

IMPLEMENTING MENTORING INTO A CONGREGATIONAL OUTREACH PROGRAM

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF DIVINITY

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MEQUON, WI

MARCH, 2014

Abstract

Mentoring is a tool for growth and development that has become popular in business, academic, and non-profit settings. Currently WELS is also using mentoring in its ministerial education system for the training of called workers. Because it has been proven to be an effective training method, this paper explores implementing mentoring into a congregational outreach program for the training and equipping its members for the task. A synthesis of qualitative research and study on both the fields of outreach and mentoring identify the benefits and risks of implementing such a program into a congregation. The results point to this conclusion: mentoring can help enhance and expedite a congregation's efforts as they continue to reach out with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Through mentoring the training process can become more focused and efficient and more attention can be brought to developmental needs of the mentee (protégé) as they progress through the stages of learning. Findings from the practice of mentoring also place an emphasis on the growth not only occurring on the side of the mentee, but mentor too; also, those outside an outreach committee can contribute to the growth of outreach committee members.

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Introduction

There has been increasing popularity within WELS (Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod) regarding the topic of mentoring. Currently it is an integral part of its called worker training system.

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon, WI is making use of mentoring. Perhaps the most obvious mentoring program in place is the vicar program. During the third year of their training, students depart from the campus in Mequon to study under the supervision of a pastor and gain practical experience in pastoral ministry.

Also at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, during the classroom years, students have the opportunity to engage in peer coaching. This is a form of mentoring in which students may pair with one another and set goals for their academic career. These goals are largely oriented toward professional and spiritual development.

After graduation, students may also partake in the Pastor Partners Initiative. One part of this program allows for Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary graduates to be paired with a mentor for the first three years of their ministry.¹

Moving west of the Seminary campus to New Ulm, MN, where Martin Luther College is located, a mentoring program for teachers upon graduation can also be found called New Teacher Induction (NTI). For the first two years of their ministry, the graduates are assigned to an experienced teacher who will serve as their mentor and coach. The program is designed to benefit these new teachers as they gain experience in full-time ministry.²

While the implementation of mentoring programs has been formally introduced in the training of WELS called workers, not much formal attention has been given to it in the training that accompanies congregational outreach programs in WELS.

¹ Information on the Pastor Partner's Initiative was taken from its homepage. Here is the link: <http://wlsce.net/pastor-partners>.

² Martin Luther College's website, www.mlc-wels.edu, identifies three benefits of the New Teacher Induction program which are based on what research has suggested. They are to: enhance teacher retention, strengthen student achievement, and develop teacher leadership. The link to find this information is <https://www.mlc-wels.edu/gsce/new-teacher-induction>

Currently there are a number of ways a WELS congregation can receive training for outreach. The synod has released publications such as *God's Great Exchange*³ and *We Believe—Therefore We Speak*.⁴ For use in Bible study, WELS has also put out *Confidently Sharing Jesus with Friends*, which includes a DVD. *Confidently Sharing Jesus with Friends* offers advice and encouragement to members hoping to witness in their own personal mission fields. For building up congregational outreach programs, the WELS Commission on Evangelism and the Evangelism Commission of each of the 12 districts offers *WELS School of Outreach*. The *School of Outreach* assists congregations in planning and implementing outreach strategies. There are various other outreach training programs or resources WELS offers, such as the *Evangelism Toolbox DVD* and *Share the Hope*. Both can be accessed through WELS Connect on the synod website.⁵

In the publications and resources listed above, there is no reference to or explanation of mentoring. Because mentoring has gained popularity in WELS ministerial education and because it is used widely and effectively in academic, business, and non-profit settings around the world today, this paper contains a study on the topic. It applies the principles and practices of mentoring to the setting of congregational outreach programs—something not yet done in WELS. The purpose of the study is to prove that the implementation of mentoring can be effective and enhance the work of congregational outreach committees.

For background on the topic of mentoring, this paper includes a brief history of its use and the perpetual and ongoing struggle to define it. Because the concept is difficult to define, even in secular settings, a definition of mentoring will be offered that fits the setting of a congregational outreach program. This will serve to bring clarity as the study is discussed and applied.

³ David J. Valleskey, *God's Great Exchange: One Way to Tell a Friend about the Savior* (Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern Publishing House, 1986). After laying out an outline for a law-gospel presentation, pages 31-47 describe how to train members and provide the trainee's lessons.

⁴ David J. Valleskey, *We Believe—Therefore We Speak: The Theology and Practice of Evangelism* (Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern Publishing House, 1995). As may be evident from the title, this publication covers the theology and practice of evangelism.

⁵ Further information on *WELS School of Outreach*, *Confidently Sharing Jesus with Friends*, *Share the Hope*, and the *Evangelism Toolbox DVD* can be found by following this link: <https://connect.wels.net/AOM/ps/evangelism/Pages/default.aspx>.

This study will also show some of the aspects of congregational outreach training that have been overlooked in publications by WELS. Further, it will reveal methods which can be effectively implemented to enhance outreach programs. To assess the need for mentoring programs in outreach committees and the benefits of implementing them, a questionnaire was sent out to various WELS congregations within the continental United States. Members of their respective outreach committees/teams/programs participated. Comments and answers from the questionnaire are included throughout the paper as they identify perceived benefits and risks of mentoring by members. Because of the limited participation of congregations in filling out this questionnaire, insights from written publications on the topic of mentoring will “fill in the gaps” to provide a fuller picture of mentoring for outreach in a congregation.

Mentoring can be viewed as a useful tool in sharing the gospel. In this paper, attention will be given to four main points. Mentoring in congregational outreach: 1) is effective when clearly defined goals for mentoring relationships are set; 2) is effective when the phases that every mentoring relationship goes through are acknowledged; 3) yields growth for those on both sides of a mentoring relationship: mentors and mentees (protégés); 4) allows for growth when members on outreach committees receive help from others in the congregation who are not on an outreach team.

This paper will first evaluate Lutheran sources on mentoring in the Literature Review. Then it will provide a historical overview on the topic of mentoring followed by a proposed definition for mentoring within a congregational outreach setting. After this has been established, the need for mentoring in a congregational outreach setting will be assessed with the aid of questionnaires that were returned. The body of the paper will then expound on the four main “takeaways” from the study. The conclusion will then summarize the findings and explain how the topic can be explored further.

Literature Review

We Believe—Therefore We Speak: The Theology and Practice of Evangelism, WELS School of Outreach, and *God’s Great Exchange: One Way to Tell a Friend about the Savior* all serve to equip congregations for outreach both in their personal witnessing fields (“Friendship Evangelism”) and through a congregational outreach team. They also provide suggestions that members who make evangelism calls learn a law-gospel outline, such as *God’s Great Exchange*. Before members “take on” a call themselves, they go through a series of lessons and/or visits in

which they observe a caller “in action.” Discussion and suggestions for pre-evangelism and the act of evangelism itself are adequately covered. However, discussion on and attention to the training of prospective outreach callers is limited and no mention or explanation of mentoring is made.

Yet, when these sources are viewed through the lens of mentoring, there can be applications which describe or relate to mentoring. For instance, the trainer, whether a called worker or member who has been equipped for the task, spends a period of time going through lessons on *God’s Great Exchange*⁶ with a trainee, and also takes them on evangelism calls to be observed as they present law and gospel. The training also includes the trainer observing the trainee until they are competent.

While the goal is obviously to learn and share law and gospel with another so they may be brought to faith in Jesus, their Savior, there is no consideration of how that might be more efficiently achieved through a study and evaluation of mentoring and applying the benefits that it can offer. Furthermore, there are various other factors ignored such as development of the mentoring relationship itself, the mutual benefits inherent in it, and the support that can come from others both inside and outside of an outreach committee within a congregation.

While WELS has not published anything on the use of mentoring in a congregation, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LC—MS) has. One of its pastors, Henry A. Simon, wrote a book in 2001 entitled *Mentoring: A Tool for Ministry*.⁷ It describes how mentoring can be a useful practice for a congregation to implement.

Simon’s book offers a number of examples of mentoring that can be found throughout the pages of Scripture: Jethro and Moses, Moses and Joshua, Priscilla and Aquila, Barnabas and Paul, Paul and Timothy, Demas and Luke, Paul and John Mark. These examples provide a theological foundation for his applications of mentoring within a congregation. The applications include mentoring: to share experience, to prepare for leadership, to grow in faith, to introduce a newcomer, to prepare for serving, its risks and benefits, when it gets bumpy, and suggestions for using it in a congregation.

⁶ Valleskey, *God’s Great Exchange: One Way to Tell a Friend about the Savior*, 31-47.

⁷ Simon, Henry, *Mentoring: A Tool for Ministry* (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2001).

While it describes and encourages congregations to use mentoring as a tool for its operation and ministry, there is only one case study contained in the book which describes the benefits of mentoring for a member learning to do outreach. It falls under the heading of the chapter: “Mentoring When it Gets Bumpy.”⁸ In order to make more specific application(s) of mentoring to congregational outreach programs, further study and research, outside of WELS and this LC-MS publication, had to be conducted.

Historical Overview of Mentoring

The first area of research conducted was on the history of mentoring. Providing a starting point for it would prove difficult, but ask any number of Christians to reflect on the origin and history of mentoring, and they’ll likely eventually go back to the Bible as a reference point. They might cite the relationship Jesus had with his twelve disciples as they followed him and learned under him for three years. They might ponder the relationship the Apostle Paul had with Timothy, Silas, or Barnabas, among others. They might go back to the Old Testament and try to pick out mentoring relationships such as Elijah and Elisha or Moses and Joshua. The fact is, mentoring relationships have always been around, but as Laurent A. Daloz describes in the Foreword to Lois Zachary’s book entitled *The Mentor’s Guide*, “Our ability to name them as such is relatively recent.”⁹

A study on the history of mentoring begins with the origin of the word itself. The first time the common noun “mentor” appeared in a dictionary was in 1750 when it was printed in the *Oxford English Dictionary*.¹⁰ It defines mentoring as “allusively, one who fulfils [*sic*] the office which the supposed Mentor fulfilled towards Telemachus. b. Hence, as common noun: An experienced and trusted advisor.”¹¹ To understand the office which the definition describes requires some familiarity with Homer’s work, *The Odyssey*. It describes a relationship that was

⁸ Ibid, 74-84.

⁹ Lois Zachary, *The Mentor’s Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2000), xiii.

¹⁰ Margo Murray, *Beyond the Magic and Myths of Mentoring: How to Facilitate an Effective Mentoring Process, New and Revised Edition* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2001), 8.

¹¹ This definition, taken from the *Oxford English Dictionary*, was found in Andy Roberts’ article *Homer’s Mentor*. Bibliographic information is as follows: Andy Roberts, “Homer’s Mentor: Duties Fulfilled or Misconstrued,” *History of Education Journal* (November 1999), 2.

common in ancient Greece. When Odysseus (or “Ulysses”) prepared to leave home for the siege of Troy, he entrusted the care of his son Telemachus to a guardian named Mentor. Mentor was to function as teacher, adviser, friend, and surrogate father to him. The relationship between Telemachus and Mentor was similar to the Greek practice of mentoring in which young boys were paired with a friend of the boy’s father or relative to learn basic life and career skills.¹² The Greeks premised these relationships under the assumption that humans learn skills, culture, and values directly from other humans whom they look up to or admire.¹³

The next era to look to for the practice of mentoring would be the Middle Ages. During this time mentoring relationships took on the title of “Master-Apprentice.” These relationships were found within the craft guilds. Owners who desired to train the following generations of workers in professions such as merchant, lawyer, goldsmith, among others, used mentoring. In this system, young boys were traditionally apprenticed to a master who was considered excellent in his trade. After working through the phase of journeyman in which he learned the craft, he would then become a master himself by examination or producing an exemplary work in his profession (hence the word *masterpiece*).¹⁴

The master-apprentice relationship eventually transformed into an employer-employee relationship during the Industrial Revolution. From that time on, the implementation of mentoring has grown and branched off from its use in the workplace. Today the terms mentor and mentee (or *protégé*) are used as an acceptable terms in businesses, government, education, and nonprofit organizations all over the world.¹⁵ Since WELS is currently utilizing mentoring in its ministerial education, it has become a part of the history of mentoring.

