James Highland writes, “The need for bivocational pastors will continue to grow in the next decades” in James W. Highland, *Serving as a Bivocational Pastor* (Newburgh, IN: Newburgh Press, 2013), 213.

movement in the West without the bivocational piece.”<sup>28</sup> One reason more Vineyard churches will be pastored by working priests is that the trend is for smaller churches. A Vineyard pastor wrote, “My personal conviction is that in the future churches will be smaller and community or neighborhood-focused and that most pastors will be bivocational.”<sup>29</sup> Smaller neighborhood-focused Vineyard churches means pastors will need to supplement their income with jobs outside of their churches.

Because of the large number of working priests leading local churches now in the Vineyard, and the belief that this group is only going to grow in number, this dissertation attempts to tackle the challenge to improve the way the Vineyard cares and resources working priests. This project is an important step toward better resourcing Vineyard working priests.<sup>30</sup> Improving the care for Vineyard working priests will help increase the impact Vineyard churches lead by working priests will have in their neighborhoods.

How many Vineyard pastors in the United States are working priests? No one knows the answer to this question. The Association of Vineyard Churches, USA is divided into sixteen regions. A Regional Overseer leads each region. In the fall of 2016, I sent an email to all sixteen Regional Overseers and asked if they knew how many pastors were in their region. I also asked if they knew how many of those pastors were bivocational. After several emails and a few phone conversations, I still did not have an accurate number. Twelve Regional Overseers did not respond at all. The four I spoke with on the phone used words and phrases like “estimate” and “my guess would be.” This

---

<sup>28</sup> “Bivocational Pastor: The Strategic Future,” *Outreach Magazine*, February 22, 2015, accessed November 21, 2017, <http://www.outreachmagazine.com/features/3038-bivocational.html>.

<sup>29</sup> Schroeder, interview.

<sup>30</sup> No doubt, if the Vineyard takes a successful step in creating resources for Vineyard working priests, other denominations will want to learn from the Vineyard as well.



reaction and lack of responsiveness implies that working priests are not important to some in Vineyard leadership. One would have to conclude that these replies give a strong indication of the general culture of the Vineyard where working priests do not enjoy equal esteem and regard as Vineyard non-working priests.

### Working Priests Will Play A Significant Role in Vineyard Church Planting

In his paper, “Ten Points of Intersection: Commonalities Between the Vineyard Movement and Church Multiplication Worldwide,”<sup>31</sup> Vineyard Missions Director Mark Fields, PhD., describes how he believes God wants the Vineyard to learn how to plant thousands of churches. After “going back to kindergarten” so-to-speak, and studying church planting movements around the world, Fields discovered ten main principals<sup>32</sup> that all of the movements he studied possessed. Fields noticed as well, that these ten commonalities fit into the Vineyard values and practices and ethos. Each of his ten principles can be applied to Vineyard current and future working priests, but there are three in particular that are especially helpful to creating better care for Vineyard working priests.

Fields’ sixth point of intersection between the Vineyard and church planting movements around the world, “Everybody gets to play,” invites the Vineyard to take better care of her working priests. The slogan, “Ministry is not just for the few, but for all

---

<sup>31</sup> Mark Fields, “Ten Points of Intersection,” *Vineyard Missions*, accessed November 21, 2017, <http://www.vineyardmissions.org/ten-points>.

<sup>32</sup> The ten points are: “1. Ministry flows from Kingdom perspective and focus; 2. Back to Jesus and His mission; 3. Doing what the Father is doing; 4. Prayer with power is foundational; 5. Compassionate ministry to people in need is a priority; 6. Everybody gets to play; 7. Simple reproducible groups; 8. Show tell model of training; 9. Key leaders who keep the missional vision alive; and 10. On an adventure with God in partnership with others.” Fields.

of followers of Jesus,”<sup>33</sup> includes working priests. Fields acknowledges, “The professionalization of ministry tends to cause pastors to do more and more of the work of ministry themselves.” This is an issue for churches who rely on the pastor to “do” the ministry and it is a problem for movements that only ordain pastors who have formal theological training. In the North American context today, the price of formal theological training and the lack of adequately paying jobs for pastors precludes many potential working priests from earning an academic degree. The Vineyard could apply Fields’ statement that “the strength of a movement lies in equipping all to do the work of the ministry” to current and future Vineyard working priests. To truly live up to the Vineyard value that everyone gets to play, working priests need better care.

The Vineyard will only be able to adhere to the seventh principle, “Simple reproducible groups” if working priests are given better care. Fields is mainly referring to small Bible study groups, like the old John Wimber<sup>34</sup> Kinship groups. Every leader Fields met with had a simple reproducible small group system in place. This concept can be applied to more than just small groups within a church; it can be applied to church planting itself. In today’s context, reproducing a large church with a fully funded pastor and staff is not always reproducible. To plant thousands of churches, working priests are going to need better care.

Finally, “On an adventure with God in partnership with others,” Fields’ last principle describes the life of Vineyard working priests. John Wimber said ministry was messy and exciting. Fields says that this is the “glue” that originally connected Vineyard

---

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> John Wimber is the recognized founder of the Vineyard Movement.

churches and will be the glue to future church multiplication. When this is a reality, everyone is learning and sharing what they are learning and no one “acted like an expert.”<sup>35</sup> Could the Vineyard be open to learning from working priests?

These three points from Fields’ “Ten Points of Intersection” are important because they shed light on the need for more working priests in the Vineyard. Churches that are planted emphasizing Fields’ “Points” will be pastored by working priests. Working priests are able to lead the smaller discipleship making communities alluded to by Fields because they do not have to focus so much on raising money to pay for their own salary. Consequently, working priests are free to focus on empowering people so that “everybody gets to play,” and facilitate simple reproducible groups.

### **Discovering the Number of Vineyard Working Priests is a Mystery**

This first step in the research of Vineyard working priests revealed two facts. First, even though there is a significant amount of Vineyard pastors who are working priests, they are not a topic currently being discussed. Second, the most common theme was that even though the number of working priests in the Vineyard is unknown, the amount is only going to increase. Vineyard area leader Joel Seymour summarizes it best in a recorded teaching for New Churches called, “Bivocational Ministry Course.”

Seymour writes:

It’s hard to find good stats largely because until recently denominations and seminaries have ignored Bi-VO ministry. In 1999 a study of African American churches estimated the number of bivo pastors at 70%. The 2015 National Congregations study puts it at 57%. The Southern Baptist and Nazarenes seem to have the best numbers. The Southern Baptists have at least 50% BiVo Pastors. In a March 2014 PBS report on BiVo it was reported that 50% of Tennessee’s 3,000 Baptist churches were headed by BiVO pastors. I saw other stats that put it more

---

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

like at 70% in TN and KY. The Nazarenes say they have between 33% to 40% BIVO pastors at any given time. Ray Gilder, the Bivocational Small Church Leadership Network chairman, has said that 83% of Southern Baptist churches are under 125 in attendance and most of those pastors are BiVO. According to Hartford Institute's 2010 and 2015 study of Congregations the # of BiVo's is growing. In 2010 their research shows 29% of churches led by BiVos while in 2015 38% are headed by BiVo pastors. My movement, the Vineyard, didn't even track bi-vo's until this year.

The second step was working with Bubba Justice after the completion of the 2017 Vineyard Census. Each year the Vineyard, USA conducts a census for all its churches. Pastors are sent an email with a link and log in information. The census asks for basic church stats. What was going to be unique with the 2017 census though was that pastors were going to have the option to click on a window to self-identify as "bivocational." This was exciting for this author because, although not a perfect solution, it did seem like a huge step toward discovering an accurate number of Vineyard working priests.

Unfortunately, the self-identifying "bivocational" option for senior pastors did not work on the 2017 census. The Vineyard national leader in charge of conducting the census discovered after the completion of the census process that senior pastors did not have access on the census to actually change their "status." This means that when senior pastors clicked on the page of the online census asking about their income and ministry status and drop down menu including a "bivocational" option appeared, but pastors were not actually allowed to click on it. As a result, the number of working priests in the Vineyard is still a huge unknown.

Besides a plethora of private informal conversations and emails these last three years, I relied on three main forms of research regarding Vineyard working priests. First I conducted a survey on Survey Monkey February 2017. The information I gathered from that survey led me to help create a special working priest lunch during the Vineyard USA

National Conference in Anaheim, California in July 2017. The information I learned at this lunch became the second major research endeavor for this project. Third, I used the research from Survey Monkey and combined it with new knowledge gleaned from the lunch to create a formal survey that I emailed to as many Vineyard working priests I could.

#### Step One: Survey Monkey February 2017<sup>36</sup>

The creator and conductor of the 2017 Vineyard census recognized the need for the Vineyard to identify as many of the working priests as possible. Because of the issue with the census not being able to record pastor's "bivocational" status, I was allowed to create a survey to send to half of Vineyard USA's pastors.

As of February 2017, there were 611 Vineyard churches in the United States. The national coordinator sent out the survey I created on Survey Monkey to just under half of these 611 pastors. The Association of Vineyard Churches, USA (AVC USA) operates mainly relationally. One of the requests from the central office is that each church tithes three percent of their monthly income to the AVC USA. The national coordinator has access to the amounts given from each church to the central office. He chose the 300 churches whose giving to the AVC USA is the least. In other words, the 300 pastors who send in the lowest amount each month were emailed a link to the Survey Monkey survey I created. The assumption was that Vineyard pastors who give the central office the least amount must have the smallest income. Churches that can afford to pay for a full pastoral staff salary tend to be larger and give a higher amount to the AVC USA each month. It

---

<sup>36</sup> See Appendix One.

was explained to me by Vineyard National Coordinator Bubba Justice<sup>37</sup> that the smallest income churches are also the smallest-sized churches, which are most likely led by pastors who also have an outside job.<sup>38</sup>

Eighty-eight, or approximately one third, of the 300 pastors who received the survey responded to my survey. The responses were catalogued and analyzed. I hypothesized that the next step would be to organize a time and space for bivocational pastors who could attend the 2017 National Conference in Anaheim to come out of the shadows, gather together, be known, and encourage one another. Because I am passionate about creating better care systems for Vineyard pastors who work second jobs, at this lunch, I also hoped to gain new insights by meeting and talking to as many fellow Vineyard working priests as possible.

#### Step Two: The Vineyard National Conference: Bivocational Lunch

As of the spring of 2017, one of the major themes this author learned through research was how hidden and unspoken the working priest phenomenon is. My own tribe did not even know how many of us there were, and other writers talk about the feeling of disconnection from their denomination common among working priests. One method to combat the working priests' sense of isolation and "family secret" mentality was by hosting a type of hospitality space during the Vineyard National Conference. The concept of a hospitality room for bivocational pastors was based on the 2015 national conference international pastor's hospitality room at a conference in Columbus, Ohio, in which organizers set aside a room for pastors who lead Vineyard churches outside of the United

---

<sup>37</sup> Bubba Justice, interview with the author, Los Angeles, California, February 14, 2017.

<sup>38</sup> I argued that the survey be sent to all 611 senior pastors to no avail.

States to come and enjoy food and refreshments as they built relationships with one another and U.S.-American Vineyard pastors. This seemed like a good model for bivocational pastors to experience at the 2017 conference in Anaheim, offering a safe space for bivocational pastors to self-identify, network with one another, and start to tell their stories.

Due to unstated reasons, the described vision for a hospitality room in Anaheim did not happen this time. A hospitality room for relationship-building purposes would be a great addition to the next national conference because it would show the Vineyard's stated commitment to better care for Vineyard working priests. Rather than having a hospitality room, on Wednesday July 12, I had the opportunity to participate in a lunch for bivocational Vineyard pastors. This lunch was wonderful! Even though the vast majority of Vineyard working priests were not able to attend because the conference was during the typical workweek, over one hundred people attended, and we had the opportunity to discuss with the national director and national coordinator our experiences as Vineyard bivocational pastors. There were three significant results from this lunch. First, we brainstormed what the Vineyard could do to better care for bivocational pastors.<sup>39</sup> Second, I was able to gather fifty-four names and emails of Vineyard bivocational pastors for a future survey. Third, the seeds of a potential future network of Vineyard working priests were planted.

---

<sup>39</sup> See Appendix Two for a photograph of the white board list we created. The most relevant items listed for this project are, Summer conferences, language issues like "full time," meeting times, little or no recognition for Vineyard working priests, the need for mentoring churches, easy to use digital resources, validation, Mini-Pastor Sabbath Retreats, and improved care for working priests.

### Step Three: Vineyard Bivocational Pastor Survey

The final step in my research process was an email survey to Vineyard working priests in August of 2017.<sup>40</sup> I combined the eighty-eight emails from the Survey Monkey responses with the fifty-four emails given to me at the July lunch in Anaheim to create another more detailed and lengthy survey. Please refer to the appendices for the survey questions and results. Twenty-two Vineyard working priests responded. Their confidential responses help inform the proposals found in Chapters Five and Six of this project. Because of the Portland Seminary's Institutional Review Board (IRB) process and guidelines, when quoted, these email survey responses are footnoted, "email from a Vineyard working priest."

### **Working Priest: A New Label**

Senior pastors who are not fully funded by their local church have been called tent-makers,<sup>41</sup> dual-role pastors, and bivocational pastors (sometimes with a hyphen between "bi" and "vocational").<sup>42</sup> Since Paul referred to himself as a tent-maker,<sup>43</sup> many people placed the same title on pastors who had more than one job. As the 20th Century progressed, the accepted term evolved to dual-role pastor<sup>44</sup> and then to bivocational

---

<sup>40</sup> See Appendix Three.

<sup>41</sup> Today the term "tentmaker" has morphed to mainly refer to missionaries who have marketable skills in the context in which they serve. Bickers writes, "As a tentmaker, Paul had a marketable skill that was needed wherever God might lead him to minister." Dennis Bickers, *The Tentmaking Pastor: The Joy of Bivocational Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 10.

<sup>42</sup> For Ray Gilder, "Though sometimes written with a hyphen, as suggested by 'spell check' the preferable spelling is bivocational, not bi-vocational." Ray Gilder, *Uniquely Bivocational* (Forest, VA: Salt Light Publishing, 2013), 5.

<sup>43</sup> Acts 18:3, Romans 16:3, 2 Timothy 4:19.

<sup>44</sup> For Elliot, "'Dual Role minister' is defined as a fully trained, ordained clergy person who is employed full time (thirty-five to forty hours a week) in a non-church job as well as twenty to twenty-five



pastor. As Dennis Bickers states, a bivocational pastor is a “minister who serves in a paid ministry position and has income from another source.”<sup>45</sup>

Now that we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is time to shift the title to something simultaneously both more contemporary and ancient. I choose to use the title “working priest,” as “The worker-priest model is an ancient, respectable and widely used in our world.”<sup>46</sup> This is a term created by the author of this paper. A working priest is a senior pastor<sup>47</sup> who leads a local congregation and has a job outside of the local church. I am a working priest because I pastor a church, The Hub Vineyard Church,<sup>48</sup> affiliated with the Association of Vineyard Churches, USA, and I teach History at Verdugo Hills High School,<sup>49</sup> a local public school. I have been a working priest for over twelve years.<sup>50</sup>

The Worker Priest movement was started during and immediately after World War II in France and Belgium. Many Catholic priests got together and received permission to acquire jobs outside of their parishes. This movement is the inspiration for the creation of the new term, “Working Priest.” Writing for *The Catholic Worker* in 1954, Dorothy Day

---

hours a week as a pastor or in a specialized church staff function.” John Elliot, *Our Pastor Has an Outside Job* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1980), 7.

<sup>45</sup> Dennis Bickers, *The Art and Practice of Bivocational Ministry* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 2013), 13.

<sup>46</sup> Brenneman, 23. Brenneman continues, “One wonders if it is just the Americans that have a problem with bivocational ministry, and if it has difficulty fitting into the American dream?”

<sup>47</sup> Unlike, Dorr, Bickers, Gilder, and Elliott, the term “working priest” refers specifically to senior pastors. In my experience, albeit limited to the Association of Vineyard Churches, USA, church planting in Uganda, and relationship with local churches in Los Angeles, every other church staff position including assistant pastors, worship leaders, and youth pastors are exclusively part-time, requiring another source of income. Also, one could make the case that pastors who are married and rely on their spouse’s income to support the household are also working priests; but that discussion is for another paper.

<sup>48</sup> [www.thehubcommunity.com](http://www.thehubcommunity.com).

<sup>49</sup> [www.verdugohs.org](http://www.verdugohs.org).

<sup>50</sup> I started teaching full time in 1994 and planted The Hub in 2003.

describes the Worker Priests of France as priests who, “have left the side of the ‘faithful’ and have gone after the lost sheep of France.”<sup>51</sup>

“Working priest” is a better name for pastors who work another job outside their church. There are four reasons to stop calling pastors who earn an income outside of their church “bivocational pastors.” First, “bivocational” has a negative connotation among professional Christians;<sup>52</sup> for many pastors and leaders of churches who are not bivocational, the term is associated with failure.<sup>53</sup> Ed Stetzer admits, “There has been a trend in the past with many denominational ministers to look down on bi-vocational pastors.”<sup>54</sup> The assumption made that feeds this negative connotation is that the bivocational pastor must not be a good enough leader to grow his<sup>55</sup> church large enough to secure an income to provide for his family. Hugh Halter says, “I’ve been trying to coin a new term for ‘bi-vocational’ because the term seems to communicate that you’re choosing to live two lives poorly.”<sup>56</sup> Labeling pastors within the Vineyard who work outside jobs as well as pastor their churches “working priests,” conveys a more positive connotation and frees the pastor from the identity of being a failure. As one Vineyard

---

<sup>51</sup> Dorothy Day, “French Worker Priests and the Little Brothers of de Foucauld,” *The Catholic Worker Movement*, The Catholic Worker Movement, March 1954, accessed November 22, 2017, <http://www.catholicworker.org/dorothyday/articles/174.pdf>.

<sup>52</sup> “Professional Christians” are people who work for a church or Christian ministry.

<sup>53</sup> Some bivocational pastors have been called “part-time preachers” or “weekend warriors.” Highland, 4.

<sup>54</sup> “Bi-Vocational Pastors,” Pastoral Care, Inc., accessed November 21, 2017, <http://www.pastoralcareinc.com/articles/bi-vocational-pastors/>.

<sup>55</sup> This author uses “his” here because in the 20<sup>th</sup> century the almost exclusive amount of people who self-identified as bivocational were men.

<sup>56</sup> Hugh Halter, *BiVo: A Modern-Day Guide for Bi-Vocational Saints (Leveraging All of Life into One Calling)* (Littleton, CO: Missio Publishing, 2013), 120.

working priest states, “We need to stop saying part-time or full-time.”<sup>57</sup> There is no full-time job in ministry. It is a calling and an endowment from God.”<sup>58</sup>

The second reason to use the term “working priest” is to allow for female pastors.<sup>59</sup> The Vineyard ordains women for ministry. The label “bivocational” not only has a negative connotation, but it also assumes the pastor is male.<sup>60</sup> This is so because traditionally in the United States pastors have tended to be males and expected to be the main breadwinner for their household. Today though, there is an increasing number of female pastors in the Vineyard compared to five years ago, and calling those who hold jobs outside of their churches “working priests” frees them from a layer of gender stereotypes. In the Vineyard, women can be priests!

The third reason to use “working priest” and not bivocational is that the name “working priest” is simpler than “bivocational,” and often more accurate. The prefix “bi-” means “two.” Some pastors in the Vineyard lead their churches and have more than one job outside of their churches. Instead of calling these pastors “trivocational” it is easier to call them “working priests.” Another complexity with “bivocational” is the definition of “vocation.” Some Vineyard pastors consider being a wife and a husband as a vocation. Some consider being a parent as a separate vocation. Instead of arguing over the meaning of “vocation” within the 21<sup>st</sup> century globalized context, it is easier to use the title

---

<sup>57</sup> Dennis Bickers writes in response to the question of full- or part-time pastoring saying, “I responded that we need to get away from the terms “part-time” and “full-time.” I do not know any part-time pastors.” Dennis Bickers, “Real Pastors,” *Vital Churches: Building Vital Churches Through Bivocational Ministry*, no. 2 (December 1998).

<sup>58</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 31, 2017.

<sup>59</sup> Survey respondent Krista Gibson wrote, “I see myself as a bi-vocational female, co-pastor: It almost seems like the hat trick of ignored areas in the Vineyard.”

<sup>60</sup> For example when Southern Baptists use the word “bivocational,” they are referring specifically to men.

“working priest.” As Marci Alboher describes in detail in her brilliant work *One Person/Multiple Career*, more and more people are adding a second vocation to their life. So, as “bivocational” can mean anyone who has two jobs, “working priest” specifically refers to those males and females in ministry.

The fourth reason to change terms is that “working priest” eliminates the myth that there is a sacred and secular divide within society. The title “working priest” conveys what it means to work full time in completely separate contexts each day. It also confronts the deeply ingrained “sacred/secular dichotomy”<sup>61</sup> that historically hurt so many tent-makers and bivocational pastors. This false dichotomy created an environment in which working priests were viewed as a lesser subclass within the clergy. Working priests are cross-cultural church leaders who have adopted a missional strategy to reach the poorest and most marginalized in each society.<sup>62</sup> One survey responder wrote, “Pastoring is a gift, it’s not limited to a congregation. It’s about how we fit in to our community, where we work, play and gather.”<sup>63</sup> To use “bivocational” is to wrongly accept that when a pastor is doing church stuff he or she is fulfilling their call in a sacred act. Then, when the bivocational pastor is working outside of the church and earning money, they are performing a secular function and not functioning as a pastor.<sup>64</sup> Working

---

<sup>61</sup> Steve Rundle, “The Emergence of the BAM Movement,” *The BAM Review*, June 2, 2014, accessed November 23, 2015, <http://businessasmission.com/emergence-bam-movement/>.

<sup>62</sup> Timothy Liu, Gordon Preece and Wong Siew Li, “Marketplace Ministry” in “Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism,” edited by David Claydon, *Occasional Paper*, no. 40 (2005), [https://www.lausanne.org/wp-content/uploads/2007/06/LOP40\\_IG11.pdf](https://www.lausanne.org/wp-content/uploads/2007/06/LOP40_IG11.pdf).

<sup>63</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 26, 2017.

<sup>64</sup> For years, I was asked by visitors to the church I pastor if I was a pastor who teaches or if I was a teacher who pastors. This question reflects the myth of the secular and sacred divide.

priests view their responsibilities inside and outside of the church as part of their sacred calling of Jesus.

“Working priest” is a more user-friendly term, as more people understand the concept of work and having a job more readily than they can conceive of the idea of vocation. “Priest” is a word that connotes religion and reminds Christians that we are all priests.<sup>65</sup> Persons who are senior leaders of a local church and work outside of that church sacrifice greatly. As Dorr aptly explains, “The word minister means to ‘to serve.’ The word pastor means ‘to shepherd.’ The word priest means ‘to offer sacrifices’ and to serve in other religious capacities.”<sup>66</sup> Working priests sacrifice their lives in order to serve and shepherd their churches. There are many definitions for pastors who are not fully funded by their congregation. For this paper I define “working priest” as a senior or lead pastor who holds a full time job outside of the church in which the working priest pastors. Because the popular literature referring to working priests is not consistent and because “working priest” is a more apt description, “working priest” will be used for the remainder of this study except for when the author is quoting another resource. When quoting another writer, the exact label the other author uses for working priests will be used.

### **Why Are There So Many Working Priests in the Vineyard?**

With globalization<sup>67</sup> comes an increased need for working priests. Working priests are uncommonly and uniquely equipped to meet the current pastoring needs of the

---

<sup>65</sup> 1 Peter 2:9–10.

<sup>66</sup> Luther M. Dorr, *The Bivocational Pastor* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1988), 57.

<sup>67</sup> Globalization is the opening of local and national views to a broader perspective that results in a more interconnected and interdependent world. Although primarily used as an economic process,

21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>68</sup> One huge asset for the working priest is the ability to reach the poorest of the poor in every corner of the world.<sup>69</sup> Almost one hundred percent of the pastors I work with in Uganda are working priests. By not relying solely on the local church to provide for all the financial needs of their families, working priests are able to meet the challenges in the Post-Christian World.<sup>70</sup> Where “bivocational” pastors mainly served in rural areas around the world, “working priests” are needed in urban areas and are equipped to rise to the occasion to pastor small churches in many cities around the world.<sup>71</sup> Once mainly a rural phenomenon, working priests are now leading churches in major metropolitan areas.

No doubt every pastor, whether a working priest or not, has their own personal reasons for why they are in the context in which they find themselves currently serving. One pastor wrote, “I believe that pastoring bivocationally helps me and helps the church.”<sup>72</sup> He goes on to say,

First, it gives me a window into the world outside my local church. Any group easily becomes self-reinforcing. Local churches are especially susceptible to this and the pastor of a local church easily becomes myopic assuming his congregation represents the world at large. Through being involved regularly with other people outside my church I am able to lead my congregation to a broader

---

globalization is the increase of interaction of people, along with their culture, with others all over the world. For more information see The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica. “Globalization-Why All the Fuss?” Encyclopedia Britannica, Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., December 31, 2000, accessed January 15, 2018. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Globalization-Why-All-the-Fuss-1518171>.

<sup>68</sup> Rundle.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ryan Bolger et al., “The Local Church in Mission: Becoming A Missional Congregation in the Twenty-First Century Global Context and the Opportunities Offered Through Tentmaking Ministry,” edited by David Claydon, Lausanne Occasional Paper no. 39 (September 29 to October 5, 2004): Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 26, 2017.

view. Second, working outside the church gives me a sense of accomplishment that helps me navigate the emotional vagaries of pastoring. You rarely have a sense of completion working in the local church. My outside work provides this, which helps me feel better about pastoring. Also, people outside my church treat me as a regular person. I'm not lifted too high or too low by anything but my performance. This has great benefit for me as a pastor. Third, it sends a strong message to the church on spiritual and financial levels. If I am willing to work outside the church, then the church means more to me than just a job. How do you, the congregant, feel about the church? My outside work provides me with extra income and alleviates my need to receive from the church.<sup>73</sup>

This is just one pastor's reasons! Although each pastor can have a plethora of personal reasons for being a working priest.

Vineyard regional leader Jamie Wilson acknowledges that there are currently a large number of Vineyard working priests and predicts that there will be even more in the near future for three reasons. First, because of urbanization issues, cities are places that are becoming more expensive. One example for a church planter is the rising cost of facility rental or ownership in large cities like Manhattan, Chicago, and Los Angeles. The second reason is to gain an edge with evangelism. Wilson acknowledges that working priests have constant contact with non-church attenders. Finally, according to Wilson, the Vineyard is committed to pick more than one model for church multiplication. Churches pastored by working priests tend to be local and more reproducible than the large church, large staff model.<sup>74</sup>

As Wilson acknowledged, the first and most common reason to be a working priest has to do with church finances. There are two subgroups within the "working priest" umbrella due to the "church finances" category. One group would like to quit their outside job but their church cannot afford for that to happen, and the other group could

---

<sup>73</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 26, 2017.

<sup>74</sup> Jamie Wilson, phone interview by author, December 5, 2016.

financially quit their outside job but specifically choose to remain working priests so as to not financially burden to their church. This second group who willfully work an outside job combat forty years of Vineyard culture in the United States, that promotes the exclusive strategy of planting a church and only holding a job in the community as a temporary way to help pioneer the church. These modern Vineyard tent-maker working priests do not see getting a second job as a means to grow their church, but rather as the means of being the church in their town.

The second reason for Vineyard pastors to be working priests is to have a presence in the local community where they serve. These working priests see having a job outside their church as the best way to fulfill the *Missio Dei*. Congregations served by tentmakers spend more of their resources of money and energy outside of themselves. Ministry is truly shared as ruling elders share responsibility for church administration and member care.<sup>75</sup> These working priests are very relational: “We chose to be bi-vocational because my husband knew that if he took a salary from the church, he would see people as numbers and not as relationships.”<sup>76</sup>

According to the Vineyard Resources *EDLD Do It Again: Essential Practices of the Vineyard Movement*, churches can get off course when they become self-centered and find meaning in existing for their own sake rather than existing to “demonstrate God’s love to the world.”<sup>77</sup> To the questions asked in the EDLD booklet, “How can church

---

<sup>75</sup> “Tentmaking or Bi-vocational Ministers,” Minister/Teaching Elders, *Presbyterian Churches, USA*, accessed October 5, 2017, <http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/ministers/tentmaking-or-bi-vocational-ministers/>.

<sup>76</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, July 19, 2017.

<sup>77</sup> Vineyard Resources, *EDLD – Do It Again! Essential Practices of the Vineyard Movement – A Word to our Churches* (Vineyard Resources, 2016).



congregations make sure that the Kingdom comes first, week in and week out? How can we keep ourselves from becoming self-centered communities? How can we do our best to see that God's love for the world comes first, and that the Church takes its rightful place as the community expressing God's heart of love for men, women, and children?"<sup>78</sup>

Vineyard working priests answer these questions in part by securing jobs outside of their church. Working priests have numerous opportunities to minister and share the gospel inside and outside of the church because of their vocations. Working priests tend to lead churches that reflect this value and have real-life stories to share each week from the pulpit. Pioneering a church as a working priest is a strategic way to lead. Chapters Five and Six discuss detailed ways the Vineyard can help working priests become healthier and more effective leaders.

The third reason many Vineyard pastors are working priests has to do with a deep self-awareness of one's identity and personality. There is a group of Vineyard working priests who planted churches with the intention of eventually quitting their outside job and only pastoring their church. However, for one reason or another, they never quit their outside job and have found their stride in pastoring their church and earning an income from another source. One example is, "The reason for my vocational choice was simple at first, but became more complex over time. When we initially planted our church I was simply trying to provide for my family. As time goes on, I now see this is part of my design and makeup. God uses the marketplace as an avenue for me to stay in touch with a world I would only have second hand information from otherwise. I like both careers and

---

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

enjoy the balance of the two.”<sup>79</sup> Many Vineyard pastors start out hoping to be able to quit their outside job and then realize that they are called to be working priests.

The research shows that many of these pastors do not have a strong theology as to why they are currently working priests. These pastors are working priests mainly because they find themselves in the position of being working priests. For their specific situations, it is best for them to pastor or co-pastor their church and derive an income apart from their church. Some of these working priests could financially afford to not work another job and some need the financial support of another job. This third group of Vineyard working priests has a vast array of stories and reasons for their current ministry context. For example, as one working priest said, “We made the decision to be bi-vocational because this church was bilked by the last pastor of all its financial resources leaving this church with many hurts and distrusts.”<sup>80</sup> Another example is a Vineyard working priest who decided to keep his second job because it provides health care coverage for his entire family. These examples show that Vineyard working priests do not have a stated theology that informs their being working priests, but they do have a strong conviction of following the Lord and providing for their family.

Another group of working priests are “Off-Ramp” working priests, or those Vineyard who are ready to retire from ministry but do not have a retirement to allow them to turn their church over to another leader. As the Vineyard pastorate in the United States ages, more pastors are looking to retire. Many Vineyard pastors legally opted to not contribute to Social Security. Those who did this must find another way to provide for

---

<sup>79</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 31, 2017.

