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The Use Of Information And Communication Technologies To Educate Laity: A Case Study

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THE USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES TO
EDUCATE LAITY: A CASE STUDY

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the Morgridge College of Education

University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

by

B. Mark Francis

November 2011

Advisor: Nicholas Cutforth Ph.D.

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ABSTRACT

Technology-based education is learning primarily based in constructivist styled pedagogies. It is neither good nor bad; its value is inherent to the user and environment where it is placed. While some churches place a high value on the benefits gleaned from its use, others abhor it in religious education.

Why churches incorporate or reject technology-based education is a phenomenon that baffles most educators because the logic invoked is neither sound nor empirical. Either way, technology continues to evolve in education circles beyond the walls of the local church. In order to preserve the historical traditions and the distinctive cultures of their organizations, many churches have refrained from using information and communication technologies for educational purposes. Instead, technology is relegated to office functions and sermon preparation practices. However, through the provisioning of grants, restructuring of budgets, and the generosity of alumni, theological schools have implemented information and communication technologies to expand their reach into religious education markets. In religious education, a divide exists between leaders and laity regarding educational development. Education for clergy adheres to guidelines prescribed by their respective religious bodies; however, lay education is local, traditionally non-formal, synchronous, and unregulated.

Traditionally, pastors consign ecclesiastical ministry to laity similar to the way parents relegate care giving to the eldest child. The primary considerations prior to

prescribing responsibility are spiritual maturity, time served, and potential. Formal training and prior participation in the ministry are additional factors. In terms of educational development, clergy and laity differ in information and communication technologies use.

This research seeks to understand and report the manner in which information and communication technologies (ICT) are used within a local church. This report is a review of the qualitative data on the education offered and the pedagogical practices of ICT used in teaching and development of laity.

Acknowledgements

Education is a journey, it does not matter how many stop/starts, restarts, or do-overs happen, and all that matters is that you finish. To this end, this work represents the completion of a leg on my educational journey.

Success rarely happens in isolation. There were several groups of individuals who have played a significant role in aiding me along this path and I would like to formally acknowledge them; they are my colleagues, my family and my God.

To my colleagues, I thank you for your comradeship over the many years. The kindness that you have shown me has forged a friendship that will last into eternity. I will never forget the many drinks, tears, complaints, and yes, the times at Spanky's that we have shared together. May your knowledge and wisdom shine as lights among those you encounter; may your leaves of kindness never wither, and the works of your hands continue to prosper and be blessed in all you say and do.

To my family and friends, I thank you for your unfailing love, encouragement, and support of my efforts during this season of change. During my times of great need, you did not abandon me; rather, you embraced me during my struggles, shared my pain, and helped me to keep moving forward in spite of the obstacles life presented. I thank you now and always for "being there" for me.

Last but never least I am eternally grateful to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. You know my uprising and my down sitting; I am but a flower in a field of grass whose time is but for a moment. I thank you for helping to make the moments I have had thus far a great one. Great is thy faithfulness, O Lord unto me.

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction	1
An Introduction to the Study	1
About the researcher	3
The Laity	3
Lay education.	4
The Setting for this Study	8
Purpose of the Study and Research Questions	8
Justification for the Study	9
Definition of Terms	10
Literature Review	11
The purpose of lay education	11
Introduction of ICT in theological education	16
ICT in school settings	18
Implementation of ICT in religious education	20
Location and access	24
ICT influencers	24
ICT implementation impacted by support	29
Statement of the problem.....	30
Chapter Two: Method.....	31
Research Questions.	31
Qualitative Research and Case Study.....	32
Data Collection.	35
Research setting.....	35
Participants.	36
Interviews	37
Observations.	38
Data Analysis.....	38
Conclusion.	40
Chapter Three: Results	41
Lay Education Learning Environments and Learning Contexts	41
Paprika Baptist Church.....	41
Lay Education Learning Contexts.	44
A Day of Worship.	46
An Evening of Fellowship.....	52
Chapter Four: Findings.....	57
Introduction	57
Moral Development.....	59
Discipleship Development.....	61
Ecclesia Preparation.	62

Educational Purposes.....	63
Learning Experiences	69
Obstacles and Opportunities	77
Obstacles.....	77
Opportunities.	80
Evaluation.....	81
Summary.....	86
Chapter Five: Summary.....	91
Introduction	91
Implications	94
Post Study Impact.....	98
References	100
Appendices	103
Appendix A	103
Interview Protocol	103
Appendix B.....	105
Informed Consent Form (for research participants)	105
Appendix C.....	107
Ph. D Project Consent Form.....	107
Appendix D	109
Observation Protocol.....	109

Chapter One: Introduction

An Introduction to the Study

How can you really measure what a person is really getting and feeling in their heart? Maybe learning is something that should be more personal. It just depends, I think, on the class and on the instructor and with their outcome. We [*the church*] are just trying to help people to grow and to strive to make sure the resources are offered for them to get that.

Pepper Johnson, Paprika Baptist Church member

I recently came back from Bangkok, Thailand, where I joined a group of missionaries to help a tribe of Burmese refugees lay a pipeline from the local river to their village. The purpose of the pipeline was to bring clean water to the village inhabitants. During this trip, I visited many churches, temples, and houses of worship. As I wandered their streets gazing at their national landmarks, I received visual verification of my multiple Google searches regarding their religious practices. While enjoying fellowship with the villagers, we ate as one people and not as individuals. When it came time to share the Gospel message, we had no technology to speak of, so we did the best with what we had: a Bible and a testimony. Each morning, I awoke to the crowing of a rooster and the rumblings that come with a raised bamboo hut filled with people getting ready to start the day. As the children prepared for school and dressed in their uniforms, I knew they would soon arrive at a building unlike the hut in which they slept. Their school buildings were in the city, filled with the latest trappings of constructivist pedagogical tools, boasting overhead projectors, electronic message boards, and computers.

The dichotomy of village life versus the technological world their children are immersed in at school weekly is readily accepted. I wondered why these people would tolerate the lack of technology when teaching the Gospel message and impose another standard within the traditional education used for their children. Reflecting on my own upbringing, I recalled that in America we tolerate a 45-60 minute lecture every Sunday morning and call it inspirational; however, in the K-12 educational classroom, we demand interactive stimuli. We attend colleges and trade courses where we are taught in classrooms, yet, on Sunday we devoutly attend places of worship where a foyer is the classroom. I see this contrast whenever I visit churches across the globe.

I have worshipped in jungles, cities, and rural areas from the Far East to England, and I see similar situations wherever I go. Therefore, I chose to perform an observational study of a church, in the Rocky Mountain Region of the United States of America, to see if there could be a difference on a local level.

I am a licensed and ordained minister, with over 22 years of ministry experience on several continents. My philosophy of ministry can be summarized on one word, alignment. Over many years I have sought to provide guidance and instructional tools that aligns the people of the church with the vision of the church and aligns the parishioners with the overall plan of God. It is my belief that curricula should allow for contextual extraction of revelation from the Holy Scriptures. I believe there is no Biblical precedent stating a specific level of learning for parishioners and another for ordained clergy. All knowledge contained in the scriptures is for the benefit of mankind and no one person or group has exclusive right to any level of learning.

So I present to you this study, a glimpse of how information communication technology (ICT) is used to teach and educate laity in a church environment. This is the story of a church daring to challenge the dual standards for ICT use in education. Within these pages I strive to highlight the efforts of a local body of believers and their journey to use ICT for lay education. I examine their efforts and compare them to secular education. As you read, I hope you see what I have experienced, a wonderful group of Christians using the resources they have to minister education to those they serve.

About the researcher

During the time of the research I was an active member of Paprika Baptist Church. I served as an Associate Minister. My duties included teaching, supervision of laity, and some pastoral duties such as ministry to the sick, elderly, and those who are home bound. In an effort to separate myself from the environment, I took an extended leave of absence and relinquished all of my church responsibilities for the entire length of the study. I attended a variety of different churches for four weeks prior to beginning the study so that I could train my eye to observe other teaching models and practices. The topic of this study is very personal to me. I am concerned about the plight of lay educators who are not supported with the education and training necessary to be successful in their role as Christian leaders.

The Laity

Lay members are the learners within church communities. They are the mothers, fathers, colleagues, and strangers who, when gathered together in a church or parish, form a group called laity. By definition, they are the members of a church or parish not serving as clergy. They are also known as the ecclesia. Their formal or secular

educational level varies, as some are highly educated within their professions while others are not. However, the common characteristic of laity is a desire to grow spiritually and develop their knowledge of the Bible.

Lay education.

The definition of lay education varies by denomination or religious affiliation. In some churches it means providing the members with the education needed for living a moral life; in others it is described as the teaching of the mission of the church. Additionally, it means the teaching of values that Jesus instilled in his disciples.

Lay education is the primary educational program offered in North American and Jewish congregations today (English, MacDonald & Connelly, 2006). It has been called lay formation and adult ministry education. At Paprika Baptist Church lay education is called adult education. The traditional purpose of lay education is the spiritual formation of the ecclesia (Delamarter, 2004). Lay education and development is the localized, non-formal instruction used to teach laity the fundamentals of Christianity (Fleischer, 2006). Lay education is intellectual inquiry and spiritual formation. Intellectual inquiry teaches principles requiring a mental change to behavior, while spiritual formation involves the transformation of self for a greater moral purpose. Lay education includes formal aspects of curriculum, technology, and pedagogy. Spiritual formation on the other hand is independent of Biblical curriculum as it can occur outside of the learning environment. Thus, the teaching of spiritual formation is based on a faith, which functions independently from the curriculum.

But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Corinthians 12:14 KJV)

Religious education researchers and Biblical commentators have long believed that without faith spiritual formation-based learning cannot take place (Schultze, 2004).

Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. (1 Corinthians 1:20-21 KJV)

The word “preaching” here refers to the proclaimed sermon messages typically heard on Sunday mornings across America and not lecture-based teaching strategies

The provision of professional development for lay educators is often an afterthought. Churches are built out of a need to serve a particular demographic. As such, their core ministerial objectives (e.g., salvation of the lost, outreach to the needy, encouraging the discouraged, and ministering to the sick) can overshadow professional development for laity, which often occurs on the job. To their credit, lay educators work hard despite the obstacles they face (e.g., often no pay, inadequate technology training, and facilities not conducive to learning).

Theological schools educate pastors and priests to practice ministry and to instill wisdom to the masses, encourage the hopeless, and provide knowledge about Christ to the ecclesia. The discipline of seminary incorporates stringent curriculum to develop leaders who can educate laity in the lessons of their faith.

¹¹And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; ¹²For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: ¹³Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the [fullness] of Christ: ¹⁴That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive... (Ephesians 4:11-14 KJV)

The preceding quote emphasizes that the purpose of leadership is to educate, train, and develop the laity. The passage serves as a Biblical foundation for the objectives of lay education. Gifts were given to collectively serve humanity, of which a portion includes the education and training of laity. Lay education and training is crucial to the development of the ecclesia, whose strength lies in unity of a common faith and belief in an eternal God.

However, most pastors agree that the importance of lay education is to promulgate the message of Christ. After all, laity integrates what they learn weekly into their lives and they, hopefully, represent what it means to be a Christian in their communities and places of work. They do this while providing the valuable resources such as time, talent, and finances necessary to keep their churches alive.

Lay education learning environments.

Classroom characteristics in church settings vary. In a traditional school environment, a classroom is an enclosed space with designated areas for the teacher and students to explore learning. Students inhabit an environment with enough space and a neat appearance. In progressive educational settings, the classroom sets an explorative tone conducive to constructivist views. In a religious environment, the work of teaching and developing laity occurs in classrooms within the holy edifices called churches. A church is designed for holy worship of a deity and undertakes educational enrichment for the parishioners. Thus, classrooms in mainstream churches are different from school classrooms. Classrooms in religious settings are often based upon shifting needs; therefore, they are not permanent. Most church congregations in America are under 200 members, so classrooms often do not have desks, whiteboards, projectors, speakers, or

screens. Their wall décor ranges from posters related to salvation and scriptural passages like the beatitudes, to notices of past and upcoming meetings. In religious settings, a classroom is a room or a temporary space where laity are taught. However, a learning context is more than a room. It incorporates the mindset of the laity towards the environment and the learning outcomes, which occur.

Location, audience, and course outcomes affect the concept of a classroom. As an example, in some Baptist churches, lay education is commonly perceived as an informal activity that teaches and educates parishioners. Contrastingly, in a seminary, the theological courses are rigorous and conducted in a traditional learning setting. Though the content may be similar (e.g., Old Testament history or homiletics), the location and audience influence the perception of rigor in a course. In a seminary environment, the course is educating those “called” to ministry, in lay education the course educates those who are called to impact their local world. Therefore in a church, a classroom is viewed as a space available to teach in. In a seminary, a classroom is a formal space where students are educated.

One purpose in undertaking this study was to discover how technology is being incorporated into the education of laity in a church setting. Recently there have been major shifts in the education and development of clergy influenced by the use of information and communication technologies. However, there is little information on whether these improvements have extended to the educational development of laity. Both clergy and laity groups use the same text as the tool for lifelong learning and development, yet their approach to education differs. Clergy attend schools of higher education, which have been modernized to reflect contemporary technological changes,

including course offerings in distance education and on-line classes. However, lay education is relegated to clergy and their designees, who may or may not be theologically or technologically trained.

The Setting for this Study

This study was conducted at Paprika Baptist Church, an inner-city church serving approximately 800 congregants in a western state in the United States of America. The church's primary emphasis is the spiritual formation of the congregants and the support of global missions. The bulk of ministerial efforts are educational and Paprika Baptist Church intentionally supports the advancement of their ministry to teach and educate laity in foreign countries. It does so both directly through its support of missionary work and indirectly through organizational support from the American Baptist Church of the Rocky Mountain Region (ABCRM).

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to describe and interpret the use of information communication technology (ICT) in a religious environment, in order to understand its impact on the education of the congregational members and visitors. The questions serve as guiding questions for this study.

1. What educational goals does the local church seek to attain and what experiences are provided through ICT to achieve these purposes?
2. How do the learning experiences achieve those objectives and how are they organized for effective instruction?
3. What obstacles and opportunities are present in the use of ICT?
4. How does the local ecclesia evaluate the effectiveness of the learning experiences?
5. What are the implications of the present study for the church and lay education?

Using Tyler's (1969) curriculum questions as a lens for understanding Paprika Baptist Church's approach to incorporating technology into religious education, this

research seeks to understand how ICT educates laity in the local setting. Ralph Tyler's approach to curriculum and instruction serves as a basis for interpreting an educational program, whether religious or not. To conduct this study, I observed lay education to describe and interpret the educational environment. In addition, I conducted interviews with ministers, lay leaders, and deacons to gain a perspective of their experience, views on education, teaching modality, and ICT usage.

Justification for the Study

There is a dearth of social science research about the Christian community in relation to laity or lay education. Existing research consists of non-peer reviewed journal articles written by leaders of the various faiths, focused on leadership issues. Lay education is unregulated, undocumented, and untracked by the Baptist denomination and has not been rigorously studied by researchers. Theological journals such the *Journal of Adult Theological Education* and *Theological Education* are primarily focused on clergy education in institutions or rural countries. James Michael Lee (1973) suggests that the reason for this dearth of research within the religious environment is because the church (defined as the formal religious bodies and their leaders) advanced the argument that the spiritual dimensions of teaching and learning are inaccessible to scientific investigation or that the social science approach is somehow inadequate for religious teaching. Lee claimed:

Theology cannot tell us the most effective way to split the atom or how to best write poetry or how to teach religion. These are jobs for physical science and literary science and social science respectively. In a kind of resistance to the social science approach, some religious educators advance the fallacious argument that the religious dimensions of teaching and learning are inaccessible to scientific investigation, and that the social science approach is therefore inadequate for religion teaching (Lee p.295).

Lee's concern was that Biblical leaders were claiming that using scientific methods could not assess the spiritual formation process. His point was that if spiritual formation could not be assessed, then how can one claim it exists or evaluate its progress?

Some Christian academic leaders view the schism between the religious and scientific community as a recent phenomenon. According to Nelson (2006), the sciences began as an integrated school of thought where there was no division between science and religion, as they were perceived as an interwoven body of knowledge. Regardless of how the separation of these two factions within the education field occurred, it has resulted in a famine of peer-reviewed research, and a consequent lack of educational development for the common parishioner. This study is one effort to examine this state of affairs by seeking to understand how ICT is used to educate laity.

Definition of Terms

- Lay, Laity: the body of religious worshipers, as distinguished from the Clergy. The people outside of a particular profession, as distinguished from those belonging to it.
- Parishioner: one of the community or inhabitants of a parish. The members of a church are commonly referred to as parishioners as an alternative way of saying laity.
- Ecclesia, Ecclesiastical Community: a congregation; a church.
- Pastor,*¹: a minister or priest in charge of a church, a person having spiritual care of a number of persons. This is the standard title for the senior leader in the Baptist faith.

¹ These terms are used interchangeably within the context of this study to refer to those individuals or group of individuals whose purpose and office reflects the oversight of a local body of parishioners. Religious instruction is a form of pastoral work and not a branch of theological instruction (Lee, 1973 pp. 20-21). Definitions from Website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/>.