¹² It should be noted Andy Roberts’ journal article offers an alternative theory for how the word mentor found its place in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Because the Mentor of Homer’s *Odyssey* did not carry out his duty in a way that reflected the definition of “mentor” in the 1750 dictionary, Roberts argues the continuation of Homer’s *Odyssey* entitled *Les Aventures de Telemaque*, written by fifteenth-century French cleric Fenelon, depicts Mentor and his relationship with Telemachus in a way that is more consistent with the definition found in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. He claims Fenelon should get the credit. Either way, the relationship in both works is reflective of the Greek practice of pairing young boys with older men.

¹³ Murray, 8.

¹⁴ Ibid, 8.

¹⁵ Ibid, 12.

Defining Mentoring in a Congregational Setting

Defining mentoring becomes difficult especially when attempting to find an all-inclusive definition. An article written in 2007 provides some of the rationale:

If mentoring theory disappoints, it is not for lack of scholarly attention or a deficit of published research. . . more than 500 articles on mentoring were published in management and education literatures during the 10 years leading up to 1997. To some extent, the limited progress in mentoring theory seems attributable to a focus on the instrumental to the neglect of the explanatory. . . critics of mentoring research have lamented the absence of theory-driven research. Mentoring tends to be based on “one off”¹⁶ studies based on limited samples and with a greater focus on correlations than careful causal explanation. In the rush to consider such obviously important issues as the nature of effective mentoring, the benefits of mentoring, and the impacts of mentoring on women and minority careers, there is all too often impatience with troublesome conceptual and analytical problems.¹⁷

This article also reveals that research on the topic since the mid-1980s has offered numerous definitions. Yet, they generally “disappoint” because they seem to have been crafted to fit the agenda of the researchers who were concerned with the nature of effective mentoring, its benefits, etc. This article even has a table which contains 13 such definitions.¹⁸ To bring some clarity to the matter, Bozeman and Feeney (the authors) propose their own definition which is contained in the footnote below.¹⁹

If the definition contained in this article were to be used, it would contradict or negate the various other definitions proposed by those who have researched mentoring in a business, nonprofit, educational, governmental, etc., setting. In 1983, when mentoring in these various settings and also the research on it was becoming more popular, Sharan Merriam noted in her

¹⁶ A “one off” study implies that research for a particular study neglected information that would have contributed to its findings. The authors of the paragraph above are explaining that a careful study on the theory of mentoring has been lacking. One particular reason for this is that research has been carried out with “one off” studies.

¹⁷ Barry Bozeman and Mark K. Feeney, “Toward a Useful Theory of Mentoring: A Conceptual Analysis and Critique,” *Administration and Society* 39, no. 6 (October 2007), 720.

¹⁸ The list on found on page 723 under Table 1: Mentoring Definitions.

¹⁹ Here is the definition as cited: “Mentoring: a process for the informal transmission of knowledge, social capital, and psychosocial support perceived by the recipient as relevant to work, career, or professional development; mentoring entails informal communication, usually face-to-face and during a sustained period of time, between a person who is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom, or experience (the mentor) and a person who is perceived to have less (the protégé).”

article *Mentors and Protégés: A Critical Review of the Literature*, “How mentoring is defined determines the extent of mentoring found.”²⁰ Merriam’s assessment, contained in a paper exploring the phenomenon in adult growth and development by means of mentoring in the business world and academic settings, suggests the definition is malleable to the setting in which it is found.

Margo Murray, president and chief operating officer of 40 years of the Managers’ Mentors, Inc., who has considerable experience in the implementation of mentoring programs, would likely give little attention to the usefulness of theory driven research on mentoring and even the definitions provided by them. She comments in the preface to her book *Beyond the Myths and Magic of Mentoring*, “When we look at the plethora of publications on mentoring, it becomes obvious that journalists and not practitioners write most of them.”²¹

With opposition between those on the side of theory driven research and those concerned with results and practical application, it becomes difficult to find a “good” working definition. Perhaps it would therefore be useful to state a definition provided by an author whose 1983 journal article on mentoring entitled *Phases of the Mentoring Relationship*, is the most commonly cited in research on the topic²². A definition is not found in this article, however, but in her subsequent book published in 1985. In *Mentoring Processes at Work: Developmental Relationships in Organization* she noted, “Mentoring is an intense relationship whereby a senior or more experienced person (the mentor) provides two functions for a junior person (the protégé), one function being advice or modeling about career development behaviors and the second function being personal support, especially psychosocial support.”²³

This seems to be the most common definition, but really does not fit the purposes of applying mentoring to the setting of congregational outreach. A more useful definition can be formulated by a synthesis of hers with other researchers. Such a definition is by a member of the George Fox University faculty and a member of the faculty of the United States Naval Academy

²⁰ Sharan Merriam, “Mentors and Protégés: A Critical Review of the Literature,” *Adult Education Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (March 1983), 165.

²¹ Murray, xv.

²² Bozeman and Feeney, 721.

²³ Kathy Kram, *Mentoring at work: Developmental relationships in organizational life* (Glenview, IL: Scott, Foreman, 1985).

in a journal article published in 2001, “A centuries old practice, mentoring is most simply described as a relationship in which a younger or less experienced individual is trained and developed by a more experienced—often older—individual (Kram, 1985; Torrance, 1984; Zey, 1991).”²⁴ This certainly comes closer to a workable definition for the setting of congregational outreach.

Pastor Henry A. Simon comes even closer to offering such a definition in his book *Mentoring: A Tool for Ministry*. He first of all expounds on the definition of mentoring offered by Dr. J. Robert Clinton of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, CA:

Mentoring provides an opportunity for Christians to go back to a relationship where one person (the mentor) cares enough about another person (the mentee) to invest valued time, precious energy, and emotional and mental effort in him or her. Dr. J. Robert Clinton has spent much of his professional time in recent years in performing, analyzing, and writing about mentoring. As a seminary professor, he views mentoring as a tool to be used by Christians in helping one another. He says that mentoring is one person helping another person to grow. This happens as the mentor transfers resources to the mentee, including knowledge, skills, and networking. These make resources available for developing God-given potential, considering new habits, and establishing values for living. . .

Dr. Clinton spreads the umbrella of mentoring wider than other writers on the subject. He sees mentoring involved when one person discipless another, serves as a spiritual director, or coaches another person in developing abilities.²⁵

Simon then provides some additional thoughts of his own regarding mentoring within a congregation: 1) the mentor having something to share with another to help him or her grow, 2) an intentional relationship which 3) is informal and occasional unlike a professional mentoring relationship.²⁶

With a definition of mentoring that has been narrowed down in this way, one can effectively argue that the examples of biblical mentoring proposed at the beginning of the section entitled *Historical Overview of Mentoring* are suitably defined as mentoring. However,

²⁴ Peter F. Wilson and W. Brad Johnson, “Core Virtues for the Practice of Mentoring,” *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 29, no. 2 (2001): 121.

²⁵ Simon, 13,14. In the *Notes* section contained in the back portion of his book, Simon provides the source for J. Robert Clinton’s definition, which the author of this thesis was unable to access. . . J. Robert Clinton, “Mentoring: Developing Leaders through Empowering Relationships,” lecture at Calving Seminary, Grand Rapids, Mich., Sept. 1998. (Altadena, CA: Barnabas Publishers), 3-4 [*sic*].

²⁶ *Ibid*, 15,16.

mentoring that occurred in biblical times has certainly changed shape today. Unlike the disciples who were able to spend days at a time directly at Jesus' side, or Barnabas and Silas who accompanied Paul on mission expeditions, or Elisha who spent time with his mentor before he was taken up in a whirlwind, or Joshua who was able to observe Moses during the years he led the Israelites toward the Promised Land of Canaan, members who serve or wish to serve in a congregational outreach committee will not be able to put in the same time commitment. Following the combined thought of Dr. Clinton and Pastor Simon, this paper proposes the following definition for mentoring in a congregational outreach program. It involves (an) intentional relationship(s) within a timeframe that is most likely limited, which enables opportunities for growth in the skill of outreach.

Assessing the Use and Need for Mentoring in Congregational Outreach

To get a better grasp on the feasibility of implementing mentoring into congregational outreach programs, questionnaires were sent out to various WELS members and pastors who are active within outreach programs in the continental United States. It should be noted, however, that only 12 were returned.²⁷ Still, their responses painted a very real picture of the benefits and risks, along with other considerations, for implementing such a style of training for outreach. The focus of the questionnaires largely placed "the spotlight" on a member-to-member mentor/mentee relationship.

In response to the question, "What benefits do you see involved if members mentored other members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?" Mark Corkins of Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church in Saginaw, MI responded, "There are more members available than called workers. Called workers always have a lot of duties and never enough time." James Schwab of St. Bartholomew Lutheran Church in Kawkawlin, MI replied, "The pastor can't do it all. Outreach happens outside the church. The pastor has a full slate with Bible Information Class, Confirmation Class, counseling, funerals, weddings, not to mention the numerous meetings throughout the week." Lynn Sweazy of Bethany in Saginaw noted, "The major benefit is that it frees up Pastor to do other things." There was a fourth similar response

²⁷ There was limited participation in filling out questionnaires for a number of reasons. In order to find congregations with active outreach committees, the author of this thesis contacted the Evangelism coordinators for each of the 12 districts in WELS. It should be noted, not every coordinator participated. After sending emails to the pastors of the congregations the author was referred to, only nine agreed to participate. Of those nine that were willing, 7 returned filled-out questionnaires. Of those seven congregations who returned them, one returned four, and two returned two. The others returned one. The filled-out questionnaires are contained in the Appendix.

received from Jon Fowler of Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church in Columbia, TN who said, “It is a force multiplier for the pastor. Would be a great thing.”

The pastor’s work schedule each week is demanding. As James Schwab noted in his comment above, he has various duties inside the church which require his attention. To have a system which relied solely on members mentoring other members would allow him to place more time and attention on the numerous duties he has outside of outreach—an obvious benefit for the pastor(s) of a congregation.

Furthermore, it not only benefits the pastor himself but also the training system as it will allow it to grow more rapidly and more members will be able to be trained. Greg Robertson of Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church in Columbia, TN said, “Members mentoring members offers a larger number of people being prepared for outreach opportunities.”

Besides easing the pastor’s workload and increasing the amount of training happening, there were identifiable benefits for the members who are being trained by other members. Pastor Scott Oelhafen, the outreach pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church in Waukesha, WI, offered his view, “Members helping members is better because it’s not an “authority” figure—see it as peer teaching. It’s gratifying to see others sharing Jesus and helping to prepare each other.” Greg Robertson of Christ Our Savior suggested, “Some members may feel more comfortable learning from someone other than called workers. Some people may be apprehensive to ask questions that may be crucial to the outreach effort.” Brent Halldorson of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Flower Mound, TX commented, “In certain cases people may feel more comfortable talking to “an ordinary Joe” rather than a pastor.” Doug Anderson of St. Bartholomew in Kawkawlin, MI said, “I feel coming from member to member, they hear a different view and style of message.”

Sometimes talking to a pastor can be intimidating when it comes to matters of faith because of his level of training, knowledge, and experience. Being trained for outreach under his mentorship might also be intimidating simply because of the Master of Divinity degree he holds from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. A member might feel he or she will never even come close to being as equipped as a pastor, and maybe even fear his or her assessments from the pastor will be all too critical.