<sup>80</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 31, 2017.

them to retire. Many of these pastors also do not have a retirement package with the church they currently serve. Consequently, albeit a fairly new phenomenon in the Vineyard, some veteran Vineyard pastors are choosing to become working priests in the twilight of their ministry to help them transition out of ministry and into a type of retirement. For example, one respondent wrote, “I have been intentionally bivocational for seven years. I started down this path looking for the off ramp from pastoring. I assumed that my second job would grow into a stable income as I transitioned out of my regular job of pastoring fulltime.”<sup>81</sup> Another long-time Vineyard working priest wrote, “I am better positioned for retirement than many of my colleagues; at fifty-nine<sup>82</sup> this is an impending situation but I wish more pastors were able to do something while they are young to position themselves to not have to struggle in their sixties and seventies to make ends meet.”<sup>83</sup>

The real challenge for Vineyard pastors in their sixties and seventies to retire was discussed at the 2016 Vineyard USA Sage Meeting. There are many Vineyard pastors in a “worst-case scenario” who do not have Social Security, not enough savings, and no insurance. One idea presented in light of this bleak situation was the potential for these retiring pastors to seek “second-career opportunities.” This is saying that one way for Vineyard pastors to retire is for them to first become a working priest.

Caring for this third group will be different from caring and creating resources for the other three groups. One of the motivations for caring for Vineyard working priests is to increase their longevity and fulfillment in ministry. This is not an issue for this third

---

<sup>81</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 17, 2017.

<sup>82</sup> According to the Vineyard 2016 Annual Census, thirty-five percent of Vineyard pastors are between the ages of fifty and fifty-nine. The average age of all 615 Vineyard pastors is fifty-two.

<sup>83</sup> Schroeder, interview.

group who is looking to leave church ministry. However, this third demographic has a lot to offer younger working priests who pastor and hold an outside job by choice and to those who do not have a choice.

### **Summary**

This chapter introduced the problem that Vineyard working priests in the Vineyard require better care and more resources in order to continue to increase the impact working priest Vineyard churches are having in their local communities. Research on this topic has never been done in the Vineyard so there are two assumptions that inform this project. The first is that there are a lot of working priests in the Vineyard and second, this amount is only going to increase.

The label “working priest” is better than the many other terms out there. The three largest groups of Vineyard working priests are clearly described. The next chapter clarifies the biblical foundations regarding working priests and takes a step toward developing a working priest theology.

## **CHAPTER TWO: WORKING PRIEST BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL, AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS**

### **Introduction**

The Vineyard movement today is filled with working priests. This chapter shows biblical and historical examples of this current reality. The first section reveals the important role that working priests play in the Bible. Leaders who served God while working another job fill the Old and New Testaments and are discussed in this section. The second section progresses from a brief summary of working priests in global church history to an account of how working priests played a significant role in the church history in the United States.

A discussion of the five most common arguments against working priests from pastors and Vineyard leaders follows the biblical and historical survey of working priests. The last part of this chapter is about working priest theology, exploring the current Vineyard working priest theology of pragmatism and four biblical metaphors to help free Vineyard working priest theology from the current constraints of pragmatism toward a more fully developed theology involving the images of exiles, tentmakers, missionaries, and nursing mothers. The detailed descriptions of these biblical working priest pictures also serve as instructions to Vineyard leadership of how to better care for Vineyard working priests.

### **Biblical Foundations**

The Bible is full of successful examples of religious leaders who earned an outside income to financially support their ministry. From the Old Testament to the New Testament, numerous priests, prophets, apostles, and pastors demonstrate how God uses

working priests for His purposes.<sup>1</sup> Examining the Old and New Testaments, this section highlights a few examples of working priests in the Bible.

Most early biblical characters earned their livelihood from land and other sources of income. Dorr points out that after forty years of support from the Egyptian court, Moses worked as a shepherd for his father-in-law for the next forty years. Once in Canaan, it was only the tribe of Levi who did not earn their living from the land (Joshua 13:14). Joshua settled on his land and built Timnath (Joshua 19:50) and Gideon farmed wheat (Judges 6:11) on his land.<sup>2</sup> Leaders in the Old Testament earned their living doing other jobs while serving the Lord.

Amos is a clear example of a “working prophet.” As a farmer and prophet, Amos had two vocations. Amos denied that he was a professional prophet and claimed to be a simple herdsman and gatherer of figs (Amos 7:14). Hosea (Hosea 1–14), another prophet, most likely worked in the family business baking with his father. During the Babylonian Captivity, the Babylonian government financially supported Daniel (Daniel 2:48).<sup>3</sup> Also, although the Levitical priests were not supported by sources of income outside the temple (Numbers 18–24), “the mainstream of prophets was predominantly self-supporting or bivocational in their ministries to the nation of Israel.”<sup>4</sup> Thus, the vast majority of Old Testament characters were a type of working priest.

---

<sup>1</sup> Chapter Four of Picardo’s *Ministry Makeover* is full of examples of working priests in the Bible. Rosario Picardo and Michael Slaughter, *Ministry Makeover: Recovering a Theology for BiVocational Service in the Church* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Luther Dorr, *The Bivocational Pastor* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1988), 19.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

God used Old Testament working priests in a significant way while they worked jobs—unrelated to religion—to earn an income. J. Christy Wilson summarizes:

Many of the godly men and women in the Old Testament were self-supporting witnesses... Adam was a cultivator, Abel was sheep farmer, Abraham was a cattle raiser, Hagar was a domestic worker, Isaac was a farmer, Rebekah was a water carrier, Jacob was a roving ranger, Rachel was a sheep herder, Joseph was a premier, Miriam was a baby-sitter, Moses was a flock-grazer, Bezaleel was a skilled artificer, Joshua was a military commander, Rahab was an innkeeper, Deborah was a national deliverer, Gideon was a military leader, Samson was a champion fighter, Ruth was a gleaner, Boaz was a grain grower, David was a ruler, Asaph was a composer, Solomon was an emperor, the Queen of Sheba was an administrator, Job was a gentlemen farmer, Amos was a sharecropper, Baruch was a writer, Daniel was a prime minister, Shadrach, Mesach, and Abednego were provincial administrators, Queen Esther was a ruler, and Nehemiah was a governor.<sup>5</sup>

This shows that God used men and women listed in the Old Testament to lead and serve His people while they made a living working other jobs. The same is true for so many people in the New Testament as well.

The clearest example for working priests in the New Testament is the life of Paul. Paul was a tent-maker/leather worker by trade and worked with others, like Priscilla and Aquilla who were also tent-maker/leather workers (Acts 18:3). Paul worked hard to earn an income outside the church because he did not want to be a burden on the churches (1 Thessalonians 2:9). Paul is the strongest model in the Bible for working priests today.

However, Paul is not the only working priest model found in the Gospels. We do not know much about how Jesus earned an income, but one can assume his carpenter father Joseph (Matthew 13:5) must have fulfilled the Jewish expectation of fathers teaching their sons a trade. Additionally, several of the first disciples of Jesus were fishermen (Matthew 4:18–22). Did they continue in their occupation while spending time

---

<sup>5</sup> J. Christy Wilson Jr., *Today's Tentmakers* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1981), 20.

with Jesus? There is evidence that at least some did after the crucifixion and resurrection as Peter went back to fishing after he witnessed Jesus' death (John 21).

Other examples of working priests or potentially working priests are Luke (Colossians 4:14) who was a physician, and the missionary Barnabas, who most likely supported himself financially with the sale of property (Acts 4:36–37). Church planters Priscilla, Aquila, and Lydia (Acts 18:3) were all business people as well.

### **Other Historical Foundations**

Following the same path as so many Old Testament leaders, the Apostle Paul, and other New Testament leaders, pastors throughout the history of Christendom have chosen the way of the working priest. The famous second century instruction to the early church known as *The Didache* instructed apostles to not ask for money.<sup>6</sup> Before the Reformation, many Catholic monasteries required priests to have outside jobs. During and after the Reformation, the “Dual Role minister emerged out of the necessity to survive because the new congregations did not have the resources to support full-time clergy, and some of the groups were underground.”<sup>7</sup>

J. Christy Wilson explains that the history of the church in the East and the West is filled with working priests. According to Wilson, most of the leaders persecuted by the Zoroastrians in Persia from 339 to 448 CE, supported themselves “by the labor of their own hands or filling appointments as secretary, physicians, or stewards in the households of the nobles and princes of those lands to which they went.”<sup>8</sup> Wilson continues that there

---

<sup>6</sup> Dorr, 23.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>8</sup> Wilson, 26.



were working priests serving as chaplains in the East India Company and among the Moravian pastors.<sup>9</sup> Just like there were working priests all over the world, the United States too has had a large number of working priests.

In the United States, frontier Baptists and Methodists demonstrated the importance of working priests. “They preached sermons, pastored churches, and performed weddings and funerals while earning their living in some secular vocation.”<sup>10</sup> The most successful “lay church planting” movement in US-American history, during the era known as the “Great Century of Missions,” occurred on the Western Frontier in the early 1800s and was led by the Methodists and the Baptists.<sup>11</sup> Churches started were small and led by working priests. In fact, known as “Farmer Preachers,” working priests “made up the vast majority of frontier missionaries.”<sup>12</sup> These working priests pastored and performed many of the same duties as the men in their congregations. Theodore Roosevelt explained that the Baptist preacher “lived and worked exactly as their flocks... They cleared the ground, split rails, planted corn, and raised hogs on equal terms with their parishioners.”<sup>13</sup> Ed Stetzer continues, “In both Baptist and Methodist life, ministers came from the people and, perhaps more importantly, stayed as part of the people. They

---

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 29–30.

<sup>10</sup> Dorr, 25.

<sup>11</sup> Edward J. Stetzer, “Passion for Planting,” *New Churches*, 2002, accessed January 15, 2018, <http://church-planting.net/FreeDownloads/General%20Church%20Planting/On%20the%20Frontier.pdf>, 4–5.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

preached affective vernacular sermons for little or no pay. It was easy for them to relate to the people—they were the people.”<sup>14</sup>

In *God’s Ambassadors*, Holifield argues that the ministry for US-American clergy is “only partially a profession.”<sup>15</sup> Modern professions think of themselves as “vocational groups set apart by a specialized higher education.”<sup>16</sup> Although many denominations see this as a goal for their ministers, Holifield points out that, more than any European nation, the United States attacked the ideal that authority and professional status of clergy comes from being “authorized by higher learning.”<sup>17</sup> It is true that as more and more denominational seminaries popped up in the United States, clergy were seen as “more” professional. However, the history of the United States suggests a collective resistance to this thinking. Holifield points out that authority for US-American clergy rests more with charisma and relationships. Therefore, working priests have been part of the United States’ history since the beginning.

One reason for becoming a working priest throughout the history of the United States has always been due to salary. Both Catholic and Protestant church leaders took on the identity of working priests. The Spanish government and the Catholic Church paid Catholic missionary priests who came to the Americas between 1493 and 1699. According to Holifield, “This dual service to two masters generated tensions.”<sup>18</sup> When the Puritans migrated to the Americas, ministers “conducted private neighborhood schools

---

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Brooks Holifield, *God’s Ambassadors* (Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2007), 6.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 39.

and taught in New England grammar schools.”<sup>19</sup> It is possible that these Puritan working priests taught grammar school as part of their ministry in the local community without pay. However, because they were teaching outside of their church, they were practicing working priests.

By the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, clergy in the colonies were also teachers and college presidents: “Six of the seven presidents of Harvard during the century were clergy, as were all the presidents of Yale, the College of New Jersey, King’s College (Columbia), William and Mary, Queen’s College (Rutgers), Georgetown, and the College of Rhode Island (Brown), along with all the provosts at the College of Philadelphia.”<sup>20</sup> This trend continued through the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as “the clergy founded most of the antebellum colleges, and in 1850 more than 90 percent of the college presidents were ministers.”<sup>21</sup>

As Populism<sup>22</sup> gained momentum in the United States in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the professional clergy were called to question. Not only were pastors also serving in various levels of education, many working priests were called “Farmer Preachers” because they were given acres to farm from their denominations in order to survive on their tiny salaries.<sup>23</sup> For many working priests during this time period, having a second job was not a choice; it was a matter of survival. By the 1920s, half of the

---

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 49.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 119.

<sup>22</sup> Populism is a political movement in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in the United States mainly in the West and the South centered around the agrarian needs of farmers. For more information see The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, “Populist Movement,” Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., August 5, 2014, accessed January 15, 2018. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Populist-Movement>.

<sup>23</sup> Holifield, 124–130.

pastors in the rural South were working priests—“part-time preachers” as they were labeled then—who “supported themselves with outside jobs, and most of them served two to three churches.”<sup>24</sup>

In the beginning of 1930s, the average salary for a minister was \$1,407, with a potentially rent-free parsonage. By 1939 the median income for clergy diminished to \$1,264.<sup>25</sup> “Ministers received less than postal workers, kindergarten teachers, skilled craftsmen, and railroad workers.”<sup>26</sup> These numbers were for white clergy, and black clergy made even less. In country churches the average pay for African American preachers was \$266 from each church.<sup>27</sup> Because of such poor salaries, pastors became working priests, and in the case of many African Americans, they pastored many country churches at the same time in an effort to “make ends meet.”

From the early twentieth century through today, working priests have continued to serve an important leadership function in the United States. In his recent blog, published December 15, 2017, Karl Vaters writes that working priest ministry in the United States is not rare and is becoming more common—even the new normal.<sup>28</sup> According to a Faith Communities Survey, less than sixty-two percent of churches in the United States have a

---

<sup>24</sup> “Almost 10% of the clergy in seventeenth-century New England practiced as physicians.” *Ibid.*, 152.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 228.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Karl Vaters, “The New Normal: 9 Realities and Trends in Bivocational Ministry,” *Christianity Today*, December 12, 2017, accessed December 14, 2017, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/karl-vaters/2017/december/new-normal-9-realities-trends-bivocational-ministry.html>.

fully funded non-working priest pastor.<sup>29</sup> Ed Stetzer, claims that one third of pastors in the United States are working priests.<sup>30</sup> This means that the working priesthood in the United States is a significant phenomenon and is increasing.

### **Five Arguments Against the Working Priesthood**

Even with the rich and impactful working priest history in the United States, there are some who claim that the working priesthood is illegitimate. There are five main arguments working priests continue to dispute in the Vineyard. Working priests are sometimes accused directly and other times indirectly of trying to serve God and money at the same time. Second, several working priests in the Vineyard have been accused of needing a second job because they do not possess enough faith. Third, the majority culture in the Vineyard contends that planting a church as a working priest is acceptable as long as it is temporary. Finally, some in Vineyard leadership wrongly apply the half-truth that “healthy things grow” to working priests and argue that if working priests were really healthy leaders, their churches would be able to fully fund them. This section seeks to debunk these arguments.

#### **Argument #1: Working Priests Attempt to Serve God and Money**

One argument against being a working priest is the assumption that pastors who have a job outside of their church will struggle to serve God and to serve money. As Jesus

---

<sup>29</sup> Bob Smietana, “Second-Shift: Surviving in Bivocational Ministry,” *Life Way*, September 29, 2016, accessed December 16, 2017, <https://factsandtrends.net/2016/09/29/second-shift-thriving-in-bivocational-ministry/>.

<sup>30</sup> Ed Stetzer, “Bivocational Ministry as an Evangelism Opportunity,” *The Exchange: A Blog by Ed Stetzer*, September 2017, accessed December 16, 2017, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/edt/2017/september/bivocational-ministry-as-evangelism-opportunity.html>.

says in Matthew 6:24 that no one can serve two masters and that we cannot serve God and money, some believe that “No part-time preacher is going to accomplish much for the kingdom of God.”<sup>31</sup> The argument using Matthew 6:24 alleges that working priests cannot serve their church and work an outside job at the same time because pastors who do try to serve God and money simultaneously and therefore disobey Jesus.

Arguing that working priests disobey Jesus is not effective for two reasons. First, the verse applies to everyone who is trying to follow Jesus, not just working priests. Pastors who are fully funded by their church are held accountable by this verse as well. A fully funded pastor can fall into the trap of trying to serve God and money while only receiving an income from their church. Second, as Luther Dorr points out, one of the reasons Paul always worked an outside job, even while planting and pastoring churches, is because rabbis could not accept pay for religious services.<sup>32</sup> The expectation was that rabbis supported themselves. Howard Marshall observes that rabbis needed to support their own preaching efforts, and it was commonly accepted and expected that rabbis have a secondary source of income.<sup>33</sup> For Paul, earning money from an outside job was not an indication of attempting to serve both God and money. Rather, supporting himself in ministry was about being a legitimate witness within his cultural context.

Jesus admonishes believers to not serve God and money. It is unfair to apply this teaching just to working priests. Pastoring a local church and working a second job does not indicate one is attempting to serve God and money. All believers, indeed all pastors,

---

<sup>31</sup> Dennis Bickers, “Real Pastors,” in *Vital Churches: Building Vital Churches Through Bivocational Ministry*, no. 2 (December 1998): 3.

<sup>32</sup> Dorr, 7.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 7–8.

should avoid serving God and money. The most famous working priest in the Bible, Paul, is a model for today's working priests and his ministry validates working priests and demonstrates that one can have two jobs and not serve God and money.

#### Argument #2: Working Priests Lack Faith

Another common argument against working priests is related to perceived levels of faith. Some fully funded pastors argue that they have a greater level of faith than pastors who hold jobs outside their church. A common question asked to working priests is, "Why are you still working in that factory? If God wants you to be a minister, you need to step out in faith, go to seminary, and get a real church."<sup>34</sup> This line of reasoning is extremely judgmental and not based on any fact. Pastors who negatively evaluate the faith of working priests do so subjectively. A case could be made that working a non-church job while leading a congregation requires a greater level of faith than what most fully funded pastors possess.

Another faith issue for regarding pastors having jobs outside their churches has to do with the level of faith of the local church body. One pastor told the author of this project that the Lord told him to quit his job as a test of faith not only for him, but also as a test of the faith level of his church. This belief is based on one pastor's unique personal experience and not on a transferrable biblical fact. This pastor might have heard the Lord tell him to quit his outside job as a personal test of faith for him and as a corporate test of faith for the church he leads, but it does not mean that the Lord requires all pastors to always quit their outside jobs for the same reason. This project argues that congregations served by a working priest have deep levels of faith. There are many ways that pastors

---

<sup>34</sup> Bickers, "Real Pastors," 3.

and churches are tested. It is wrong to equate a leader's faith level with whether or not she is fully funded by the local church. Each pastor and congregation should embrace their unique calling as a local body and not judge another's faith level based on the size of one's budget.

### Argument #3: Being a Working Priest Only Works Temporarily

One Vineyard leader summed up this argument and Vineyard teaching in an interview, "Ah, I remember the bi-vocational days. They have their merits if they don't go on forever!"<sup>35</sup> There is a common sentiment in some denominations that being a working priest is acceptable as long as it is seen as a temporary lifestyle choice and not a calling. As one working priest wrote:

I can't speak for the movement as a whole but, anecdotally, I've encountered two prevalent themes. (1) Bivocational ministry is a pioneering thing to do and necessary in the start-up phase but not a long-term approach to ministry here in the U.S. and certainly not ideal. (2) Pastors who remain bivocational for a long period of time (longer than 2-3 years) are often seen as flawed or inadequate leaders...not builders. I believe the philosophy that drives these attitudes is consumer driven in its orientation, built on the American success/achievement paradigm where folks are measured based on results (i.e. numerical growth).<sup>36</sup>

Emphasis on numerical growth is an erroneous viewpoint that comes from a genuine concern for the church planter, a recognition of the reality of potential burnout, and a misunderstanding of Paul and his ministry.

Given the demands of pastoring a church, leading as a working priest can potentially expedite burnout. Those who believe that the status of "working priest" is a temporary strategy for church planting desire to care for Vineyard pastors and planters.

---

<sup>35</sup> Cindy Nicholson and Dave Jacobs, interview "The Small Church Pastor," Vineyard USA, 2017, accessed November 24, 2017, <http://www.vineyardusa.org/library/the-small-church-pastor/>.

<sup>36</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, March 1, 2017.



However, the challenges and extra difficulties faced by working priests can be overcome with proper care and resourcing. The fact that working priests face numerous significant challenges does not disqualify their ministry.

The second aspect of this argument is based on the myth that Paul performed manual labor temporarily. This is just not the case. The Bible states the opposite (1 Thessalonians 2:9) and affirms that Paul supported himself in ministry throughout his entire professional career. Luther Dorr points out that one of the reasons Paul was a working priest was because the Hebrews and Greeks had different concepts of manual labor and preaching for money. As Greeks scorned manual labor, becoming a working priest who worked with his hands, Paul became a living example for the early church. By laboring outside of churches and synagogues, Paul distanced himself from Greek lecturers and public speakers who could earn some of the best incomes.<sup>37</sup> Paul modeled a ministry style that shows pastors that working a second job outside their church does not need to be temporary.

To say that having a second job for a pastor is acceptable if only temporary creates a culture in the movement or denomination that excludes working priests who choose, like Paul, to work a second job long-term. There is no indication in the Bible that Paul built his financial support large enough and quit working with leather. Ministry is difficult, and working priests face unique challenges and these are discussed in Chapter Four of this project. However, the need to overcome hard hurdles does not disqualify pastors from being working priests throughout their pastoral ministry.

---

<sup>37</sup> Dorr, 7–8.

#### Argument #4: “Healthy Things Grow”

Another common argument is that “healthy things grow”: “If God had truly called you to the ministry, He would have opened up a larger church for you by now.”<sup>38</sup> This reasoning equates health with church size. For example, if the leader is healthy the church will grow to a size economically large enough to be able to hire a full-time, fully funded pastor. This argument is false for two main reasons. First, although it is true that healthy things grow, not all things grow in the same way or the same size. To say that healthy things grow, and to apply that to mean only fully funded pastors are healthy, is to make the false inference that all churches must be large enough to fully support a pastor in order to demonstrate that the pastor is a good and healthy leader. All one has to do is look at the birds and trees or almost any living thing to see that God grows healthy things in all shapes and sizes. When people use this argument to denigrate and shame working priests, they are really saying that all churches should be a size economically large enough to pay for a professional pastor; they are not actually talking about health at all.<sup>39</sup>

Rather than focusing on the health of the pastor of the church, this argument focuses on the congregation size.<sup>40</sup> In late 20<sup>th</sup> century US-American church culture, size meant everything. For the Evangelical church in the United States, it seems like the

---

<sup>38</sup> Bickers, “Real Pastors,” 3.

<sup>39</sup> Siu Fung Wu articulates a variation of the argument. Wu writes that one misconception of working priests is, “The quality of bi-vocational pastors is thought to be lower than the average full-time pastor, because otherwise they would have found a full-time position somewhere else.” Siu Fung Wu, “The Bi-vocational Pastor,” *Grace Communion International*, n.d., accessed November 21, 2017. <https://www.gci.org/church/ministry/bivocational>.

<sup>40</sup> Pete Scazzerro has recently written extensively on the emotional and spiritual health of people and leaders. His material is very helpful when discussing actual health issues and not simply the amount of attenders on a Sunday or the size of the offering. See, Scazzerro’s website for details, <https://www.emotionallyhealthy.org/eh-leader/>.

bigger the church, the better. If Christian magazine covers, social media popularity, and conference speaker headlines are any indication, then mega-church leaders are seen as the most successful pastors in America and smaller church pastors are seen as unhealthy and failures. According to Karl Vaters, “For the last several decades, the church leadership culture as a whole has despised Small Churches.”<sup>41</sup> Vaters uses the “Ikea and Starbucks” metaphor to combat the fallacious argument that healthy things grow. For Vaters, Ikea represents large churches and Starbucks represents small churches. We need mega churches, and, like Ikeas, there are not that many of them around. Simply because Ikea is large and needed for fashionable inexpensive furniture needs, not all stores are like Ikea. Some stores are more like Starbucks. Starbucks are small and seemingly on almost every corner in the country. Just like Starbucks, small churches can be as successful with their mission as Ikeas are with their mission. Just because one is large and one is small does not equate health or success.<sup>42</sup>

The second reason this is a bad argument is that it contradicts scripture. Paul was a great leader and planted and grew several churches (Acts 14:1–28). He also did not want to be a burden on these churches so he continued to labor and toil even when these churches were presumptively large enough to fully fund him (1 Thessalonians 2:9). The anti-working priest argument that healthy things grow—so, only the pastors who are fully funded are healthy—is anti-biblical and based on consumerism rather than scripture.

---

<sup>41</sup> Karl Vaters, *The Grasshopper Myth: Small Churches and the Small Thinking that Divides Us* (N.p.: New Small Church), 43.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. 51–54.

### Argument #5: Working Priests Lack Credibility

Many people see working priests as lacking credibility. This argument is similar to the previous, “Healthy Things Grow” argument, as it is believed that “When you can quit your other job and pastor full-time, you’ll be a real pastor.”<sup>43</sup> Both arguments are based on the fallacious idea that size is the most important factor in determining health and credibility. This incorrect way of thinking is based on the contemporary culture of the United States that idolizes size and power.

The idea that working priests lack credibility voices the thinking that in order to be credible, a pastor must have a large church. However, working priests in fact possess strong credibility. Alan R. Niquette, in his Doctor of Ministry Thesis, “Bi-Vocational Ministry: A Manual for Tentmakers,” lists five ways today’s working priests possess credibility based on 1 Thessalonians 2:1–12.<sup>44</sup> As discussed below, each of Niquette’s five points of credibility counterattack the argument that working priests lack credibility.

**Message Credibility: 1 Thessalonians 2:1–2.** Vineyard working priests have strong credibility with their message. Whether being a working priest due to financial necessity or missional choice, pastoring this way enhances the working priest’s credibility. Like Paul, working priests face many conflicts and hardships. As Niquette points out,<sup>45</sup> 1 Thessalonians 2:1–2 describes how Paul continued in ministry despite opposition and poor treatment. Paul offers comfort and courage to his readers the same way contemporary working priests do today. Paul preached the Good News wherever he

---

<sup>43</sup> A common message repeatedly communicated to Vineyard working priests.

<sup>44</sup> Alan R. Niquette, *Bi-Vocational Ministry: A Manual for Tentmakers* (Portland, OR: Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, 1987).

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

went. Today's working priests have erased the secular and sacred divide and proclaim Jesus in both of their vocational pursuits. Paul served as a working priest, and when Vineyard working priests serve today, their credibility goes up because they continue on in ministry despite all the hardships they face on a daily basis.

**Motive Credibility: 1 Thessalonians 2:3–6.** The motives of Vineyard working priests are credible. Paul uses seven negative statements to point out the positive aspects of the working priesthood. The seven negative statements Paul uses to highlight the fact that he is a model of the opposite way of ministry are: 1) He is not preaching with deceit; 2) He is not preaching with impure motives; 3) He is not preaching with trickery; 4) His purpose is not to please people; 5) He is not preaching with flattery; 6) He is not pretending to be friends for money; and 7) He is not seeking human praise. Each of these negative assertions shows the positive and credible motives that Vineyard working priest possess. For example, verses three and four claim that as a working priest Paul did not preach with deceit or with impure motives, but that he preached the truth. Like Paul, pastors today who have jobs outside their churches enjoy a deep sense of credibility from their congregations and others in their communities because their pure motives show through in all their hard work.

The reader also learns in verse four that Paul did not preach as a “people pleaser,” as is one concerned with making others happy. Instead, working priests demonstrate that they are doing what they do to please God. The motive to be a working priest is to honor the Lord, not to make humans happy. Consequently, the credibility of motives increases because working priests are free from the bondage to make people in their church happy.

Working priests follow the Lord and are not slaves to church boards or local church culture.<sup>46</sup>

Building on verse four, verses five and six argue that Paul did not pretend or use flattering words. Pastors who flatter or pretend often do so for financial gain. Flattering words can be used as a cover of ulterior motives and as manipulation. The speakers along with Paul were not attempting to receive glory from people. Paul's motives were pure, which he demonstrated by earning money with an outside job.

One advantage of being a working priest is the freedom most working priests have from financial issues. Paul willingly did manual labor so he was not a burden to the church. Even though he had the right to financial support by the church, his motivation was pure, and others witnessed how credible his motives were.<sup>47</sup>

**Love Credibility: 1 Thessalonians 2:7–8.** Paul says that he and his team are as innocent, gentle, and loving as babies in verses seven and eight. The word “cherish” in these verses is the same word used in Ephesians 5:28–29 to describe the way husbands should care for their wives as Christ cares for and nourishes the church. There is an intimate closeness drawn here. This can also be a good picture for how the Vineyard could be more caring for working priests. This paper focuses on the nursing mother metaphor later in this chapter.

Paul loves the Thessalonians so much that he shared his life with them. This love is visible through the fact that Paul is a working priest. He is preaching and manually laboring among them. Because he gives of himself so sacrificially, the credibility of his

---

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

love is elevated. Working priests today can boast this way too because they are self-supporting leaders who have personally invested their entire life for ministry.<sup>48</sup>

**Purpose Credibility: 1 Thessalonians 2:9.** Paul speaks for all working priests today when he states that he worked day and night to earn a living so that he would not be a burden on the church. This shows how believable his purpose is. It also reinforces an advantage to being a working priest: they are not financially enslaved to their congregations.<sup>49</sup> Paul and his team are self-supporting church leaders. Working priests today are the same, and their lifestyle is one where they work willingly day and night with a specific purpose: to see new converts, given elevated credibility by all who witnessed them in their toil.<sup>50</sup>

**Counsel Credibility: 1 Thessalonians 2:10–12.** By being working priests, pastors are able to teach from all of their learning experiences. People tend to trust the advice of someone who they see living out what they are preaching. Paul's practice is the epitome of this and says so in verses ten through twelve. Paul invites his hearers to view his team's working priest lifestyle. Paul's devoutness and honesty as demonstrated in his financial self-support is a living example to others. Working priests too, are worthy of emulation. Working priests truly "practice what they preach."

---

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> This author has a friend who got so wealthy with an outside business that he told his church board that he no longer wanted to accept a salary from the church. The president of the board refused his offer saying, "If we did not pay you then we could not control you." Working priests, like Paul, are free to follow Jesus and not be financially controlled by church boards.

<sup>50</sup> Niquette.