- Deacon: (in some Protestant churches) a lay officer appointed to assist a minister, esp. in secular affairs.
- Associate Minister/Minister:)a member of the clergy, esp. in Protestant churches. Within this study the Associate Minister or Minister are assistants to the Pastor who serve as senior religious educators.
- Priest,^{*2}: a person ordained to the sacerdotal or pastoral office; a member of the clergy; minister. In hierarchical churches: a member of the clergy of the order next below that of bishop, authorized to carry out the Christian ministry. A minister of any religion.
- Clergy,*: the group or body of ordained persons in a religion, as distinguished from the laity.
- Mores: the accepted traditional customs and usages of a particular social group. Within the context of this study, refers to those traditions that parishioners follow as they seek to protect their moral standards of Christianity.

Literature Review

The purpose of lay education

Lay education using ICT requires acknowledging the multiple dimensions that comprise spiritual formation (Gross, 2006). In K-12 education, a teacher groups students according to their learning needs (Cheng & Mok, 2008) and tests are used to measure student performance against pre-established benchmarks or standards. In lay education a teacher does not have the resources to accurately gauge the spiritual maturity of laity, nor is this the primary goal of lay education. Therefore, the teacher does not measure the “spiritual transformation” of those in the classroom. However, he or she assumes a level of student commitment to daily reading and studying of the Bible based upon scriptural principles. Unless he or she has prior training in education pedagogy, the lay educator is unable to

² These terms are used interchangeably within the context of this study to refer to those individuals or group of individuals whose purpose and office reflects the oversight of a local body of parishioners. Religious instruction is a form of pastoral work and not a branch of theological instruction (Lee, 1973 pp. 20-21). Definitions from Website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/>.

measure spiritual growth or the attainment of religious principles. In lay education, students are grouped by their desire to take the class rather than prior academic accomplishment. Traditional groupings are by gender and age (e.g., youth, children, men, and women). There are no special education classes, special needs students, or advanced designations for learners. Each group consists of a blend of learning styles, abilities, views, and beliefs that pose a challenge for any teacher, even those with training. Lay education is “open to all who will come,” so each class has multiple religious or secular viewpoints.

Responsibility for the training and development of laity.

Within the Baptist faith, the roles of Pastor and Deacon are the only two church positions officially recognized. The Pastor is the official head of the church and bears full responsibility for the care and spiritual maturation of those under his/her care. The Deacons are the servants who assist in getting the pastoral job done. Their duty title is “whatever is needed” as their duties vary. The relationship is similar to a CEO and a “working” board of directors. Other offices are unofficially recognized such as Bishop or Evangelist but these do not have a formal role within Baptist doctrine.

The ecclesia recognizes all ministerial roles mentioned in the Bible such as Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, Teacher Bishop, and Elder.

Apostle – A sent one, a person who establishes churches, foundationally and orderly so that others can take over from where he/she left off. This office functions similar to an entrepreneur who begins a business with the intention of selling it off to investors. However, in this case there is no material profit gained and the investors are the local parishioners. “For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, *you are* God’s building. According to the grace of God, which was given to me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.” (1 Cor. 3:9-10 NKJV).

Prophet – One who sees into God’s plans and Word; a provider of specific vision to the people. “And Samuel answered Saul, and said, I *am* the seer: go up before me unto the high place; for ye shall eat with me to day, and to morrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that *is* in thine heart.” (1 Samuel 9:19 KJV)

Evangelist – proclaims the good news, wins the lost, and heals the sick. Think of the evangelist as a rake and the lost are leaves. He/she gathers the lost for the sole purpose of sharing the good news (Eph. 4:11; 2Tim. 4:5)

Pastor – a local Sheppard leading a specific group of laity towards an ordained vision plan or mission. A Pastor is similar to a CEO. He/she only runs one company and remains responsible for them until succeeded by someone else. “Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare *it* in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd *doth* his flock.” (Jer. 31:10 NKJV).

Teacher - one who accurately interprets Biblical doctrine applies it to himself/herself then demonstrates to others how to do the same. “An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law. You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say do not commit adultery do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?” (Rom. 2:20-22 NKJV).

Bishop – a senior member of the ecclesia whose primary functions are outside of the local church. “This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that rules well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil” (1Tim.3: 1-7)

Elder – an individual within the ecclesia who is of age who has proven prudence regarding doctrinal issues. “And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed” (Act 14:23)

The emphasis in Ephesians 4:11 is that no gift, office, or cleric role serves alone in the development of the ecclesia. Each gift brings a unique slant and understanding of the Biblical message that aids in the development of all laity. The comparison between using multiple offices of clergy to teach laity is analogous to the relationship between using multiple modalities to educate laity. Just as no one education theory explains the development of laity, no singular ministry, denomination, or parish has a cornerstone on

educating laity. The educational learning theory used for laity is dependent upon the local congregation, its purpose, mission, and vision. “A theory both explains and predicts theological practice. It enables a religion teacher to discover why this particular pedagogical practice produces one kind of learning rather than another” (Lee, 1971, p. 149).

Traditional theological education pedagogy.

Theological education is either formal or informal. In the formal sense, it consists of a full immersion in a multi-year residential program. In such a program, senior members of the religious community use lecture-based teaching practices in face-to-face discourse to mold the younger members in theological thought and reflection. The students learn to research and reflect upon doctrinal challenges they will encounter as they begin in ministry.

In theological education the classical model for ministerial preparation is full immersion in a residential program where senior members of the religious faith instruct novice students using lecture-based pedagogies that challenge them to develop the art of theological reflection through research, writing, and storytelling (Delamarter, 2004). In 2008, there were 77,861 students enrolled in 190 American Theological Society (ATS) schools in the United States and Canada, of which 35 schools accounted for over half of all enrollments (Delamarter, 2004). The majority of these schools are located in densely populated areas.

In traditional church circles, these methodologies are so entrenched that when religious leaders consider a lay education model this view serves as a foundation. Thus,

lay education typically becomes a “watered down” version of this traditional view (Delamarter, 2004).

Adult education.

One research model, views lay education delivery as a universal experience enjoined by a body of learners embedded within a spiritual environment (Fleischer, 2006). In this model, the local ecclesia does not have an educational program. Instead, its educational program is embedded in all facets of the local church including the signage, décor, worship, classroom, and sermon. (Harris, 1989; Fleischer, 2006). The church signage informs the visitor of the church’s activities through an electronic screen. A website provides additional information on the calendar, informing the reader about the church’s history, people and educational programs. Finally, the classroom teaching or sermon preaching proclaim what is important for the congregants to learn or understand. Therefore, through the process of observation one can discover what a church is teaching.

In lay education, the teacher faces a multidimensional learner with varying levels of spiritual education that have been forged over time. Because students are not measured for their spiritual aptitude beforehand, it is difficult for teachers to differentiate the lessons to meet the educational demands of the class. Teachers then, have no objective tool to address the state of spiritual maturity (Gross, 2006). While some learners possess extensive doctrinal education, others are newer students with a limited knowledge of scriptural passages. Therefore, the process of evaluating the educational aptitude of the student ranges from observation to probing questions. However, this does not diminish the teacher’s ability to accurately convey the lesson. Though lay education teachers are a volunteer force, they have teaching standards similar to their scholarly trained

counterparts and through training they can learn the art of scholarly teaching (Gaeddert, 2002).

In a letter to the Hebrew nation, the writer rebukes the local leadership for not using pedagogical practices that would have matured the lay congregation at the time. The author writes, “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat” (Hebrews 5:12). This scripture states that there is an expectation to progress in spiritual education over a period of time and that there are certain principles that should be learned. However, among researchers, today, there is consensus that spiritual growth is a personal process that cannot be standardized by teaching and religious education because there is not an evaluative tool that transcends denominational lines (Hull, 2003).

Because not all pastors attend seminary, or choose a formal pathway to the pulpit, there must be accommodation to address the life experiences each person brings to ordination for Biblical service. A Biblical example is Jesus’s disciples who were not formally educated as Jewish rabbis prior to discipleship, but learned vocationally. In a similar fashion, some Pastors follow varied paths to the pulpit just as parishioners follow varied paths to the position of lay teacher.

Introduction of ICT in theological education

Research addressing ICT usage and lay education is scarce for a number of reasons. ICT research in ecclesiastical communities predominately emphasizes seminary or formal education conducted at an institution (Delamarter, 2004). Lay education and development is typically a localized, non-formal form of instruction used to teach laity

the fundamentals of Christendom (Fleischer, 2006). Due to denominational and doctrinal differences, the definition of education varies within each church or parish. Furthermore, the governing bodies establish lay education standards. In her book, *Engaging Technology in Theological Education: All That We Can't Leave Behind*, Mary Hess (2005) argues for the expansion of media and ICT in the use of theological education. She asserts that educators must meet the students at their level of learning and that theological institutions should recognize that today's audiences differ from the ones in which the educators may have been raised. She uses the term "future congregant" as a way of forward thinking about the congregations we *will* have versus the ones currently in the pews. As theological schools of higher education prepare future teachers, they will need to address training for future parishioners.

The classical model used for lay education development is derived from the scriptural letter written to the Church of Ephesus (Eph. 4:11-13) and the general Epistle of Peter (Nicolas, 2003).

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers: For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11)

From a Biblical perspective, the pastoral offices and others listed in the preceding quote have a greater responsibility for ensuring the growth and maturity of the parishioners under their care. Since 2000, several technological programs have been introduced in seminaries for the purposes of educating pastors to teach in the churches in which they serve. However, there have been no studies of mass implementations of ICT in religious communities.

ICT in school settings

Information and communication technologies (ICT) are a mixture of multimedia-based resources used to teach the educational curriculum of an instructor or institution. In the past, it was believed that, once ICT was available, implementation would immediately follow. However, the key to successful ICT implementation in the classroom is the teacher (Lim & Khine, 2006). A classroom is first and foremost a place where learning occurs. Meeks (2004) defined pedagogy as the tools used by the teacher and student as they interact with each other in an environment to accomplish curriculum. Pedagogy, then, is the driving force, and technology is the tool used by the skilled teacher to accomplish learning. Therefore, it doesn't matter whether the classroom is a computer laboratory or a standard classroom with table and chairs, the difference in ICT-based teaching is the tools that are used.

Information and communication technologies add to the pedagogical process, they do not create it. Without successful classroom management strategies no technological implementation will succeed (McGrail 2007). In the past, teachers have been forced to accept technology within their classrooms without receiving the proper training or professional development (Cuban, 2001). Training and professional development are critical factors when predicting if teachers will adopt technological change (Sahin & Thompson 2007). As school districts received grants for technology enhancements, professional development did not keep pace. Therefore, the teachers who did not possess an expanded use of technology continued to use technology for basic purposes (McGrail, 2007). When ICT was first introduced, there was little or no training on how to use them. The software was limited, varied, and presented technological barriers such as

compatibility with legacy-based systems. Teachers began to use ICT for rudimentary drill and knowledge-level learning (Zhao, 2007). One key factor in technological implementation is teacher use. The more teachers use the educational models learned in professional development, and the more experience they gain through ICT use, the more confidence they will have in their abilities (Flemming 2007). Experience equals use, with experience referring to the training, development, and practice testing the theories and technology tools that are explored in training. In education, the choice to use technology or not ultimately rests with the classroom teacher despite district mandates (Ertmer, 2005). If schools and districts are to make a fundamental lasting change in the teaching methodologies regarding technological use, the teachers and their pedagogical practices must be addressed.

Imbedded within each teacher are his or her epistemological beliefs of what constitutes knowledge. If teachers believe that learners construct their own knowledge, they teach and use software that supports this paradigm. Teachers who use computers for low-order thinking skills use traditional information transmission oriented pedagogies. Teachers who implement constructivist pedagogies tend to use computers for higher-order thinking skills. This is why the pedagogical belief of the teacher is possibly the last barrier to full technological implementation (Ertmer, 2005).

Levin and Wadmany (2008) cite two factors affecting ICT use in the classroom: the source of the influence to use technology and the natural factors affecting teachers' views on cognitive transformation. A teacher can be successful without the use of technology within the classroom. Good pedagogical practices are a prerequisite for effective teaching, whereas the presence of technology is not. If a teacher has poor

pedagogical practices, his or her teaching deficiency will magnify itself when technology is added. The reasons teachers adopt technology in a classroom vary from the influence of the administration, to the presence of local grant support, to the perceived benefits of incorporating technology. Lim and Khine (2006) acknowledge that for effective use of ICT, a teacher requires technical and administrative support, collegial collaboration, and time. Force-feeding ICT implementation only results in rejection because the teacher must be comfortable with the change for ICT use to be a success (Ertmer, 2005).

A shift in the teacher's epistemological beliefs regarding ICT can occur over time. When studied longitudinally, teachers using direct instruction pedagogies transformed to student-centered pedagogies over a three-year period when ICT served as the basis of instruction (Levin & Wadmany, 2008). A teacher's beliefs about the value of ICT directly affects his or her decision about what is or is not important, and how knowledge is addressed in the classroom (Albion, 2007). Thus the successful implementation of ICT depends on the teaching strategies employed in the classroom.

Implementation of ICT in religious education

Information and communication technologies complement the learning environment instead of creating it (McGrail, 2007). Therefore, the classroom environment allows instructors to foster the teacher/student relationship, similar to the mentor/disciple relationship (Koontz, 2007). In lay education, the end goal is the active participation of the ecclesia in the purpose, mission, and vision of the local church (English, MacDonald et al., 2006). To this end, each church seeks to fulfill its unique needs for leaders to fill positions of service.

The use of ICT should fit the local church where it is used (Foley, 2005). The premise here is that instruction needs of laity and lessons under study drive the use and need for technology, not vice versa. Put simply, pedagogy precedes technology (McGrail, 2007). According to the American Baptist Church of the Rocky Mountain Region, 80% of Christian congregations are smaller than 100 members. Therefore, the use of technology as a supplement to the lecture-based proclamation strategies, often seen in larger churches, may be an appropriate role for some congregations. While it is up to the local pastor to choose what is best for his or her parishioners, some have chosen to implement ICT beyond the basic Light Emitting Diode (LED) projector.

In his speech at the Fourth Annual Institute of Educational Sciences, Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, stated that raising national test scores in math and science was one of the four areas of reform the U.S. Department of Education is focusing on (Duncan, 2009). The initiative began with improving test scores as an extension of the No Child Left Behind Act. Indicators of school improvement include ICT implementation. Schools began with the lowest common denominator using technology as a presentation medium to display items instead of writing them on a board. Other educators use ICT for drill and knowledge, because that is the only instructional support needed to augment their traditional teacher-centered strategies. Other teachers allow student use of ICT for research and presentations. Teachers' limited knowledge of ICT correlates to limited student use and reduced competence of information and communication technology for both student and teacher (Yin Cheong Cheng & Mok, 2008). However, this does not indicate that the first stage of ICT use is plagued with poor teaching. Contrastingly, strong pedagogical skills catapult the teacher's mastery of environments of creativity.

The learning culture and ICT implementation.

The learning culture of today has changed from viewing teachers as dispensers of knowledge, to one where the teacher leads students to construct their own knowledge (Albion, 2007). As educators strive to develop the teachers of tomorrow, a pressing concern is how to accurately, train for, measure and sustain a technology-based teaching system. There is little agreement among educators about what learning paradigms best support this endeavor (Flemming, 2007). As an example, acronyms such as ICT are used one way in the literature and another within P-20 schools (Albion & Maddux, 2007). Some interpret ICT broadly to include attendance, managements and other non-instructional items while others restrict its definition to pedagogical practices, websites, or evaluation systems, which directly impact the learner's cognition.

A primary concern for ICT implementation is the ability for the users to adopt the technology in meaningful ways (Albion, 2007). According to Franklin (2007), adult educators either accept or reject ICT proposals due to integration of approach, support, or the ease of adoption. In other words, the way the implementation is presented to the educators is a primary determinant of how successful the implementation will be. Successful implementation addresses teachers' perception, barriers to change, and need for support (Zhao, 2007). It is the voice of the teacher that has been overlooked by researchers in the past. The classrooms of elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities are controlled by the teacher's voice. His or her views and perceptions of ICT dominate the nature of its use within the classroom context (Franklin, 2007).

When considering the factors that predict whether faculty within a collegiate environment will adopt technology, Sahin and Thompson (2007) concluded that 75% of

the variation could be explained by the availability of networks of support for the teachers during the implementation. Their research analyzed four factors: user demographics, computer experience, hardware use, and learning modality. Primarily using graduate dissertations as reference sources, their survey focused on the correlation between the faculty's adoption of technology use within coursework and the students' comfort using ICT strategies. Their conclusion revealed no significant correlations between the instructor's background, age, or experience and ICT adoption. Rather, the best predictors were the instructor's ability to learn from different sources, accept collegial criticism, and remain open to data-analysis tools (Annetta, 2008; Bai, 2008; Sahin & Thompson, 2007).

Thus, a critical predictor of faculty adoption is the level of financial, technical, and collegial support during the implementation phase of the ICT project. Additional factors were training in higher-level thinking skills and enabling the teacher to assist the students in constructing their knowledge (Franklin, 2007; Rice, 2007; Shaffer, 2006). Other research covering the predictive factors affecting teachers' implementation of ICT use in the classroom context, revealed similar findings of professional development, curricular development, and pedagogical support for teachers as key influencers (Lim & Khine, 2006). Studies conducted by various researchers (Franklin, 2007; McGrail, 2007; Rice, 2007) found a strong correlation between experience and ICT use, supporting the notion of pedagogy preceding technology use for veteran teachers. Training, support, and availability of technology were cited as factors effecting positive adoption. The students' use of ICT strategies correlates with coursework in ICT rather than instructor use.