To continue to explore this idea from the other side, pastors might naturally have higher expectations for their members. They could presuppose their members will retain what was said during a sermon or Bible study on the topic of evangelism. Perhaps they feel a seminar is also

enough for the members to be thoroughly equipped. Mark Mittelberg in his book *Building a Contagious Church* explains this presumption on the part of the pastor and the risk it imposes for the members,

Most church and Christian leaders greatly overestimate the ability of their members to communicate their faith—at least in part because many of us leaders are the kind of learners who can hear an idea, reflect on it a bit, and then figure out how to put it into action in our own lives. We assume that if all we needed was to hear the basic idea, then that’s all others are going to need too. But according to training experts, most people *don’t* have the natural ability to make this kind of connection. The average person hears ideas, likes them, and forms good intentions to do something with them, but he or she is at a loss when it comes to knowing how to put those ideas into action.²⁸

With members mentoring other members for outreach, it would help “bypass” this risk. Unless a pastor was naturally and constantly aware of this, or was repeatedly reminded by members that they need more training and review which is “down to their level.”

In addition to comments from questionnaires and Mark Mittelberg’s insight, David Valleskey in *We Believe—Therefore We Speak* identifies an additional benefit which comes from members mentoring other members for outreach:

Experience teaches that lay people can often be more effective evangelists among their peers than pastors in the sense that some people are more willing to listen to a lay person, who in their mind represents the “satisfied customer,” than a pastor, whom some look upon as the “salesman.” The gospel is no more and no less powerful if it comes from the mouth of a lay person or a pastor, of course. The difference lies in the willingness of the unchurched person to listen to what either a pastor or a lay person has to say.²⁹

There are obvious benefits of having the task of mentoring fall exclusively under the responsibility of the members, but alongside these benefits, there are also risks. Some of these risks surfaced in the answers given to the following question on the questionnaires, “What risks do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?” As a result of having members exclusively doing the outreach, Lynn Sweazy of Bethany in Saginaw, MI noted, “The Word of God may be improperly shared with others.” Doug Anderson simply said, “Incorrect Information.” Mark Drezdon of Divine Peace Lutheran Church in Garland, TX predicted, “Members mentoring other members might get the

²⁸ Mark Mittelberg, *Building a Contagious Church: Revolutionizing the Way We Do Evangelism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 158.

²⁹ Valleskey, 235.

message wrong, or misstep on a difficult call when something is not expected.” Kathleen Sweazy of Bethany in Saginaw commented on the dangers of a process where the pastor was not involved and also spoke to the nature of a harmful relationship, “There is always the possibility of the blind leading the blind. There would probably be a bigger opportunity for poor practices to spread and if the proper person was not mentoring it could be very discouraging to the mentee.” Additionally, Brent Halldorson suggested, “A lack of training is a very real risk. Pastors are trained in evangelism and will undoubtedly pick up on cues and opportunities that ordinary lay people would miss.”

The majority of these comments reveal the depth of biblical knowledge and how to apply it differs greatly from pastors to lay members. There’s a noticeable gap. Also, pastors naturally have more experience and training to handle specific situations which lay members have never experienced or been trained for.

That aside, lay members may have a depth of biblical knowledge that is similar to the pastor’s. Also, members may be able to offer insights and solutions which the pastor simply cannot “see” or overlooks. Furthermore, members may actually have more experience than the pastor in certain outreach situations.

To see it from the perspective of a pastor, here are some comments that come from a retired pastor as well as a pastor who is currently active in ministry. Randall Rathje of Bethany in Saginaw, MI said, “I am constantly amazed by the lack of depth that many have. Even the best can easily fall into legalistic approaches (that, of course, is our nature).” Pastor Scott Oelhafen commented, “When members mentor members, sometimes, gospel-motivation is lost or unrealistic expectations are given, depending on the personality of the mentor.” These comments reveal that members might become overzealous in their attempts to help train and mentor others for outreach and the result is that they turn to law-driven (legalistic) practices and/or also hold too high of expectations the members they are mentoring.

Again, these comments can be explored further. Legalism will not always occur as a result of member’s mentoring efforts. The sinful nature infects pastors as well and can turn them to legalistic approaches. It should be noted that pastors are not exempt from this danger.

Certainly pastors can make mistakes and fall into poor pastoral practice. Still, the risks of exclusively having members mentor other members are certainly recognizable. The two identified have been: 1) shallower knowledge of God’s Word, and 2) unrealistic expectations and

legalistic practice. To minimize the risks, Mark Drezdon advised, “First, I really think that having a called worker needs to be part of the training, especially early on. . . I think after a member has had a series of calls with a called worker, an experienced member can continue the mentoring process. This can allow the called worker to get more members involved quicker.” Randall Rathje described a more thorough process which will result in benefits from members mentoring other members,

Depends on what you mean by mentoring. I think that the formal training, i.e. training one to present the gospel with an outline if that is what one chooses to do, should be left in the hands of the Pastor. If, however, mentoring is you going out with me on calls and observing and then gradually participating with the lead member and then making the presentation with the lead member’s support, that could be a good thing. . . I would favor the pastor mentoring one member and then when that member becomes competent (not just confident) then his mentee. . . can become a mentor and the pastor can begin the cycle with another, etc.

Mark Drezdon’s comment “early on” suggests that the pastor needs to be involved as a mentor when the congregation is younger and there is not an active and thoroughly trained evangelism team yet in place. The second comment from Randall Rathje revealed the formal training should fall in the hands of the pastor or a member who has been thoroughly equipped and is capable of training. This process will allow the outreach team, and also the mentoring program in it, to become larger as more mentors are trained. In other words, to start from scratch, the pastor would be the only one mentoring until a network of member mentors could be established and begin to grow. Or, there is an additional possibility. If a pastor has arrived at a congregation with a member mentoring system currently in place, the pastor would not necessarily have to do outreach training. Members who are thoroughly trained might be able to take on the responsibility and could potentially even do it better.

Having a pastor oversee the entire outreach program when it is beginning will reap its benefits, especially when only the roots of a congregational outreach team are being established. This is important and does help minimize the risks that go along with lack of knowledge and experience. Valleskey also wrote about the pastor’s responsibility in this regard:

If a congregation is just beginning to train members to serve as congregational evangelism callers, we recommend it start small. Two trainees are probably enough to begin with. Preferably, the trainer will be the pastor himself. After people are trained, they can then not only make calls on their own but assist the pastor in training others.

This is in accord with Paul's words to Timothy: "The things you have heard me say. . . entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Ti 2:2).³⁰

To establish a congregational mentoring program for outreach, it is advisable to follow the process described above. That is the working assumption of the remaining portions of this paper. The focus is on how mentoring might be effectively implemented into training for congregational outreach under the parts of the definition supplied in the previous section: Mentoring in a congregational outreach program involves (an) intentional relationship(s) within a timeframe that is most likely limited, to allow for opportunities of growth in the skills of outreach.

As alluded to, one of the biggest constraints on mentoring relationships in congregational outreach is that of time. This is because there may not always be the time available for the relationship to develop and produce results. Most relationships that are considered a mentoring relationship are done in the business, academic, and professional world and will naturally lend themselves to mentor and mentee being able to put in a much larger time commitment, as well as make it a bigger priority. When a smaller congregation places too much in the hands of the members, there are also apparent dangers and risks. Brent Halldorson highlighted one of the risks of member mentor/mentee relationships within a congregation:

The church size and dynamics are important factors. In our case we have a relatively small congregation and a very small nucleus that does much of the work, so mentoring is difficult when the same small group are the only ones that get truly involved. These same people are volunteering for church work day, VBS, council and other events and it is difficult to ask them to take on other tasks such as mentoring (or being mentored) for Outreach. As such, burn-out is a very real risk if certain members feel they are doing all the heavy lifting and eventually give up in frustration. . . Members want outreach to be a focus but then find themselves too busy to help out.

Members on outreach committees have many things in their lives which will limit the amount of time they can put into doing outreach for the church. They have jobs, relationships, hobbies, and family matters to attend to. They will not be involved in a mentoring relationship that typically fits those found in business, education, etc. This paper will also take that into consideration and expound on how the most can be made of the mentoring relationships that are possible within a congregation. They will be discussed under four points through the remainder of this paper: 1) Goal-Oriented Mentoring for Outreach, 2) Acknowledging the Phases of the

³⁰ Valleskey, *We Believe—Therefore We Speak: The Theology and Practice of Evangelism*, 241.

Mentoring Relationship, 3) Acknowledging the Two-Sided Growth in a Mentoring Relationship, and 4) Acknowledging the Growth from within the Body of Christ.

Goal-Oriented Mentoring for Outreach

The forms outreach may take vary from congregation to congregation and often even within a particular congregation. A form of outreach could simply be a first-time worship visitor follow-up visit where the visitors are thanked for their attendance at church, welcomed back, and left with literature or some other token of appreciation. Many churches will set up booths at community festivals and hand out flyers, have drawings for prizes, and start up conversations with those attending. Many places will host a sports camp on the church property. In these camps, members can have opportunities to volunteer as coaches, assistants, hand out bottles of water, etc. These forms of outreach would typically be considered “pre-evangelism.”

“Witnessing” happens when evangelism calls are conducted and a law-gospel presentation is shared. They can happen spontaneously in the community or on planned canvassing trips. They may even take place in forms of outreach that are considered “pre-evangelism.” Whatever form of outreach is being used and whatever type of mentoring is occurring for training for any of the forms, it is important that the goal of the mentoring relationship(s) remains intact and in focus.

Jesus spelled out the goal for the NT church when he gave the Great Commission, “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Mt 28:19,20).³¹ Making disciples and teaching them to obey everything Christ has commanded requires one important step—sharing the gospel. Jesus also expressed this in another Gospel account recorded in Mark chapter 16, verse 15, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.” The Apostle Paul expressed his personal goal during his time with the Christians at Corinth, “I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified” (1 Co 2:2).

The goal of any type of outreach, whether immediately in a law-gospel presentation or in pre-evangelism, is that the gospel might be shared so disciples are made through Word and

³¹ All Scripture quotations contained in the running prose of this paper are taken from *The Holy Bible: New International Version*, 1984 translation, unless indicated otherwise in a footnote.

Sacrament by the working of the Holy Spirit. Mentoring relationships will, therefore, be formed and progress with this goal in mind.

Learning how to do this effectively and efficiently serves as the foundation on which every mentoring relationship formed in congregational outreach programs is established. In the first page of *The Mentor's Guide: Facilitating Effective and Learning Relationships*, Lois Zachary claims, "Learning is the fundamental process and the primary purpose of mentoring. One of the principal reasons that mentoring relationships fail is that the learning process is not tended to and the focus of learning goals is not maintained."³² Learning how one might best use his or her God-given skills and abilities to share the gospel of Jesus Christ or "pave the way" to that point, is what the spotlight of the mentoring relationship is on, not on the relationship itself.

Zachary suggests that the learning journey of both mentor and mentee (protégé) should be reflected on. For the mentor, she suggests,

Mentors must have a clear understanding of their own personal journey. Mentors who fail to differentiate between self and other in a mentoring relationship run the risk of mentor cloning, that is, projecting their own lived experience onto the mentee. The result is that the mentee learning tends to be formulaic, learning is not individualized, and the mentee ends up front and center on the mentor's stage rather than on his or her own.³³

The mentor must also understand the amount of experience that the mentee he or she is matched with has and "where they are at." Zachary observes, "Mentees bring their own history of experience to a mentoring relationship. Rather than assume what that history and experience is, a mentor who engages the mentee in a discussion of that experience can better avoid the mentor cloning trap."³⁴

The purpose of both mentor and mentee identifying their experience level and also skills, is so they can begin their relationship with a firm grasp of what is already known by one or the

³² Lois Zachary, *The Mentor's Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 1. The author of this book is a specialist in adult development and learning and principal of Leadership Development Services, LLC, a consulting firm that offers leadership education and training for corporate and nonprofit organizations across the United States. The author of this paper found this work most helpful as he applied principles from the practice of mentoring to training for congregational outreach. Even her annotated bibliography in the back directed the author to worthwhile and helpful sources which aided in the completion of this paper. This book is highly recommended for use by any mentor.