### **Working Priest Theology**

Many Vineyard working priests have not systematically worked out a theology for having a job outside their church while pastoring; they simply do it to keep the doors of the church open. When asked about his theology for being a working priest, one pastor responded succinctly, “No theology, simply survival.”<sup>51</sup> Many Vineyard working priests did not become working priests for overt theological reasons. Some find a second job because they believe it will make them a better pastor. For example, one working priest wrote, “I don’t know that I have a specific theology of bivocational ministry but I do feel that something about not being totally immersed in church matters every day has lightened my load, focused my gifts, and kept me more in touch with how my flock lives their lives.”<sup>52</sup> Others developed a working priest theology once they started working a second job. A common Vineyard working priest answer to the question of what theology drives their working priest status is: “I didn’t become bivocational for theological reasons. Now, though, I have formed some theology for it.”<sup>53</sup>

Planting a Vineyard church before reflecting theologically has been a common practice in the American Vineyard since its inception. Encounter with the Holy Spirit followed by obedient action, leading to theological reflection and education to gain understanding, is a practice that stems from Vineyard DNA and has become part of its ethos. The three-step process of first experiencing a calling from God, in this case to pioneer a Vineyard church, second, obeying God by planting the church, and then third,

---

<sup>51</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 31, 2017.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, November 9, 2016.



pursuing either a formal or informal education to “make sense of what is happening,” has been the prescribed course of action. It must be pointed out though that planting, and then pastoring, churches from this recipe of hearing God, obeying God, then searching for a theology to sustain the ministry is in itself a type of theology. One Vineyard working priest summarizes this theology:

There is no philosophy or theology behind it. I think most people understand it pragmatically. With the rising cost of real estate and the shrinking size of most congregations it seems reasonable to assume that more and more of us will be bivocational. If we had more church planting in the area the topic would be pressing. Perhaps we will soon start to think about that which will lead us to develop such a philosophy and/or theology.<sup>54</sup>

An example of this is how when working priest Glenn Schroder planted his church in 1996 he quit his outside job. However, six years ago, after the church developed and grew, he decided to go back to work “because it felt like the right thing to do.”<sup>55</sup> Schroder is also convinced that in his city, “Ten churches of 200 people would make a much greater impact than one church of 2,000.”<sup>56</sup>

This pragmatism is reminiscent of the Apostle Paul who was a working priest while planting and pastoring churches. Luther Dorr states that one of the reasons Paul was a working priest was because every Jewish boy in Paul’s time was required to learn a trade. In fact, the wisdom of the day was that if a father did not teach his son a trade, he was training him to be a thief. No doubt Paul was taught how to work with leather and make tents as a boy.<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, November 9, 2016.

<sup>55</sup> Glenn Schroder, phone interview by author, December 5, 2016.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Dorr, 7.

### Do What Needs to Be Done

Claiming to not have a theology, but lead a church as a working priest, is actually a theology. This attitude and stance on ministry comes from the second part of 1 Corinthians 3:5 where Paul says that he and Apollos did the work the Lord gave them. Paul is speaking as a working priest explaining to the church the nature of being a servant. Working priests are servants who come to the aid of all the members in one's church to help them realize their calling and gifting. Working priests look to 1 Corinthians 3 to become a servant and steward to help others complete their tasks.<sup>58</sup> Some Vineyard working priests see themselves as coming alongside members of their church and aiding them in discovering their gifts and talents.

### Being a Working Priest as a Spiritual Gift

Vineyard working priests that seemed to have morphed into the working priesthood tend to look to various chapters from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians as their basis for pursuing employment outside of their church. One pastor looks to the spiritual gifts list in 1 Corinthians 12 as his reason for becoming a working priest. Some working priests view their situation as being a gift of from the Holy Spirit. Verse five says that there are different kinds of service and the working priesthood is one of them. Verse six declares that God works in different ways. Working priests claim this as validation for leading a local church while earning an income from an outside job. After all, according to verses five and six, everyone serves the same Spirit and the same God. Finally, at the end of verse eleven, Paul states that that Spirit alone decides which gift each person should have. One common Vineyard interpretation of this phrase is that there

---

<sup>58</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, November 9, 2016.

are many other spiritual gifts not specifically listed here in 1 Corinthians 12:1–11.

Working priests claim that this interpretation includes becoming a working priest. Some Vineyard working priests view their calling as a spiritual gift from the Lord.

### Being Part of the Larger Body of Christ

The second part of 1 Corinthians 12, verses twelve to twenty-six, describes the body of Christ as a human body with many parts. The Vineyard values the idea that it is one part of the larger body of Christ around the world. Vineyard working priests take this interpretation one step further and view themselves as integral members of the larger body of Christ as well. Verses thirteen, nineteen, and twenty-two of chapter twelve assert three important points for current Vineyard working priest theology. These verses show that even within diversity, there is one spirit, there are a variety of different parts to the one body, and the parts that at first seem to be the weakest are actually the most important.

Verse thirteen paints the picture that there is diversity in the body of Christ, but only one Spirit. There are slaves, Gentiles, Jews, and free persons, but all share the same spirit. Vineyard working priests are different from mega-church pastors and other pastors who run their churches much like CEOs would run large businesses. The point is, even though there are a variety of different Vineyard pastors, all Vineyard pastors working priests and non-working priests share the same Spirit.

After further discussion of the body as likened to the local and global church, Paul asserts in verse nineteen that it would be an odd thing if the body had only one part. It could be argued that the priest is one part of the body of their church. For working priests, this means it would be strange if all the pastors in a denomination were fully

funded and only worked for their local church. In other words, the large churches in the Vineyard need churches pastored by working priests, and churches pastored by working priests need large church pastors.

Karl Vaters understands this and makes a strong case that, like the body needs its different parts, all different sized churches in any given town in the United States needs one another. In his *The Grasshopper Myth*, Vaters invites the reader to imagine a typical city of one million people.<sup>59</sup>

The city's churches might break down in size like this:

- 4 megachurches averaging 5,000 members for a total of 20,000 members
- 15 big churches                    1,000 members                    15,000 members
- 40 mid-size churches            500 members                    20,000 members
- 100 semi-small churches       250 members                    25,000 members
- 500 small churches              100 members                    50,000 members
- 500 house churches              15 members                      7,500 members
- For a total church attendance of                                    137,500 members

Vaters then asks, "Which church size is the *most* essential to this city? The *least* essential? It should be obvious by now that we need all of them."<sup>60</sup>

Building on Vaters' idea, working priest theology looks to 1 Corinthians 12:22 and discovers Paul's truth that some parts of the body that seem to be the weakest and least important are actually the most necessary. Working priests in the Vineyard are seen as weak and not important, but they are quite necessary to the Vineyard movement and the Kingdom of Jesus. A by-product of understanding that each body part is necessary is how working priests are good delegators. Because of the truth in these verses in 1 Corinthians 12 and the realities of working so many hours outside of the church, working

---

<sup>59</sup> Vaters, *Grasshopper Myth*, 170.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

priests have a heightened awareness of their need to empower members in their churches. As seen in this response, for these types of working priests, empowering the laity is key, “Drawing on 1 Corinthians 12 et al., the church is a congregation of Jesus in the Spirit. All our gifts are needed and no one, especially a ‘strong one’ is more needed than any other. I admit this view is not held by all in my church but we move steadily toward building community upon it.”<sup>61</sup>

The verses from 1 Corinthians discussed in this section demonstrate the need for churches led by working priests to not only rely on the various members of their congregations, but also working priest-led churches should be in partnerships with other larger churches. Chapter Five shows that one way to care for working priests in the Vineyard is to create partnerships between churches pastored by working priests and larger churches in a given Vineyard area. Like the different parts of the body need one another, the different sizes of churches must rely on one another. Working priests in the Vineyard know this reality and many desire to become strategic partners with other Vineyard churches.

#### Embrace the Priesthood of all Believers

Miller’s *Reinventing American Protestantism* looks back to a shift in the Vineyard where the major leaders were not formally trained professionals. In the early Vineyard Movement, there was a view of what it meant to be a pastor. Generally, to be a pastor one had to have a gift, a call, and anointing. Permission to plant was given based on anointing, not on credentials or academic degrees. However, Miller points out that something happened in the Vineyard with the professionalization and clerification of the

---

<sup>61</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, November 9, 2016.

church that caused a loss of the ethos of the priesthood of all believers. Vineyard working priest theology helps the Vineyard recover its value that all believers are priests.

For some mainline denominations, like the Presbyterian Church, USA for example, this professionalization was a result of a seminary education.<sup>62</sup> Hence, Presbyterian working priests “are outsiders to the traditional system of the full-time highly educated pastor.”<sup>63</sup> This is not so for the Vineyard. The segregation of Vineyard clergy is a result of size and budget and whether or not the church fully financially supports the senior pastor. The “priesthood of all believers” passage in 1 Peter 2, or how the Vineyard likes to interpret it, “everyone gets to play,”<sup>64</sup> can help Vineyard working priests to be more included and better resourced. “What is needed is a theology of inclusivity and mutuality.”<sup>65</sup>

Most likely written to gentiles positioned outside of Judaism, 1 Peter proclaims to followers of Jesus that they are now welcome as part of the family because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The recipients of this letter were marginalized, possessing no legal or political power. Howard writes, “Verse 4 brings relief to those who are rejected by saying God accepts them. Those who did not qualify, were perceived of as inferior, are perceived by God as valuable and given their proper place as priests and living stones in

---

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> It is ironic that one of the Vineyard Distinctives is this slogan, “Everyone gets to play,” but in so many facets of the Vineyard organization, working priests do not get to “play.”

<sup>65</sup> Craig Montgomery Howard, *Building a Community of Pastors: Pathways for Inclusion of Tentmakers and Commissioned Lay Pastors in the PC (USA)* (Chicago: McCormick Theological Seminary, 2011).

the building of God.”<sup>66</sup> Vineyard working priests embrace this inclusion. It is time for this theology of inclusion and covenant to improve the level of participation of working priests in the greater Vineyard story. The Vineyard can do this because in 1 Peter 2:4 and 9–10, the “problem of inferior and superior; outsiders and insiders; has now been transformed and the church now can work to build the people of God.”<sup>67</sup> All believers are called priests in 1 Peter. Working priests are leaders of local churches who pastor their congregation and earn an income from a job apart from their church. These pastors are not inferior to other pastors and should be included as “insiders” within their movement or denomination.

#### Look to “Tentmaking” for Missional Strategies

Ruth E. Siemens, a recognized pioneer of “tentmaking” as a strategy for missionaries, in her essay “The Vital Role of Tentmaking in Paul’s Mission Strategy,” describes the nine benefits of tentmaking. First, tentmaking provides entry into countries that normally would not allow missionaries to enter. Second, it allows for constant contact with non-believers. Third, it conserves funds for non-tentmakers. Fourth, missionaries are multiplied through tentmaking as more lay people are choosing to become tentmaking missionaries. Fifth, tentmaking allows for people to see Christians in a real life, non-church environment. Six, Siemens says that tentmaking lowers the attrition rate of missionaries. Seventh, it legitimizes mission agencies in difficult countries. Eighth, it allows for new sending countries, who do not follow the traditional Western model of full donor support, to start sending tentmaking missionaries. Ninth,

---

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

tentmakers make use of the global job market that God has designed to finish the task of spreading the Gospel. Working priests today can look to Siemens' nine benefits of tentmaking and adapt them to their own situation.

After listing the benefits, she then goes on to explain that Paul labored constantly for the churches he planted and continued to serve. She says that 1 Corinthians 9:6 suggests that Paul worked on his first missionary journey and must have supported himself as he went through Cyprus and Galatia.<sup>68</sup> Siemens says that 2 Corinthians 11:12 makes certain that Paul worked on his second journey, and both letters to the Thessalonians say that Paul worked "night and day." Paul was working in and out of the church all the time.

According to Siemens, Paul was a working priest for three reasons. The first reason was for credibility. Twice Paul states that he did not want to be an obstacle to the Gospel.<sup>69</sup> Although getting paid to speak did not pose a problem to Jews, getting paid to preach among the Gentiles could potentially elevate suspicion. Paul did not want to be a "peddler of God's Word," so he kept doing manual labor.

The second reason Siemens gives for Paul laboring outside the church is for identification purposes. Paul wrote from Ephesus, "To this present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our hands,"<sup>70</sup> to be able to identify with the poor and lower classes. Paul easily fit in with the Jews and the Greeks (educated Gentiles). However, he wanted to win the weak and the

---

<sup>68</sup> Ruth Siemens, "The Vital Role of Tentmaking in Paul's Mission Strategy," *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 14, no. 3 (July-September 1997): 122.

<sup>69</sup> 1 Corinthians 9:12, 2 Corinthians 6:3ff.

<sup>70</sup> 1 Corinthians 4:11, 12.



poor. Being a working priest helped him identify with a people group he would not have been able to without working manual labor.

The third reason Paul was a working priest was to model how to follow Jesus. Paul did not want to be a financial burden to any church, and he wanted to give us an example to follow.<sup>71</sup> Many Vineyard working priests enjoy a deeper trust from their congregations because, like everyone else in the church, even after late night Bible studies or worship or prayer meetings, working priests have to wake up early the next morning and go to work. Sometimes “fully funded” pastors can appear “out of touch” with their congregants when they attend late night church functions but do not have the stress due to the need to wake up in the morning and go to work. Working priests know this added stress and lack of energy after a church event the previous day. Consequently, working priests usually enjoy a deeper trust and appreciation from their congregations.

Much of the recent writing that attempts to derive a theology for working priests by looking at the tent making of Paul is too influenced by the recent American phenomenon known as the Church Growth Movement. To continue to develop a theology for working priests, it is important to understand that Christian pastors in the United States have a long history of holding jobs outside of the congregations they serve and that the concept of a “full-time” pastor is a fairly recent development given traction by the Church Growth Movement. As *God's Ambassadors* points out, US-American history is full of pastors who came to this country to serve local churches but who did not have the financial means to survive from one income.<sup>72</sup> Describing his own Reformed Church in

---

<sup>71</sup> 1 Thessalonians 3:8.

<sup>72</sup> Holifield.

America tradition, Seibert writes, “In fact, a careful study of church history demonstrates that what is actually ‘new’ in the church is full-time clergy.”<sup>73</sup> For some reason, many current Vineyard pastors view the tent making of Paul as an aberration from serving as a non-working priests in today’s world. For Paul, tent making was a way for him serve churches without burdening them financially. This way of ministry is one of the four main biblical metaphors for today’s working priests.

### **Four Biblical Metaphors for Working Priests**

Metaphors help leaders see things about reality that otherwise might be kept unseen. Vineyard leadership and Vineyard working priests uncover ways to improve working priest ministry in the four metaphors of exiles, tent-maker, missionary, and nursing mother. These four theological types inform the imagination for working priests and their congregations. The Bible is full of pictures, stories, and metaphors. Shepherds in the Bible, for example, have been used as a picture for pastoring for over 2,000 years. Working priests see themselves as exiles, and like the Apostle Paul did, as tentmakers, missionaries, and nursing mothers. Metaphors are useful not as a “one-on-one match”<sup>74</sup> to reality, but they shed light on “dimensions of reality which will otherwise go unnoticed and therefore unexperienced.”

#### The Exiles

Vineyard working priests experience many of the same emotions as immigrants. Like immigrants, working priests feel a sense of displacement, and they struggle to find

---

<sup>73</sup> Warren Seibert, *The Calling of a Part-Time Pastor: Developing a Guidebook for Small Church Leaders in the Reformed Church in America* (Bloomington, IN: Westbrow, 2016), 5.

<sup>74</sup> Walter Brueggemann, *Cadences of Home* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 1.

their identity because they work in two different contexts. Bo H. Lim, university and associate professor of Old Testament, Seattle Pacific University and Seminary, Seattle, Washington writes about exile as a way to understand her own immigrant experience.<sup>75</sup> Like Bo H. Lim chooses “exile” to understand immigration, Vineyard working priests can look to the exiles in the Bible to understand being a Vineyard working priest and to develop a strong working priest theology. As exile “provides a biblical and theological motif to understand [her] own identity and vocation,” it also provides the same for working priests. When working priests see themselves as exiles they are able to find joy in their calling. When the Vineyard sees working priests as exiles, the Vineyard will be in a better position to improve their care for working priests.

Like exiles, working priests must grieve. Writing about exiles, Brueggemann states, “Exiles must grieve their loss and express their resentful sadness about what was and now is not and will never again be.”<sup>76</sup> Twenty-first century ministry in the United States is different from the culture, economy, and social context of the Jesus People Movement of the 1970s that gave birth to the Vineyard. Brueggemann explains that exile is, “not primarily geographical, but it is social, moral, and cultural.”<sup>77</sup> Vineyard working priests serve in a completely different social, moral, and cultural milieu than the first generation of Vineyard pastors. Even for the working priests who have chosen this path,

---

<sup>75</sup> Bo H. Lim, “Exile and Migration: Toward a Biblical Theology of Immigration and Displacement,” *The Covenant Quarterly* 74, no. 2 (May 2016). This paper is a revision of the lecture “Prophetic Ministry among Exiles: The Contribution of Asian and Latino/a American Biblical Interpretation” given on September 23, 2015 as part of the 2015 Nils W. Lund Memorial Lectureship at North Park Theological Seminary.

<sup>76</sup> Brueggemann, 4.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

the exile metaphor invites working priests to grieve the fact that the “Glory Days” of the Vineyard, as described by many elder Vineyard leaders, are no more. Brueggemann states that the current context of the church in the United States is one of exile and should look to the Lamentations to help her grieve. Working priests can do the same. Working priests look to Lamentations to give words to the sadness that is present with being a working priest.

The experiences of current Vineyard working priests are similar to the exilic experience as recorded by the poetry of Lamentations. The three motifs of Lamentations inform the grief pattern of today’s working priests. The first movement is sustained sadness and negativity. Lamentations 1:3 describes that there is no resting place, and Lamentations 2:3 simply says there is no rest. Because working priests are busy with two jobs there is a sense of no rest or resting place like the one described in Lamentations. The second movement is the sense of being abandoned and forgotten. Lamentations 5:20 asks, “Why do you continue to forget us? Why have you abandoned us for so long?” As working priests are not able to attend the traditional Vineyard conferences and gatherings there is a feeling of sadness of being forgotten and abandoned. Finally, as Brueggemann points out, the third motif is one of negotiation between hope and despair.<sup>78</sup> Lamentations 3:18–23 asserts that hope is lost, but then shows up again. This is the same experience for working priests. The despair felt one day can vanish the next as the working priest dares to hope again.

Viewing working priests as a type of foreigner helps the Vineyard learn how to treat her working priests better. Leviticus 19:33–34 tells Israel how to treat foreigners saying, “Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat

---

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 4.

them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.” The Vineyard can take this advice and apply it to her working priests by improving the care of working priests. Like Israel is instructed to treat foreigners as native-born, the Vineyard can treat working priests in the same manner as non-working priests. Like Israel was to view foreigners, the Vineyard can view working priests as a legitimate ministry choice. Instead of reinforcing negative biases against working priests, copying the command of God for foreigners, the Vineyard can demonstrate love to working priests in the form of census recognition and upgraded forms of care.

#### The Tentmakers

Paul was a working priest who supported himself in ministry by making tents. Paul the Tentmaker is historically the most common theological picture for working priests. Luke writes that Paul made tents while in Corinth (Acts 18:3). Again, in 1 Corinthians 9:6, Paul writes that Barnabas and himself both earned a living outside of churches. Paul the Tentmaker states in both letters to the Thessalonians that he worked hard day and night to pay his own way (1 Thessalonians 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:7–8). When it comes to the modern US-American working priest, people have tended to look to Paul the Tentmaker as the example. Some denominations still call their working priests “Tentmakers.” It is common for pastors who hold a job outside their church to refer to themselves as currently in a “tent making” phase of their ministry.

Arguably the greatest person in the early church, Paul was an early “great Christian, evangelist, missionary, church planter, theologian, and writer of some of the

New Testament”<sup>79</sup> while earning an income as a tentmaker-leather worker. As a working priest there is “no more an illustrious example than the apostle Paul, the tentmaker-preacher. He could well be called the ‘Father of Bivocationalism.’”<sup>80</sup> The New Testament reports Paul working as a manual laborer in Thessalonica, Corinth, and Ephesus. Dorr states that Paul did this in at least three cities and most likely even more.

However, as Ralph Moore points out, Acts 18 has been misunderstood.<sup>81</sup> One common incorrect assumption is that Paul stopped making tents once Silas and Timothy arrived in Corinth. The text does not say that Paul ever stopped making tents. The assumption that Paul had no choice but to work with leather and other fabrics to fund his ministry is false. For Paul, tent making was the preferred strategy to spread the Gospel.<sup>82</sup>

Words are extremely important. To help return to a more Biblical worldview when it comes to working priest ministry, it is important to no longer refer to bivocational pastors as “tentmakers” but to refer to them as “working priests.” According to Ralph Moore, the founder of Hope Chapel Churches in California, Paul believed there were four advantages to being a working priest. A brief summary of these four points is helpful here.

First, Paul knew that having other sources of income outside the churches strengthened his credibility. When faced with criticisms, and when his apostolic credentials were being questioned in Corinth, Paul continued to refuse financial support

---

<sup>79</sup> Dorr, 7.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ralph Moore, “Paul: Planting Churches Bivocationally by Phil Claycomb (1 of 2),” Ralph Moore, August 17, 2017, accessed November 24, 2017, <https://www.ralphmoore.net/paul-planting-churches-bivocationally-phil-claycomb-1-2>.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

and instead stated, “three times for emphasis—that he never made use of that support. Why? Because Paul wanted to avoid creating any obstacle that might keep people from hearing the gospel and questioning his motives. He did not want people to think he preached for profit.”<sup>83</sup> Paul used his working priest status to “establish himself as a man of credibility.”<sup>84</sup> William Barclay, makes the point that Paul was not allowed to receive money from being a rabbi.<sup>85</sup>

Second, for Moore, Paul believed working priest ministry made it possible for pastors to identify with others in a deeper way. Paul the Tentmaker intentionally identifies with the people around him in 1 Corinthians 9 by not only becoming weak to the weak, but by also working like them. Paul also intentionally identifies with the people around him in 1 Corinthians 4:11–12 when he writes that he labors and works with his own hands like those in the church.

Third, by embracing being a working priest, Paul demonstrated servant leadership. Toward the end of Luke-Acts, Paul shares why he worked so hard as a working priest in ministry. In Acts 20:33–35, Paul writes that he ministered as a working priest in order to be an example. Paul believed he was serving his community and living as an example by keeping his job outside any church.

Fourth, the working priest ministry rejects a Christ-versus-career worldview. Many Christians today separate ministry and career. This sometimes is referred to as the sacred and secular divide. Paul, and today’s working priests, make no such distinction. Paul did everything, including tent making, as an act of worship and ministry. Paul

---

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> William Barclay, *The Acts of the Apostles, The Daily Study Bible* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1955), 147.

reinforces that there are no separate sacred and secular compartments in Colossians 3:17, admonishing everyone that “whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Paul does not make a distinction between full-time ministry and bivocational ministry because everything he does, including making tents, he does in the name of Jesus. Paul was a fully integrated full time pastor who supported himself by making tents. For Paul, there was no division between sacred acts and secular acts. This is important for today’s working priests and leads to the next metaphor of missionaries.

### The Missionaries

There are two parts that make up the missionary metaphor for working priests. Many working priests today look to the *Missio Dei* to for their theological foundation while others see themselves as ministers of reconciliation. Bernard Wall writes in the Introduction to *Priest and Worker, the Autobiography of Henri Perrin*:

It was absolutely pointless for churchmen to go on behaving in their traditional way, saying Mass in their cold and empty churches for a few middle-aged spinsters and reluctant altar boys, when the vast majority of Frenchmen, and especially the industrial workers, had lost contact with the Church altogether and could only be approached in a “missionary” spirit (like the “pagans” of Africa) with a technique adapted to their special circumstances.<sup>86</sup>

Like the working priests among the United States Frontier in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, today’s working priests consider “themselves missionaries in the exact the same way that Paul was a missionary.”<sup>87</sup> Ed Stetzer states, “Most Missiologists recognize that the need for new churches will not be met by recruiting seminary trained pastors.”<sup>88</sup>

---

<sup>86</sup> Henri Perrin, *Priest and Worker: The Autobiography of Henri Perrin* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), 5.

<sup>87</sup> Charles Chaney, *History of Missions in America* (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1976). 126.



The *Miss Dei* is a Latin Christian theological term that is most commonly translated as the “mission of God.” The church is seen as an instrument of God’s mission in the world.<sup>89</sup> As the leader, pastors of these churches view themselves as missionaries and fulfilling Jesus’ words in Matthew 28. For working priests, having a job outside of the church is the best way to fulfill Jesus’ command to make disciples of all nations. Receiving an income outside the church allows the pastor to not be a financial burden on the church so that the church can use any income it receives to share the Good News of Jesus with more people. Many Vineyard working priests and potential working priest church planters look to having a second job as helping their church fulfill the missionary mandate of Matthew 28.

The second piece to the missionary picture is the Ministry of Reconciliation. The word reconciliation means to renew a friendship or to restore to a right relationship. In 2 Corinthians 5:11–21, Paul writes that we have been given a ministry of reconciliation. In the United States the contemporary thinking about these verses is regarding racial reconciliation. Working priests who are ministers of reconciliation are missionaries to their diverse neighborhoods.

---

<sup>88</sup> Stetzer, “Passion,” 2. Stetzer also writes: “There are many reasons why lay church planting has received little attention in North America. These would include the seminary bias promoted by denominational leadership, the availability of seminary trained graduates (regardless of the quality), and the ignorance of the success of lay church planting.” 2.

<sup>89</sup> David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 389–390.

## The Nursing Mother

A move toward a holistic working priest theology must start at recovering the mothering voice in scripture. The idea for a theology for working priests based on the mothering voice first came to this author in Uganda while interviewing Ugandan Vineyard working priests. One pastor told the author that her reason for being a working priest was based on Proverbs 31. For her, Proverbs 31 informed her theology for doing ministry.<sup>90</sup> She models her life as a mother, worker, and minister after the mothering practices described in Proverbs 31.

Looking at the work of the secular Jewish philosopher, Dr. Hannah Arendt, and her categories of Labor, Work/Fabrication, and Action,<sup>91</sup> Dr. Emma Percy makes a strong case that the ministry is much like mothering.<sup>92</sup> Where traditionally people would place pastoring in Arendt's Action category, Percy places ministry in Labor and Action. Historically, Labor activities like cleaning the house, washing clothes, preparing meals, and caring for children have been accomplished by mothers, while Action endeavors, like leadership roles in business and politics, have been done mostly by men. By combining Labor and Action as two parts of the same ministry coin, Percy likens pastors "to the activities of Jesus as both a servant and a leader."<sup>93</sup> Servant leadership is a major Vineyard value and indeed part of its DNA. These values create a theology for working priests. Working priests not only do the repetitive mechanics involved with weekly

---

<sup>90</sup> Nereah Ochieng, interview by author, Kampala, Uganda. January 5, 2016.

<sup>91</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958).

<sup>92</sup> Emma Percy, *Mothering as a Metaphor for Ministry* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate Publishing Group, 2014).

<sup>93</sup> MaryKate Morse, "Pastoring as Mothering," *Missio Alliance*, Missio Alliance, last modified October 27, 2016, accessed December 9, 2016, <http://www.missioalliance.org/author/marykate-morse/>.

worship, but working priests, like mothers, labor in the “repetitive, cyclical work”<sup>94</sup> of holding a job outside their church; they behave as activators while they shepherd their flocks. This author borrows Percy’s mothering metaphor for ministry and takes it one step further and to apply it to working priest ministry. After all, Paul did.

Traditionally working priest theology has been simply informed by Paul’s tent-making profession. Once pastors truly embrace the servant leadership of Jesus and see mothering as a metaphor for leading as a working priest, they can move beyond the working priest theology of simple “tent making” and let Paul’s self-identification as a mother lead to a fresh theology for the working priesthood.

A Vineyard theology for working priests derived from Paul as the mothering apostle is better than viewing Paul as just the tent-making apostle for three reasons. First, Paul does not self-identify as a tent-maker. In Acts, Paul is called a tent-maker in the context that he stayed with other tent-makers.<sup>95</sup> Conversely, Paul calls himself a mother. In 1 Thessalonians 2:7, Paul says the he is like a mother caring for her children. To the church in Galatia, Paul claims to be in labor.<sup>96</sup> Paul declares to the church in Corinth that he is breast-feeding them.<sup>97</sup> Paul identifies as a mother and freely uses different images and attributes of mothering to describe how he pastors. Percy writes that “Paul was deliberately using metaphors that subverted ideas of hierarchy and authority, referring to himself with maternal images that seem shamefully inadequate for a male leader.”<sup>98</sup>

---

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Acts 18:3.

<sup>96</sup> Galatians 4:19.

<sup>97</sup> 1 Corinthians 3:2.

<sup>98</sup> Percy, Loc. 730, Kindle.

Shame and inadequacy are two powerful emotions that Vineyard working priests must overcome. Developing a theology of the working priesthood using the mothering metaphor will serve to subvert these challenging emotions.

The second reason mothering is a better foundation for working priest theology rather than tent-making is that mothering is a calling that does not end. For many in the Vineyard, tent-making is seen as a temporary necessary evil until one is successful enough to achieve fully funded status. This theology is derived more from the church growth movement and capitalistic economic philosophy than from scripture. Working priest Hugh Halter says, “The goal is to live as healthy a kingdom life as you can, being faithful to obey God and free up as much time for people as you can.”<sup>99</sup> This goal is in line with mothering, not tent-making. Mothering only transitions to different stages, but does not cease. At some point mothers safely feed their children meat and not just milk, but the work of mothering has not stopped. Referring to John Calvin, Percy says that mothers “spare no trouble or effort, avoids no care, is wearied by their coming and going, and gladly even give her own life to be drained.”<sup>100</sup> This also describes pastors who faithfully serve their church and hold an outside job.

The third reason to move toward a mothering metaphor and away from the traditional tent making way of thinking is that mothering is more holistic. A mother is a mother whether she is at home or at work. There is no such thing as being a spiritual mom and a secular mom. The same is true for working priests: “There is no such thing as

---

<sup>99</sup> Hugh Halter, *BiVo: A Modern-Day Guide for Bi-Vocational Saints (Leveraging All of Life into One Calling)* (Littleton, CO: Missio Publishing), 127.

<sup>100</sup> Percy, Loc. 701, Kindle.

a secular job,” says Doug Black Jr.<sup>101</sup> In the United States, “tent-making” as a way to justify being bivocational has become another symptom of the duality that plagues US-American religion.<sup>102</sup> This author is often asked if I am a pastor who teaches or a teacher who pastors. This question comes from the false dualism that there is a divide between the “sacred” and the “secular.” Working priest ministry as mothering removes this divide and gives permission for pastors to use their shepherding gifts, like a mother who uses her mothering gifts, in every context. Recovering a mothering metaphor paves the way for working priests to not only become friendly co-laborers with Jesus, but also opens the gate for the “priesthood of all believers.”<sup>103</sup> Just like mothers care and create an environment for their children to succeed, working priests create sanctuary for their flocks to live as disciples of Jesus.

By embracing the metaphorical identity of exiles, working priests gain permission to grieve. When Vineyard leadership views working priests as types of exiles, they are motivated to create better avenues of care. The tentmaker metaphor sheds light on the reality that working priest ministry is difficult while the missionary picture informs working priests that they are participating with God’s mission on earth. Finally, the nursing mother imagery that Paul himself claims aids Vineyard working priests with identifying their calling as working priests as essential and permanent.

---

<sup>101</sup> Doug Black, *Marathon: A Manual for Bivocational Ministry* (Philadelphia: The Author, 2014), 31.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 70.

## Summary

Working priests have a long and important history. There are types of working priests in the Old Testament and several working priests in the New Testament. World church history after the Bible is filled with working priests who continued the work of Jesus. Working priests are almost single-handedly responsible for leading churches in the Western Frontier of the United States. Working priests are important and portray a legitimate form of pastoral ministry that has been common throughout history.

Working priests face a variety of false assumptions and this chapter describes the five most common ones of the Vineyard. Vineyard working priests face these debates and continue to serve mainly for pragmatic reasons. After a discussion of the current Vineyard theology of working priests as described by Vineyard working priests themselves, the chapter moves this theology along by offering four biblical metaphors.