Location and access

Room size and arrangement, which may impact the use and success of ICT, is another critical factor that is often unaddressed in the literature. When ICT is implemented, there is little opportunity to change the classroom size and location. The location of the tables and desks, the amount of entrance/egress space, and the room layout change with an influx of technological hardware (McGrail, 2007).

This factor is compounded in a church setting. Room size and design limit technical use. Additionally, in local churches, technology funding is often inadequate and denominational support is limited to capital projects. When planning a space for learning, all facets of the space are essential, from the location of electrical outlets to the functions of the furniture (McGrail, 2007).

The physical devices for information and communication technologies in classrooms are divided into three categories: 1) Legacy hardware: TV/VCR Carts, projection screens, CD/Tape players, and overhead projectors; 2) Advanced hardware: digital cameras, handheld recorders, Palm/PDA and camcorders; and 3) Software: the programs which access a variety of hardware devices (Sahin and Thompson, 2007). These devices require space and their placement could impede the learning and effectiveness of ICT use in the local lay educational setting.

ICT influencers

Several factors, including access, preparation and training, leadership, and time, influence the integration of communication technologies (Bai, 2008; Fleming, 2007; Franklin, 2007; Levin & Wadmany, 2008; Lim & Khine, 2006; Sahin & Thompson, 2007). In elementary school classrooms, the most cited predictor of a successful ICT

implementation was leadership from the administration (Franklin, 2007). It is unclear if “leadership” involved a sense of trust, guidance, direction, or all of the above. After ICT was implemented, the teachers cited obstacles including too much curriculum to cover, time constraints, and high-stake tests as perceived barriers to ICT use. The majority of teachers in the study subscribed to constructivist views on learning, and noted the benefits of technology in enabling children to construct ideas for themselves (Franklin, 2007). Though there was not a significant predictor between student grade levels and computer use, it was clear that K-2 students used the computers differently than grades 3-5 students. It is unclear if this was a product of teacher training or the students’ cognitive development.

Technological implementation since 2000.

Educators who were not part of the technological revolution face difficult barriers to digital conversion in comparison to their contemporary counterparts (Koontz, 2007). While the exact reason for this finding varies, mastery of the hardware tools used within the ICT context, and their acceptance of technology, were cited as barriers to the use of these tools. This is not to imply that baby boomers cannot use technology or that they are less adept in their technological skills, rather that baby boomers view the personal use of ICT as less of a need than later generations. In fact, baby boomers can learn technology just as easily as their younger generational counterparts (Foley, 2005). Some instructors use a LED projector and presentation software to highlight major points when teaching, while other instructors use presentation software as *the* teaching tool, plastering the screen with their lecture notes disguised as a visual presentation. The screen is loaded with small fonts and the instructors read them verbatim to the students (Koontz, 2007).

Initial ICT implementation at theological institutions.

In the late 1990s, the Elli Lily Foundation provided grants for theological schools to fund their development and advancement in the use of technology in education. The Foundation cited their own research that found that, while secular institutions were advancing, the theological seminaries were falling behind. To assist in reducing this gap, the Foundation funded several studies and provided resources to assist the professional development of seminary leaders and their students.

Stages of ICT use in churches.

It is not clear whether ICT for the purpose of educating laity was formally introduced to the ecclesiastical community or whether the process evolved over time. Research suggests there are three stages of ICT deployment in local settings. These stages are not always linear in progression. As an example, some churches already use technology for learning songs, highlighting sermon points, and informing laity of weekly announcements.

The initial stage is an adaptation of the classical visual only paradigm with small portions of the learning content committed to ICT use. In this stage, the church adds visual presentations, a small movie clip, or the option to email the instructor for more questions; but the course essentially maintains the traditional lecture-based, teaching strategies used over many years. This stage involves introducing ICT as an element to support instruction, rather than a portal through which to educate.

Stage two occurs when the impacts gained in stage one plateau. During this stage of ICT use, the church redesigns the curriculum and parts of the delivery mechanism. The educator translates what is occurs in the prior setting to a technological one where the

learner uses ICT versus being the recipient of ICT use. Students respond to teacher inquiries using blogs or wiki pages. Small groups report their finding in a three slide visual presentation. Differentiated learning, kinesthetic activities, and multiple forms of evaluations are facilitated by ICT.

Stage three is characterized by the pedagogical changes on behalf of the teacher and institutional changes on behalf of the church or school. The teacher returns to the classroom with a revised pedagogical style gleaned from active use of technology as a teaching and learning medium. The institution recognizes the necessity of professional development for the lay education teacher to maintain an active and professional teacher pool. The educational program director begins to examine the range of possibilities for the use of ICT for the purposes of lay instruction.

The introduction of ICT into the church setting.

The use or integration of technology into a setting can be contrasted to a journey. The journey of technology from primarily office use to web environments, to broadcast media, such as radio, to the sanctuary, and finally to the lay instructional classroom, was relatively short. In retrospect, it seems a bit odd that the lay education classroom would be the last location for technology use but in most churches it is. Within church settings today, computers have a place in offices controlling heating ventilation and cooling (HVAC) systems; as smart phones, and serving as the network backbone hosting the website. Whether it is because lay education is seen as a relational doctrine, or the educational transfer of static knowledge such as Old and New Testament history, the incorporation of ICT in the classroom is muted the classroom has been one of the last sanctuaries into which technology has been introduced (Delamarter, 2005).

When computers were introduced into church offices, they served as a tool for personal and professional productivity and easily gained acceptance. Next, seminary graduates began to use Biblical software to make sermon preparation easier. Later, the age of multimedia invaded the churches via websites with flash programming for websites, live streaming of sermons, and brief videos. Some churches use these technologies as a manner of ecommerce, others as a source of evangelism. Case in point: Religious services on television use large screens to project words of songs, sermon points, and church announcements. However, most of these innovations have not had a significant impact in the classroom due to pedagogical challenges to effective ICT use (Cheung, 2006; Cheng & Mok, 2008; Delamarter, 2004). The manner and speed of the ICT integration into a community, church, or school is dependent on the vision of the leader and his/her view of technology (Delamarter, 2005).

How laity is currently being developed.

The theological community must rethink the way it engages learners in light of adult education theories which have emerged over the past three decades (Wickett, 2005). Teachers, must direct learning to fit the varied needs of the audiences before them. Using models such as self-directed learning, experiential learning, and transformative learning, the lay education teacher can effectively guide the instruction toward becoming learner centered.. Additionally, accountability tools such as learning contracts or covenants assist the teacher in differentiating the instruction by providing an agreement of the work to be completed. These contracts/covenants assist the lay education teacher in keeping students accountable to the studies in a lay environment.

As a comparison, in countries like China, the importance of religious education is acknowledged, but given a low status in comparison to other core subjects (Cheung, 2006). In Hong Kong's rigid examination-based structure, religious educators consist of primary education teachers with an extra religion course. When compared to secular education, religious education lacks formal qualification standards. Unless the school teaches K-12 education, the ecclesia operates without designated standards for lay education teacher development.

ICT implementation impacted by support

Austin (2004) states, "The transformation of American society from the industrial age to the information age compels a change in the roles and responsibilities of K-12 teachers, and therefore, teacher educators" (p. 30). Transformation begins with the use of standards aligned to assist teachers and educators to change their pedagogical views of education from one involving decontextualized drill and practice to one that fosters student collaboration and construction of knowledge (Niederhauser, Lindstrom, et al., 2007). Today's technology-rich classroom is a multifaceted, semi-structured environment fostering the creation of wonderful ideas and allowing diversity of expression.

Each iteration of the transformation cycle towards the 21st-century classroom involves changes in curricular structure, pedagogical effectiveness, and teacher attitude toward student-centered learning (Albion, 2007; Cheng & Mok, 2008). The successful application of ICT varies by the teacher's competence with technology and years of teaching experience. Other factors such as teacher support, funding, equipment availability, curricular alignment, and administrative support, all play a role in the effective uses of ICT within the classroom.

In comparison to secular education models, though not explicit, the survival of ICT in religious communities would require similar support and curricular alignment tailored to the setting of its use. Additionally, funding for the ongoing professional development for lay teachers would help ICT use succeed.

Statement of the problem.

While literature has addressed the use of ICT in theological seminaries, there is a dearth of qualitative research addressing ICT assisted learning in a local church context. No research has been conducted on local church adult religious educational programs; thus no standards exist for what constitutes a teacher, education, or classroom in the local context (English, MacDonald, et al., 2006 Nicholls, 2003).

This study focuses on the use of ICT in a religious environment and describes the impact on education of the congregational members. Within this study, the perspectives of local pastors, associate ministers, and laity who have experienced educational programs offered at their local church are presented. Using the fundamental questions outlined by Tyler (1949) as a framework, this study explores the use of ICT to educate laity in the local church setting.

Chapter Two: Method

Research adds to our current knowledge base, improves our practices as learners, informs policy debates, and builds student research skills (Creswell, 2002). Research also helps to distinguish evidence-based findings from opinions. However, research is nothing more than a means to investigate phenomena of some kind. It involves looking at something with a keen eye for the purpose of understanding, similar to a detective searching for clues to solve a case. It simply is looking afresh at what presents itself. Within this chapter, I outline the research procedures used to investigate how ICT was used to teach and educate laity.

To accomplish this, I used instrumental case-study methodology. It was the method best suited for the examination of the religious educational context. Within this section, I discuss case-study methodology in general, my research rationale for its use, and the data-analysis process.

Research Questions.

This study focuses on the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in a religious environment to teach and educate laity. The research questions were hewn from the basic principles of curriculum and instruction extrapolated by Ralph Tyler (1969). The straightforward approach espoused by Tyler served as a perch for me to observe the use of ICT within religious educational pedagogy.

This study addressed the disparity in research concerning lay education development by describing the manner in which ICT is used in a church setting. Comparisons are made to research from K-12 education, seminary, and other formal learning environments, where necessary to provide a context for understanding the use of ICT in this specialized learning environment.

To interpret how ICT was utilized in this setting, I used the teachings of Ralph Tyler (1969) to develop four research questions. These questions are:

1. What education purpose does the church seek to achieve and what experiences are provided through ICT to achieve such goals
2. How do the learning experiences achieve those objectives and how are they organized for effective instruction?
3. What obstacles and opportunities are present in the use of ICT?
4. How does local ecclesia evaluate the effectiveness of the learning experiences
5. What are the implications for the church and lay education?

Qualitative Research and Case Study.

While qualitative (Zhao, 2007) and quantitative (Sahin & Thompson, 2007) methodologies have been used to explain how ICT is integrated into education pedagogy, I chose to use a qualitative methodology. The emphasis of case study research is the problem under study and the methodology serves as a function of the research (Luttrell, 2005). Therefore, when selecting what criteria should govern the research process, researchers should begin their inquiry process with philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality (ontology), how they know what is known (epistemology), the inclusion of their values (axiology), the nature in which their research emerges (methodology), and their writing structures (Creswell, Hanson, Plano-Clark & Morales, 2007).

Qualitative case study research seeks in-depth knowledge of a case, with a goal of discovering the how's of a situation, rather than a prediction the outcome (Luttrell, 2005). Qualitative designs have made significant contributions to the field of education (Creswell et al., 2007). In this research, case study methodology allowed for the discovery of ICT use without excluding some of the moral biases, which may be contained in religious education.

According to Creswell (1998) qualitative research is an investigative process by which one can understand a social or human problem through the use of methodological inquiry. The intent of this instrumental case study was to illuminate the rationale for the use of ICT in lay education, the reactions of congregants to education pedagogy, and the implications of ICT use for lay education. Stake (2008) referred to instrumental case study as a method to grasp more than just a common understanding of a particular situation. He believed the case is secondary and plays a supportive role in facilitating a greater understanding of something else.

Case study methodology allows for a detailed description of the environment using a core set of tools, primarily observations, interviews, archival documents, and audiovisual recording of the services. The observations included, but were not limited to, the physical environment, the people involved, and their interactions with one another. The interviews were semi-structured, recorded and transcribed. Documents used included, but were not limited to, church service bulletins, mission statements, curriculum handouts, and business data.

Using the process for gathering evidence in a legal investigation as an example to illustrate a model for material gathering in a case study, the researcher serves as a lawyer and the intended audience for the research as the jury. The judge can be the researcher's conscience, the selection committee of a dissertation, or the review committee of a journal for publication.

However, contrary to a legal investigation, the case study researcher states specifically what they are looking for, how they will look for it, and what questions they are asking of the participants. The local Institutional Review Board screens the interview questions in advance and the research process is examined for validity and accuracy by a variety of individuals or groups, such as other researchers on the dissertation proposal defense committee.

Case study methodology uses carefully drafted research questions aimed at answering the "hows" of a topic through scientific investigation. For example, if a researcher desires to understand how technological tools used in K-12 education could be applied to non K-12 environments, such as a religious institution, he or she must consider and understand the setting, the teacher and students, the curriculum, and how the curriculum enhances teaching and learning. Afterward, the research question is narrowed to focus on what technological tools are used within the setting. Thus, in a case study the researcher must consider the variables within the context of the study but not be emotionally moved by them. Similarly, staying in context to a legal analogy, only the evidence applicable to the case is considered; everything else is thrown out.

In summary, case study methodology was an appropriate research design for addressing the use of ICT in lay education. As stated earlier, this topic has not been the subject of much research; therefore I seek to add to the knowledge base in this area.

Data Collection.

The data in this study were obtained from interviews, observations, and archival records. Of the approximately 590 parishioners observed at Paprika Baptist Church, 12 lay members were chosen for interviews, six females and six males. Three of the 12 Deacons who served as teachers also participated. The associate ministers of the church were selected, because they are the sole source of educational implementation for Paprika Baptist Church, they consisted of three individuals, all male. I collected two forms of data over a 12-month period: interviews and observations. Interviews were comprised of the formal and informal meetings, group discussions, and inquiries with the citizens of Paprika Baptist Church and the American Baptist Church of the Rocky Mountain Region community. Observational data included field notes and direct observations. The archival church records related to parishioner attendance; the number of classes since inception; staff, and other parishioner statistics such as average age of congregation; lay leader roles; and history of professional development.

Research setting.

Paprika Baptist Church was formed in 1988 with six members. Six months later the church had approximately 54 charter members to begin its mission of teaching and educating the Basil community. In 1988 the church purchased four acres of land adjacent to Tamarac High School and has remained in the Basil community ever since. Now at the

age of 22 and three building modifications later, Paprika Baptist Church is an established figure in the Far Northeast Rocky Mountain community with over 600 active members. The office staff is comprised of the senior pastor, ministry assistant, Christian education director, and children's education leader, minister of music, financial secretary, office clerk, and treasurer. The church has 10 deacons who oversee the ministerial teams that are divided among parishioners alphabetically.

In the winter of 2009, the Senior Pastor of Paprika Baptist Church granted initial permission for me to undertake research at the church to address uses of ICT for lay education (Appendix C). I drafted a formal letter the following week and presented it to the University of Denver's Institutional Review Board (IRB) as part of the comprehensive application. Formal permission to begin the study was granted in May 2010.

Participants.

Church records indicate that in 2009 Paprika Baptist Church parishioners varied in age from 18-65 years with a median age of 38. A total of 17 participants were used in this study (Table 1). Using purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2002), I selected individuals with a long-standing history at the church whose participation in educational programs over the years would enable them to provide their perspectives on the history and implementation of ICT technology. Purposeful sampling is defined as a form of sampling in which the researcher studies a person or site to learn a phenomenon (Creswell et al., 2007). The participants used in this study was divided into three groups:

1. Administrators: the pastor and minister of religious education who could describe the overarching goals of the education program, its purposes, and evaluation measures.

2. Teachers: associate ministers, deacons or deaconesses tasked with the duties of teaching the lay education courses who could address the implementation cycle of the proposed curriculum, what happens in the classroom, how students are enrolled, and the education cycle from a practical standpoint.
3. Laity: adult recipients of the education who could describe the end result of the education, their view of the pedagogy used, their motivation for taking the course, and the history of the education process as it affects them.

Table 1

Demographics of participants

Roles	Gender		Age		Ethnicity
	Male	Female	25-39	40-55	
Administrators	2	0	0	2	African American
Teachers	2	0	1	2	African American
Laity	6	6	3	9	African American
Totals	11	6	4	13	

Interviews

Interviews focused on the lay education programs offered at Paprika Baptist Church to understand the manner by which ICT is implemented, to serve as a data source for answering the research questions. Respondents shared how ICT impacted their learning in the classroom, what they perceived were the reasons for ICT use in the learning process, and overarching purposes for the lay education program (Appendix A). Thus, interviews provided personal insight into the manner, use, and purpose of ICT. The interviews took place at the church, either before a class, or at a time convenient to the interviewee. The interview questions are contained in Appendix B.

Observations.

Lay education took place in two prominent locations at Paprika Baptist Church: the sanctuary and classrooms. Sanctuary lessons emphasized the spiritual formation of the soul using a mass communication style. In this setting, I observed the technology-based tools used to communicate the lesson to laity, the congregants' response to the material presented, the style of presentation, and the physical setting. Other observations were of environmental factors such as the time of day and perceived mood of the worship. In classrooms, I observed the physical location and design of the room, its conduciveness for instruction, parishioners' response to instruction, and ICT use in the material presented (Appendix D). Additional observations concentrated on how ICT could help instruction. As an example, could ICT be used to teach asynchronously vs. synchronously, or could ICT use assist in reaching a more diverse audience, such as the elderly or students away from home? Observational Protocol can be found in Appendix D

Data Analysis.