³³ Ibid, 7.

³⁴ Ibid, 7.

other, and where the focus of learning can be placed. In other words, it makes the learning relationship specific and goal driven, so unnecessary teaching or review does not need to be done.

Once the experience of both mentor and mentee has been identified, they can begin to move forward in the learning process. Margo Murray suggests the mentee should bring a draft of a development plan to the mentor in the subsequent meeting. This will allow the opportunity for the mentor to read and clarify what it is the mentee is expecting out of the relationship. It also provides an opportunity for the mentee to make sure the mentor understands what he or she is expecting. Murray further suggests, to avoid confusion on either side, expectations of the relationship should be put into concrete terms.³⁵

To provide a hypothetical example, consider the relationship of John and Mary. John has been serving on the evangelism committee of his congregation for ten years now, and has served as chairman for five of those ten years. He devotes most of his time to making evangelism calls and uses *God's Great Exchange* as a law-gospel presentation. When Mary joined the evangelism committee, she chose John as her mentor. When they first met, she said, "I've read *God's Great Exchange* and I've practiced it on my own. I feel I've got it down pat. I'd like to practice it with you, get your feedback, and then try it out when we go into the home with you by my side."

In this example, Mary expressed her experience with *God's Great Exchange*: she had done self-study and she felt she was fairly competent. Her expectations were that John would simply observe and offer feedback until she was confident and competent to do evangelism calls on her own. This is an example of a mentee providing expectations in concrete terms.

Imagine John then said, "Well, there's more to an evangelism call than sharing God's Great Exchange. You'll typically want to talk with the people you've visiting for around a half-hour before you share law and gospel. Would you like training or some advice on how to start up and maintain those conversations?" Mary then realized she hadn't thought about this and replied "Yes, sometimes I'm not the best at starting conversations or keeping them going. I'll definitely need your help." John then added "training in the preliminary discussions" to her expectations. They then had two clearly defined expectations in their relationship.

Another hypothetical example to consider might be that of Jennifer and Rachel. Rachel works in Human Resources with her company. She has considerable experience talking to people

³⁵ Murray, 169.

and also is accustomed to handling complaints. When she decided to join the outreach committee in her congregation, she planned to volunteer to work the booths their church sets up in the community's harvest festival each year. When she chose Jennifer to be her mentor, she told her, "I have no problem talking to people. I do that for a living. Before I help out in the festival I want you to know that I'll have no problems handing out flyers or literature, or running drawings for prizes. I just want to be trained in how to turn a conversation into a spiritual one, if I find an opening. I'm not real experienced with this."

Again in this relationship, it is important to note Rachel revealed her skills and experiences, and requested training only in the areas she thought she needed help with. She put her expectations into concrete terms.

To continue with this example, Jennifer then said, "I'm glad you have a lot of experience with people. It sounds like you can hit the ground running. What I can do is share with you some pointers for turning a conversation to the spiritual side. Here's something I thought of. Do you have a lot of experience with kids? We talk with the kids a lot when we hand them balloons and pencils." Rachel realized she only spoke with adults in her job and didn't have a lot of experience with kids, so she said, "No." Jennifer then added to Rachel's expectations "training on how to interact with children." In this way they established their relationship with two goals on paper.

In both of the examples provided, the mentees requested one type of training from the mentor—that they would either offer advice or give feedback. They spoke nothing about requesting the mentor to carry out a task for them while they observed. According to an article written by W. Brad Johnson, a professor of psychology in the Department of Leadership, Ethics, and Law of the United States Naval academy, this is an important step. He notes in his article *The Intentional Mentor*,

Intentional mentors move beyond inadvertent or circumstantial modeling, and instead are overtly invitational, asking their protégés to watch them perform specific professional tasks . . . and encouraging them to try these activities as well. Excellent mentors appreciate the fact that modeling offers several advantages to protégés. Modeling allows direct demonstration of many behaviors specific to the profession, and this often produces faster learning than direct experience.³⁶

³⁶ W. Brad Johnson, "The Intentional mentor: Strategies and Guidelines for the Practice of Mentoring" *Journal of Psychology: Research and Practice* 33, no 1, (2002): 93.

Johnson wrote this article for psychologists who are serving as mentors to students in the field of psychology. Their purpose is to assist them in their professional growth. Even though mentors in a congregation training mentees for outreach might not be considered professionals, Johnson's insight is good advice. By observing a mentor model how to carry out specific tasks done during outreach before trying it themselves, mentees will watch someone more experienced and how they have learned to handle specific situations. They will observe techniques they may have never seen before and it may bring to their awareness techniques they might not have thought of on their own. They also might get a firmer hold on some of the language involved in the outreach task they are hoping to perform. After all, people more experienced in a particular area tend to be more familiar with the language used in it. Mentor modeling, though tempting to overlook, is a key step for the mentee's learning and for more quickly accomplishing the goals established in the relationship.

After establishing proper goals and allowing the mentor to model the task(s) the mentee wishes to carry out, the mentee will begin actively carrying out the task with the mentor observing him or her so they can offer feedback. Feedback is an important part of the training process and consists of two steps. The first step is the mentee reflecting on what they had done during the task they carried out. Lois Zachary says, "Research indicates that one of the ways adults learn best and also retain the knowledge they learn is by consciously reflecting on their learning."³⁷ Once the mentee has reflected on his or her performance, he or she should have the opportunity to meet with the mentor and share what they learned in their time of reflection. They will present the mentor with what they wrote down regarding their experience. This process allows learning to be expedited. Zachary identifies five benefits of regular mentoring reflection: it 1) clarifies thinking, 2) captures the richness of learning experiences, 3) helps to sort out the mentor's feelings about what is occurring, 4) provides a written log with specific details and 5) promotes systematic and intentional reflection.³⁸

This process is a critical part of the mentee's learning and requires time. Because pastors are very busy carrying out other areas of work in the congregation, this is a part of the mentoring process that perhaps is best done by a lay member serving as a mentor. In the questionnaire sent

³⁷ Zachary, 53.

³⁸ Ibid, 61.

out to WELS congregations, an outreach committee lay member identified this as one of the benefits of having members mentoring other members for outreach instead of having the called workers doing it. This was Lynn Sweazy of Bethany in Saginaw, MI, who said, “It helps to get feedback quickly.”

To ensure timely feedback, attention to time management is another aspect of goal-oriented mentoring. Zachary emphasizes making time management a priority in the mentoring relationship, “Dealing with time concerns up front and in ongoing fashion helps mentors and mentees maintain perspective so that they can focus better on the learning goals.”³⁹

There are a number of things the mentor should keep in mind when providing feedback for the mentee. One of them would involve intentionally taking the time to have a meeting regarding their performance. If the two ride in the car together to carry out an outreach task and have sufficient time on their return, they may want to use that time for feedback on the experience. However, they should make sure the car-ride will provide enough time for them for feedback (remember this would also integrate the reflection step). That is only one suggestion for the setting of the meeting, any meeting place would be acceptable if both mentor and mentee are comfortable and feel they have enough time to adequately discuss the task they just performed.

If the meeting is scheduled at a time later than the outreach task they attended together and it is not “fresh in their mind,” they should make sure both come prepared to the meeting, so they can maximize the time they spend in it. Also, each time they meet, they should start each session with a progress review or update to help regain focus for the meeting. This is done so the meeting can find the appropriate starting point for the discussion and time isn’t wasted on feedback from previous outreach functions they took part in together.

Conclusion to Goal-Oriented Mentoring for Outreach

Whether it is outreach that can be classified as pre-evangelism that “paves the way” for the good news of Jesus to be shared, or outreach that involves sharing law and gospel with someone, the goal is constant: sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ to make disciples. Goal-oriented mentoring uses methods which efficiently help both mentor and mentee train in a way that allows for the learning process to progress more quickly. Having the mentee express expectations allows the mentor to understand what skills and experience the mentee has and also allows them to offer additional suggestions for what they need to learn. By doing this, they will

³⁹ Ibid, 60.

both “be on the same page.” Allowing the mentor to do some intentional modeling, gives the mentee a stronger idea of what needs to be done to carry out the task from someone more experienced. Placing time management as a priority will allow time for the appropriate feedback which allows both mentor and mentee to track progress and identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.

Acknowledging the Phases of a Mentoring Relationship

Every mentoring relationship naturally goes through different phases that make up part of a cycle. Reflect on the phases of the relationship Peter went through as he was mentored by Jesus. He was enlisted when Jesus called to him and his brother Andrew from the bank of the Sea of Galilee, “Come, follow me and I will make you fishers of men” (Mt 4:19). He then left his boats and nets to learn how to become a different kind of fisherman. He sat at Jesus’ feet on a mountainside and listened to his famous Sermon on the Mount. He was at Jesus’ side as he saw Jesus heal the sick and preach to the crowds. He learned what it would cost to be a disciple of Jesus—nights where he wouldn’t be afforded the comfort of a pillow. He experienced separation from Jesus as he sent him and the other Eleven out to the lost sheep of Israel. Jesus told him along the way he would encounter hatred from men and persecution. After Jesus’ death on the cross and resurrection, their relationship was redefined as Jesus told him to feed his lambs and his sheep. Closure was brought to the relationship when Jesus gave him and the other disciples these instructions before he ascended into heaven, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Ac 1:8).

Every mentoring relationship will not stay the same, it will progress through a series of changes, called “phases.” In 1983, Kathy Kram, a professor at the Boston University School of Management, wrote an article entitled *Phases of the Mentor Relationship* in which she identified the changes that occurred within relationships in the workplace between eighteen younger (junior) managers who were paired with older ones (senior). After conducting her interviews, she found that each of the relationships went through a cycle of four phases: Initiation, Cultivation, Separation, and Redefinition.

Initiation

Initiation is the phase during which the mentor/mentee relationship begins. This is the phase where a member will choose which member they will want to be mentored by, or, from the

other side, to mentor. As mentioned in the *Goal-Oriented Mentoring* section, they will discuss and clarify expectations so a clear and attainable plan of action for the relationship can be available and progress can be tracked. Throughout the initiation stage ground rules will be laid and boundaries will be established so the relationship has clear definition.

In order for growth in outreach skills to be maximized, this phase is likely the worst place to try to save time in. In fact, Lois Zachary in her *Mentor's Guide*, refers to this stage as both "Tilling the Soil" and "Planting Seeds."⁴⁰ She labels the action of these two phases "preparing" and "negotiating." Both these phases are carried out with the mentee's learning and growth in mind. She claims,

When learning permeates the negotiating phase, it is not cumbersome or restrictive. In fact, it is often quite liberating because mentoring partners have a map and a compass to guide them through the remaining phases. A mutual commitment to fulfillment of the mentee's goals enriches the partnership. Mentoring partners stand a better chance of holding each other accountable. Having a formalized mentoring agreement does not preclude having an informal mentoring relationship. Articulating the commitment increases the likelihood of success.⁴¹

Although it might be tempting to skip this part of the relationship because congregational outreach is done on a volunteer basis, taking the time to acknowledge this phase will give a clear sense of goals and will likely expedite the training process. Once this phase is completed, the next phase can be entered.

Cultivation

Cultivation is the phase in which the mentor will be "hands-on" in all aspects. Whether it's actively observing and providing feedback, training before an event, or simply planning for the future, this part of the relationship will operate strictly within the boundaries established and according to the goal-oriented plan of the initiation phase.⁴² The mentor will be there constantly when the mentee is in action. At the very least, the mentor will not allow the mentee to function without full awareness of it.

⁴⁰ Ibid, pages 65 and 93, respectively.

⁴¹ Ibid, 116.

⁴² Kram, 617.

