Scratching the stained glass ceiling: inspiring women through the voices of other women

Lavonia Elizabeth Kess McIntyre

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SCRATCHING THE STAINED GLASS CEILING: 
INSPIRING WOMEN THROUGH THE VOICES OF OTHER WOMEN

By

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Bachelor of Science, Morgan State University, 1979
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A Doctoral Dissertation
submitted to the faculties of the schools of the
Atlanta Theological Association
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Ministry
at
Interdenominational Theological Center
2013
ABSTRACT

SCRATCHING THE STAINED GLASS CEILING:
INSPIRING WOMEN THROUGH THE VOICES OF OTHER WOMEN

By
Lavonia Elizabeth Kess McIntyre
May 2013
Pages 215

Women in leadership have had a difficult time rising into positions of leadership in the church. Qualified women in the local church are not realizing their dreams and or achieving their goals because of barriers which include sexism in the church and society, cultural differences and the inner struggles through various expected roles within their family structure. Women in the local church need proper nurturing, guidance and or support in the articulation or the manifestation of their ministerial visions and goals.

There is very little data available regarding women in leadership. Research suggests that even though women make up the majority of membership in the church, women are disproportionately represented in the leadership of the church. Research further suggests that even though Americans are comfortable with women as leaders, relatively small numbers of women make it to top leadership positions relative to their male counterparts.

The conceptual framework integrated ideas from theological, biblical and theoretical perspectives. The theological perspective focused on several theologians within the categories of the theology of liberation, feminist theology, Black feminist theology and womanist theology. The biblical perspective was explored through the arguments about women in leadership from the egalitarian and complementarian viewpoints. The biblical perspective further discussed women in leadership within the
arguments about women in leadership from the egalitarian and complementarian viewpoints. The biblical perspective further discussed women in leadership within the biblical context. Finally, the theoretical perspective investigated the theory of subordination as it relates to women in leadership. The theory of subordination was explored in three sections: (a) the biblical theory of subordination, (b) the cultural theory of subordination and (c) the pastoral domination theory of subordination.

The purpose of this project is to encourage and inspire women who have the potential to be leaders by assisting them to develop leadership skills, enabling them to step forward as true leaders in the church using a “Wo-Mentoring” approach.

The research project was conducted at Saint John C.M.E. Church in Monticello, Georgia. Women in this congregation were involved in a program that will help them envision their goals, identify the barriers that preclude them from reaching their goals, and help them utilize the voices of other women to give encouragement as future leaders. This program enabled these women to develop skills to process their issues, understand themselves, and visualize goals assisting them in creating a workable road map toward these goals. The intended results are changes from within – transformation. The women should be different in their approach to leadership in various ministries.

In the project, the women participated in leadership sessions including bible study, developing vision, mission and goal statements, and communication skills. As a result, the women who participated in the sessions were inspired to equip themselves using the resources provided.

The researcher evaluated the effectiveness of the project by utilizing a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. This project utilized Stacy Floyd-
Thomas' qualitative method of 'historiography' to understand the other women's voices used to undergird the project. The quantitative method explored statistical data conducted in pre/post surveys as it relates to the program participants. Additionally, the researcher used qualitative methods to dialogue with the women participants.

The results of the project suggest that the women who participated in the project had a better understanding of leadership; and felt that they would use their skills in the near future. It was concluded that many of the participants experienced transformation.

We will be better equipped for future leadership opportunities when we understand the many obstacles women face such as sexism in the church, cultural differences and inner struggles through various expected roles.
DEDICATION

This Doctor of Ministry Dissertation is dedicated to a great theologian, the late Dr. Edward L. Smith for his guidance and sound advice during this process.

This dissertation is also dedicated to my father, Rev. Leon Columbus Kess, Jr. and my mother, Mrs. Letitia Louise Leeper Kess for your constant love and encouragement. Mom, thank you the drive, tenacity and temperament. Dad, thank you for instilling the competition and desire to pursue higher education, and life-long learning at a young age. Both of you through the power of the Holy Spirit passed down a Spiritual legacy for this generation and beyond. It is also dedicated to my father-in-law, the late Rev. Preston James McIntyre and my mother-in-law, the late Mrs. Lillie Bell Sinclair McIntyre.

This Dissertation is dedicated to all Women in Leadership who accepted God’s calling, actively pursued their calling and were persistent, understanding that there is room for all in leadership.

Finally, this Doctor of Ministry Dissertation is dedicated to the love of my life, my best friend and husband, Mr. Victor B. McIntyre. You have tirelessly supported our ministry, provided encouragement, gave me space to grow and provided stability. I appreciate everything you have done and I love our kind of love.

L. E. K. M
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I give all honor and praise to God for wisdom, guidance and strength to complete this Dissertation.

I would like to acknowledge:

- Dr. Steven Rasor, Director of the Doctor of Ministry Department at the Interdenominational Theological Center who provided sound advice, leadership and the roadmap and Melody Berry, Office Assistant for the Doctor of Ministry Department.

- My Dissertation Chair, Dr. Beverly Wallace who provided guidance, thoughtful insight and constant encouragement.

- Dr. Willie G-dman for stepping in to be my second reader after the death of Dr. Edward Smith.

- Dr. Janice Blackmon-Smith, my third reader for your encouragement, advice and prayer.

- Ms. Sheila Cofer, my editor and Ms. Jacquelynn Smith, who worked tirelessly to read and re-read this Dissertation as well as provided organizational structure.

- Dr. Carolyn McCrary, Dr. Jacquelynn Grant, and Dr. Cheryl Townsend Gilkes who provided their professional expertise as I unpacked the subject matter.

- Bishop Teresa Snorton, Elder Jane Thomas, Rev. Nellie Williams and Sis. Barbara Campbell for trusting me with your stories.

- Saint John Christian Methodist Episcopal Church for the constant support and encouragement during and supporting during my tenure in the Doctor of Ministry Program and participating in the Ministry Project.

- Bro. Tommie Benjamin, the Assistant to the Pastor at Saint John Christian Methodist Episcopal Church for being a dedicated assistant.

- My Husband, Victor B. McIntyre; my children, Jabari S. & Minnie McIntyre, Amina S. McIntyre and Victor M. McIntyre and all those who call me Momma Mac.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

leadership built on liberating justice

is a place to gain strength for the journey

so that we learn to live creatively in the tight circle of choices that
are given to us by this social order we all live in

but also plot, scheme, and realize ways to craft that tight circle into
a spiral of possibilities for this generation

and serve as the standing ground for the next generation
and the next generation and beyond

Emilie Townes in her article, *A Womanist Perspective on Spirituality in Leadership*, writes this in poetic form to portray women who are struggling to be leaders. As this poet steers us through the stanzas, we are drawn into the vivid description of the struggle, the pain, the uphill journey, and the achievements women are engaged in to be a woman leaders.

As women leaders we are on a spiritual journey. This journey is not without triumph and struggles. On the spiritual journey the foundation of our existence begins with the family history, storytelling, religious beliefs and cultural influence. As we

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1 Emilie M. Townes. *A Womanist Perspective on Spirituality in Leadership*. (Theological Education 37 no 2 2001), 95.
mature into adults we must build upon those foundational pieces. We have, as Emilie Townes stated, “Learned to live creatively in the tight circle of choices that are given to us by this social order we all live in.”² It is my desire to enlarge the possibilities for women to become and recognize their leadership.

**MOTIVATION FOR RESEARCH**

In the position of pastor I have experienced many barriers, differences and obstacles in the pastorate. I have observed women in the church who have experienced obstacles, because of internalized oppression as well as cultural barriers erected in the church, barriers that preclude them from rising to their level of excellence. These barriers are also those positions of leadership in church that women are not typically allowed or encouraged to fill.

While reading the bible, I could not help but to ask the question, “Where are the women?” In the *Women’s Bible Commentary* edited by Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe, the authors conclude that typically women in the bible were seen as ‘invisible.’

Were one to reconstruct a picture of ancient Israelite society on the basis of Joshua, one might easily conclude that Israel was composed almost exclusively of men. Even the women who appear – Rahab (Chapters 2 and 6), Achsah (15:13-19) and the daughters of Zelophehad (17:3-6) – are visible only because they represent some kind of exception. Where are all the women in Joshua? Deftly tucked, one might answer, between the lines.³

² Emilie M. Townes. *A Womanist Perspective on Spirituality in Leadership*. (Theological Education 37 no 2 2001), 95.

Women are visible in the missionary society, the usher board, pastor’s aid and even in the choir. However, in the ministry setting women in leadership are visibly invisible. Women are not encouraged to be in leadership positions outside of the cultural norms.

An example can be found in a church that did not want a woman to be the pastor. One of the members of the church, who did not attend church, I might add; governed the church from his home. Because of his authoritative presence he persuaded the members to only do as he said to do; which was to not support the pastor. As a result, it was difficult for this woman pastor to pastor the congregation. In my own personal experience, I remember being assigned to a particular church that had a community program. The program concluded under a sycamore tree. The pastors in the community stood under that tree and discussed how they were going to get rid of the new woman pastor. Needless to say, I, the new woman pastor was standing with them. Eventually they realized that I was that new pastor. What that experience did was to let me know early in the ministry that the culture within the community had an impact on the church and the culture was embedded among the members of the church. The church community systematically put pressure on the churches that had woman pastors assigned to them. In another personal example a particular church and the community banded together to force me, as pastor, out of the pulpit. This particular church in the community put pressure on the church by constantly inserting letters, pamphlets, and publications in the doors of the church every Sunday, mailing this literature to their homes and even preaching and distributing a sermon about ‘a female preacher’. This information put pressure on the congregation to withdraw their support of the pastor.
Not only have I had personal experiences, but I have also observed women in the church who have experienced internalized oppression as well as cultural barriers erected that precludes them from rising to their level of excellence. These barriers include sexism in the church and society, cultural differences, and embedded theology. As a result, these barriers stop women from pursuing positions of leaderships. Young women who are unwed mothers, for example, are discouraged or not allowed to be in leadership positions. I have seen members in the local church place pressure on these young women through gossip and strict rules limiting their ability to participate in church activities resulting in these women feeling isolation.

The motivation for this project is to pave the way for other women who have goals and aspirations they want to achieve but have roadblocks and obstacles standing in their way. Women clergy in the past and in the present have made many strides in the theological field. However, women still encounter major obstacles in pulpit ministry. The Black Church is one such obstacle. “The black church is an institution that is a critical site for the subordination of women and the perpetuation of conservative gender ideologies.”

This project will help women who are potential leaders as well as other women in leadership to be inspired by studying other women leaders that have encountered obstacles and discovering how these women maneuvered these obstacles. The purpose of the project is to also to assist select women with leadership capacities, discover the hidden qualities within themselves and motivate them to acquire leadership skills. By addressing these issues, I hope to empower the women in this study to

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articulate their goals and help them to feel fulfilled. This will assist those women who are coming into leadership position.

TITLE OF DISSERTATION

"Scratching the Stained Glass Ceiling: Inspiring Women through the Voices of Other Women"

The title of this dissertation, "Scratching the Stained Glass Ceiling: Inspiring Women through the Voices of Other Women" suggests that women leaders are still struggling to break through barriers or the glass ceiling that have kept women within the boundaries of the most sacred of places, the church. It is assumed that once a woman is elected or placed in a leadership position that has been primarily occupied by a man, than the glass ceiling has been broken. It is my contention that, the opening has been closed, at times permanently, by those who did not intend for the ceiling to be broken. It is also my contention that once a woman has permeated through the glass ceiling, culture at times makes it difficult for another woman to do the same. This is also true, I believe, within the stained glass ceiling of the church. Therefore, I feel that women must constantly 'scratch' the stained glass ceiling in an effort to break and eventually shatter it.

The stories, advice and leadership from women who have attempted to and have broken the stained glass ceiling will serve as motivators for women to continue to pursue their goals and aspirations. By using the voices of other women be it women who have
struggled and women who have succeeded, biblical women who have been used by God, or women who will eventually serve as mentors; women in this study will be inspired by these examples.

KEY WORDS AND CONCEPTS

Leadership

In order for us to fully understand the plight of women in leadership, a concise definition of leadership needs to be explored. Miles Monroe suggests that “it is virtually impossible to fully define the concept of leadership because of its complexity. Leadership consists of an array of diverse qualities, qualifications, components, skills, capabilities, and even unquantifiable elements.” Typically, the definition of leadership was more or less descriptive in nature.

Henry T. and Richard Blackaby in their book *Spiritual Leadership the Interactive Study* explored the definition of leadership from various contributors in his book:

- John W. Gardner in his book *On Leadership* defines leadership as “the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by a leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers.”

- James MacGregor Burns in his book *Leadership* states “leadership over human beings is exercised when persons with certain motives and purposes mobilize, in competition or conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological, and other resource so as to arouse, engage, and satisfy the motives of followers.”

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• Oswald Sanders in his book *Spiritual Leadership* states that “Leadership is influence, the ability of one person to influence others.”

• George Barna in his book *Leaders on Leadership* defines a "Christian leader as someone who is called by God to lead; leads with and through Christ-like character; demonstrates the functional competencies that permit effective Leadership to take place.”

Bishop Vashti M. McKenzie in her book *Not Without a Struggle* defines leadership as “the powerful force by which exclusionary paradigms such as racism and sexism may be confronted, challenged, and changed.” Lovett H. Weems, Jr. in his book *Church Leadership* defines leadership as “the development and articulation of a shared vision, motivation of those key people without whom that vision cannot become a reality, and gaining the cooperation of most of the people involved.”

Susan Hunt and Peggy Hutcheson in the book *Leadership for Women in the Church* writes: "Leaders are able to influence others even when they have no formal authority. Leaders are able to visualize clearly what needs to be accomplished. They are able to organize others to believe in and support this vision, mobilize the resources to get action, and build relationships for continued process. Leaders work well in informal (unstructured), as well as formal (structured) organizations. Leaders effectiveness comes from their abilities to develop followers-contributors to the shared goals of the group."

Bernard Bass in his article “The Meaning of Leadership” in *The Leader's Companion* by J. Thomas Wren writes that "leadership has been conceived as the focus of group processes, as a matter of personality, as a matter of inducing compliance, as the exercise of influence, as particular behaviors, as a form of persuasion, as a power relation, as an

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7 Vashti M. McKenzie. *Not Without a Struggle.* (Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press), xviii.

8 Lovett H. Weems, Jr. *Church Leadership,* (Nashville: Abingdon Press), 12-13.z
instrument to achieve goals, as an effect of interaction, as a differentiated role, as
initiation of structure, and as many combinations of these definitions."9

A leader is someone who is not afraid to follow, a person that is always in a
continuous pattern of learning and has the ability to impart said knowledge to others in a
way that they can understand. A leader is someone who has the ability to motivate,
excite and draw out innate qualities in others. A leader has a vision and the ability to cast
that vision to others who are in turn willing to work toward that same vision. A leader
is a not afraid to listen with inclusiveness, bringing cohesiveness to the body and sending
forth those with a vested interest to implement said vision. A leader has the ability to
encourage and inspire others to walk with or follow them. Finally, a leader has a deep
spiritual connection with God or a belief system that sustains them.
Marginal - The social and material reality of those who cannot participate in the
mainstream of society because they do not have adequate resources or opportunities.10

Oppression - The condition of being treated unjustly and living without freedom. It is
stressed by liberation theologians that describe situations of the poor and marginalized
who lack necessary freedom or rights due to the injustices of nations.11

Embedded Theology - According to Dr. Edward Smith in his Philosophy and Theology
Lecture on March 11, 2011 at the Interdenominational Theological Center, embedded
theology are those beliefs that have been rooted in us by our parents, family member,

9 J. Thomas Wren, ed. The Leaders Companion: Insights on Leadership Through the Ages, (New

10 Donald K. McKim. Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms, (Louisville, Kentucky:

11 Ibid., 195.
school, church or community. Embedded theology is based on our personal experiences, our religious experience and the experiences of those who are close to us. Our Embedded Theology comes from preaching, music, personal conduct, liturgy, Christian practices, and rituals and customs to name a few. Embedded Theology begins long before one is aware of it.

Outline of the Project

This dissertation is a compilation of research and programmatic observations and proposes that there is a relationship between sexism in the church and society, cultural differences and the embedded theologies that inhibit women from church leadership. This dissertation explored the underlining circumstances that women face in their plight to lead in a patriarchal culture. Through the process of empirical, theological, biblical and theoretical reflection, this study examines the issues that women in leadership experience.

Chapter 1 of this dissertation introduces the subject matter providing motivation for the research. This chapter further discusses the rational for the title of the dissertation as well as key words and concepts related to the subject matter.

Chapter II explains the ministry context and the ministry issue. The empirical literature in Chapter III reviews the statistical data that derives from literature found in two studies; *Black Power from the Pew* by Stephen C. Rasor and Christine D. Chapman and *The White House Project Report: Benchmarking Women's Leadership* edited and directed by Lucie Lapousky and Deborah Slaner Larkin.
The theological literature review found in Chapter IV discusses the hermeneutical process as it relates to the interpretation of the ministry issue. This chapter further discusses the five hermeneutical steps outlined by Dr. Edward Smith: retrieval, critique, suspicion, understanding and explanation. The retrieval step in the ministry issue is explored through the theological categories of Jesus, God, Holy Spirit revelation and Human Being/Sin and their relationship to the ministry issue.

The final step of the hermeneutical process will address various theologies, liberation theology, feminist theology, black feminist theology and womanist theology from the perspective of various theologians. Liberation theology captured the views of Gustavo Gutiérrez and James Cone. Feminist theology was discussed through the viewpoints of Bonnie McLemore and Carrie Doehring. Black feminist theology was articulated from the viewpoint of bell hooks and Patricia Collins. Finally, womanist theology is examined from the viewpoint of Jacquelyn Grant, Deloris Williams and Monica Coleman as it relates to Black women and their struggles.

The biblical literature review in Chapter V examines the arguments of women in leadership; the Egalitarian and Complementarian points as well as the Scotist and Thomist points of view. This chapter also discusses scriptural texts that exclude women in leadership, scriptures that support or empower women and specific examples of women in leadership from the Old Testament as well as the New Testament.

The theoretical literature review in Chapter VI investigates the theory of subordination as it relates to women in leadership. The book Race, Class, and Gender in the United States by Paula S. Rothenberg is a compilation of various articles and
viewpoints concerning the patriarchal culture as it relates to women in leadership. The theory of subordination will be explored in three sections: (a) the biblical theory of subordination, (b) the cultural theory of subordination and (c) the pastoral domination theory of subordination. Finally, Chapter VII will discuss the methodology for the ministry project; Chapter VIII will examine the results, discussion and conclusion of the women in leadership workshop.

The purpose of this project was to encourage and inspire women who have the potential to be leaders by assisting them to develop leadership skills, enabling them to step forward as true leaders within the local church.
CHAPTER II
MINISTRY CONTEXT AND
MINISTRY ISSUE

THE MINISTRY CONTEXT

Most of the church members represented in the mainline denominations are comprised of women. “70% of women worshippers in Protestant congregations are women while 30% are men.”¹ “Throughout all varieties of black religious activity, women represent from 75 to 90 percent of the participants.”² That is not to say that men are not present; that is not the case. However, women have been considered the backbone, the nurturers and the major workers in the church. Women have been the president of the stewardess board, usher board, choir, and missionary society. Many women have participated in raising money for the upkeep of the church. Women have even served as the nurturers for children on to adulthood. “Black women know how radically dependent their churches and communities are on their presence and actions for both organizational integrity and effective mobilization.”³ “Black women have invested considerable amounts of time, energy, and economic resources in the growth and

² Cheryl Townsend Gilkes. If It Wasn’t For the Women, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2001) 44.
³ Ibid., 7.
development of religious organizations."\textsuperscript{4} "On one level, women are very involved in the life of the Church. On another level, we are not at all involved in the life of the Church."\textsuperscript{5} If it wasn't for the women, the church would not be where it is today.

Saint John Christian Methodist Episcopal Church is no different. This study will be carried out at Saint John Christian Methodist Episcopal Church in Monticello, Georgia which will be further known as St. John C.M.E. Church. St. John C.M.E. Church is located in downtown Monticello, Georgia and is approximately three blocks from the center of town centered within a lower to moderate income residential community. Monticello is the county seat and the largest city in Jasper County. "Monticello is located north of Macon and southeast of Atlanta in central Georgia with an approximate population of 2,598."\textsuperscript{6} "The population consists of 52.78 percent white residents, 41.88 percent black residents and 5.34 percent other residents." \textsuperscript{7} The overall town radius is approximately eight miles. In 2011, Monticello elected its first African American Mayor. The Monticello City Council consists of five City Council persons; three African American and two White council persons. One white female also services the city council. Bro. Larry Thurman, a member of St. John CME Church, currently serves on the Monticello City Council. Since being in office the current Monticello leadership has recruited an office building and a hospice to the city of Monticello.

\textsuperscript{4} Ibid., 43.

\textsuperscript{5} Linda McKinnish Bridges. "Women's Leadership in the Church." \textit{Review and Expository, a Quarterly Baptist Theological Journal}: (Summer 1998, Vol. 95, No. 3), 328.


St. John C.M.E. Church is centered in a lower to moderate income residential community consisting mainly of African American families within the community radius around the church. Many of the members live in the surrounding area. St. John C.M.E. Church members are proud of the fact that at least one-third of the membership has a higher education degree, college and above. The majority of the remaining two-thirds of the congregation have their high school diploma. The church stresses the importance of education and the completion of school. The majority of the members work and have worked at the local schools as teachers, principal and office workers. There are a few opportunities in city government as well as family owned shops and eateries. Another large section of job opportunities include the Georgia Pacific plant, other factories, and the local hospital or nursing home.

The St. John C.M.E. Church congregational membership consists of about 80 members; 59 of these members are women. The active membership consists of approximately 45 members of whom 30% are men. St. John C.M.E. Church has a multigenerational membership ranging from infants to seniors which includes a cross-section of singles, married couples and families; single parent families, blended families and elderly persons. The multigenerational membership still exhibits strong morals, values and respect for one another. The elders in the congregation are given the utmost respect. The members still seek guidance and advice on various matters. Some of our leading senior advisors such as Brother Ulysses Carter, Brother William Thomas, Sister Juanita Thompson, Sister Mary Digby, Sister Lillie Jackson and Sister Barbara Goins have been providing guidance to the younger members of the congregation. Sister
Juanita Thompson has been the church’s musician for many years. The members of the choir seek her guidance concerning major programs and musical selections especially concerning the youth department. Sister Thompson is also the resident decorator of the church for major functions. She has acquired members of the church as apprentices. Sister Thompson is always sought out to provide advice on decorating ideas and final revealing. Sister Mary Digby serves as a major advisor for the Christian Education Department and the pastor’s aide board. The current chairpersons seek guidance from Sister Mary Digby. She provides sound background leadership and knowledge as decisions are made on behalf of these boards. Both Sister Juanita Thompson and Sister Mary Digby are considered matriarchs of the church. Finally, in my opinion, Brother Ulysses Carter would be considered the patriarch of the church. He provides sound leadership to the entire church. There are very few decisions that are made without the prior approval of Brother Ulysses Carter.

Much of the history at St. John C.M.E. Church has been developed through oral documentation from the senior members. “The land where St. John C.M.E. Church now stands was purchased from Mr. Evan H. Powell for a sum of $25.79 on December 26, 1913. The persons responsible for representing the church were Brothers James Cherry, W. M. Tinsley, Isham Digby, Walter Victrum and W. H. Brown who were trustees of the church.”8 “The cornerstone shows that the present church was built in 1915 however the church dates back to 1891.”9 “In 1976, St. John C.M.E. Church experienced a total renovation of its church building. The fellowship hall was built in 1991. This annex was

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8 History of St. John CME Church: Church Anniversary Booklet. (November 21, 2010), 7.

9 Ibid., 7.
constructed by Walker Gotel, a general contractor and member of the church. The members have described the physical church as a circular shaped edifice adorned with many majestic crystal chandeliers. The members of St. John C.M.E. Church are proud of the members and the pastor’s contributions, donations and accomplishments to the beautification and upkeep of the sanctuary. These accomplishments include the addition of restrooms, painting the building inside and out and installation of hardwood floors. Some of these contributions include contributions from the Lillian Digby family, the William Gotel family, the Thompson family and the Hosley Tinsley family. Several faithful members of the church have donated various items to enhance the worship experience as well as beautify the sanctuary. Some examples include the majestic chandeliers, stained glass windows, unique ceiling fans and pulpit accessories. The Hammond Organ and Baldwin piano have greatly enriched our worship services.

Education of the children at St. John C.M.E. Church has always been of great importance to the membership of the church. As a result, the Christian Education Department led in the development of ministries in the church. "In 1997, St. John C.M.E. Church opened the Susie Tinsley Tutoring Center and the Bobby Simmons Media Center. This facility is primarily a result of the visionary efforts of Brother Peter Card a member of the church. It was Brother Card’s desire to establish a place where the children of the community could come and receive tutoring assistance to ensure their success in school."

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10 Ibid., 7.

11 History of St. John CME Church: Church Anniversary Booklet. (November 21, 2010), 7.
In the early years St. John C.M.E. Church was part of a circuit of churches which included St. John C.M.E., Sardis C.M.E. and Prospect Liberty C.M.E. Churches. During that time St. John C.M.E. Church worshiped on second and fourth Sundays, Sardis C.M.E. Church worshipped on first Sunday and Prospect Liberty C.M.E. Church worshipped on third Sunday. No one was able to identify the year when the churches were separated. According to the members St. John C.M.E. Church was turned into a station or standalone church around the late 40’s or early 50’s. For a period of years St. John C.M.E. Church continued to worship on second and fourth Sundays. In the mid 50’s St. John C.M.E. Church became a four Sunday charge. Currently, worship services take place on first, second, third and fourth Sundays. St. John C.M.E. Church congregation can be considered a healthy congregation even though the church is around 119 years old. Many of its members still live within a five mile radius of the church. St. John C.M.E. Church can be considered a part-time charge in which the pastor only comes to town either on the weekends or when needed, without office hours. Currently, the pastor lives 70 miles from the church. This makes it difficult to pastor within the community throughout the week. Most of the work including visitation of the sick, church and quarterly conferences and church activates are completed on Saturday and Sunday.

St. John C.M.E. Church has had 39 pastors during its existence. Most of the pastors have lived out of town 25 to 75 miles from the church. The previous pastor served four years and was the first female pastor to serve at the church. The longest tenured pastor was thirteen years, the shortest one year. Of the first eighteen pastors in
the early years of St. John C.M.E. Church existence fourteen pastors stayed one year at a time, the others only two years. Of the remaining pastors, one pastor’s tenure was thirteen years and another was ten years. The remaining pastors served from one to six years. The average tenure for the last ten pastors was three years. The church has been able to function and adapt to changes in administration.

The organizational leadership of the church is consistent with most Methodist churches. St. John C.M.E. Church is a member of the Atlanta Rome District in the Georgia North Conference of the Sixth Episcopal District in the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. The Sixth Episcopal District comprises the entire state of Georgia. The Georgia North Conference ranges from Augusta, Georgia to Elberton, Georgia. The Georgia North Conference includes the Elberton/Gainesville District, the Augusta/Sparta District and the Atlanta/Rome District. The Atlanta Rome District is comprised of 33 churches. The pastor’s immediate supervisor is the Presiding Elder. The Bishop presides over the Sixth Episcopal District. The Bishop assigns the pastor to the church at the Georgia North Annual Conference.

The current pastor in charge of St. John C.M.E. Church just happens to be a woman. Overall the membership has accepted a female pastor. Only a few members have expressed a problem with the gender of the pastor. They have chosen to worship at other worship centers.

There were no assistant pastors who served this church until the 2011-2012 conference. However, the pastor has been able to recruit several Seminary students to assist the congregation throughout the school year. The students received training in
ministry, pulpit etiquette, examining their spiritual gifts and ministerial opportunities. During the 2011 annual conference, the Presiding Prelate Bishop Kenneth W. Carter assigned an ‘assistant to the pastor’, Brother Tommie Benjamin a member of the church. Brother Benjamin is the first member of St. John C.M.E. Church to accept his call to ministry and be placed on Trial in the Georgia North Annual Conference. Brother Benjamin’s assignment has greatly enhanced our worship services, assisted the pastor in several capacities and provides leadership in the Monticello community.