I relied on Creswell's (2002) six-step process for analyzing and interpreting qualitative data:

1. Preparing and organizing the data for analysis
2. Exploring the data
3. Describing and developing themes from the data
4. Representing and reporting the findings
5. Interpreting the findings
6. Validating the accuracy and credibility of the findings

Preparing and organizing the data for analysis.

First, the interviews were scheduled, conducted, and recorded. Field notes were taken during and after the interviews. After each interview, the recording was transcribed

and a copy was sent to the interviewee for approval. Gaps in the transcription, where words were incorrect or missing, were corrected.

Exploring the data.

Once the interview data were transcribed, I read them several times to ensure comprehension and engrain a sense of the interviewees' words and thoughts. I also read the field notes for consistency with the transcripts. Afterward, I coded the data by its ability to address the research questions, considering whether more information was needed. Field notes were coded by dates, then by the themes emerging in the notes.

Describing and developing themes from the data.

I divided the material into large sections by major themes with each code related to a research question. Afterwards, I developed small detailed vignettes about the people or activities observed. The themes were organized and layered to outline the story of my findings. My intention was to obtain a greater sense of the themes emerging from the data and their relation to the research questions.

Representing and reporting the findings.

Once I sorted the data into themes and placed them into sections relating to the research questions, I organized the material so that it represented the story told by the participants. Graphs, organizational charts, and storyboards were used to analyze the data. The findings were sequenced to describe lay learning and development from class registration to evaluation. I included multiple perspectives from each emerging theme depicting the learning experience of the parishioners with original illustrations and quotations from the teachers and parishioners.

Interpreting the findings.

I interpreted the findings by determining the extent to which the emergent themes related to the research questions and reflected upon intended meaning of the religious viewpoints expressed in the data. Then the data was compared to the literature. Additionally, the gaps in the data allowed me to accurately reflect upon the limitations of the study and what suggestions there could be for future research.

Validating the accuracy and credibility of the findings.

I established the validity of the findings by triangulating codes and themes from the interview pool of educational leaders (pastor or educational director), teachers (senior laity), and parishioners (the primary recipients). I categorized each group's statements to determine the primary reasons for the ICT use in the educational program. Additionally, I consulted with members of the religious community (other pastors and religious leaders) to ensure the interpretation of the religious idioms were accurately reflective in context of their scriptural meaning.

Conclusion.

Qualitative research served as the methodology used in this study and as a way to understand the educational journey of the lay educator at a local institution. Within this section, I have outlined my rationale for the choice of instrumental case study. In the next chapter, I describe the findings through a rich description of ICT use in the Paprika Church setting and the participants' perspectives.

Chapter Three: Results

Lay Education Learning Environments and Learning Contexts

Paprika Baptist Church

Serenity... as I use it here is the scent of peaceful bliss. It's an expectation of peace and harmony brought effortlessly each morning. Serenity is observed with all the senses. On this pleasant morning, my eyes examine the brightness of the sunlight and I say within myself "...it is good..." A deep breath of the fresh, warm, gentle breeze is, in a word... pleasant.

I arrived at the church early, ready for another day of observations, ad hoc conversations, and worship. On this day the sun was shining in its strength, shimmering, bright, and yellow. It lit up the partly cloudy sky, sending the message of expectation. The forecast called for clear skies and 92 degrees. I remember seeing rays of radiant light from the east providing a sense of serenity. I continued my walk across the manicured grass, hopped over the small juniper bush, and then landed on the aged and patched asphalt. As I strolled towards the main doors, I was met by one of the deacons who was there opening the building. "Good morning sir," he said briefly, as he extended his arm for a handshake. After exchanging pleasantries, I proceeded into the foyer where I waited and observed, as the parishioners would soon arrive.

Paprika Baptist Church is cradled in a Rocky Mountain urban community that bristles with nature. Its corner location affords it ample sunlight each day and the tall

Colorado Blue Spruce pine trees assist with providing ample shade. The lawns are manicured Kentucky bluegrass, adorned with a variety of bushes and shrubbery, peppered across the four-acre property. The building is made of brick and stucco. Large crosses near each entrance identify the building's purpose as a church while picture windows grace the facility like a belt around a midsection.

As the members and guests approached the church, several parishioners who were serving as greeters and donned violet sport coats, waited to open the doors. They stood in a foyer encased with glass, peered into the parking lot and watched as members arrived. As visitors crossed the patchy asphalt surface to the two large open glass doors exclaiming "Welcome," their smile was contagious, their affection genuine, and the feeling of heartfelt thanks, precious. "Hmmm... thank you for that lovely greeting!" exclaimed one parishioner as she warmly smiled after a pleasant hug.

Most individuals returned the gesture with a brief but slight head nod, thanking them for the pleasant reception as they received a bulletin outlining the morning activities. I thought the greeters would surely tire; however, as time passed, I counted the 287th guest, who despite arriving late was greeted as the first. As I pondered how this could correlate to the importance of ICT use, the word "preparation" came to mind. It was as if the greeters prepared the parishioners to receive a message, whether it was ICT derived or not.

Upon entry, a 46" LCD flat panel television broadcast the inner sanctuary activities and weekly announcements. Visitors and members watched the television to

gauge how much time they had to take their children to the children's church located down a lavender carpeted hall.

The foyer was warm with the movement of people stirring, some trying to get in place for the beginning of service, others chattering about the week's activities, while a few were prepping their children with money for their offering and last-second advice on behavior. My mind immediately drew a correlation to the backstage activities prior to a large production or a major show. One lady in particular caught my attention. She was dressed in blue, appearing like a cloudless sky. Her hat was wrapped with a white-laced scarf, tied in a bow on the right side. Her make-up was modest and flawless as there were no blend lines at the base of her jawbone, yet the satin sheen on her face reflected only the brightness she held within. A white silk scarf, Tiffany bracelet, and Etienne Aigner shoes accented her designer two-piece suit, but she matched to perfection. She had it "flat going on" as they would say. She stood there poised and smiling, waiting to enter the service with her black Prada purse clutched underneath her right arm.

As the doors to the sanctuary opened, the bellowing sound of the worship occurring within the sanctuary rushed out of the doors like a mighty wind. Ushers dressed in black and white stood in military styled fashion with perfect posture, right arm to the side and the left bent at the elbow, palms facing upward. They welcomed the people with a slight head nod directing them to aisles, where another usher stood in a similar position. Other ushers stood at the front of the sanctuary, like guards at Buckingham Palace without the coat of arms, whose body posture stated, "the seats behind me are full; please

go to the other seats in the rear.” The head usher stood in the center of the sanctuary towards the rear orchestrating the movements of the usher brigade.

No words were used to communicate between the ushers, no CIA-styled radios with earpieces and words mumbled at their wrist, and no sign language, only discrete hand signals aligning with the every transition of service. They counted members, distributed fans or tissues, directed the parishioners to stand and sit, all without a word spoken. I found this intriguing, as I wondered about the origins of this tradition and practice.

Prior to the message, but after the songs, ushers count the attendees. They move in a clandestine manner remaining seen, but unseen. They assisted in the simple tasks, such as providing you with a fan if you need one, directing visitors to their seat when one cannot be readily found, and helping manage the overall order of the services.

As the people arose during one of the worship songs, I asked a person sitting close, “Why is there a television screen in the foyer?” The response was quick and astute “It is for you to see the events occurring in service, the announcements of upcoming events, and to serve as an overflow monitor when the sanctuary is full.” After a pause, I stated “thank you” and went on my way into the sanctuary in between the song selections.

Lay Education Learning Contexts.

The church program follows a logical process to progress the parishioner through the service using a series of transitions. Each member or visitor is provided a bulletin upon entering the church by volunteer greeters posted at the entry doors. Within the

bulletin is the order of service, announcements, and a financial contribution envelope. On the back is a list of the ministries with the contact information of the individuals leading them.

In the sanctuary, music is played at a low volume. On the main screen is a graphic depicting a theme, this Sunday the theme was rebuilding. The contrast emphasized how the wall of Jerusalem was rebuilt in the book of Nehemiah to the way our lives needs to be rebuilt today. In the lower right hand corner is a countdown clock with the phrase “Service begins in...” and when the clock hits zero the lights dim, the choir emerges bellowing a song of praise, as the music/choir director leads them. From there a break occurs when one of the Associate Ministers welcomes the visitors and special guests afterwards there is a brief 1-2 minute period where the members greet the guests and the people around them while the choir sings “Were glad that you’re here” and the band plays upbeat and cheerful rhythms.

After the next song is sung, the tempo slows, a time of solace and prayer occurs where the parishioners gather at the alter. Those remaining in their seats hold hands as an Associate Minister leads the congregation in a prayer lasting roughly 3-5 minutes. After one more song is sung the sermon begins. ICT is used to announce the sermon title, main points, and scriptural passages. Once the response to salvation is done the offerings is collected. After a brief break for announcements a summary styled benediction closes the service.

Some primary obstacles to ICT use were the sequencing of events. The lighting, video, presentation slides and auditory cues all serve the learning environment. When

synchronized together they form a harmonic story, which emphasizes the sermon points. When cues are missed, video starts late, music is too loud or similar hiccups occur the Associate Minister or Deacon's ability to adapt either emphasizes the or downplays the errors further enhancing or distracting from the overall message. Verbal cues such as multiple calls for an "amen" were either a check for understanding or part of the speakers rhythmic presentation style. The sermon message serves as the primary communication for the local church. It is the message for the week that the parishioners are to glean from and apply to their lives using the points illustrated.

The midweek classes are held in the sanctuary or the classroom located in the rear of the facility. During the summer months when the AWANA program is not in session, the classes are held in the classrooms, otherwise the sanctuary is the primary location used. The course begins at 7:00 pm and last until 8:15. The parishioners sit at tables, facing forward in a traditional lecture styled arrangement.

A Day of Worship.

For observation purposes, I sat in the rear of the church. While there, I noticed the entire sanctuary was painted white, except in the choir loft where the walls were accented in what appeared to be a sunburst yellow hue. I was not sure if this was to reflect the purity of God, or serve as a neutral palate or accent wall. Either way, the color played tricks on the eyes as it appeared as two different shades when viewed directly, or at an angle even, though both walls were actually the same color. The ceilings were tall, flanked with speakers colored the same as the ceiling to reduce their sightlines, while providing equal sound disbursement throughout the room. The chairs were burgundy with

oak wooden frames, wide enough to hold a full figured adult with firm cushions to reduce fatigue during extended seating. They were aligned in rows similar to a stadium. Each chair had a wooden basket underneath where Bibles, announcements, and other service-related items were stored. There were three aisles, one in the center and two smaller ones on the sides, running the length of the seating area. The side aisle housed the HVAC vents, so during the summer months those who desired more cooling sat near the vents. It was as if there were good seats and bad seats depending on your cooling preference rather than listening and viewing pleasure. In the front of the sanctuary was a large wooden cross, made from ash. Its size looked as if it could hold a full sized adult, but the beauty of the finely stained wood lent itself to more docile uses. The platform was large with a clear Plexiglas podium, situated in front of an orchestra area with a half wall and two rows of choir seating behind that. The stage was well lit compared to the sanctuary, which had can lights in the ceiling and six spotlights.

The physical make-up of the congregation appeared to be 60/40 split, women to men. It remains uncertain if this is representative of the greater community or that women are more church-centered than men. The youth sat together, as if they were in a class within a class, towards the rear third of the church. They spoke as youth do, in code, using small chunks of information, and constantly looking around to see if someone was watching them. The remainder of the congregants sat as people do at a conference, near the aisles, with space between them and the next individual so that their personal space was not violated by strangers.

ICT was used to communicate the message through a presentation program called Sunday Church Plus. It served as a PowerPoint styled software with flair. The graphics were Biblically centered with views of footprints, sunsets, and various landscapes depicting serenity of some sort. Each slide used sans serif fonts and faded in and out blending scriptures, various quotes, and announcements in a seamless fashion.

The frequency at which the images appeared on the screen seemed planned by the videographer in the rear sound booth, but appeared impromptu to the viewer. After watching several services there was no clear indication of predictability, yet the frequency and timing matched the message and service impeccably. During one interactive message, the slides used addressed the three main points made by the speaker, appearing as teaching points. When the speaker stated, “why did she succeed” a burgundy colored slide with bright yellow letters accented by a faded cross in the upper right hand corner of the slide appeared with the statement “why did she succeed”. After appearing for approximately 8-10 seconds, the slide faded back to the blank slide used for the day, and the attention of the audience went back to the speaker. He repeated the phrase “why did she succeed” three times in what appeared to be a purposeful reflection or an attempt to stress the statement as a main point to the parishioners. As the message continued, the sub-points exclaimed in support of the story regarding the person’s success were not presented using ICT. This continued for the other two points of the sermon.

The choir voices were amplified through the 36-channel sound system, compensating for distance, voice, and tone through a series of black boxes in a rack with blinking red and green lights.

During the offertory period of the service the choir sang as a scripture relating to the reasons for giving was presented on the screen. While some may consider this to be a form of marketing to the parishioners, it is a standards staple within church environment to provide scriptural passages that reinforce the reasons/rationales for giving financial resources to the church. Afterwards, this was followed by the primary slides used for the day.

During the prayer session, the main screen presented an image of a woman praying. She appeared in a penitent pose, kneeling with her arms extended. No scripture was provided as the mood of the congregation shifted to what can be called a somber reflection. However, during other portions of the service, such as the welcome of new visitors, the slides presented were of the pastor and his wife in the upper left corner followed by a “we’re glad you’re here” message. By my estimates, each service’s adult attendance was 300-350.

Whenever a person such as the Associate Minister stood on the platform their image was shown on the large screen in the center of the sanctuary. Some of the congregants watched the screen for additional viewing; others chose to look at the actual individual. I am unsure if this is due to our culture being used to looking at a screen for additional information or because viewing it this way is better for their eyes. As I peered from the rear of the sanctuary I was able to see the individual on the screen without any squinting.

The service began with prerecorded praise music as congregants came into the sanctuary amidst fellowship between regular parishioners and visitors. It was quite the

active place, full of smiles, laughter, and the exchange of pleasantries. Most individuals were professionally dressed. Gentlemen were typically in suits with or without ties and the ladies were in dresses or business suits.

During the service the screen remained lowered. When not in active use, the screen displays an image relating to the service. When the screen is raised the wooden cross behind it is displayed. It appeared that the videographer, in the rear of the church, was cued by the words of the sermon so he would know when to click to the next screen showing the outline of the sermon as it progressed. The presentation software used is called “Sunday Plus” its use was similar to PowerPoint as slides transitioned across the screen. In the back of the church was a “cheater” screen for the choir, allowing them to read the words of the songs they were singing and to see the face of the minister during the sermon.

Information regarding upcoming meetings and events were placed on the screens in the foyer, front, and rear of the sanctuary and were shown in a cycle, each appearing for approximately 10-12 seconds. These were the same announcements provided at the end of the service. The choir proceeded into the sanctuary and up to the choir loft without any pomp or circumstance. The choir was not in robes, rather a coordinated palette of black and white (that Sunday). The color schemes change each Sunday to match the theme of the day. The only exception is on the first Sunday of every month. On this day communion is served so the Pastor and choir are in color coordinating robes. The Deacons and Associate Ministers are dressed in a dark suit white shirt and red tie. The Deaconesses are all in white suits with skirts, until Labor Day when they switch to ivory.

It is a very interesting sight to behold, as a visitor, I would often speculate why such formality is needed to serve communion when Biblically it was done at the end of a meal?

At the precise time the musician began to play, the recorded music faded. A splash screen appeared, then as the choir began to sing the song words appeared on the front and rear screens in the sanctuary and a long range shot of the activities occurring within the sanctuary were displayed on the large screen in the foyer. When I asked why the large screen television was placed there, I was told it was so that those coming into the church could see what was going on.

The music was presented in a lively, active, high-energy setting, allowing the parishioners to actively participate in the praise and worship portion of the service. If the songs were a congregational hymn, where the people were to participate, the words were posted on the screens. If the song was one where the choir ministers sang, then no words showed on the screen to the congregants. Sometimes there was a large range screen shot of the choir singing. Congregants often stood during a song and lifted their hands in the air and waved them, singing along with all or various parts of the song.

When the sermon began, the image on the screen remained until the end of the prayer and the minister stated the title or gave a verbal cue. During this particular message, the preacher used musical cues from past celebrity shows familiar to his audience to illustrate a point he was presenting. The congregants sung as they remembered a time or era that surrounded the songs, which correlated with the message. I thought this was an interesting strategy to activate prior knowledge to drive home a point.

The only weakness was for the youth, whose age would probably present a different interpretation of the theme from *Mahogany*, the movie where Diana Ross played a designer struggling to make it amidst the fashion elite of the time.

At the end of each service the important announcements were read while being posted on the screen simultaneously. Additionally, some were presented as mini-commercials, where the parishioners acted out a specific point to be made or showed a mini-clip of a special service as the announcer did a voice-over. What effect or impact this had on the message is unknown. The video-based announcements were for a children's Easter musical.

An Evening of Fellowship

Though class begins at 7:00 p.m. there is a pre-learning exercise that occurs. The parishioners begin trickling in at approximately 6:30. Some go to pray with the faithful few, but others came to do what they could not do all day long, find fellowship! It appears as if it is some form of ritual to come early, chat, state how your day has been and proclaim that if it were not for God you would not have made it through. After attending class to learn and maybe ask a question the fellowship continues. After class, folks stay a little longer to chat and agree how they will need God just to get ready to make it through all the things they still have to do tonight or another day at work. A majority of individuals partook in the same ritual of a warm greeting, hug and brief conversation, and the rituals serve as a bonding of sorts, which carries into the learning environment.