The purpose of this phase is so that nothing is missed on the part of the mentor and/or mentee, and the mentee will sense a feeling of safety knowing the mentor is always close. This sense of reliance on the mentor will actually strengthen the bond between the two of them and will make discussions about errors made during an outreach task less awkward or tense. As they work side-by-side, growth will be encouraged, enabled, and empowered by the mentor. Growth will also be monitored very closely.

The only danger that this phase threatens for any mentoring relationship is that some will be satisfied by the mentoring they receive from their partner and feel it has met their expectations. They will thrive and feel they are on track to reach their full potential. On the other hand, some will feel like they were not correctly matched with their mentor because they are not helping them fulfill the expectations mutually agreed upon in the initiation stage.⁴³

One of the advantages of discussing the implementation of mentoring in a congregational setting is that it can be discussed from the standpoint of believers and through the lens of Scripture. When there are feelings of tension in a relationship and the mentee feels he or she is not receiving the mentoring that will help them grow efficiently and optimally, it is good to remember what God says through the Apostle Paul about the vast variety of gifts in a congregation. Paul described the various members of the church as parts of Christ's body, noted their various functions and how they are beneficial to each other in 1 Corinthians 12,

The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body. . . Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is there are many parts, but one body (1 Co 12:13a,4-20).

Even though the mentee feels like he or she is not getting the training from their mentor which might best allow their gifts to grow, they can still acknowledge their mentor has gifts which are still aiding the body of Christ, even if they are not what they were hoping for. The mentees can forgive the mentors for what they lack in and appreciate them for the gifts they do have. Then,

⁴³ Ibid, 617.

they can ask to be paired with someone else. The mentor could also rejoice in the variety of gifts within the body of Christ, realizing that if he/she didn't have the appropriate experience/gifts to help the mentee, that was certainly okay.

As the cultivation phase of the mentoring relationship comes to a close, the mentees will have learned very closely under the supervision and direction of the mentor. Once the mentor or mentee senses not much can be accomplished in this phase, the next phase will be entered.

Separation

Separation is naturally the next phase following cultivation. This phase occurs so the mentee will develop a sense of independence and confidence. This phase will bring in some feelings new to the relationship as both mentor and mentee are distanced from each other. Kram notes as the mentee faces challenges alone, and the mentor is not available, "Some turmoil, anxiety, and feelings of loss generally characterize this period as the equilibrium of the cultivation phase is disrupted."⁴⁴

This phase may feel uncomfortable at some points. When the mentor sends the mentee off to carry out tasks alone, he or she will want to be available to offer their assistance. Also, the mentee may feel uncomfortable without the mentor by his or her side to act as somewhat of a "safety net" if they are confronted with an unfamiliar situation such as a question they are not sure how to answer. However, once both become more familiar with this phase, the mentee will gain a sense of confidence and independence and the mentor will find satisfaction in assisting a mentee to become self-sufficient. Kram says, "The end of this phase occurs when both managers recognize that the relationship is no longer needed in its previous form [(i.e. in the cultivation stage)]."⁴⁵

Redefinition

Once both mentor and mentee have realized that the mentee is sufficiently equipped and independent, the mentor/mentee relationship will not come to an end, but simply be redefined.

Kram suggests at this phase, the relationship will likely become more of a friendship than a mentoring relationship.⁴⁶ Others have referred to this type of relationship as informal. In other

⁴⁴ Ibid, 618.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 620.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 620.

words, mentoring is still occurring between mentor and mentee, but the training process is over. This type of mentoring might simply be carried out in forms such as meeting over coffee and discussing work being done by either of the two and sharing ideas. It could be as simple as a conversation which results in insights being shared that are useful to the work being done in outreach. Informal mentoring, like formal mentoring, can involve telephone calls, emails, texts, etc. Although the formal mentoring relationship has come to a close, mentoring still occurs. Howard and William Hendricks, who co-authored *As Iron Sharpens Iron: Building Character in a Mentoring Relationship*, wrote, “By far, the most common form of mentoring is the informal approach. It is rarely called mentoring and tends to be overlooked (as well as undervalued).”⁴⁷ Even though the formal mentoring relationship has come to a close, benefits can still ensue.

Sadly, Kram also noted that the redefinition phase could also end in bitterness and hostility.⁴⁸ For any number of reasons, the mentee or mentor might feel the relationship did not operate smoothly and goals were not met. It might also be that expectations were met, but there were simply too strong of personality differences between the two.

In order to help a mentoring relationship avoid this, Lois Zachary proposes a strategy that might prove useful. She claims that at the end of any formal mentoring relationship, the focus should be on what was learned within the duration of the relationship. She refers to this as “closure.” She says, “Without closure, a mentee can lose the dimension of leveraging the learning that has taken place. Good closure incorporates helping mentoring partners apply and integrate what has been learned as a result of the relationship. A mentor’s questions and thoughtful analysis can help a mentee evaluate learning outcomes and identify how to maximize and build on that learning.”⁴⁹ Even if a mentee felt he or she did not get the training she had hoped for, identifying what was learned and how that can be built upon will likely turn the perceived negative outcome of a relationship into a positive one.

Zachary provides three suggestions for dealing with (a) problem(s) that beset the relationship(s):

⁴⁷ Howard & William Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron: Building Character In a Mentoring Relationship* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1995), 100.

⁴⁸ Kram, 621.

⁴⁹ Zachary, 153,154.

1) Acknowledge the problem or difficulty encountered without casting blame or passing judgment—for example, “It looks as if we’ve come to an impasse.” 2) If the decision is to end the mentoring relationship, make a clean break of it and end on an upbeat note. Consider what went right with the relationship as well as what went wrong—for example, “Let’s look at the pluses and minuses of our relationship so that we can each learn something from the relationship.” 3) Express mutual appreciation. Acknowledge the progress and accomplishments that did result from the relationship—for example, “Although we haven’t been able to accomplish all of your objectives, we were successful in one area. I attribute our success to your persistence and determination; those are the very characteristics you will need. . .”⁵⁰

In the case of hard feelings, such as bitterness or hostility when the relationship comes to an end and seeks redefinition, it is important for the Christian to remember love, forgiveness, and encouragement. The Apostle Paul writes in Ephesians chapter 4, verses 29, 31-32, “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. . . Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” It is also important for Christians to remember that positions in a congregation (such as an outreach/evangelism committee) are used in service to God “so the body Christ might be build up, until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” (Eph 4:12b,13).

There are two additional thoughts a mentor/mentee will want to take into consideration to help prevent a difficult break in their relationship. The first one is that during the initiation stage the two may want to make an agreement that they periodically ask if the needs of both sides are being met. If it doesn’t seem to be working, they can simply end the relationship and the mentor can try to connect the mentee with a different mentor. The second one is that they realize they both could be functioning as mentors in the future. If that turns out to be the case, it would be helpful for both of them if they could come to each other for advice.

Conclusion to Acknowledging the Phases of a Mentoring Relationship

The phases of the mentoring relationship are important to the growth of the mentee’s skills in outreach and are worth acknowledging when put into practice so outreach skills can be cultivated more quickly. Here again is a brief summary of the stages. The initiation phase

⁵⁰ Ibid, 154,155.

provides clear expectations for the mentoring relationship and serves as a good “road map” for the duration of the relationship. When relationship is in the cultivation stage, the mentor will enable the mentee, under his or her direct supervision, to grow in their skills until they sense the next step (separation) can be entered. Separation is important because it allows the mentee to gain a sense of independence, competence, and confidence for performing outreach tasks. Redefinition is a means of acknowledging the relationship has formally come to a close, and learning can still take place on more of an informal level as they both sit on the outreach board as competent and trained as mentors. By doing this, they can continue to improve their personal mentoring as they serve on the congregational outreach committee.

Acknowledging the Two-Sided Growth in a Mentoring Relationship

Most people think of a mentoring relationship and they probably assume growth occurs only on one side—the side of the mentee. That was basically the assumption of the author as he began researching this paper, but the research broadened his view. When questionnaires were sent out to WELS members serving on congregational outreach committees, one of the benefits of mentoring they identified was that it would actually enhance the growth of both mentor and mentee. Randall Rathje commented on his version of informal training for outreach by working alongside the pastor who currently serves the congregation he is a member at, “I am proud to be a Northwestern Alumnus, and WLS [(an alumnus of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary)]. Served [*sic*] three years at our cong. [*sic*] in Indianapolis, and then twenty years at Mich. Lutheran Seminary. . . Not any informal training to speak of but I must say that I have learned a few things from Pastor Nitz re: [*sic*] the work of evangelism.” From pastor to former pastor, growth occurred!

Another member who serves on the outreach committee with this former pastor, Kathleen Sweazy, expressed her opinion, “I think mentors would strengthen their skills as they taught others. Everyone would learn from one another.”

A mentor in a congregational setting, in a sense, might seem unteachable. He or she will have far more experience and probably will have more knowledge than the mentee. This seems true especially if the mentor is a pastor. In this sense, a mentee might seem to have hardly anything to offer. However, the book of Proverbs says there can always be continued growth when two or more people are working together. Chapter 27, verse 17 says, “As iron sharpens

iron, so one person sharpens another.”⁵¹ In Roland Cap Ehlke’s commentary on Proverbs, *The People’s Bible*, he notes, “When we share and learn with others, we sharpen one another, as iron sharpens iron. The rabbis of old held that studying with others leads to fuller and more accurate knowledge.”⁵² Ehlke also offers one possible application of this passage, “When we do all of our learning alone, there is the possibility that, without the corrective [*sic*] of others, we will go off on tangents.”⁵³

Besides keeping a learning experience focused, learning with another, even if it is with a mentee, can help a mentor become aware of things he or she never would have thought of on their own. The mentor might take on mentees who are of different ages, ethnicities, and backgrounds. Mentees will be able to provide them with insights that will help the mentor cross those barriers as they reach out to those various types of people. As the mentor sees the mentee in action and discusses matters of outreach with him or her, he or she will learn applications of God’s Word from the mentee as he or she expresses their faith in their own personal style which they likely would not have come up with on their own.

Effectively, mentoring can be referred to as a two-way street.⁵⁴ Ideas for strengthening outreach will come not just from the mentor but from the mentee as well. They will both benefit from the experience and “grow [together] in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pe 3:19) so they are better “prepared to give an answer to anyone who asks [them] to give the reason for the hope that [they] have” (1 Pe 3:15).

In order to maximize the experience on both sides, the mentor will have to give a certain amount of attention to his or her own learning experience and growth. By doing this, they will be able to identify past experiences which helped their development progress. Lois Zachary claims, “When mentors do not take time to prepare adequately for the mentoring relationship and reflect

⁵¹ This Scripture quotation is taken from *The Holy Bible: New International Version* (2011).

⁵² Roland Cap Ehlke, *The People’s Bible: Proverbs* (Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern Publishing House, 1992), 271.

⁵³ *Ibid*, 271.

⁵⁴ Lauren E. Maltby & M. Elizabeth Lewis Hall, “Mentoring: The View from Both Sides,” *Christian Association for Psychological Studies* 31, no. 1 (2013): 70.

on their learning, they are not growing and could be limiting the growth of their mentees. Sometimes the learning comes about serendipitously.”⁵⁵

Also, as the mentor observes the various phases of the mentoring relationship unfold with his or her mentee, Zachary recommends the mentor reflect on the relationship experience as it is happening, “Being critically reflective throughout the phases of a mentoring relationship generates new insights about oneself, mentoring partners engaged in the relationship, and the learning relationship.”⁵⁶ She points out that it will bring a sense of redefined purpose and allow them to bring new energy and focus as they carry out the mentoring task each day so both will grow together.