Leadership within the congregation consists of major boards which include Steward Board Ministry, Trustee Board Ministry, Stewardess Board Ministry, Ministry of Christian Education, Evangelism Ministry and Missions Ministry. Ironically the presidents or chairpersons of these boards and ministries are mostly women. Their roles were figurative. In other words, they were not able to make decisions on behalf of the boards, they were not properly trained and the pastor instructed them on what they should do. However, the membership has the desire and is willing to learn. There are several active ministries at St. John C.M.E. Church which include ministries for all ages.

St. John C.M.E. Church is considered a community church. A community church is a church that is within the community therefore the membership has a vested interest in the church, its worship, as well as the community as a whole. Most of the membership live and work in the community. The church has addressed the needs of the community by participating in community-wide ministries to address the entire city not just the surrounding community. The members of St. John C.M.E. Church sit on several community boards as well as volunteer their time to assist the organizations that service
Jasper County. The Jasper County Family Connection Collaborative provides services to families such as health screenings, family and children’s services and back to school supplies. “The Jasper County Family Connection Collaborative serves as the local decision-making body, bringing community partners together to develop, implement, and evaluate plans that address the serious challenges facing Georgia’s children and families.” An organization that functions under the Jasper County Family Connection Collaborative umbrella is the Jasper County Food Bank. The Jasper County Community Food Bank was established to provide food for families in need. The Community Food Bank is a 100% run volunteer nonprofit organization.

The Jasper County Care Corp “coordinates local churches and DFCS to help serve people in need; provides emergency financial assistance for rent, utilities, prescriptions, glasses, stranded motorists with gas and lodging as needed; and hosts the October Blitz annual weekend of home repairs for the aged and needy.” Each year St. John CME Church participates in the summer ecumenical worship services where the churches in the Monticello community fellowship together, exchange pulpits, worship together and donate money toward the Jasper County Care Corp. Finally, Overview, Inc. “identifies problems, provides services and operates programs in an effort to enable elderly and economically disadvantaged citizens achieve self-sufficiency.” This program currently


provides services and energy assistance for Baldwin, Greene, Hancock, Jasper, Johnson, Morgan, Putnam, Washington and Wilkinson Counties.

THE MINISTRY ISSUE

Women in leadership have had a difficult rising into positions of leadership in the church. Women in the local church are not realizing their dreams and or achieving their goals because of barriers including sexism in the church and society, cultural differences and their own inner struggles with the various role expectations from their family structure.

Barriers such as sexism and cultural differences in church and society pose challenging obstacles to the development of women in leadership positions. Women in the local church need proper nurturing, guidance and or support in the articulation and the realization of their goals and visions. I believe, women in the local church can be supported and resourced to fill positions of leadership.

An issue that is associated with the fore mentioned ministry issue is the inner struggles of women relative to the various expected roles within their family structure, community, and in the church. The inner struggles cause some of the difficulties women have in not achieving their goals or reaching their potential. Women have been placed in specific roles based on culture and family. As a result, women have become silent. Andre Lorde in her book *Sister Outsider* says, “In the cause of silence, each of us draws the face of her own fear – fear of contempt, of censure, or of some judgment, or recognition, of challenge, of annihilation. But most of all, we fear the visibility without
which we cannot truly leave."\textsuperscript{15} This suggests that women in leadership have to find a way to overcome the fears in order to begin the process of liberation.

In the church "black women have on one hand always been highly visible, and on the other hand, have been rendered invisible through the depersonalization"\textsuperscript{16} of sexism and culture. Therefore Black women hide in silence even in the church because of the imposed expectations of culture that infiltrate even the church. It is therefore important to assist women in the church use their voice.

Women in leadership have had a difficult rising into positions of leadership in the church. Women in the local church are not realizing their dreams and or achieving their goals because of barriers which include sexism in the church and society, cultural differences and their own inner struggles with the various role expectations from their family structure. Barriers such as sexism and cultural differences in church and society pose challenging obstacles to the development of women in leadership positions. Women in the local church need proper nurturing, guidance and or support in the articulation and the realization of their goals and visions. Women in the local church can be supported and resourced to fill positions of leadership.

The inner struggles of women relative to the various expected roles within their family structure, community, and in the church causes some of the difficulties of women not achieving their goals or potential. Women have been placed in specific roles based on culture and family. As a result, women have become silent. As suggested by Andre Lorde "In the cause of silence, each of us draws the face of her own fear – fear of

\textsuperscript{15} Andre Lorde. \textit{Sister Outsider}, (Berkeley: Crossing Press, 2007), 42.

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 42.
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18 Ibid., 42.
CHAPTER III
EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

The empirical data will derive from two sources, which include: Black Power from the Pew by Stephen C. Rasor and Christine D. Chapman and The White House Project Report: Benchmarking Women’s Leadership edited and directed by Lucie Lapousky and Deborah Slaner Larkin. “Surprisingly little information exists across sectors regarding the representation of women, and particularly women of color, in positions of leadership.” ¹ The above periodicals will give up-to-date statistical information, surveys and studies on women in leadership in the church.

Rasor and Chapman’s Study: Black Power from the Pew

In the book, Black Power from the Pew by Stephen C. Rasor and Christine D. Chapman, statistical data was derived from two studies: The ITC (Interdenominational Theological Center) Project 2000 and the Members Voice Project (MVP) both funded by the Lilly Endowment. “The MVP project was patterned after the U.S. Congregational Life Survey (US CLS), also funded by the Lilly Endowment.”²

“Members Voice Project (MVP) is the nation’s most comprehensive survey of African-American congregational life from the perspective of the people in the pews. This resource reflects the data collected from more than 13,000 parishioners of Protestant congregations in 27 states and the

² Ibid., 8.
District of Columbia. The MVP study enables local congregations, denominational officials, and others to understand what congregations are doing regarding their spiritual lives, reaching out to their communities, and developing their congregational identities.” ³

Within the overview of the MVP Project several categories were investigated. These categories include “Building Spiritual Connections, Building inside Connections, Building outside Connections, and Building Identity Connections.” However, for the purpose of this dissertation the empirical data derived from the MVP category of leadership will be investigated.

According to the MVP Project, “of the laity surveyed in the MVP study, 74 percent reported that they hold at least one leadership position in the congregation (such as governing board, committee, choir or usher, church school teacher, etc.) – nearly double the average reported by US CLS congregations.” ⁴ “The majority of ordained clergy are men, and yet those individuals who are sitting in the pews or who do the ongoing and consistent work of these faith communities are women. The mission and ministry of black communities are carried out by the women.” ⁵ This is true of most churches. Women serve as the backbone of the church. “Of particular interest was examining the roles of women in church leadership, internal systems of support for


⁵ Ibid., 51.
women to exercise leadership, and spiritual gifts as part of women's spiritual
development."6 "Even though the principal programs of the black church rely
disproportionately on women for their support and success, all of the traditional black
religious denominations tend to have congregations made up mostly of women and are
led primarily by men."7

Social welfare was not considered a primary role for men in
African-American culture; therefore, this activity was delegated to the
women of the church. Women founded ministries dedicated to urban
areas. In these ministries, they preached, ran day care and food distribution
centers, and educated those who sought them out. Fundraising was only
one of the ways women demonstrated that they, in essence, where the
foundation of the church even though men were at the forefront and
received most of the recognition. Money was the means to attain success
for African missions, and women were the principal players in raising it.
Because opportunities within the traditional ministry of black churches
were limited, the missionary profession was appealing to many African-
American women, giving them the opportunity to pursue leadership roles
not normally available to them in America. In other words, black women
are deeply involved as leaders in congregations but much less so as leaders
of congregations. For both men and women, being involved at the
leadership level in the congregation helped them feel connected inside
their congregation.8

"It has been suggested that this gendered division of labor was an accommodation
to the dominant culture's reading of biblical texts in women's roles. On all organizational
levels, women are concentrated in areas of church work traditionally done by women
rather than in top leadership positions."9

When it comes to leadership in the church, women are still struggling in the areas of
ordained ministry. "The ordination of women has been a controversial issue in the

6 Ibid., 73.
7 Ibid., 73-74.
8 Ibid., 75-76.
9 Ibid., 75.
history of the Black Protestant church, and women as ordained clergy have been historically underrepresented in the black church. For the most part, men have monopolized the ordained ministry. However, “in recent years, many traditional denominations have ordained a greater number of women ministers, but organizational hurdles have placed a stained-glass ceiling on women’s opportunities to attain either pastorates in larger congregations or higher-ranking ecclesiastical posts. Black women have had limited leadership roles available to them.”

**Lapousky and Larkin Study: White House Project Report: Benchmarking Women’s Leadership**

Additional statistical information was derived from the *White House Project Report: Benchmarking Women’s Leadership* edited and directed by Lucie Lapousky and Deborah Slaner Larkin. The *White House Project Report: Benchmarking Women’s Leadership* “is an assessment of the current state of women’s leadership in ten major sectors.” It was “written to assess where the United States stands in terms of the balance of leadership between men and women. Obviously, we knew men were in the majority but we did not have a clear sense of “by how much” or how the gender gap in leadership varied by sector.” “This report further seeks to addresses the following contradiction: ‘If many Americans are comfortable with women leading in all sectors,  


11 Ibid., 75.


13 Ibid., 113.
then why are we so far from that goal?" 14 According to this report "89 percent of Americans are comfortable with women as top leaders in all sectors, from academia and business to media and military." 15

In fact, the public currently believes that women — even more than men — have what it takes to be leaders in today's world, according to a 2008 Pew Research Center study. In that study, the public rated women above men in five of the eight character traits they value highly in their leaders (honesty, intelligence, creativity, outgoingness, compassion) and equal to men in two others (hardworking, ambition). Men rated higher (by 10 percent more respondents) in only one trait — decisiveness. Overall 69 percent of those surveyed thought women and men would make equally good leaders. 16

"Yet this comfort level that Americans express is accompanied by the misperception that women are already leading equally alongside their male peers." 17 "However, as The White House Project Report: Benchmarking Women's Leadership illustrates, while women may be participating in the workforce in equal—or in some cases, higher—numbers relative to their male peers, they rarely make it to the top. Across the leadership spectrum in the sectors studied here, women are stalled at 18 percent — with numbers much lower among women of color." 18

Today, we are nowhere near where we need to be in terms of representation in leadership positions — in fact, we are even losing ground in some sectors. Even though the public is ready, and women themselves are trained, educated, in the pipeline and prepared to lead, women in general — and women of color in particular — are vastly underrepresented at the top ranks of the 10 fields reviewed in this report.

14 Ibid., 5.
15 Ibid., 5.
16 Ibid., 8.
18 Ibid., 4.
And in many key indicators such as pay, board seats and corporate officer posts, progress has stopped or even gone backwards in the last few years.\(^\text{19}\)

This report also "offers concrete, practical recommendations that involve specific accountability measures to track progress as well as creative, 'out-of-the box' suggestions. Each of these sector-specific recommendations builds upon what is the key factor to achieving true transformation across all leadership fields — propelling a critical mass of diverse women into leadership alongside men."\(^\text{20}\)

"The White House Project Report: Benchmarking Women's Leadership surveyed the current state of women's leadership in 10 different fields: Academia, Business, Film and Television Entertainment, Journalism, Law, Military, Nonprofit, Politics, Religion, and Sports."\(^\text{21}\) The project also seeks "to establish an understanding of where we are" as women in leadership, "so that we may know where we need to go."\(^\text{22}\) "Across the board, the key to true transformation is advancing a critical mass of women into leadership, so that we can move permanently beyond gender and on to agenda."\(^\text{23}\)

The empirical data derived from the religious sector within the project will be utilized. In the area of religion:

- Although women overall constitute a majority of churchgoers (60 percent), men continue to dominate leadership roles in the church and temple.

\[^{19}\text{Ibid., 9.}\]
\[^{20}\text{Lucie Lapousky and Deborah Slaner Larkin, editors. The White House Project: Benchmarking Women's Leadership, (New York City, New York: 2009), 5.}\]
\[^{21}\text{Ibid., 4.}\]
\[^{22}\text{Ibid., 4.}\]
\[^{23}\text{Ibid., 4.}\]
• On average, in Judeo-Christian faith traditions in the U.S., women currently make up only about 15 percent of Protestant clergy and rabbis.

• More women than ever are training for leadership: The proportion of women in Protestant seminaries nearly tripled over the last few decades; today, about half of all Reform Jewish seminary students are female.

• Until there is a change both in the rule prohibiting women from ministerial leadership in the Catholic Church, Orthodox Judaism and Islam, and in the resistance to women’s leadership that remains in other religions, women will continue to face an unbreakable stained-glass ceiling.24

This statistical data “focused on the more populous Christian denominations (Catholicism and multiple denominations of Protestantism), Judaism and Islam, for which faiths we were able to find some current data.”25 It is my contention that women in African American denominations will continue to face a stained-glass ceiling that is difficult to break through.

The ‘status of women in leadership in the individual sector of religion’ provided statistics in several areas which include: Current levels of leadership, Women as followers and unofficial leaders, Leadership in the Christian faiths, and Women of color in religion. Women want to be leaders in the church. “The public is ready for women to fill religious leadership roles.”26 “Those who already are exposed to female religious leaders express satisfaction.”27 “Others argue that female religious leaders meet needs

24 Ibid., 12.
25 Ibid., 93.
26 Ibid., 92.
27 Ibid., 92.
that male leaders may not.\textsuperscript{28} As I explored the statistical data provided, there was a huge gap in the amount of data provided from African American churches.

Gauging the current status and progress of women in religious leadership is more difficult than in any other business and professional sector studied in this report. With such a multitude of faiths, little or no universality in definitions of leadership, and a marked absence of data to work with, analyzing women's leadership in religion presents a significant challenge. During the preparation of this report, it was immediately clear that there is a dire need for increased and standardized data collection on the status of women in this field. While historical information is available, there is a dearth of hard numbers.\textsuperscript{29}

These results are definitely true of most mainline African American denominations. Currently, there is no data within African American denominations to verify the current levels of leadership for women in leadership as well as their accomplishments.

\textit{The White House Project Report: Benchmarking Women's Leadership} discussed 'women as followers and unofficial leaders.' "The question of women's "proper" roles within religious faiths has been controversial almost since the beginning of religious belief."\textsuperscript{30} "Men continue to dominate leadership roles in the church and temple. Certain denominations do not allow women to preside over religious services; in other faith traditions, women are able to seek leadership roles, but continue to face various levels of resistance, discrimination, difficulty finding mentors and role models, and other challenges."\textsuperscript{31}

In the U.S., women have long been the backbone of religious communities, constituting a clear majority of churchgoers (60 percent) and nearly always making up the majority of volunteers and organizers for

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 92.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 92.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 93.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., 93.
church- or temple-sponsored events and programs. Some 87 percent of women say they have a formal religious affiliation, compared to 80 percent of men, according to interviews with more than 35,000 Americans aged 18 and older in 2007 by the Pew Research Center’s U.S. Religious Landscape Survey. Women constitute greater membership in the most populous Christian denominations.  

According to the report “women today make up about 15 percent of clergy in the ‘mainline’ Protestant churches.”  

In terms of ‘leadership in the Christian faith’ it was found that “more women are joining the clergy, though the numbers are still below critical-mass levels.” “Within Protestant faiths overall, women currently make up about 15 percent of ministers, pastors and priests, compared with less than 3 percent in 1970. Though the proportion of female senior pastors serving in Protestant churches did not grow beyond 5 percent throughout the 1990s, it rose steadily in the last decade, to 10 percent in 2009.” “The biggest roadblock to women clergy is moving into senior positions in larger, more influential churches.” There is currently no data for mainline African American denominations.

Finally, “African-American women have long been regarded as the backbone of the black church, but their extensive and significant contributions are made as lay leaders, not as religious heads of churches. Women of color make up 34 percent of all people of

32 Ibid., 93.
33 Ibid., 94.
34 Ibid., 95.
35 Ibid., 95.
36 Ibid., 95.
color in Protestant seminaries, matching the percentage of white females in Protestant seminary schools.\textsuperscript{37}

There are examples of women of color rising to top positions in the Protestant and Jewish faiths. The Lutheran Church of America ordained the nation’s first female African-American and Latina pastors in 1979 and the first Asian-American female pastor in 1982. The Rt. Rev. Nedi Rivera in 2004 became the first female Hispanic Episcopal bishop, and served as a suffragen (assisting) bishop until 2009. Vashti Murphy McKenzie made history in 2000, when she became the first woman elected bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and in 2009 Alysa Stanton became the first African-American ordained Reform rabbi.

The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church elected Teresa Snorton the first woman bishop in 2010.

Summary

When looking at this data it is clear that there are major gaps in the study. Some of these gaps include extensive data on women in leadership in the main line African American denominations. As a mainline denomination the challenge would be to gather such information in order for the church to critically look at women in the leadership roles of the church as well as within the field of ordained ministry.

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., 98.
CHAPTER IV

THEOLOGICAL LITURATURE REVIEW

Ministry Issue

Gender issues relevant to ministry are no different at St. John C.M.E. Church than any other church. Women in leadership have had a difficult time rising into positions of leadership in the church. Qualified women in the local church are not realizing their dreams and or achieving their goals because of barriers which include sexism in the church and society, cultural differences and inner struggles through various expected roles within their family structures. Women in the local church can be supported and resourced to fill positions of leadership. Therefore, it is still difficult for women to break through the stained glass ceiling.

Hermeneutical Process

The theological section will address this issue by utilizing the hermeneutical process. According to Dr. Edward Smith in the lecture dated February 9, 2011, the hermeneutical process was discussed as it relates to the interpretation of a given subject matter. "Theology is the attempt to establish mutually critical correlations between an interpretation of the Christian tradition and an interpretation of the contemporary situation."¹ It is through the interpretation of every aspect of the situation that true correlations can take place. In Dr. Smith's lecture several aspects of the hermeneutical

process were presented. First, "in order to understand our present situation — indeed even to experience it — we must interpret it."² "Theology attempts to discern and interpret those fundamental questions that disclose a genuinely religious dimension in our contemporary experience and language." All of our theological understanding is combined to understand our situations and experiences. Secondly, in the "hermeneutical process it becomes imperative for theologians to render explicit their understanding of the ultimate norm of the Christian tradition."³ "The theological task is to interpret both the situation and tradition."⁴ There must be a correlation between scripture and its relevance for today, the situation and the traditions of society. Thirdly, "hermeneutics, as itself grounded in conversation and thereby in a genuine community of inquire, aids in the possible consensus and the adjudication of the real differences among particular theologies."⁵ The exploration of different theologies and their historical context aids in the interpretation of the subject matter. "We are, in short, performing the distinctly theological task of an interpretation of Christian religion, namely, developing mutual critical correlations between an interpretation of the contemporary situation and the interpretation of the Christian tradition."⁶ Next, "whenever we interpret the Christian message theologically, we inevitably also apply it to our own contemporary experience in

² Ibid., 45.
³ Ibid., 46.
⁴ Dr. Edward Smith. Theology Lecture, (Interdenominational Theological Center, February 2011).
⁶ Ibid., 47.
order to understand it all."\(^7\) In other words, our experiences govern our explanation and understanding. Finally, "in the case of genuine theological interpretation, the questions of both meaning and truth must be faced squarely as the theologian attempts to establish the particular form of correlation appropriate to the relationship between the two constants on any particular subject matter."\(^8\) According to Dr. Edward Smith in order to effectively establish the correlation between the situation and tradition the hermeneutical process establishes a format for this interpretation.

This chapter will discuss the five hermeneutical steps outlined by Dr. Edward Smith; retrieval, critique, suspicion, understanding and explanation. This process will access the theological content and context which undergirds the ministry project. Within the framework of the hermeneutical process the issue of women in leadership will be examined from a biblical, theoretical, empirical and theological point of view. It is in this context that the issue of women in leadership will be addressed.

**Retrieval**

The first step in the hermeneutical process is 'Retrieval'. Retrieval involves understanding the relationship between the ministry issue and the theological categories; Jesus, God, Holy Spirit, Revelation and Human Being/Sin. "Formal theological discourse involves all five theological categories."\(^9\) Each of these categories plays a role, from primary to secondary, in the ministry issue. The Bible and other theological literature are used to address the theological categories.

\(^7\) Ibid., 47.

\(^8\) Ibid., 48.

To examine this issue of women in leadership theologically we must first examine God’s will; in other words what God intended. Is it God’s will for women to be in leadership in the church? According to Genesis 1:26-27, “Then God said, ‘Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.’ So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth’” (Genesis 1:26-28). God created male and female in God’s image and set forth a task for them together, equally to have dominion over all that God created. “For one, there is an equality of personhood. Both male and female are created in the image of God.” Secondly, “there is equality in the social realm. Both male and female are commanded to exercise dominion over creation.” “There is likewise an equality in the family realm. Both male and female share joint responsibility in the bearing and rearing of children.” Finally, there is an equality in the spirit realm. Both male and female are blessed by God.”

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12 Ibid., 99.

13 Ibid., 100.

14 Ibid., 100.
created for each other, to need each other, and thus together to be one."\(^{15}\) It is therefore God’s will that men and women work together in leadership.

**Jesus**

The triune member that plays a primary role in the theological understanding of the ministry issue is Jesus. Jesus is the Savior of the poor and oppressed, treated woman with compassion, was sensitive to the needs of women and challenged the social norms of that time.

Jesus is the Savior of the poor and oppressed. The mission statement of Jesus can be found in Luke 4:18-19. “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”\(^{16}\) However, when Jesus reads the scroll from the book of Isaiah some of the passage was omitted from Luke’s version. Isaiah 61:1-2 states, “The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor, and the day of vengeance of God; and to comfort all who mourn.”\(^{17}\) The mission statement contains six specific tasks: to bring good news to the poor; to bind up the brokenhearted; to proclaim release to the captives; to recover sight to the blind; to let the oppressed go free; and to

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proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor. Within this mission statement Jesus did not exclude anyone. However, the mission is inclusive of those who are considered marginalized and oppressed. Women for the most part have been marginalized and oppressed.

Jesus treated women with compassion often healing them in public. “As he went, the crowds pressed in on him. Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years; and though she had spent all she had on physicians, no one could cure her. She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his clothes, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped. Then Jesus asked, “Who touched me?” When all denied it, Peter said, “Master, the crowds surround you and press in on you.” But Jesus said, “Someone touched me; for I noticed that power had gone out from me.” When the woman saw that she could not remain hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before him, she declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. Jesus said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace.” 18 In the midst of the crowd this woman with the issue of blood was unclean for twelve years. According to Jewish law she was to remain separate from others. Leviticus 15:25-31, “If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, not at the time of her impurity, or if she has a discharge beyond the time of her impurity, all the days of the discharge she shall continue in uncleanness; as in the days of her impurity, she shall be unclean. Every bed on which she lies during all the days of her discharge shall be treated as the bed of her impurity; and everything on which she sits shall be unclean, as in the uncleanness of her impurity. “Whoever touches these things shall be

unclean, and shall wash his clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening."\(^{19}\) "Thus you shall keep the people of Israel separate from their uncleanness, so that they do not die in their uncleanness by defiling my tabernacle that is in their midst."\(^{20}\) She defied the law and sought out healing from Jesus. The woman with the issue of blood hid in the midst of the crowd and touched Jesus without being detected. When she was detected by Jesus, she was healed because of her faith. Jesus, as noted here, responded to the woman in spite of the fact that she was what society considered unclean.

Jesus was also sensitive to the needs of women even in the controversial setting of the church. Jesus healed in the synagogue. "Women were barred from participating in synagogue worship. Women could attend sabbateon, devoted to the liturgy of worship, as long as they sat in a balcony or behind a latticework at the back of the sanctuary, thereby remaining hidden from the view of the worshiping men."\(^{21}\) As recorded in Luke 13:10-13, "Now he (Jesus) was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment." When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God.\(^{22}\) Jesus healed

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\(^{21}\) C. S. Cowles. A Woman’s Place? Leadership in the Church, (Kansas City, Missouri: Beacon Hill Press, 1993), 49.

in the synagogue. Jesus called the woman forward to the area where women are not permitted, broke culture by speaking and touching her and finally affirmed her presence and need for healing.

Finally, Jesus is the liberator who challenged the social norms of that time. “In an astonishing reversal of all social norms, Jesus rejected all titles that in any way suggested rule, dominance, or authority and deliberately chose, instead, diakonos, ‘servant’ (Mark 10:42-45).”

He violated rabbinic traditions.

Jesus not only violated rabbinic tradition but offended Martha’s sense of propriety when he permitted Mary to hear the Word. When Martha complained that Mary was not fulfilling her proper domestic role in the kitchen, he (Jesus) defended her: ‘Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her’ (Luke 10:42 NASB). In so doing Jesus affirmed the right of women to hear God’s Word. In His gentle rebuke, Jesus was stating a new principle that would break the autocracy of women’s culturally and socially imposed role: namely it is more important for women to attend to the Word of God that it is to fulfill household duties. A woman is greater than what she does. She has worth and dignity apart from childbearing.

Women were not permitted to be in certain places at certain times especially when men were present. John 4:4-42 tells us the story of the ‘Woman at the Well.’ According to customs Jews do not associate with Samaritans. Jesus broke cultural customs when he spoke to the woman telling her about herself. The Women’s Bible Commentary edited by Carol A. Newson and Sharon H. Ringe has a unique description of this conversation.

The conversation between Jesus and the woman is thus a scandalous conversation, a scandal noted by the woman herself. She responds to Jesus’ request for water with the words “How is it that you, a


24 Ibid., 86.
Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?” The woman knows that a Jewish man should not talk with a Samaritan woman. Moreover, a Jew should not consider drinking water from a Samaritan vessel. The scandal is noted also by Jesus’ disciples when they arrive at the well. They are amazed that Jesus speaks with the woman; Jewish rabbis did not speak in public with women.\(^{25}\)

“Jesus breaks open boundaries in his conversation with the Samaritan woman: the boundary between male and female, the boundary between ‘chosen people’ and ‘rejected people’. Jesus’ journey to Samaria and his conversation with the woman demonstrate that the grace of God that he offers is available to all.”\(^{26}\) Jesus offered the woman living water or a better way to live life. “This conversation challenges the status quo by offering the water of life to a Samaritan woman.”\(^{27}\)

Jesus also challenged social norms while addressing the woman who was caught in adultery in John 8:3-11. It was reported that a woman was caught in the act of adultery. She was brought before Jesus by the scribes and Pharisees. “When the scribes and Pharisees brought the woman who had been caught in adultery to Jesus, they dehumanized her, turning her into an object for debate and discussion. The text focuses exclusively on the woman and her sexual behavior as sin continues to dehumanize and objectify her.”\(^{28}\) The woman is considered a sinner because of the laws and culture of the day; therefore, the sentence was for her to be stoned. According to Deuteronomy 22:22, “If a man is caught lying with the wife of another man, both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman as well as the woman.” Leviticus 20:10, “If a man commits

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\(^{26}\) Ibid., 384.

\(^{27}\) Ibid., 384.

\(^{28}\) Ibid., 385.
adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death.” “The law to which the Pharisees referred called for stoning both the man and the woman caught in an adulterous act. Yet as we can see the woman was not caught in adultery by herself, she was with a man. The crowd however did not bring the man forward – only the woman. “That only the woman was brought to Him (Jesus) reveals the double stand operative in Jesus’ day: namely, men were exempted but women were expendable.” This incident points to the patriarchal cultural attributes of that time. Men were not considered sinners in the case of adultery – only women. Also the punishment is unequivocally extreme toward women. This is even true today. Women are ostracized and demeaned when caught for sexual activities that involve both male and females. However, Jesus in his compassion intervened on the woman’s behalf. “When they kept on questioning him, he said to them, “Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” “Jesus straightened up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” She said, “No one, sir.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.” “What is striking about this story is that Jesus treats the woman as the social and human equal of the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus speaks to both sets of characters about sin.”