After entering through the right hand side of the double glass doors, children in tow. Theresa walks in with Allen 12, and Renee 9. She is a successful entrepreneur who owns two coffee shops and several parcels of land. Her daughter had her hair in braids, not the standard kind done at a beauty salon with artificial hair. No, mom did these. The look of pride on her face and the way each braid flowed like thin locks as they hung from her head showed a sense of handiwork that could only be done in the home. Each braid had a barrette of a different color so that her hair looked like she dove into a bag of skittles and came up with one on each end. I thought to myself, how many bags of barrettes did it take to do this child's hair? Renee wore a yellow summer dress and yes.... rainbow shoes. Each tiny toenail was painted a different color to match her barrettes. I was in sheer awe wondering if this was a display of attention to detail or just the traditional feminine training that goes with raising a little girl. Her big brother was dressed monochrome in black. Black hat, tilted to one side, oversized tee shirt, shorts whose length was so long they could pass a capris, and yes black Air Force Ones, the shoes, not the presidential air plane.

As Theresa came through the door, a smile formed on her face as if the thoughts of the day just left her and she was so glad she had made it to church. She extended a greeting to those in the foyer "Hello Mrs. Robinson, sister Holmes, Jasmine...as she waved with her arm extended, palm up and hand rotating 90 degrees to the right then left in rapid fashion similar to a 1940's movie. When her eyes locked with a friend her smile was "taken up a notch" and she extended her other arm and hugged Maria Thompson who was sitting in the burgundy wood framed chair. "How have you been?" She

exclaimed as if she had not seen Maria in some time. As they sat and engaged in small talk, the children dispersed to their respective areas by age to conduct their own fellowship.

Fellowship appears to be the precursor to the lesson of the day, like an appetizer is to a meal. It is a first course where more than communication happens. Educationally the mood, or tone of the class is set in the foyer. Unbeknownst to the teacher, the foyer fellowship causes classroom grouping by prior conversation where learners bring their mood, temperament, and openness to the lesson into the classroom.

The room is a large 20'x75' rectangle painted white with the office standard 2'x4' ceiling tiles. It is actually three rooms with accordion styled room dividers approximately at 25' and 50' respectively, which were pushed back to make one large space. There are three doors across one wall, juxtaposed by windows on the other side of the room. Inside the room is a small CRT television and VCR combination. These were rarely used for teaching purposes but it was good to see that they were part of the room design.

The room was set up longitudinally to accommodate the maximum number of people, similar to a long hall. White 6' folding tables were positioned three across, with a center aisle, so each row accommodated approximately 7-9 individuals. The learners sat in brown folding chairs, facing forward, where an 8' oak framed dry erase board hung centered on the 25' white wall.

The learners entered through the rear two doors. I assumed this was to cause the least disturbance. The bonds that began in the foyer held throughout the class, yet briefly submitted to the ethos of the class. When asked to move forward, they did not. It appears

that they were in rebellion; but there just weren't enough seats available to maintain their proximity to each other. I concluded obedience is accepted until it interferes with the bond or a personal sense of comfort that was established in the foyer.

Each class begins in the same way. A scripture is read, a song sung, and a prayer is prayed. All of this appears as an attempt to neutralize the foyer's emotions and begin afresh in the classroom. However, due to the consistency of the prayer, song, and scripture based lesson introduction, it falls short of overcoming the foyer greeting as the unofficial class primer. They maintain the fellowship bonds formed in the foyer. Some learners shared a bible, though each person brought one, and notes for the class. It was unclear if the intent was to save desk space or to just continue to fellowship.

One couple sat together and shared a Bible. The traditional domestic role was on display. The husband appeared to be the chief learner, dressed in blue Dockers, dark brown belt and shoes, accented with a horizontally striped golf polo. His wife was clad in a long orange tie died crinkled skirt, straight from the Chico's catalog, flat shoes, with a beige shell top and was lightly adorned with makeup. His wife, though educated sat by his side and asked a few questions, however the main questions came from the husband.

The lesson began with a review of what was covered in the previous lesson and an overview of what will be covered this evening. I waited in vain for an objective to be clearly stated. When I tapped the person on the shoulder to ask what were we covering tonight she clearly stated, "1 Kings" in a tone that suggested it should be obvious.

A white board is used but the teaching is predominantly a lecture with brief breaks for questions and a singular check for understanding. This night is different from

most, as there is a PowerPoint presentation being used. The instructor's use of the technology provides a sense of assurance as there were not technological hiccups over the one-hour lesson and the slides flowed with ease.

As the lesson progressed, I noticed the class wasn't as interactive as the fellowship in the foyer. I wondered if the lack of response was due to familiarity with the teacher, a form of respect, or whether the pedagogical style conveyed a sense of dominance that limited the voice of the learner. The teacher taught with such authority, he proclaimed rather than suggested. He declared the events occurred in the book of 1 Kings, in a manner that suggested otherwise would appear blasphemous. There was no room left for an alternate interpretation, so the learners appeared to take his words as gospel.

The class closed in a request for questions, followed by a review of the timeline discussed, and a brief introduction into what would be discussed next week. Finally there was a prayer and a return to what began the evening...fellowship.

Chapter Four: Findings

Introduction

The old adage that *form follows function* best describes the rationale used by churches when designing a lay educational program. When developing a lay education program, the pedagogy used or rejected, impacts the learning achieved when it is implemented. When choosing an educational strategy to teach laity, the educational leaders at Paprika Baptist Church did not consider ICT use, or its impact on instruction. Educational specialists were not consulted. Instead they resorted to scriptural passages about education and developed a program with the hope that the population being served would fit the educational mold designed for them. The primary flaw in this design is that the Bible does not outline a formal pedagogy for teaching. Instead, there are pedagogical examples sprinkled throughout the scriptures, but these fall short of being doctrinal mandates. Therefore, what typically forms from this line of thought is an educational program with an endless cycle of classes leading to a perceived end, which no two learners can define alike. Case in point, when asked what was the end goal for a Christian education program the respondents' views were varied:

I think the goal of a Christian education program is to equip the learners so that they have as much knowledge about God and His Word so that they can go out and fulfill the Great Commission "...to go ye therefore and teach all nations..." and I think the goal of a Christian education program is to prepare laity so that when they go out, they can correctly share scriptural principles.

I would say that the end goal is for laity to be able to have the ability to teach bible study or another person. Each one teaches one. As a learner, you want to be

able to teach someone else what you have learned, so I believe that laity should be able to teach or help along someone else.

Christian education is to get you to know more about your purpose that God has for you on this earth. In fact, not only the purpose, but also who God is, your relationship with him, and with people.

When looking from the vantage point of all the Baptist churches within the western region, my investigations revealed that there was no significant difference in technology use for educating laity in a classroom setting between larger churches (over 1,000 parishioners) and smaller churches. The majority of churches within the region have congregations under 500 with varying demographics and locations rural, to suburban, to inner city. The use of technology for the purposes of lay education depended more upon the Pastor's style and congregational need than the location and size of the church. One comment that summarized this view was, "some of the larger churches use computers and computer-based programs for teaching children and youth. However, in the adult classes they still use small group conversations with PowerPoint." ICT use varied from place to place, PowerPoint is used in some churches and in others it's still the 1950s style of worship and education.

As illustrated in Figure 1, when considering the overall purposes of lay education programs within the regional churches three dominant themes emerged from the study: moral development, disciple development, and ecclesia preparation.

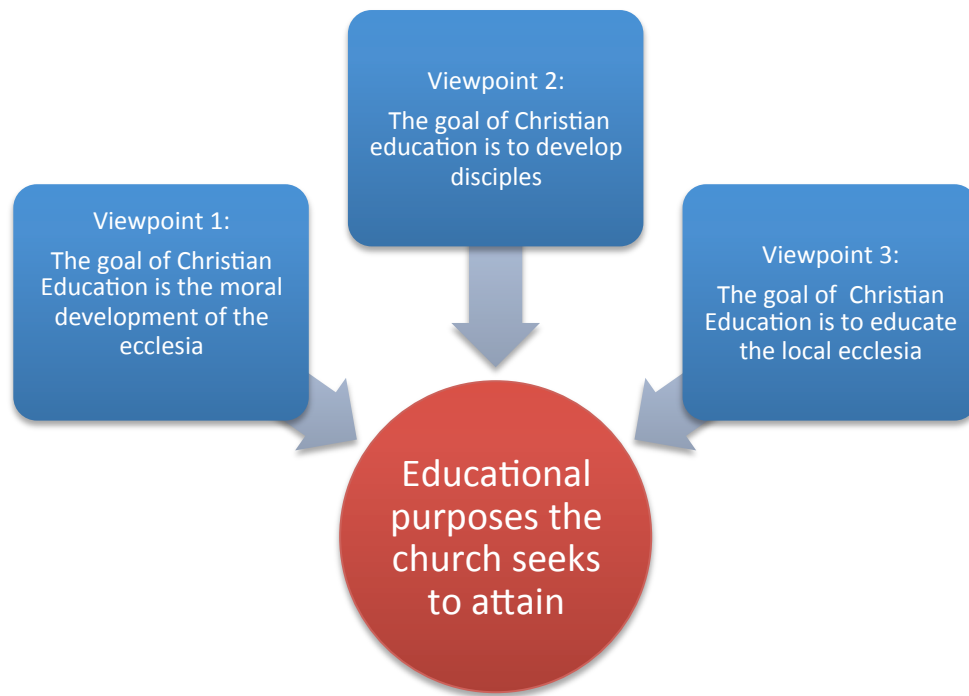


Figure 1. The three dominant themes emerged from the study depicting the educational purposes

Moral Development.

The goal of Christian education is the moral development of the ecclesia. Lay education using ICT requires knowledge of the multiple dimensions that comprise spiritual formation (Gross, 2006). Lay education consists of intellectual inquiry and spiritual formation. Intellectual inquiry teaches principles requiring a mental change. It's like having a different view about one's behavior towards others or how the actions of others are interpreted so that you can respond Biblically. As an example, the book of Proverbs states, "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Prov. 15:1). Intellectual inquiry teaches that when faced with an angry person it is better to speak kind words because to use harsh language will feed into the anger you face.

Spiritual formation involves the transformation of self for a greater moral purpose. It is like the second step to intellectual inquiry. Spiritual formation is when you believe “A soft answer turns away wrath...” to the point where your actions promote peace. As an example, through the process of spiritual formation the demeanors of Mother Theresa, the Dali Lama, or Desmond Tutu have transformed to such a degree that their actions, mannerism, and speech promote peace or peaceful interactions. The process of spiritual formation is independent of a specific religion as it is only a process.

While lay education includes formal aspects of curriculum, technology, and pedagogy, spiritual formation is independent of Biblical curriculum as it can occur outside of the learning environment. Thus, the teaching of spiritual formation is based on a faith, which functions independent of the curriculum. So when the Associate Minister at Paprika Baptist Church crafts a lesson, each teacher imbeds his or her epistemological beliefs of what constitutes knowledge into it. Their ICT use is dependent upon how they believe the learner constructs knowledge. As an example, teachers who use computers for low-order thinking skills use traditional transmission-oriented pedagogies. Teachers with constructivist pedagogies tend to use computers for higher-order thinking skills. This is why the pedagogical belief of the teacher is possibly the last barrier to full technological implementation (Ertmer, 2005). As stated within the literature review, the purpose of lay education is the spiritual formation of the ecclesia (Delamarter, 2004). Though ICT may be used, it is not required for spiritual formation. Therefore, as the lay educator uses his or her understanding of what spiritual formation is to teach (Gross, 2006), the level of ICT use to drive the lesson points differs from teacher to teacher even within the same

class. Unlike secular education, where a teacher groups students according to their learning needs (Cheng & Mok, 2008), and tests are used to measure student performance against pre-established benchmarks, lay education programs do not measure spiritual transformation beforehand; instead, the teachers assumes a level of commitment to daily reading and studying of the Bible.

Discipleship Development.

The goal of Christian education is to develop disciples. This is the view shared by the common parishioner. The purpose of education in the church is to help persons grow in the Christian faith so they can function as mature Christians in all aspects of life.

Individuals supporting this view believe the purpose of lay education is to fulfill the Great Commission "...and Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:18-19 KJV).

The term "teach" is contextually used to denote the learning of Biblical doctrine for the purposes of teaching in a variety of settings. Parishioners believe the priority is the application of learning regardless of the materials, technology or pedagogy used. When asked to describe what the implementation of ICT in educational programs should look like, respondents recognized its importance and encouraged gradual adoption:

I think to implement a regular course using ICT maybe we could slowly collect everyone's e-mail and send reminders to start out small with the technologies we posses and see how many people will embrace it. If there's a verse that we need to memorize, send it out and see how many people actually get the e-mail and how many people actually learn the verse and then we could branch out from there. I do not believe that we should bombard them with technology. Some of us would probably be okay with that while others are still getting into the loop. So, I think to start out small and just to let them know that we are trying to branch out so we

can possibly even reach more people like with the newsletter now being on our website.

I do think that it should be a goal of any church or any classroom teacher, for that matter, to institute technology. I know that as we look at our global community technology plays a role. I think even as early as our young children are in school, they are introduced to technology. It is supported in the classrooms through smart boards and overhead projectors. Many children use their own laptops or notebooks in order to complete assignments. I believe we are going to stimulate our children in the classroom at school and every aspect of our lives. I think that technology just reinforces and it brings to life words on a page. A lot of us are visual learners; we learn by touching and by doing, and the use of technology helps to stimulate that need in every way.

ICT use should be introduced slowly and increase in use depending on the needs and technological aptitude of the local church.

Ecclesia Preparation.

The goal of Christian education is to educate the local ecclesia and equip them for works of service as stated in the book of Ephesians chapter 4:

“...For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

The key word in the scripture is perfect meaning complete, whole or mature. The purpose for the gifts stated earlier in the verse is to grow/disciple the ecclesia (both local and global) until they become mature. Each local church has a statement addressing the “maturing” of the ecclesia within mission/vision statement. Lay education assists in preparing the local ecclesia to serve in various capacities for spiritual maturity to occur through experiential learning. The curriculum is holistic in nature towards addressing the physical and spiritual natures of man. As an example the church teaches the concept of EMAM (every member a minister) to help laity understand that as a member of the

ecclesia they are to serve (minister) to others while receiving education in Biblical doctrine (ministry) themselves. In the adult education courses laity receive education on the Biblical principles addressing the love of God. This addresses the spiritual nature of man (that which was formed by God). They are taught how to assist (minister) others in a manner that may be contrary to how they were treated. Additionally Biblical examples are provided for them to grasp the physical actions used to display God's love.

The purpose for Christian education at Paprika Baptist Church is to equip the local ecclesia for evangelism, discipleship, ministry, fellowship, and worship through the teaching of Biblical doctrine. This chapter discusses the rationales used for the development of an educational system at Paprika Baptist Church. The questions were formed from models for examining an education system as espoused by Ralph Tyler (1969).

Educational Purposes.

What educational goals does the local church seek to attain and what experiences are provided through ICT to achieve these purposes?

The educational goals Paprika Baptist Church sought to attain were to equip laity for local ministry through the teaching of Biblical doctrine. The church leaders sought to prepare the congregation so they could promulgate the Gospel message to their communities where they lived and worked.

Evangelism, at Paprika Baptist Church refers to the act of communicating Biblical doctrine in a manner that provides the hearer with accurate information on which he or she can make a sound decision about salvation. Laity has the responsibility of sharing

their faith with neighbors, friends, and colleagues. Each Sunday the parishioners are reminded of this by several key phrases proclaimed from the pulpit, such as, “It is your job to invite, and God will do the rest...” Statements like this one serve as a reminder to parishioners of what their essential duties are. However, this overarching view of lay education is unique to Paprika Baptist Church, therefore it is not transferable from congregation to congregation. Other church congregations visited during the period of this study revealed that parishioners are responsible for teaching their families, serving as moral examples to society, providing resources to those who are without, and other acts of kindness.

Every quarter Paprika Baptist church offers a new membership class entitled EMAM (Every Member a Minister) to share the “equipping” message to those new to the faith and the church. The class is usually taught by one of the lay educational leaders. Though the Associate Minister in charge of developing educational content encourages the use of ICT, the actual use observed was minimal. Even though the EMAM class has been running for over ten years, no stock sets of ICT-based visual aids were developed. It is uncertain why ICT use was infrequent when the educational leaders clearly stated during the interview that they desired ICT use. One member stated...

It was my hope and desire that for us to be a teaching program of excellence and that we would equip every lay member to fulfill their purpose. So when an individual comes through the door, it's our evangelism programs, which causes them to understand the Biblical doctrine necessary for him or her to grasp the plan of God outlined in the Bible. So, from those beginning points, where the person that is unlearned, our desire is to cause him [or her] to understand what the message is, all the way through their development, to fulfill that person's role...so he or she will become active in the larger ecclesia.

Discipleship as it is used at Paprika Baptist Church refers to one who is disciplined. In terms of lay education, a disciple is a parishioner who has taken courses over an unstated period of time, with the end goal of spiritual maturation or formation. At Paprika Baptist church the evidence of this spiritual maturation is consistent attendance of worship services and adult education classes. The belief that consistency equals growth over time appears to transcend the Baptist faith. As an example, in Catholicism, when a priest states “I have not seen you at confessions lately,” he typically means that one’s presence is a requirement for growth.