Conclusion to Acknowledging the Two-Sided Growth within a Mentoring Relationship

When a mentoring relationship develops and grows, the growth does not occur just on one side, but on both. The mentor, though more knowledgeable and experienced, will learn from the experience of the relationship itself and also from the mentee as he or she gains different viewpoints and they confront new obstacles of outreach together. To ensure the relationship reaches its potential, the mentor will want to take great care in reflecting not just on his or her own past experiences, but also on the relationship he or she currently has with a mentee so it can be refocused, re-energized, efficient, and productive.

Acknowledging the Growth from within the Body of Christ

The various people God has placed within a church contribute to its growth. It happens as called workers lead in the church, as the members of an outreach committee carry out their tasks, and also as members continue to support each other. God has blessed his church with different gifts which can be used in his service. In terms of the analogy of the body of Christ, as the parts of the body serve together in unity of knowledge and faith under Christ, the church’s head, the whole body grows. Paul wrote in Ephesians 4, verse 16, “From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”

Growth in a congregational outreach program can occur beyond the mentor/mentee relationships described so far in this paper. Growth can occur as the entire outreach committee,

⁵⁵ Zachary, 163.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 163.

called workers and members alike, work together. Kathleen Sweazy of Bethany in Saginaw, MI said, “I think it would be important to have the mentors and mentees all meet together with a called worker to discuss their experiences and continue to learn best practices.” Another participant, Joan LeJeune of Abiding Grace in Covington, GA, suggested taking on more than one mentor wouldn’t necessarily be a bad thing. “You can never have too many mentors! Everyone has ideas we can tap into.” This comment shows that growth in the outreach “part of the body of Christ” can occur as the “outreach members” go to each other for advice. This comment also shows that the outreach committee can grow as the other parts of the body support it.

Any type of support, encouragement, advice, or insight that comes from outside an outreach committee can still be considered a type of mentoring. Ellen A. Ensher, an associate professor of management at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, CA, and Susan Elaine Murphy, an associate professor of psychology at Claremont McKenna College and associate dean of the Henry R. Kravis Leadership Institute in Claremont, conducted research which would support this. They interviewed 50 top leaders in a variety of industries in the early 21st century and discovered the effectiveness of a system called “Power Mentoring” toward career development.

The findings of their research suggested that somewhat of a departure from traditional mentoring (one-on-one mentoring) offers many more benefits and rewards in mentoring relationships that have been established. To understand “Power Mentoring,” here is a summary of their findings. Ensher and Murphy describe how Power Mentoring includes traditional mentoring but also expands and in some cases radically departs from what we consider to be traditional mentoring:

Power mentoring is about networks and may involve having access to groups or even an entire lineage of mentors, rather than simply being in a dyadic relationship.

It is not only about protégés receiving benefits but is also about the rewards mentors receive.

Traditional mentoring tends to be about mentors and protégés partnering together because “like attracts like.” Power mentoring is often about relationships between people who are dissimilar but who have complementary skills and needs.

In traditional mentoring, the mentor frequently chooses the protégé, whereas in power mentoring the protégé often makes the first advance.

Instead of being a monogamous, one-on-one relationship, power mentoring involves an open, even polygamous relationship.⁵⁷

As they stated above, “Power Mentoring” involves more than just a single relationship with a single person. It can involve having numerous relationships. It can involve people who do not have the same gifts and skills (a complementary relationship) and it involves the protégé (mentee) taking the initiative in establishing these relationships. To apply “Power Mentoring” to a congregational outreach team would mean having more than one mentor within the team, even mentors outside of the team. It involves taking advantage of the gifts of others in the body of Christ which members may not have themselves.

Conclusion to Acknowledging the Growth from Within the Body of Christ

Technically mentoring for outreach can come from just about anyone. It can be encouragement from another member when it seems outreach work is not producing results and gets discouraging when doors are slammed and conversations abruptly end. It can be insight on how to talk to someone with a different personality type. It can be an observation that comes from a mentor about how the congregation might consider reaching out in a new way to the community. It could be learning from the experiences of how others were brought to the church as a result of outreach efforts and the work of the Holy Spirit through the Word. It can be getting a fresh perspective on the type of flyers, literature, media, etc. being used. Growth in outreach can come from anywhere within the body of Christ as the various parts work together and support each other.

Conclusion

This thesis does not examine every aspect of mentoring when implemented in congregational outreach. It serves to prove that mentoring is a wise method for such training without “fleshing out all the details.” Accordingly, there are many questions that can still come to mind when considering the topic: What methods are available for matching mentors with mentees and which can and should be used in such a setting? What should be taken into consideration regarding matching mentors when it comes to matters of age, gender, culture, and personality? What would group mentoring look like in a congregational outreach program? What

⁵⁷ Ellen A. Ensher and Susan Elaine Murphy, *Power Mentoring: How Successful Mentors and Protégés Get the Most Out of Their Relationships* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 20,21.

mentoring styles and tactics are available for training mentees in outreach? What does mentoring look like in action when it is used to train for different areas of pre-evangelism (“Friendship”, festival booths, canvassing, conversations before a law and gospel presentation, etc.)? What does mentoring more fully look like when applied to areas of evangelism when law and gospel is shared (evangelism calls, spontaneous opportunities in the community, etc.)? What congregations, if any, consider themselves to have a training program for outreach which is formally classified as mentoring? There are certainly other questions that could come to mind.

It is the prayer of this author that this paper showed the practice of mentoring can enhance and expedite the work of congregations as they continue to reach out with the good news of Jesus Christ “to make disciples.” Implementing a mentoring program requires establishing mentoring relationships which are sensitive to time-management and learning-focused. By providing a clearly defined “road map” or plan in a relationship, learning can progress more quickly. By acknowledging the phases of a mentoring relationship, mentors will be able to help mentees (protégés) more effectively as they progress through the stages of learning. Throughout the course of these relationships, learning and growth will occur not just for the mentee but also for the mentor. The mentor will learn as he or she reflects on their own experiences, those of the mentees, and as he or she observes the mentee “in action.” In addition, growth in outreach skills isn’t merely limited to an exclusive mentor/mentee relationship, but also as members of outreach committees seek advice, support, and encouragement from others inside and outside of their outreach program.

As mentioned earlier, mentoring is a popular and effective tool being implemented throughout the world today. It is also an effective tool that can be used in a congregation. May it be used wisely to share the gospel!

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Appendix

Copy of Questionnaire

What congregation are you a member at?

Describe the type of training you received for doing outreach. (Formal, informal)

Would you consider the type of training you received to be mentoring?

Do you continue to receive training or support from this person(s)?

Still thinking of outreach. Do you receive training or support from others within your congregation who are not on your outreach committee/team? (If so, please explain)

How has your training for outreach (formal or informal) helped you in situations where you are doing outreach? Comment on the following. . .

Door-to-door

Events (such as an outreach booth at a community festival)

Spontaneous outreach opportunities in the neighborhood or community

Other(s)

Brainstorm. What benefits do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

What risks do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

Filled-out Questionnaires

The following questionnaires were filled out by members of outreach committees in WELS congregations across the continental United States. Not all comments included in the questionnaires reflect accuracy in accord with the doctrine of WELS. 12 total were filled out and returned.

Name: *Brent Halldorson*

What congregation are you a member at?

Prince of Peace Lutheran, Flower Mound TX

Describe the type of training you received for doing outreach. (Formal, informal)

Mostly informal, however I grew up in a mission setting (Canada) where outreach to un-churched was normal. I have attended WELS Outreach training seminars in the past but do not think of myself as formally trained.

Would you consider the type of training you received to be mentoring?

Our pastor does work very closely with Outreach and it was one of the core reasons we called Pastor Taylor.

Do you continue to receive training or support from this person(s)?

Yes.

Still thinking of outreach. Do you receive training or support from others within your congregation who are not on your outreach committee/team? (If so, please explain)

We have a fairly small core group, so several key members are integral in Outreach. One member was formerly the Outreach chairman and he helps out, as does our ADC chairman. We are trying to perpetuate Outreach as a focus for all of our committees, not just the "Outreach Committee." For every activity we undertake as a congregation we try to look at it from an Outreach perspective and ask, "Will this help draw unbelievers through our doors?" Examples include "Trunk or Treat", Christmas parade, canvassing, community events, advertising efforts, Mornings with Mommy, etc.

How has your training for outreach (formal or informal) helped you in situations where you are doing outreach? Comment on the following. . .

Door-to-door

We have found this to be rather ineffective. We have dropped off door hangars and tried to speak to people when they are home, but have had very little interest. On one occasion we tried to blanket a large area and on another we focused on fewer homes but with more personal contact, but neither approach seemed to work well.

- *Our Church is in Texas, where "everything is big," including all the mega-churches in the region. These mega-churches have teen programs, singles programs, music programs, etc., etc.*

On one hand additional training could help, but on the other hand I think it takes a certain personality and God-given gift for someone to be successful at door-to-door outreach.

Events (such as an outreach booth at a community festival)

One of our most successful outreach events is called "Independence Fest". It is a community-sponsored fair that gives us a platform to tell people about our Church, programs (VBS, Mornings with Mommy), etc. Having a spinning wheel to draw in kids has been a real success.

I find that women are far more approachable, so it has worked well to have women from our congregation on hand that can go up to other women, especially those with children, to tell them about our programs.

Spontaneous outreach opportunities in the neighborhood or community

While door-to-door has not worked as well, using banners in front of the Church has worked. We are located near the community school and parents form a car-line along our Church (we have a captive audience!). This is not truly spontaneous, but our last event (Trunk or Treat) drew in many from the community because they saw crowds of people, lights, etc. Some people did simply stop in while driving by. This is very encouraging as it brings in un-churched people and at least lets them feel comfortable that the Church is a place they can come to and feel welcome. It is our prayer that some of these people will begin attending, but at least for now they can see that our Church is an active part of the community and a place where they can go and not feel awkward.

Other(s)

Several women from our congregation, including Pastor's wife, came across a successful program designed by a lay member in the WELS called "Mornings with Mommy" (<http://blogs.wels.net/missions/2013/05/25/mornings-with-mommy/>). We adopted this program in 2014 and it has proven to be one of the best events ever at drawing people in to our Church. Word has spread throughout community groups and most of the sessions are completely booked. It is our prayer that this will be a great platform for witnessing to young families.

Brainstorm. What benefits do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

Certain lay people have a natural gift for witnessing their faith. I do not feel that I have a real gift in this area, but I recognize it in others. As Outreach chairman I try to ask these individuals to help at events where their gifts can help.

Women can be very good at Outreach, particularly when speaking with other women with young families.

- *If I, as a middle aged man, go up to a woman with a small child there is a sense of tension (she doesn't know me and it is not surprising if she is uncomfortable), but a woman from our congregation approaching the same person does not make*

them feel uncomfortable. Often I will try to have one of my own kids with me and this can help.

- *This is an unfortunate reality in our day and age, but we need to acknowledge this and use both the tools we have and the time we have wisely.*

In certain cases people may feel more comfortable talking to “an ordinary Joe” rather than a Pastor.

What risks do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

The church size and dynamics are important factors. In our case we have a relatively small congregation and a very small nucleus that does much of the work, so mentoring is difficult when the same small group are the only ones that get truly involved. These same people are volunteering for church work day, VBS, council and other events and it is difficult to ask them to take on other tasks such as mentoring (or being mentored) for Outreach. As such, burn-out is a very real risk if certain members feel they are doing all the heavy lifting and eventually they give up in frustration.

A lack of training is a very real risk. Pastors are trained in counseling and will undoubtedly pick up on cues and opportunities that ordinary lay people would miss.

Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

Outreach work can be incredibly humbling. The things you think will work often do not, and the reverse can be true as well. Members want outreach to be a focus but then find themselves too busy to help out.

While I do think training is important, every situation is very different.

- *All-day or all-weekend training sessions seem to be too generic and I don't feel like I have come away with many new ideas.*
- *I think it would be helpful to showcase studies from across the WELS and review programs that have worked (and not worked) for certain regions and dynamics (i.e.: Mornings with Mommy, sports camps, ESL training, etc.). This may help congregations build on what has worked well in other areas. A video could be distributed for congregations to review internally rather than sending people to training sessions.*

Name: *Greg Robertson*

What congregation are you a member at?

Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church, Columbia, TN.

Describe the type of training you received for doing outreach. (Formal, informal)

We have annual canvassing training where topics are covered from why we want to reach the lost, how God uses us in outreach, and role playing for likely scenarios for canvassing efforts.

Would you consider the type of training you received to be mentoring?

I would consider certain aspects of training is mentoring. Any growth in God's word could possibly be applied in canvassing since it is uncertain what type of concerns or questions will be presented after knocking on a door.

Do you continue to receive training or support from this person(s)?

Yes, our Pastor is always open to encourage outreach and the annual training is always encouraging to members interested in outreach.

Still thinking of outreach. Do you receive training or support from others within your congregation who are not on your outreach committee/team? (If so, please explain)

I would say training comes directly from called workers however; support for outreach from lay members can be nearly as important and encouraging as formal training.

How has your training for outreach (formal or informal) helped you in situations where you are doing outreach? Comment on the following. . .

Door-to-door

Formal canvassing training has had the most benefit for me in outreach. The annual training is a constant reminder that God has the decision to bring a person to faith or to bring a person to your congregation. Without training it would be very easy for me to think that I have some influence on a person coming to faith.

Events (such as an outreach booth at a community festival)

Spontaneous outreach opportunities in the neighborhood or community

I think the spontaneous outreach opportunities are some of the most beneficial and encouraging outreach opportunities for lay persons. Many times they are more personal and offer a better chance for in depth conversation and conversation tailored to the person's objections.

Other(s)

Brainstorm. What benefits do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

Members mentoring members offer larger number of people being prepared for outreach opportunities. Also, some members may feel more comfortable learning from someone other than called workers. Some people may be apprehensive to ask questions that may be crucial to the outreach effort.

What risks do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

I feel the risks are minimal. The role of mentoring for outreach is simply to invite unbelievers to visit your church. Even if something is said during an outreach

opportunity it would be the Pastor's responsibility to educate the person on what scripture says.

Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

Name: *James Schwab*

What congregation are you a member at?

St Bartholomew Ev Lutheran Church, Kawkawlin, MI 48631

Describe the type of training you received for doing outreach.

Training has been mostly formal. Our current pastor, Pastor Larry Seafert, has been our pastor for 4 years. Since he came we have attended a 2 day school of Outreach, we have hosted that same day School of Outreach in which 11 congregations attended. We have an outreach group which meets the first Sunday of every month following our late worship service. No one is elected to this group. Strictly voluntary. We have approx. 8 in attendance at every meeting. We plan for E4K and C4K every year.

Would you consider the type of training you received to be mentoring?

Yes.

Do you continue to receive training or support from this person(s)?

Yes.

Still thinking of outreach. Do you receive training or support from others within your congregation who are not on your outreach committee/team? (If so, please explain)

It is hard to get volunteers to help, but I feel we have a strong core group to lead the charge, with the support of our pastors.

How has your training for outreach (formal or informal) helped you in situations where you are doing outreach? Comment on the following. . .

Door-to-door.

WE DONT GO DOOR TO DOOR.

Events.

We have been involved in our local community parades and have taken best of show in our 3 of 3 entries. Our pastor, Larry Seafert participated in this past summer's "Faster Pastor Race" at TriCity Motor Speedway. I believe we took in donations of nearly \$1500 to go towards our future pastor/teacher training fund.

Spontaneous outreach opportunities in the neighborhood or community:

E4K, C4K, Trunk or Treat in our church parking lot. One Easter about 3 years ago we did a mass mailing out to the surrounding area. We have had 3 outdoor worship services with chicken BBQ and hog roasts following inviting the community to worship and dinner following.

Our congregation belongs to BALM, which is an acronym for Bay Area Lutheran Ministry. It is a group of 4 area WELS congregations that meet once a quarter. We meet and plan group functions. The most recent being a Reformation Diet with Prof John Brenner speaking on the differences between the WELS and LCMS. We have joint Advent services every year. Joint Elders workshops. St John's in Bay City hosted a morning outreach training entitled: Small Talk to God Talk. Pastor Starr from Trinity is planning a daylong Men's Conference this February.

Brainstorm. What benefits do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

The pastor can't do it all. Outreach happens outside the church. The pastor has a full slate with Bible Information Class, Confirmation class, counseling, funerals, weddings, not to mention the numerous meetings throughout the week.

We have a second pastor, Pastor Andrew Lindke. Outreach is one of his responsibilities. He attends every outreach meeting when he can. He mentors us in our outreach planning. He is also active in our Bay City Jail Ministry.

What risks do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

We have shown the Friendship Witnessing DVD's between our worship services.

We could have our called teachers teach the different levels of kids in our E4K/C4K, but you have to give the members the opportunity to step up to the plate and take charge. It's not always possible to have a called worker doing the mentoring. There's just too many fox holes and trenches out there! Members mentoring members is fine as long as "the right hand knows what the left hand is doing."

Name: *Joan LeJeune*

What congregation are you a member at?

Abiding Grace in Covington.

Describe the type of training you received for doing outreach. (Formal, informal)

Informal

Would you consider the type of training you received to be mentoring?

Somewhat

Do you continue to receive training or support from this person(s)?

I work with this person regularly at outreach efforts at local events.

Still thinking of outreach. Do you receive training or support from others within your congregation who are not on your outreach committee/team? (If so, please explain)

No

How has your training for outreach (formal or informal) helped you in situations where you are doing outreach? Comment on the following. . .

Door-to-door

Limited visiting due to work schedule.

Events (such as an outreach booth at a community festival)

Mostly what I do.

Spontaneous outreach opportunities in the neighborhood or community

I usually hand out literature in the subdivision and when I am out walking in town or places I can leave literature.

Other(s)

Professionally, all my employment gives me the opportunity to talk one on one with people. I invite people to join us at Abiding Grace when I can.

Brainstorm. What benefits do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

You can never have too many mentors! Everyone has ideas we can tap into.

What risks do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

None that come to mind.

Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

Most of my outreach work has been with Paulina who I have become friends with. She has the best attitude and the best "presentation" for an outreach person. Outreach work is fun if you let it be. . . just put on your best smile and tell people what makes you smile!!

Name: *John Fowler*

What congregation are you a member at?

Christ Our Savior – Columbia, TN

Describe the type of training you received for doing outreach. (Formal, informal)

- *Formal: Every year we provide canvass training to those interested as we canvass on Wednesday evenings in the summer.*
- *Formal: We had the school of outreach at our church 6-7 years ago*
- *In-formal: law and gospel training. You attend these with the pastor to learn how to do this and then go out on your own*

Would you consider the type of training you received to be mentoring?

- *The informal law and gospel training is a type of mentoring, but a defined mentoring program - NO*
- *During canvassing we send an experienced person with a less experienced one*

Do you continue to receive training or support from this person(s)?

- *It is our pastor so I would say yes ... but not formal*

Still thinking of outreach. Do you receive training or support from others within your congregation who are not on your outreach committee/team? (If so, please explain)

- *Yes ... see above on canvassing*

How has your training for outreach (formal or informal) helped you in situations where you are doing outreach? Comment on the following. . .

Door-to-door
YES

Events (such as an outreach booth at a community festival)
YES

Spontaneous outreach opportunities in the neighborhood or community
YES

Other(s)

Brainstorm. What benefits do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

- *Big benefits. It is a force multiplier for the pastor. Would be a great thing*

What risks do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

- *As long as you pick the correct person and the pastor has direct oversight then the risk is minimal*

Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

Name: *Kathleen Sweazy*

What congregation are you a member at?

Bethany, Saginaw, MI

Describe the type of training you received for doing outreach. (Formal, informal)

I would consider it informal "on the job" training from Pastor regarding visitations and continuous feedback based on our results sent in to him after our visits. We also discuss outreach in our Evangelism meetings; mainly what activities would draw the community and our pre-school families into our church.

Would you consider the type of training you received to be mentoring?

I would say "yes" to the training and feedback from Pastor since it is an ongoing process.

Do you continue to receive training or support from this person(s)?

Yes

Still thinking of outreach. Do you receive training or support from others within your congregation who are not on your outreach committee/team? (If so, please explain)

No

How has your training for outreach (formal or informal) helped you in situations where you are doing outreach? Comment on the following. . .

Door-to-door

I was terrified of this aspect of outreach. I think in the initial phase of outreach it helps to know that "less is more". There isn't the pressure to provide theological answers. We spend a short time with people, just showing an interest in them and providing them with information on what our church has to offer as well as a few "gifts" such as pens or notepads, etc. It's almost always positive.

Events (such as an outreach booth at a community festival)

We haven't done the booth thing, but we do have a Bible Soccer Camp each year and last year we had a Creation Day. These provide an opportunity to show our best side to the community. We never charge for anything we use for outreach, just pray a connection will be made with participants. We use the information from these events for our door-to-door opportunities. We keep everything low key and while there is always a religious base to our events there is no pressure for anyone. We just try to be super friendly and make a connection to the community.

Spontaneous outreach opportunities in the neighborhood or community

I think no matter how the opportunity arises it's important to go slow and build a friendship before getting into too heavy a religious discussion, unless the person is up for that. Also, we've been taught it's best to do outreach on a one-on-one basis. Trying to reach out to a group isn't likely to be productive.

Other(s)

Brainstorm. What benefits do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

You would probably have a larger work force and once the program had a strong base I could see this happening. I do think it would be important to have the mentors and mentees all meet together, with a called worker, to discuss their experiences and continue to learn best practices. I think mentors would strengthen their skills as they taught others. Everyone would learn from one another.

What risks do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

There is always the possibility of the blind leading the blind. There would probably be a bigger opportunity for poor practices to spread and if the proper person was not mentoring it could be very discouraging to the mentee. Some people do not have the gifts they think or wish they had. I have faith that called workers have been trained in this and would be able to share their skills with others effectively. If not, they would know who to ask for help.

Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

God's Blessings on your paper.

Name: *Lynn Sweazy*

What congregation are you a member at?

Bethany Ev. Lutheran Church, Saginaw, MI

Describe the type of training you received for doing outreach. (Formal, informal)

Semi formal-pastor gave us written does, don'ts, etc., He also took us on one call with him.

Would you consider the type of training you received to be mentoring?

Yes

Do you continue to receive training or support from this person(s)?

No, other than if we have a question or want his opinion on how we handled a situation.

Still thinking of outreach. Do you receive training or support from others within your congregation who are not on your outreach committee/team? (If so, please explain)

No

How has your training for outreach (formal or informal) helped you in situations where you are doing outreach? Comment on the following. . .

Door-to-door

This is what Pastors written comments were all about.

Events (such as an outreach booth at a community festival)

Spontaneous outreach opportunities in the neighborhood or community

The more visits that I make and the more I study/read the Bible, the easier it is for me to share my faith with others.

Other(s)

Brainstorm. What benefits do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

The major benefit is that it frees up Pastor to do other things. It also helps to get feedback quickly and helps by encouraging one another.

What risks do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

The word of God may be improperly shared with others.

Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

Name: *Mark Corkins*

What congregation are you a member at?

Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church, Saginaw, MI

Describe the type of training you received for doing outreach. (Formal, informal)

I went out with Pastor and we did three visits together. I was comfortable with the training he gave me. I am a trainer at work, teaching computer skills to the participants and I am very comfortable speaking to people.

Would you consider the type of training you received to be mentoring?

Yes, because I have trained other people to do this job too along with fielding questions from Team members.

Do you continue to receive training or support from this person(s)?

Yes.

Still thinking of outreach. Do you receive training or support from others within your congregation who are not on your outreach committee/team? (If so, please explain).

Yes. I report out to council, and quarterly meeting to the congregation, on Evangelism and Visitation Team visits.