When working priests see themselves as exiles they have permission to grieve and continue to lead as working priests. When the Vineyard views working priests as types of exiles, they place the movement under the same instruction the ancient Israelites received from the Lord to treat the foreigners as native-born and therefore care for working priests in the same way the Vineyard cares for non-working priests. Working priests are tent-makers and missionaries like Paul. Finally, working priests need to recover the Pauline picture of pastoring as a nursing mother.

## CHAPTER THREE: WHAT OTHER US-AMERICAN DENOMINATIONS ARE DOING FOR WORKING PRIESTS

### Introduction

Over the past forty years a few denominations based in the United States have started to give attention to the US-American working priest phenomenon.<sup>1</sup> This section is a summary of the highlights found in popular and academic writings of the past forty years as they specifically inform how the Vineyard can improve its care and resourcing of working priests today. Each of the resources in this chapter contributes helpful ideas the Vineyard could do to improve her care and resourcing for Vineyard working priests.

The premier thinker and writer in the United States when it comes to this topic is Dennis Bickers. Dr. Bickers, a US-American Baptist working priest has written several books for working priests and their congregations. Starting with his first two books *The Tentmaking Pastor: The Joy of Bivocational Ministry* in 2000 and his *The Bivocational Pastor: Two Jobs, One Ministry* in 2004, through his 2010 Doctor of Ministry project titled, “Coaching Bivocational Ministers for Greater Ministry Effectiveness,”<sup>2</sup> and continuing to his most recent lectures, blogs, and conference talks, Dr. Bickers has by far contributed the most work toward resourcing and caring for working priests. This review is in chronological order, however, because of Bickers thinking and publishing, his doctoral project for Liberty Theological Seminary in 2010 will be reviewed first. After that section the rest of the review is organized chronologically with each resource

---

<sup>1</sup> It is important to remind the reader that this project is geared for the Vineyard in the United States as the overwhelming majority of Vineyard pastors outside of the United States have been working priests from the beginning. It seems to be a US-American phenomenon to elevate pastors who are fully funded, to the detriment of working priests.

<sup>2</sup> Dennis Bickers, “Coaching Bivocational Ministers for Greater Ministry Effectiveness” (D.Min. diss., Liberty Theological Seminary, 2010).

describing how it can help the Vineyard develop its own resources for Vineyard working priests.

### **Vineyard Working Priests Need Coaching**

Dennis Bickers wrote his dissertation describing how to best coach working priests. His ideas and conclusions inform a part of the solutions in Chapter Five and the future creation of a website described in Chapter Six of this paper. Bickers shows how important it is to specifically coach working priests. For Bickers, working priests need special coaching strategies because they possess unique challenges in addition to all the common challenges faced by fully funded pastors. Bickers identifies time issues, lack of self-esteem, and lack of resources as the three largest challenges working priests face in ministry.

For Bickers, “There are five primary areas of life that bivocational ministers must balance if they want to enjoy a healthy lifestyle and an effective ministry: God, family, ministry responsibilities, second job, and self-care.”<sup>3</sup> He states time management is the number one issue identified by working priests. The second unique hurdle identified by the working priests surveyed by Bickers is the feeling of lack of self-worth. Because working priests feel inferior to fully funded pastors because denominations tend to measure success with numbers and “full time” status, many working priests struggle with identity issues and low self-esteem. Bickers identifies the lack of support for working priests as the third unique challenge for working priests. He claims that this is due mainly to lack of support from denominational leadership and fellow ministers within the denomination.

---

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 20.



Using Bickers 2010 thesis that working priests need coaching as the center of recent publications about working priests, there are a few significant works, including two by Bickers himself, that moved the working priest conversation along prior to 2010. Many of these books were written in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. This shows that for over thirty years, even before the Vineyard movement began, working priests have been part of other US-American denominations. This section shows how the Vineyard can adapt nine of these resources to better care and resource Vineyard working priests.

*Case Histories of Tentmakers*<sup>4</sup> and *Bi-Vocationals*<sup>5</sup> are listed together because they are both written by James Lowery and are similarly structured. Lowery is also one of the few people who wrote about working priests from an Episcopal/Anglican stance. He wrote his 1976 volume to educate leaders of the Episcopal denomination about the great potential working priest could have for church growth and renewal.<sup>6</sup> Lowery states that he produced the 2006 volume of working priest case studies because in the thirty years since his first book there are more and more working priests in the Episcopal and Anglican Church as “50% plus of the local congregations are too small or poor to fund the so-called traditional arrangement of a full-time, fully-paid resident priest.”<sup>7</sup>

Lowery tells the story of thirty working priests. The sketches found here and in his 1976 *Case Histories* demonstrate care and resource for Vineyard working priests.

---

<sup>4</sup> James L. Lowery, Jr., *Case Histories of Tentmakers* (Wilton, CT: Morehouse-Barlow, 1976).

<sup>5</sup> James L. Lowery, Jr., *Bi-Vocationals: Men and Women Who Enrich the Human Ecology and the World Surrounding* (West Conshohocken, PA: Infinity Publishing, 2006).

<sup>6</sup> Mike Kennedy, “Book Review #11: *Bivotionals* by James Lowery,” *Bivocational Preacher*, August 17, 2017, accessed November 2, 2017, <https://www.bivocationalpreacher.net/book-review-11-bivotionals-james-lowery/>.

<sup>7</sup> Lowery, *Case Histories*, v.

First, by telling the stories of Episcopalians and Anglicans, Lowery shows that the working priest reality is in every denomination. Second, stories of working priests encourage current working priests. Each of these stories could serve as a basis of a blog on a website geared to care and resource Vineyard working priests because these stories show the human side of being a working priest.

Lowery's stories can inspire current and potential Vineyard working priests because of all the plethora of the different occupations he describes. One person is a lawyer, another artist. Some working priests described started as Catholic priests then changed to Anglican and then "retired" to become working priests. Lowery also notes that many of the working priests he interviewed and wrote about "enter the clergy life as a sort of mid-life discovery and addition, combining this second career with what went on before."<sup>8</sup> This could help Vineyard working priests who are middle aged by inspiring them to continue their work and ministry.

In 1980 when he wrote *Our Pastor Has an Outside Job*, John Elliott was the pastor of Genesee Baptist Church in Rochester, New York. Elliott wrote this book to help convince Baptist judiciaries that hiring working priests in small Baptist churches was a viable alternative "to yoking, hiring untrained leadership, federating, or starving the preacher."<sup>9</sup> Elliot received a grant from the Lilly Foundation and from four denominations to study the growing phenomenon of working priests.

Besides offering theological and historical precedents for working priests and describing the typical arguments for and against becoming a working priest, who Elliott

---

<sup>8</sup> Lowery, *Bi-Vocationals*, 27.

<sup>9</sup> John Elliott, *Our Pastor Has an Outside Job: New Strength for the Church through Dual Role Ministry* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1980), 6.

calls “dual-role” pastors, the most important aspect of this book is that it shows the urgent need for working priests over thirty years ago. He explains that denominations are starting to be open to the fact that they will need working priests to fill the pastoral role in many of their churches. Elliott is one of the first pastors to come up with a plan for denominations in the United States to train and equip pastors who are working priests.

Elliott’s “Road to Dual Role” map on page 44 is an example of an early strategy for churches, denominations, and pastors to consider the working priesthood as a good choice for certain local congregations. In his concluding chapter, Elliott also correctly predicts that there will be more women working priests and that trend deserves study.<sup>10</sup>

Alan Niquette’s doctoral thesis<sup>11</sup> for Western Conservative Baptist Seminary shows the Biblical and practical reasons for becoming a working priest. Focusing on Paul the Tentmaker, Niquette exegetes 1 Thessalonians 2, 2 Thessalonians 3, 1 Corinthians 9, 2 Corinthians 11 and Acts 20, to show four main reasons why Paul was a working priest. According to Niquette, Paul engaged in tentmaking as a working priest to demonstrate credibility, show that he was a hard worker, maintain financial support, and to be an example to the elders.

Niquette conducted surveys with experienced working priests and inexperienced working priests to arrive at several practical aspects of serving as a working priest. Niquette makes room for working priests who see themselves as temporarily ministering while having a second job and for working priests who see themselves as permanently

---

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>11</sup> Alan R, Niquette. *Bi-Vocational Ministry: A Manual for Tentmakers* (Portland, OR: Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, 1987).

this way. This dissertation offers solid preliminary steps toward a working priest theology.

*The Bivocational Pastor* by Luther Dorr<sup>12</sup> is the first comprehensive mainstream book written from a mainline denominational perspective about working priests. In the preface Dorr writes that he wrote this book out of three concerns: he realized the number of working priests in America was going to increase; to legitimize and normalize the ministry of working priests in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; and to encourage and recognize current and future working priests. The majority of this book is Southern Baptist Convention circa 1988 specific. However, other denominations like the Vineyard can benefit from the first four chapters wherein Dorr combines Biblical and other historical background materials and describes Paul the “Bivocational Preacher” in detail.<sup>13</sup> These points were explained in Chapter Two of this project.

Building his case that working priests are legitimate, Dorr produces a list of working priests from 100–600, 500–1500, and then into the twentieth century. Dorr’s brief 2000-year history of working priests demonstrates the historical and current significance of the ministry of working priests. Dorr proves that working priests have a long and important history. By showing the impact of working priests throughout history, Dorr proves that working priests are authentic ministers. This is relevant because this means that working priests deserve, and indeed need, better care by the Vineyard today.

---

<sup>12</sup> Dorr spent over sixty years in the ministry and sadly died during the writing of this dissertation in July 2017.

<sup>13</sup> Luther M. Dorr, *The Bivocational Pastor* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1988), 7.

Vernon Swenson<sup>14</sup> was concerned with the amount of churches in North America that were struggling just to keep the doors open. For Swenson, even in 1991, there is a leadership crisis in the church in North America. He wrote this two-part book to describe two models. The first model is how to raise up working priests from within the local congregation, people he refers to as “indigenous” to the local church. The second part is about educating these future working priests via extension courses. Swenson places the strategy of working priests arising from local churches correctly in the missional way of doing church as he relies heavily on the writings of Roland Allen. Swenson’s book could serve as a guide for the Vineyard to train and deploy future working priests who are currently members of the laity.

As a joint project between the Christian Community and The Brethren Academy, Steve Clapp, Ron Finney, and Angela Zimmerman wrote *Preaching*<sup>15</sup> after studying the Brethren Church in North America. They learned that sixty-seven percent of Brethren pastors were or were currently serving as a working priest. The authors discuss some of the benefits experienced by working priests throughout the book. Some of the benefits of the working priesthood described by the authors are the extra income from the outside job, not being totally dependent on their congregation for money, and the diversity of work outside the church. Many respondents to the interviews by the authors also stated

---

<sup>14</sup> Vernon Swenson, *What Can Be Done? Indigenous, Bi-Vocational Ministry and Ministry Education by Extension* (Lima, OH: Fairway Press, 1991).

<sup>15</sup> Steve Clapp, *Preaching, Planning, & Plumbing: The Implications of Bivocational Ministry for the Church and for You* (Fort Wayne, IN: Christian Community, 1999).

that they appreciated seeing “solid results from one’s secular work”<sup>16</sup> and that they “enjoyed a more apparent sense of freedom and well-being.”<sup>17</sup>

There are three specific ways listed in this book describing how denominations can help working priests. The authors suggest support groups for working priests could be helpful as well as workshops and seminars organized by the denomination that working priests could attend: “On-line chat rooms and web-pages may serve to link ministers to one another in order to discuss the issues surrounding their calling.”<sup>18</sup> This section calls the Vineyard to create a website for working priests. Besides calling for a working priest online presence, the book states: “Sessions for bivocational ministers held at the time of annual denominational meetings could also provide opportunity for mutual support and exchange of helpful strategies.”<sup>19</sup>

No one has written more about the working priesthood than Dennis Bickers. He wrote *The Tentmaking Pastor* and *The Bivocational Pastor* before his doctoral dissertation. In addition to the books he has written Bickers continues to blog regularly. The earlier book focuses on how a working priest can find joy in ministry while the second volume is more about leadership principals to ensure success. Bickers provides solid reasons why working priests are needed today while acknowledging that there is still a stigma attached to pastors who hold a second job outside of their church. The Vineyard can incorporate the ideas in these books for a website and teaching curriculum for future Vineyard working priests.

---

<sup>16</sup> Clapp, 65.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 69.

One of the most helpful books that will aid increasing the care and resourcing of Vineyard working priests is *One Person Multiple Careers, How “The Slash Effect” Can Work For you, A New Model for Work/Life Success*, by Marci Alboher.<sup>20</sup> Meeting lawyer/pastor Angela Williams in 2000 inspired Alboher to start a journey of researching people who many would call bi-vocational and she has labeled the slash effect. As part of her experience of learning from people with multiple vocations, Alboher herself added a slash. Her helpful book is full of stories of successful *slashers* and will be a great resource for Vineyard working priests. Alboher also finds several common threads that contribute to slash effect success. These ingredients for success can be translated to the Vineyard working priest context and increase the care for Vineyard working priests.

Even though this book was inspired by a working priest, it is not written by a someone in the ministry or affiliated with Christianity. What is so wonderful for working priests is that this book not only normalizes being a working priest, but Alboher actually elevates those who have a slash in their vocational life. Her process of storytelling and highlighting people who are multi-vocational, should be copied by denominations to encourage working priests.

Alan Brock, in his doctoral thesis for Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, recognizes that working priests are either poorly trained or not trained at all how to preach.<sup>21</sup> Using his research of the Linn-Livingston Baptist Association of Bivocational Pastors, Brock discovered that they had “inadequate or no training in expository

---

<sup>20</sup> It is fitting that the inspiration for this book is a working priest, high-powered lawyer, and pastor Angela Williams, who the author met at a lawyer conference in Washington, DC in 2000.

<sup>21</sup> Alan Brock, *Equipping Bivocational Pastors to Develop Skills for Expository Preaching* (D.Min., diss., Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008).

preaching.”<sup>22</sup> Brock proposes training working priests how to preach using church partnerships and the Internet. This study is helpful for the Vineyard to create a network of working priests who are being trained to preach.

Dr. Terry Dorsett wrote this training manual to assist pastors of small churches in creating teams to increase the impact the local church is having in their community.<sup>23</sup> The goal is to “help these pastors develop leadership teams so that they are not doing the entire ministry themselves.”<sup>24</sup> This short textbook-style paperback could function as a model for future trainings for Vineyard working priests. Dr. Dorsett discusses the reality of current church trends in the United States including the increase of working priests. There is a need for more working priests, and these working priests should be taught to create teams who can share in the ministry. One of the strongest arguments for leading as a working priest is the concept of the priesthood of all believers found in 1 Peter, and Dr. Dorsett’s book offers practical strategies for making that a reality.

Craig Montgomery Howard wrote this thesis for McCormick Theological Seminary to argue that his denomination needs pathways “that can lead to the reframing of denominational understandings, practices, and ecclesiology that support the formation of pastoral communities, which will include multi-job pastors.”<sup>25</sup> Howard and the Presbyterian Church, USA refer to working priests as Tentmakers and Commissioned

---

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., vi.

<sup>23</sup> Terry Dorsett, *Developing Leadership Teams in the Bivocational Church* (Bloomington, IN: Crossbooks, 2010).

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>25</sup> Mary Miller Currie, *Commissioned Lay Pastors in the Presbyterian Church: A Handbook Provided by Churchwide Personnel Services National Ministries Division*, The Presbyterian Church, USA Office for Resourcing Committees on Ministry (2003), ii, <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/clphandbook1.pdf>.



Lay Pastors (CLP). Howard recognized that the Presbyterian Church in the United States is becoming a denomination of small churches that struggle financially. One solution is for these small churches to hire working priests. Howard discovered that denominational leaders were mostly against this and that to change this way of thinking a clear path for ordaining working priests was needed. This study informs the Vineyard in 2017 and call the Vineyard to do the same.

Karl Vaters is a pastor who nearly fell out of ministry because he was killing himself by trying to grow his church to a certain size. Although he is not a working priest himself, his book<sup>26</sup> is full of helpful things for the care and resourcing of Vineyard working priests. His definition of the Grasshopper Myth is, “The false impression that our Small Church ministry is less than what God says it is because we compare ourselves with others.”<sup>27</sup> Vaters goes on to show how working priests can overcome this myth and help themselves overcome the many hurdles they face.

Karl Vaters writing, *The Grasshopper Myth* and his current blog for *Christianity Today* is encouraging and affirming for working priests. He discusses the different definitions for success. He also shows the unique contributions small churches have to the kingdom of God. Vaters writing is incorporated throughout this dissertation as it demonstrates over and over again how important small churches are to the kingdom of God. Vaters’ book informs the Vineyard that churches pastored by working priests are very important.

---

<sup>26</sup> Karl Vaters, *The Grasshopper Myth: Big Churches, Small Churches and the Small Thinking that Divides Us* (N.p.: New Small Church, 2012).

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., Inside Cover.

Dr. James W. Highland is a working priest in rural Tennessee. “His career includes pastor of significant churches, Capital Funds Consultant to more than 200 churches, Executive Vice-President of a nationally recognized church fundraising company” and Development Director of a Tennessee Baptist Convention agency.<sup>28</sup> He wrote the book, *Serving* in 2012 in the form of an imagined dialogue between a working priest and a church consultant as a way to be “helpful to ministers who are serving as a bivocational pastor or are considering that ministry role.”<sup>29</sup>

*Serving* describes four benefits of being a working priest. First, Highland explains that when he was a non-working priest, 90% of the people he was in contact with were church people. Now as a working priest he gets to interact with many people outside his congregation. Second, as a working priest earning an income outside his church, he has a stronger sense of security and independence. When Highland was not a working priest, church finances caused him anxiety. The third benefit for Highland is that he believes his second job creates a type of buffer for his family between them and the church he leads. Fourth, when Highland transitioned to a working priest he believes the expectations his church had on him decreased. Highland experiences more confidence now because he meets the current expectations as opposed to when he only worked for the church and constantly felt he was not living up to the expectations the church placed on him.

Because, “‘change’ is impacting every area of our lives,”<sup>30</sup> working priests are needed and they face harsh challenges. Time is a common challenge for ministers in general, and working priests in particular: “The bivocational pastor will certainly

---

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., vii.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., v.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 5.

encounter the pressure of giving time to family, friendships, small groups, study, prayer and personal leisure time.”<sup>31</sup> Highland highlights the challenge of time that working priests face. Time is an issue faced by all pastors, but working priests tend to experience a unique form of time pressure due to their second job. This can be a personal issue.

The most helpful chapter is Chapter Nine regarding the working priest and personal life issues. What is great about this chapter is that Highland points out the positives aspects of being a working priest: “The bivocational pastor’s role, one person in two distinct career jobs roles, can be a blessing.”<sup>32</sup> For Highland, there are four main benefits to being a working priest. First, working priests have many contacts outside of their church. Second, having an outside income source can lessen the anxiety that can come with money issues. Third, Highland “often sensed that [he] and [his] family lived in a glass house”<sup>33</sup> but with a second job, he did not feel that way anymore. Fourth, Highland discovered that with having a second job, the people in his church lowered their expectations of him and now he finds that instead of disappointing his church by not living up to their expectations, he is bringing them joy by often exceeding their expectations.

Three years after his doctoral thesis, Beacon Hill Press published Dennis Bickers’ ideas about working priests needing coaching.<sup>34</sup> Writing specifically to denominational leaders, congregations pastored by working priests, and working priests themselves,

---

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>32</sup> James W. Highland, *Serving as a Bivocational Pastor* (Newburgh, IN: Newburgh Press, 2013), 183.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 184.

<sup>34</sup> Dennis Bickers, *The Art and Practice of Bivocational Ministry* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 2013).

Bickers argues that working priest need and desire coaching. The Vineyard could use the coaching outline chapters in this book as a basis to train working priest coaches who come alongside fellow working priests. The book also describes the various types of working priests and makes room for women to be working priests. This book can also help Vineyard leadership see that working priests do not serve as a detriment to the Vineyard, but in fact, working priests are an asset to the Vineyard and coaching them “provides public affirmation of the importance”<sup>35</sup> of working priests.

The major point of Hugh Halter’s *BIVO*<sup>36</sup> that is most helpful for working priests is his thesis that the “goal of our calling isn’t to be bi-vocational, fully paid, or volunteer. The goal of our existence is to learn how to leverage everything God has given us.”<sup>37</sup> This statement has the potential to demonstrate care for Vineyard working priests by freeing them from the constant drive to grow their church large enough so they can quit their second job. Halter also calls for a network of working priest leaders.

Since 2005, Ray Gilder has been the National Coordinator of the Bivocational and Small Church Leadership Network. This is a Southern Baptist Convention group of working priests. Gilder wrote *Uniquely Bivocational*<sup>38</sup> because he noticed the numbers of churches that were pastored by working priests was growing and there are not many resources available to help. Gilder does a good job of articulating the common arguments against becoming a working priest. He also states that the two key factors that all working

---

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 154.

<sup>36</sup> Hugh Halter, *BiVo: A Modern-Day Guide for Bi-Vocational Saints* (Littleton, CO: Missio Publishing, 2013).

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>38</sup> Ray Gilder, *Uniquely Bivocational-Understanding the Life of a Pastor Who has a Second Job* (Forest, VA: Salt Light Publishing, 2013).

priests must have are “the call of God upon his life and the God-given desire to make a difference, whatever it takes.”<sup>39</sup> The research in the Vineyard supports this claim. Because the Vineyard ordains women, it is important to note that the necessity of calling and desire to do whatever it takes applies to Vineyard working priests who are women as well. Gilders list of the advantages of being a working priest and his explanations of what a working priest should expect from the church they lead are very helpful and can help Vineyard working priests.

Doug Black<sup>40</sup> says that working priest are the long-distance runners of ministry. His book is true to its title and is a manual for all working priests. It is a great manual because it differentiates working priests from small church pastors who may or may not be working priests. One large point in this book is how working priests erase the dichotomy of sacred and secular spaces. Black’s contribution to the working priest conversation is that working priests are missional. Getting out of the church office and into the streets is what being a working priest is all about and Black shows a way for pastors to do that and for their congregations to aid them along.

Another resource is *Constructing Blue Collar Leaders In A White Collar World* by Lamar Herndon.<sup>41</sup> The two most helpful parts of this book that can be used to increase the care and resourcing of Vineyard working priests are Herndon’s relisting of Terry Dorsett’s eight benefits of being a working priest and Herndon’s three reasons for writing this book. Herndon has written this book for three reasons. The first reason is the number

---

<sup>39</sup> According to Gilder, this applies to women as well.

<sup>40</sup> Doug Black, *Marathon: A Manual for Bivocational Ministry* (Philadelphia, PA: The Author, 2014).

<sup>41</sup> Lamar Herndon, *Constructing Blue Collar Leaders in a White Collar World* (Virginia Beach, VA: Legacy Book Publishing, 2015).

of working priests in the United States is growing. He cites three reasons for this phenomenon. Herndon states that due to the lack of training in US-American churches regarding financial stewardship, the rise of the cost of living in the United States, and the economic downturn and recession the US-American economy has recently experienced each contribute to the fact that more and more churches are pastored by a working priest.

The second reason Herndon wrote this book is personal. Both Herndon's dad and father-in-law were working priests. Herndon personally witnessed the extra challenges and struggles working priests in the United States face on a daily basis. The personal nature of Herndon's experience is also the third reason for writing this book. Herndon himself has been working priest. He credits his wife and her income and support with the fact that he was able to quit his blue-collar job and just focus on his small Southern Baptist church. The rest of the almost 400-page book reads like a summary textbook of general old and new leadership principals that are specifically aimed at working priests.

Studying his own denomination, the United Methodist Church in the United States, Rosario Picardo wrote *Ministry Makeover*<sup>42</sup> for pastors who might be potential working priests. The first two chapters give the background and context of the current decreasing membership trend occurring in the United Methodist Church. Picardo concludes that church planting is the solution to the problem of shrinking church size in the Methodist Church, and in chapter three he makes the case that "Another way for the church to rethink its resources is rooted in the role of bi-vocational ministers."<sup>43</sup> For

---

<sup>42</sup> Rosario Picardo and Michael Slaughter, *Ministry Makeover: Recovering a Theology for BiVocational Service in the Church* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2015).

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

Picardo, working priests are best perched to live out in real and practical ways the “Three R’s”: relocation, reconciliation, and redistribution.<sup>44</sup>

From general context, to focus specifically on working priests, Picardo describes the lives of Amos, Nehemiah, and Paul as Biblical precedents for working priest ministry: “Amos, Nehemiah, and Paul are very similar in their hard work as bi-vocational ministers for the Lord.”<sup>45</sup> Moving forward from the Bible to 18<sup>th</sup> century church history, Picardo describes the lives of five Wesleyan Revivalists who were working priests. John Nelson (1707–1770), Jacob Albright (1759–1808), Martin Boehm (1725–1812), and Richard Allen (1760–1831) were all Methodist working priests who left lasting legacies in the Methodist denomination.

After a brief chapter on the theology of work, Picardo turns to showing how his church at the time of his writing, Embrace Church in Lexington, Kentucky “can be a case study within mainline denominationalism as a seedbed for training missional leaders through bi-vocational and incarnation missionary methods.”<sup>46</sup> What this means is that the five members of the Embrace Church pastoral staff would choose to secure a job outside of their church as an experiment to see what the results might be in terms of professions of faith, baptisms, attendance, and finances. The result of the experience was that Picardo noticed four patterns: a strong sense of calling; accountability through community as fellow staff members; feelings of being blessed through their pastoral community; and a better financial situation for the church. As a result of these findings, Picardo writes, “Embrace Church has found a creative way to maintain its attendance, entrepreneurial

---

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 65.

spirit, and meet the needs of the congregations with these bi-vocational pastors.”<sup>47</sup> After a year of the staff choosing to be working priests, the church grew thirteen percent, and now has eighty percent more professions of faith, and thirty percent more baptisms.<sup>48</sup>

Paul Powell originally wrote *Shepherding the Sheep in Smaller Churches*<sup>49</sup> in 1995 to help small church pastors. The Bivocational and Small Church Leadership Network republished it twenty years later to expand the original readership to current working priests. The BSCLN “began in 1977 solely for the purpose of advancing and revitalizing bivocational and smaller membership church ministries, their pastors, and leadership teams.” This edition is called the BSCLN Scholarship Edition and was updated with a new introduction from Ray Gilder.

Even though it is referring to small churches in general, whether they are pastored by a working priest or not, this book is an encouragement to working priests. Powell states that a smaller church can do a big work and that pastors should not be fooled by size.<sup>50</sup> For Powell, the morale-boosting importance of vision of the church is more important than size of the church. Powell reminds the reader, and encourages working priests, that the “measure of a church is in the fulfilling of its mission.”<sup>51</sup> This is inspirational for working priests because so much of the clergy culture in the United States is centered around the size of one’s church. The Vineyard would care better for her working priests if they incorporated these points by Powell.

---

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 86.

<sup>49</sup> Paul W. Powell, *Shepherding the Sheep in Smaller Churches* (Nashville, TN: Bivocational & Small Church Leadership Network Scholarship Edition, 2015).

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 17.



Another big take away is the Preface and Introduction where the vision of the BSCLN is explained. The BSCLN knows, “The days ahead will be characterized by more and more pastors becoming bivocational.”<sup>52</sup> At the beginning of this book the four elements of the BSCLN are listed. First, the vision is, “Advancing bivocational and small church ministries in their strategic service to the kingdom of Christ.” Second, the “Scholarship Training for Life and Leadership” element is primarily Web-based and includes a full range of ministry training materials. The third element is a list of Eight Advancing Strategies: 1) Network Communication System; 2) Scholarship Training for Life and Leadership; 3) Regional Consultants and Educational Partners; 4) National Partnership Network; 5) “Sharing Partners Fund” to help the needs of small churches; 6) BSCLN Leadership Staff; 7) National BSCLN Operations; and 8) BSCLN Development Board. These eight strategies inform the creation of a website and network for the caring and resourcing of Vineyard working priests. The fourth element is Enduring and Critical Challenges. For example, “60% of all US churches have less than 60 in average weekly attendance; and in 2013, more than 83% of 46,125 Southern Baptist churches have fewer than 125 in average Sunday school attendance.” It is critical to “stand with, encourage and provide resources to these churches serving on every frontier of the Christian faith.”

Warren Seibert is a working priest in the Reformed Church. He pastors a local Reformed Church and serves as a registered nurse in New York. Seibert states that thirty percent of all Protestant churches in the United States are pastored by working priests.<sup>53</sup> Seibert is concerned that because there are so many working priests in America, there

---

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., Introduction.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., xvi.

needs to be training and a specific process for them. For Seibert, working priests face several expectations from their congregations. Seibert discovered that the most important expectation of congregations regarding working priests has to do with calling. For Seibert, congregations want their working priest to believe that they are truly called to be a working priest.

This is supported by the surveys and interviews for this project on Vineyard working priests. Vineyard working priests who feel most connected to the Vineyard and believe they are having a significant impact in their local community all have a high sense of calling. Healthy working priests feel called to be that way. The Vineyard can do a better job with creating structures and processes to affirm the working priest call on many pastor's lives. Affirming such a call would also require a specific process whereby a church planter could be trained and deployed as a working priest. Rick Flann and Chris Pope wrote *Youth Ministry Bi-Vocational Survival Guide*<sup>54</sup> to encourage and bless youth pastors who are expected to be a "shepherd 24/7"<sup>55</sup> while working another job outside the church. Flann and Pope confront the fairy-tale-like expectation many future youth leaders have while in college or seminary. They admit that the reality of today's world often requires youth pastor's to seek an outside source of income apart from their youth ministry. The Vineyard can apply the concepts in this book to all the other areas of ministry in a local Vineyard church that are being led by a working priest. By honoring working priest youth leaders and working priest worship leaders for example, the

---

<sup>54</sup> Rick Flann and Chris Pope, *Youth Ministry Bi-Vocational Survival Guide Fulfilling a Full-Time Calling in a Bi-Vocational World* (Bloomington, IN: West Bow, 2016).

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, xv.

Vineyard would demonstrate care for all working priests including senior pastors and church planters.

### **US Denominations with an Online Presence for Working Priests**

The most recent online offering for working priests from Ed Stetzer and New Churches is the “Bivocational Ministry Course.”<sup>56</sup> This course combines podcasts, printed materials, and online interaction over the course of fourteen modules. Module topics include “Debunking Myths and Rethinking Calling,” “Bivocational Ministry Research,” “How to Prepare a Sermon in 15 Minutes,” and “Hard Talk in Bivocational Ministry.” Hugh Halter (see above) teaches most of the podcasts. Vineyard pastor Joel Seymour teaches a class called, “The Unique Bivocational Challenges and Advantages of a Rural Setting.” The courses are practical and a great resource for working priests because they are current and address the real challenges working priests are facing today.

The Vineyard Institute functions as the Vineyard’s non-accredited seminary. Many Vineyard pastors do not go to accredited seminaries but take courses from the Vineyard Institute before licensing and ordination. There are currently no classes offered by the Vineyard Institute that deal specifically with the Vineyard working priest phenomenon. The Bivocational Course offered by New Churches is a good first step that the Vineyard Institute could use as a prototype for future classes geared for the care and resourcing of current and future Vineyard working priests.