When educational leaders were asked why such a rudimentary tool as attendance is used to gauge a complex process like learning, they stated that the end result of Christian discipleship is measured not in the tests one takes but in the actions one demonstrates. The proofs of these demonstrations are examined when opportunity presents itself for laity to perform them. Therefore time is essential to the evaluation of learning.

Whether parishioners learn via ICT or other lecture-based methodologies doesn’t matter; the end result is how the person performs what is locally defined as spiritual maturity. Though the definition of spiritual maturity, which is not a part of this study, varies from church to church, and parish-to-parish, the measurement tool remains as a series of observations by Pastors, Associate Ministers, and lay education teachers over an undesignated period of time. If this sounds vague, it’s because it is. Nonetheless, before one becomes too critical, we must remember that this process has served the church and

communities well for centuries. Observation is how some parents tell if a child has learned or how teachers measure whether a student has mastered a technique.

Evidence of spiritual maturity when it is performed is sometimes called ministry. In this sense, it is closely related to discipleship. Paprika Baptist Church defines ministry as the tangible acts of kindness displayed by a person who acts out of genuine love. Examples would include when laity visits the sick and injured at the hospital, nursing home, or some other facility. When they call to encourage another in time of need, or other acts of kindness such as holding a door for a visitor, and helping the elderly to their seat during worship services. Each of these acts of kindness is seen as tangible evidence of ministry and Christian maturity regardless of whether ICT was used to teach the end result.

Fellowship on the other hand is the communication of compassion to those within the local ecclesia. Fellowship takes many forms. It can be the communication between laity before and after a Sunday service, or it can be the interactions between individuals at large gatherings such as a church picnic. Fellowship, as observed in this study, is the communication that takes place between laity for the purposes of bonding and collaborating. The value of fellowship to a church is a common sensitivity for the needs of others, thus impacting the mores of the church ethos, allowing it to minister to itself.

Worship is a term widely used to identify the expression of adoration by laity towards God during services. Though it takes place primarily during Sunday “worship” services, it can also happen as people are driving their vehicles, or engaging in an interactive lesson about the classic song “How great thou art.” The key emphasis

distinguishing worship from fellowship is the direction of the adoration. When the adoration is between lay members it is called fellowship; when the adoration is towards God it is called worship.

Adult education in congregational settings should create an atmosphere where laity grasps the intricacies of the message points being delivered. Thus, creating the ability for the members to be productive citizens in the greater ethos of Christendom. Lay education should allow for the student to rise from commonality to become skilled discerners of Biblical doctrine. When this occurs then laity can become the world influencers they were meant to be (Mercer, 2006).

Paprika Baptist Church primarily uses ICT as a means to communicate church information first, then as a learning tool when needed. Rosemary Williams, an educational leader stated, “Paprika Baptist Church uses a variety of visual media, particularly LCD type projectors, email, texting, and a website. Projectors are used predominately in the worship service and in classroom settings with larger audiences. We have overhead projectors; however, these antiquated display devices are rarely used. Our website is more informational and not used as a learning medium. We use electronic messaging (emails and texts) to notify/remind our membership of meetings and other events. We also use a phone tree whereby we can call our entire or select membership.”

The term ICT refers to both hardware devices and software controls. In light of this, the opinions about ICT varied. Some parishioners’ viewed ICT use as valid for the purpose of classroom education only, others saw ICT as a visual aid enhancing the learning experience whether in worship services or in the classroom, and some saw it as a

nuisance to communication, period. For comparison purposes, a local Catholic church, not far from Paprika Baptist Church, does not use any ICT during their worship services without a complaint from any parishioner. However, when it came to classroom teaching, ICT use is prevalent as the priest, or lay education leader, though the advantages of ICT use were beneficial to the lesson. The point is while ICT can be used to teach and educate laity, its value is limited to the perceptions of the user and their audience. More information on the hindrances of ICT implementation is presented in the following chapter.

My field observations revealed ICT use allowed the parishioners to grasp an understanding of the proclaimed message by infusing a mix of multimedia (message points and video clips) to focus the learners on a single theme. When parishioners took notes during the sermon delivery, the graphically displayed messages aided in their comprehension. As an example, Cumin Baptiste stated, “I love it when I see the scripture on the screen because if I didn’t hear it, or I forgot what the verse was, because I always write it down, if it’s on the screen, it gives me time to go back and make sure that I have the right one.”

Biblical education is a multi-faceted process combining traditional education, a layer of theology, with sprinklings of local culture, adapted to address the moral development of the ecclesia. As an example, Paprika Baptist Church developed several comprehensive programs such as:

- EMAM – every member a minister and every leader a learner is a course designed to educate new members of Paprika Baptist Church in church doctrine and assist the new believer in finding their gifts and callings.

- Sunday school – a traditional Baptist course addressing the Biblical passages in the New and Old Testament. The curriculum is designed to cover the entire Bible in four years. The lessons address key issues relating to moral and spiritual development.
- Foundational series – these courses are for the senior members of the congregation. Classes are held on Wednesdays at noon and cater to those who are either new to the faith or are mature, but still desire a course where the other students are around the same age.
- Other adult courses address specific demographics such as singles, married, women, and men groups. Children’s courses and courses specific to youth, while acknowledged, are not part of this study

The overarching purposes of lay education development at Paprika Baptist Church include an active knowledge of Biblical values to fulfill local vision, mission, and individual purpose. One member summarized the goal of Christian education by stating its purpose was to strengthen us Biblically and help us to understand the knowledge contained in the Bible.

An oft-quoted phrase by Paprika Baptist Church’s educational leaders is “we are here for the purposes of equipping the church for evangelism, discipleship, ministry, fellowship, and worship through teaching.” Interviews conducted during the study validated the leaders’ view by consistently stating they believed the purpose of lay educational development was to strengthen the ecclesia, in the areas of Biblical understanding and comprehension.

Learning Experiences

How do the learning experiences achieve those objectives and how are they organized for effective instruction?

Traditionally, the purpose of a learning objective is to state what the outcome (objective) of the lesson is and how as a class the learners were expected to obtain it. At Paprika Baptist Church, the line between the overarching learning objectives and the educational experience selected to achieve those objectives was not clear. Courses such as EMAM, Sunday school, foundational classes, and adult classes are offered. However, there is no curricular alignment; thus, the outcomes may or may not achieve the lay educational development sought. It is as if some of the courses, though educational, were provided for the purposes of having a menu of classes for laity to partake in, yet lacking a nutritional label.

One reason for this may be that the use of ICT for teaching laity was not in the church's original plan for lay education. Even though ICT was in existence when the church began and the intents of education philosophy were formed, its benefits were not introduced until later in the church's educational development. As one of the educational leaders stated,

Presently, the immediate educational objectives are to grow the congregation in their understanding of the Bible. The goal is to have them discover the truths of the Bible, and increase their overall comprehension and understanding. This goal was arrived at based on previous attempts at providing classes where it was believed that the subjects were relevant and pertinent to the needs of the people. Seemingly, based on attendance as the measure, they were not as relevant as we had believed. Therefore, it was decided the best solution was to go back to basics, meaning, back to Biblical principles.

When it was decided that ICT was a viable method for learning, only those teachers who desired its use rapidly integrated it into the learning experience of the parishioners. Because ICT was never a mandate for learning, its use was relegated to

being accepted by those who desired its benefits. As an example, when asked about the manner in which ICT is used, one educational leader stated,

We have used everything from actual artistic drawings and paintings. We have used overhead projectors, we have used puppets, and we have used the large overhead LCD projector screen. I have taken the puppet stage and spread it out from one side of the church to the other side of the church, and I have hung huge posters on them to teach eschatology last day kinds of classes. Paprika Baptist Church is a gifted church and we use everything from object lessons to pots and pans in the pulpit, videotapes, we write newsletter articles, and we are just starting our training in terms of computerizing.

While this view of ICT use is encouraging, the uses outlined were limited to one teacher. Some parishioners recognize the benefits of ICT as a good thing for the youth and children because they are the technological ones. In other words, use it over there for the kids. “Electronics is one of our biggest tools for teaching and learning, so it should be a goal. Most of the children, in everything they do, they are using hand-held calculators, games and, in school, they are all on computers, so it only makes sense to make sure that in the religious world we also have technology.”

Paprika Baptist Church’s learning experiences were not selected to illicit a predetermined outcome. Instead, the church developed coursework aligned to a series of Biblical scriptures rooted in the book of Ephesians. The belief was that if a course on basic Biblical doctrine education were taught with fidelity, the results would be a dynamic learning experience. Each class, whether ICT-based or not, was expected to provide each parishioner with a unique Biblical experience to assist in his or her spiritual formation. One Biblical leader stated, “The end purposes are to equip the people of God for works of service (Ephesians 4). Education is for the purpose of preparing the congregation to serve in various capacities in the church, community, and workplace. The

curriculum is spiritual and holistic in nature towards addressing the physical and spiritual man.” Again, the irony of this comment is the misalignment between outcome desired and learning experiences selected. As an example, if the course outcome is service-based acts of piety then the course design should to allow for learning experiences such as role-play, teaching pedagogies that elicit this behavior, and the use of ICT to specifically address the objectives until they are met.

When contrasting spiritual education at Paprika Baptist Church to secular education we need to look no further than the outcomes. In secular education the outcomes are planned based upon local policy, goals, and objectives from which curricular objectives are formed. However, spiritual education at the local church level often comprises watered down versions of seminary coursework because some Biblical leaders believe laity should be developed differently than themselves (Mercer, 2006). By watered down, I am referring to facts, figures, names, and locations versus reasons, rationales, and implications for the actions themselves. Coursework addressing hermeneutics, eschatology, or spiritual dimensions are all courses that can be taught, and in some churches are taught, to laity. However, the dominant view of lay education is that higher-level coursework are reserved for those seeking to know more about spiritual matters or those who have an internal dedication to ministerial work (Mercer 2006).

Assessment of lay education coursework is an educational faux pas. “I am a person that really doesn’t believe in tests because sometimes I believe that people study to test,” one member exclaimed when asked about assessment. In fact, churches in the western region do not assess lay coursework outside of a few follow-up questions and

brief checks for understanding. The true reason is uncertain but what is certain is that learning outcomes are measureable whether spiritual or secular. All educational objectives are measureable.

Spiritual formations address the process of how a person matures spiritually. This is important to a church because it is their business to develop their parishioners' faith in God. Educational measurement is not as important to Paprika Baptist Church as the methods used to achieve personal discovery. Every class is designed to allow room for the unplanned but expected intervention of God to aid in teaching.

In secular education the hidden curriculum consists of items that are learned, but were not taught directly as part of the curricula; they occur as a result of being in the learning environment. While some null curricular items can be planned, the comprehension of the null is unique to the individual. In the lay learning environment, the null curriculum is one of the loudest sections of the unwritten lesson plan. As an example, a learning environment filled with crosses, stained glass, and high ceilings, whose décor screams conservatism speaks that, here, we learn a certain curriculum in a certain way. Then add to this, environment mannerism of piety, smiles, and people whose fashion sense resembles the 1960s.

Similarly, while a student at a large Midwestern University, I noticed that technology was important because in the majority of the classrooms there were a projector, computer, flat screen TV, and hoards of little computer connection jacks sprinkled throughout. In the halls and little nooks, there were dry-erase boards on wheels, more computer jacks, TVs, and connections to allow for the use of technology. However,

I have yet to see a sign stating, “We love technology here.” All of these items are part of the null curriculum that speak to the learner and becomes part of the curriculum.

In churches, when laity is taught one series of lessons and the Deacons/Ministers another, it speaks to what one ought to know. When doctrines regarding baptism are taught and eschatology left unaddressed, it speaks about the values the church holds regarding the curriculum and learning levels of laity. Therefore in a church setting, the null curriculum sets the stage and teaches laity about their role before the instructor opens his or her mouth.

Another primary ministerial emphasis for Paprika Baptist Church is the spiritual formation of the congregants and the support of missions locally and globally. Local missions consist of the efforts expended to reach the community they serve with acts of piety in an effort to demonstrate the love of God. The exact acts vary from cleaning up a yard or painting a fence for the elderly, to hospital visits, marital counseling, and homework help for youth. This means the bulk of their in-class ministerial efforts are designed to produce individuals who will serve in areas that support ongoing ministry, such as teachers of children/youth, ushers, greeters, lay leaders of women, men, youth, or general functions in music. The use of ICT is beneficial, but not pertinent to lay development in each of these areas.

Additionally, Paprika Baptist Church intentionally supports the advancement of their ministry for teaching and educating laity in foreign countries, both directly through their support of missionary work, and indirectly through organizational support for the American Baptist Church of the Rocky Mountain Region (ABCRM).

During the EMAM class, in particular, the parishioners are tested for their spiritual acuity with an assessment, which highlights what character traits or talents they possess, so they can serve in a particular area of ministry. Upon first glance, the test appears to be a generic survey where people choose whether they like working in groups or individually, or whether they likes working with children or adults. The assessment results serve as a guide to assist the prodding of laity from the fence of indecision to become involved serving in the church. One education leader stated, “We give them a gift test to try to identify their gifts and then, at that point, to place him or her in whatever ministry they need to be in.”

In North American churches, lay education courses are the dominant vehicle for equipping the masses (English et al., 2006). The primary purpose of these courses is the spiritual formation of the ecclesia (Delamarter, 2004). Lay education and development is typically localized, non-formal instruction used to teach laity the fundamentals of Christianity (Fleischer, 2006). During the study, the adult education class at Paprika Baptist Church was engrossed in a sequential review of the Old Testament. The educational leader stated it was a formal directive from the Pastor who decided on a back-to-basics approach towards adult educational development, “We are reading through the Bible; it’s been the Pastor’s vision that we move in that direction, for the last two years and so, at this time, we have a read-through the Bible program, we have two major Bible studies. Both are on Wednesdays; one is at 12-noon and one is at 6:45 pm and, at this time, we are seeing great growth in our noon-day class.”

Curricular organization follows a pattern similar to that found in traditional educational environments. On the exterior, the outline of coursework is linear. A core group of courses exist to address the foundation of Biblical experience, from which an individual can build an in-depth doctrinal understanding of God. Beginning with the Every Member a Minister (EMAM) course, the individual is introduced to basic scriptures regarding theology, salvation and the doctrine of baptism. As this linear path continues, topics such as eschatology are introduced to the extent that they address spiritual life and death. From there the parishioners arrive at a place where they can make a decision regarding their place or role within the local ecclesia. As the class culminates, the person can choose to become an active member within the church, serving in a specific ministry such as the choir, ushers, or greeters. The hope is that in time, parishioners can grow and learn in a manner conducive with their learning style, pace, and schedule availability.

The church has two large multiple purpose rooms for educating laity. One room is approximately 60'x 20' and the other is 20'x 40'. Both are equipped with a retractable folding divider wall to separate them into three or two rooms respectively. Each room is outfitted with a small 4-foot dry erase board. The church has a mobile cart with a laptop and front-mounted LCD projector for those teachers desiring ICT use.

The educational pedagogy in the classes observed without ICT use are taught without stating or testing for a formal objective such as, "At the end of this lesson learners will possess an understanding of the Judges of Israel during the time of..." When I inquired of the teacher why an objective wasn't provided, I did not get a clear response.

My observations led me to conclude that it was because the church desired an informal presence within the classroom, so learners wouldn't be intimidated to think they need a formal education or prerequisite knowledge to participate in a course. However, parishioners differed on the need for formality. One member stated "...I do believe there should be a formal sign-up because if you have to purchase books, you need to know how many people are coming..." Most stated positive views about the informal nature of the classes.

Obstacles and Opportunities

What obstacles and opportunities are present in the use of ICT?

Obstacles

Technology use is left up to the individual. Some of the laity, referred to as elders in the church, do not possess computer devices themselves and believe that it is useless to grasp information from websites, DVDs, or PowerPoint presentations. In their minds, a good communicator mitigates the need for such frivolous things. For example, when asked about technological implementation, most comments by the elder participants pointed to the implementation for the children or younger audiences. Some of the comments were, "I could see that [technology] being implemented in the classroom settings here. Having it in the children's church, and then also having it in the nursery because the nursery can do the same thing." Another stated, "I think also with MP3s and iPods, our young people, the future of the church, is going to also be like the future of the regular classrooms. We will be able to bring up or research a scripture faster, and also cross-reference, so I think ICT is very important to the future of the church."

Nuances exist within learning environments that might not be noticed by the casual observer. One example is architecture. I asked a priest one day why the ceilings in churches were so high. The height presents challenges for heating, sound, and lighting effectiveness. After a brief pause, then a smile, he shared with me that the purpose for high ceilings is to give the illusion that God is present. The people need space so they can look up as they worship, so ceiling height is needed to create a greater presence. Another such nuance is technology.

During a recent presidential speech given by President Obama from the Rose Garden, it became apparent to me that, as a society, we accept technologies such as touch screen TVs and LCD projectors from news agencies or professors, as they are tools used within their respective industry. However, though we are a technology-rich country, I have not witnessed a touch screen television or a LCD projector in use during a presidential address. This observation was duplicated when I noticed the Pastor of Paprika Baptist Church reverting to using his leather bound Bible instead of the one on his trusty iPod. One Sunday, I asked the Pastor why he stopped using his iPod to reference scripture while in the pulpit. He responded that some of the parishioners chided him for texting in the pulpit (an area considered sacred by some). Though I thought that he should have defended himself and explained what he was actually doing, the wisdom I gleaned from this is that though you may be correct, exerting your correctness may not be the wise thing to do. I concluded when leading in religious circles, sometimes it is better to accept criticism without a fight if you are trying to teach the people a higher principle. Perhaps he felt that it simply was not worth the effort to teach people about the difference

between texting and scriptural referencing prior to delivering a message. One Biblical teacher shared, “Sometimes the old-fashion way just works for some people. A computer would not be considered spiritual to me; the electronic word just doesn’t work for me. It needs to be written.”