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30 Ibid., 90.


Many raise the argument that Jesus only elected males for his disciples. Jesus was working within the social norms of the society. The social norms of society serve as an undercurrent within the writings of the synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke. The Women's Bible Commentary: Revised and Updated edited by Carol Newson, Sharon Ringe and Jacqueline Lapsley provides the audience with an indication of the Gospel writers prospective. The ‘Gospel of Matthew’ written by Amy-Jill Levine in the Women's Bible Commentary states:

Matthew has not designed an egalitarian community. Jesus appoints no women among the Twelve and locates no woman as ‘judging the twelve tribes of Israel,’ no women are present at the transfiguration, Last Supper, or Gethsemane. Along with epitomizing service, women also subvert justice. Women are both among Jesus’ follows and among those who resist his teaching.34

Elizabeth Struthers Maibon in her article the ‘Gospel of Mark’ in the Women's Bible Commentary states:

Mark both reflects the patriarchal culture of its original situation and challenges that culture in important ways. All major characters are men, many of whom (but not all) are given names, and they appear in both public and private settings. The women characters are minor in terms of their narrated presence in the plot, most of them (but not all) remain nameless, and they generally (but not always) appear in the private settings of the homes. These generalities exhibit the patriarchal world of both author and audience.35

“The ancient patriarchal world was hierarchical in multiple dimensions: gender, ethnicity, religious status, economic status, political status, and class, which could combine many


35 Ibid., 480.
of these aspects.” Jane Schaberg and Sharon Ringe in their article the ‘Gospel of Luke’ in the Women’s Bible Commentary states:

Even as the Gospel (of Luke) highlights women as included among the followers of Jesus, subjects of his teaching, and objects of his healing, it deftly portrays them as models of subordinate service, excluded from the power center of the movement and from significant responsibilities. Claiming the authority of Jesus, this portrayal is an attempt to legitimate male dominance in the Christianity of the author’s time... The danger lies in the subtle artistic power of the story to seduce the reader into uncritical acceptance of it as simple history, and into acceptance of the depicted gender roles as divinely ordained.

There is much controversy around why Jesus did not choose women to be part of the twelve. The Greco-Roman world during the time of Jesus was patriarchal. William Gentz in the book The Dictionary of Bible and Religion writes, “One generalization that can be made is that most of these cultures were highly patriarchal.” Gentz also states that “Men were dominant, women subordinate, no matter what their social status.” As well as “in Israel women were essentially considered property and were of lesser value.” However, this does not answer the question why Jesus did not select a woman as a disciple. With all of the things Jesus did in his short ministry, we cannot surmise the process by which Jesus selected the disciples.

We do know that Jesus selected twelve disciples, all of whom were Galilean Jews. Does this mean that men who were not of Jewish descent should not be leaders of the church because Jesus did not select them? Or does it mean that because African Americans were not of Jewish descent they should not be leaders in the church because

36 Ibid., 480.
38 Ibid., 1116.
39 Ibid., 1116.
Jesus did not select them? Jesus was not from Galilee or Jerusalem. Yet he was an itinerant preacher whose membership spanned the Galilean territory. It is possible that Jesus, in the beginning of his ministry was working within the laws and customs of country. “Furthermore, while Jesus did not have a woman among his immediate Twelve, it was commonly assumed by the church fathers from Origen in the third century to Herveus Burgidolensis in the twelfth century that Jesus did include women among the group of seventy-two who were commissioned and sent out. He was simply a realist in terms of the amount of change the Palestine culture could accommodate at that point in time.”

In summary, Jesus is the Savior of the poor and oppressed, was compassionate and sensitive to the needs of women and was a liberator who challenged the social norms of the time. "In the Bible, Christ is presented as someone who brings us liberation. Christ the Savior liberates from sin, which is the ultimate root of all disruption of friendship and of all injustice and oppression."41 “Clearly, women have never had a greater champion, a mightier ‘liberationist,’ than Jesus of Nazareth. In word and deed, Jesus struck the chains that had for so long bound women in a demeaning state of depersonalization and dehumanized subordination.”42 The example of Jesus is applicable in our time. Women in leadership are still challenged by the social norms of today’s society. The culture still functions within a patriarchal hierarchy. This culture extends deep into the fibers of the church.

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Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit plays one of the secondary roles in the theological understanding of the ministry issue. As women in ministry we are all given specific gifts. It is through the power of the Holy Spirit that these gifts are manifested. “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.” 43 Karl Barth in his *Church Dogmatics* speaks of the Holy Spirit being as a “divine act whereby a man (or woman) being is empowered for an encounter with the self-revealing God.” 44

The Holy Spirit does not distinguish between male and female. As recorded in Acts 2:2-4, “When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.” 45 The text does not distinguish or even determine who ‘all’ is. All is inclusive of everyone.


In summary, the Holy Spirit plays a vital role in helping women to uncover their leadership abilities and specific gifts. "The context of Acts 2:1-4 suggests that women were among those present where the Holy Spirit descended on the church at Pentecost." The Holy Spirit has a relationship with Jesus Christ. The power of the Holy Spirit empowers, transforms and enables women to understand their abilities.

God

God plays the other secondary role in the theological understanding of the ministry issue. God is the one that created humankind, man and woman. "Equality is a dynamic and repeated theme from Genesis to Revelation. From the moment of creation, God’s Word validates the importance of women, with equal relationship with God." Genesis 1:27, "So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. "Without establishing relative rank of the genders, the spinner of this creation tale indicates that humankind is found in two varieties, the male and the female, and this humanity in its complementarity is a reflection of the deity." Additionally God did not place women in a subordinate position when God created man and woman. "Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should


be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.” 50 “So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.” 51

God wanted man to realize he needed a helper of equal status, that he could not make it alone (Genesis 2:18). However, the concept of helpmeet is often used as an argument for male dominance. Further study shows this to be in error. The Hebrew for “meet” translates to equal to. The word for “helper” is the same word used in the other Bible verses for the many ways God helps us. There is no subordinate or gender attached. 52

In Summary, God did not make a mistake in creating man and woman to be equal partners. It is man through patriarchal control that caused a division between and against the equality of woman.

Revelation

The primary role of Jesus and the secondary roles of the Holy Spirit and God as it relates to the ministry issue will be further clarified through revelation. “These revelations will enable us to know the will, ways and approaches of God as they relate to ministry and enhancing effectiveness.

The woman’s role is subjective when it comes to women in leadership. C. S. Cowles in his book, A Woman’s Place: Leadership in the Church defines the role of women throughout history.

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Women have constituted the most discriminated against majority in every civilization, culture, race, nation, and of religion. They have been relegated to a second-class status and treated as a subhuman species. They have been denied citizenship, education, civil or legal rights, and a voice or a vote in any public assembly. ‘Women have been treated as man’s inferior so long, that this practice has become accepted as truth.’

We have in some cases moved forward in society. Women are gaining in employment, political arenas and family structures. However, we still have a long way to go.

The church is one place where women in leadership have found difficulty gaining access to leadership positions. Historically this is the case. ‘Martin Luther in his democratizing doctrine of the ‘priesthood of every believer’ did not extend to women. Martin Luther regarded women as unfit for preaching, ministering the sacraments, or holding any positions of leadership in the congregation.’ This is true today, some men and women do not want women to lead in positions that men have occupied. It is very difficult to breach the ministry hierarchy in the church.

Finally, C. S. Cowles describes the woman’s role from the patriarchal point of view.

A wife’s role was strictly domestic. Her duties were to spin, weave, sew, and wash clothes for her husband. She was also responsible for grinding meal, baking, cooking, preparing and serving his meals. She was not permitted to eat with him but was to remain standing behind him while he ate. Other duties included clothing him, washing his face, hands, and feet, preparing his bed, and caring for him when he grew old. She had to turn over to him all money earned from manual work. She rendered to her husband unquestioning and absolute obedience in all things. This was a religious duty.

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54 Ibid., 56.

55 Ibid., 47-48.
Even though women have made progress in several areas within the family, there are still unwritten assumed roles for women. In many cases the woman’s role is still considered domestic even though modern conveniences have assisted in the process. Women most often assume the unwritten domesticated role. These roles manifest themselves even though women have a job outside of the home, children to take care of and a husband. Women are expected by virtue of the way we were taught by our fore-mothers to serve and be submissive to our husbands.

In summary, women in leadership have made some strides toward inclusivity in the area of church leadership. However, women are still viewed in terms of their domesticated duties. As long as society continues to have a narrow view of the capabilities of women, then women will continue to be subjected and limited to only certain leadership positions.

**Human Rights/Sin**

Finally, sin plays a role in the theological understanding of the ministry issue.

According to Deloris Williams in the book *Sister’s in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk* “the fallacious merging of the Black church and the African-American denominational churches hides a multitude of sins against black women prevalent in the African-American denominational churches on a daily bases.”

Some of these sins are:

- The sexism that denies Black women equal opportunity in the churches’ major leadership roles. Such action opposes God by denying God’s call to black women to preach. The sin of sexism dies slowly in some African-American denominational structures and hangs on tenaciously in others.

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• The immoral models of male leadership at the helm of too many of the Black denominational churches.

• Collusion that often exists between some Black male preachers and the political forces in America oppressing Black women and all Black people.

• The sexual exploitation of Black women in the denominational church by some black preachers.

• The tendency of the proclamation and teachings of the denominational churches to be so spiritualized and 'heaven-directed' that women parishioners are not encouraged to concentrate on their lives in this world and to fight for their own survival, liberation and productive quality of life.

Women suffer internalized oppression, not only the oppression that someone places on them but also the oppression that women place on themselves. This problem does not involve men. Men's problems involve sexism. This internalized oppression involves women who still believe that men have the right to oppress them.

The sin is that we, meaning men and women, do not treat women leaders as all leaders should be treated. Luke 6:31 reads, "Do to others as you would have them do to you." Matthew 7:12 reads, "In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets." In summary, the sin is anything that serves as an oppressive entity against women in leadership.

Summary

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Women in leadership have a difficult time rising into positions of leadership in the church. We have addressed the issue by using the first step, Retrieval, in the five step hermeneutical process. The hermeneutical process attempts to establish a correlation between the ministry issue and how it is interpreted. Retrieval involves understanding the relationship between the ministry issue and the theological categories; Jesus, God, Holy Spirit, Revelation and Human Being/Sin. The theological category of Jesus played the primary role in the theological understanding of the ministry issue. The other categories, Holy Spirit and God, played secondary roles. The author used the bible and other theological literature to address the theological categories. Jesus served as the Savior to the poor and oppressed, treated women with compassion, was sensitive to the needs of women in controversial settings of the church and he challenged the social norms and culture of the day. The Holy Spirit plays a vital role in helping women to uncover their spiritual gifts and how they are manifested in the church. The Holy Spirit does not distinguish between male and female. God is the creator of humankind, man and woman, additionally God did not place women in a subordinate position when God created man and woman. The Revelation in leadership is that women still have a difficult time gaining access in leadership positions. Finally, it is a sin that women are oppressed by themselves and others. It is a sin that we do not treat women as leaders. These five theological categories helped to establish a correlation between the ministry issue and its interpretation.

**Critique**

The second step in the hermeneutical process is ‘Critique’. According to Dr. Edward Smith in his lecture dated February 9, 2011, the critique is the theological
understanding of what is happening in the ministry issue. The critique provides explanations to the questions: What has the church been doing up to now? What has kept this from happening? Why are women in leadership having a difficult time rising into positions of leadership in the church? The critique will address the ministry issue as it relates to the ministry context.

Monticello is a small town located about 70 miles from Atlanta. The town is not on a direct path from Atlanta or Macon. It is not off the interstate. In other words you have to intentionally go to Monticello. There are very few jobs available for men or women outside of factories and public schools. Higher education can only be obtained if one travels to schools more than thirty miles away. The opportunities for advancement are not great. Women do not have the same opportunities as men. In most cases, women are juggling family with children, husbands, household responsibilities and employment. Cultural influence also plays a critical role in how women are treated. I believe that it is difficult to provide the opportunities for leadership growth in Monticello.

In the denomination of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church leadership opportunities are provided for women in churches in the larger cities. These same opportunities are not afforded to those who reside in smaller towns. Teachers and people in leadership who are trained within the denomination do not focus on churches off the beaten path. Because Monticello is some 30 miles from the nearest major interstate, it is considered off the beaten path.

Classes and curriculum offered by the denomination are provided 45 or more miles away and are often unavailable or out of reach financially for smaller churches. It is somewhat expected of those who reside in smaller towns to come to the ‘big city’ to
receive leadership training. Yet obstacles which include transportation, finances, and proper care for the children preclude women from smaller and rural congregations from receiving this valuable training.

In summary, many women in small towns such as Monticello are still struggling to receive training near their homes because of obstacles. Some of the same opportunities available to women in the larger towns are not available to the smaller towns. It is my critique that the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church is still struggling with the issue of women in leadership.

Suspicion

'Suspicion' is the third step in the hermeneutical process. This step in the hermeneutical process raises questions as to why the author thinks the ministry issue is not being addressed.

In the exploration of women in leadership there could be many reasons why women are not in leadership positions. Some of these reasons, I contend, include embedded theology, understanding of source theology impacting women's identity and thought process, lack of training, caring for family which includes spouse and children, lack of support for women by women, and the church's refusal to assist women as well as the thought process that women should only do specific jobs.

Embedded Theology

As we explore why women are not in leadership positions, we must first investigate that which is intrinsically entrenched within us, our embedded theology. We began the learning process from birth with our mothers talking and teaching. Dr.
Edward Smith in his book *The Doctrines of Providence and Revelation: An Introduction to Philosophy and Theology* says the following:

"Many of us were born and raised in this theology. It began in us before we could speak, developing during years of Sunday worship, church school, and youth groups, and reinforced by the life example of our parents, friends and ministers. As we grew older and began to think for ourselves, this theology was reshaped and became very much our own, in some ways like and in other respects unlike the theology we encountered in our homes and churches. These theological messages from the church have bred into the hearts and minds of the faithful since our entry into the church."  

"Christians learn what faith is all about from countless daily encounters with their Christianity – formal and informal – planned and unplanned. This understanding of faith disseminated by the church and assimilated by its members in their daily lives is called 'embedded theology'."  

"Embedded theology in religious language is often known as 'first hand' or the language of witness, being made up of the most immediate and direct testimonies of the meaning of faith." Embedded theology includes the prayers that were prayed to us as a child; the morals and values that were taught and learned; the family stories and history from family outings, holiday gatherings and family connected moments; as well as culture and historical context passed down from one to another. Embedded theology is everything that is learned in the church including Sunday school lessons and recitations as well as polity that shapes our worship and the lyrics and the music in our songs and the gospel that is preached from the pulpit. Embedded theology is the "theology that is

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60 Smith, Dr. Edward L. *The Doctrines of Providence and Revelation: An Introduction to Philosophy and Theology*, (Atlanta, Georgia: The Research Center Press, 2001), 51.

61 Ibid., 50.

62 Ibid., 50.
deeply in place at work and in our lives as Christians in our homes, churches, and the world."

Source of Theology

"Sources of authority that shape our identities include: the bible (historically, a primary source for Protestants); experience (i.e., of women and those who are marginalized); social scientific data (i.e., on biological and gender differences); denominational sources such as creeds, rulings from the magisterium in the Roman Catholic tradition, or denominational constitutions; and gender and feminist studies." As a result, we bring to the table our fixed thought process on what a leader should be and who a leader should be based on our embedded theology and source of theology. Unfortunately our theology can be used to obstruct one’s path. Our theology can also encourage and promote women to be the leaders they are called to be.

Training of Women

Women are the last to be trained. Often training is at a far greater expense than for their male counterparts. Some of these expenses include child care, added living arrangements to include children, and greater student loan debt. Many obstacles or barriers need to be overcome in order for women to receive training. These barriers include the cultural barriers, family barriers and innate barriers. Women who have children at an early age are the last to be considered for programs that teach them leadership skills.

Women as Caregivers

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63 Ibid., 50.

Women are the primary caregivers for their children. In most cases in order to make ends meet, women who are married with children and women not married with children are finding that they are tri-vocational workers. Women are mothers and wives. They take care of the home and extended family members. Women also have jobs outside of the home, in some cases more than one job to make ends meet. These jobs are usually lower paying jobs. As a result, time and money prevent women in these situations from receiving leadership training. They just don’t have time and in some cases the energy.

**Women Not Supporting Women**

Another issue in this category of suspicion is that of women not supporting women. Some women do not support each other as leaders. “In fact, one of the perennial arguments against female pastors is that it is not the men of the church who object but the women who do not want a woman in the pulpit.”65 At times we are considered our own worst enemy. A primary example would be women whose mothers do not support them in the quest for additional education, a better job or even moving on to a better life. One reason may be that mothers may not have done so themselves. In this case daughters are discouraged from exploring leadership opportunities. Mothers instead encourage their daughters to do as they did, stay at home and take care of the household and family.

At times women are pigeonholed into specific roles by members and clergy who believe that women are only supposed to have specific roles in the church such as the usher board, choir and Missionary Society. However, “Black women know how radically dependent their churches and communities are on their presence and actions for

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both organizational integrity and effective mobilization. When blocked from the most visible leadership positions, women find ways to make their voices heard and their power felt in alternative spaces of their own creation, spaces that often give them limited access to the sacred platforms.\(^{66}\)

Women are not encouraged to venture out and explore options that are not typically extended to them. An example of this can be best illustrated from my experience at a former church setting. There were a few women in the church who were vehemently opposed to any women who were not of their economic status who attempted to take a leadership role in the church. These women reserved these choice leadership roles for those who were in their specific class category. Therefore, if women attempted to elevate themselves into leadership positions they were ostracized and isolated. One might say that they were set up for failure. Needless to say very little was accomplished outside of the dominating group. As a result, a strong invisible class system barrier was established to keep women from working in leadership roles or participating in leadership opportunities.

Finally, it is my suspicion that women in the local church are some of the main adversaries against women in the pulpit. Bishop Vashti McKenzie in her book, *Not Without a Struggle: Leadership Development for African American Women in Ministry – Revised and Updated* outlines several reasons why women in the local church do not accept women in the pulpit. “Some believe that the pulpit is historically one of the few places African American men can exert strong, positive leadership, and for that reason African American women should let them do so. Others feel the pulpit is one of the few

\(^{66}\) Cheryl Townsend Gilkes. *If It Wasn’t For the Women*, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 2001), 7.
remaining positions where women can interact with men who are sensitive to their spiritual needs."\textsuperscript{67} "Still others believe that some women have problems working with other women."\textsuperscript{68} "Often women don’t want other women in the pulpit simply because this represents change in tradition neither articulated nor supported by authorizing bodies."\textsuperscript{69}

**The Church Not Supporting Women’s Leadership**

My suspicion is that the church does not encourage or support women, especially women with children, to be candidates for leadership positions at church. The perception is that women need to be taking care of their children. While no real evidence has been documented this contention, however, could be seen in another example: A former member of a church, whom I will call Linda, had two children out of wedlock. Linda was an extremely talented singer, director, and songstress. However, because she had children and was not married, church members did not encourage or support her endeavors in music ministry in front of the congregation. She was discouraged from teaching children. Some women went so far as to prohibit their daughters from associating with her. A second example is one I experienced myself: At a younger age I recognized God calling me to ministry. I was a mother with three small children. After consulting my pastor, I was told to go home and raise my children. God does not call women to preach. As a result, I was not supported in my quest toward my specific calling. It was suppressed until some 20 years later. The pastor whom I trusted


\textsuperscript{68} Ibid., 36.

\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., 36.
persuaded me to believe that women were not supposed to pursue their calling in ministry. Furthermore the women within the congregation supported the pastor's thought process.

In summary, "Men and women resent the presence of clergy who happens to be women because they represent the changing nature of how a church works or a change in the work of the church." This has not changed. Women in leadership as well as women who happen to be preachers and pastors are still experiencing some of these same excuses as to why women should not be in the pulpit.

Qualified women in the local church are not receiving proper nurturing, guidance and or support in the articulation or the manifestation of their ministerial visions and goals. This includes clergy and lay women. There are barriers such as sexism and cultural differences in church and society which pose challenging obstacles to the development of women in leadership positions.

**Understanding**

The fourth category in the hermeneutical process is that of ‘Understanding’. Understanding is an explanation of a concept or theology that helps explain the ministry issue.

Historically, women in leadership have had a difficult time breaking through the glass ceiling. The term "the glass ceiling" refers to "the invisible barriers that impede" the progression of women into leadership positions. "The term glass ceiling was coined by Katherine Lawrence and Marianne Schreiber of Hewlett-Packard in 1979.

The term 'glass ceiling' refers to situations where the advancement of a qualified person within the hierarchy of an organization is stopped at a lower level because of some form of discrimination, most commonly

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70 Ibid., 36
sexism or racism. Glass ceiling is defined as 'the phenomenon whereby women do quite well in the labor market up to a market after which there is an effective limit on their prospects.'

"The general-case glass ceiling hypothesis states that not only is it more difficult for women than for men to be promoted up levels of authority hierarchies within workplaces but also that the obstacles women face relative to men become greater as they move up the hierarchy. Gender-based discrimination in promotions is not simply present across levels of hierarchy but is more intense at higher levels." The 'glass ceiling' is a metaphor for the invisible ceiling that exists as women attempt to move up the ladder of success. The glass ceiling is "a transparent barrier that kept women from rising above a certain level in corporations. . . . It applies to women as a group who are kept from advancing higher because they are women." "Taken literally, the metaphor of the 'glass ceiling' implies the existence of an impermeable barrier that blocks the vertical mobility of women; below this barrier, women are able to get promoted; beyond this barrier, they are not."

The 'glass ceiling' which manifests itself in the church is called the 'stained glass ceiling'. "The 'stained glass ceiling' is a sociological phenomenon in religious communities which revolves around the apparent difficulty for women who seek to gain a

71 Sonia Taneja, Mildred Golden Pryor and John Humphreys; Empowerment from the Gender Perspective (Delhi Business Review X Vol. 10, No. 2, July - December 2009), 21-22


role within church leadership. The use of the term ‘stained glass ceiling’ is metaphorical, indicating a certain level of power or authority within the church structures that women tend not to rise above within church hierarchies.”75 The metaphor of the ‘stained glass ceiling’ is an unspoken yet visible, invisible barrier in the church. Many churches “have demeaned women, and used theology and scriptural misinterpretations to keep them in second-class status. Women who challenged the religious status quo had to cope, not only with culture and tradition, but with the ‘will of God’.”76

Women are supported and encouraged as long as women stay within a specified area and do not attempt to cross over into leadership positions generally held by men. Women are encouraged to be ushers, choir members, missionaries, and Sunday school teachers. However women in specific contexts are discouraged or not allowed to have leadership roles in the church. This includes women who birth children out of wedlock or women who have made mistakes in their lives. Finally, women are greatly scrutinized if they profess to have a leadership calling in ministry.

It was amazing that women heard the call to preach through the ‘sounding brass and tinkling cymbals’ of cultural biases, traditions, and sexism. The road was (is) not easy and the burdens were (are) not light for many paradigm-pioneering women who faced criticism, rejection, isolation, and even excommunication. Some were even threatened with bodily harm. Every imaginable argument was used to deny what God had spoken into their hearts. The Bible, which gave them images of women with ‘like passions’ such as Deborah, Hildah, Mary Magdalene, and Phoebe, was used against them. Biblical interpreters labeled them, among other things, as heretics.77


An issue that is associated with the above ministry issue is the inner struggles of women relative to the various expected roles within their family structure, community and in the church. Women have been placed in specific roles based on culture and family. The motivation is to pave the way for other women who have goals and aspirations, to seek after what they want and what they want to do but have roadblocks and obstacles standing in their way.

In summary, it is my understanding that women in leadership still have a difficult time rising into positions of leadership in the church. I believe that Bishop Vashti McKenzie in her book *Not Without a Struggle: Leadership Development for African American Women in Ministry – Revised and Updated* states it best:

One of the next challenges to sexism in the church is for clergywomen to move beyond ‘first appointment’ churches or entry level positions. Clergywomen face a ‘glass ceiling’ or ‘stained glass ceiling’ of their own. The advancement up the denominational ladder is within view, but women have been unable to move in significant numbers beyond the local church to serve in denominational positions and on the episcopal level to effect change and/or be a part of the decision dynamic on the denominational level. Another challenge is to move beyond the tokenism of the ‘first and only women’ elected or appointed to this, that, or the other office.\(^78\)

**Explanation**

The final step in the hermeneutical process to better understand the issue of women in leadership is that of ‘Explanation’. Various theologians and literature on the plight of women in leadership will be used to explain this phenomenon and will be exclusive to the use of theologians within the categories of liberation, feminist, and womanist theologies.

Review of the Theology of Liberation

Gustavo Gutiérrez in his book the *Theology of Liberation* indicates that "liberation emphasizes that human beings transform themselves by conquering their liberty throughout their existence and their history."79 "Liberation expresses the aspirations of all oppressed peoples and social classes, emphasizing the conflictual aspect of the economic, social, and political process which puts them at odds with wealthy nations and oppressive classes."80 Liberation is transformation. Something has to change the situation, the culture and especially the mindset of a person. Poor can be a metaphor for where we are, meaning the state of mind we are in. Poor does not necessarily mean economically, it can be physically, emotionally, mentally and even spiritually. Poor can be a state of mind, in a given situation. Within the church structure, poor can describe the undercurrent of oppression that is prevalent in the dual message given to women who seek leadership positions in the church.

According to Gutiérrez true “liberation” has three main dimensions: First, it involves political and social liberation, the elimination of the immediate causes of poverty and injustice. Second, liberation involves the emancipation of the poor, the marginalized, the downtrodden and the oppressed from all “those things that limit their capacity to develop themselves freely and in dignity”. Third, liberation theology involves liberation from selfishness and sin, a re-establishment of a relationship with God and with other people.81

“Liberation theology speaks of salvation in Christ in terms of liberation.” "This approach meant listening to the ‘muted cry’ that wells up from millions of human beings,

80 Ibid., 24.
81 [http://liberationtheology.org/people-organizations/gustavo-gutierrez](http://liberationtheology.org/people-organizations/gustavo-gutierrez), Internet; accessed; May 4, 2011, xxxvii.
pleading with their pastors for a liberation that is nowhere to be found in their case."82 According to Gutierrez “the cornerstone of liberation theology is poverty.” “Any essential clue to the understanding of poverty in liberation theology is the distinction between three meanings of the term ‘poverty’: real poverty as an evil—that is something that God does not want; spiritual poverty, in the sense of a readiness to do God’s will; and solidarity with the poor, along with protest against the conditions under which they suffer."83

Black liberation theologian, James Cone, offers additional understanding of the term ‘liberation’. “James Cone believes that God’s promise of liberation is the strength and enduring power that keeps people to fight on for their liberation.”84 “Liberation is certainly a gift from God. Freedom thus belongs to God and is not human made.”85

James Cone understands liberation as freedom: First, liberation as freedom is to be in relation to God. To be in right relationship with God is the primary content of human liberation and this freedom must precede the freedom to be in relation to self and community. Secondly, liberation is freedom in relation to self and community of the oppressed. There can be no authentic freedom of self unless it is related to the freedom of the community. Thirdly, Cone understands liberation as the project of freedom in history. Liberation cannot be separated from the historical struggle of freedom in this world. It is biblical. ‘Jesus proclaimed freedom to the captives, good news to the poor, ministered to the least of these, and invited the sinners to the Kingdom banquet.’ Finally liberation is a project of freedom and hope. It goes beyond the here and now.”86

82 Ibid., xxxvii.
83 Ibid., xxv.
85 Ibid., 338.
86 Ibid., 338-339.
Liberation is the first layer of oppression that women in leadership must acknowledge. Women must acknowledge that they are in an oppressive situation. Many times women do not know they are oppressed because women are in the midst of the situation. A woman in the church, for example, asked me what my project was about. She basically said, “I have never experienced oppression in the church. Preachers provide every opportunity for women to grow and serve in leadership roles.” This woman is highly gifted in the area of leadership. However, she has been ‘sat down’ by many pastors once she begins to exhibit these innate qualities.