---

<sup>56</sup> “Bivocational Ministry Course,” *New Churches*, November 2017, accessed November 6, 2017, <https://newchurches.com/courses/bivo/>.

## The United Methodist Church

The United Methodist Church has made some adjustments and accommodations for working priests regarding their courses of study for ordination. Instead of requiring potential working priests to attend the two-week courses of study at specific locations, the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry created extension centers and modified the curriculum to be taught during the weekends: “The extension centers usually offer courses in a two or three-weekend format, which allows bi-vocational local pastors to participate without taking extensive time away from their work or families.”<sup>57</sup>

The Oklahoma Conference of The United Methodist Church has a “Bi-Vocational Pastors Academy.” The purpose of this academy is, “To equip up to 150 Oklahoma laypeople to become bi-vocational, part-time pastors in small churches located near them.”<sup>58</sup> Participants in this academy are mostly volunteers in a church who “come from many walks of life: teachers, bankers, farmers, business owners, etc.”<sup>59</sup> The academy runs for six months from January to June and participants complete eighty hours of training. The cost is \$250 and is underwritten by The Oklahoma United Methodist Foundation.

---

<sup>57</sup> “Higher Education and Ministry,” United Method Church, 2017, accessed October 5, 2017, <https://www.gbhem.org/where-can-i-take-course-study>.

<sup>58</sup> Carol A. Cook Moore, “Bi-Vocational Pastors Academy,” Oklahoma Conference, n.d., accessed October 5, 2017, <http://www.okumc.org/pastorsacademy>.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

### The Presbyterian Church

Presbyterian and Reformed churches are uniquely suited to utilize working priests. The Presbyterians have many organized churches with qualified elders who could help oversee new church plants by working priests.<sup>60</sup> They have done this out of necessity. One Presbyterian pastor blogged, “We know that there’s a crisis right now, as many (perhaps roughly half, and some say 70%) of our congregations can no longer afford a full-time minister.”<sup>61</sup> This is important because this means as more Presbyterian churches are not able to afford a full-time minister, there will be an increase demand for Presbyterian working priests to pastor these churches.

### The United Church of Christ

The United Church of Christ has a conference just for bi-vocational pastors in 2016.<sup>62</sup> This event is geared both toward those currently serving or seeking to serve as a working priest as well as governing body or judicatory leaders who work with ministers who serve in a working priest context. Four of the session titles are: 1) Learning from Bi-vocational pastors (storytelling and sharing what you know); 2) Developing a congregation full of leaders (empowering the congregation to do the work of ministry); 3) How to grow a congregation while working part-time; 3. Self-esteem issues and Bi-

---

<sup>60</sup> Andy Smith, “To the Ends of the Earth: A Case for Bi-Vocational Church Planting,” Westminster Seminary California, April 6, 2017, accessed October 5, 2017, <https://www.wscal.edu/blog/to-the-ends-of-the-earth-a-case-for-bi-vocational-church-planting>.

<sup>61</sup> Carol Howard Merritt, “A Bivocational Minister Warns Against Bivocational Ministry,” *The Christian Century*, August 23, 2013, accessed October 5, 2017, <https://www.christiancentury.org/blogs/archive/2013-08/bi-vocational-minister-warns-against-bi-vocational-ministry>.

<sup>62</sup> United Church of Christ, “Bi-Vocational Ministry Conference,” April 15–16, 2016, accessed October 5, 2017, <http://events.uccpages.org/bivocational2016.html>.

vocational pastors; and 4) What leadership competencies are needed for part-time pastors? The conference also included session for denominational leaders to help care for working priests.<sup>63</sup>

The Vineyard could incorporate what the United Church of Christ does for their working priests by creating events just for Vineyard working priests. A short weekend conference taught by Vineyard working priests aimed at current and future Vineyard working priests would demonstrate care and leadership for Vineyard working priests.

### The Evangelical Covenant Church

The Evangelical Covenant Church has a licensing track for working priests.<sup>64</sup> This is a huge affirmation and support for working priests. It acknowledges the reality of working priests and makes room for them by providing a clear path to licensing. Part of the “Bivocational License” process for the Covenant Church is learning about being a working priest from a required reading list. The Vineyard could incorporate this as part of the church planting process. The Vineyard Institute could also develop a class specifically for future Vineyard working priests.

### Summary

This chapter shows what other denominations have done, and are doing, to care and resource working priests. Each resource listed in this chapter contributes specific ideas that the Association of Vineyard Churches, USA can incorporate to improve the care and resourcing of Vineyard working priests. It is clear from the popular books,

---

<sup>63</sup> Mike Rinehart, “Three Bi-vocational Pastors,” Grace Evangelical Church, February 16, 2017, accessed October 5, 2017, <http://www.gracenola.org/three-bi-vocational-pastors/>.

<sup>64</sup> “Bi-vocational Ministry License,” The Evangelical Covenant Church, 2017, accessed November 6, 2017, <http://www.covchurch.org/vocational-ministry/credentialing/licenses/bvl/>.

academic writings, and various websites, that the Vineyard is behind other denomination in this regard. Chapters Five and Six will show what the Vineyard can do to not only “catch-up” with other denominations, but how it can become a leader in caring for working priests. The next chapter combines the resources listed in this chapter with interviews, surveys, and conversations with Vineyard working priests and describes in detail several unique challenges working priest face.

## CHAPTER FOUR: THE UNIQUE CHALLENGES OF VINEYARD WORKING PREISTS

### Introduction

This chapter explains the unique challenges Vineyard working priests face. All pastors struggle with large and small challenges. The research shows that working priests struggle more though because in addition to facing all the same challenges as non-working priests, working priests must overcome unique obstacles. Two surveys, a discussion during the Vineyard hosted “Bivocational Lunch,” and several interviews reveal that the five largest challenges specific to Vineyard working priests are: 1) identity and shame issues; 2) multiple accepted definitions of success and failure; 3) varying expectations and margin management; 4) lack of recognition from denomination; and 5) isolation. This chapter concludes with a sectional summary of the findings of Vineyard regional overseer, Brenda Gatlin. These are important because they highlight the need for working priest soul care and provide a basis for the Vineyard to build a support network and improve the care and resourcing of Vineyard working priests.

Leading people is challenging. Even people who are gifted leaders face difficult tests. Shepherding a church comes with its own set of difficulties: “Being a pastor is hard but being bivocational is even harder.”<sup>1</sup> Pastoring a local church while working an outside job brings to the working priest all the struggles attached to pastoring in general, while adding several unique challenges. Karl Vaters says, “Pastors may be the hardest-working, most undervalued members of our society. And that goes double for small

---

<sup>1</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 31, 2017.



church and bivocational pastors.<sup>2</sup> This section explains the specific hurdles Vineyard working priests must overcome in order to not only stay in ministry, but to also see an impact for the kingdom in their community. According to Anna Siemens, “Tentmakers are often made out to be second class. They receive little help or encouragement from their churches or the mission community because these do not understand the tentmaker approach to which the tentmakers are called by the Lord.”<sup>3</sup>

Pastoring in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is difficult. Leadership guru Peter Drucker famously said, “The four hardest jobs in America (and not necessarily in order) are the President of the United States, a university president, a CEO of a hospital and ... a pastor.”<sup>4</sup> Every pastor faces the challenges of time management, various insecurities, emotional and spiritual health issues,<sup>5</sup> and discovering the balance of work and family life. These difficulties are a given for all senior pastors. Even the lack of various resources for working priests is common among the general clergy.<sup>6</sup> There are, however, specific hurdles that working priests must overcome in addition to the general challenges faced by all senior pastors. The five largest barriers specific to working priests are: 1) identity and shame issues; 2) multiple accepted definitions of success and failure; 3) varying

---

<sup>2</sup> Karl Vaters, “Redefined Success,” *The Journal*, Christianity Today 37, no. 1 (Winter 2016), accessed November 21, 2017, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2016/winter/redefined-success.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Ruth Siemens, “Tentmakers Needed for World Evangelization,” in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, eds. R.D. Winter and S.C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1999), D246–D248, D252–D253.

<sup>4</sup> Dan Chun, “Pastors Often Succumb to Job Burnout Due to Stress, Low Pay,” *The Honolulu Advertiser*, November 18, 2006, accessed November 23, 2015, <http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2006/Nov/18/il/FP611180330.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Peter Scazzero, *The Emotionally Healthy Leader: How Transforming Your Inner Life Will Deeply Transform Your Church, Team, and the World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), 11–24.

<sup>6</sup> Bickers states that working priests are hungry for resources. However, this is not unique to working priests in Dennis Bickers, *The Art and Practice of Bivocational Ministry* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 2013), 35.

expectations and margin management; 4) lack of recognition from denomination; and 5) isolation.

### **Identity and Shame**

Even though we live in a new globalized world in which almost every idea and principle appears up-for-grabs, the so-called “sacred/secular” dichotomy permeates levels of denominational polity and feeds the battle within working priests’ identity. Because this author is a working priest, I know the realities of this. I am constantly asked the question, “Are you a teacher who pastors or are you a pastor who teaches.” This is an identity question sprung from the well of the sacred-secular dichotomy. Dorr says this is a common problem and working priests often ask themselves, “Who am I? Am I a preacher, or am I a secular worker?”<sup>7</sup> I used to base my answer on the person asking the question. When a guest at church asked me, I would answer, “Pastor, of course.” However, when asked by a school administrator or a parent of a student during open house, I would consistently say, “Teaching is my life.” Now, after twelve years of surviving as a working priest, I simply say, no matter who is asking, “I am a working priest.” To get to this point, I had to overcome my own shame and be led to God.<sup>8</sup>

Every pastor must manage time appropriately, but because working priests work outside of the local church, they do not get to attend many denominational gatherings: “While trying to juggle all his other responsibilities, a [working priest] will often see

---

<sup>7</sup> Luther M. Dorr, *The Bivocational Pastor* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1988), 74.

<sup>8</sup> Jill L. McNish, *Transforming Shame: A Pastoral Response* (Binghamton, NY: Haworth Pastoral Press), 2.

denominational work as something for which he does not have time.”<sup>9</sup> This causes working priests to lose a bit of their denominational identity. For example, like many denominations, The Association of Vineyard Churches, USA has a monthly local area meeting where relationship among pastors is grown, important denominational information is dispersed, and Vineyard distinctiveness is reinforced. Working priests do not attend these meetings because they are held while we are working. For Bickers, “This leads to many [working priests] feeling like second-class citizens in their own denominations.”<sup>10</sup> Pastoring while feeling like a second-class citizen in one’s own denomination is a huge identity issue that needs to be overcome.

Along with identity struggles, working priests must overcome the shame attached to working two jobs. Darla Samuelson defines shame as a “basic human affect based on perception (our perception of what others think of us).”<sup>11</sup> Working priests are perceived as “second class citizens” of the clergy. Working priests are viewed by non-working priests, many denomination leaders, and often by working priests themselves, as not being equal to clergy who are fully funded. In the pastoral profession there is an unspoken, yet sometimes overtly stated, type of class structure. Within this system, working priests are commonly treated as inferior pastors. This can cause grief. Forrester says that, “Shame is a form of grief. It is grief at the loss of self.”<sup>12</sup> Working priests who do not have a strong sense of calling struggle with a lack of identity as they report that

---

<sup>9</sup> Dennis Bickers, *The Tentmaking Pastor: The Joy of Bivocational Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 200), 127.

<sup>10</sup> Bickers, *Art and Practice*, 2.

<sup>11</sup> Darla Samuelson, email message to author, October 5, 2015.

<sup>12</sup> John A. Forrester, *Grace for Shame: The Forgotten Gospel* (Toronto, ON: Pastor’s Attic Press, 2010), 33.

they often feel like they do not know who they are and how they fit into the current Vineyard structure.

It is ironic that working priests do not get to attend many denominational gatherings, but when they do, they must resist the shame that can be attached to the comments of other pastors at these gatherings. Even birthed from genuine intentions, many fully funded pastors' comments regarding working priests are shame based. Three questions that people have asked this author in the past few years that could help me question my identity are: "What's your vision for growing so you can quit teaching? When do you think you will be able to stop being a part time pastor? You would be a better pastor and the Hub would grow if you didn't have to work."<sup>13</sup> Given that fact the most small churches "do not feel good about themselves"<sup>14</sup> already, working priests must overcome issues of identity and shame.

### **Success and Failure**

Currently in the Vineyard, bivocational pastoring is a ministry style dictated by circumstances. Therefore, bivocational pastors are assumed to be people who will one day work solely as a pastor. Consequently, they may feel undervalued or less successful than others. With a better-developed perspective working priests can bring value to the role, which is, after all, biblical.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> David Richardson, conversation with author, December 2, 2014. I get asked some form of these three questions at different pastoral gatherings and ministerial associations. These three exact questions were asked by David Richardson.

<sup>14</sup> Bickers, *Art and Practice*, 37.

<sup>15</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, November 6, 2016.

There is an old adage, “If it is healthy it will grow.” Unfortunately, this truism, or what is better labeled, a “falsism” is the foundation for defining success and failure for pastors. In other words, if a church is growing then two things must be true: the congregation should be able to fully fund a senior pastor; and the senior pastor is a successful leader. Consequently, working priests are seen as failures in many denominations because most of their churches are small and therefore do not fully fund them. Bickers writes that after a 2004 study he conducted, “Larger churches represent greater success in ministry. A [working priest] serving a church of fifty people may well wonder what is wrong with him...”<sup>16</sup> As Dorr writes, “the ideal [re: success] for many is a man full-time... If for some reason a church can’t have this, it might feel second class, or less than ideal [re: failure].”<sup>17</sup> Until I redefined personal success, I too felt like a failure for being a working priest. I agree with Bickers, that a working priest “must not allow others to define ministerial success for him and his church. Instead, he needs to clearly understand what God’s call is to him and his church at this particular time in history. Success will occur when he has fulfilled that call.”<sup>18</sup>

The current economic situation in the United States demands that churches either grow to medium or large size or the pastor must become a working priest. According to Elliot, a sixty-member church could fully fund a pastor in 1950. Writing in 1980, he states that it took 150 members to fully fund a pastor.<sup>19</sup> Today in the United States, it is virtually impossible for a 150-member church to fully fund a pastor. Given the high cost

---

<sup>16</sup> Bickers, *Art and Practice*, 34.

<sup>17</sup> Dorr, 77.

<sup>18</sup> Bickers, *Tentmaking Pastor*, 45.

<sup>19</sup> John Y. Elliott, *Our Pastor Has an Outside Job: New Strength for the Church through Dual Role Ministry* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1990), 11.

of living in most major US cities, churches have to have at least 200 members in order to support a fully funded pastor. The majority of Vineyard churches are under 100 members. This means that there are many Vineyard pastors who are forced to be working priests simply because of the current economic situation in the United States. When it comes to defining success and failure, unfortunately for many, size still matters.

Vineyard regional leader Allen Hodges points out that when pastors plant a church and it does not grow to the unstated yet expected size, pastors, especially those who chose the working priest path, suffer from “it must be me” syndrome.<sup>20</sup> Hodges continues that many working priests already feel insecure and then when the area or region schedule gatherings that exclude them, all the shame and feeling of failure is reinforced.<sup>21</sup>

This sentiment is evident, if not subtle, in many different levels. For example denominations and movements hold all types of conferences and denominational gatherings. The pastors who are asked to present and take center stage at these meetings are viewed as successful and worthy of emulating. Working priests are not asked to present and are not seen on stage. The definition of success that is subtly and sometimes overtly communicated as a result of who is asked to speak and who is conspicuously not invited to speak, is that fully funded pastors are successful and working priests are not. The working priest “has to come to terms with the fact that he [or she] may never pastor the biggest church in the community, or else he [or she] is going to become miserable and frustrated.”<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Allen Hodges, phone interview by author, December 8, 2016.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Dennis Bickers, *Tentmaking Pastor*, 45.

### **Expectations and Margins**

All pastors are busy and must manage congregational expectations. Because working priests have jobs outside the church they have the peculiar added challenge of mastering expectations<sup>23</sup> and searching for elusive margins within their weekly calendar. Because working priests have “the additional time restraint of spending several hours each week in other employment,”<sup>24</sup> they must overcome the ingrained need to “measure up”<sup>25</sup> to the plethora of congregational, and their own interior, demands. “Often the [working priest] is unavailable to minister to a person or family immediately when the minister’s presence might be expected.”<sup>26</sup> The working priest must overcome this expectation with clear communication and confidence knowing that some members and potential members of the local church might not stay if the senior pastor is a working priest. Sometimes long held expectations just do not change.

Working priests simply cannot attend every church function including important events traditionally reserved for the pastor. This affects people’s expectations. Two years ago the father of a member of the Hub died and this author was asked to officiate the funeral. The extended family, who had no connection to the Hub, scheduled the funeral on the first day of the new fall semester of teaching. I could not get a substitute teacher on that day so I had to gently inform the family that I was unavailable to be at the funeral.

---

<sup>23</sup> Bickers says, “Balance also requires that [working priests] maintain healthy expectations for your ministry, church, and family.” Ibid., 88.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>25</sup> Jeff VanVonderen, *Tired of Trying to Measure Up: Getting Free from the Demands, Expectations and Intimidation of Well-Meaning People* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers 1989), 41.

<sup>26</sup> Dorr, *Bivocational Pastor*, 76.

I have no doubt that this led to this particular family leaving the Hub a few months later. I did not fulfill their expectations.

Working priests struggle with finding margin in their schedule. Time for play, rest, and spontaneity is elusive at best. It is difficult to schedule spontaneity! Without margin, Dorr states that most working priests continue to ask themselves the question, “Is it worth it all?”<sup>27</sup> When Ray Gilder conducted several listening sessions with working priests, he discovered the issue that every working priest needed help with was time management.<sup>28</sup> All pastors must excel in delegating and multitasking, working priests have the unique challenge of doing both at a faster pace in order to create margin in our schedule.

Because working priests “have to learn to change mental gears frequently,”<sup>29</sup> they can sometimes appear to have Multiple Personality Disorder.<sup>30</sup> Bickers wishes he would have read *Margin* by Richard A. Swenson at the start of his ministry.<sup>31</sup> If Bickers would have known at the start of his ministry about the need build margin with emotional, physical, time, and finances like Dr. Swenson suggests, he could possibly have avoided a season of depression.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>28</sup> Ray Gilder, *Uniquely Bivocational: Understanding the Life of a Pastor who has a Second Job* (Forest, VA: Salt Light Publishing, 2013), 56.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>30</sup> Many times I accidentally insert teacher phrases into my sermon delivery, or phrases usually kept in church, to my classroom. For example, last week I accidentally told my first period to take out their Bibles, when I meant to say, “textbooks.”

<sup>31</sup> Bickers, *Tentmaking Pastor*, 86.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 87.



### **Working Priest Lack of Recognition**

In addition to all the “normal” issues that come with pastoring, working priests have the added challenge of not being recognized: I have never really felt we were recognized.<sup>33</sup> The Association of Vineyard Churches, USA is no different from mainline denominations in not even knowing the number of pastors currently serving who are working priests.<sup>34</sup> Working priests in the Vineyard are literally not a recognized entity when it comes to the official numbers and census.<sup>35</sup> As Dennis Bickers says though, this is common across denominational lines in the United States.

Another piece that adds to the puzzle of non-recognition is how little, if at all, the working priest issue is discussed at conferences. One complaint at the “Bivocational Lunch” in July was that no one could recall ever hearing from a Vineyard working priest in a main session at any national conference. The research has not verified this as fact one way or the other, but the point is that Vineyard working priests do not feel acknowledged because there has not been a known conference speaker who is a working priest. This feeling led one working priest to write, “Truthfully we feel pretty darn invisible.”<sup>36</sup> Part of Vineyard culture is that who and what is valued receives center stage at conferences and since working priests have not been able to hear from a fellow working priest from the main stage, working priests in the Vineyard do not feel recognized.

---

<sup>33</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, September 4, 2017.

<sup>34</sup> Dennis Bickers, personal e-mail message to author, September 17, 2017, Used with permission.

<sup>35</sup> It must be stated though that in 2017 the Vineyard Census did include a “bivocational” choice in a drop-down menu, but because of previous census decisions pastors were not able to actually choose this option. Consequently, a genuine effort was made to make progress in discovering how many working priests there are in the Vineyard but the fact remains the amount is unknown.

<sup>36</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 31, 2017.

### Working Priest Isolation

Many pastors in general struggle with feeling alone:<sup>37</sup> “I see myself on the outside looking in, I see myself as an island apart from the movement.”<sup>38</sup> The cliché is that it is lonely at the top, but working priests experience a magnified sense of disconnection from other pastors and their denomination: “[Working priests] do feel isolated from the Vineyard most of the time.”<sup>39</sup> This feeling of isolation stems from each of the three levels of structure in the Vineyard: the areas, the regions, and the national.

Working priests tend to be disconnected from their area when the monthly area meetings are held during the workweek between the hours of 9 am to 5 pm.<sup>40</sup> The vast majority of working priests are not able to attend these relationship-building meetings because they are working their other job: “Many area meetings are scheduled at times when bivo pastors are working, forcing them to take time off to attend. Changing those meetings to a Saturday, for example, makes it difficult for non-bivocational pastors to attend.”<sup>41</sup> Typically every two years the regions have a regional conference. Working priests are unable to attend these either for the same reason.<sup>42</sup> Third, when there is a national conference, working priests must not only take time off from work because

---

<sup>37</sup> One pastor wrote, “I do feel disconnected from the Vineyard. If I knew how to overcome that, I would. I don’t believe it is due to my bivocational status; I was full time for 2 years, and I felt just as disconnected during that time.” A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 28, 2017.

<sup>38</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 31, 2017.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> “It is just more challenging to get time off and participate.” A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, September 2, 2017.

<sup>41</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, March 1, 2017.

<sup>42</sup> “I have to manage my time and it can limit my ability to attend Vineyard functions.” A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 31, 2017.

theses conferences are Monday through Thursday or Friday, but they also have the added hurdle of having enough finances to be able to travel to either Anaheim, California or Columbus, Ohio.<sup>43</sup>

Conferences for the working priests are a dichotomy because on one hand it is extra difficult for the working priest to even attend, and on the other hand, when a working priest does attend a regional or national conference, their sense of shame and lack of identity can be reinforced. Viewed from a working priest perspective, conferences are created, designed, and run by and for non-working priests. One pastor wrote, “Even going to conferences, area/regional meetings can make us feel disconnected.”<sup>44</sup> This happens because working priests are not celebrated. Working priests are not given permission to be working priests from the stage at the national level. Sometimes they feel inferior because of conversations that take place during the conference. One wrote, “We have also felt like maybe we aren’t risking enough as other fulltime pastors have done. Almost like our faith isn’t big enough and we haven’t surrendered. That is a strange thing to deal with.”<sup>45</sup> Because there is nothing specific for working priests at these conferences the message that they will be whole when they are fully paid by the church is reinforced over and over. This lack of connection space for working priests is another indication that working priests are relegated to second-class status in the Vineyard.

---

<sup>43</sup> The national conference is held every two years and rotates between Anaheim, CA and Columbus, OH. Consequently, depending on which state the working priest is serving will determine how expensive it will be to even just get to and from the conference.

<sup>44</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, September 4, 2017.

<sup>45</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, September 4, 2017.

### **Working Priests Need Soul Care<sup>46</sup>**

Brenda Gatlin is a Vineyard Regional Overseer. Two years ago, after noticing that there were so many working priests in her region, Gatlin contacted them to see to it that the working priests under her care were receiving adequate care. Her first step was to listen and discover what the working priests in her region needed. This section is a summary of the responses working priests in her region gave to the question: “What are some of the unique challenges that you face as a bi-vocational Pastor?”<sup>47</sup>

Gatlin discovered through her interviews and meetings with working priests in her region that Vineyard working priests desire soul care. She emailed the author of this dissertation seven anonymous responses from seven different working priests in her region. The quotes here highlight some common challenges of pastors in general and show how the topics presented in this chapter apply to the specific needs of working priests.

It is a challenge for working priests to keep caring for their soul a priority. One reason is that working priests feel tremendous pressure to spend time with their church and their family. In responding to the question, “What is the most important need you have as a working priest right now,” a working priest told Gatlin, “Just finding time for consolation and the things that would feed my soul. It often feels like there are mostly demands that have to happen to keep work and family going.” Working priests tend to put other priorities first before their own care. “For example one working priest told

---

<sup>46</sup> As part of his doctoral project, Dr. Steve Summerell interviewed 200 Vineyard pastors and concluded that Vineyard pastors need soul care and is one of the inspirations of this project. Steve Summerell, “Overcoming Obstacles to Spiritual Formation in the Lives of Vineyard Pastors,” (DMin, diss., Azusa Pacific University, 2006).

<sup>47</sup> Brenda Gatlin, email message to author, November 8, 2016.

Gatlin, “This is all I’ve ever known and I don’t have anything else to compare it to. But taking the time to really do my own soul care, have friendships, hobbies, even find time and margin for my own soul care seems to come last after everything else.”

### **Summary**

Pastoring a church is one of the most difficult jobs to hold in the United States. Not only does pastoring a church while working another job increase this difficulty exponentially, but there are five additional unique challenges that working priests face. Working priests struggle with identity and shame issues. It is also hard to determine what is success and failure. Working priests struggle with expectations and margin issues, while constantly feeling alone and not receiving recognition for the larger denomination. Due to these challenges, working priests tend to ignore their own soul. Increasing the care for Vineyard working priests would help them pursue greater health and in return increase the impact they are having in their communities.

Fortunately, each of these challenges can be overcome. The next chapter offers specific practices the Association of Vineyard Churches can implement to help working priests. The last chapter describes another solution, the creation of a website to care and resource Vineyard working priests.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: IMPROVEMENTS FOR WORKING PREIST CARE WIHTIN THE CURRENT VINEYARD STRUCTURE**

### **Introduction**

This chapter explains the adjustments the Association of Vineyard Churches, USA can make within the current Vineyard structure to improve the care and resourcing of Vineyard working priests. The Vineyard does so many wonderful things already and is perfectly poised to help increase the impact working priests are having on their communities by changing how some current helpful activities are being run. Advancements can be made at the national, regional, and area levels of the Vineyard USA. This chapter takes the unique challenges faced by working priests described in Chapter Four and shows how the Vineyard can adjust parts of how “business” is done to help working priests overcome these difficult hurdles. With these refinements at these three structural levels of the Vineyard, working priests will dramatically increase the impact their ministries are having in their communities and working priests will acquire a deeper joy and satisfaction in ministry.

### **Vineyard Working Priests and the Need for Cultural Intelligence**

Vineyard working priests are both part of the Vineyard culture and they make up their own culture at the same time. Although the exact number of Vineyard working priests is still unknown, there are enough of them to be considered a separate pastoral cultural group in the Vineyard. The first step toward better care of Vineyard working priests is for the Vineyard to increase their cultural awareness of Vineyard working priests.

According to Dr. David Livermore, Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is a set of skills that facilitates effective cross-cultural management.<sup>1</sup> The model Livermore has developed is comprised of four parts. As discussed in this section, the Association of Vineyard Churches, USA can base future models of increased care for working priests on these four components.

The first aspect is cultural drive. This is driven by a motivation to understand a group of people who are different. The cultural way Vineyard leadership expresses “drive” to understand a different aspect of the Vineyard movement is by using the word “nudge.” For example, national director Phil Strout has expressed that the Holy Spirit seems to be nudging the Vineyard to better care for her working priests.<sup>2</sup> Part of Strout’s leadership style is to be sensitive and respond to the “nudges” from the Holy Spirit.

The first step in Drive, or in the case of the Vineyard, “nudge,” is to be honest and acknowledge biases, fear, and even lack of interest. This has already happened in the Vineyard in four ways. One, the Vineyard is committed to discovering how many Vineyard working priest there actually are. Two, the Vineyard hosted a lunch at the last national conference for working priests called, “Bivocational Pastors Lunch.” Three, some national and regional leaders are starting to engage in conversation about better caring for Vineyard working priests. The Vineyard is in good position to progress from Livermore’s first step of motivation to the second through fourth steps. As the Vineyard

---

<sup>1</sup> David Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence: The Real Secret to Success* (Grand Rapids, MI: AMACOM, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> During the conversation, Strout used the word “nudge” to describe what he believes the Spirit is directing the Vineyard executive team to do. For example, Strout suggested the Vineyard is being nudged to pursue deeper cultural knowledge of Vineyard working priests. Strout is also thankful for this project and thanked the author for pursuing this and for giving the Vineyard a “nudge.” Phil Strout, Zoom conversation with author, March 21, 2017.

walks these steps, working priests will be better cared for and resourced and therefore increase their impact for the Kingdom of Jesus.

The second part to CQ is cultural knowledge. This type of knowledge applied to working priests is the awareness of how working priests think and act. It is also an understanding of the unique challenges working priests face as Vineyard local church pastors. It is one thing to count the number of working priests, but it is indeed another type of knowledge to know how these working priests think, do theology, and serve their communities. To be holistic, it would also be good if the Vineyard learned about the emotional and spiritual health of her working priests. For example, the research shows that several working priests would like better soul care. This dissertation offers a beginning point to understanding this aspect.

For Livermore, the third quadrant for developing CQ is cultural strategy. Drive and knowledge leads to strategy. The next step after acknowledging the nudge and then learning more about working priests, the Vineyard leadership can create—in relationship and conversation with working priests—a strategy to move forward with better care for working priests. To be strategic, the Vineyard needs to be “actively thinking, adapting behavior, and ultimately becoming more innovative.”<sup>3</sup> The Vineyard must become better at cross-cultural situations between working priests and non-working priests in three ways.

Strategy is developed with awareness, planning, and checking. Awareness is enhanced by learning from working priests, listening to what they have to say, and gathering information about them from books and dissertations, like this current project.

---

<sup>3</sup> Livermore.



Planning is applying this new awareness to a new situation. Livermore encourages thinking ahead before a gathering, like a Vineyard conference for example, and determining what behaviors and actions need to be adjusted. This chapter is about some of these needed adjustments. Checking means making sure plans are accurate and effective. Livermore suggests enlisting help with planning and finding persons who can provide cultural guidance. This means that any Vineyard strategy to better care for working priests should be created with working priests.

Finally, the fourth component is cultural action. One major part of action is communication. Culturally intelligent organizations and leaders are skilled at using drive, knowledge, and strategy to take appropriate action and adapt communication. Drive, or nudges, motivates the Vineyard to communicate with working priests effectively. Knowledge is used to identify appropriate language. Using “working priests” instead of “bivocational” for example for all the reasons mentioned in Chapter One. Strategy is used to develop an effective communication style, and the action itself, including words, delivery, and nonverbal communications.

Words are important. This was discussed at the Bivocational Lunch at the National Conference in July 2017. Many pastors lamented the fact that so many Vineyard people use the word “bivocational” in a negative manner. The Vineyard is a lot further along today than where it was a few years ago in regards to CQ with working priests, however it is not where we want to be. Part of communication with words is knowing when and how to apologize. Many working priests would feel cared for if there were apologies made for past offenses to working priests. Delivery and knowing the appropriate method of communication is important. For example, if area meetings are the

most important times for communicating area issues, then adjustments need to be made so working priests can attend these meetings to engage with this communication.