In my observations, the role of the teacher is critical to the epistemological values espoused within the lay educational classroom. In churches, the traditional teacher-student relationship is one where the teacher possesses more doctrinal knowledge, has considerably more experience using doctrinal principles, and has spent more time in research of the scriptures than the student. Therefore questions regarding the lesson tend to focus more on the content rather than the teacher’s interpretation of scripture. However, if the teacher is seen as inexperienced, the questions are directed at their understanding of doctrinal concepts, rather than the material under study. As an example, if a parishioner believes that water baptism is only by full immersion and the teacher espouses that sprinkling or some other method is acceptable, then a debate of Biblical doctrine ensues regardless of the age or experience of the teacher. But, with the advent of electronic pads and smartphones, use of ICT within the classroom changes the role of the student from a common learner to an informed participant. In one Bible study session a parishioner armed with a mobile pad device challenged the teacher’s view of events occurring in the life of the Biblical character David, the son of Jesse. The questions dealt with the details of when Samuel the prophet chose to anoint David instead of his brothers. His ability to reference Biblical material was faster and with greater accuracy than the teacher’s memory

Opportunities.

Lay education is localized education. Thus, it caters to the specific needs of the populous served. Paprika Baptist church currently does not have a formal online lay education program in place. According to the Assistant Minister over lay education, past attempts have failed because generic programs are not designed to teach topics the way the students were trained to learn and the church did not have the resources to dedicate a full-time person to the effort. Currently, the church is testing a generic online training program for new teachers. When asked why use new teachers, the response centered around the idea that new teachers need to learn basic information regarding teaching principles, ethics, and children safety, which are generic to any institution.

Another option is to take the existing program and tailor it to an online audience. However, while such an endeavor appears to involve simply merging an existing program to an online format, it does not address the learner's needs existing in the local context. For distance education to work there must first be a genuine need for distance education. If the church just presented a distance education program where the premise within the educational structure is relationship-based, this may present a problem or the learners may not accept the format.

However, some learners may adopt the technology if they are used to this format as a means of receiving information. If trained properly, a small class may be able to use websites with a variety of Biblical versions to choose from, such as Biblegateway.com where the versions of the Bible can be accessed with a click of a mouse, and various Greek definitions or Biblical teaching aids are at a finger's reach.

When using a mass-produced program tailored for a local congregation, weekly Bible study programs could become the centerpiece of lay education in the local church (Davis, 2007). Classes for youth are based upon prewritten and published material versus material specific to the local populous. One parishioner stated that a generic program in an online format is best because books and other items are visual.

Evaluation

How does local ecclesia evaluate the effectiveness of the learning experiences and what are the implications for the church and lay education in general?

One primary advantage of using ICT to teach and educate laity is evaluation. Whether formative or summative, ICT allows the teacher to easily gather data from a lesson or topic under study through a series of questions whose responses are computed electronically. However, evaluation, whether via ICT or not, isn't the primary goal of the Christian education program at Paprika Baptist Church. One leader stated, "There is little or no follow-up to evaluate the learning or to ensure comprehension..." While this statement may appear brash, it is a purposeful answer rooted in Biblical scripture and tradition. As an example, the true test of priests is not whether they passed their seminary courses; rather, it is if they love the people they serve. It is the condition of their heart that speaks of their effectiveness; it is a test, which no one can measure but God Himself. According to Biblical scripture there is no evaluation but the one given by God Himself at the end of our lives "...And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:25 KJV). Until the final judgment, we are evaluated by our responses to the everyday ills of life.

Continuing with the paradigm of non-evaluation, growth in the Biblical classroom is considered as maturity over time and not whether you have actually comprehended the material at the time it was presented. One must consider the purpose of lay education when considering the outcomes. When knowledge is presented, especially Biblical knowledge, each person grasps the basic content of the lesson, but spiritual formation may take some time to develop.

Another church member stated it this way: “Scripture states ...we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual (1 Cor. 2:13 KJV). While it may appear difficult to measure the internal epiphany one receives during a lesson that is oft called “a move of the spirit,” it is possible to measure learning. Students in a classroom setting are supposed to retain and be able to regurgitate lower-level knowledge the teacher reveals to them. The religious educators use the belief that it is the Holy Spirit of God that reveals knowledge. While this belief system may appear acceptable to the members of Paprika Baptist Church, it flies in the face of reason. If it is the Holy Spirit teaching then why have curriculum? Having knowledge of doctrinal reasoning, I understand that the emphasis is that teachers believe there is an “internal assistance” provided to help the learners grasp spiritual concepts. This is called enlightenment. The member continued by stating, “In a regular classroom setting, the material presented is all head knowledge (information for secular use) and your achievement is based upon what you know. This is not true for spiritual things. Spiritual information is application-based (what you actually do with the

knowledge you have learned). The beauty of Biblical classes is that you really don't know who received anything because the gospel is personalized."

Therefore, evaluation of spiritual criteria occurs asynchronous to the course, hence the scripture, "For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his own fruit" (Luke 6:43-44 KJV).

If the evidence of learning is the production of fruit (e.g., good works towards others), then teachers should provide time or evidence-based evaluations like role-play, blogs, journals, think, pair, and share activities and the like to allow multiple points for evaluation of the learning content. These evaluation strategies can assist the teacher to grasp the level of "fruit" production occurring in the classroom, instead teachers relegate evaluation in the traditional sense to factual items of dates, times, and regurgitation of highly quoted scriptures. When asked, teachers say, "how can we evaluate things that are not seen?" Learning is based on one's faith, which takes place in the heart of the individual. My internal response was salvation takes place in the heart, learning does not, therefore salvation is by faith, and education is not.

The parishioners of Paprika Baptist Church shared the delayed view of testing for fruit. One member stated,

...I am a person that really doesn't believe in tests because sometimes I believe that people study to test... I think that people should be tested on their actions in religion and their true heart because you are dealing with someone's eternal life. What happens to the person that is mentally incapable or impaired? Can you test them on the book of John? But you could test their heart, their actions. You can look at them and believe and guide them through the religious study of love, humility, and charity and they can give you that, but as far as giving them a

question and answer, some people can't do that and so I wouldn't restrict it to just a test.

Others believed in a voluntary testing of facts, figures, dates, and names. For example, Chipotle Reed stated, "...It (testing) should be voluntarily. If you look at the office of a minister, they have to be tested. If you look at the office of a deacon, they have to be tested on what they've studied over a year and a half, so I believe that, in some way, if I wanted to offer an accredited class or an accelerated class, it should be voluntary-based to be tested." Another member chimed in stating, "I feel the same way, I do not think there should be some form of test because if you've read the book of John, there are some answers to questions that you should know when they are asked to you." I assumed the commenter was referring to the popular verses in the book of John regarding Christian salvation.

I thought the implications for not having a formal evaluation system for laity may place a diminished value on the general education courses in the perception of the church leadership but it doesn't. As an example, Deacons must endure a one-year course then afterwards they are publically tested in an open forum in view of the congregation prior to being awarded the office of Deacon. During a special evening service, the candidates sit on the platform under spotlights like a scene from a Perry Mason investigation. They must respond correctly to questions about their faith, baptism, and lifestyle by a group of ministers. Each answer must have a scriptural reference that must be quoted. The purpose for this exercise is to prove to the congregation their mastery of scriptural passages. Though the candidates are colleagues and friends they are barred from helping each other. Having observed this ritual personally, I can say that I have seen some creative

forms of assistance. At the end of this exercise the ministers leave and discuss which candidates have passed the test and will receive the office of a Deacon. While these discussions take place, the candidates remain on stage and do their best to appear confident. Afterwards, the panel returns and the decisions are rendered. However, no such test is given to laity. The exact reason this is accepted may differ by church and denominational belief but my investigations reveal a belief system that says a certain level of knowledge is required for those desiring leadership offices and a different level is required for laity. Whether the class is a yearlong series through the Old Testament or a four-week mini-series, the primary benefit for course completion is the personal satisfaction in taking the course. This may be the primary detriment of a local lay education program, the lack of finality. In retrospect I ask myself, is it my secular education beliefs that say conclusion is essential to serve as a launching point for the next course, or is it really essential for laity? The lay education courses observed were perpetual in nature with no end, so it was difficult to gauge value of such a course. As an example, though the adult Sunday school class covers the Bible every four years, a learners may be there for 20 or more years, taking the same class without a sense of conclusion. The only change observed was that a new book was issued every quarter. Therefore, the perceived value may be a personal intrinsic sense of accomplishment or satisfaction from having been taught the Bible for many years.

Not all parishioners share the view of fruit production as a means of evaluation for learning. One member stated, “I don’t think there is enough ICT-based evaluations available for the things that you are actually learning. It is more of sitting in the

classrooms and listening, but how do you really know if someone is learning if there's no way of performing the tasks in which they have been taught?"

Clearly this parishioner believes that lecture-based methods are not addressing her needs or she may be more inclined toward kinesthetic styles of learning.

Summary

In summary, when the leaders of Paprika Baptist Church initially designed their lay education program, ICT was either not part of the educational plan or seen as something that could be added later to the educational program. It came about later, after they perceived the value it could bring to their program. However the meal of educational design was already made so ICT was added like salt and pepper on a dining table, only as needed and by those who desire more seasoning than was already part of the dish.

The groups that were interviewed considered the use of ICT as something that could help their education; however, no group or individual considered building a program around it or making it a mandatory component of the educational process. When asked the pedagogical question, "what do you see as the benefit from using ICT technology as a teaching tool," the responses centered on the premise of ICT being important because it engages the learner in different ways than a lecture can, but the participants stopped short of saying it was vital to the education and development of laity. One response that summarizes this point was:

I think it helps people to use all skills; all of our senses whether seeing, hearing, and touching, and that component where you have the video screen they say if you see something, it increases your chances of understanding and learning so I think that it is a great value and I think we live in a culture, in a time where people expect to see multimedia.

Therefore, the overall purpose the church sought to attain was to design a religious education system to educate laity in the basic doctrine of Baptist Christians. A specific pedagogy including the use of ICT, was not mandated. The parishioners were trained to hone their gifts for the benefit of the local ecclesia, which translates into a positive influence on the greater ethos of Christendom. ICT use for the purposes of teaching and educating laity is perceived as a modern additive used to visually explain the Biblical doctrine rather than a medium to grasp scriptural knowledge leading to spiritual formation.

The learning experiences selected to attain the objectives for lay education were vague due to doctrinal interpretations, differences in class structure and pedagogy. Doctrinal interpretations on scriptural passages regarding lay education were not organized into clear goals for the teachers to achieve. The differences in class structure varied from teacher to teacher and class to class thus creating an internal inconsistency. For example, an adult class changed location based upon who taught the class. This created an inconsistency as one location offered tables, chairs and a dry erase board creating a classroom styled environment, when another did not. When taught by another teacher the class was in the sanctuary, a voluminous space suited to a lecture-hall styled presentation. Though the pedagogy can vary by teacher and style, the course intent and purpose should remain consistent. However, at Paprika Baptist Church the pedagogy changed between classes to such a degree that the course content and purpose were disrupted.

Learning in K-20 education is prescribed and aligned to a specific set of standards established by educational leaders within a given area of expertise. In Biblical education, the learning outcomes are localized, therefore doctrinal beliefs contained in scriptural passages, the values, perceptions, and economics of the church are the driving factors for the standards. Laity is oft perceived as individuals who do not know what they need to learn in order to develop spiritually, therefore the learning material is prescribed. They have the freedom to choose offerings and the order in which they are taken, but this freedom of choice is not to be confused with a personalized educational plan. The choice of courses rarely leads to a terminal certificate of Christian education because lay education is an on-going activity; as such the typical rewards for attending more classes is internal confidence in biblical doctrine.

The obstacles and opportunities impeding a viral spread of ICT throughout the church are the mindset of the learners and the mindset of the leaders. While some parishioners state they are ready for ICT to be used in more ways than visual presentations, others believe that it should be implemented for the young. The education leaders leave the use of ICT up to the teacher, so integration is sporadic. While there is definitely room to move some of the teaching programs to a pure ICT format, technological hurdles to customize a program to the specific needs of the congregation are key hindrances preventing on-line or hybrid formats.

The evaluation tool used for educational growth is time and attendance followed by manifested actions of piety. In essence, formative assessments take place during the learning as follow-up questions for understanding or investigative questions by the

teacher to query the student's knowledge about the topic under study. Summative assessments are not used as they make the class more formal than the students' desire. In either case ICT was not used on a consistent basis as some teachers who were prone to ICT use had jeopardy-like questions imbedded into a PowerPoint presentation and others chose a question and answer style probing of the students

While attendance doesn't appear as an evaluation tool, its use assumes the learner was attentive to the instruction, thus, given enough time there would be sufficient information transformation to perform a series of formative markers for assessment.

After an undesignated period of time the lay education leaders began to look for evidence that the learning received had taken root and produced some form of fruit. Once a correlation was drawn between class attendance and actions leading towards a positive Christian culture, summative conclusions are determined. Though rudimentary, this method allows for an unobtrusive evaluation of the learning objectives without having the parishioners feeling as if they were tested.

How ICT is used within the local church context for lay education largely depends on the vision of the church or seminary (Delamarter, 2005). The researcher's observations through ministerial experience in helping multiple denominations and churches suggest two general points. First, the larger the church, the larger the possibility of ICT use because its functionality is needed to articulate a sermon or Biblical message to a mass audience. Second, the more the church leadership is open to ICT use, the more ICT is used within the local context. This is because a "buy-in" exists regarding the functional benefits of ICT. Thus the leadership does not need to be convinced of its

usefulness. The continuum of ICT implementation ranges from expert implementation at one end to trial and error at the other. Churches may hire a consultant skilled in ICT implementation or introduce ICT based on the way they have seen it used in their own experience or in another church. Therefore, each church's vision for, and knowledge of, ICT influences the speed and methodology of implementation.

Chapter Five: Summary

Introduction

Within universities there is an active debate about the role research has on education. Some see the ability to teach as secondary to the ability to perform research (Casado-Díaz, Mas-Ruiz, & Sellers-Rubio, 2010) Similarly, with churches, sound technological pedagogy is secondary to knowledge of the scriptures. Thus, subject-matter knowledge trumps the ability to disseminate knowledge itself. While this view isn't widely accepted, it applies to a majority of churches across the American landscape.

Information and communication technology used in religious education environments is the same as ICT-based education in non-religious environments because the technology used takes on a shape unique to its setting. As an example, within a local church, the size, diversity, and location are influencers to the way technology is used. With suburban church audiences above 800 parishioners, it is common to see video-based announcements, televisions throughout the facility, automated numbering systems for childcare and projectors for the classroom. To the leaders, communication may consist of "tweets" and e-mail. The sermon messages are either live streamed or podcasted with the bulk of the announcements disseminated through the church website. However, in churches fewer than 100 parishioners, little ICT is seen or used because, in relational settings, the cost might outweigh the benefits so announcements are on a posted on corkboards in the lobby. The bulk of the communication is verbal and informal.

Classrooms, offices or the main sanctuary are the only places where there is a projector, or computer. The leadership might possess a smartphone or electronic calendar but my observations reveal a casual, “call me” or an informal date provided from their calendar.

Additionally, within each church, the level of technology between teachers and students vary as the age, gender, and education level of the student’s factor into the class demographics. In secular education, whether rural or urban ICT is mandated. Yet each locale uses it with a personal flavor. Some institutions are proud of their marquee boasting their name, with scrolling messages of the week’s announcements, yet, others are sports-focused with animated screens and more ads splattered across than an Indy drivers race suit. Schools have websites, with each teacher possessing a webpage. Wiki-pages are commonplace, attendance is automated and teacher aides are electronic. In short, their policies, principles, and procedures address how much technology is used. This is the basic contrast between lay and secular use of ICT.

When I began this research, I sought to investigate how ICT could be used to teach and educate laity in a religious setting. Having been raised in religious settings from childhood, it was puzzling to me why the teaching tools found in traditional education settings were absent when I went to church. Was there a double standard? Was the lack of ICT related to costs somehow? Years later, my educational pursuits allowed me the opportunity to formally investigate this fundamental question, so I relished the opportunity. The research process was difficult; what began as a brief case study ended up as a multi-year project full of complexity. The research began simply. Using a variety of journals and books, I laid a base of literature depicting the past, present, and proposed

future uses of ICT in lay settings. I allowed the authors to speak from their vantage points without intervention. I summarized their viewpoints and quoted their sayings.

Unbeknownst to me initially, at Paprika Baptist Church, the Bible was used as a source of reference for educational programming. Biblical passages addressing the formation of education on a global sense were used as a basis for program development, and even though the contextual application, technology, and teaching style was different, the idea of lay education was timeless.

Lay education is both formal and informal. In the formal sense, it consists of a full immersion in some form of a local residential program such as a seminary. In such a program, senior members of the denomination teach the young as in the days of old when knowledge was passed from father to son or mother to daughter. In the non-formal sense the senior members of a local church educate the laity for local missions such as evangelism. ICT use in either environment is considered beneficial, but nonessential.