“Under capitalism, patriarchy is structured so that sexism restricts women’s behavior in some realms even as freedom from limitations is allowed in other spheres. The absence of extreme restrictions leads many women to ignore the areas in which they are exploited or discriminated against; it may lead them to imagine that no women are oppressed.” The statement “you can’t see the forest for the trees’ explains it best. In the case of the church, women are immersed in religious ritual, worship, the pastor and everything that makes up the church. When people are in the midst of the situation be it good or bad they cannot see the issue as a whole, only bits and pieces.

**Review of Feminist Theology and Black Feminist Theology**

Helen Reddy pinned the lyrics to the song *I am Woman* which was used as the feminist anthem during the feminist movement.

I am woman, hear me roar, in numbers too big to ignore. And I know too much to go back an' pretend 'cause I've heard it all before and I've been down there on the floor. No one's ever gonna keep me down again.

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Oh yes I am wise, but it's wisdom born of pain. Yes, I've paid the price but look how much I gained. If I have to, I can do anything. I am strong. I am invincible. I am woman.

You can bend but never break me, 'cause it only serves to make me more determined to achieve my final goal. And I come back even stronger not a novice any longer, 'cause you've deepened the conviction in my soul.

I am woman watch me grow, see me standing toe to toe. As I spread my lovin' arms across the land, but I'm still an embryo, with a long, long way to go, until I make my brother understand.88

“Reddy’s anthem directly and forcefully addresses issues of feminism, women’s rights, and gender equality.”89 Growing up I always felt that this anthem described a woman who is struggling to be heard. She is ready to take her rightful place. So, get ready here I come. This song was used to promote the women’s movement known as feminism. “Feminism may be broadly defined as a point of view in which women are understood to be fully human and thus entitled to equal rights and privileges.”90 “Feminism strives to eradicate sexism and related exploitative classification systems and to allow those silenced to join in the cultural activity of defining reality.”91 Feminism includes an awareness that society’s norms are masculine and that to be a woman in such a society involves marginality.92 Feminism is considered a middle class-white women’s theology.

"Hence, feminist theology is a liberation theology; it is liberation theology in the context of women and men."\(^93\) Yet this context is not inclusive of all women.

"Frequently, white feminists act as if black women did not know sexist oppression existed until they voiced feminist sentiment. White feminists believe they are providing black women with ‘the’ analysis and ‘the’ program for liberation. They do not understand, cannot even imagine, that black women, as well as other groups of women who live daily in oppressive situations, often acquire an awareness of patriarchal politics from their lived experiences, just as they develop strategies of resistance (even though they may not resist on a sustained or organized basis)."\(^94\)

According to Jacquelyn Grant in her article *Womanist Theology: Black Woman’s Experience as a Source for doing Theology, with Special Reference to Christology* states that feminist theology basic tenets are:

1. Feminist theology seeks to develop a wholistic theology. Feminist theology rejects the traditional forms of oppressive and one-sided, male-dominated theologies which arise out of patriarchal religions.

2. Feminist theologians call for the eradication of social/sexual dualisms in human existence which is inherent in patriarchy. A patriarchy is characterized by male-domination and female submission and subordination. In such a society, men are considered strong, intelligent, rational and aggressive; women are considered weak, irrational, and docile.

3. The function of feminist theology is to conceptualize new and positive images of women.

4. Finally, feminist theology must evaluate male articulated understandings of the Christian faith.\(^95\)

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The feminist theology in this context does not incorporate all women who experience sexism. The basic tenets of feminist theology are geared toward white middle and upper class women.

"It has been argued by many blacks that the women's liberation movement is a white middle-class movement. Therefore it is believed to be totally irrelevant to the situation of black women since the majority of them are not middle-class."\(^{96}\) However, as the feminist movement has evolved the feminist position also changed to include a broader audience.

Bonnie Miller McLemore in her article "Feminist Theory in Pastoral Theology" found in the book entitled *Feminist and Womanist Pastoral Theology* further elaborates on the definition of feminism.

Feminism is far more than a movement to achieve equal rights, individual freedom, and economic and social equity for middle-class White women. Instead, a feminist perspective demands a critical analysis of structures and ideologies that rank people as inferior or superior according to various traits of human nature, whether gender, sexual orientation, class, color, age, physical ability, and so forth. Feminism strives to eradicate sexism and related exploitative classificatory systems and to allow those silenced to join in the cultural activity of defining reality.\(^ {97}\)

Carrie Doehring in her article "A Method of Feminist Pastoral Theology" describes three positions of feminism:

1. Demanding equal access by addressing issues of gender equality and gender oppression;

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\(^{96}\) Ibid., 199.

2. Rejecting patriarchal structures, naming women's experience as different from men's, reforming and constructing systems by using women's experience;

3. Rejecting any meaning system (patriarchal, racist, classist, heterosexist) that has universalized and made metaphysical any binary categories (i.e., masculine/feminine, white/black, straight/gay) that place people in privileged and marginalized positions.98

This position moves the feminist theology to be inclusive of those who are considered marginalized. "Feminism is far more than a movement to achieve equal rights, individual rights, and economic and social equity for middle-class white women. Instead, a feminist perspective demands a critical analysis of structures and ideologies that rank people as inferior or superior according to various traits of human nature, whether gender, sexual orientation, class, color, age, physical ability, and so forth."99

This analysis is best communicated through those who consider themselves Black Feminists. bell hooks in her book, Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center describes the feminist movement as those women who rebelled against racism who collectively came together in what is known as women's liberation. Feminism is described by bell hooks as "a struggle to end sexist oppression. Therefore, it is necessarily a struggle to eradicate the ideology of domination that permeates Western culture on various levels, as well as a commitment to reorganizing society so that the self-development of people can take precedence over imperialism, economic expansion, and material desires."100


commitment to feminism so defined would demand that each individual participant acquire critical political consciousness based on ideas and beliefs.”

hooks also states that, “feminist thought and practice were fundamentally altered when a radical woman of color and white women allies began to rigorously challenge the notion that ‘gender’ was the primary factor determining a woman’s fate.” “Looking at the interlocking nature of gender, race, and class was the perspective that changed the direction of feminist thought.” Women had to acknowledge that gender is a common denominator but for black women and women of other races, race and class are also a contributing factor.

hooks further states that:

Frequently, white feminists act as if black women did not know sexist oppression existed until they voiced feminist sentiment. They believe they are providing black women with ‘the’ analysis and ‘the’ program for liberation. They do not understand, cannot even imagine, that black women, as well as other groups of women who live daily in oppressive situations, often acquire an awareness of patriarchal politics from their lived experience, just as they develop strategies of resistance (even though they may not resist on a sustained organized basis).

These experiences manifest themselves at home, on the job and in the church. Black women have lived with overt and covert experiences of oppression, yet have found strategies and defense mechanisms as barriers to minimize the pain that they experience.

Finally, hooks’ describes feminism as a movement. “Feminism as a movement to end sexist oppression directs our attention to systems of domination and the

101 Ibid., 26.
103 Ibid., xii.
104 Ibid., 11.
interrelatedness of sex, race, and class oppression."¹⁰⁵ "Sexist oppression is of primary importance not because it is the basis of all other oppression, but because it is the practice of denomination most people experience, whether their role be that of discriminator or discriminated against, exploiter or exploited."¹⁰⁶

Patricia Hill Collins in the book *Black Feminist Thought* describes "Black women's subordination within intersecting oppressions of race, class, gender, sexuality, and nation."¹⁰⁷ It is her contention that "Black feminist thought aims to empower African American women within the context of social injustice sustained by intersecting oppressions. Since Black women cannot be fully empowered unless intersecting oppressions themselves are eliminated."¹⁰⁸ "By embracing a paradigm of intersecting oppressions of race, class, gender, sexuality, and nation, as well as Black women's individual and collective agency within them, Black feminist thought reconceptualizes the social relations of domination and resistance."¹⁰⁹ The diagram below is a visual diagram of the intersection of Black Women's oppressions of race, class, gender, sexuality, nation and black women’s collective agency within (embedded Theology) which is described by Patricia Hill Collins.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 33.
¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 25.
¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 291-292.
It is my contention that as Black women in leadership we have to contend with the paradigm intersecting oppressions of sexism, racism, classism, and embedded theology. This makes sense. We contend with these 'isms' in one form or another in our culture, at work, and yes even at our places of worship. Sexism in the church is still the dominant oppressive that affects Black women in leadership. One might think that sexism in the church is only exhibited from men. This is not true. Sexism is the undercurrent expression exhibited by women upon women partly because of embedded beliefs, biblical teaching and personal theologies. The next diagram illustrates the oppressive 'ism's' that Black Women in leadership have to contend with in the church; sexism, racism, classism, and embedded theology.
In summary, feminist theology is a liberation theology. Feminist theology addresses women’s rights and gender equality. However, feminist theology falls short in addressing the Black women’s experience that includes sexism, classism and racism. Therefore, Black Feminist theology addresses these issues. Black Feminist thought addresses the intersecting oppressions of race, class, gender, sexuality and embedded theology.

**Review of Womanist Theology**

Thus far we have explored women in leadership from the perspective of liberation theology, feminist theology and Black feminist theology. While Black feminist theology addresses the intersecting oppressions of race, class, gender, sexuality and embedded theology, one component that is missing yet relevant to Black women in leadership is experience. Jacquelyn Grant in her article, *Womanist Theology in North America* states that; “Womanist Theology is a theological perspective that emerges out of the experiences of Black women.”

Black woman or a white woman is so different that another word is required to describe
the liberative efforts of Black women."111 Alice Walker defines "womanist as:

1. From womanish. (Opp. of "girlish," i.e. frivolous, irresponsible, not
serious.) A black feminist or feminist of color. From the black folk
expression of mothers to female children, "you acting womanish," i.e.,
like a woman. Usually referring to outrageous, audacious, courageous or
willful behavior. Wanting to know more and in greater depth than is
considered "good" for one. Interested in grown up doings. Acting grown
up. Being grown up. Interchangeable with another black folk expression:
"You trying to be grown." Responsible. In charge. Serious.

2. Also: A woman who loves other women, sexually and/or nonsexually.
Appreciates and prefers women's culture, women's emotional flexibility
(values tears as natural counterbalance of laughter), and women's strength.
Sometimes loves individual men, sexually and/or nonsexually. Committed
to survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female. Not a
separatist, except periodically, for health. Traditionally a universalist, as
in: "Mama, why are we brown, pink, and yellow, and our cousins are
white, beige and black?" Ans. "Well, you know the colored race is just
like a flower garden, with every color flower represented." Traditionally
capable, as in: "Mama, I'm walking to Canada and I'm taking you and a
bunch of other slaves with me." Reply: "It wouldn't be the first time."

love and food and roundness. Loves struggle. Loves the Folk. Loves
herself. Regardless.

4. Womanist is to feminist as purple is to lavender.112

"Womanish became converted to womanist, referring to being serious and courageous. It
pointed to serious black women, courageous Black women, bold Black women."113 "A
womanist then is a strong black woman who has sometimes been mislabeled as a

111 Jacquelyn Grant. Womanist Theology: Black Woman's Experience as a Source for doing
theology, with Special Reference to Christology, (Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center 13
no 2 Spring 1986), 200.

112 Walker, Alice. In Search of Our Mothers' Garden, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich,

113 Jacquelyn Grant. Womanist Theology in North America. (Journal of the Interdenominational
Theological Center 16 no 1- 2 Fall-Spring 1988-1989), 288.
domineering, castrating matriarch. A womanist is one who has developed survival strategies in spite of the oppression of her race and sex in order to save her family and her people.”114 “The chief function of womanism is not merely to replace one set of elitist, hegemonic (authority/control) texts that have traditionally ignored, dismissed, or flat-out misunderstood the existential realities of women of the African Diaspora with another set of Afrocentric texts that had gotten short shift and pushed to the margins of the learned societies. Rather, our objective is to use Walker's definition as a critical, methodological framework for challenging inherited traditions for their collusion with androcentric patriarchy as well as for being a catalyst in overcoming oppressive situations through revolutionary acts of rebellion.”115

“Black women's experiences include not only Black women's activities in the larger society, but also in the churches. It emphasizes the fact that Black women have often rejected oppressive structures in the church and the larger society.”116

Womanist Theology recognizes the fact that many cultures are indeed patriarchal. In these cultures sexism renders women at best, second-class citizens. Sexism violates the humanity and basic dignity of women. Secondly, Womanist Theology affirms the struggle for the eradication of racism wherever it is found. Moreover whereas black women shared the racial oppression of black men, wherever they are found, the added dimensions of black women's oppression means that there needs to be special or added attention to our challenge in the theological arena. Womanist theology is thoroughly grounded in the


struggles to eliminate sexism from our communication and from the larger community.\textsuperscript{117}

This does not mean that women exclude men, that is not so. Womanists seek to eradicate racism, sexism and classism.

Deloris Williams in her book \textit{Sisters in the Wilderness} defines “womanist theology as a prophetic voice reminding African-American denominational churches of their mission to seek justice and voice for all their people, of which Black women are the overwhelming majority of their congregations. Yet this prophetic voice is concerned about the well-being of the entire African-American community, female and male, adults and children.”\textsuperscript{118}

Williams also states that the aim of womanist theology is discourse and work with Black women in the churches; it also brings Black women's experience into the discourse of all Christian theology, from which it has previously been excluded. Womanist Theology attempts to help Black women see, affirm and have confidence in the importance of their experience and faith for determining the character of the Christian religion in the African-American community. Womanist theology challenges all oppressive forces impeding Black women's struggle for survival and for the development of a positive, productive quality of life conducive to women’s and the family’s freedom and well-being. Womanist theology opposes all oppression based on race, sex, class, sexual preference, physical disability and caste.\textsuperscript{119}

Monica Coleman in her book \textit{Making a Way Out of No Way: A Womanist Theology} states that “womanist theology is a response to sexism in black theology and racism in feminist theology.”\textsuperscript{120} According to Coleman early Black theologians included

\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., 286-287.


\textsuperscript{120}
the experiences of Black men and boys and feminist theologians addressed white middle to upper class women. None of these theologies addressed the needs of Black women’s oppression. “The term womanist allows Black women to affirm their identity as black while also owning a connection with feminism.”121

“Womanist theology examines the social construction of Black womanhood in relation to the African American community and religious concepts.”122 “Womanist theology is known for its analysis of religion and society in the light of the triple oppression of racism, sexism, and classism that characterizes the experience of many black women.”123 “Womanist theology uses a wide range of sources – traditional church doctrines, African-American fiction and poetry, nineteenth-century black women leaders, poor and working-class black women in holiness churches, gospel music, spiritual, personal narratives, conjurer, and syncretic black religiosity, and the experience of black women in slavery.”124 Finally,

Womanist theologies maintain an unflinching commitment to reflect on the social, cultural and religious experiences of black women. Womanist theologies are ultimately grounded in and accountable to the religious reality of black women's lives. As a form of liberation theology, womanist theologies add the goals of survival, quality of life, and wholeness to black theology’s goals of liberation and justice. Womanist theologians analyze the oppressive aspects of society that prevent black women from having a quality of life and wholeness that God desires for them and for all creation.125


121 Ibid., 6.

122 Ibid., 6.


124 Ibid., 8.

125 Ibid., 11.
Womanism allows black women to collectively engage in holistic healing and transformation. "Black women must do theology out of their tri-dimensional experience of racism/sexism/classism. To ignore any aspect of this experience is to deny the holistic and integrated reality of Black womanhood."\textsuperscript{126}

Summary

The final step of the hermeneutical process addressed the ministry issue by reviewing various theologians and literature on the plight of women in leadership. The discussion focused on several theologians within the categories of liberation, feminist, and womanist theologies. The researcher discussed the theology of liberation through the viewpoints of Gustavo Gutiérrez and James Cone. Liberation is the first layer that women in leadership must acknowledge. Women must recognize that they are in an oppressive situation.

The second layer explored was that of feminism theology. This section discussed the influence of the feminist movement as it relates to women addressing issues of feminism, women's rights, and gender equality. Feminist theology was discussed through the viewpoints of Bonnie McLemore and Carrie Doehring.

The third layer investigated was Black feminist theology. Black feminist theology addressed Black women's subordination from the intersecting oppressions of race, class, gender and embedded theology. Black feminist thought was articulated from the viewpoint of bell hooks and Patricia Collins.

\textsuperscript{126} Jacquelyn Grant. \textit{White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus}, (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1989), 209.
This leads us to the third layer, Womanist theology. Womanist theology uses the experience as well as intersecting theologies to discuss Black women’s oppression. Womanist theology is examined from the viewpoint of Jacquelyn Grant, Deloris Williams and Monica Coleman as it relates to Black women and their struggles.

Women in leadership in the church must still contend with sexism, racism, classism, and their own internal voice that could prohibit them from expressing leadership capabilities.
CHAPTER V
BIBLICAL LITERATURE

There is much discussion concerning women in leadership in the church with literature presented on many sides. The purpose of this biblical section is to present argument on women in leadership, the Egalitarian and Complementarian points as well as the Scotist and Thomist point of view. Additionally scriptural texts that exclude women in leadership as well as scriptures that support or empower women will also be highlighted. Specific examples of women in leadership will be presented from the Hebrew Bible as well as the New Testament.

It is not the author's desire to persuade the audience whether women ought to be in leadership or not. The author is merely giving the reader both arguments. The Biblical section is to merely highlighting that women were used by God in leadership positions throughout the bible.

Egalitarianism and Complementarianism Viewpoints

Robert L. Saucy and Judith K. Tenelshof in the book *Women and Men in Ministry: A Complementary Perspective* focused on the issue of women in leadership. "At times the issue (of women in leadership) has been confused by posing the question in such limiting terms that it fails to get to the real underlying issue involved."1 "An

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example is: Should women be ordained?"² Should a woman be consecrated to the office of bishop? Should a woman pastor a church? These are just some of the questions that are posed to women who seek the highest positions of the church. Saucy and Tenelshof also suggest that "limiting the question to the issue of ordination does not address the more basic underlying question of the overall relationship of man and woman in the church."³ "The basic issue in the question of women's ministry in the church is thus: Does God intend any role distinction between men and women in relation to ministry in the church?"⁴ A person's views on women in leadership are derived from how one interprets the biblical text.

According to Saucy and Tenelshof there are two distinct views on women in leadership: egalitarianism and complementarianism.

The position that does not take the biblical teaching as normative for the church today is known as egalitarianism. It is also described as the feminist position. According to this understanding, there are no distinctions between the roles of men and women in ministry; all functions and positions in church ministry are equally open to both genders. On the other side are those who see the biblical teaching of a distinction in roles between man and woman in the church (or in the home), who are commonly known as complementarians. This position has also been traditionally called patriarchy or hierarchism, although these latter terms are more limited in meaning, emphasizing only headship of man rather than the complementary contribution of the distinct role of women.⁵

According to Sarah Sumner in the book *Men and Women in the Church* both complementarian and egalitarian views have several things in common.


³ Ibid., 23.

⁴ Ibid., 25.

⁵ Ibid., 26-27.
1. Both sides of the debate are radically revising church tradition.

2. Both sides of the debate are trying to be biblical.

3. Both sides are also mixed. Complementarian thought is usually a mix of Bible and traditionalism. Egalitarian thought is usually a mix of Bible and feminism.

4. It is possible to affirm women leaders in the church without becoming a feminist. Feminism is about women’s power. Christianity is about Christ’s power. 6

5. “Both sides believe in the primacy of Scripture. In other words, both sides agree that the authority of Scripture is higher than the authority of church tradition.” 7

Linda L. Belleville a contributor in the book, Two Views on Women in Ministry states that the “issues that divide traditionalists (now self-identified as ‘complementarians’) and egalitarians today is not that of women in ministry per se (i.e., women exercising their spiritual gifts), it is rather women in leadership. While a consensus has emerged regarding women and spiritual gifting, a great divide has emerged on the issue of women in leadership – especially women leading men.” 8 “Invariably the debate between egalitarians and traditionalists comes down to four basic questions:

Does the Bible teach a hierarchical structuring of male and female relationships?

Do we find women in leadership positions in the Bible?

Do women in the Bible assume the same leadership roles as men?


Does the Bible limit women from filling certain leadership roles?  

Craig Bloomberg also a contributor in the book, *Two Views on Women in Ministry* offers his position as “mediating between classic complementarian and egalitarian perspectives (critics would call it fence-sitting!).”  

However the author falls on the side of complementarian. According to Bloomberg there are several larger issues involved in the complementarian and egalitarian debate on women in leadership/ministry. The first larger issue is, “almost every egalitarian, and particularly women in church leadership roles, have been personally attacked, often repeatedly, in very sub-Christian ways, by certain complementarians to such an extent that it becomes hard for them even to consider the possibility that a more restrictive position might be correct.” This is a common but at times unspoken occurrence that happens to women within a woman’s particular denomination and church, in different church settings outside of a woman’s denomination or church and even in communities that have specific adverse view points on women in leadership.

“A second larger issue is the tendency to see one’s views on gender roles as part of a much larger package.” The church is constantly evolving. However, the church’s viewpoint of leaning toward women in leadership or against women in leadership can affect relationships with other churches and the community. The churches who are not in favor of women in leadership tend not to associate or worship with churches who

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9 Ibid., 24.


11 Ibid., 125.

12 Ibid., 126.
embrace women in leadership. There are many factors in the larger picture which include the history of the church and the culture in the community.

“A third issue surrounds the ways questions are posed.” Should women hold positions of leadership in the church? Should women be ordained? The presentation of the question surrounding women in leadership affects the overall outcome of the answer.

Finally, “a fourth issue involves what is practiced in different parts of the world today. Countless women from western cultures have been permitted to preach, teach, and evangelize ‘on the mission field’ when their sending churches would never permit such practices ‘back home’.”

Sumner in her book *Men and Women in the Church* states “that complementarians and egalitarians often fail to speak in a way that shows the other side was heard.”

According to Sumner the issue comes back to the notion of exactly what is meant by the terms ‘equality’ and ‘distinction’. For egalitarians, the concepts of equality and distinction mean that women and men are equal as persons but distinct with regard to sexuality. It means, moreover, that roles should not be defined by gender unless the activities of the role are sexual, such as with a husband or wife. When the nature of the role is nonsexual, such as with a pastor or preacher, then roles should be defined by giftedness rather than gender.

“For complementarians, the concepts of equality and distinction mean that men and women are equal before God as persons but distinct with regard to roles. It means,

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13 Ibid., 126.


16 Ibid., 274.
moreover, the proper roles for men and women are defined by gender distinctions, even though the tasks do not involve sexuality.”\textsuperscript{17}

Sumner also distinguishes the complementarians and the egalitarians in a ‘philosophical order’. Complementarians are ‘Scotists’ and egalitarians are ‘Thomists’. “The word Scotist derives from the name of Duns Scotus, a theologian who was not a Scotist. Scotus, himself, was a ‘Thomist’. When Scotus made his case against women’s ordination, he gave two reasons why: because Jesus did not ordain his mother and because women should suffer the punishment of the fall by never enjoying eminence or authority.\textsuperscript{18} “The Thomist view was named after Thomas Aquinas.”\textsuperscript{19} According to Sumner, “Daniel Dorinai explains it this way:

To speak in archetypes, there are Thomist and Scotist views of order. The Thomist says God’s order must and does have a reason, and readily propounds natural and theological reasons why women may not teach and exercise authority in the church. The Scotist says we know God’s will, but cannot explain it, for God orders the world as he wills, whether with, against, or beyond reason. The Thomist expects and examines coherence between natural law and divine law; Scotist does not.\textsuperscript{20}

“That means that while Thomists insist that God’s commands and God’s creation correlate directly with one another, Scotists believe that God’s commands need to correlate with nothing but God’s will.”\textsuperscript{21}

In summary, the debate of women in leadership in the church will continue. There are strong viewpoints on both sides. The debate still goes on. “Some of us are

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 274.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 274.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., 275.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 275.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 275.
saying that men but not women are eligible to do anything (the view of the complementarians). Others are saying that eligibility should be more open (the view of the egalitarians)." Whether a person has chosen to be egalitarian or complementarians, Thomist or Scotist the dialogue must continue.

**Biblical Texts that Exclude or Support Women in Leadership**

"Women, who constitute the majority of members in every church, are second-class citizens. They are denied access to pulpits, lecterns, and boardrooms for no other reason than their gender."22 Scriptural references are often used to discourage women from preaching, teaching or providing leadership in the church. Two such scriptures that are often used are: (1) I Corinthians 14:34-35 (NRSV), "Women should remain silent in the churches." Persons who do not support women in leadership often interpret the Corinthians text, to mean "women are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says." According to this interpretation, "if women want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church."23 (2) I Timothy 2:11-14 (NRSV), "Let a woman learn in silence with all submission." Some interpreters of the I Timothy text say, "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control."24

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24 Ibid., I Timothy 2:11-14.
There are however, other texts that lend support for women as leaders. Acts 2:17-18 (NRSV), “In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.” This text suggests that women have spiritual gifts that will be used in ministry. Another text, Ephesians 4:11-13 (NRSV), reads, “The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.” Galatians 3:28 (NRSV) reads, “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” These texts suggest women have equal roles in the body of Christ. According to Cowles, “The enfranchisement of women in the holiness tradition has been based upon a settled conviction that the dispensation of the Holy Spirit has dawned, empowering both men and women to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ as prophesied by Joel and proclaimed by Peter on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17-18).” These scriptural texts provide the evidence that both men and women will be viewed equally.


27 Ibid., Galatians 3:28.

Biblical Women in Leadership

Throughout the Biblical text, one could readily find several women who were prominent leaders in the bible. In the Old Testament there were three women who held the title of prophetess: Miriam, Exodus 15:20; Deborah, Judges 4:4 and Huldah, II Kings 22:14. In the New Testament, even though women were not recorded to be chosen to be one of the twelve disciples, women journeyed with Jesus. Women held the position of prophet who had the authority to teach and preach. Priscilla was listed as a ‘co-worker’ of Paul in Acts 18:2; Phoebe was listed as a ‘deacon,’ in Romans 16:1 and Junia was listed as an apostle, in Romans 16:7.