Nonverbal communication is an important part of action. Some working priests lamented the fact that no one could recall a working priest giving a keynote speech at a national conference. For Vineyard working priests, this is a loud nonverbal communication that working priests are second-class pastors in the Vineyard.

### **Solutions from the Vineyard Working Priest Lunch**

In July 2017, a working priest lunch was held at the Vineyard National Conference. There were over one hundred people in attendance. As part of the discussion led by national director Phil Strout, national coordinator Bubba Justice wrote some of the attendee's responses on a white board (Appendix One). These twenty-one items can be broken into two categories. The first category is Vineyard Cultural and Structural Issues, and the second category is Specific Aid and Care. Cultural and Structural refers to how the Vineyard currently does business, like when area, regional, and national meetings take place (Item #4) and how the Vineyard culture currently demonstrates care and resources for working priests like the general feeling of second-class status when working priests attend national conferences (Item #14). The Vineyard Cultural and Structural issues concerning working priests discussed during the meeting in July 2017 had to do with Vineyard gatherings. Many working priests in the room expressed a sense of regret that there seems to be little or no recognition for the many working priests currently pastoring in the United States.

It was also brought to light that no one in the room could recall ever hearing from a Vineyard working priest during a main session. This fact has led to a sense of not

feeling validated by many working priests. After the meeting one pastor commented to this author, “Aaron, did you feel all the shame in the room?”<sup>4</sup> It was agreed that the culture of the Vineyard is reflected in the language people in the Vineyard use and reciprocally, the language used in the Vineyard shapes and reflects Vineyard culture. How the Vineyard refers to her working priests is one indication of how they are viewed. It is also important to be reminded of the fact that no one has counted the number of working priests. This surely makes a statement as to the value that the Vineyard places on working priests and contributes to the common sense of shame.

The meeting also produced many helpful ideas to care and resource Vineyard pastors to have a greater impact in their community. Working priests expressed the need for specific aid. A few mentioned it would be helpful if the Vineyard provided help with legal documents when planting a church like with applying for 501(c)3 status.<sup>5</sup> Other pastors mentioned the need for fellow working priest coaches who not only are trained to coach working priests, but who are working priests themselves. The rest of this chapter is a detailed discussion of how the Vineyard can better care for and resource her working priests based on a combination of this momentous lunch meeting and three years of researching working priests in the Vineyard and beyond.

### **Seeing Working Priests as Called**

To care for Vineyard working priests better, leaders at each level of the Vineyard structure need to view working priests as called pastors of local Vineyard churches. “In the Vineyard, and perhaps across denominations, this will require a paradigm shift,

---

<sup>4</sup> A Vineyard Working Priest, personal conversation with the author, July 12, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> 501(c)3 refers to the section of the United States tax code that allows for federal tax exemption for nonprofit corporations.

changing attitudes toward bivocational ministry, seeing it as a calling and NOT as a means to an end.”<sup>6</sup> Calling is an important concept for the Vineyard. It is the belief that God wants it to happen. For example, if a pastor is viewed as called by God to be a pastor, he or she will become a pastor because that is what God’s will is for that person. Currently, the message from the Vineyard to working priests is mixed when it comes to working priest being called.

Working priests are in the position to overcome shame and insecurity when it is reinforced to them that they are called. “Perform your work as a calling instead of income,”<sup>7</sup> one Vineyard stated was the best advice he received. The happiest Vineyard working priests are those who feel called. According to Christ Kopka, for successful working priests, “even their tent-making efforts are part of their calling.”<sup>8</sup> Transitioning the message from Vineyard leadership from being a working priest is acceptable if temporary to a more biblically accurate stance of working priests are part of the called crew of Vineyard pastors will demonstrate a significant level of care for Vineyard working priests.

### **Working Priest Ideas Discovered by Brenda Gatlin**

As discussed in Chapter Four, Vineyard regional overseer, Brenda Gatlin, desires to improve Vineyard care for working priests. She investigated how the Vineyard could grow in this area. The responses she received help inform the ideas in this chapter on how to improve the care of Vineyard working priests. Gatlin asked the working priests who

---

<sup>6</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, March 1, 2017.

<sup>7</sup> “Bi-Vocational Pastors,” Pastoral Care, Inc., 2017, accessed November 21, 2017, <http://www.pastoralcareinc.com/articles/bi-vocational-pastors/>.

<sup>8</sup> Chris Kopka, “The New Tent-Makers,” *Christianity Today*, Winter 2013, accessed November 21, 2017, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2013/winter/new-tent-makers.html>.

serve in her region, “How can we practically help you feel more cared for?” Here are their suggestions:

1. Send a worship and pastor team from a larger church to the working priests’ church four times a year to give the working priest four Sundays off.
2. Provide a way for working priests who are married to get away for a weekend.
3. Send Vineyard people to the working priests for times of encouragement.
4. Send Vineyard teams to “do” soul care for working priests.
5. Provide working priest scholarships for regional events.
6. Provide a working priest coach.
7. Change the format of the Pastoral Sabbath Retreats to allow working priests to attend.<sup>9</sup>

Each of these suggestions can be done! The Vineyard desires to be culturally relevant and by providing better care for her working priests is not only relevant, but essential.

### **The Association of Vineyard Churches, USA Structure**

The Association of Vineyard Churches, USA is governed and lead by a thirteen-member executive board. The leader and president of this board is the national director. Recently, the Vineyard has added a national coordinator to function as a pastor to Vineyard pastors. The Vineyard is broken down into sixteen regions (see map in appendix). Each region is divided into smaller areas. Each area is lead by an Area Leader. The vision is that each area would gather monthly and build relationship and act as a type of learning community. According to the Vineyard USA website, “Regional Leaders (RLs) and Area Leaders (ALs) are the foundation of our regional care structure. Pastoral support and care for pastors and churches is facilitated by the ALs, each covering

---

<sup>9</sup> All suggestions listed here are from Vineyard working priests overseen by Brenda Gatlin. Brenda Gatlin, email message to author, November 8, 2016.

a specified area within a region. These ALs work together with the RL of their region to provide leadership and encouragement to each local Vineyard church.”<sup>10</sup>

At least once a year the areas in a given region would get together as a region for a conference or retreat. The whole Vineyard conferences together every twenty-four months on a rotating basis between Anaheim, California and Columbus, Ohio. Because the Association of Vineyard Churches, USA is not an official denomination and based mainly on autonomous local churches being in relationship with one another and sharing the same values and priorities, the area, regional, and national gatherings are extremely important. This section explains how the Vineyard can improve the level of care and resource for Vineyard working priests at the area, regional, and national levels.

#### Improving Care for Working Priests at the Vineyard Area Level

The Association of Vineyard Churches, USA is divided into seventy-eight areas. Each Vineyard area has an Area Leader who functions as the coordinator and pastor of the area. Most Vineyard Area Leaders organize a monthly meeting for the pastors in the area to gather. These meetings are a time to build relationship and camaraderie among Vineyard pastors. Monthly gatherings usually consist of a time of worship and prayer, a presentation from one of the pastors or an invited local expert, and lunch. As a decentralized movement, each area has a lot of autonomy.<sup>11</sup> However, the point of the monthly gatherings remains the same across the country.

---

<sup>10</sup> “Explore the Vineyard > Our Leadership,” Vineyard USA, accessed November 7, 2017, <https://vineyardusa.org/about/leadership/>.

<sup>11</sup> Some areas do not meet at all. One area does not meet, but the Area Leader visits each church every month. However, the vast majority of areas gather monthly to be together and encourage one another.

As one working priest said, “The biggest roadblock is availability. Bivocational pastors are people with two jobs AND the same relational time needs the rest of us have. How do they have time to do their job, pastor their church, care for their family, meet new people, stay healthy, etc. and maintain relationship with other pastors in the area?”<sup>12</sup> Changing the monthly area gathering times to an evening or a Saturday morning would demonstrate care for Vineyard working priest. Each Area Leader has a budget and authority to determine the time and location of the monthly meetings. One unique difficulty of being a working priest is not being able to attend the monthly area meeting. Working priests tend to miss area meetings due to requirement of their second job. When area meetings are set during the week from 9 am to 5 pm when most working priests are working, they are unable to attend. By not attending these bonding times, working priests report a sense of isolation that can lead to depression. A common sentiment expressed in the research is, “Yes, there is a disconnect as all the pastor meetings and Vineyard functions require you to be off work during the day. They always scheduled them at noon or out of town, there is very little time for a Bi-Vocational pastor to attend.”<sup>13</sup>

Areas in the Vineyard that have adjusted their monthly gathering times enjoy greater participation and working priest satisfaction. For example, one area in southern California is comprised of pastors who are all working priests except for the Area Leader. Seeing the reality of the situation and wanting to care and resource the working priests in his area, Area Leader Travis Twyman moved the monthly area meetings to Saturday mornings. The pastors in this area report a deeper sense of connection to the Vineyard

---

<sup>12</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, November 9, 2017.

<sup>13</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 31, 2017.

and encouragement for ministry. As a working priest from the Northwest reported, “I feel pretty connected. Our area pastor meetings are on Saturday mornings on behalf of bivocational folk.”<sup>14</sup> This shows that Vineyard working priests feel a level of camaraderie

### **Area Leaders Can Invite Working Priests to Share Area Leadership Responsibilities**

Besides accommodating working priests at the area level by adjusting the meeting times to when working priests can attend, area leaders could demonstrate care to working priests by inviting them to share some of the area leadership responsibilities:

“Bivocational pastors need to hear that vineyard supports them and as a movement we have the care and the passion to involve us to look into the future of the movement.”<sup>15</sup>

The Survey Monkey and email survey conducted revealed that the working priests who feel the tightest sense of connection to the Vineyard are the ones who stated that they had been invited into serving. The Vineyard Area is an appropriate level for working priests to serve in because areas are designed to be small and geographically close. This makes it easier for working priests to connect with other pastors in the area. It also makes it easier for working priests to share some of the burden in the area.

Working priests in any given area would be encouraged by being invited to lead worship, give a presentation, organize the meal, or facilitate another aspect of the monthly area pastors’ meeting. Inviting a working priest to share leadership communicates two messages. The first message is to the working priest from the area leader. The message the working priest receives is affirmation and legitimacy. Being invited to area leadership tells the working priest that he or she is not a second-class

---

<sup>14</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, September 27, 2017.

<sup>15</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 31, 2017.



Vineyard citizen. The second message the invitation sends is to the rest of the area pastors that working priests are not only a reality, but also an asset to the area. By inviting working priests into greater area involvement, working priests will be better cared for and resourced. Regional leader Allen Hodges suggests that working priests be invited to represent a Multiply Vineyard team.<sup>16</sup> It would be a challenge, due work, pastoring and travel, but Hodges is convinced it could be done. It is time to rethink who “we ask to serve the movement.”<sup>17</sup>

### **Improving Care for Working Priests at the Vineyard Regional Level**

A way the Vineyard could demonstrate care for working priests would be to provide mobile preaching teams. They could “send out a worship leader, people to preach from larger churches. Commit to 4 weekends a year that we could take time off or a weekend off as other Vineyard folks are coming to help teach or lead worship.”<sup>18</sup> “The key, at least from a regional perspective, is community and inclusion, which we haven’t always done very well when it comes to the bivocational leaders in our midst.”<sup>19</sup> Visiting teams could visit churches pastored by working priests for two reasons. The first reason would be to allow the working priest the weekend to not work for their church. One working priest wrote, “what if the Vineyard developed something like the Presbyterian concept of ‘pulpit supply.’ My thought is, if bivocational pastors had the opportunity to take a break that the local church saw as ‘sanctioned’ perhaps we could offer marriage

---

<sup>16</sup> Allen Hodges, phone interview by author, December 8, 2016.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Brenda Gatlin, email message to author, November 8, 2016.

<sup>19</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, March 1, 2017.

retreats, or other types of personal enrichment?”<sup>20</sup> Working priests do not have regular opportunities to get away from their church and providing a mobile team would show love and care for Vineyard working priests.

The second reason to provide a mobile preaching and worship team is to give the working priest the weekend off, but not to go away for the weekend, but to attend their church without preaching and worship leading responsibilities. Providing this for Vineyard working priests would serve three purposes. First, the working priest would get a sense of what it is like to attend their own church without preaching. Second, the mobile team would pray for the pastoral team and could even mentor or coach the team for the day. Working priests struggle to make it to conferences and trainings. A mobile team for the day could help in this area. A Vineyard working priest described the need for “guest speakers and/or worship leaders who could come to our church, and other pastors who are like us who could encourage and pray for us!”<sup>21</sup>

### **Working Priests are Cared for through Partnerships with Large Churches**

Increasingly they define what “congregation” and “church service” mean. Most people are too busy to question the premise and are, at the same time, impressed by the professionalism such churches provide. Very few Vineyards, whether or not the pastor is bivocational, can compete. At the same time, many mature Christians want something smaller, more dynamic and “pure.” House churches and things even less formal appeal to them. Again, it is hard for Vineyards to meet that need. Consequently, most are in-between. They are too small to provide more than a fraction of what the mega church

---

<sup>20</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, August 31, 2017.

<sup>21</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, September 1, 2017.

offers and too large to allow the dynamism desired by many. We, small church pastors, are feeders to both groups.<sup>22</sup> Working priests could benefit if the Vineyard orchestrated partnerships between large churches and churches pastored by working priests. There are three ways larger churches could help working priests.

In *The Grasshopper Myth*, Karl Vaters outlines three ways larger church pastors can help working priests.<sup>23</sup> These three strategies will help working priests overcome some of the challenges that come with pastoring and working another job. First, Vaters says that larger church pastors should give “An honest assessment of the task” of becoming a larger church.<sup>24</sup> Vaters says that most larger church pastors make either one of two errors when telling others how their churches grew. The first error is the “I have no idea how it happened” explanation.<sup>25</sup> Vaters gives those who use this explanation of church growth the benefit of the doubt and assumes it comes from a stance of humility, but the fruit of explaining church growth by saying one does not know how it happened makes working priests skeptical. There is a lack of transparency with this explanation that leaves out the obviously needed combination of “skills, gifts, circumstances, wisdom, work, anointing, calling and God’s timing required to grow a church to large or mega size.”<sup>26</sup> The second error that can occur is a step-by-step formula for church growth so detailed that it becomes virtually nontransferable to a different church context. Many

---

<sup>22</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, September 9, 2017.

<sup>23</sup> Vaters is specifically talking to “Small Church Pastors” as he calls them, but these three points apply specifically to working priests as well. Karl Vaters, *The Grasshopper Myth: Big Churches, Small Churches and the Small Thinking that Divides Us* (N.p.: New Small Church, 2012), 159–167.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.

working priests who attend these types of seminars or read these detailed church growth books are often left wondering, “What’s wrong with me?”<sup>27</sup> These steps for building a large church assumes that that is a one-size-fits-all model of growing churches.

The second action Vaters says is needed by larger church pastors is to “Acknowledge our struggles” as working priests.<sup>28</sup> Working priests tend to struggle alone. Many cannot “afford to go to conferences to learn new ideas and meet with fellow pastors for moral support.”<sup>29</sup> This reality leads to the third action for Vaters. He writes that large churches should “recognize our [small churches] unique needs and contributions.”<sup>30</sup> Every church has a unique story, but we can agree on some common principles. The Kingdom of Jesus is being expanded by both large and small churches and each size church can learn from the other.

### **Adapting Regional Conferences to Accommodate Working Priests**

One of the activities of the regions is to put on conferences and other gatherings during the year. Like the area meetings, these regional experiences can be adjusted to accommodate working priests. The regions can change three things with how regional conferences are organized. Executive Director of The Ministers Council ABC/USA wrote in 1998, “Increasingly, as I meet with regional Minister Councils, I hear an openness to

---

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 162.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 162–163.

<sup>30</sup> Again, Vaters is referring to mega church pastors recognizing small church pastors. The point here though is that it applies to working priests as well. Ibid., 165.

transform meeting and retreat schedules to accommodate colleagues who cannot participate during traditional daytime hours.”<sup>31</sup>

First, to be more welcoming to working priests is to make sure the gatherings occur during the weekends. This will take some sacrifice by pastors who are not working priests because pastors who only work at their church tend to not want to do anything related to church during the weekend expect for work on Sunday or Saturday evening if the church has Saturday services. However, as mentioned above, most working priests only have the weekend away from their second jobs. Joel Seymour has seen this work in his region. “We decided to make our regional senior pastor’s retreat Thursday night through Saturday noon so Bi-Vo’s only have to miss one day of work.”<sup>32</sup>

Second, working priests could also be invited to serve with help creating these events and even make some presentations. As shown above, when working priests are invited to serve in leadership positions they feel less isolated and more engaged with the movement. Working priests would also lend a different perspective to the creation of regional events.

Third, working priests could be asked to speak and make presentations at regional gatherings. The majority of the speakers at regional gatherings are pastors of large churches who do not have second jobs. These pastors present materials that are good, but usually most helpful for churches with the same situation as the presenter. Consequently, working priests leave these gatherings feeling like they do not measure up to the Vineyard definition of success. By having working priests present, the message from the

---

<sup>31</sup> Kate Harvey, “Vital Churches: Building Vital Churches Through Bivocational Ministry,” American Baptist Churches of the Great Rivers Region, BivoNet/The Ministers Council ABC/USA, no. 2 (December 1998), accessed November 21, 2017, <http://www.abcgrr.org/bivocation/pdfdocs/vitaliss1.pdf>.

<sup>32</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, November 8, 2017.

region is that working priests are affirmed and wanted in the movement. This will increase the care and resourcing of working priests.

### **Improving Care for Working Priests at the Vineyard National Level**

Acknowledging the amount of Vineyard working priests by allowing them to be counted on the annual census would demonstrate a huge amount of care:

“Acknowledging the immense amount of working priests in the Vineyard counting working priests lets us know we count. Count us!”<sup>33</sup> The Vineyard currently does not know how many working priests are pastoring in the United States. It is true that this is a common phenomenon among the major denominations in the United States, but in this case, doing what other denominations are doing is not a good thing for working priests.

Every year the Vineyard conducts a census to collect important data. This data is used to create an annual report, guide church planting efforts, design regional and national conferences, and help the executive team lead the movement. By not counting working priests, the Vineyard is conveying the message that working priests are not important. It is common for working priests to have low self-esteem and see their ministry as subpar to the ministries of non-working priests. Being an unknown group, and not being acknowledged by the census reinforces the negative self-talk and self-outlook.

### **Making Room at the National Level for Working Priest Voices**

Working priests deserve a seat at the national decision-making table. Including the national director, the Vineyard Executive Board consists of fifteen members who each represent specific parts of the Vineyard. For example, there is a board member overseeing “Large Churches” and a board member overseeing “Small Churches.” There are also

---

<sup>33</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, November 8, 2017.

members for church planting, children ministries, loving the city, and missions. However, there is no board position overseeing the care and resourcing of Vineyard working priests. It is true that working priests overlap many of these niche areas, however, there are enough Vineyard working priests to warrant a specific board position.

Currently, the Vineyard is not structured to maximize its care for Vineyard working priests. This systemic issue is changing and improving but the Vineyard still has a long way to go before working priests are truly cared for in the ways they need to be. One working priest wrote, “I believe we (the Vineyard, USA) need to create more conceptual room for ministry that doesn’t look like a full-time paid pastor of an extremely large congregation (+300).”<sup>34</sup> Giving voice to working priests is a cultural issue as much as it is a structural issue. The structure of the Vineyard plays a role in creating the culture of the Vineyard.

A few years ago, the Vineyard started to hold Pastor Sabbath Retreats (PSRs) for pastors who were on the tired spectrum from just needing a week off to avoid approaching burn out to pastors who were currently burnt out and contemplating quitting the ministry. These one-week events involve counseling, prayer, rest, and space for a minimal cost. One way the Vineyard could improve caring for the working priests in the movement would be to create PSRs specifically for Vineyard working priests. The three main ways to care specifically for working priests would be to adjust the timing and length of the PSR, provide spiritual experiences specifically for working priests, and provide a guest speaker to preach at the working priests church for the weekend.

---

<sup>34</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, September 27, 2017.

It is difficult for most working priests to get time off from their jobs. Consequently, the Vineyard could offer a working priest PSR during a long weekend. It would be best to pick a long weekend when most businesses have the day off but that is not linked to Christianity when the working priest would want to be preaching on Sunday.<sup>35</sup> Many working priests attending the lunch at the National Conference for working priests stated that they need a PSR but the timing and length of the current PSR structure precluding them from attending. By adjusting the time of the PSR from Monday through Friday to Friday through Monday working will only have to take one or two days off at the most. It also shortens the retreat by one day allowing more working priests will take advantage of this great Vineyard offering.

Another roadblock for working priests attending a PSR is the fear that there will not be resources for the unique needs of working priests. The Vineyard could offer specific PSRs for working priests. Each PSR has five to ten couples. A shortened PSR over a long weekend could be filled with all working priests. Each official session could be led by a working priest who has coaching and spiritual direction training. One pastor wrote, "I think it would be great to have a retreat for bi-vocational pastors in which their needs and challenges were addressed and which would also fully affirm them as called and recognized in their calling (whether short or long term) as bi-vocational Christian leaders."<sup>36</sup> During these sessions, specific needs and struggles of working priests would be addressed.

---

<sup>35</sup> Some states have Mondays off like Veterans Day when a working priest would only have to take Friday off to be gone for four days.

<sup>36</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, September 27, 2017.



Finally, if a working priest cannot find a person to preach for them on the Sunday of the PSR, the Vineyard could provide a speaker. Another roadblock for working priests to miss a Sunday is the issue of who is going to preach. One respondent simply stated this common working priest concern writing, “Make sure the local church is covered so the pastor can be gone.” By providing a guest speaker the Vineyard would demonstrate care and concern for the working priest who would like to attend a PSR.

Because this paper is based on research on Vineyard working priests to discover how to better care and resource them whether they are male or female, the issue of women in leadership is not the primary focus. However, there is an increasing number of Vineyard churches pastored by husband and wife teams. Consequently, it is important to note, that any PSR for working priests will need to provide for women as well as men in leadership. One pastor wrote, “I think that Vineyard could do a bi-vocational retreat-type weekend and I also think that getting a conference together for the women in leadership positions would be extremely valuable.”<sup>37</sup>

There should be a specific track for working priests to plant churches. The Vineyard has two areas focusing on church planting, Multiply Vineyard and Vineyard Missions. These two arms could work together to create a specific pathway for a team to pioneer a new Vineyard church as working priests. Writing about the Presbyterian Church (USA), Howard says, “Perhaps the question is not, should this happen, but how might

---

<sup>37</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, July 19, 2017.

this happen?”<sup>38</sup> As shown in Chapter Three, other denominations do this with some success.

### Summary

Structurally, the Vineyard is divided into areas, regions, and national levels. Each of these three levels have leaders who create events designed to care and resource Vineyard pastors. By adapting existing events to accommodate working priests and by adding specific events for working priests, the level of care and resource for Vineyard working priests will increase dramatically.

The Vineyard also has a culture. As made clear in the first survey conducted for this project on Survey Monkey, The Working Priest Lunch in Anaheim, and follow surveys, the current culture has a lot of room for improvement when it comes to caring for and resourcing Vineyard working priests. Working within the current structure, adding some special events, and giving working priests a voice in the Vineyard by first allowing them to have a presence in the annual census, and then have a seat at the table in area, regional, and national gatherings, the Vineyard will increase working priests’ effectiveness and camaraderie. The next chapter is a detailed description of a network the Vineyard could create via a website for working priest that will provide care through facilitating online relationships and providing a variety of helpful resources.

---

<sup>38</sup> Craig Montgomery Howard, *Building a Community of Pastors Pathways for Inclusion of Tentmakers and Commissioned Lay Pastors in the PC (USA)*, (Chicago: McCormick Theological Seminary, 2011), 24.

## **CHAPTER SIX: A CARE AND RESOURCE PLAN FOR VINEYARD WORKING PRIESTS**

### **Introduction**

This final chapter calls for the creation of a website designed and dedicated for Vineyard working priests. The first section shows how Vineyard working priests are suited for pastoral leadership in the Vineyard. The next section summarizes three documents: the 1998 American Baptist Churches of the Central Region Recommendations; the 2017 Vineyard USA Annual Report; calls for the Vineyard Institute to add a class for Vineyard working priests, and Hugh Halter’s “Six Knacks,” to clearly show that Vineyard working priests need specific support from the Vineyard in order to increase the impact they currently experience. The last section applies the discoveries made in these three documents to the eight immediate needs of Vineyard working priest and demonstrates how a new Vineyard created website will meet these needs.

### **Working Priests Fit in the Vineyard**

There are two main reasons working priests fit into the Vineyard movement today. First, working priests are already pastoring in the Vineyard. There are scores of working priests currently pastoring in the Vineyard, and by all accounts their numbers will increase each year. Karl Vaters says that working priests are becoming the new normal.<sup>1</sup> Second, working priests are good at the current stated Vineyard priorities of

---

<sup>1</sup> Karl Vaters, “The New Normal: 9 Realities and Trends in Bivocational Ministry,” December 12, 2017, accessed December 14, 2017, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/karl-vaters/2017/december/new-normal-9-realities-trends-bivocational-ministry.html>.

evangelism, discipleship, leadership, and diversity as stated in the Vineyard EDLD Handbook. It is in the best interest of the Vineyard church to train, support, and network.

### Working Priests are Already in the Vineyard

As reported in the first chapter of this project, the exact number is unknown, but the reality is that there is a large number of Vineyard working priests currently pastoring Vineyard churches throughout the United States, and this phenomenon is expected to grow to greater numbers in the near future. The exact number is unknown because there has not been a working priests option on the annual Vineyard census. The author of this project investigated this situation and discovered that 300 working priests is a conservative safe estimate of the number of pastors in the Vineyard, USA who currently lead a local church and earn a second income outside their church. This number does not count the Vineyard pastors who rely on their spouse as a second income for their household. Church leaders and experts both within the Vineyard and in other denominations unanimously agree that the working priest phenomenon is only going to increase.

### Working Priests Excel at EDLD

In 2016, Vineyard Resources published a booklet called *EDLD Do It Again, Evangelism, Discipleship, Leadership, Diversity, Essential Practices of the Vineyard Movement*.<sup>2</sup> Vineyard National Director Phil Strout explains that the vision of this booklet is to help people explore the basic principles involved with living in Jesus' kingdom here

---

<sup>2</sup> Vineyard USA, *EDLD: Do It Again! Essential Practices of the Vineyard Movement—A Word to our Churches* (Vineyard Resources, 2016).

on earth.<sup>3</sup> Strout believes that these four essential practices were revealed to him from the Lord after some time of reflection.

Strout states that often churches can operate from a culturally-driven motivation rather a “Kingdom-driven” one.<sup>4</sup> He believes that EDLD is not about what “works” in contemporary culture, but what is needed for the Kingdom at this moment in history. This is the exact reason why it is important for the Vineyard to take better care of and resource her working priests. One way to show care is to train working priest to help them stay true to the mission of their local church because as Strout states, “Church life gets off course when a church starts existing for its own sake, rather than existing to demonstrate God’s love to the world.”<sup>5</sup> Vineyard working priests are doing this and to help them excel in their ministry they need better care from the Vineyard.

#### Evangelism: Sharing the Good News

Working priests throughout the Vineyard are having an impact in their communities with evangelism in several ways. First, the sheer high number of Vineyard pastors who are working priest in the United States strongly suggests a large impact. If approximately fifty percent of the 600 Vineyard churches are led by working priests, then that means somewhere around 300 Vineyard churches throughout the country are operating under a working priest. Instead of looking at these churches as unhealthy, it is time to care and resource them. Perhaps, as Karl Vaters says, maybe it is part of God’s plan to evangelize through churches led by working priests.

---

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 6.

Another way working priests have an impact is through the evangelism that happens as they care for the poor. Vineyard working priests tend to partner with local ministries like food banks to feed the poor and share Jesus. One pastor wrote, “Our church is home to a non-profit corporation that operates a food bank in a distressed area of our county. Every week they feed 80–200 families depending on season. Their primary clients are farm workers, so when the need for their services is higher, more food is passed out.”<sup>6</sup> Another working priest wrote that the church he leads did several community service projects this summer and, “People from our congregation served free Starbucks coffee...hosted an Ice cream social...[and] worked in a local ministry... We also continued our regular weekly food pantry, held a free car wash, cooked hot dogs and made snow cones for people in a local park, volunteered at some local school events, wrote cards of appreciation to our police officers, and distributed backpacks and school supplies to 53 children that live in a section 8 apartment complex near our church.”<sup>7</sup>

Ed Stetzer<sup>8</sup> summarizes the main components of Vineyard working priests with four main descriptions. First, Vineyard working priests desire to be incarnate in the community. These working priests “seek to be present in the everyday rhythms of the community.” Second they are highly relational. Working priests want to be the church as described in Acts 2:47: “They had favor with all the people.” Working priests seek to build bridges to the community through businesses, organizations, and local

---

<sup>6</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, September 27, 2017.

<sup>7</sup> A Vineyard working priest, e-mail message to author, September 27, 2017.

<sup>8</sup> This whole paragraph is adapted from Ed Stetzer, “Finding the Right Church Planting Model Part 4: The Missional Incarnational Approach,” *The Exchange: A Blog by Ed Stetzer, Christianity Today*, August 17, 2015, accessed November 21, 2017, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2015/august/finding-right-church-planting-model-part-4-missional-incarn.html>.

governments. Third, they engage in holistic mission. They want to be a blessing to the city and embrace a spiritual, social, and cultural mission. Fourth, they “disciple their way into a church.” Many of the people who attend Vineyard working priest churches belong before they may become an actual follower of Jesus.

### Discipleship: Helping Christians Grow

Most working priests report that they have a head start with discipleship because holding a second job outside of their church gives them a greater authenticity to those whom they are discipling. Working priests’ lives demonstrate to people in their church that when it comes to discipleship and formation, they are not asking people to do anything that they are not willing to do. Longtime Vineyard partner, Robert Logan has laid out eight discipleship essentials: sacrificial service, generous living, disciple making, personal transformation, authentic relationships, partnering with the Holy Spirit, experiencing and worshiping God, and community transformation. Working priests throughout the United States are engaged in these eight practices, and like Paul, they are modeling these practices with their lives.

### Leadership: Multiplying Leaders

The Association of Vineyard Churches, USA desires to multiply leaders.<sup>9</sup> Because the scarcest resource for working priests is time, delegation and leadership training are required skills for Vineyard working priests. Working priests must be good at multiplying leaders. This dissertation shows that many, if not most, of the current and future leaders in the Vineyard and other denominations are working priests. Vineyard working priests

---

<sup>9</sup> Vineyard USA, “How to Multiply Leaders: The IRTDMN Approach,” Vineyard USA, 2018, accessed January 10, 2018, <https://vineyardusa.org/library/leadership-multiply-leaders/>.

are poised to multiply leaders as care for Vineyard working priests improves. One common Vineyard truism is that leaders multiply themselves. This means that leaders reproduce leaders who are like them. If this is correct, leaders who are working priests will reproduce leaders who are also working priests. The simple reality of the Vineyard situation is that working priests leaders multiply working priests.

#### Diversity: Reaching Out to Those Different from Them

The best way to connect with people who are different from you is to make room for them in your life. The pastor who is in the church office all day and who does not have contact with people outside of the church struggles to make room for people who are different. Working priests have an advantage to sharing the Gospel with others because they work outside the church and have many contacts with unbelievers.