The methods were simple: prepare the data, explore the data, organize the data into themes, report, interpret, and validate the findings. This is where the difficulty became apparent. What I once perceived as black and white became various shades of grey. In the end the data spoke for itself. ICT impacts lay instruction, however, I am not sure why it might have taken the church a long time to implement it. As questions emerged, I used research questions as a lens to help me to understand the rationale used in developing their lay education program, but it left me pondering ICT's impact in the process. It appears that ICT was an afterthought, like an upgrade to a computer software package, it was only a modification to meet the demands of the changing time not a tool

to transform the learning process. The mental pattern from the beginning was that “we could accomplish lay education without it.” So I wondered what was their initial view about of lay education? Was it education just for laity or was it education to keep the people in the seats accomplishing the local mission of the church? This question still haunts me.

Implications

In closing, my observations, interviews, and field notes have driven me to one conclusion: education is education and faith is faith. There are three points I would like to leave with you: first, salvation is by faith, education is not; second, the decision to use ICT for educating laity is not a religious one; and third, the instructional need of laity and lessons under study should drive the use of technology.

First, salvation is by faith, education is not. While Biblical revelation may appear mystic and incomprehensible to the ordinary person without a practical understanding of Judaism or Christianity, sound education principles that allow dissemination of knowledge is not. Religious education is not new, and like other forms of education benefits from the use of ICT. It is true that in lay education the teacher faces a multidimensional learner with varying levels of spiritual progression making it difficult to measure growth objectively (Gross, 2006). However, difficult is a far cry from unattainable. Hess (2005) argued for the expansion of media and ICT in the use of theological education, asserting that educators must meet the students at their level of learning and that theological institutions should recognize that today’s audiences differ from the ones in which they may have been raised. Therefore, Biblical education that

possesses a clear objective and has a defined curriculum can be taught using ICT with measurable outcomes. As stated earlier, information and communication technologies add to the pedagogical process, not create it. Lay teachers, or any teachers for that matter who have received successful classroom management strategies using ICT or any other pedagogy will succeed (McGrail, 2007). Church educators must remember that a classroom is first and foremost a place where learning occurs (Meeks, 2004). Whether the classroom is a computer laboratory or a traditional space, the end goal of lay education is the same; the only difference is the tools that are used.

In its barest sense, education, whether religious or not, is a recipe involving four core independent ingredients: teacher, student, subject under study, and environment. This is followed by a dependent variable (the goal or purpose of the learning), granted this varies depending on the type of study. Afterwards, it is seasoned by a host of pedagogical flavors designed to reach a desired outcome. There is nothing mystical about it; the process is sound, empirical, and duplicable in other environments. The mere message of evangelism proves this fact. Evangelism is basically taking a message and duplicating it to be heard by the masses. The message caters to the local populous, and differentiates without losing its core theme and purpose. Salvation is by faith, education is not.

Second, the use of ICT to educate laity is not a religious decision; it's an educational one. When deciding to use ICT or not, each local church must ask several simple questions such as: What education purposes do I desire to attain and what

experiences will attain these purposes? Also, how are these learning experiences that were selected to reach those objectives organized for effective instruction?

Answering these questions does not constitute a visit with the local Archbishop; rather they involve sound reasoning regarding measurable objectives about the audience, environment and the learning styles of the learners. The use of ICT can impact what occurs within the classroom when applied correctly. Information and communication technologies complement the learning environment, instead of creating it (McGrail, 2007). Therefore, the classroom environment allows instructors to foster the teacher/student relationship, similar to the mentor/disciple relationship (Koontz, 2007). In lay education, the end goal is the active participation of the ecclesia in the purpose, mission, and vision of the local body (English et al., 2006). To this end, each church ought to fulfill its unique needs for leaders by using ICT to teach laity to fill positions of service.

However, the use of ICT is just a tool whose core purpose is to present the information in a flexible form to ease in information reception. ICT can be viewed as the modern version of props, flannel boards, and other tactile devices used to teach in the past.

Third, the instructional need of laity and lessons under study should drive the use of technology. The Bible is not a pedagogical book, nor does it espouse a singular view to learning its principles; therefore Christianity cannot use it as a tool to exclude sound pedagogy. Lee (1973) stated that teaching is a process whereby one person deliberately, purposively, and efficaciously structures the learning situation in such a manner that the

specific desired learning outcomes are acquired (p. 206). Education, whether religious or not, is meant to convince the common learner of a greater truth by building on the ones he/she already has or discovery of new ones through an orchestrated series of events. To this end, the best tools whether technology-based or not should be chosen. ICT is neither secular nor unholy; it is a combination of tools that can be used to educate anyone. The use of ICT should fit the local church where it is used (Foley, 2005).

Delamarter (2004) suggests there are three stages of ICT deployment in local settings. These stages are not always linear in progression. As an example, some churches already use technology for learning songs, as highlights of sermon points, and to inform laity of weekly announcements.

Stage one is an adaptation of the classical paradigm with small portions committed to ICT use. Stage two occurs as a result of the revelation that the traditional paradigm of instruction does not lend itself to the integration of ICT. Stage three is characterized by awareness for the necessity of professional development for the lay education teacher, in order to maintain an active teacher pool and professionalism.

In closing, two final thoughts emerged from this study. In light of adult education theories, which have emerged over the past three decades, the methods used by the theological community to engage learners is antiquated (Wickett, 2005). Though it is stated throughout this study it bears repeating that sound pedagogy precedes technology. Secondly, to remain effective, teachers, whether lay or not, must direct learning to fit the varied needs of the audiences before them. Using models such as self-directed learning,

experiential learning, and transformative learning, the lay education teacher can effectively guide the instruction towards the learner.

Post Study Impact

As a result of this study Paprika Baptist Church made modifications to the learning environment, increased access to ICT based resources and began a professional development strategy. The Pastor was planning a building expansion and elected to use me as the construction manager to speak to the design on behalf of the church. Using the results from the study several suggestions were implemented into the design of the facility.

The classrooms were expanded from five to eight (63% increase). The size of the rooms played a role in the expansion as well. The classroom square footage doubled from approximately 1,600 sq. ft. to over 3,750 sq. ft. Another primary concern was the size of the room did not fit the size of the class being taught. Some classes were held in the sanctuary. This meant a room accommodating over 400 was used to teach a class of 32. The three additional classrooms accommodate classes of 20, 30 and 60 respectively. Each room is contemporarily designed and filled with windows to allow natural light to enhance the learning environment.

Access to ICT based resources was addressed by adding the availability for multimedia in every location. The entire facility was wired for public and private wireless access. This allows a family to use the Internet to work while their child attends a practice or class. The purpose was to keep more parents on location to increase monitoring of the children, and enhance fellowship with other parishioners. Seven

additional LCD television screens were added allowing individual use or streaming of video content to all or a selected few. The uses of these were to provide information, direction, and video based instruction as needed. Each classroom was wired as a smart room allowing for the use of overhead LCD projectors, sound, and white boards in coordinated or individual use. The sanctuary received additional lighting with the ability to actively dim or brighten the room.

The Associate Minister over lay education began an online professional development program to train the teachers on repetitive coursework (child safety, classroom ethics, roles of a volunteer) allowing him to focus on course work addressing hermeneutics. It is my belief that these enhancements will increase the functionality of the lay education program at Paprika Baptist Church.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Interview Protocol

Research Hypothesis: The use of information and communication technologies to educate laity: A case study

Time of the Interview _____

Date _____

Place _____

Interviewer B. Mark Francis MA Ed.

Interviewee _____

Position of the Interviewee _____

Project summary: My name is B. Mark Francis; you are invited to participate in a study that will observe the use or non-use of (ICT) in a religious environment, in order to understand its impact on the education of the congregational members and visitors. This research is being conducted to fulfill the requirements of an independent study course (CUI 5990) at the University of Denver. The results are used to serve as data for a doctoral thesis. I (B. Mark Francis) can be reached at (720) 375-6385 or via email at bmarkfrancis@me.com. The course instructor, Dr. Nicholas Cutforth, Morgridge College of Education, University of Denver, Denver, CO 80208, (303) 871-4200, ncutfort@du.edu, supervises this project.

This study seeks to address the disparity in research addressing lay education development, by understanding and reporting the manner that information and communication technologies (ICT) are used within the local church context to educate laity.

Confidentiality: I have read and understood the foregoing descriptions of the study examining the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to teach Laity. I have asked for and received a satisfactory explanation of any language that I did not fully understand. I agree to participate in this study, and I understand that I may withdraw my consent at any time. I have received a copy of this consent form.

Are there any questions?

Introduction: Good evening and thank you for choosing to participate in this research. Your participation in this study should take about 12-15 minutes of your time. Participation will involve responding to several questions about your learning experiences at Paprika Baptist Church. As a reminder, participation in this project is

strictly voluntary. The risks associated with this project are minimal. If, however, you experience discomfort you may discontinue the interview at any time. I respect your right to choose not to answer any question(s) that may make you feel uncomfortable. Refusal to participate or withdrawal from participation will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Are you ready to begin?

Organization:

1. Tell me about PAPRIKA BAPTIST CHURCH, describe the positive attributes that brought you here? Describe the Bible study courses you attend?
2. Was there a formal enrollment procedure or cost associated with the class you are in? Did you have to sign up or register for the class?
3. Did the church staff contact you after the first class or when you miss a class?

ICT use within the teaching structure:

1. ICT is defined in this research as “a mixture of multimedia-based resources used to teach the educational content of the instructor or institution.” ICT can refer to the use overhead projectors, LCD projector; web based learning, electronic messages/articles relating to the lesson material, etc. Which of these, if any do you use or have observed their use for the educational instruction here at PAPRIKA BAPTIST CHURCH? Do any of these technologies help you or assist in your learning? Please explain...
2. Do you believe there should be a goal to implement ICT in the classroom environment? Please explain? How do you foresee this happening?
3. *Describe the end purposes (aims, goals) of the educational programs offered (e.g. Bible study, Sunday School, etc.)
4. *Are there learning opportunities available for laity to use the material covered in class? If so can you explain them to me? Describe how they work? Does the teacher follow up to ensure the lessons were applied correctly?

Educational goals:

1. *What are the overarching educational objectives for the church and how did you arrive at these/this goal?
2. *What learning opportunities will you offer to meet the educational goals outlined? To whom do you provide these opportunities? How will you provide these opportunities?

Thank you for your cooperation and participation in this interview. Your information and responses will be kept confidential. If there is a need for a future interview for the purposes of follow up or clarification on your responses you will be notified. A transcribed copy of this interview will be provided to you for your information and verification. Again thank you for participating in this interview.

* These questions are primarily for the church founder and educational director

Appendix B

Informed Consent Form (for research participants)

Research: The use of information and communication technologies to educate laity: A case study

Dear _____

My name is B. Mark Francis; you are invited to participate in a study that will observe the use or non-use of (ICT) in a religious environment, in order to understand its impact on the education of the congregational members and visitors. This research is being conducted to fulfill the requirements of an independent study course (CUI 5990) at the University of Denver. The results are used to serve as data for a doctoral thesis. I (B. Mark Francis) can be reached at (720) 375-6385 or via email at bmarkfrancis@me.com. The course instructor, Dr. Nicholas Cutforth, Morgridge College of Education, University of Denver, Denver, CO 80208, (303) 871-4200, ncutfort@du.edu, supervises this project. Participation in this study should take about 12-15 minutes of your time. Participation will involve responding to several questions about your learning experiences at Paprika Baptist Church. Participation in this project is strictly voluntary. The risks associated with this project are minimal. If, however, you experience discomfort you may discontinue the interview at any time. I respect your right to choose not to answer any questions that may make you feel uncomfortable. Refusal to participate or withdrawal from participation will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Your responses will be identified by code number only and will be kept separate from information that could identify you. This is done to protect the confidentiality of your responses. Only the researcher will have access to your individual data and any reports generated as a result of this study will use only group averages and paraphrased wording. However, should any information contained in this study be the subject of a court order or lawful subpoena, the University of Denver might not be able to avoid compliance with the order or subpoena. Although no questions in this interview address it, we are required by law to tell you that if information is revealed concerning suicide, homicide, or child abuse and neglect, law that this be reported to the proper authorities requires it.

If you have any concerns or complaints about how you were treated during the interview, please contact Susan Sadler, Chair, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, at 303-871-3454, or Sylk Sotto-Santiago, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at 303-871-4052 or write to either at the University of Denver, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, 2199 S. University Blvd., Denver, CO 80208-2121.

You may keep the preceding page for your records. Please sign this page if you understand and agree to the above. If you do not understand any part of the above statement, please ask the researcher any questions you have.

Sincerely,

B. Mark Francis
Doctoral Candidate

Morgrige College of Education
University of Denver

I have read and understood the foregoing descriptions of the study examining the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to teach Laity. I have asked for and received a satisfactory explanation of any language that I did not fully understand. I agree to participate in this study, and I understand that I may withdraw my consent at any time. I have received a copy of this consent form.

- ☐ I agree to be audio-taped
- ☐ I do not agree to be audio-taped
- ☐ I agree to be videotaped
- ☐ I do not agree to videotaped
- ☐ I do not agree to participate in this study

Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name _____ Telephone number _____

- ☐ I would like a summary of the results of this study to be mailed to me at the following postal or e-mail address:

Appendix C

Ph. D Project Consent Form

Investigator: B. Mark Francis

Study: The use of information and communication technologies to educate laity: A case study

Introduction: This study seeks to address the disparity in research addressing lay education development, by understanding and reporting the manner that information and communication technologies (ICT) are used within the local church context to educate laity. Additionally, this research fulfills the requirement for a graduate coursework at the University of Denver.

Procedures: The research I plan to perform addresses the use or non-use of ICT to educate laity in a religious environment. The research will consist primarily of classroom observations and brief interviews of parishioners who can speak to the ICT use in the classroom. The participants will be asked brief questions about their educational experience, ICT tools used in the classroom and church in general, and their impact on the educational environment. I would like your permission to audiotape and to transcribe the discussion so that I may study the discussion as part of my research class. The discussion will last approximately 10-15 minutes and will be conducted at PAPRIKA BAPTIST CHURCH.

Risks: Due to the nature of interviews, the time constraints of the interview, and the subject matter in questions the interviewee is unlikely to experience any physical, psychological, or social risks. If at anytime you become uncomfortable or experience any problems due to a parishioner's participation in this project, you may withdraw at any time and I will understand.

Benefits: Potential benefits of this research are increased insight into the ways and means of how laity are developed.

Confidentiality: Participation in this study is confidential and all information will be written in such a manner that no participant will be identified. All names will be replaced by a pseudonym in the transcription, all notes and the final report. All research material will be kept under the control of the researcher. Procedures to protect the identity of the individuals interviewed will be followed in transcription and in all reports associated with this project. Information derived from this study will be used for research purposes within the context of my graduate research courses. The identity of the interviewees will be kept confidential and any videotapes/audiotapes will be destroyed once the transcription is complete. Although I do not expect this to come up, I need to make you aware that the only exception to this promise of confidentiality is that I am legally obligated to report any evidence of illegal activities, abuse or neglect.

Financial Information: No financial transactions are required for this study. Neither participants nor PAPRIKA BAPTIST CHURCH will receive any reimbursements for their participation in this study.

Subjects' Rights: Participation in this study is voluntary and Traditional Baptist Church is free to withdraw at any time.

Contact Persons: B. Mark Francis 720-375-6385. I may be reached evenings and weekends at this number. Please feel free to ask any questions that you may have. You may also call my graduate instructor, Dr. Nick Cutforth, PhD, Professor, Curriculum and Instruction at the Morgrige College of Education, University of Denver. E-mail: ncutfort@du.edu phone: 303.871.2477 fax: 303.871.3422

Consent: have read this form and the research study has been explained to me. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and have been answered to my satisfaction. If I have additional questions, I have been told who to contact. I agree to participate in the research study described above and will receive a copy of this consent form. I will receive a copy of this consent form after I sign it.

Subject Date

Rev. William T. Golson M. Div.
Pastor/Founder TLCD
Date: 02/01/2010

Appendix D

Observation Protocol

Research Hypothesis: How Information and Learning Technologies are used to teach and educate laity: A case study of Paprika Baptist Church

Time of observation _____

Date _____

Location _____

Interviewer

B. Mark Francis MA Ed.

Project summary: This study seeks to address the disparity in research addressing lay education development, by understanding and reporting the manner that information and communication technologies (ICT) are used within the local church context to educate laity.

Physical setting:

1. Describe the room setting, what items are on the walls, ceilings, doors (if applicable) etc.
2. Describe the room arrangements in terms of teaching style, function and seating arrangements
3. Describe items that may impeded the learning but that is/are part of the room setting but not the instruction (e.g. cabinets, storage, columns, etc.)

ICT use within the teaching structure:

1. ICT is defined in this research as “a mixture of multimedia-based resources used to teach the educational content of the instructor or institution.” ICT can refer to the use overhead projectors, LCD projector; web based learning, electronic messages/articles relating to the lesson material, etc. Explain if any of these items are used in the learning environment and how
2. If ICT is used explain the level of computer knowledge the user needs to effectively interact with the lesson under study. How is the interaction done and why? Is it in response to a prompt by the instructor or via some other method?

Educational goals:

1. What are the overarching educational objectives for the lesson? Are they posted, covered, given to the student?
2. Based upon the location and how the objective was communicated is there a response needed by the lay member?

3. What learning opportunities were offered to meet the educational goals outlined?
How was the learner informed about the lesson outcomes? What are the rewards for attaining the objectives?