There are also many examples in the Old and New Testament of women who in addition to being prophets, co-workers and deacons, were also teachers, and evangelists. Linda L. Belleville a contributor in the book, Two Views on Women in Ministry states that many of these women were “multi-gifted women.” “Moses’ sister Miriam possessed instrumental, hymnic, and prophetic gifts that served Israel well toward the wilderness years (Exodus 15:20; Micah 6:4). Deborah as mentioned above was named a ‘prophet’ (Judges 4:4), but also a judge (vv. 4-5), and a ‘mother in Israel’ (5:7).²⁹ “Besides Miriam and Deborah there was the prophetess God instructed Isaiah to marry (Isaiah 8:3); the prophetess Huldah (2 Kings 22:14), who was active during the time of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:2), Zephaniah (Zephaniah 1:1), Nahum (Nahum 3:8-10), and Habakkuk (Habakkuk 1:6); and the prophetess in exile (Ezekiel 13:17-24) and postexilic (Nehemiah 6:14).”³⁰

In the New Testament “women were singled out in the early church as apostles (Romans 16:7), prophets (Acts 21:9; 1 Corinthians 11:5), evangelists (Phil 4:2-3), patrons (Romans 16:2), teachers (Acts 18:24-26; Titus 2:3-5), deacons (Romans 16:1; 1 Timothy 3:11), prayer leaders (1 Corinthians 11:5), overseers of house churches (Acts 12:12; 16:14-15; Colossians 4:15), prayer warriors (1 Timothy 5:5), and those who were known for their mercy and hospitality (1 Timothy 5:10).”31 “One of the ministries for which women in the church became renowned was that of patronage... It has long been noted that women alone are mentioned as the source of financial support for both Jesus and the Twelve.”32 Finally, “women were also recognized for their apostolic labors. Junia for instance, is commended as a woman whom Paul considered ‘outstanding among the apostles’ (Roman 16:7)”33

Women leaders are indeed gifted in ministry. “While women appear in a variety of ministry roles in the bible, the key questions are whether these roles warrant the label of leadership – especially leadership over men – and whether the community of faith affirms women in these roles.”34

Alice Ogden Bellis in her book Helpmates, Harlots, and Heroes: Women’s Stories in the Hebrew Bible extensively surveyed, from a theological point of view women in the bible. She used the opinions of Feminist and Womanist such as Cheryl

30 Ibid., 35-36.
31 Ibid., 36.
32 Ibid., 37.
33 Ibid., 38.
Sanders, Shawn Copeland, Cheryl Townsend Gilkes, Renita Weems, Phyllis Tribble, David Gunn, Gayle Yee, David Freedman, Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, and Susan Ackerman to provide theological interpretations of the women in the Hebrew bible. These women and men provided "examples of pure literary criticism, culturally cued reading, and historical approaches."35

Bellis gives a brief description of the 'women's status in ancient Israel,' 'the everyday lives of Hebrew women before the monarchy, during the monarchy, and after the monarchy.'36 The biblical women were placed in three categories, helpmates, harlots, and heroes. These names described the specific roles the women played in the biblical text. Helpmate "refers to the role of woman as a helping mate or wife, such as Sarah and Rebekah."37 Harlot "refers to the prostitutes of the biblical world such as Rahab and Tamar, daughter-in-law of Judah."38 Heroes are those women "who stand out as acting independently or valiantly, such as Deborah, Miriam, and Ruth."39 However, there were some women who were not placed in any category although their stories were told in this book. One such category could be entitled 'victim.' Such examples include Tamar, David’s daughter and Jephthah’s daughter.

One unlikely woman with distinct leadership qualities is Rahab. I will be using Rabab as it relates to the ministry setting as a woman with a past and a person who probably would be an unlikely choice within the culture of this ministry setting. Rahab is

35 Ibid., 212.
37 Ibid., 31.
38 Ibid., 31.
39 Ibid., 31.
by profession a prostitute. "As a prostitute she is marginal even in her own culture, and her marginality is symbolized by her dwelling in the city wall, in the very boundary between the inside and the outside."40 "Rahab is a triply marginalized woman. From Israel's point of view, she is an outsider; from Canaan's point of view, she is a woman; and even from the Canaanite woman's point of view, she is a prostitute, outside normal life."41 The Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms defines marginalized as "the social and material reality of those who cannot participate in the mainstream of society because they do not have adequate resources or opportunities."42 Marginalized women are barred or even blocked from opportunities and resources. They experience social exclusion; limitations placed on them. A marginalized woman could be any woman who is considered outside the inner circle of status quo. Female preacher, pastor or minister can also be considered marginalized.

In my ministry context the marginalized women of the church have already been distinguished by virtue of the culture's identification. This can be best illustrated from an example in my church setting:

I asked a young woman in the church to be in a leadership position. After thinking about it, this young woman decided as a result of her past indiscretions she would be an unlikely choice for such a position. She basically stated, "If you knew my past, you wouldn't choose me as a leader in this church."


This seems to be the sentiment of most of the membership in the church. Women who are asked to be in leadership positions face an invisible yardstick to determine if they measure up. As a result, these women do not consider themselves leaders, could not see themselves as leaders and/or have not been considered a leader by the church. In my ministry context these women through the years, have been taught that they cannot participate or be a leader in the church until certain standards are met. As a result, these women cannot see themselves outside of their situation, their mindset, their profession, their role, or even the roles and situations we as clergy and lay persons have placed women in.

This doctoral project will create a process where women will envision their goals and identify the barriers that preclude them from reaching those goals. This project will attempt to enable women participants to develop skills to process their issues, understand themselves, visualize their goals and assist them in creating a workable road map toward their goals. Within this doctoral project, Rahab and other women in the bible will be used as a jumping-off point for women to understand that anyone can be used by God. “We can learn from positive role models, the woman who had power and used it well and the women who had little power and accomplished important goals in spite of powerlessness.”

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43 Ibid., 210.
CHAPTER VI
THEORETICAL LITERATURE

Theory of Subordination

In this project, the theory of subordination will be used as a framework to undergird this work. It is probably safe to say that the theory of subordination is present at most churches. The theory of subordination states that a dominating group willingly subjects oppression on those they consider subordinate. In other words the patriarchal culture is considered the dominating group who willingly, if not unknowingly oppress the subordinate group, in this case, women. The oppression of women is at the forefront of the patriarchal culture. “At the heart of patriarchy is the oppression of women.”¹

“Oppression is a social phenomenon that happens between different groups in a society; it is a system of social inequality through which one group is positioned to dominate and benefit from the exploitation and the subordination of another.”²

According to Allen Johnson in his article ‘Patriarchy’ in the book Race, Class, and Gender in the United States by Paula S. Rothenberg states that “a society is patriarchal to the degree that it is male-dominated, male-identified and male-centered.”³

“Patriarchy is male-dominated in that positions of authority – political, economic, legal,


²Ibid., 171.

³Ibid., 165.
religious, educational, military, domestic — are generally reserved for men... even those identified as ‘head of household’ all tend to be male under patriarchy.”

“Male dominance creates power differences between men and women. It means, for example, that men can claim larger shares of income and wealth; they can shape culture in ways that reflect and serve men’s collective interests; and they promote the idea that men are superior to women.”

As a result women in leadership in the church are placed in less desirable positions, given jobs that are less desired by men and pastor smaller churches with less wages and no benefits.

Johnson further states that, “patriarchal societies are male-identified in that core cultural ideas about what is considered good, desirable, preferable, or normal are associated with how we think about men and masculinity. The simplest example of this is the still widespread use of male pronouns and nouns to represent people in general” and God in particular. We regularly “refer to human beings as ‘man’, doctors as ‘he’”. God is also usually referred to in the masculine gender of ‘he’.

“Because patriarchy is male-identified, when most women look out on the world they see themselves reflected as women in a few narrow areas of life such as ‘caring’ occupations and personal relationships. To see herself as a leader, for example, a woman must first get around the fact that leadership itself has been gendered through its identification with maleness and masculinity as part of patriarchal culture. While a man might have to learn to see himself as a manager, a woman has to be able to see herself as a woman manager.”

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4 Ibid., 165.
5 Ibid., 166.
6 Ibid., 166.
7 Ibid., 167.
A preacher who is a man is acknowledged as 'Reverend' and a woman preacher may be acknowledged instead as 'Sister,' especially within the ministry peer group. A man assigned as the pastor is identified as pastor and a woman who is assigned as the pastor is viewed by the membership as 'Sister'. Another example presents itself with pastors who are women with husbands. More often than not the woman pastor is called 'Mrs.' or 'Sister' and the husband is called 'Pastor'. "For her (a woman) to assume real public power – as in politics, corporations, or her church – she must resolve a contradiction between her culturally based identity as a woman, on the one hand, and the male-identified position that she occupies on the other. For this reason, the more powerful a woman is under patriarchy, the more ‘unsexed’ she becomes in the eyes of others as her female cultural identity recedes beneath the mantle of male-identified power and the masculine images associated with it."8

Finally, according to Johnson, "In addition to being male-dominated and male-identified, Patriarchy is male-centered, which means that the focus of attention is primarily on men and what they do."9 "Because patriarchy is male-identified and male-centered, women and the work they do tend to be devalued, if not invisible. In their industrial capitalist form, for example, patriarchal cultures do not define the unpaid domestic work that women do as real work, and if women do something, it tends to be valued less than when men do it."10 The work can be the same as their perspective counterparts; however, the man’s work will be noticed, commented on and valued far


9 Ibid., 168.

10 Ibid., 169.
more than is a woman who completed the same job with even better efficiency. An example is a woman could plan a specific project or activity, implement the project from beginning to end. However, if the woman leader had a man helping, the male will more or less receive the credit for the project succeeding.

The theory of subordination gets its basis from the mental and sometimes physical process of using scriptural texts as tools of persuasion and subordination. “The practices are covert because they socialize groups to the dominant morality by insisting that they are simply (and rightly) teaching scripture and tradition.11 The theory can be understood from at least three perspectives: (a) the biblical theory of subordination, (b) the cultural theory of subordination and (c) the pastoral domination theory of subordination.

**Biblical Theory of Subordination**

The biblical theory of subordination suggests that for years scripture has been used to keep the congregation, especially women, in a subordinate position. Many churches use the bible to support the oppression of women. An example can be found in one former church. The pastor of a church in the community was disturbed that the Christian Methodist Episcopal (C.M.E.) church assigned a woman pastor to the church in the community. The male pastor of another church in the community sent letters, correspondences, flyers and finally a tape every Sunday for a year using scripture as basis for the C.M.E. church congregation to disregard and get rid of their female pastor. Ultimately, approximately 60% of the congregation stopped coming to church because of the pressure.

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The biblical theory of subordination allows us to look closely at specific scriptures that have been used for decades to oppress women. : I Corinthians 14:34-35, “Women should remain silent in the churches. and I Timothy 2:11-14, “Let a woman learn in silence with all submission are two such examples as described in an earlier section of this thesis.

Cultural Theory of Subordination

The cultural theory of subordination examines the very essence of dominant groups over subordinate groups. This was best explained in the chapter Domination and Subordination written by Jean Baker Miller in Rostenberg’s Race, Class and Gender in the United States. Miller outlines several characteristics of dominant groups and subordinate groups. A few of these characteristics are as follows: “Dominant groups usually define one or more acceptable roles for the subordinate. Subordinates are usually said to be unable to perform the preferred roles. Once a group has been labeled as inferior, the superiors tend to label it as defective or substandard in various ways.”

“When subordinates show the potential for, or even more dangerously have developed other characteristics – let us say intelligence, initiative, assertiveness – there is usually no room available within the dominant framework for acknowledgement of these characteristics.”

“A Subordinate group has to concentrate on survival. Open, self-initiated action in its own self-interest must be avoided. Subordinate groups resort to disguised and indirect ways of acting and reacting.”

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13 Ibid., 113.

14 Ibid., 113.
the dominants than they know about themselves. Tragic confusion arises because subordinates absorb a large part of the untruths created by the dominants.”15

**Pastoral Domination Theory of Subordination**

The pastoral domination theory of subordination is characterized as complete control from the pulpit. Pastors exhibit a certain amount of control over the congregation, passive, aggressive, or passive-aggressive, depending upon their leadership style. “The ‘silencing’ of black women’s voices coincide with ‘regularizing’ the presence of black male preachers.”16 The pulpit served as the stage or the place of control. “Preaching, as Cheryl Townsend Gilkes put it, ‘is the most masculine aspect of black religious ritual’.”17 “African American men, who were prohibited from exercising power in other public arenas, would be adamant about maintaining authority in the one institution they did manage to control, Black churches. Their embrace of patriarchy in Black churches was aided by passages in the bible that support the subordination of women.”18

According to Marcia Riggs in her book *Plenty Good Room: Women Versus Male Power in the Black Church*, “the context of the church is a site of sexual-gender oppression, women are not men’s equals or even complements but are regarded and (mis)treated as men’s subordinates, euphemistically referred to as supporters or the ‘backbone

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15 Ibid., 114.


17 Ibid., 109.

of the church.’”

“Thus, women stand in, yet outside, the gates of the black church; they control relatively autonomous women’s departments of the church but their authority in other spheres of the church’s life and acceptance in leadership roles must be negotiated and approved by male gatekeepers. Consequently, the paradoxical coexistence of a women’s tradition of resistance and male gatekeepers stands at the heart of the complexity and duplicity of sexual-gender relations in the African American church and tends to lead the leadership and the membership to dismiss or excuse the ways that sexual-gender oppression occurs in the church.”

Riggs further states that the “assertion of heterosexual patriarchal privilege is enacted by using lay women to fulfill personal and professional needs, dismissing or silencing the voices of women (lay and ordained) in the governing of the church, restricting or eliminating the full participation of women as leaders at the various levels of the church’s ministry. The practice(s) of power is dominating and controlling as it establishes and maintains a hierarchy of relations between sexual-gender groups, with heterosexual men at the top of the hierarchy.”

Finally, some African American male preachers “treat laywomen in a manner consistent with dominant society’s patriarchal norms; he exploits her talents, makes her a sexual object, and is dismissive when challenged by her. However, because his behavior is being acted out in the context of the African American church, he can be described as operating from a peer group-controlled masculinity or innovative masculinity that reflects

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20 Ibid., 83.

an understanding of clerical status as bestowing patriarchal privilege.”

“Patriarchal privilege has ‘control of women’ as its core value, and this value cannot exist in the same context in which justice is a core value without creating a context that breeds moral corruption.”

In order for Black women in leadership to scratch the “stained glass ceiling” we must critically explore the undercurrent issues in the church. This takes time. The theory of subordination explains why there is an issue of women in leadership. However, it is my hope that I see a change in the mindset of the church for my daughter’s generation.

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22 Ibid., 52.

23 Ibid., 86.
proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor. Within this mission statement Jesus did not exclude anyone. However, the mission is inclusive of those who are considered marginalized and oppressed. Women for the most part have been marginalized and oppressed.

Jesus treated women with compassion often healing them in public. “As he went, the crowds pressed in on him. Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years; and though she had spent all she had on physicians, no one could cure her. She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his clothes, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped. Then Jesus asked, “Who touched me?” When all denied it, Peter said, “Master, the crowds surround you and press in on you.” But Jesus said, “Someone touched me; for I noticed that power had gone out from me.” When the woman saw that she could not remain hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before him, she declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. Jesus said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace.”

In the midst of the crowd this woman with the issue of blood was unclean for twelve years. According to Jewish law she was to remain separate from others. Leviticus 15:25-31, “If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, not at the time of her impurity, or if she has a discharge beyond the time of her impurity, all the days of the discharge she shall continue in uncleanness; as in the days of her impurity, she shall be unclean. Every bed on which she lies during all the days of her discharge shall be treated as the bed of her impurity; and everything on which she sits shall be unclean, as in the uncleanness of her impurity. “Whoever touches these things shall be

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unclean, and shall wash his clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening.”19 “Thus you shall keep the people of Israel separate from their uncleanness, so that they do not die in their uncleanness by defiling my tabernacle that is in their midst.”20 She defied the law and sought out healing from Jesus. The woman with the issue of blood hid in the midst of the crowd and touched Jesus without being detected. When she was detected by Jesus, she was healed because of her faith. Jesus, as noted here, responded to the woman in spite of the fact that she was what society considered unclean.

Jesus was also sensitive to the needs of women even in the controversial setting of the church. Jesus healed in the synagogue. “Women were barred from participating in synagogue worship. Women could attend sabbateon, devoted to the liturgy of worship, as long as they sat in a balcony or behind a latticework at the back of the sanctuary, thereby remaining hidden from the view of the worshiping men.”21 As recorded in Luke 13: 10-13, “Now he (Jesus) was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, “Woman, you are set free from your ailment.” When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. 22 Jesus healed

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in the synagogue. Jesus called the woman forward to the area where women are not permitted, broke culture by speaking and touching her and finally affirmed her presence and need for healing.

Finally, Jesus is the liberator who challenged the social norms of that time. “In an astonishing reversal of all social norms, Jesus rejected all titles that in any way suggested rule, dominance, or authority and deliberately chose, instead, diakonos, ‘servant’ (Mark 10:42-45).”23 He violated rabbinic traditions.

Jesus not only violated rabbinic tradition but offended Martha’s sense of propriety when he permitted Mary to hear the Word. When Martha complained that Mary was not fulfilling her proper domestic role in the kitchen, he (Jesus) defended her: ‘Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her’ (Luke 10:42 NASB). In so doing Jesus affirmed the right of women to hear God’s Word. In His gentle rebuke, Jesus was stating a new principle that would break the autocracy of women’s culturally and socially imposed role: namely it is more important for women to attend to the Word of God that it is to fulfill household duties. A woman is greater than what she does. She has worth and dignity apart from childbearing.24

Women were not permitted to be in certain places at certain times especially when men were present. John 4:4-42 tells us the story of the ‘Woman at the Well.’ According to customs Jews do not associate with Samaritans. Jesus broke cultural customs when he spoke to the woman telling her about herself. The Women’s Bible Commentary edited by Carol A. Newson and Sharon H. Ringe has a unique description of this conversation.

The conversation between Jesus and the woman is thus a scandalous conversation, a scandal noted by the woman herself. She responds to Jesus’ request for water with the words “How is it that you, a

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24 Ibid., 86.
Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" The woman knows that a Jewish man should not talk with a Samaritan woman. Moreover, a Jew should not consider drinking water from a Samaritan vessel. The scandal is noted also by Jesus’ disciples when they arrive at the well. They are amazed that Jesus speaks with the woman; Jewish rabbis did not speak in public with women.25

“Jesus breaks open boundaries in his conversation with the Samaritan woman: the boundary between male and female, the boundary between ‘chosen people’ and ‘rejected people’. Jesus’ journey to Samaria and his conversation with the woman demonstrate that the grace of God that he offers is available to all.”26 Jesus offered the woman living water or a better way to live life. “This conversation challenges the status quo by offering the water of life to a Samaritan woman.”27

Jesus also challenged social norms while addressing the woman who was caught in adultery in John 8:3-11. It was reported that a woman was caught in the act of adultery. She was brought before Jesus by the scribes and Pharisees. “When the scribes and Pharisees brought the woman who had been caught in adultery to Jesus, they dehumanized her, turning her into an object for debate and discussion. The text focuses exclusively on the woman and her sexual behavior as sin continues to dehumanize and objectify her.”28 The woman is considered a sinner because of the laws and culture of the day; therefore, the sentence was for her to be stoned. According to Deuteronomy 22:22, “If a man is caught lying with the wife of another man, both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman as well as the woman.” Leviticus 20:10, “If a man commits


26 Ibid., 384.

27 Ibid., 384.

28 Ibid., 385.
adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death.” “The law to which the Pharisees referred called for stoning both the man and the woman caught in an adulterous act.29 Yet as we can see the woman was not caught in adultery by herself, she was with a man. The crowd however did not bring the man forward – only the woman. “That only the woman was brought to Him (Jesus) reveals the double stand operative in Jesus’ day: namely, men were exempted but women were expendable.”30 This incident points to the patriarchal cultural attributes of that time. Men were not considered sinners in the case of adultery – only women. Also the punishment is unequivocally extreme toward women. This is even true today. Women are ostracized and demeaned when caught for sexual activities that involve both male and females. However, Jesus in his compassion intervened on the woman’s behalf. “When they kept on questioning him, he said to them, “Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” 31 “Jesus straightened up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” She said, “No one, sir.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.”32 “What is striking about this story is that Jesus treats the woman as the social and human equal of the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus speaks to both sets of characters about sin.”33


30 Ibid., 90.


Many raise the argument that Jesus only elected males for his disciples. Jesus was working within the social norms of the society. The social norms of society serve as an undercurrent within the writings of the synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke. The Women’s Bible Commentary: Revised and Updated edited by Carol Newson, Sharon Ringe and Jacqueline Lapsley provides the audience with an indication of the Gospel writers prospective. The ‘Gospel of Matthew’ written by Amy-Jill Levine in the Women’s Bible Commentary states:

Matthew has not designed an egalitarian community. Jesus appoints no women among the Twelve and locates no woman as ‘judging the twelve tribes of Israel,’ no women are present at the transfiguration, Last Supper, or Gethsemane. Along with epitomizing service, women also subvert justice. Women are both among Jesus’ follows and among those who resist his teaching.34

Elizabeth Struthers Maibon in her article the ‘Gospel of Mark’ in the Women’s Bible Commentary states:

Mark both reflects the patriarchal culture of its original situation and challenges that culture in important ways. All major characters are men, many of whom (but not all) are given names, and they appear in both public and private settings. The women characters are minor in terms of their narrated presence in the plot, most of them (but not all) remain nameless, and they generally (but not always) appear in the private settings of the homes. These generalities exhibit the patriarchal world of both author and audience.35

“The ancient patriarchal world was hierarchical in multiple dimensions: gender, ethnicity, religious status, economic status, political status, and class, which could combine many


35 Ibid., 480.
of these aspects.” Jane Schaberg and Sharon Ringe in their article the ‘Gospel of Luke’ in the *Women's Bible Commentary* states:

Even as the Gospel (of Luke) highlights women as included among the followers of Jesus, subjects of his teaching, and objects of his healing, it deftly portrays them as models of subordinate service, excluded from the power center of the movement and from significant responsibilities. Claiming the authority of Jesus, this portrayal is an attempt to legitimate male dominance in the Christianity of the author’s time... The danger lies in the subtle artistic power of the story to seduce the reader into uncritical acceptance of it as simple history, and into acceptance of the depicted gender roles as divinely ordained.

There is much controversy around why Jesus did not choose women to be part of the twelve. The Greco-Roman world during the time of Jesus was patriarchal. William Gentz in the book *The Dictionary of Bible and Religion* writes, “One generalization that can be made is that most of these cultures were highly patriarchal.” Gentz also states that “Men were dominant, women subordinate, no matter what their social status.” As well as “in Israel women were essentially considered property and were of lesser value.” However, this does not answer the question why Jesus did not select a woman as a disciple. With all of the things Jesus did in his short ministry, we cannot surmise the process by which Jesus selected the disciples.

We do know that Jesus selected twelve disciples, all of whom were Galilean Jews. Does this mean that men who were not of Jewish descent should not be leaders of the church because Jesus did not select them? Or does it mean that because African Americans were not of Jewish descent they should not be leaders in the church because

36 Ibid., 480.
38 Ibid., 1116.
39 Ibid., 1116.
Jesus did not select them? Jesus was not from Galilee or Jerusalem. Yet he was an itinerant preacher whose membership spanned the Galilean territory. It is possible that Jesus, in the beginning of his ministry was working within the laws and customs of country. “Furthermore, while Jesus did not have a woman among his immediate Twelve, it was commonly assumed by the church fathers from Origen in the third century to Herveus Burgidolensis in the twelfth century that Jesus did include women among the group of seventy-two who were commissioned and sent out. He was simply a realist in terms of the amount of change the Palestine culture could accommodate at that point in time.”

In summary, Jesus is the Savior of the poor and oppressed, was compassionate and sensitive to the needs of women and was a liberator who challenged the social norms of the time. "In the Bible, Christ is presented as someone who brings us liberation. Christ the Savior liberates from sin, which is the ultimate root of all disruption of friendship and of all injustice and oppression." "Clearly, women have never had a greater champion, a mightier ‘liberationist,’ than Jesus of Nazareth. In word and deed, Jesus struck the chains that had for so long bound women in a demeaning state of depersonalization and dehumanized subordination." The example of Jesus is applicable in our time. Women in leadership are still challenged by the social norms of today’s society. The culture still functions within a patriarchal hierarchy. This culture extends deep into the fibers of the church.


**Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit plays one of the secondary roles in the theological understanding of the ministry issue. As women in ministry we are all given specific gifts. It is through the power of the Holy Spirit that these gifts are manifested. “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.” 43 Karl Barth in his *Church Dogmatics* speaks of the Holy Spirit being as a “divine act whereby a man (or woman) being is empowered for an encounter with the self-revealing God.” 44

The Holy Spirit does not distinguish between male and female. As recorded in Acts 2:2-4, “When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.” 45 The text does not distinguish or even determine who ‘all’ is. All is inclusive of everyone.


In summary, the Holy Spirit plays a vital role in helping women to uncover their leadership abilities and specific gifts. “The context of Acts 2:1-4 suggests that women were among those present where the Holy Spirit descended on the church at Pentecost.”

The Holy Spirit has a relationship with Jesus Christ. The power of the Holy Spirit empowers, transforms and enables women to understand their abilities.

God

God plays the other secondary role in the theological understanding of the ministry issue. God is the one that created humankind, man and woman. “Equality is a dynamic and repeated theme from Genesis to Revelation. From the moment of creation, God’s Word validates the importance of women, with equal relationship with God.”

Genesis 1:27, “So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. “Without establishing relative rank of the genders, the spinner of this creation tale indicates that humankind is found in two varieties, the male and the female, and this humanity in its complementarity is a reflection of the deity.”

Additionally God did not place women in a subordinate position when God created man and woman. “Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should


be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.”

“So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.”

God wanted man to realize he needed a helper of equal status, that he could not make it alone (Genesis 2:18). However, the concept of helpmeet is often used as an argument for male dominance. Further study shows this to be in error. The Hebrew for “meet” translates to equal to. The word for “helper” is the same word used in the other Bible verses for the many ways God helps us. There is no subordinate or gender attached.

In Summary, God did not make a mistake in creating man and woman to be equal partners. It is man through patriarchal control that caused a division between and against the equality of woman.

Revelation

The primary role of Jesus and the secondary roles of the Holy Spirit and God as it relates to the ministry issue will be further clarified through revelation. “These revelations will enable us to know the will, ways and approaches of God as they relate to ministry and enhancing effectiveness.

The woman’s role is subjective when it comes to women in leadership. C. S. Cowles in his book, *A Woman’s Place: Leadership in the Church* defines the role of women throughout history.

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Women have constituted the most discriminated against majority in every civilization, culture, race, nation, and of religion. They have been relegated to a second-class status and treated as a subhuman species. They have been denied citizenship, education, civil or legal rights, and a voice or a vote in any public assembly. 'Women have been treated as man's inferior so long, that this practice has become accepted as truth.'

We have in some cases moved forward in society. Women are gaining in employment, political arenas and family structures. However, we still have a long way to go.

The church is one place where women in leadership have found difficulty gaining access to leadership positions. Historically this is the case. "Martin Luther in his democratizing doctrine of the 'priesthood of every believer' did not extend to women. Martin Luther regarded women as unfit for preaching, ministering the sacraments, or holding any positions of leadership in the congregation." This is true today, some men and women do not want women to lead in positions that men have occupied. It is very difficult to breach the ministry hierarchy in the church.

Finally, C. S. Cowles describes the woman's role from the patriarchal point of view.

A wife's role was strictly domestic. Her duties were to spin, weave, sew, and wash clothes for her husband. She was also responsible for grinding meal, baking, cooking, preparing and serving his meals. She was not permitted to eat with him but was to remain standing behind him while he ate. Other duties included clothing him, washing his face, hands, and feet, preparing his bed, and caring for him when he grew old. She had to turn over to him all money earned from manual work. She rendered to her husband unquestioning and absolute obedience in all things. This was a religious duty.

54 Ibid., 56.
55 Ibid., 47-48.
Even though women have made progress in several areas within the family, there are still unwritten assumed roles for women. In many cases the woman’s role is still considered domestic even though modern conveniences have assisted in the process. Women most often assume the unwritten domesticated role. These roles manifest themselves even though women have a job outside of the home, children to take care of and a husband. Women are expected by virtue of the way we were taught by our fore-mothers to serve and be submissive to our husbands.

In summary, women in leadership have made some strides toward inclusivity in the area of church leadership. However, women are still viewed in terms of their domesticated duties. As long as society continues to have a narrow view of the capabilities of women, then women will continue to be subjected and limited to only certain leadership positions.

Human Rights/Sin

Finally, sin plays a role in the theological understanding of the ministry issue. According to Deloris Williams in the book *Sister's in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk* “the fallacious merging of the Black church and the African-American denominational churches hides a multitude of sins against black women prevalent in the African-American denominational churches on a daily bases.”

Some of these sins are:

- The sexism that denies Black women equal opportunity in the churches’ major leadership roles. Such action opposes God by denying God’s call to black women to preach. The sin of sexism dies slowly in some African-American denominational structures and hangs on tenaciously in others.

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• The immoral models of male leadership at the helm of too many of the Black denominational churches.

• Collusion that often exists between some Black male preachers and the political forces in America oppressing Black women and all Black people.

• The sexual exploitation of Black women in the denominational church by some black preachers.