Working priests are also the epitome of diversity. Working priests pastor the majority of Vineyard churches outside of the United States. For example, in Uganda, one hundred percent of the Vineyard churches are led by working priests.<sup>10</sup> Not only are different cultures outside the United States filled with working priests, but also working priests lead most of the LaViñas (Spanish-speaking Vineyard churches) in the United States.<sup>11</sup> Vineyards led by non-white males have led the way for working priests.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> The author has led the U.S.-Uganda partnership for over a decade and has researched this.

<sup>11</sup> LaViñas are Spanish-speaking Vineyard in the United States.

<sup>12</sup> Mark Fields, phone interview by author, November 21, 2016.



### Three Documents Inspire Vineyard Improvement with Working Priest Care

The 1998 American Baptist Churches of the Central Region Recommendations, The Vineyard USA Annual Report, and Hugh Halter's, "Six Knacks," chronicle and describe why the Vineyard needs to create improved resources and vehicles of care for Vineyard working priests. This section uses the soundness of these three documents to instruct how the Vineyard could take steps to improving how Vineyard working priests are treated. The 1998 American Baptist Churches of the Central Region Recommendations Can Inform the 2018 Vineyard How to Better Care for Vineyard Working Priests

In 1998 the American Baptist Churches of the Central Region partnered with The Ministers Council and National Ministers in a pilot project on working priests. There were two meetings where approximately twenty-five working priests gathered to discuss issues surrounding being a working priest. After these two meetings and two seminars the group published the results of their findings. The group published seven recommendations that can be applied two decades later to the Vineyard:

1. *Encourage bivocational ministry as a healthy option for pastors with specific job/career skills and experience, and for churches with budgets of \$75,000 or less.*<sup>13</sup> For the Vineyard this means every level of Vineyard leadership could publicly endorse working priest ministry as a healthy option and stop arguing that working priests are unhealthy leaders.<sup>14</sup> As stated repeatedly in this paper, working priests need to be counted on the census and the Vineyard could publish

---

<sup>13</sup> These are 1998 language and figures.

<sup>14</sup> The author was told by a regional leader that pastors who have an outside job are unhealthy. A Vineyard Regional Leader, phone interview by author, November 21, 2016.

the numbers with pride and without excuse. A Vineyard website dedicated for working priests would signal to the movement that the Vineyard views churches pastored by working priests just as healthy and successful as churches with fully-funded pastors.

2. *Provide resources and training for bivocational ministry, for pastors and church leaders and for college/seminary students who are considering ministry as a vocation.* A website could be the vehicle to create a network of Vineyard working priests. This network could partner with different Vineyard ministries and larger churches and create grants so that working priests could gain access to training and education. The Vineyard Institute offers scholarships already for students in countries outside the United States so offering scholarships to working priests would not be too big of a stretch.<sup>15</sup> A website could also post training videos specifically geared to the needs of working priests.
3. *Provide continuing education events for bivocational ministers including practical help with issues such as time management.* Vineyard working priests desire to gather and learn from experts and one another. This has already been discussed in this project and is an important point. Both formal and informal educational experiences are needed for working priests. One critical topic working priests require is time management and a website could be the perfect vehicle to create opportunities for working priests to develop new time management skills.

---

<sup>15</sup> The author received an email from New Churches offering the Vineyard working priests a twenty-five percent discount on their newly created online class for working priests titled, “Bivocational Ministry.”

4. *Schedule more denominational events and meetings at times when more bivocational ministers could attend, such as evenings or weekends (beginning perhaps on Thursday evening or Friday).* This too has been discussed in Chapter Five already. A website could post for free, sessions from conferences missed by working priests. Also, it could house presentation slides from presenters and notes from attendees. Chat rooms around conferences and gatherings could be a helpful way for working priest to feel a part of the Vineyard if they are unable to attend gatherings.<sup>16</sup>
5. *Provide more flexible options for retirement and medical benefits, especially for BivoMin pastors who are also self-employed or employed by a company which does not provide such benefits.* This recommendation does not really apply to the Vineyard currently as each Vineyard church is autonomous and the Association of Vineyard church neither provides for retirement or healthcare benefits. In fact, there are a significant number of Vineyard working priests who have second jobs mainly for the health care benefits that come with that outside job. A website could possibly be a hub for ideas regarding retirement investments and health care issues.
6. *At the region level, the process of ordination needs to be flexible enough to recognize this ministry as valid and needs to recognize more options for training and education.* This is one of the major themes of this project. A website could house the pathway for ordination of working priests. It would also, like the Covenant Church, have a window for all the training materials including book

---

<sup>16</sup> Once-in-a-while, this author's Area Leader emails me notes from the Area Meeting. Even though it is not the same as being there, it does make me feel good and a part of the Vineyard.

recommendations for working priests. The Vineyard Institute could interface with the website and work with Vineyard Resources to create a clear valid road for people to become working priests.

7. *Regions can be partners with ABC Seminaries to provide more flexible options for offering theological education to persons wanting to be better prepared for ministry.* This is similar to recommendation six. As more seminaries increase the number of online course offerings, the Vineyard could aid working priests via website, connect with options. The Vineyard could also offer scholarships for working priests, and future working priests, to pay for seminary online courses.

The Vineyard could adopt these recommendations by creating a website that includes the main points of these recommendations. By doing this, the Vineyard would be caring for and resourcing Vineyard working priests.

### Reimagining the Vineyard USA Annual Report

Each year the Association of Vineyard Churches, USA publishes an annual report. This section shows what including Vineyard working priests could look like. It also shows what improved care for working priests could look like. Each section also shows how a website would better resource Vineyard working priests.

**The Cover: Celebrating the Past, Resourcing the Future.** On the cover of the 2016/2017 Vineyard USA Annual Report, there are a slogan and a quote from John Wimber. The title says, “Celebrating the Past, Resourcing the Future,” and the Wimber quote is, “When God calls you to an extraordinary task, he provides extraordinary resources.” These both speak to Vineyard working priests and what could be possible if they were both applied specifically to working priests.

First, better resourcing working priests both fulfills celebrating the past and resourcing the future. The Vineyard past is full of non-professional, non-educated planters and pastors. As mentioned above, the early Vineyard is full of leaders who were considered qualified because of their calling and gifting, not because of the size of their church or bank account. This project clearly argues elsewhere, that the future will see an increase of working priests. The Vineyard will not be an exemption. If the Vineyard is serious about resourcing the future, it must be committed to resourcing her working priests. A website full of planting and pastoring resourcing made available to Vineyard working priests would help.

Second, Wimber's quote means that God provides resources for those who are called. The Vineyard can become the answer to the prayer of working priests by resourcing working priests, first in the Vineyard USA and then around the globe and interdenominationally. A website is a good starting point for international and multidenominational resourcing.

**National Director Phil Strout's Opening Letter is a Call to Resource Working Priests.** The report opens with a letter from National Director Phil Street. There are two quotes in this letter that call for better care and resourcing of working priests. The first is, "As I've shared around the country, I believe Vineyard USA (VUSA), and each entity within it, is to be a resourcing 'supply line' to our local churches."<sup>17</sup> This includes local Vineyard churches pastored by working priests. A website for Vineyard working priests would have this quote from our national director

---

<sup>17</sup> Vineyard USA, "Celebrating the Past, Resourcing the Future 2016/2017 Vineyard USA Annual Report," Vineyard USA, 2017.

and would also be a place for Phil Strout to communicate specifically with Vineyard working priests.

The second quote that directly relates to the care and resourcing of working priests is, “As we provide the resources, you are then set free to find the open field, running with all you’ve got (Hebrews 12:1) as God guides you to the successes He is wanting to achieve with you.”<sup>18</sup> For Strout, resourcing is freeing. Working priests desire the freedom Strout is talking about here and a website full of creative freeing resources will help working priests find success. Creating and running a website for working priests would allow working priests to morph the definition of success to one suitable for leaders who work jobs outside of their church.

**The Vineyard Distinctives Include Working Priests.** The next page of the report title, “Remembering Who We Are,” lists the Vineyard Distinctives and the Vineyard Essential Practices. This report already discussed the EDLD practices in Chapter Four and how they relate to working priests so this section focuses on the Vineyard Distinctives. All nine of the distinctives can be applied to working priests, but there are two distinctives that speak more directly to working priests.

The priority, “Everyone Gets to Play: We don’t have elite, superstar leaders: We are all commissioned—men, women, and children of every background” is pointedly important for working priests. As discussed in this project, it is common for Vineyard working priests to feel like there are two classes of Vineyard leaders. Working priests see themselves as not being in the superstar category or elite. Working priests are currently the unspoken elephant in the Vineyard room; we literally do not count. This distinctive that everyone gets to play is a strong reminder that working priests are legitimate leaders

---

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

who are just as commissioned as non-working priests. A website could be a public reminder of this to all who view it.

Another priority that empowers working priests is “Faith is Spelled R-I-S-K: We believe being in the Body of Christ involves getting outside of our comfort zones. Adventurous faith is welcome in the Vineyard.” Planting a Vineyard church as a working priest requires a huge amount of faith and risk. As discussed in detail in Chapter Five, the Vineyard can emerge outside of the area, regional, and national comfort zone and become adventurous with adapting to the needs of working priests. A website for working priests could foster and catalyze the suggestions in Chapter Five.

**Vineyard 2016 Financials Can Inform How to Include Working Priests in 2018.** The statement on page four of the report titled, “2016 Financials” that says “100% (of the national budget) Serves the Local Church” is difficult to reconcile when read through the lens of a working priest. A working priest who serves in an area where the area meetings and regional meetings are during the workday of the common Monday through Friday workweek, does not see the fruit of the \$4.6 million annual budget. Working priests are not being resourced with these funds. Over fifty percent of these funds are used by Multiply Vineyard, Vineyard Missions, and Vineyard Service Group. It would be easy to see working priests as essential to each of these three areas of the Vineyard. A website could be created and funded through these pieces of the financial pie and improve the resourcing of working priest.

**Vineyard Vital Signs Point to a Huge Number of Working Priests.** According to page five, “Vital Signs,” fifty-two percent of the 600 Vineyard churches have less than one hundred attenders. There is a very strong chance that most or all of these churches are

led by a working priest or working priest team. A working priest website could start to catalog and compile more detailed statistics regarding working priests. Denominations measure what is important to the organization. For working priests to feel important, the Vineyard needs to start including them as part of the Vineyard vital signs.

### **Working Priests Could be Celebrated Alongside Vineyard Ministry**

**Celebrations.** There are eight Vineyard ministries listed on page six that “address key areas of development for all our churches.” The ministries celebrated are: Vineyard Large Church, Vineyard Women, Vineyard Renewal, Vineyard Scholars, Vineyard Healthy Church, Vineyard Justice, Vineyard Pastor Sabbath Retreats, and Vineyard Love Your City. There are probably working priests involved in each of these ministries, however it would show care if Vineyard working priests first, could be known as an official ministry and second, could be celebrated.

Vineyard Healthy Church “exists to come alongside Vineyard pastors and leaders of our churches that are under 200 in attendance to help promote church growth and health.” According to the previous pages’ Vital Signs, seventy-six percent of the 600 Vineyard churches are 200 in attendance or under. This is an extremely large amount compared to the four percent of Vineyard churches at 1,000 attendees or more. There is an imbalance here. Vineyard Large Church is a ministry that is celebrated with four percent of the churches and churches led by working priests, which could be as many as sixty percent of the Vineyard churches do not have an official ministry. It would be simple for the Vineyard to create a website specifically celebrates Vineyard working priests.



**Event Highlights Should Include a Working Priest Event.** There are six national events listed on page seven that “impacted our churches.” These events celebrate and promote diversity, worship, regions, missions, causes, and Sabbath retreats. To better care for and resource working priests, there should be a specific event for working priests. A website could be a conduit for creating such an event. The website could also be the vehicle that would live stream the working priest gathering for those who could not attend.

**Vineyard Resources.** The most helpful aspect of the Vineyard for working priests is Vineyard Resources. According to the annual report, Vineyard Resources “exists to develop and distribute Kingdom-centric resources for Vineyard churches at home and abroad.” It was stated several times at the National Conference Bivocational Pastors’ Lunch that the Digital Membership website of Vineyard Resources is extremely helpful. This is clearly a good model for a website for working priests. Just like large churches have different needs from medium size churches, churches pastored by working priests have unique needs. These unique needs can be met through a Vineyard Resources-type website for working priests.

#### Vineyard Institute Could Create Classes for Working Priest

The Vineyard Institute was “created to equip the people of God to pursue the call to go out into the world as workers in the harvest, whether that calling is as a disciple in the workplace, a spiritual mentor to the younger generation, a missionary, a pastor, ministry leader, or church planter in the church.” This vision could include classes about becoming a working priest. Working priests in the Vineyard and future working priests

could be resourced by the Vineyard Institute adding classes for and by working priests to the curriculum.

One good model for this is the Bivocational Course recently produced by New Churches. New Churches is a website created by Ed Stetzer and others: “NewChurches.com wants to help you build a strong foundation by connecting you with top experts in the field of church planting and multisite ministry, and by regularly providing you with the resources, information, and community you need to thrive.”<sup>19</sup> This website offers a new course titled, “Bivocational Ministry.” This class is for people who “are wondering whether bivocational ministry is right for you. If your budget doesn't allow a full-time position. If you're choosing bivocational as an intentional strategy. If you're wanting to learn how to better manage your time and money as a bivocational pastor. If you want to learn about the effectiveness of bivocational ministry from research.”<sup>20</sup> This class is a good model the Vineyard could emulate with a website dedicated for working priests.

#### Working Priest Needed Skills: Halter's Six Knacks

Hugh Halter is a working priest. In his book *Bivo*,<sup>21</sup> and his most recent teaching for the New Churches course, “Bivocational Pastor,”<sup>22</sup> Halter describes six skills, what he refers to as “knacks” that every working priests needs. Halter writes, “As I have talked

---

<sup>19</sup> “Multiply the Mission,” New Churches, 2017, accessed November 14, 2017, <https://newchurches.com/about/>.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Hugh Halter, *BiVo: A Modern-Day Guide for Bi-Vocational Saints (Leveraging All of Life into One Calling)* (Littleton, CO: Missio Publishing, 2013).

<sup>22</sup> Hugh Halter, New Churches, “Bivocational Ministry,” Module 14, <https://newchurches.com/courses/bivo/>.

with hundreds of successful BiVo's, I've discovered that there are six primary 'knacks' that you have to take seriously before you'll truly enjoy the BiVo life."<sup>23</sup> Halter prefers the word knack because it connotes a growing aptitude and not perfection. These six knacks are summarized here because they speak to the potential dangers of the working priesthood.

The first knack is the Personal Knack. This is the ability to own one's own life. This is about managing and moving one's self. The second knack is the Family Knack. This is about the strength and stability of one's family. This is particularly important for the many Vineyard working priests who are "co-pastoring" as working priests. The third knack is the Relational Knack. Halter calls this one the "street cred"<sup>24</sup> knack. The question here for working priests is whether or not people want to follow you. Fourth is the Spiritual Knack. Many working priests, as discussed in Chapter Four, struggle with their identity. The spiritual knack is about the ability to hear and follow God's voice as a working priest. Fifth, is the Financial Knack. "Essentially this knack is about how well positioned you are to live BiVo."<sup>25</sup> Finally, the sixth knack is the Skill/Gift Knack. A healthy working priest must be called, skilled, and gifted by God to serve in a working priest capacity. This shows that the Vineyard should provide resources for potential working priests to learn if they are gifted and skilled at pastoring a local church and working an outside job.

---

<sup>23</sup> Hugh Halter, *BiVo*, 110.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 111.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

### **Website Helps Provide for the Eight Immediate Working Priest Needs**

Taking the findings of the 1998 American Baptist publication and Halter's Six Knacks, and by looking at the 2017 Vineyard Annual Report through the eyes of a Vineyard working priest, this section puts forth eight urgent working priest needs. Included with the description of each need is an explanation of how a website, created by the Vineyard would aid at meeting these pressing needs.

#### **Need #1: Create a Network for Vineyard Working Priests**

Vineyard working priests should be members of a network consisting of fellow Vineyard working priests. Vineyard working priests feel left out of denominational gathering and often feel alone. Pastors need community and working priests struggle to achieve a sense of community among fellow professionals. A working priest network is needed to help care and resource Vineyard working priests.

A website for working priests would be a safe place for working priest stories to be shared. Working priest Tim Schuster who graduated from Bethel Seminary in 2012 was never introduced to any working priest role models in seminary. Tim writes, "If you don't have a full-time, paying role as a pastor, it's somehow treated as a failure."<sup>26</sup> A website would be able to introduce Vineyard working priests to current and past role models. When this happens, we "will realize that bivocationalism should not be seen as a failure, but in fact can be a successful strategy and a legitimate way of pursuing one's calling."<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup> Chris Kopka, "The New Tent-Makers," *Christianity Today*, Winter 2013, accessed November 21, 2017, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2013/winter/new-tent-makers.html>.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

A website with shared working priest stories would demonstrate that the Vineyard cares and it would combat the many destructive myths surrounding working priests. Dr. Brenneman summarizes four myths:

Myth #1 “If only I’d gone to seminary, I’d be a better pastor.”

Myth #2 “If only I were more committed, I would be a full-time pastor.”

Myth #3 “If only I were a good pastor, our church would grow.”

Myth #4 “If only I had more time to give to pastoring, more would get done.”<sup>28</sup>

Stories are powerful tools that working priests could use to battle these four myths. As working priests communicate their struggles, successes, and strategies via the Vineyard working priest website these myths will lose their power and working priests will develop and grow.

#### Need #2: Offer Online Training

As more seminaries started in the United States, pastoring evolved into a profession for the formally educated. Pastors started to earn professional degrees and seminary certificates. Most working priests did not have access to the different forms of accredited training because of time and financial constraints. As a result, working priests, formerly labeled with the negative term, “bivocational,” populated the uneducated subset of professional pastors. Working priests today should be able to access online education.

Working priests need training. According to Diane Brenneman, even the Worker priest movement in France would only authorize priests “to work full time in factories

---

<sup>28</sup> Diane Zaerr Brenneman, “The Bivocaitonal Pastor: Toward A Healthy Part-Time Arrangement For the Fully-Valued Pastor and the Fully-Engaged Congregation,” (D.Min. diss., McCormick Theological Seminary, 2007), 22–23.

and on building sites after an appropriate preparation.”<sup>29</sup> According to Thom Rainer, working priests in the future will get their ministry and theological training online.<sup>30</sup> The Vineyard already has a vehicle for this called Vineyard Institute. However, there are currently no classes offered that specifically addresses the issues related to being a working priest. A Vineyard created website could be the vehicle that offers specialized trainings for working priests.

One current model for this is the “Bivocational Course” offered online via New Churches. This course has pre-recorded videos from working priests and former working priests. There are fourteen modules and they each come with a handout to follow as one watches the video. The modules also include recommended readings that are helpful. The Vineyard could adapt this module for Vineyard working priests.

### Need #3: Create a Communal Conversation

There is a tension in the Vineyard DNA that hinders working priests from excelling and having a greater impact in their communities. For Region Leader Jamie Wilson, the Vineyard conversation regarding working priests is a pragmatic issue.<sup>31</sup> There is a philosophical pressure at the national level that creates an environment where working priests feel like second-class pastors. Many working priests feel like failures. Current Vineyard metrics, combined with circa 1980s white American church growth

---

<sup>29</sup> “French Priests to Work on Building Sites and Factories,” *The Guardian*, October 25, 2016, accessed November 21, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/oct/25/french-priests-building-sites-factories>.

<sup>30</sup> Thom Rainer, “Eight Characteristics of the New Bivocational Pastor,” *ThomRainer.com*, June 19, 2017, accessed November 21, 2017, <http://thomrainer.com/2016/01/eight-characteristics-of-the-new-bivocational-pastor/>.

<sup>31</sup> Jamie Wilson, phone interview by author, December 5, 2016.

instincts would lead many to question the value or ability of long term working priests. Wilson points out that the Vineyard currently does not have any written theology for working priest ministry. This dissertation seeks to start the Vineyard working priest theological conversation and a newly created website would contribute greatly.

Glenn Schroder says that working priests need a network and an avenue for them to receive support from someone who understands their situation.<sup>32</sup> A website that will create a network would help care for working priests and give them permission to excel in ministry. The Vineyard is approximately two decades behind in this area when compared to older denominations. According to a 1998 Vital Churches study, twenty years ago, “Both United Presbyterian Church USA and the Southern Baptist Convention have consequently developed networks for bivocational persons.”<sup>33</sup>

#### Need #4: Increase Vineyard Cultural Intelligence

Describing the need for more working priests in the Mennonite Church back in 2007, Dr. Brenneman asserted that one of the impediments to fulfilling the need for more working priests is a cultural one.<sup>34</sup> When this is true in a small denomination like the Vineyard, Brenneman states:

Bivocational pastors are not as well known in our small denomination as full-time pastors, who can serve on boards and task forces, national committees, and as delegates to assembly. As a result, they may not receive affirmation from peer networks or growth opportunities from conference and denominational work. Not being known in a small denomination can contribute to reduced recognition for

---

<sup>32</sup> Glenn Schroder, phone interview by author, December 5, 2016.

<sup>33</sup> Kate Harvey, “Vital Churches: Building Vital Churches Through Bivocational Ministry,” American Baptist Churches of the Great Rivers Region, BivoNet/The Ministers Council ABC/USA, no. 2 (December 1998), accessed November 21, 2017, <http://www.abcgrr.org/bivocation/pdfdocs/vitaliss1.pdf>.

<sup>34</sup> Brenneman, “Bivocational Pastor.”

pastoral efforts, perhaps a general view that bivocational pastors are less effective, and a total deficit when we miss the edification and building up of the body that bivocational pastors can offer the leadership of the church.<sup>35</sup>

A website developed by the Association of Vineyard Churches, USA dedicated to the care and resourcing of Vineyard working priests would both demonstrate Vineyard cultural intelligence and propagate it. David Livermore in *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*<sup>36</sup> states that there are five reasons organizations should increase their cultural intelligence.

The first reason to focus on cultural intelligence is to understand the people an organization serves in a given context. Livermore, writing for businesses, refers to these people as customers. Local churches and those who attend them are not Vineyard customers, but the point is valid to seek a deeper understanding of Vineyard local churches and their worshippers. One important facet of the Vineyard that needs to be better understood, and the point of this project, is that there is a large segment of Vineyard churches pastored by working priests. By understanding this point, and understanding Vineyard working priests, and their local congregations they serve, will help increase the level of cultural intelligence.

The second reason to create a website to deepen cultural intelligence regarding working priests is so that the Vineyard organization can better manage this diverse movement. Livermore writes that in order for an organization to survive and succeed, its leadership must adapt policies and strategies that work for various cultural groups. As argued in this paper, working priests make up a specific ministry cultural group.

---

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>36</sup> David Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence: The Real Secret to Success* (Grand Rapids, MI: AMACOM, 2015).



The third reason is to recruit and develop talent. There are many options for pastors in today's church landscape. To attract called and anointed pastors to multiply Vineyards in the United States and beyond, the Vineyard needs to not only help working priests and future working priests overcome their unique challenges, but the Vineyard as an organization needs to understand the culture of the Vineyard working priests and a website for of stories, ideas, and resources for working priests would ultimately help the Vineyard increase her ability to find, grow, and retain talent.

The fourth reason to create a working priest website according to Livermore's reasons for developing cultural intelligence is to create adaptations to current leadership approaches. Cultural intelligence helps the Vineyard tailor her leadership approach to be more effective with working priests. The website could be a leadership resource for working priests and the Vineyard Executive Team, regional leaders, and area leaders.

The fifth insight Livermore offers the Vineyard regarding understanding working priests has to do with respect. Cultural intelligence has to do with the capacity to treat people with honor, dignity, and kindness. These are values of the Vineyard, and understanding working priests better would allow the Vineyard to serve alongside working priests in a respectful manner. Obviously the first baby step, as described already in this project, is to count Vineyard working priests, but a good next step would be to create a website that allows working priests to celebrate the working priesthood.

### Need #5: Help Working Priests Own Their Identity

Long-time Baptist working priest Dennis Bickers has created a website called *Bivocational Ministry*.<sup>37</sup> This website has created a community for working priests and the churches they serve. The Vineyard could help working priests by creating a similar website for the community of Vineyard working priests and the churches they serve. This would be especially helpful in Vineyard areas where, according to Joel Seymour, most of the pastors are working priests.<sup>38</sup>

### Need #6: Overcome Shame Through Facilitating Working Priest Online Triads

Building relationships with other working priests as an Online Triad through the working priest website is a way for working priests to overcome shame. Joel Seymour in his talk concerning working priests from rural areas in the United States suggests that working priests form groups of three to build relationships and coach one another. He calls these groups, Online Triads.

Online Triads facilitated through a Vineyard working priest website would connect working priests who are not able to attend most Vineyard meetings. Missing these meetings, as described in Chapter Four, further isolates working priests who serve in a highly isolating job already. Fortunately, we “live in an age where we can connect via tech. Google Hangouts, Skype and Facetime make it easy.”<sup>39</sup> Seymour suggests

---

<sup>37</sup> Dennis Bickers, *Bivocational Ministry: A Community for All Bivocational Ministers and the Churches They Serve*, Blogspot.com, 2017, accessed January 10, 2018, <http://bivocationalministry.blogspot.com>.

<sup>38</sup> Joel Seymour, e-mail message to author, November 6, 2017.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

working priests gather online once a month in groups of three to build relationship and coach one another.

The Vineyard working priest website could facilitate this as a host for online conferencing applications. One Vineyard regional leader already does this. He writes, “In our region, I’ve encouraged AL’s to connect regularly via Zoom or Skype and I use scholarship funds to make it possible for bivocational leaders to attend regional retreats and even national conference.”<sup>40</sup>

During these online gatherings, Seymour suggests, “Each person gets 30 minutes of time to share while one of the other two asks simple coaching questions.”<sup>41</sup> Seymour prefers these questions:

- How are you? (look for real answers—not pleasantries)
- What are you celebrating? What’s working?
- What challenges are you experiencing?
- What do you plan to do about the challenges? What’s your first step?
- How can we help you?
- How can we pray for you?

These questions discussed online would create greater connection between Vineyard working priests and between the Vineyard and her working priests. Seymour writes, “We have seen these type of triads provide the connection pastors need with other pastors as well as provide life giving relationships for those in the thick of bi-vo pastoring and planting.”<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>40</sup> Mark Warner, e-mail message to author, March 1, 2017.

<sup>41</sup> Joel Seymour, e-mail message to author, November 6, 2017.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

### Need #7: Define Success and Succeed

A working priest website will help working priests have a greater impact for the kingdom in their communities by defining success and giving working priests the needed tools to succeed. One way to encourage working priests would be to publicize that there are many successful working priests in the Vineyard. As one working priest states, “Being a bi-vo pastor isn’t somehow failing. In fact, it probably needs to be embraced in the coming days as a proper strategy and “new normal” if we hope to plant more churches in small town/rural America.”<sup>43</sup> The website could be the forum to count Vineyard working priests. The website could be the mechanism through which success as a working priest could be redefined.

In order for working priests to not be seen as failures by Vineyard leadership and themselves, there needs to be a redefinition of success. One working priest writes, “And you must recognize, the church culture that we’re surrounded with is filled with the idolatry of defining success by numbers. If that idol gets in your heart, it’s very difficult. You feel like a loser if you are not growing fast like the church down the street.”<sup>44</sup> The working priest website can accomplish this in two ways. The Vineyard is a movement based on relationship between autonomous local churches. This means that each local church generally agrees with and accepts the Vineyard theology, priorities, values, and practices, but each Vineyard also is autonomous and possesses their metrics of evaluation.

---

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Lindsey Gatlin, “From ‘Emotionally Healthy Bivocationalism,’” Multiply Vineyard, January 17, 2012, accessed November 21, 2017, <https://multiplyvineyard.org/emotionally-healthy-bivocationalism/>.

The first way the website will help redefine success for working priests is by allowing working priests to post and communicate their definition of success. For example, there was a time in the Vineyard where to be considered an official church the church had to have a certain number of small groups meeting during the week. This definition does not work for most working priests. Through the website, working priests will post their metrics for success and share their definitions of success. For example, Joel Seymour's mantra for success when he planted his first church was, "Obedience is the definition of success."<sup>45</sup> As working priests throughout the country, old and young, planters and seasoned veterans, post their definitions of success, working priests will begin to see themselves as successful. Not only that, but non-working priests will start to see working priests as successful too!

The second way the website will help redefine success and consequently raise the level of satisfaction in ministry is by having a parish mentality and not elevating Sunday attendance to the highest measure of success. Seymour writes, "The truth is that in a small town your flock may very well be as big as an average megachurch. Why? Because in Small Town USA your flock isn't who shows up on Sundays."<sup>46</sup> One of the main types of Vineyard working priests is the missionary who purposely chooses to be a working priest. These working priests have removed the barrier between the sacred and the secular and they view their whole town, community, or city as their church. Seymour continues, "Their flock includes the mayor who attends another church four times a year. It includes

---

<sup>45</sup> Seymour, e-mail message.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

the rough around the edges mechanic who fixes the pastor's car. It includes the cashier at the local mom and pop grocery store.”<sup>47</sup>

The Vineyard working priest website will be a hub for stories of how working priests are shepherding their coworkers and leading their towns to Jesus. Some of these people may eventually become attenders or even members of their local Vineyard church. As working priests around the country read these stories of success from other working priests, a new definition of what it means to be a success Vineyard pastor will emerge.

#### Need #8: Count Vineyard Working Priests

To feel successful, Vineyard working priests need to be counted. Vineyard pastor, Vineyard Area Leader and former working priest, Joel Seymour, tells the story of when in 2011 he took a church planter with him to a Vineyard conference. The church planter had sacrificed a tremendous amount to plant a church in a town of about 5,000 people. As the planter, who was a working priest, earned an income through a business he owned, he worked hard to grow his Vineyard church to forty people. After four years, the working priest was tired so Joel took him to the national conference with him. During one of the sessions, all Vineyard church planters who had reached the magic number of one hundred were now considered successes and officially established Vineyard churches. Joel writes, “As we sat in a church auditorium of 3,000 people celebrating those who'd broke the 100 barrier to become ‘established’ my friend was incredibly discouraged. We celebrate big, megachurch, and fast church growth in 5 easy steps—all the books are written by pastors

---

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

of large churches and magazines put out their top 100 fastest growing and 100 largest churches. But bivo planters feel like they don't even count."<sup>48</sup>

Vineyard working priests need a website linked to the VineayrdUSA.org website so that Vineyard working priests have an online presence where they count. On the website, Vineyard working priests could self-identify as a working priest and register and create an account. As Vineyard working priests create accounts, the Vineyard national office, and individual working priests, could track how many working priests there are in the United States.<sup>49</sup> The first step to redefining success and allowing working priests to enjoy success is to let them know they count are being counted.

### Summary

This chapter starts with a description of how working priests currently fit into the Vineyard and it ends with eight points explaining how a Vineyard website for Vineyard working priests will increase working priest leadership effectiveness. This chapter argues that, based on three documents about working priests in the United States, a newly created website for working priests is clearly the logical, valuable, and kind next step the Vineyard should take to offer improved care and better developed resources to all Vineyard working priests.