How has your training for outreach (formal or informal) helped you in situations where you are doing outreach? Comment on the following. . .

Door-to-door

Events (such as an outreach booth at a community festival)

Spontaneous outreach opportunities in the neighborhood or community

Other(s)

I would like to comment here for the above points. It is easy for some people to meet someone and talk about the weather, social events, or other general events. But, it takes a special someone to talk about their Lord to people. I believe that Visitation Teams and Evangelism has helped me do that. By actually doing Visits, I am more confident in speaking about Jesus and what the Lord has done for me and my family.

Brainstorm. What benefits do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

There are more members available than called workers. Called workers always have a lot of duties and never enough time. By using members to Greet visitors on Sunday and Outreaching within the community, it allows them to help with church duties and to be part of a church, not someone who is in the church door and out the door in an hour attending service.

What risks do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

None. Is the President of a church, an Evangelism Chair or even an Elder a "Called Worker". Some say "yes", and some would say "no". Being asked to perform duties at/for your church is being called. Correct? A member being ask to perform a job duty is a little "nerve wracking" at first and confidence will come in time. But taking that first step is really the hardest thing to do.

Church members working for their Lord must be confident in what they are doing, what to say and how to say it. This can be done with a little instruction. It is okay to be nervous talking. But, to me, hearing someone talk about Jesus and what their Lord has done for them can warm many hearts. It is great to hear someone talk about their Lord. If tasks were only performed by a called worker then a lot of tasks would not be done, period.

Outreach Teams should only be done by church members. Pastors come and go within churches but, if members don't speak to each other and interact with themselves and new visitors, then you only have a place where the Lord is spoken about. Nothing else. Bethany is a wonderful church! It is great, not only because for Pastor, but because of the members of Bethany and how we interact with each other.

Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

Ben, I pray that you can see here what I feel at Bethany. My family had intentions of staying at Bethany for 4 years while our son attended Michigan Lutheran Seminary (MLS). Now, we are staying here. If we happen to move back to our original home, that

we still own and commute 50 miles to church each week. We will. It is wonderful here. This is our home.

Name: *Mark Drezdon*

What congregation are you a member at?

My name is Mark Drezdon and I am a member at Divine Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Garland, TX. As a bit of background, I was born/raised Roman Catholic and lived in the Milwaukee area most of my life. I moved to TX almost 3 years ago and my wife and I became members at DPLC about 2 years ago. I am currently serving as the Board of Evangelism Chair.

Describe the type of training you received for doing outreach. (Formal, informal)

When I accepted the offer to be a member on the Board of Evangelism, I immediately volunteered to be the Chair of the Board. I have been blessed with an extroverted personality, comfort in any speaking situation, and wanted to make a difference for souls looking for our Savior. I think Pastor saw the potential and suggested I go on calls with him

The first time we went out, Pastor showed me his “technique” and methods for making people comfortable when they answer the door – for example, taking a step back after knocking on the door and not crowding the space so it seems like I’m trying to force the issue or get in the door. The second time we went out Pastor took most of the people that answered the door, with me speaking up when appropriate (for example, when someone said they were raised Catholic and hadn’t been to church for a while – perfect queue for me!). I tried a few and I think was getting the hang of it. By the 3rd time, I was pretty comfortable, so thereafter, we started splitting up here and there. (It is more fun going with someone, especially Pastor Hering, but more efficient going separately to cover more leads.)

“Informal” training for outreach – these contributed to helping my comfort level in speaking to “strangers”:

- *Speech classes in high school*
- *Playing in bands through high school and college (solos, directing, etc.)*
- *Professional recruiter training (learning how to conduct an interview)*
- *Teaching at the college level – lots!*
- *Public speaking at professional conferences*

Would you consider the type of training you received to be mentoring?

In the case of Pastor’s training, yes. His example, followed up by explanations as to why he handled certain situations the way he did (e.g. answering certain questions a particular way) was definitely mentoring. Also learning some of the questions he would ask people in certain situations really helped a lot.

Do you continue to receive training or support from this person(s)?

Yes – we go on calls together maybe once every 6 – 8 weeks when we want to kill 2 birds with one stone and make Evangelism plans for the congregation, and I always learn something from Pastor.

Still thinking of outreach. Do you receive training or support from others within your congregation who are not on your outreach committee/team? (If so, please explain)

Training, no. Support, we have 2 or 3 members who have helped going on calls, but very seldom.

How has your training for outreach (formal or informal) helped you in situations where you are doing outreach? Comment on the following. . .

Door-to-door

Pastor's training has been effective in being able to handle most situations with comfort.

Events (such as an outreach booth at a community festival)

We just completed an outreach festival at our church where my wife and I ran a game for kids. No problem, though I'm pretty good with kids anyhow!

Spontaneous outreach opportunities in the neighborhood or community

Again, Pastor's training has made it easy to handle any situation.

Other(s)

I have talked to people in my workplace (carefully since this can become an issue in today's environment) about our Savior with ease (and not getting myself in trouble).

Brainstorm. What benefits do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

First, I really think that having a called worker needs to be part of the training, especially early on. That said, I have gone out once with another member with limited experience, but she had gone with Pastor previously. I think she felt comfortable asking why I did things the way I did (and I often referenced Pastor's training), and I think it gave her confidence to do some talking seeing another member handling calls. So, I think after a member has had a series of calls with a called worker, an experienced member can continue the mentoring process. This can allow the called worker to get more members involved quicker. (Yes, the called worker could take 3-4 members on calls at once, but then the people being called on would be a bit intimidated by a gaggle of people showing up – 2 is enough!)

What risks do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

Members relying solely on other members might get the message wrong, or misstep on a difficult call when something is said that is not expected. Even after doing calls for a couple years now, that is the only fear that I have, but I trust the Holy Spirit will give me

the right words. And I know I have Pastor's advice and example to follow. Every time I go out with him I learn something, and I can say that no one else in our congregation – not even our best, most experienced Elders, which are very good – could give me the training that Pastor has given me.

Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

Outreach is very rewarding, and I can't imagine not doing it!

Best wishes and God's blessings

Name: *Pastor Scott Oelhafen*

What congregation are you a member at?

Trinity Lutheran Church, Waukesha, WI

Describe the type of training you received for doing outreach. (Formal, informal)

Formal at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Would you consider the type of training you received to be mentoring?

Somewhat

Do you continue to receive training or support from this person(s)?

Yes

Still thinking of outreach. Do you receive training or support from others within your congregation who are not on your outreach committee/team? (If so, please explain)

Yes, I believe, at times, our leaders give training and support by modeling outreach.

How has your training for outreach (formal or informal) helped you in situations where you are doing outreach? Comment on the following. . .

Door-to-door

It's good to role-play with the professor/students/outreach committee before we go out so we are not surprised.

Events (such as an outreach booth at a community festival)

Our training has helped us so we don't have to reinvent the wheel and talk beforehand what others have done so we can include the "best of others' experience" to make us more effective.

Spontaneous outreach opportunities in the neighborhood or community

I believe God gives us mentors so that we can be more prepared to give an answer for the hope we have.

Other(s)

Brainstorm. What benefits do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

Members helping members is better because it's not an "authority" figure—see it as peer-teaching. It's gratifying to see others sharing Jesus and helping to prepare each other.

What risks do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

When members mentor members, sometimes, Gospel-motivation is lost or unrealistic expectations are given, depending on the personality of the mentor.

Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

Name: *Doug Anderson*

What congregation are you a member at?

St. Bartholomew Lutheran Church, Kawkawlin, MI

Describe the type of training you received for doing outreach. (Formal, informal)

Formal and informal

Would you consider the type of training you received to be mentoring?

No

Do you continue to receive training or support from this person(s)?

No

Still thinking of outreach. Do you receive training or support from others within your congregation who are not on your outreach committee/team? (If so, please explain)

No

How has your training for outreach (formal or informal) helped you in situations where you are doing outreach? Comment on the following. . .

Door-to-door

Not applicable

Events (such as an outreach booth at a community festival)

Yes, we have had two floats in the Auburn Parade. We felt comfortable handing out literature

Spontaneous outreach opportunities in the neighborhood or community

No spontaneous events

Other(s)

Yes, Easter and Christmas for children. Outreach to community and inreach with in congregation.

Brainstorm. What benefits do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

I feel coming from member to member they hear a different view and message. We expect to hear a message from our Pastor's. Member to member allows us to work amongst ourselves to learn and grow.

What risks do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

Incorrect information. We always have a Pastor at a meeting or function.

Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

I believe the outreach program we have started has allowed us to in reach within our congregation and outreach to the community. Small progress is good. It is hard to keep people interested in the outreach process. We enjoy our outreach program. Feel free to contact me with any other questions.

Name: *Randall Rathje*

What congregation are you a member at?

Bethany Lutheran, Saginaw Mich.

Describe the type of training you received for doing outreach. (Formal, informal)

I am proud to be a Northwestern Alumnus, and WLS. Served three years at our cong. in Indianapolis, and then twenty years at Mich Luth Seminary. I finished my working career in the public school system. While at Indianapolis, I attended a conference based upon the work of James Kennedy, "Talk about the Savior". Not any informal training to speak off but I must say that I have learned a few things from Pastor Nitz re: the work of evangelism.

Would you consider the type of training you received to be mentoring?

In a sense. Nitz leads the way, but I don't believe that you would call it mentoring.

Do you continue to receive training or support from this person(s)?

Yes, in the form of encouragement and new (to us) ideas about outreach.

Still thinking of outreach. Do you receive training or support from others within your congregation who are not on your outreach committee/team? (If so, please explain)

No.

How has your training for outreach (formal or informal) helped you in situations where you are doing outreach? Comment on the following. . .

Door-to-door

Events (such as an outreach booth at a community festival)

Spontaneous outreach opportunities in the neighborhood or community

Other(s)

I thought that the Kennedy training was valuable in that it gave me an outline to talk to somebody in various situations. To be sure, Kennedy was of a Calvinist background, but those things could be tweaked out as ours did in their publication based upon his material. I've used it in making follow up calls, talking with friends and acquaintances, etc. I have been very impressed with the contacts that we have made through the various "events" that take place here at Bethany e.g. soccer camp (I even support it in spite of the fact that I am an old football coach and consider soccer to be a communist plot)

Brainstorm. What benefits do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

Depends upon what you mean by mentoring. I think that the formal training, i.e. training one to present the Gospel with an outline if that is what one chooses to do, should be left in the hands of the Pastor. If, however, mentoring is you going out with me on calls and observing and then gradually participating with the lead member and then making the presentation with the lead members support, that could be a good thing. The benefit, of course, is the sense of ownership that this instills in the participants. We all are one in mission, as an old hymn states, and that is enhanced by member/member participation. I would favor the pastor mentoring one member and then when that member becomes competent (not just confident) then his mentee (don't know if there is such a word) can become a mentor and the pastor can begin the cycle with another, etc.

What risks do you see involved if members mentored members for outreach (as opposed to called workers mentoring members)?

I am constantly amazed by the lack of depth that many have. Even the best can easily fall into legalistic approaches (that, of course, is our nature) The pastor can't just say, "Well, how did it go?" I believe that an evangelism night should be established and that the teams should then return to church for a formal debriefing. In that way the pastor could monitor and hopefully correct (in a nice way) any problems that he sees arising.

Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

Pastor Nitz has done an excellent job in training his members at various aspects of outreach. Greeters have been established and they have been trained to function in such a way as to not merely smile and say good morning, but speak to a visitor, perhaps find out some information that he can pass on to pastor, point out where things are in church, invite them to post service refreshments, etc. That and the events are an excellent way to get people involved in the work of the church. I may not be able to or want to make visits, but I can pass out water at the soccer camp. Events just don't happen; they take training. We have meetings before an event; meetings meaning talking and talking allows the participants to realize that even in the smallest of jobs they are an important part in the work of the church.