• The tendency of the proclamation and teachings of the denominational churches to be so spiritualized and ‘heaven-directed’ that women parishioners are not encouraged to concentrate on their lives in this world and to fight for their own survival, liberation and productive quality of life.  

Women suffer internalized oppression, not only the oppression that someone places on them but also the oppression that women place on themselves. This problem does not involve men. Men's problems involve sexism. This internalized oppression involves women who still believe that men have the right to oppress them.

The sin is that we, meaning men and women, do not treat women leaders as all leaders should be treated. Luke 6:31 reads, “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” Matthew 7:12 reads, “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.” In summary, the sin is anything that serves as an oppressive entity against women in leadership.

Summary

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Women in leadership have a difficult time rising into positions of leadership in the church. We have addressed the issue by using the first step, Retrieval, in the five step hermeneutical process. The hermeneutical process attempts to establish a correlation between the ministry issue and how it is interpreted. Retrieval involves understanding the relationship between the ministry issue and the theological categories; Jesus, God, Holy Spirit, Revelation and Human Being/Sin. The theological category of Jesus played the primary role in the theological understanding of the ministry issue. The other categories, Holy Spirit and God, played secondary roles. The author used the bible and other theological literature to address the theological categories. Jesus served as the Savior to the poor and oppressed, treated women with compassion, was sensitive to the needs of women in controversial settings of the church and he challenged the social norms and culture of the day. The Holy Spirit plays a vital role in helping women to uncover their spiritual gifts and how they are manifested in the church. The Holy Spirit does not distinguish between male and female. God is the creator of humankind, man and woman, additionally God did not place women in a subordinate position when God created man and woman. The Revelation in leadership is that women still have a difficult time gaining access in leadership positions. Finally, it is a sin that women are oppressed by themselves and others. It is a sin that we do not treat women as leaders. These five theological categories helped to establish a correlation between the ministry issue and its interpretation.

Critique

The second step in the hermeneutical process is ‘Critique’. According to Dr. Edward Smith in his lecture dated February 9, 2011, the critique is the theological
understanding of what is happening in the ministry issue. The critique provides explanations to the questions: What has the church been doing up to now? What has kept this from happening? Why are women in leadership having a difficult time rising into positions of leadership in the church? The critique will address the ministry issue as it relates to the ministry context.

Monticello is a small town located about 70 miles from Atlanta. The town is not on a direct path from Atlanta or Macon. It is not off the interstate. In other words you have to intentionally go to Monticello. There are very few jobs available for men or women outside of factories and public schools. Higher education can only be obtained if one travels to schools more than thirty miles away. The opportunities for advancement are not great. Women do not have the same opportunities as men. In most cases, women are juggling family with children, husbands, household responsibilities and employment. Cultural influence also plays a critical role in how women are treated. I believe that it is difficult to provide the opportunities for leadership growth in Monticello.

In the denomination of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church leadership opportunities are provided for women in churches in the larger cities. These same opportunities are not afforded to those who reside in smaller towns. Teachers and people in leadership who are trained within the denomination do not focus on churches off the beaten path. Because Monticello is some 30 miles from the nearest major interstate, it is considered off the beaten path.

Classes and curriculum offered by the denomination are provided 45 or more miles away and are often unavailable or out of reach financially for smaller churches. It is somewhat expected of those who reside in smaller towns to come to the ‘big city’ to
receive leadership training. Yet obstacles which include transportation, finances, and proper care for the children preclude women from smaller and rural congregations from receiving this valuable training.

In summary, many women in small towns such as Monticello are still struggling to receive training near their homes because of obstacles. Some of the same opportunities available to women in the larger towns are not available to the smaller towns. It is my critique that the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church is still struggling with the issue of women in leadership.

Suspicion

'Suspicion' is the third step in the hermeneutical process. This step in the hermeneutical process raises questions as to why the author thinks the ministry issue is not being addressed.

In the exploration of women in leadership there could be many reasons why women are not in leadership positions. Some of these reasons, I contend, include embedded theology, understanding of source theology impacting women’s identity and thought process, lack of training, caring for family which includes spouse and children, lack of support for women by women, and the church's refusal to assist women as well as the thought process that women should only do specific jobs.

Embedded Theology

As we explore why women are not in leadership positions, we must first investigate that which is intrinsically entrenched within us, our embedded theology. We began the learning process from birth with our mothers talking and teaching. Dr.
Edward Smith in his book *The Doctrines of Providence and Revelation: An Introduction to Philosophy and Theology* says the following:

"Many of us were born and raised in this theology. It began in us before we could speak, developing during years of Sunday worship, church school, and youth groups, and reinforced by the life example of our parents, friends and ministers. As we grew older and began to think for ourselves, this theology was reshaped and became very much our own, in some ways like and in other respects unlike the theology we encountered in our homes and churches. These theological messages from the church have bred into the hearts and minds of the faithful since our entry into the church."\(^{60}\)

"Christians learn what faith is all about from countless daily encounters with their Christianity – formal and informal – planned and unplanned. This understanding of faith disseminated by the church and assimilated by its members in their daily lives is called 'embedded theology'."\(^{61}\)

"Embedded theology in religious language is often known as 'first hand' or the language of witness, being made up of the most immediate and direct testimonies of the meaning of faith."\(^{62}\) Embedded theology includes the prayers that were prayed to us as a child; the morals and values that were taught and learned; the family stories and history from family outings, holiday gatherings and family connected moments; as well as culture and historical context passed down from one to another. Embedded theology is everything that is learned in the church including Sunday school lessons and recitations as well as polity that shapes our worship and the lyrics and the music in our songs and the gospel that is preached from the pulpit. Embedded theology is the "theology that is

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\(^{60}\) Smith, Dr. Edward L. *The Doctrines of Providence and Revelation: An Introduction to Philosophy and Theology*, (Atlanta, Georgia: The Research Center Press, 2001), 51.

\(^{61}\) Ibid., 50.

\(^{62}\) Ibid., 50.
deeply in place at work and in our lives as Christians in our homes, churches, and the world."\(^{63}\)

**Source of Theology**

"Sources of authority that shape our identities include: the bible (historically, a primary source for Protestants); experience (i.e., of women and those who are marginalized); social scientific data (i.e., on biological and gender differences); denominational sources such as creeds, rulings from the magisterium in the Roman Catholic tradition, or denominational constitutions; and gender and feminist studies."\(^{64}\)

As a result, we bring to the table our fixed thought process on what a leader should be and who a leader should be based on our embedded theology and source of theology. Unfortunately our theology can be used to obstruct one’s path. Our theology can also encourage and promote women to be the leaders they are called to be.

**Training of Women**

Women are the last to be trained. Often training is at a far greater expense than for their male counterparts. Some of these expenses include child care, added living arrangements to include children, and greater student loan debt. Many obstacles or barriers need to be overcome in order for women to receive training. These barriers include the cultural barriers, family barriers and innate barriers. Women who have children at an early age are the last to be considered for programs that teach them leadership skills.

**Women as Caregivers**

\(^{63}\) Ibid., 50.

Women are the primary caregivers for their children. In most cases in order to make ends meet, women who are married with children and women not married with children are finding that they are tri-vocational workers. Women are mothers and wives. They take care of the home and extended family members. Women also have jobs outside of the home, in some cases more than one job to make ends meet. These jobs are usually lower paying jobs. As a result, time and money prevent women in these situations from receiving leadership training. They just don’t have time and in some cases the energy.

Women Not Supporting Women

Another issue in this category of suspicion is that of women not supporting women. Some women do not support each other as leaders. “In fact, one of the perennial arguments against female pastors is that it is not the men of the church who object but the women who do not want a woman in the pulpit.” At times we are considered our own worst enemy. A primary example would be women whose mothers do not support them in the quest for additional education, a better job or even moving on to a better life. One reason may be that mothers may not have done so themselves. In this case daughters are discouraged from exploring leadership opportunities. Mothers instead encourage their daughters to do as they did, stay at home and take care of the household and family.

At times women are pigeonholed into specific roles by members and clergy who believe that women are only supposed to have specific roles in the church such as the usher board, choir and Missionary Society. However, “Black women know how radically dependent their churches and communities are on their presence and actions for

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both organizational integrity and effective mobilization. When blocked from the most visible leadership positions, women find ways to make their voices heard and their power felt in alternative spaces of their own creation, spaces that often give them limited access to the sacred platforms.\textsuperscript{66}

Women are not encouraged to venture out and explore options that are not typically extended to them. An example of this can be best illustrated from my experience at a former church setting. There were a few women in the church who were vehemently opposed to any women who were not of their economic status who attempted to take a leadership role in the church. These women reserved these choice leadership roles for those who were in their specific class category. Therefore, if women attempted to elevate themselves into leadership positions they were ostracized and isolated. One might say that they were set up for failure. Needless to say very little was accomplished outside of the dominating group. As a result, a strong invisible class system barrier was established to keep women from working in leadership roles or participating in leadership opportunities.

Finally, it is my suspicion that women in the local church are some of the main adversaries against women in the pulpit. Bishop Vashti McKenzie in her book, \textit{Not Without a Struggle: Leadership Development for African American Women in Ministry - Revised and Updated} outlines several reasons why women in the local church do not accept women in the pulpit. "Some believe that the pulpit is historically one of the few places African American men can exert strong, positive leadership, and for that reason African American women should let them do so. Others feel the pulpit is one of the few

\textsuperscript{66}Cheryl Townsend Gilkes. \textit{If It Wasn't For the Women}, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 2001), 7.
remaining positions where women can interact with men who are sensitive to their spiritual needs.\(^{67}\) "Still others believe that some women have problems working with other women."\(^{68}\) "Often women don’t want other women in the pulpit simply because this represents change in tradition neither articulated nor supported by authorizing bodies."\(^{69}\)

**The Church Not Supporting Women’s Leadership**

My suspicion is that the church does not encourage or support women, especially women with children, to be candidates for leadership positions at church. The perception is that women need to be taking care of their children. While no real evidence has been documented this contention, however, could be seen in another example: A former member of a church, whom I will call Linda, had two children out of wedlock. Linda was an extremely talented singer, director, and songstress. However, because she had children and was not married, church members did not encourage or support her endeavors in music ministry in front of the congregation. She was discouraged from teaching children. Some women went so far as to prohibit their daughters from associating with her. A second example is one I experienced myself: At a younger age I recognized God calling me to ministry. I was a mother with three small children. After consulting my pastor, I was told to go home and raise my children. God does not call women to preach. As a result, I was not supported in my quest toward my specific calling. It was suppressed until some 20 years later. The pastor whom I trusted


\(^{68}\) Ibid., 36.

\(^{69}\) Ibid., 36.
persuaded me to believe that women were not supposed to pursue their calling in ministry. Furthermore the women within the congregation supported the pastor’s thought process.

In summary, “Men and women resent the presence of clergy who happens to be women because they represent the changing nature of how a church works or a change in the work of the church.”70 This has not changed. Women in leadership as well as women who happen to be preachers and pastors are still experiencing some of these same excuses as to why women should not be in the pulpit.

Qualified women in the local church are not receiving proper nurturing, guidance and or support in the articulation or the manifestation of their ministerial visions and goals. This includes clergy and lay women. There are barriers such as sexism and cultural differences in church and society which pose challenging obstacles to the development of women in leadership positions.

Understanding

The fourth category in the hermeneutical process is that of ‘Understanding’. Understanding is an explanation of a concept or theology that helps explain the ministry issue.

Historically, women in leadership have had a difficult time breaking through the glass ceiling. The term “the glass ceiling” refers to “the invisible barriers that impede” the progression of women into leadership positions. “The term glass ceiling was coined by Katherine Lawrence and Marianne Schreiber of Hewlett-Packard in 1979.

The term ‘glass ceiling’ refers to situations where the advancement of a qualified person within the hierarchy of an organization is stopped at a lower level because of some form of discrimination, most commonly

70 Ibid., 36
sexism or racism. Glass ceiling is defined as ‘the phenomenon whereby women do quite well in the labor market up to a market after which there is an effective limit on their prospects.’

“The general-case glass ceiling hypothesis states that not only is it more difficult for women than for men to be promoted up levels of authority hierarchies within workplaces but also that the obstacles women face relative to men become greater as they move up the hierarchy. Gender-based discrimination in promotions is not simply present across levels of hierarchy but is more intense at higher levels.” The ‘glass ceiling’ is a metaphor for the invisible ceiling that exists as women attempt to move up the ladder of success. The glass ceiling is “a transparent barrier that kept women from rising above a certain level in corporations. . . . It applies to women as a group who are kept from advancing higher because they are women.” “Taken literally, the metaphor of the ‘glass ceiling’ implies the existence of an impermeable barrier that blocks the vertical mobility of women; below this barrier, women are able to get promoted; beyond this barrier, they are not.”

The ‘glass ceiling’ which manifests itself in the church is called the ‘stained glass ceiling’. “The ‘stained glass ceiling’ is a sociological phenomenon in religious communities which revolves around the apparent difficulty for women who seek to gain a

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71 Sonia Taneja, Mildred Golden Pryor and John Humphreys; Empowerment from the Gender Perspective (Delhi Business Review X Vol. 10, No. 2, July - December 2009), 21-22


role within church leadership. The use of the term ‘stained glass ceiling’ is metaphorical, indicating a certain level of power or authority within the church structures that women tend not to rise above within church hierarchies.”[75] The metaphor of the ‘stained glass ceiling’ is an unspoken yet visible, invisible barrier in the church. Many churches “have demeaned women, and used theology and scriptural misinterpretations to keep them in second-class status. Women who challenged the religious status quo had to cope, not only with culture and tradition, but with the ‘will of God’.”[76]

Women are supported and encouraged as long as women stay within a specified area and do not attempt to cross over into leadership positions generally held by men. Women are encouraged to be ushers, choir members, missionaries, and Sunday school teachers. However women in specific contexts are discouraged or not allowed to have leadership roles in the church. This includes women who birth children out of wedlock or women who have made mistakes in their lives. Finally, women are greatly scrutinized if they profess to have a leadership calling in ministry.

It was amazing that women heard the call to preach through the ‘sounding brass and tinkling cymbals’ of cultural biases, traditions, and sexism. The road was (is) not easy and the burdens were (are) not light for many paradigm-pioneering women who faced criticism, rejection, isolation, and even excommunication. Some were even threatened with bodily harm. Every imaginable argument was used to deny what God had spoken into their hearts. The Bible, which gave them images of women with ‘like passions’ such as Deborah, Hildah, Mary Magdalene, and Phoebe, was used against them. Biblical interpreters labeled them, among other things, as heretics.”[77]

An issue that is associated with the above ministry issue is the inner struggles of women relative to the various expected roles within their family structure, community and in the church. Women have been placed in specific roles based on culture and family. The motivation is to pave the way for other women who have goals and aspirations, to seek after what they want and what they want to do but have roadblocks and obstacles standing in their way.

In summary, it is my understanding that women in leadership still have a difficult time rising into positions of leadership in the church. I believe that Bishop Vashti McKenzie in her book *Not Without a Struggle: Leadership Development for African American Women in Ministry – Revised and Updated* states it best:

One of the next challenges to sexism in the church is for clergywomen to move beyond ‘first appointment’ churches or entry level positions. Clergywomen face a ‘glass ceiling’ or ‘stained glass ceiling’ of their own. The advancement up the denominational ladder is within view, but women have been unable to move in significant numbers beyond the local church to serve in denominational positions and on the episcopal level to effect change and/or be a part of the decision dynamic on the denominational level. Another challenge is to move beyond the tokenism of the ‘first and only women’ elected or appointed to this, that, or the other office.78

**Explanation**

The final step in the hermeneutical process to better understand the issue of women in leadership is that of ‘Explanation’. Various theologians and literature on the plight of women in leadership will be used to explain this phenomenon and will be exclusive to the use of theologians within the categories of liberation, feminist, and womanist theologies.

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Review of the Theology of Liberation

Gustavo Gutiérrez in his book the *Theology of Liberation* indicates that "liberation emphasizes that human beings transform themselves by conquering their liberty throughout their existence and their history."  

"Liberation expresses the aspirations of all oppressed peoples and social classes, emphasizing the conflictual aspect of the economic, social, and political process which puts them at odds with wealthy nations and oppressive classes." Liberation is transformation. Something has to change the situation, the culture and especially the mindset of a person. Poor can be a metaphor for where we are, meaning the state of mind we are in. Poor does not necessarily mean economically, it can be physically, emotionally, mentally and even spiritually. Poor can be a state of mind, in a given situation. Within the church structure, poor can describe the undercurrent of oppression that is prevalent in the dual message given to women who seek leadership positions in the church.

According to Gutiérrez true "liberation" has three main dimensions: First, it involves political and social liberation, the elimination of the immediate causes of poverty and injustice. Second, liberation involves the emancipation of the poor, the marginalized, the downtrodden and the oppressed from all "those things that limit their capacity to develop themselves freely and in dignity". Third, liberation theology involves liberation from selfishness and sin, a re-establishment of a relationship with God and with other people.

"Liberation theology speaks of salvation in Christ in terms of liberation." This approach meant listening to the ‘muted cry’ that wells up from millions of human beings,

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80 Ibid., 24.

81 http://liberationtheology.org/people-organizations/gustavo-gutierrez, Internet; accessed; May 4, 2011, xxxvii.
pleading with their pastors for a liberation that is nowhere to be found in their case." According to Gutierrez “the cornerstone of liberation theology is poverty.” “Any essential clue to the understanding of poverty in liberation theology is the distinction between three meanings of the term ‘poverty’: real poverty as an evil—that is something that God does not want; spiritual poverty, in the sense of a readiness to do God’s will; and solidarity with the poor, along with protest against the conditions under which they suffer.”

Black liberation theologian, James Cone, offers additional understanding of the term ‘liberation’. “James Cone believes that God's promise of liberation is the strength and enduring power that keeps people to fight on for their liberation.” “Liberation is certainly a gift from God. Freedom thus belongs to God and is not human made.”

James Cone understands liberation as freedom: First, liberation as freedom is to be in relation to God. To be in right relationship with God is the primary content of human liberation and this freedom must precede the freedom to be in relation to self and community. Secondly, liberation is freedom in relation to self and community of the oppressed. There can be no authentic freedom of self unless it is related to the freedom of the community. Thirdly, Cone understands liberation as the project of freedom in history. Liberation cannot be separated from the historical struggle of freedom in this world. It is biblical. ‘Jesus proclaimed freedom to the captives, good news to the poor, ministered to the least of these, and invited the sinners to the Kingdom banquet.’ Finally liberation is a project of freedom and hope. It goes beyond the here and now.”

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82 Ibid., xxxvii.
83 Ibid., xxv.
85 Ibid., 338.
86 Ibid., 338-339.
Liberation is the first layer of oppression that women in leadership must acknowledge. Women must acknowledge that they are in an oppressive situation. Many times women do not know they are oppressed because women are in the midst of the situation. A woman in the church, for example, asked me what my project was about. She basically said, "I have never experienced oppression in the church. Preachers provide every opportunity for women to grow and serve in leadership roles." This woman is highly gifted in the area of leadership. However, she has been 'sat down' by many pastors once she begins to exhibit these innate qualities.

"Under capitalism, patriarchy is structured so that sexism restricts women's behavior in some realms even as freedom from limitations is allowed in other spheres. The absence of extreme restrictions leads many women to ignore the areas in which they are exploited or discriminated against; it may lead them to imagine that no women are oppressed."87 The statement "you can't see the forest for the trees' explains it best. In the case of the church, women are immersed in religious ritual, worship, the pastor and everything that makes up the church. When people are in the midst of the situation be it good or bad they cannot see the issue as a whole, only bits and pieces.

**Review of Feminist Theology and Black Feminist Theology**

Helen Reddy pinned the lyrics to the song *I am Woman* which was used as the feminist anthem during the feminist movement.

I am woman, hear me roar, in numbers too big to ignore. And I know too much to go back an' pretend 'cause I've heard it all before and I've been down there on the floor. No one's ever gonna keep me down again.

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Oh yes I am wise, but it's wisdom born of pain. Yes, I've paid the price but look how much I gained. If I have to, I can do anything. I am strong. I am invincible. I am woman.

You can bend but never break me, 'cause it only serves to make me more determined to achieve my final goal. And I come back even stronger not a novice any longer, 'cause you've deepened the conviction in my soul.

I am woman watch me grow, see me standing toe to toe. As I spread my lovin' arms across the land, but I'm still an embryo, with a long, long way to go, until I make my brother understand.88

"Reddy's anthem directly and forcefully addresses issues of feminism, women's rights, and gender equality."89 Growing up I always felt that this anthem described a woman who is struggling to be heard. She is ready to take her rightful place. So, get ready here I come. This song was used to promote the women's movement known as feminism. "Feminism may be broadly defined as a point of view in which women are understood to be fully human and thus entitled to equal rights and privileges."90 "Feminism strives to eradicate sexism and related exploitative classification systems and to allow those silenced to join in the cultural activity of defining reality."91 Feminism includes an awareness that society's norms are masculine and that to be a woman in such a society involves marginality.92 Feminism is considered a middle class-white women's theology.


“Hence, feminist theology is a liberation theology; it is liberation theology in the context of women and men.”93 Yet this context is not inclusive of all women.

“Frequently, white feminists act as if black women did not know sexist oppression existed until they voiced feminist sentiment. White feminists believe they are providing black women with ‘the’ analysis and ‘the’ program for liberation. They do not understand, cannot even imagine, that black women, as well as other groups of women who live daily in oppressive situations, often acquire an awareness of patriarchal politics from their lived experiences, just as they develop strategies of resistance (even though they may not resist on a sustained or organized basis).”94

According to Jacquelyn Grant in her article Womanist Theology: Black Woman’s Experience as a Source for doing Theology, with Special Reference to Christology states that feminist theology basic tenets are:

(1) Feminist theology seeks to develop a wholistic theology. Feminist theology rejects the traditional forms of oppressive and one-sided, male-dominated theologies which arise out of patriarchal religions.

(2) Feminist theologians call for the eradication of social/sexual dualisms in human existence which is inherent in patriarchy. A patriarchy is characterized by male-domination and female submission and submission. In such a society, men are considered strong, intelligent, rational and aggressive; women are considered weak, irrational, and docile.

(3) The function of feminist theology is to conceptualize new and positive images of women.

(4) Finally, feminist theology must evaluate male articulated understandings of the Christian faith.95

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The feminist theology in this context does not incorporate all women who experience sexism. The basic tenets of feminist theology are geared toward white middle and upper class women.

"It has been argued by many blacks that the women's liberation movement is a white middle-class movement. Therefore it is believed to be totally irrelevant to the situation of black women since the majority of them are not middle-class." However, as the feminist movement has evolved the feminist position also changed to include a broader audience.

Bonnie Miller McLemore in her article "Feminist Theory in Pastoral Theology" found in the book entitled *Feminist and Womanist Pastoral Theology* further elaborates on the definition of feminism.

Feminism is far more than a movement to achieve equal rights, individual freedom, and economic and social equity for middle-class White women. Instead, a feminist perspective demands a critical analysis of structures and ideologies that rank people as inferior or superior according to various traits of human nature, whether gender, sexual orientation, class, color, age, physical ability, and so forth. Feminism strives to eradicate sexism and related exploitative classificatory systems and to allow those silenced to join in the cultural activity of defining reality.97

Carrie Doehring in her article "A Method of Feminist Pastoral Theology" describes three positions of feminism:

1. Demanding equal access by addressing issues of gender equality and gender oppression;

95 Jacquelyn Grant. Womanist Theology: Black Woman's Experience as a Source for doing theology, with Special Reference to Christology, (Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center 13 no 2 Spring 1986), 198.

96 Ibid., 199.

2. Rejecting patriarchal structures, naming women's experience as different from men's, reforming and constructing systems by using women's experience;

3. Rejecting any meaning system (patriarchal, racist, classist, heterosexist) that has universalized and made metaphysical any binary categories (i.e., masculine/feminine, white/black, straight/gay) that place people in privileged and marginalized positions.98

This position moves the feminist theology to be inclusive of those who are considered marginalized. "Feminism is far more than a movement to achieve equal rights, individual rights, and economic and social equity for middle-class white women. Instead, a feminist perspective demands a critical analysis of structures and ideologies that rank people as inferior or superior according to various traits of human nature, whether gender, sexual orientation, class, color, age, physical ability, and so forth."99

This analysis is best communicated through those who consider themselves Black Feminists. bell hooks in her book, Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center describes the feminist movement as those women who rebelled against racism who collectively came together in what is known as women's liberation. Feminism is described by bell hooks as "a struggle to end sexist oppression. Therefore, it is necessarily a struggle to eradicate the ideology of domination that permeates Western culture on various levels, as well as a commitment to reorganizing society so that the self-development of people can take precedence over imperialism, economic expansion, and material desires."100


commitment to feminism so defined would demand that each individual participant acquire critical political consciousness based on ideas and beliefs.”

hooks also states that, “feminist thought and practice were fundamentally altered when a radical woman of color and white women allies began to rigorously challenge the notion that ‘gender’ was the primary factor determining a woman's fate.”

“Looking at the interlocking nature of gender, race, and class was the perspective that changed the direction of feminist thought.” Women had to acknowledge that gender is a common denominator but for black women and women of other races, race and class are also a contributing factor.

hooks further states that:

Frequently, white feminists act as if black women did not know sexist oppression existed until they voiced feminist sentiment. They believe they are providing black women with ‘the’ analysis and ‘the’ program for liberation. They do not understand, cannot even imagine, that black women, as well as other groups of women who live daily in oppressive situations, often acquire an awareness of patriarchal politics from their lived experience, just as they develop strategies of resistance (even though they may not resist on a sustained organized basis).

These experiences manifest themselves at home, on the job and in the church. Black women have lived with overt and covert experiences of oppression, yet have found strategies and defense mechanisms as barriers to minimize the pain that they experience.

Finally, hooks’ describes feminism as a movement. “Feminism as a movement to end sexist oppression directs our attention to systems of domination and the

101 Ibid., 26.


103 Ibid., xii.

104 Ibid., 11.
interrelatedness of sex, race, and class oppression."105 "Sexist oppression is of primary importance not because it is the basis of all other oppression, but because it is the practice of denomination most people experience, whether their role be that of discriminator or discriminated against, exploiter or exploited."106

Patricia Hill Collins in the book *Black Feminist Thought* describes "Black women's subordination within intersecting oppressions of race, class, gender, sexuality, and nation."107 It is her contention that "Black feminist thought aims to empower African American women within the context of social injustice sustained by intersecting oppressions. Since Black women cannot be fully empowered unless intersecting oppressions themselves are eliminated."108 "By embracing a paradigm of intersecting oppressions of race, class, gender, sexuality, and nation, as well as Black women's individual and collective agency within them, Black feminist thought reconceptualizes the social relations of domination and resistance."109 The diagram below is a visual diagram of the intersection of Black Women's oppressions of race, class, gender, sexuality, nation and black women's collective agency within (embedded Theology) which is described by Patricia Hill Collins.

105 Ibid., 33.
108 Ibid., 25.
109 Ibid., 291-292.
It is my contention that as Black women in leadership we have to contend with the paradigm intersecting oppressions of sexism, racism, classism, and embedded theology. This makes sense. We contend with these ‘isms’ in one form or another in our culture, at work, and yes even at our places of worship. Sexism in the church is still the dominant oppressive that affects Black women in leadership. One might think that sexism in the church is only exhibited from men. This is not true. Sexism is the undercurrent expression exhibited by women upon women partly because of embedded beliefs, biblical teaching and personal theologies. The next diagram illustrates the oppressive ‘ism’s’ that Black Women in leadership have to contend with in the church; sexism, racism, classism, and embedded theology.
In summary, feminist theology is a liberation theology. Feminist theology addresses women’s rights and gender equality. However, feminist theology falls short in addressing the Black women’s experience that includes sexism, classism and racism. Therefore, Black Feminist theology addresses these issues. Black Feminist thought addresses the intersecting oppressions of race, class, gender, sexuality and embedded theology.