This project shows the need for improvement with how Vineyard working priests are cared for and resourced. It has been a wonderful journey getting to know fellow Vineyard working priests through interviews, surveys, and conversations at various

---

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> This strategy also sets the Vineyard, USA up to become the international working priest hub. However, this current project focuses only on working priests in the United States. Stay tuned!

gatherings. The Vineyard is not where it was with her lack of care for working priests, but she is not yet where she needs to be either. This dissertation discusses in detail the momentous moment in which we find ourselves where there has been and will continue to be an increase of working priests in the Vineyard. It is time for a cultural shift to happen that allows working priests to be supported in ways that will help them thrive and creates opportunities for working priests to increase their impact for the kingdom of Jesus in their communities.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alhoher, Marci. *One Person Multiple Careers, How "The Slash Effect" Can Work For You: A New Model for Work/Life Success*. New York: Warner Business Books, 2007.
- Arendt, Hannah. *The Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958.
- Barclay, William. *The Acts of the Apostles, The Daily Study Bible*, 2nd ed. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1955.
- Barton, R. Ruth. *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership: Seeking God in the Crucible of Ministry*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2008.
- Benner, David G. *The Gift of Being Yourself: The Sacred Call to Self-discovery*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004.
- Bickers, Dennis Wayne. "Coaching Bivocational Ministers for Greater Ministry Effectiveness." D.Min. diss., Liberty Theological Seminary, 2010.
- Bickers, Dennis. "Real Pastors." *Vital Churches: Building Vital Churches Through Bivocational Ministry*, no. 2 (1998).
- Bickers, Dennis. *The Art and Practice of Bivocational Ministry*. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 2013.
- Bickers, Dennis W. *The Tentmaking Pastor: The Joy of Bivocational Ministry*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000.
- "Bivocational Pastor: The Strategic Future." *Outreach Magazine*. February 22, 2015. Accessed November 21, 2017. <http://www.outreachmagazine.com/features/3038-bivocational.html>.
- Black, Doug. *Marathon: A Manual for Bivocational Ministry*. Philadelphia: The Author, 2014.
- Block, Peter, Walter Brueggemann, and John McKnight. *Another Kingdom: Departing the Consumer Culture*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2016.
- Bock, Darrell L. *Acts*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007.

- Bolger, Ryan, Ron Crandall, Matt Friedman, Knud Jorgenson, Pete Luedemann, K. Rajendran, John Thornton, and Berit Kloster. "The Local Church in Mission: Becoming a Missional Congregation in the Twenty-First Century Global Context and the Opportunities Offered Through Tentmaking Ministry." Edited by David Claydon. Lausanne Occasional Paper No. 39 (September 29 to October 5, 2004): Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization.
- Bosch, David J. *Transforming Mission*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991.
- Brenneman, Diane Zaerr. "The Bivocaitonal Pastor: Toward a Healthy Part-Time Arrangement for the Fully Valued Pastor and the Fully-Engaged Congregation." D.Min. diss., McCormick Theological Seminary, 2007.
- Brock, Alan. *Equipping Bivocational Pastors to Develop Skills for Expository Preaching*. Kansas City, MO: Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008.
- Bruce, F. F. *The Book of the Acts*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1988.
- Brueggemann, Walter. *Cadences of Home*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997.
- Bruun, Erik A. and Jay Crosby. *Our Nation's Archive: The History of the United States in Documents*. New York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 1999.
- Bush, Peter. "The New Normal." *Presbyterian Record*. April 1, 2007. Accessed November 28, 2017. <http://www.presbyterianrecord.ca/2007/04/01/the-new-normal/>.
- Carlson, Kent and Mike Lueken. *Renovation of the Church: What Happens When a Seeker Church Discovers Spiritual Formation*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2011.
- Chaney, Charles. *History of Missions in America*. South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1976.
- Chang, Patricia. "Pulpit Supply." Religion Online, November 29, 2003. Accessed December 13, 2015. <http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2915>.
- Chittister, Joan. *The Liturgical Year*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2009.
- Chun, Dan. "Pastors Often Succumb to Job Burnout Due to Stress, Low Pay." *Advertiser*. November 18, 2006. Accessed November 24, 2015. <http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/>.

- Clapp, Steve. *Preaching, Planning, & Plumbing: The Implications of Bivocational Ministry for the Church and for You*. Fort Wayne, Indiana: Christian Community, 1999.
- Cory, Lynn. *Neighborhood Initiative and the Love of God*. N.p.: Lynn Cory, 2013.
- Cory, Lynn. "Reformation 'Churches without Borders,'" Neighborhood Initiative Blog. July 29, 2015. Accessed April 12, 2016.  
<https://neighborhoodinitiative.com/reformation-churches-without-boarders/>.
- Currie, Mary Miller. *Commissioned Lay Pastors in the Presbyterian Church: A Handbook Provided by Churchwide Personnel Services National Ministries Division*, The Presbyterian Church, USA Office for Resourcing Committees on Ministry. 2003, ii. <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/clphandbook1.pdf>.
- Day, Dorothy. "French Worker Priests and the Little Brothers of de Foucauld." *The Catholic Worker Movement*. The Catholic Worker Movement. March 1954. Accessed November 22, 2017.  
<http://www.catholicworker.org/dorothyday/articles/174.pdf>.
- Dorr, Luther M. *The Bivocational Pastor*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1988.
- Dorsett, Terry. "Bivocational Ministry is Becoming More Common." Terry Dorsett Blog. November 19, 2010. Accessed November 23, 2015.  
<https://drterrywdorsettbooks.wordpress.com/2011/11/19/bivocational-ministry-is-becoming-more-common/>.
- Dorsett, Terry. *Developing Leadership Teams in the Bivocational Church*. Bloomington, IN: Crossbooks, 2010.
- Dorsett, Terry. "Why is Bivocational Ministry Growing Across North America?" Terry Dorsett Blog. April 7, 2011. Accessed November 23, 2015.  
<https://drterrywdorsettbooks.wordpress.com/2011/04/07/why-is-bivocational-ministry-growing-across-north-america/>.
- Dorsett, Terry. "Helping Bivocational Pastors Avoid Burn Out." Next Generation Evangelistic Network. November 23, 2010. Accessed November 23, 2015.  
<http://thoughtsfromdrt.blogspot.com/2010/11/helping-bivocational-pastors-avoid-burn.html>.
- Douthat, Ross Gregory. *Bad Religion: How We Became a Nation of Heretics*. New York: Free Press, 2012.
- Drane, John William. *The McDonaldization of the Church: Spirituality, Creativity, and the Future of the Church*. London: Darton Longman & Todd, 2000.

- Elliott, John Y. *Our Pastor Has an Outside Job: New Strength for the Church through Dual Role Ministry*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1980.
- Faris, William T. *Homegrown: Our First Steps in Bringing the Church Back Home*. Orange County, CA: William T “Bill” Faris, 2011.
- Fields, Mark. “Ten Points of Intersection.” Vineyard Missions. Accessed November 21, 2017. <http://www.vineyardmissions.org/ten-points>.
- Flann, Rick and Chris Pope. *Youth Ministry Bi-Vocational Survival Guide Fulfilling a Full-Time Calling in a Bi-Vocational World*. Bloomington, IN: West Bow 2016.
- Forrester, John Arnold. *Grace for Shame: The Forgotten Gospel*. Toronto: Pastor’s Attic Press, 2010.
- Gatlin, Lindsey. “From ‘Emotionally Healthy Bivocationalism.’” Multiply Vineyard. January 17, 2012. Accessed November 21, 2017. <https://multiplyvineyard.org/emotionally-healthy-bivocationalism/>.
- Gilder, Ray. *Uniquely Bivocational-Understanding the Life of a Pastor Who Has a Second Job*. Forest, VA: Salt Light Publishing, 2013.
- Halter, Hugh. *BiVo: A Modern-Day Guide for Bi-Vocational Saints (Leveraging All of Life into One Calling)*. Littleton, CO: Missio Publishing, 2013.
- Harvey, Kate. “Vital Churches: Building Vital Churches Through Bivocational Ministry,” American Baptist Churches of the Great Rivers Region. BivoNet/The Ministers Council ABC/USA. no. 2 (December 1998). Accessed November 21, 2017. <http://www.abcgrr.org/bivocation/pdfdocs/vitaliss1.pdf>.
- Hawkins, Greg L. and Cally Parkinson. *Move: What 1,000 Churches Reveal about Spiritual Growth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011.
- Herndon, Lamar. *Constructing Blue Collar Leaders in a White Collar World*. Virginia Beach, VA: Legacy Book Publishing, 2015.
- Highland, James W. *Serving as a Bivocational Pastor*. Newburgh, IN: Newburgh Press, 2013.
- Hirsch, Alan, Tim Catchim, and Mike Breen. *The Permanent Revolution: Apostolic Imagination and Practice for the 21st Century Church*. San Francisco: JosseyBass, 2012.
- Hock, Ronald F. *The Social Context of Paul’s Ministry: Tentmaking and Apostleship*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980.

- Holifield, E. Brooks. *God's Ambassadors*. Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007.
- Howard, Craig Montgomery. *Building a Community of Pastors Pathways for Inclusion of Tentmakers and Commissioned Lay Pastors in the PC (USA)*. Chicago, IL: McCormick Theological Seminary, 2011.
- Jackson, George Bernard. *Ordination Training for Bi-Vocational Clergy in the United Cornerstone Churches International, Inc. of Thomasville, North Carolina*. 2009. *Divinity Projects*. 20. [https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/divinity\\_etd/20](https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/divinity_etd/20).
- Jewett, Robert. *The Shame Factor: How Shame Shapes Society*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011.
- Juntunen, Justin. "Bi-Vocational Ministry: The Key to Sowing: Multiply Vineyard." *Multiply Vineyard*, November 28, 2016. Accessed December 6, 2016. <http://multiplyvineyard.org/2016/09/14/6670/>.
- Kirkpatrick, Nathan. "It's Time to Recalibrate Expectations for Clergy." *Faith & Leadership*. Faith & Leadership. August 5, 2014. Accessed November 21, 2017. <https://www.faithandleadership.com/it's-time-recalibrate-expectations-clergy>.
- Kopka, Chris. "The New Tent-Makers." *Christianity Today*. Winter 2013. Accessed November 21, 2017. <http://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2013/winter/new-tent-makers.html>.
- Lim, Bo H. "Exile and Migration: Toward a Biblical Theology of Immigration and Displacement." *The Covenant Quarterly* 74, no. 2 (May 2016).
- Livermore, David. *Business Book Review* (Grand Rapids, MI: AMACON: July 8, 2010).
- Livermore, David. *Leading with Cultural Intelligence: The Real Secret to Success*. Grand Rapids, MI: AMACOM, 2015.
- Liu, Timothy, Gordon Preece, and Wong Siew Li, "Marketplace Ministry," in *Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism*. Edited by David Claydon. *Occasional Paper*, No. 40 (2005). [https://www.lausanne.org/wp-content/uploads/2007/06/LOP40\\_IG11.pdf](https://www.lausanne.org/wp-content/uploads/2007/06/LOP40_IG11.pdf)
- Lowery, Jr., James L. *Bi-Vocationalists: Men and Women Who Enrich the Human Ecology and the World Surrounding* (West Conshohocken, PA: Infinity Publishing, 2006).
- Lowery Jr., James L. *Case Histories of Tentmakers* (Wilton, CT: Morehouse Barlow, 1976).

- Merritt, Carol Howard. "A Bivocational Minister Warns Against Bivocational Ministry." *The Christian Century*. August 23, 2013. Accessed October 5, 2017. <https://www.christiancentury.org/blogs/archive/2013-08/bivocational-minister-warns-against-bi-vocational-ministry>.
- McNish, Jill L. *Transforming Shame: A Pastoral Response*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Pastoral Press, 2004.
- Miller, Vincent Jude. *Consuming Religion: Christian Faith and Practice in a Consumer Culture*. New York: Continuum, 2004.
- Moore, Carol A. Cook, "Bi-Vocational Pastors Academy." Oklahoma Conference. N.d. Accessed October 5, 2017. <http://www.okumc.org/pastorsacademy>.
- Moore, Ralph. "Paul: Planting Churches Bivocationally by Phil Claycomb (1 of 2)." Ralph Moore, August 17, 2017. Accessed November 24, 2017. <https://www.ralphmoore.net/paul-planting-churches-bivocationally-phil-claycomb-1-2>.
- Morse, MaryKate. "Pastoring as Mothering." *Missio Alliance*. Last modified October 27, 2016. Accessed December 9, 2016. <http://www.missioalliance.org/author/marykate-morse/>.
- Morse, MaryKate. "Spiritual Formation: Conformed to the Image of Christ for What Purpose?" *Missio Alliance*. March 31, 2016. Last modified March 31, 2016. Accessed April 6, 2016. <http://www.missioalliance.org/spiritual-formation-conformed-image-christpurpose/>.
- Niquette, Alan R. *Bi-Vocational Ministry: A Manual for Tentmakers*. Portland, OR: Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, 1987.
- Palmer, Parker J. *To Know as We Are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993.
- Pathak, Jay and Dave Runyon. *The Art of Neighboring: Building Genuine Relationship Right Outside Your Door*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2012.
- Perrin, Henri. *Priest and Worker: The Autobiography of Henri Perrin*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964: 5.
- Peterson, Aaron. "The Unique Challenges Facing Today's Working Priests." DMIN 716: Academic Essay, George Fox Seminary, 2015.
- Percy, Emma. *Mothering as a Metaphor for Ministry*. Farnham, UK: Ashgate Publishing Group, 2014.

- Picardo, Rosario and Michael Slaughter. *Ministry Makeover: Recovering a Theology for BiVocational Service in the Church*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2015.
- Powell, Paul W. *Shepherding the Sheep in Smaller Churches*. Nashville, TN: Bivocational & Small Church Leadership Network, Scholarship Edition, 2015.
- Putnam, Robert D. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000.
- Rainer, Thom. "Eight Characteristics of the New Bivocational Pastor." ThomRainer.com. June 19, 2017. Accessed November 21, 2017. <http://thomrainer.com/2016/01/eight-characteristics-of-the-new-bivocational-pastor/>.
- Rainer, Thom. "Eight Reasons Why Some Full-Time Pastors and Staff Should Go Bivocational." ThomRainer.com. January 19, 2015. Accessed November 21, 2017. <http://thomrainer.com/2015/01/eight-reasons-fulltimepastors-staff-go-bivocational/>.
- Rinehart, Mike. "Three Bi-vocational Pastors." *Grace Evangelical Church*, February 16, 2017. Accessed October 5, 2017. <http://www.gracenola.org/three-bi-vocational-pastors/>.
- Rohr, Richard. "The Loss of Community: Center for Action and Contemplation." *Center for Action and Contemplation RSS*. Last modified April 20, 2016. Accessed April 20, 2016. <https://cac.org/the-loss-of-community-2016-04-20/>.
- Rundle, Steve. "The Emergence of the BAM Movement." *The BAM Review*. June 2, 2014. Accessed November 23, 2015. <http://businessasmission.com/emergencebam-movement/>.
- Scazzero, Peter. *The Emotionally Healthy Leader: How Transforming Your Inner Life Will Deeply Transform Your Church, Team, and the World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015.
- Siemens, Ruth. "The Vital Role of Tentmaking in Paul's Mission Strategy." *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 14, no. 3 (July–September 1997), 121–129.
- Siemens, Ruth. "Tentmakers Needed for World Evangelization." in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, edited by R.D. Winter and S.C. Hawthorne. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1999.
- Seibert, Warren. *The Calling of a Part-Time Pastor: Developing a Guidebook for Small Church Leaders in the Reformed Church in America*. Bloomington, IN: WestBow, 2016.

- Smedes, Lewis B. *Shame and Grace: Healing the Shame We Don't Deserve*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993.
- Smietana, Bob. "Second-Shift: Surviving in Bivocational Ministry." *Life Way*. September 29, 2016. Accessed December 16, 2017.  
<https://factsandtrends.net/2016/09/29/second-shift-thriving-in-bivocational-ministry/>.
- Smith, Andy. "To the Ends of the Earth: A Case for Bi-Vocational Church Planting." Westminster Seminary California. April 6, 2017. Accessed October 5, 2017.  
<https://www.wscal.edu/blog/to-the-ends-of-the-earth-a-case-for-bi-vocational-church-planting>.
- Smith, James Bryan. *The Good and Beautiful God: Falling in Love with the God Jesus Knows*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2009.
- Smith, James K. A. *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009.
- Stetzer, Ed. "Bivocational Ministry as an Evangelism Opportunity." The Exchange: A Blog by Ed Stetzer. *Christianity Today*. September 2017. Accessed December 16, 2017.  
<http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2017/september/bivocationalministry-as-evangelism-opportunity.html>.
- Stetzer, Ed. "Finding the Right Church Planting Model Part 4: The Missional Incarnational Approach." The Exchange: A Blog by Ed Stetzer. *Christianity Today*. August 17, 2015. Accessed November 21, 2017.  
<http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2015/august/finding-right-church-planting-model-part-4-missional-incarn.html>.
- Stetzer, Ed. "Passion for Planting." *New Churches*. 2002. <http://church-planting.net/FreeDownloads/General%20Church%20Planting/On%20the%20Frontier.pdf>, 4–5.
- Summerell, Steve. "Overcoming Obstacles to Spiritual Formation in the Lives of Vineyard Pastors." DMin. diss., Azusa Pacific University, 2006.
- Swenson, Vernon. *What Can Be Done? Indigenous, Bi-Vocational Ministry and Ministry Education by Extension*. Lima, OH: Fairway Press, 1991.
- VanVonderen, Jeffrey. *Tired of Trying to Measure up: Getting Free from the Demands, Expectations, and Intimidation of Well-Meaning People*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1989.



- Vaters, Karl. "Redefined Success." *Christianity Today* 37, no. 1 (Winter 2016). Accessed November 21, 2017. <http://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2016/winter/redefined-success.html>.
- Vaters, Karl. "The New Normal: 9 Realities and Trends in Bivocational Ministry." *Christianity Today*. December 12, 2017. Accessed December 14, 2017. <https://www.christianitytoday.com/karl-vaters/2017/december/new-normal-9-realitiestrends-bivocational-ministry.html>.
- Vaters, Karl. *The Grasshopper Myth: Big Churches, Small Churches and the Small Thinking That Divides Us*. N.p.: New Small Church, 2012.
- Venter, Alexander. *Doing Church: Building from the Bottom Up*. Cape Town, South Africa: Vineyard International Publishing, 2000.
- Vineyard USA. *EDLD: Do It Again! Essential Practices of the Vineyard Movement – A Word to our Churches*. Vineyard Resources, 2016.
- Willard, Dallas. *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God*. San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998.
- Wilson, Jr., J. Christy. *Today's Tentmakers*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1981.
- Wu, Siu Fung. "The Bi-vocational Pastor." *Grace Communion International*. N.d. Accessed November, 21, 2017. <http://www.gci.org/church/ministry/bivocational>.

## APPENDIX ONE

These questions were sent to 300 Vineyard pastors in February, 2017. The purpose of this survey was to ascertain common Vineyard working priest challenges and determine how the Vineyard might be able to help working priests overcome some of these hurdles through improved avenues of care. The hope was to also discover what some Vineyard areas were already doing to better resource Vineyard working priests.

### Survey Monkey Questions

1. How many Vineyard pastors in your area supplement their family income with a job outside of their church?
2. Have you ever found yourself wanting or needing to supplement your income because your family could not financially make it on what your church pays you?
3. If married, does your spouse contribute to your family's income?
4. Has the American ideal of raising a family on one income become obsolete?
5. Have you ever found yourself wanting/needing support with Spiritual Direction and Coaching but were unable to access them due to financial reasons?
6. Have you ever missed an important Vineyard gathering because you were working another job?
7. Is it possible for Vineyard pastors who hold a job outside of their church to feel successful?
8. Is it possible for Vineyard pastors who hold a job outside their church to be viewed by fellow Vineyard pastors as successful?
9. Do bivocational pastors in your area have access to Vineyard gatherings?
10. How can a pastor who holds a job outside their church be healthy?
11. Does holding a job outside of church hinder senior pastors from relationship with fellow Vineyard pastors? If so, how?
12. What could the area and regions do to help families who pastor Vineyard churches and have more than one income become healthy and successful?

13. What are the unique resources bivocational pastors need to be healthy and successful?
14. Do you know any Vineyard pastors who are bivocational by choice? If so, do you know why they choose to have a job outside their church?
15. What would you want in a website that would be helpful to Vineyard pastors who have jobs outside their churches?
16. Some Vineyard pastors are families with two and even three incomes. How can the Vineyard assist these families with access to relationship with other pastors and attendance at area, regional, and national gatherings?
17. Are Vineyard bivocational pastors seen as legitimate Vineyard pastors?
18. Think about a Vineyard pastor who you view as healthy and successful. List the top three practices of this pastor that makes them a success to you.
19. It is possible for a Vineyard pastor to be effective and healthy while being bivocational?
20. My area could do more to assist bivocational pastors.
21. One thing my area is doing that assists Vineyard bivocational pastors is:
22. To be successful, bivocational pastors need:
23. If you would like to be entered to win a \$100 Amazon Gift Card please give me your name and email. Your name and email will be kept separate from the survey.

## APPENDIX TWO

This is a photograph of the whiteboard that was created at the Vineyard Bivocational Pastors lunch at the Anaheim Vineyard during the Vineyard National Conference on Wednesday July 12, 2017. This list depicts what Vineyard working priests communicated to Phil Strout during the lunch meeting as to what the Vineyard could potentially do to better care for Vineyard working priests.

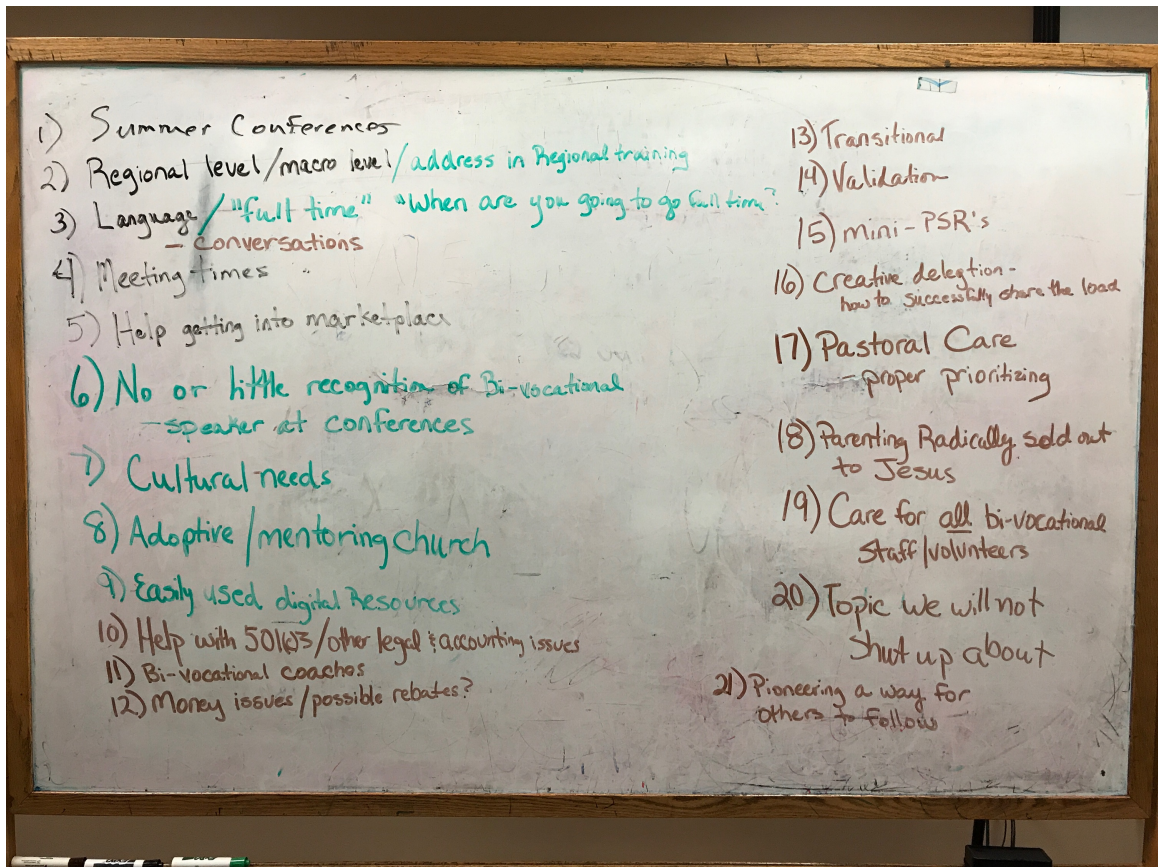


Photo Credit: Lisa Peterson

1. Summer conferences
2. Regional level/macro level/address in Regional training
3. Language/ "full time" "When are you going to go full time?" – conversations
4. Meeting times
5. Help getting into marketplace
6. No or little recognition of Bivocational speaker at conferences
7. Cultural needs
8. Adoptive/mentoring church
9. Easily used digital resources
10. Help with 501(c)(3)/other legal accounting issues
11. Bi-vocational coaches
12. Money issues/possible rebates?

13. Transitional
14. Validation
15. Mini-PSR's
16. Creative delegation – how to successfully share the load
17. Pastoral Care – proper prioritizing
18. Parenting radically sold out to Jesus
19. Care for all bivocational staff/volunteers
20. Topic we will not shut up about
21. Pioneering a way for others to follow

## APPENDIX THREE

After the July 2017 Bivocational Lunch at the Vineyard National Conference, a brief survey was emailed to 150 Vineyard working priests. Twenty-two of these pastors responded. This chart is a summary of the 12 major themes with example statements from the responses.

### Email Survey Questions

1. Please describe your current situation with pastoring a church and working an addition job outside your church. How long have you been doing this? What got you into being a bivocational pastor? What do you believe about pastoring bivocationally? Describe the theology behind your decision to be bivocational. What do you think are the pros and cons of being bivocational?
2. Please give me a tour of your activities and duties for a typical week. Describe both your jobs including the hours spent with each one. What are the challenges that come with being bivocational? What are ways to overcome these challenges? How are you doing overcoming these challenges?
3. I've noticed in my research that many bivocational pastors of varying denominations tend to feel disconnected from their denomination. How do you think it would be possible for bivocational pastors to feel more connected to their denomination? How could the Vineyard improve with our care and resources for our bivocational pastors?
4. How do you see yourself within the Vineyard movement? How do bivocational pastors fit? Do you fit in? How can bivocational pastors contribute to the Vineyard movement at the area, regional, national, and international levels?
5. The passion behind this project is that it would be a gift to the Vineyard and our bivocational pastors. Imagine Vineyard bivocational pastors receiving a gift. Please describe this gift. Suppose the Vineyard committed to better resourcing and care of our bivocational pastors. Please describe what that would look like. What could the Vineyard spend money on to improve how bivocational pastors are resourced?
6. What can the Vineyard do better at each of these four levels to improve the care of our biovccational pastors?
  1. Area?
  2. Regional?
  3. National?

4. International?
7. Describe how being bivocational affects your emotions. How do you feel in your local church you lead? Your area? Your region?
8. Please share your age, occupation outside the church, education, marital status, family status, and living situation.

#### Thematic Chart of Responses

Theme Number	Theme	Number of Emails for this Theme	Example Statements
1	The Vineyard Needs Working Priests	17	<p>I think that bi-vocation is going to be the way churches go in the future. We need young people to lead, and they will most likely have to be bi-vocational.</p> <p>I believe bivocational pastoring is an aggressively increasing trend</p> <p>If we are successful, more and more people will be bi-vocational. We are really the ones leading the Vineyard into it's desired future.</p>
2	Vineyard Working Priests Feel Isolated from the Vineyard	12	<p>Area and region are totally irrelevant to me at this point in time. I hear nothing from them and haven't a clue what is going on in my area or region.</p> <p>Even going to conferences, area/regional meetings can make us feel disconnected.</p> <p>We do feel isolated from the Vineyard most of the time.</p> <p>I see myself on the outside looking in, I see myself as an island apart from the movement.</p>
3	Vineyard Events Should Be Adjusted for Working Priest	14	<p>Stop planning regional events on weekdays!</p> <p>How about evening area meetings?</p> <p>We need special retreats for bivocational pastors.</p>

4	Vineyard Working Priests have a Pragmatic Theology	13	<p>So "theologically" I believe that we just do what we must do.</p> <p>I didn't become bivocational for theological reasons.</p> <p>I refuse to be a burden on the church as that money can be better spent on evangelism and meeting the needs of people.</p>
5	Vineyard Working Priest Network	11	<p>A network of pastors in the same boat would be an amazing investment by the vineyard.</p> <p>I think the Vineyard movement as a whole could serve us struggling pastors a lot better by just checking in via phone or visit on a more frequent basis.</p> <p>I am not sure that money is what we need. Relationship will go a lot farther than money.</p>
7	Better Care at the Area Level	12	<p>There seems to be no sympathy or consideration for bi-vocational pastors.</p> <p>When you all honored us with a meal and saw that we are full time pastors at Anaheim that gave me what I needed from my peers to be seen, that we are complete in our design, pastors in the church as well as pastoring other outside the church.</p> <p>We love our area guy, but we never hear from him.</p>
8	Better Care at the Regional Level	14	<p>Since we are many and not few, have us be represented at every level in our movement.</p> <p>Sabbath retreats that are shorter for couples, families, and pastors to have space to think</p> <p>My hope is that bi-vocational pastors will have more of a voice in leadership in this movement. I think we can bring a lot of good to the Vineyard at large.</p>



9	Better Care at the National Level	15	<p>I have never been to a national level meeting and as long as I am b-vocational, I probably never will. They are always too far away, and too expensive to attend.</p> <p>We have had Vineyard hearts for a long time and we heard God call us to plant after getting tired of feeling like we were round pegs trying to fit in square holes.</p> <p>Just a thought – what if the Vineyard developed something like the Presbyterian concept of “pulpit supply.” My thought is, if bivocational pastors had the opportunity to take a break that the local church saw as “sanctioned” perhaps we could offer marriage retreats, or other types of personal enrichment?</p>
10	Specific Resources for Vineyard Working Priests	15	<p>What I need most is a place to replenish. How about a Sabbath Retreat BEFORE you burn out and fall apart?</p> <p>I think the Vineyard could really benefit from recognizing the issues which face small churches and spend time resourcing pastors and churches who might otherwise feel like they are failing if they have less than 100 people in their congregations.</p> <p>For us, curriculum and printed resources would be great!</p>
11	Being A Working Priest Comes With Benefits	13	<p>I have had numerous opportunities to minister and share the gospel inside and outside of the church because of my vocation.</p> <p>But the ministry opportunities stretch throughout the entire county due to my special role.</p> <p>Our church has been able to partner with other organizations and have a real impact because we have had the flexibility of funds to do so.</p>
12	Being a Vineyard Working Priest is a Calling	12	<p>It is a calling and an endowment from God.</p> <p>I strongly believe that while God called me to be a pastor, He just as clearly called me to be a Christian businessman.</p> <p>I have fully owned and embraced my bi-vocational calling and I walk in it in a way that invites others to take me seriously as I am.</p>