Review of Womanist Theology

Thus far we have explored women in leadership from the perspective of liberation theology, feminist theology and Black feminist theology. While Black feminist theology addresses the intersecting oppressions of race, class, gender, sexuality and embedded theology, one component that is missing yet relevant to Black women in leadership is experience. Jacquelyn Grant in her article, *Womanist Theology in North America* states that; “Womanist Theology is a theological perspective that emerges out of the experiences of Black women.”110 Alice Walker suggested that the experience of being a

Black woman or a white woman is so different that another word is required to describe the liberative efforts of Black women.”\(^{111}\) Alice Walker defines “womanist as:

1. From *womanish*. (Opp. of “girlish,” i.e. frivolous, irresponsible, not serious.) A black feminist or feminist of color. From the black folk expression of mothers to female children, “you acting womanish,” i.e., like a woman. Usually referring to outrageous, audacious, courageous or *willful* behavior. Wanting to know more and in greater depth than is considered “good” for one. Interested in grown up doings. Acting grown up. Being grown up. Interchangeable with another black folk expression: “You trying to be grown.” Responsible. In charge. *Serious.*

2. *Also:* A woman who loves other women, sexually and/or nonsexually. Appreciates and prefers women’s culture, women’s emotional flexibility (values tears as natural counterbalance of laughter), and women’s strength. Sometimes loves individual men, sexually and/or nonsexually. Committed to survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female. Not a separatist, except periodically, for health. Traditionally a universalist, as in: “Mama, why are we brown, pink, and yellow, and our cousins are white, beige and black?” Ans. “Well, you know the colored race is just like a flower garden, with every color flower represented.” Traditionally capable, as in: “Mama, I’m walking to Canada and I’m taking you and a bunch of other slaves with me.” Reply: “It wouldn’t be the first time.”


4. Womanist is to feminist as purple is to lavender.\(^{112}\)

“Womanish became converted to womanist, referring to being serious and courageous. It pointed to serious black women, courageous Black women, bold Black women.”\(^{113}\) “A womanist then is a strong black woman who has sometimes been mislabeled as a


domineering, castrating matriarch. A womanist is one who has developed survival strategies in spite of the oppression of her race and sex in order to save her family and her people.”114 "The chief function of womanism is not merely to replace one set of elitist, hegemonic (authority/control) texts that have traditionally ignored, dismissed, or flat-out misunderstood the existential realities of women of the African Diaspora with another set of Afrocentric texts that had gotten short shift and pushed to the margins of the learned societies. Rather, our objective is to use Walker's definition as a critical, methodological framework for challenging inherited traditions for their collusion with androcentric patriarchy as well as for being a catalyst in overcoming oppressive situations through revolutionary acts of rebellion.”115

“Black women's experiences include not only Black women's activities in the larger society, but also in the churches. It emphasizes the fact that Black women have often rejected oppressive structures in the church and the larger society.”116

Womanist Theology recognizes the fact that many cultures are indeed patriarchal. In these cultures sexism renders women at best, second-class citizens. Sexism violates the humanity and basic dignity of women. Secondly, Womanist Theology affirms the struggle for the eradication of racism wherever it is found. Moreover whereas black women shared the racial oppression of black men, wherever they are found, the added dimensions of black women's oppression means that there needs to be special or added attention to our challenge in the theological arena. Womanist theology is thoroughly grounded in the


struggles to eliminate sexism from our communication and from the larger community.\textsuperscript{117}

This does not mean that women exclude men, that is not so. Womanists seek to eradicate racism, sexism and classism.

Deloris Williams in her book \textit{Sisters in the Wilderness} defines "womanist theology as a prophetic voice reminding African-American denominational churches of their mission to seek justice and voice for all their people, of which Black women are the overwhelming majority of their congregations. Yet this prophetic voice is concerned about the well-being of the entire African-American community, female and male, adults and children."\textsuperscript{118}

Williams also states that the aim of womanist theology is discourse and work with Black women in the churches; it also brings Black women's experience into the discourse of all Christian theology, from which it has previously been excluded. Womanist Theology attempts to help Black women see, affirm and have confidence in the importance of their experience and faith for determining the character of the Christian religion in the African-American community. Womanist theology challenges all oppressive forces impeding Black women's struggle for survival and for the development of a positive, productive quality of life conducive to women's and the family's freedom and well-being. Womanist theology opposes all oppression based on race, sex, class, sexual preference, physical disability and caste.\textsuperscript{119}

Monica Coleman in her book \textit{Making a Way Out of No Way: A Womanist Theology} states that "womanist theology is a response to sexism in black theology and racism in feminist theology."\textsuperscript{120} According to Coleman early Black theologians included

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., 286-287.


\end{footnotesize}
the experiences of Black men and boys and feminist theologians addressed white middle to upper class women. None of these theologies addressed the needs of Black women’s oppression. “The term womanist allows Black women to affirm their identity as black while also owning a connection with feminism.”

“Womanist theology examines the social construction of Black womanhood in relation to the African American community and religious concepts.” “Womanist theology is known for its analysis of religion and society in the light of the triple oppression of racism, sexism, and classism that characterizes the experience of many black women.” “Womanist theology uses a wide range of sources – traditional church doctrines, African-American fiction and poetry, nineteenth-century black women leaders, poor and working-class black women in holiness churches, gospel music, spiritual, personal narratives, conjurer, and syncretic black religiosity, and the experience of black women in slavery.” Finally,

Womanist theologies maintain an unflinching commitment to reflect on the social, cultural and religious experiences of black women. Womanist theologies are ultimately grounded in and accountable to the religious reality of black women’s lives. As a form of liberation theology, womanist theologies add the goals of survival, quality of life, and wholeness to black theology’s goals of liberation and justice. Womanist theologians analyze the oppressive aspects of society that prevent black women from having a quality of life and wholeness that God desires for them and for all creation.

121 Ibid., 6.
122 Ibid., 6.
124 Ibid., 8.
125 Ibid., 11.
Womanism allows black women to collectively engage in holistic healing and transformation. "Black women must do theology out of their tri-dimensional experience of racism/sexism/classism. To ignore any aspect of this experience is to deny the holistic and integrated reality of Black womanhood."\textsuperscript{126}

Summary

The final step of the hermeneutical process addressed the ministry issue by reviewing various theologians and literature on the plight of women in leadership. The discussion focused on several theologians within the categories of liberation, feminist, and womanist theologies. The researcher discussed the theology of liberation through the viewpoints of Gustavo Gutiérrez and James Cone. Liberation is the first layer that women in leadership must acknowledge. Women must recognize that they are in an oppressive situation.

The second layer explored was that of feminism theology. This section discussed the influence of the feminist movement as it relates to women addressing issues of feminism, women's rights, and gender equality. Feminist theology was discussed through the viewpoints of Bonnie McLemore and Carrie Doehring.

The third layer investigated was Black feminist theology. Black feminist theology addressed Black women's subordination from the intersecting oppressions of race, class, gender and embedded theology. Black feminist thought was articulated from the viewpoint of bell hooks and Patricia Collins.

\textsuperscript{126} Jacquelyn Grant. \textit{White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus}, (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1989), 209.
This leads us to the third layer, Womanist theology. Womanist theology uses the experience as well as intersecting theologies to discuss Black women’s oppression. Womanist theology is examined from the viewpoint of Jacquelyn Grant, Deloris Williams and Monica Coleman as it relates to Black women and their struggles.

Women in leadership in the church must still contend with sexism, racism, classism, and their own internal voice that could prohibit them from expressing leadership capabilities.
CHAPTER V

BIBLICAL LITERATURE

There is much discussion concerning women in leadership in the church with literature presented on many sides. The purpose of this biblical section is to present argument on women in leadership, the Egalitarian and Complementarian points as well as the Scotist and Thomist point of view. Additionally scriptural texts that exclude women in leadership as well as scriptures that support or empower women will also be highlighted. Specific examples of women in leadership will be presented from the Hebrew Bible as well as the New Testament.

It is not the author's desire to persuade the audience whether women ought to be in leadership or not. The author is merely giving the reader both arguments. The Biblical section is to merely highlighting that women were used by God in leadership positions throughout the bible.

Egalitarianism and Complementarianism Viewpoints

Robert L. Saucy and Judith K. Tenelshof in the book Women and Men in Ministry: A Complementary Perspective focused on the issue of women in leadership. "At times the issue (of women in leadership) has been confused by posing the question in such limiting terms that it fails to get to the real underlying issue involved."1 "An

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example is: Should women be ordained?"² Should a woman be consecrated to the office of bishop? Should a woman pastor a church? These are just some of the questions that are posed to women who seek the highest positions of the church. Saucy and Tenelshof also suggest that "limiting the question to the issue of ordination does not address the more basic underlying question of the overall relationship of man and woman in the church."³ "The basic issue in the question of women's ministry in the church is thus: Does God intend any role distinction between men and women in relation to ministry in the church?"⁴ A person's views on women in leadership are derived from how one interprets the biblical text.

According to Saucy and Tenelshof there are two distinct views on women in leadership: egalitarianism and complementarianism.

The position that does not take the biblical teaching as normative for the church today is known as egalitarianism. It is also described as the feminist position. According to this understanding, there are no distinctions between the roles of men and women in ministry; all functions and positions in church ministry are equally open to both genders. On the other side are those who see the biblical teaching of a distinction in roles between man and woman in the church (or in the home), who are commonly known as complementarians. This position has also been traditionally called patriarchy or hierarchism, although these latter terms are more limited in meaning, emphasizing only headship of man rather than the complementary contribution of the distinct role of women.⁵

According to Sarah Sumner in the book *Men and Women in the Church* both complementarian and egalitarian views have several things in common.


³ Ibid., 23.

⁴ Ibid., 25.

⁵ Ibid., 26-27.
1. Both sides of the debate are radically revising church tradition.

2. Both sides of the debate are trying to be biblical.

3. Both sides are also mixed. Complementarian thought is usually a mix of Bible and traditionalism. Egalitarian thought is usually a mix of Bible and feminism.

4. It is possible to affirm women leaders in the church without becoming a feminist. Feminism is about women’s power. Christianity is about Christ’s power.  

5. “Both sides believe in the primacy of Scripture. In other words, both sides agree that the authority of Scripture is higher than the authority of church tradition.”

Linda L. Belleville a contributor in the book, *Two Views on Women in Ministry* states that the “issues that divide traditionalists (now self-identified as ‘complementarians’) and egalitarians today is not that of women in ministry per se (i.e., women exercising their spiritual gifts), it is rather women in leadership. While a consensus has emerged regarding women and spiritual gifting, a great divide has emerged on the issue of women in leadership – especially women leading men.”

“Invariably the debate between egalitarians and traditionalists comes down to four basic questions:

Does the Bible teach a hierarchical structuring of male and female relationships?

Do we find women in leadership positions in the Bible?

Do women in the Bible assume the same leadership roles as men?

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Does the Bible limit women from filling certain leadership roles?  

Craig Bloomberg also a contributor in the book, *Two Views on Women in Ministry* offers his position as “mediating between classic complementarian and egalitarian perspectives (critics would call it fence-sitting!).”  

However the author falls on the side of complementarian. According to Bloomberg there are several larger issues involved in the complementarian and egalitarian debate on women in leadership/ministry. The first larger issue is, “almost every egalitarian, and particularly women in church leadership roles, have been personally attacked, often repeatedly, in very sub-Christian ways, by certain complementarians to such an extent that it becomes hard for them even to consider the possibility that a more restrictive position might be correct.” 

This is a common but at times unspoken occurrence that happens to women within a woman’s particular denomination and church, in different church settings outside of a woman’s denomination or church and even in communities that have specific adverse view points on women in leadership.

“A second larger issue is the tendency to see one’s views on gender roles as part of a much larger package.” The church is constantly evolving. However, the church’s viewpoint of leaning toward women in leadership or against women in leadership can affect relationships with other churches and the community. The churches who are not in favor of women in leadership tend not to associate or worship with churches who

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9 Ibid., 24.


11 Ibid., 125.

12 Ibid., 126.
embrace women in leadership. There are many factors in the larger picture which include the history of the church and the culture in the community.

“A third issue surrounds the ways questions are posed.” 13 Should women hold positions of leadership in the church? Should women be ordained? The presentation of the question surrounding women in leadership affects the overall outcome of the answer.

Finally, “a fourth issue involves what is practiced in different parts of the world today. Countless women from western cultures have been permitted to preach, teach, and evangelize ‘on the mission field’ when their sending churches would never permit such practices ‘back home’.”14

Sumner in her book *Men and Women in the Church* states “that complementarians and egalitarians often fail to speak in a way that shows the other side was heard.”15

According to Sumner the issue comes back to the notion of exactly what is meant by the terms ‘equality’ and ‘distinction’. For egalitarians, the concepts of equality and distinction mean that women and men are equal as persons but distinct with regard to sexuality. It means, moreover, that roles should not be defined by gender unless the activities of the role are sexual, such as with a husband or wife. When the nature of the role is nonsexual, such as with a pastor or preacher, then roles should be defined by giftedness rather than gender.16

“For complementarians, the concepts of equality and distinction mean that men and women are equal before God as persons but distinct with regard to roles. It means,

13 Ibid., 126.


16 Ibid., 274.
moreover, the proper roles for men and women are defined by gender distinctions, even though the tasks do not involve sexuality."\(^{17}\)

Sumner also distinguishes the complementarians and the egalitarians in a 'philosophical order'. Complementarians are 'Scotists' and egalitarians are 'Thomists'. "The word Scotist derives from the name of Duns Scotus, a theologian who was not a Scotist. Scotus, himself, was a 'Thomist'. When Scotus made his case against women's ordination, he gave two reasons why: because Jesus did not ordain his mother and because women should suffer the punishment of the fall by never enjoying eminence or authority.\(^{18}\) "The Thomist view was named after Thomas Aquinas."\(^{19}\) According to Sumner, "Daniel Dorinai explains it this way:

To speak in archetypes, there are Thomist and Scotist views of order. The Thomist says God's order must and does have a reason, and readily propounds natural and theological reasons why women may not teach and exercise authority in the church. The Scotist says we know God's will, but cannot explain it, for God orders the world as he wills, whether with, against, or beyond reason. The Thomist expects and examines coherence between natural law and divine law; Scotist does not.\(^{20}\)

"That means that while Thomists insist that God's commands and God's creation correlate directly with one another, Scotists believe that God's commands need to correlate with nothing but God's will."\(^{21}\)

In summary, the debate of women in leadership in the church will continue. There are strong viewpoints on both sides. The debate still goes on. "Some of us are

\(^{17}\) Ibid., 274.

\(^{18}\) Ibid., 274.

\(^{19}\) Ibid., 275.

\(^{20}\) Ibid., 275.

\(^{21}\) Ibid., 275.
saying that men but not women are eligible to do anything (the view of the complementarians). Others are saying that eligibility should be more open (the view of the egalitarians).” Whether a person has chosen to be egalitarian or complementarians, Thomist or Scotist the dialogue must continue.

**Biblical Texts that Exclude or Support Women in Leadership**

“Women, who constitute the majority of members in every church, are second-class citizens. They are denied access to pulpits, lecterns, and boardrooms for no other reason than their gender.”22 Scriptural references are often used to discourage women from preaching, teaching or providing leadership in the church. Two such scriptures that are often used are: (1) I Corinthians 14:34-35 (NRSV), “Women should remain silent in the churches.” Persons who do not support women in leadership often interpret the Corinthians text, to mean “women are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says.” According to this interpretation, “if women want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.”23 (2) I Timothy 2:11-14 (NRSV), “Let a woman learn in silence with all submission.” Some interpreters of the I Timothy text say, “I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.”24


24 Ibid., I Timothy 2:11-14.
There are however, other texts that lend support for women as leaders. Acts 2:17-18 (NRSV), "In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy." This text suggests that women have spiritual gifts that will be used in ministry. Another text, Ephesians 4:11-13 (NRSV), reads, "The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ." Galatians 3:28 (NRSV) reads, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." These texts suggest women have equal roles in the body of Christ. According to Cowles, "The enfranchisement of women in the holiness tradition has been based upon a settled conviction that the dispensation of the Holy Spirit has dawned, empowering both men and women to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ as prophesied by Joel and proclaimed by Peter on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17-18)." These scriptural texts provide the evidence that both men and women will be viewed equally.


27 Ibid., Galatians 3:28.

Biblical Women in Leadership

Throughout the Biblical text, one could readily find several women who were prominent leaders in the bible. In the Old Testament there were three women who held the title of prophetess: Miriam, Exodus 15:20; Deborah, Judges 4:4 and Huldah, II Kings 22:14. In the New Testament, even though women were not recorded to be chosen to be one of the twelve disciples, women journeyed with Jesus. Women held the position of prophet who had the authority to teach and preach. Priscilla was listed as a ‘co-worker’ of Paul in Acts 18:2; Phoebe was listed as a ‘deacon,’ in Romans 16:1 and Junia was listed as an apostle, in Romans 16:7.

There are also many examples in the Old and New Testament of women who in addition to being prophets, co-workers and deacons, were also teachers, and evangelists. Linda L. Belleville a contributor in the book, Two Views on Women in Ministry states that many of these women were “multi-gifted women.” “Moses’ sister Miriam possessed instrumental, hymnic, and prophetic gifts that served Israel well toward the wilderness years (Exodus 15:20; Micah 6:4). Deborah as mentioned above was named a ‘prophet’ (Judges 4:4), but also a judge (vv. 4-5), and a ‘mother in Israel’ (5:7). “Besides Miriam and Deborah there was the prophetess God instructed Isaiah to marry (Isaiah 8:3); the prophetess Huldah (2 Kings 22:14), who was active during the time of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:2), Zephaniah (Zephaniah 1:1), Nahum (Nahum 3:8-10), and Habakkuk (Habakkuk 1:6); and the prophetess in exile (Ezekiel 13:17-24) and postexilic (Nehemiah 6:14).”

In the New Testament “women were singled out in the early church as apostles (Romans 16:7), prophets (Acts 21:9; 1 Corinthians 11:5), evangelists (Phil 4:2-3), patrons (Romans 16:2), teachers (Acts 18:24-26; Titus 2:3-5), deacons (Romans 16:1; 1 Timothy 3:11), prayer leaders (1 Corinthians 11:5), overseers of house churches (Acts 12:12; 16:14-15; Colossians 4:15), prayer warriors (1 Timothy 5:5), and those who were known for their mercy and hospitality (1 Timothy 5:10).”

“One of the ministries for which women in the church became renowned was that of patronage... It has long been noted that women alone are mentioned as the source of financial support for both Jesus and the Twelve.” Finally, “women were also recognized for their apostolic labors. Junia for instance, is commended as a woman whom Paul considered ‘outstanding among the apostles’ (Roman 16:7)”

Women leaders are indeed gifted in ministry. “While women appear in a variety of ministry roles in the bible, the key questions are whether these roles warrant the label of leadership – especially leadership over men – and whether the community of faith affirms women in these roles.”

Alice Ogden Bellis in her book Helpmates, Harlots, and Heroes: Women’s Stories in the Hebrew Bible extensively surveyed, from a theological point of view women in the bible. She used the opinions of Feminist and Womanist such as Cheryl

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30 Ibid., 35-36.
31 Ibid., 36.
32 Ibid., 37.
33 Ibid., 38.
CHAPTER VII

THE MINISTRY PROJECT

The purpose of this project is to encourage and inspire women who have the potential to be leaders by assisting them to develop leadership skills, enabling them to step forward as true leaders within the local church, district-wide and globally. With this study I hope to inspire women to continue to seek after their goals and aspirations, understand the culture of the church and assist future women who have the potential to become leaders.

Women’s voices must be heard in order for other women to have the courage to find their voices. As suggested by Andre Lorde in the book *Sister Outsider* “… where the words of women are crying to be heard, we must each of us recognize our responsibility to seek those words out, to read them and share them and examine them in their pertinence to our lives.”¹ It is through the voices of other women that we see ourselves, our struggles, our inadequacies, our triumphs and our future.

The intended results are changes from within – transformation. The women will be different in their approach to leadership in various ministries. The women will develop camaraderie among their peers. Hopefully the women who participate in the focus groups will be more confident in reaching their goals and they will seek after

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leadership opportunities in the local church, within the Episcopal District as well as globally.

The researcher will be different because she will have greater understanding about her leadership abilities. The researcher will utilize the voices of other women to strengthen her leadership.

**Methodology**

The research project took place at Saint John C.M.E. Church in Monticello, Georgia. Women in this congregation were invited to be involved in a program that would help them envision their goals, identify the barriers that preclude them from reaching their goals, and would help them utilize the voices of other women to give encouragement as future leaders. It was my hope too that this program would also enable these women to develop skills to process their issues, understand themselves, and visualize goals assisting them in creating a workable road map toward these goals.

This program was completed in two phases. Phase one consisted of using qualitative interviewing with semi-structured open ended questions. Bishop Teresa Snorton, Presiding Elder Jane Elizabeth Gray Thomas, Rev. Nellie Williams, and Mrs. Barbara Campbell were interviewed. The women were chosen as they exemplified women in the position of scratching or breaking through the glass ceiling. The interviewed served as an undergirding to the ministry project. The second phase consisted of implementing a program I designed with women of St. John C.M.E. Church (See appendix 7, for the full program).
Phase One – The Semi-structured Interviewed

Voices of the women leaders in the C.M.E. Church were used as the undergirded strategy for encouragement. The researcher engaged the women of St. John C.M.E. Church in the plenary session with the voices of other women in the C.M.E. Church who have struggled and risen to positions of leadership. Within the stories of these women their voices connected the readers to their triumphs and struggles. As a result, the women who participated in the sessions seemed to be inspired to equip themselves using the resources provided. The women participants selected positive role models within the scriptural text and someone they admire within the congregation.

In phase one the researcher interviewed women identified as breakers of glass ceilings. The women interviewed included: Bishop Teresa Snorton, the first woman Bishop in the C.M.E. Church; Presiding Elder Jane Elizabeth Thomas, the first woman Presiding Elder in the 6th Episcopal District of the C.M.E. Church consisting of the state of Georgia; Rev. Nellie Williams, the first woman Pastor in the 6th Episcopal District of the C.M.E. Church; and Mrs. Barbara Campbell, the first woman Connectional Lay Leader of the C.M.E. Church. These stories served as the undergirded voices of leadership for the women who participated in the program. These stories were audio taped and later transcribed.

Each woman leader selected to be interviewed was contacted to schedule a time, date and place for the interview. The woman leader was informed that the interview will take between 1 and 1 ½ hours to complete. The interviewer explained the project and why they were selected to be interviewed. Interview questions were developed in advance so that the questions remain consistent for each interview.
The day before the interview each woman leader was called to confirm the interview. The necessary equipment was prepared for the interview. The interview equipment includes a digital tape recorder, backup recording device (cell phone), interview questions, paper and pens.

On the day of the interview, the interviewer arrived at least one-half hour before the scheduled interview. Upon arrival the interviewer set up the recorder equipment, tested the sound in the area and prepared for the interview. The interviewer also provided the demographic questions, water, cough drops and facial tissues for the interviewee. When the interviewee arrived she was greeted by the interviewer. The project overview was explained to the interviewee. The interviewer asked the interviewee to sign a ‘Consent to Participate in Research’ form (See Appendix 1). After which the woman leader was asked to complete the face sheet provided to obtain the demographic information found the appendix. The interviewer asked the interviewee prepared interview questions (See Appendix 2).

The interviewer anticipated that the interviews would conjure up feelings about the women leader’s individual journey. The interviewer also anticipated that stories would involve strong resistance from fellow clergy, members of the church, the community and even family members. The researcher recommended counseling to assist in the processing of feelings that might be uncovered as a result of the dialogue. The interviewer glimpsed into the woman leader’s journey to uncover tidbits to assist others in their leadership journey. Finally, it was the intent of the interviewer to bring the voices of the women leaders to the table so other women might hear their stories.
PHASE TWO – Women in Leadership Conference

Phase two of the project involved the participants at Saint John CME Church. In order to address the ministry issue I proposed to enable women in the local congregation to develop leadership skills, articulate their goals, gain knowledge about themselves and use biblical mentors through lectures, discussions and written assignments. The specific group that the researcher targeted were African American women living in Monticello, Georgia (women who were married, women who were married with children, women who were single, women who are single with children and women who desire to make a commitment to change), between the ages of 21-60. The women who participated expressed an interest in developing or furthering their leadership skills.

There were three parts of this phase of the project: the leadership program components conducted in four sessions, an interview process, and a selection of a Biblical mentor. Pre/post surveys were conducted at the beginning of the conference (See Appendix 5) Additional empirical data was obtained from the personal testimonies and interviews.

In an effort to complete the above referenced tasks the following process will be used: Introduction of the Women’s Leadership Workshop

1. For one month during the Sunday morning worship service at St. John C.M.E. Church the announcement stated: “There will be a two-day Women’s Leadership Conference at St. John C.M.E. Church. The two-day workshop will convene on Friday, September 14, 2012 at 6:30-9:30 p.m. and continue through Saturday, September 15, 2012 at 8:30 am. – 3:30 pm. In order for us to adequately prepare we need all participants to sign up in advanced. The ushers will have a sign-up sheet” (See Appendix 8).

2. The researcher called each participant to confirm their presence.
3. At Friday’s session each participant was, registered and received a registration packet which contained an agenda, a three-ring binder: Oath of Confidentiality (See Appendix 4), pre-tests and post-tests (See Appendix 5), Behavior Individual Traits Assessment (See Appendix 6) and various worksheets (See Appendix 7), journal, pen in and souvenir bag. The researcher was invited to fellowship with one another over a light meal. After devotion the researcher explained the purpose of the Women’s Leadership Conference. Afterward each participant was asked to sign an Oath of Confidentiality and given a pre-test to assess the specific level of leadership skills that the participant possesses and complete the Behavior Individual Traits questionnaire by John Jackson and Lorraine Bossé-Smith.

a. The plenary session on ‘Leadership’ took place during Friday’s session. In this session the definition of leadership by various authors was explored. The participants were asked: ‘What characteristics do you think leaders should have?’ These characteristics were posted on the wall. The top five characteristics were compared to the persons the participants suggest are leaders.

b. Two or three participants were asked to briefly talk about the leadership qualities of their role models or someone who has influenced them.

c. The facilitator explained to the participants that leaders come from all walks of life. At this time some of the excerpts of the interviews from the women leaders in the C.M.E. Church were introduced to the participants. Some of the barriers and obstacles encountered as leaders were highlighted.

d. The facilitator discussed the styles of leadership in the book Leveraging Your Leadership Style by John Jackson and Lorraine Bossé-Smith (See Appendix 7). The styles of leadership are Commander, Coach, Counselor, and Conductor. The participants looked at their scores from the Behavior
*Individual Traits* questionnaire to determine their specific leadership style.

Time was set aside for discussion in the group.

e. The facilitator discussed transformative leadership and the transformative biblical images as well as their styles according to the book *Leading Ladies: Transformative Biblical Images for Women’s Leadership* by Jeanne Porter. The Biblical leadership images and styles are: Leader as Midwife – Push and Shiphrah, Egyptian midwives; Leader as Choreographer – Miriam, prophetess; Leader as Weaver – Deborah, the judge; and the leaders as Intercessor – Esther, the Queen of Persia. The leadership styles were compared to the biblical leadership images and styles.

f. The participants were placed in a biblical image group each represented by a facilitator. The groups were selected as a result of the *Behavior Individual Traits* questionnaire. Each participant was placed in the biblical image group based on their scores from *Behavior Individual Traits* questionnaire. The participants who scored high in the ‘Coach’ group were placed in the ‘Midwife’ group. The participants who scored high in the ‘Commander’ group will be placed in the ‘Choreographer’ group. The participants who scored high in the ‘Counselor’ group were placed in the ‘Weaver’ group. The participants who score high in the ‘Conductor’ group were placed in the ‘Intercessor’ group. In the event participants who score equally in two groups were placed in the group with the least amount of members associated with the two equally scored groups, i.e. Coach and commander.

4. Saturday’s session of the leadership conference opened with a brief devotion (prayer and song) followed by an introduction of the guest facilitators, Rev Juanita Sheppard, Rev. Amina McIntyre, and Evangelist Melissa Horton. Each facilitator creatively introduced the Biblical image they represented.
a. Each facilitator facilitated a group no larger than 5 women. Each group convened in different parts of the church: the sanctuary, multipurpose room, and lower level. Each facilitator used the same lesson plans to conduct each segment of the leadership workshop (See Appendix 8).

b. The first breakout session was the Bible Study (See Appendix 7). The facilitator discussed the Biblical image and her leadership characteristics with the participants. The facilitator utilized the Bible and Leading Ladies: Transformative Biblical Images for Women's Leadership by Jeanne Porter as resources.

c. The second breakout session discussed setting goals as outlined in the lesson plans (See Appendix 7). The facilitator defined vision, mission and goal as well as the differences between the vision and mission. The facilitator utilized the books The Path by Laurie Beth Jones, Success the Glen Bland Method by Glen Bland, The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen R. Covey, and the Bible. The facilitator assisted the participants in writing a personal mission statement; a vision statement; a short range personal, spiritual, educational and recreational goal; and a long range personal, spiritual, educational and recreational goal. The goal setting sections was the longest session because of the in-depth nature. The participants discussed not only their goals but also those things which prohibit them from reaching these goals as well as inward and outward barriers which preclude them from reaching their goals.

d. The third session discussed communication as outlined in the lesson plans (See Appendix 7). The facilitator discussed the three distinct models of communication as outlined in the book 5 Leadership Essentials for Women by Linda Clark. The story of Abigail found in 1 Samuel 25 will discuss communication. The participants discussed how they communicate. The facilitator discussed Ten Tips for Effective Listening found in the book by Linda Clark. During the session the participants
selected a partner and spent time telling her partner about herself and in turn listening to her partner. This section allowed the participants to develop additional communication and listening skills.

e. The final session discussed interviewing techniques. The facilitator introduced the team method of leadership found in the book *Defining Your Own Way* by Nicole Roberts Jones. The leadership team consists of those persons who will listen, mentor, and motivate you among other things. The facilitator provided guidelines and suggestions on interviewing (See Appendix 7). The participants were encouraged to select a mentor who could be a friend, church member or family member. Each participant was encouraged to interview their mentor on leadership.

f. The leadership conference closed with the participants taking the post-test to determine what the participant has learned (See Appendix 5). Finally a rededication service as well as the selection of Biblical mentors for each participant.

The estimated costs were approximately $4500.00. Included in these costs are the reproduction of materials, journals, books, souvenir bags, refreshments and food for meals; supplies, statistician and editor, trips to interview women in leadership, in and out of state; equipment: a digital recorder, recordable CD’s, and flash drives; certificates of completion; and books, lesson plans, and special gifts for facilitators.

**Evaluation Process**

The researcher evaluated the effectiveness of the project by utilizing a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative method explored the statistical data collected from the pre and post-test. As part of the qualitative method the researcher interviewed women participants who were first in their particular discipline, i.e. the first female Pastor in the 6th Episcopal District of the C.M.E. Church
(which is the state of Georgia), the first female Presiding Elder in the 6th Episcopal District, the first female Bishop in the C.M.E. Church, the first female Connectional Lay President in the C.M.E. Church. Lastly, during the individual sessions the facilitators collected personal testimonies to be used in the results section.

Dr. Stacy M. Floyd-Thomas in the book *Mining the Motherlode* discusses “methods used by womanist scholars of religion to mine that wealth of wisdom and apply it to the task of divine and social justice for black women and their communities.”

“Black women's perspectives represent a model of epistemological privilege that can help us describe, analyze, and empower all oppressed people in order to change our dismal plights into more positive prospects.” In this research project designed to help women in the church find their voice, I have used the method of historiography as a way to understand the perspective other voices or interviews in the project. According to Thomas:

Historiography seeks to debunk the historical accounts about black women and their trials and triumphs by bringing to light those life stories and faith narratives that have been either marginalized or skewed within traditional historical discourse. Womanist ethicists frequently use biographies and autobiographies in order to chart the ways that black women's histories, leadership roles, and activist spirit have historically created communal values and standards.

“As Alice Walker's initial definition of womanism indicates, the ingenuity and strength of black women's moral wisdom is steeped within traditions, practices, and intergenerational dialogue drawn from the shared past of black women.” In other words, “history in this

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3 Ibid., xiii.

case is a constant and ongoing attempt to write black women's lives, experiences, and morality back into the larger story of what it means to be human in this world so that their lives may be the indigenous sources that might rescue the oppressed.”6 “Embedded within these narratives lie not only the stories of individual black women and the people’s striving for freedom from oppression, but also the horrific truth concerning the social manufacturing and religious roots of racism, sexism, and classism as American core values.”7

Historiography helps the participant understand the different aspects of the women leader’s stories which provides vital information as it relates to the ministry context. Historiography also emphasizes the different nuances within the stories. Embedded in these stories are the trials and triumph and struggles and victories. The facilitator used the stories of the women leaders in the plenary session of the Women in Leadership Conference. Excerpts of the women leader’s stories highlighted specific obstacles they encounter and in some cases how they overcame these obstacles (See Appendix 3).

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5 Ibid., 105.
6 Ibid., 106.
7 Ibid., 115
CHAPTER VIII
RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND CONCLUSIONS

RESULTS

The Women in Leadership Conference took place Friday, September 14, through Saturday, September 15, 2012 at Saint John Christian Methodist Episcopal Church in Monticello, Georgia. This conference was held to help the participants envision their goals, identify the obstacles and barriers that preclude them from reaching their goals as well as utilizing the voices of other women to inspire the participants to become leaders in the church and beyond. The Women in Leadership Conference enabled the participants to develop skills to process their issues, understand themselves and visualize goals as the facilitators assisted the participants in creating a workable road map toward these goals.

Friday's session began promptly at 6:30 pm with registration, followed by devotion, and the partaking of a light meal. Each participant was given a registration packet which contained an agenda; a three-ring binder (Oath of Confidentiality, pre and post-tests, Behavior Individual Traits questionnaire, and various worksheets, Appendixes 4,5,6,and 7), journal, pen and a souvenir bag. After the meal the participants were asked to complete an Oath of Confidentiality, a brief demographic survey (Appendix 4 and 5)
followed by a pre-questionnaire on leadership (Appendix 6). Friday's plenary session on leadership was conducted by the lead facilitator, Pastor Lavonia K. McIntyre. Friday's session ended at 9:00 p.m. with a closing prayer.

**Demographic Information**

The project was limited to African American women, women who are married, women who are married with children, women who are single, women who are single with children and women who desire to make a commitment to change and were between the ages of 21-60 from the perspective ministry site, St. John C.M.E. Church. The women participants were therefore restricted to those who signed up for the program and then actually attend the workshop sessions.

A total of 29 persons signed up to participate in the Women in Leadership Conference, however only 20 persons were in attendance (See Appendix 8). Forty percent of the women were between the ages of 41-51. There were 25% in the 31-40 and the 51+ age groups. Only 10% of the participants were in the 18-30 age groups.

**Woman in Leadership**

**Table 1: Age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51+</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fifty percent of the participants were married, 30% single, 15% divorced and 5% separated (See Table 2).
The majority of the participants were employed; 50% were employed full time, 15% were employed part time, and 5% were self-employed. Thirty percent were unemployed (See Table 3). However those who were unemployed expressed that they were caretakers of elderly relatives or children.
Table 3: Profile of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed 30%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed Full Time 50%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed Part Time 15%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Employed 15%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were a variety of educational levels represented among the participants. Thirty-five percent of the participants reported having a high school diploma, 15% reported having some high school while none reported having a GED. Fifteen percent reported having some college education and 20% were college graduates. 5% reported having some post-secondary education and 10% earned a Master's Degree (See Table 4).
Table 4: Level of Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some High School</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GED</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Graduate</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Post-Secondary</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pre-post Leadership Assessment

Each participant was asked to complete a pre-test at the beginning of the conference and a post-test at the end of the conference to determine the effectiveness of
the Women in Leadership Conference from the participants (See Appendix 4). Some of the results from the pre-test will be compared with the results from the post-test.

**Pre/post Test Results**

**Leadership**

Each participant was asked who they considered a great leader? The participants named various family members (father, aunt, uncle, and cousins) while 6 participants named their mother as someone they considered a leader. However, only one participant considered herself a leader. Participants named President Barak Obama, Bishop Kenneth Carter, the presiding prelate of the 6th Episcopal District (Georgia), and Jesus as the prime example of leadership. Overwhelmingly the participants named the pastor as a great leader. One participant defined a great leader as "one with a sincere love for the Lord who also has high moral and ethical values, someone who is strong but humble." Only one participant considered herself a leader.

The post-test responses on who the participants considered a leader did not change, however, several of the participants explained why the person they selected was a great leader. One person stated that President Barak Obama was a great leader because "we need a strong black leader in our lives." Another participant described their pastor as "a wonderful leader in that she teaches her congregation as well as nurtures and helps to motivate them." Still another defined a leader as “one who is wise, knowledgeable, focused, strong, yet humble and compassionate.” At the end of the conference the number of women who considered themselves as great leaders increased to six (6) participants.
Seventy-five percent of the participants stated that there were not any programs in the local church that nurtured the participant’s growth as a leader. However, 25% of the participants named Bible Study as the program that nurtured their growth as a leader.

Several characteristics were suggested by the participants to build leadership confidence. Some of these included time management, being able to say what was on their minds, goal setting, listening skills and communication. Overall most of the participants listed time management and goal setting as the primary characteristic to build leadership confidence.

The participants were asked if there were any barriers that impacted their growth in leadership. Some of these barriers included: age, time, home problems, finances and job. One participant stated her barrier was, ‘me, myself and I.’ Participants cited childcare as another barrier. Another participant expressed that she “wanted to be able to give more input when discussing family issues and give my opinion even more when asked to respond to problems at work.” Still another participant stated that her barrier was negativity. “It is very difficult trying to live my life for me and my mother. Meaning, my mother is a negative person. No matter what I do and how hard I try I never hear her say ‘well done’.” (The statement was written with a sad face drawn beside it.)

**Spiritual Gifts**

The participants were asked if they were aware of their gifts and talents (See Table 5). Fifty-five percent of the participants were aware of their gifts and talents in the pre-test while 40% were not and another 5% was somewhat aware of their gifts and talents.
One participant felt that "she had the gift to be a leader but had yet to step out on faith." Several women felt that their gifts were "doing for others and helping older people." Another participant felt that she had "good organizational skills and is a good planner." Others in the group had talent in the areas of cooking, sewing, and creativity. However in the post-test, 95% of the participants acknowledged their gifts and graces while 5% did not. One participant explained that she was a "hardworking, reliable individual who gives 110% towards whatever project or task." Another acknowledged that she was "a good actor." One participant stated that she is good at "taking care of the elderly." At the end of the conference the participants commented that they were more aware of their gifts and talents.

Vision and Mission

One of the important questions on the survey was about participant’s vision plan. The vision is what one could be or desires to be in the future. The mission statement is
the road map toward that vision. Goals are the specific steps. The participants were asked if they had a 1, 3 or 5 year plan. Only 35% (7) of the participants had a 1, 3 or 5 year plan; 65% (13) had no plan at all. However, the post-test results reported that 100% of the participants had at least a one year plan. Some of the plans included going back to school to receive a degree, getting a better job, starting their own business, or even moving out on their own.

One participant was very specific as she envisioned herself as a nurse practitioner and administrator. Her mission was to complete all the phases toward her nursing degree. Her specific goals included getting the ‘RN ~ BSN, BSN ~ MSN Bridge.’

Another participant is planning to pursue courses in interior design. Some of the spiritual goals included attending Bible study, increased prayer and meditation time and pursuing leadership roles in the church. Overall the participants stated that they were excited about future possibilities.

The Plenary Session

The plenary session on Leadership began with an overview of the Women in Leadership Conference. The facilitator engaged the participants to provide their definition of a leader or leadership traits (See Appendix 7). Each word or phrase was placed on a 25in x 30in Post-it easel pad sheet on the wall. Some of these included: talker, vision, planner, people person, organizer, determined, aggressive, dependable, attitude, personality, listener, dedicated, committed, manners, follower, helper, team player, server, trainer, Godly, motivator, delegator, and communicate. The participants were then asked to select the overall top 5 attributes of a leader. The five attributes were; vision, Godly, dependable, delegator, and committed. A good leader is a communicator,
people person, planner, delegator, motivator, advisor, and listener. A great leader is one who communicates and is open to feedback and criticism. A great leader is a weaver who brings them together as a community, knows where you are going and takes you to the next level. A great leader is a cross trainer who coaches, empowers, nurtures and pushes you. After the leadership session the participants expressed that they had a better understanding of leadership.

Secondly, the facilitator explored various definitions of a leader, leadership, leadership traits and transformative leadership. At this time the facilitator utilized the interviews of Women Leaders in the C.M.E. Church. These interviews introduced the participants to women leaders in the C.M.E. Church who were first in their perspective areas: first woman Lay Leader Mrs. Barbara Campbell; first woman Pastor in the 6th Episcopal District, Rev. Nellie Williams; First Woman Presiding Elder in the 6th Episcopal District, Presiding Elder Jane Elizabeth Thomas; first woman Bishop in the C.M.E. Church, Bishop Theresa Snorton, Presiding Prelate of the Fifth Episcopal District. Specific aspects of their stories were articulated to the participants. These interviews highlight them as a person, where they came from, the barriers and obstacles that they experienced and practical advice for the participants to follow (See Appendix 1 and 2). The participants learned that many of the women leaders came from small churches just like theirs to become great leaders.

Afterward the facilitator asked each participant to complete a 'Behavior Individual Traits Questionnaire' by John Jackson and Lorraine Bossie. The four styles of leadership: commander, coach, counselor and conductor, were explained to the participants. Each participant scored their questionnaire and discussed their styles of
leadership. There were 3 persons who were considered commander, 5 coach, 5 counselor and 3 conductor. There was 1 person who had an equally high score in both commander and coach. She was placed in the commander group. There was 1 person who scored equally in both commander and counselor. She was also placed in the commander group. There were 2 participants who scored equally in both conductor and counselor. They were placed in the conductor group.

The facilitator then discussed the ‘Transformative Biblical Images’ according to the book Leading Ladies: Transformative Biblical Images for Women’s Leadership by Jeanne Porter. The facilitator also briefly introduced the ‘Biblical leadership styles’: ‘Midwife, Choreographer, Weaver, and Intercessor.’

As a closing activity the facilitator provided each participant with 5 paper clips and asked each person to connect the paper clips in 3 min. The purpose of this exercise was to engage the entire group in leadership building. During the activity the ladies connected their paper clips while discussing the activity. Two of the ladies decided to collect the paper clips from other participants. In the end, all of the paper clips were connected. The participants were asked what they learned from the paper clip demonstration. The participants acknowledged that it takes cooperation and a leader to work together for a desired outcome. Friday’s session was closed out with prayer.

Saturday’s Session

Saturday's session began at 8:30 a.m. with a continental breakfast, an introduction of the guest facilitators followed by devotional. The devotion was led by the by four facilitators (Pastor Lavonia K. McIntyre, Elder Juanita Sheppard, Evangelist Melissa Horton and Reverend Amina S. McIntyre) who represented the Biblical women in the
The women introduced each biblical image to all the participants in creative dialogue.

Elder Juanita Sheppard represented the 'Midwife': Push and Shiphrah, Egyptian midwives. She demonstrated the 'Midwife' by re-enacting the birthing process with a make believe woman giving birth. Elder Sheppard got down on her knees as she coached the women in the birthing process. She used a scarf to catch and wrap the baby. Evangelist Melissa Horton represented the 'Intercessor': Esther, the Queen of Persia. Evangelist Horton read the scriptural text and described an Intercessor through the eyes of Esther. She described the intercessor as one who must listen to God, go before God on behalf of the people, understand God’s timing and take action. Reverend Amina S. McIntyre represented the 'Choreographer': Miriam, the prophetess. Rev. A. McIntyre donned a costume of an orange, gypsy skirt and shirt with scarf and presented a liturgical dance. The dance included whirling while using a tambourine. Rev. McIntyre described the choreographer as one who creates. Pastor Lavonia K. McIntyre represented the 'Weaver': Deborah, the judge. Pastor McIntyre used cloth with a weave patterned to introduce the intricate complexities of being a prophet, judge and leader of the people. Pastor McIntyre described the weaver as one who gathers pieces and intricately weaves them together in a creative pattern.

Following the devotion the participants were divided into the four Biblical image groups. These groups were selected based on their scores on the Behavior Individual Traits questionnaire in the book Leveraging Your Leadership Style by John Jackson and Lorraine Bossie-Smith. The questionnaire was administered in the Friday night plenary.
leadership session. The participants who are in the 'Commander' group were placed in the 'Choreographer' group. The participants who are in the 'Coach' group were placed in the 'Midwife' group. The participants who are in the 'Counselor' group were placed in the 'Weaver' group. Finally, the participants who are in the 'Conductor' group were placed in the 'Intercessor' group. Each group consisted of 5 participants and chose different areas in the church to convene.

Each facilitator utilized the same lesson plans to conduct their individual small group sessions. The breakout sessions included: Session One, Bible Study; Session Two, Goal Setting part one and part two; Session Three, Communication; and Session Four, Interviewing Skills (See Appendix 7 Lesson Plans). During Bible Study each facilitator re-introduced the Biblical Image they represented to their specific groups. Session two was the longest session. This session discussed goal setting utilizing The Path by Laurie Beth Jones, Success the Glen Bland Method by Glen Bland and The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen R. Covey as resources. The facilitator and the participants defined vision, mission, and goal. They also discussed the difference between vision, mission, and goal. Afterward each participant was guided through the process of writing a vision, mission, and one goal each (1 year, 3 year and 5 year goal).

Several of the participants expressed that they wanted to go back to school to further their education. As part of goal setting each participant outlined what degree they were seeking, the necessary steps to getting in school and completing a degree and the timeframe in which this process might take place. The participants discussed those things that precluded them from reaching their goals and aspirations. Below are several participants' responses:
-Because of pre-work with the ladies in explaining the process, the participants were very open with their conversations and felt comfortable sharing their vulnerabilities.

-Most, but not all, could identify something in their lives that they were good at. In dialogue, one participant stated that her childhood educational failures and lack of support has stunned her personal development.

-None of the participants felt like what they were currently doing/work places tied to the things that fulfilled them.

-All had struggles with seeing themselves as special and unique in God's eyes. The envelope was pushed a bit in our conversations and found that the women lacked affirmation within their circles of influence at church.

-Experience and exposure are some of what was missing in their lives. Many have not seen the world enough to see beyond their present context, and into the realm of possibility.

Session three introduced the art of communication as a leadership component. The facilitators utilized 5 Leadership Essentials for Women: Developing Your Ability to Make Things Happen by Linda Clark as a resource. This resource identifies three models of communication. This model helps the participant understand how she communicates with others.

The facilitator introduced the story of Abigail found in 1 Samuel 25 as an example of communication. Communication is an essential tool one needs to develop as a leader. She identified the three distinct models of communication as outlined in the book 5 Leadership Essentials for Women; one-way communication, two-way communication and transactional Communication. The participants identified their method of communication as well as Abigail’s method of communication. The group members concluded that transactional communication was the best means of communication.
The participants reviewed the handout *Ten Tips for Effective Listening*. The purpose of this exercise was to... As an exercise each participant selected a partner. They spent two minutes telling something about themselves to each other. The participants then listened and repeated what she heard. This exercise is to be repeated with the other participant talking next and the other listening. The participants stated that this exercise should be conducted with all the church members. One participant felt that the exercise will help her in her parenting skills. The purpose of the exercise was to apply the listening techniques reviewed in the *Effective Listening* handout. Most of the participants found the listening skills helpful in their leadership development. The final session introduced interviewing techniques to interview a mentor. This session utilized excerpts of the book *Define Your Own Way* by Nicole Roberts Jones. The purpose of this exercise was to assist the participant in identifying those persons on her team. The facilitator assisted the participants in understanding that leadership is a team process. Learning to conduct interviews would help the participants to comfortable talk about themselves and learn information about the perspective mentors. Basic interviewing techniques were presented to the participants. Each participant had selected mentors from their families, church members or jobs who they would interview. Interview questions were developed by the participants. Some of these questions included:

- What is your name?
- Where did you grow up?
- What is your level of education?
- How long have you been a member of this church?
- Is there anything you wanted to do that you were unable to do?
- Did you have any struggles or barriers at home, at church or on the job?
- How did you overcome these obstacles?
- Is there any practical advice that you can give me?
Rededication Service

All participants reconvened following the breakout session and completed a post-test before the closing service. Participants were giveaways including books, trinkets and CD's. A part of the closing ceremony included a rededication service. As part of the rededication service, scarfs were placed on the altar. Each participant and facilitator was encouraged to go to the altar and select a scarf of their choice. The scarf was introduced as a prayer shawl. The participants were charged to begin a new chapter in their lives. “You are now equipped with a roadmap to guide you”, they were told. The participants were asked to gather around the altar with their prayer shawls around their shoulders. Each participant was asked to be specific about what they desired for their lives and any issues to be resolved. The facilitators prayed for each participant individually. Finally, the participants gathered around the facilitators and prayed for them. It was a very moving worship experience. At that time the participants either selected a Biblical mentor or were given a Biblical mentor from the facilitators. The Women in Leadership Conference was closed out with a benediction and a sister-hug.

DISCUSSION

Women in leadership have had a difficult time rising into positions of leadership in the church. Qualified women in the local church are not realizing their dreams and or achieving their goals because of barriers which include sexism in the church and society, cultural differences and the inner struggles through various expected roles within their family structure. Women in the local church need proper nurturing, guidance and or support in the articulation or the manifestation of their ministerial visions and goals. This includes clergy and lay women. There are barriers such as sexism and cultural
differences in church and society which pose challenging obstacles to the development of women in leadership positions. Women in the local church can be supported and resourced to fill positions of leadership. Therefore, it is still difficult for women to break through the stained glass ceiling.

The conceptual framework integrated ideas from various types of research. This included theological perspectives within the categories of the theology of liberation, feminist theology, Black feminist theology and womanist theology. The biblical perspective was explored through the arguments on women in leadership from the Egalitarian and Complementarian viewpoints. The biblical perspective further highlighted women in leadership within the biblical context. Finally, the theoretical perspective investigates the theory of subordination as it relates to women in leadership. The theory of subordination was explored in three sections: (a) the biblical theory of subordination, (b) the cultural theory of subordination and (c) the pastoral domination theory of subordination.

The purpose of this project was to encourage and inspire women who have the potential to be leaders by assisting them to develop leadership skills, enabling them to step forward as true leaders within the local church, district-wide and globally. The results of the project concluded that the women who participated in the project each developed 1, 3, and 5 year vision, mission and goals statements. Many of the participants hoped to use their skills in the near future. The participants expressed that they experienced transformation.

There were a few meaningful transformations that took place during the goals setting session. One woman was in school to work as a nurse and had desires to operate
an assisted living home, as there are none in the Monticello area. Another woman mentioned that she was really involved in her church and wanted to see how to increase the programming for Youth and Young Adults. One participant not only expressed that she wanted to continue her education but that she was “scared of the responsibility, the extra load and possible negative impact on the job. The thought of going back to school while working a full time job was intimidating.” She also affirmed that she was going to take the necessary steps to go back to school. This same participant came to the aid of another participant in the group who basically said “She could not go to school because of her past.” This participant explained her story.

I am in the third year of a seven year probation sentence. I plead guilty to something I did not do. I took the rap for my husband so he would not go to jail. If he went to jail he would have been there for a very long time. (She began to cry as she explained her story.) I am not proud of my decision. I realize that it has and will affect me for the rest of my life. I went to school to be a nurse. I completed the first year but had to stop school when I was convicted. I have always wanted to be a nurse.

It was decided among the group that they would come together and support one another. One participant also decided that she would investigate to see if it was feasible for the participant to continue her education in nursing school.

Another meaningful transformation happened with a participant who came into the session expressing how she felt.

She wanted to be more confident and expressed her hesitation for her own situation. She was divorced, but still living with her ex-husband and had desires to reunite in matrimony, since they were now working on their relationship with a God-centered thought process. As the group talked, she was encouraged to start speaking in the affirmative. It was revealed through this process that she enjoyed running errands with people, particularly driving them and had in fact driven for the county before she was placed on disability. She has a desire to start a shuttle service (which
could be used to work with an assisted living home) and had looked into it before, only deterred by the cost.

During break time she was encouraged to create a box (or bowl) of affirmations, writing down 30 positive things about herself, tear them up individually, and placed them in the box. Every day, she was to pull one out – it was something that was not to be shared by everyone else, only her, and should include “I am confident”. When she left the group, there was a noticeable change in her demeanor and outlook.

The participants and facilitators were very supportive of each person who participated in the Women’s Leadership Conference. Each participant encouraged one another and supported each other emotionally. One participant acknowledged that “I have been in church with one participant all my adult life. I had no idea that she was going through so much.”

With this study we inspired women to continue to seek after their goals and aspirations, understand the culture of the church and assist future women who have the potential to become leaders. Finally, women participants listened to the voices of the women leaders. Within the women leader’s voices and the biblical examples our participants were able to envision what they could become.

As a result of this process, the goals of the project were successful in assisting women to develop a workable road map for future endeavors. Most of the women were surprised that they had so much in common. The women participants indicated that they were inspired to fulfill their goals and objectives. Each woman was able to form a special bond with women in the church they had not fully known in the past.

During the rededication service the participants were encouraged to seek guidance from the Lord through prayer and meditation; from their elders for wisdom; and support
from the church. Many of the participants purged through the shedding of tears. Each person was given a biblical mentor or selected their own biblical mentor.

**Wo-Mentoring**

The concept or model that best describes the relationship aspects in the Woman in Leadership conference is ‘Wo-Mentoring’. Laura Ellingson and Patty Sotirin in the article “*Academic Aunting: Reimagining Feminist (Wo) Mentoring, Teaching, and Relationships*” defines the concept of mentoring:

“The classic figure of the mentor is in Homer's Odyssey: Mentor is an old friend and wise counselor, in whom Odysseus entrusts his household during his long absence. This classic tale of mentoring appears to involve a feminine dimension in the guise of the goddess Athena. Appearing as Mentor, Athena guides Odysseus's son Telemachus in his search for his father and, concurrently, in his passage to manhood and male privilege within the patriarchal Greek culture. Yet the tale is an unrelievedly masculinist "coming of age" story as Mentor/Athena facilitates Telemachus's ambitions to join his father as a man and a king.”

“Mentoring is the relationship between a mentor and a mentee that is built upon the strength and belief in the dreams of the mentee. By such belief, the mentor helps the mentee to believe the dream is accomplishable.”

Ellison and Sotirin utilized the concept of ‘Aunt Relationships’ as it pertains to mentoring women. The ‘Aunt’ figurehead “provides a generative alternative to mothering and sisterhood as frameworks for feminist mentoring, teaching, and scholarly reviewing.” “The aunt is a familiar, often minor character in familial narratives, a

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3 Ibid., 35.
gendered node in kinship webs, a designation for affective obligations and ambiguous responsibilities, and an unlikely locus for refiguring feminist relationships.” They further suggest that “the practice of granting ‘honorary’ aunt status suggests that ‘aunting relationships’ are not bound by the obligations of nuclear familial relationships, but instead can be entered into voluntarily or conferred on the basis of affection and respect rather than obligation or lineage.”

“Aunts may take the place of the mother, serving as mentors, caretakers, and teachers, in relationships where intimacy is premised more on desire and connection than on familial duty.”

“Moreover, one may have more than one aunt, each of whom offers a different embodiment of female possibilities, a different negotiation of the same/different dialectic.”

Willie G-dman in an interview at the Interdenominational Theological Center describes “‘Wo-Mentoring’ as a comparison concept phrase of ‘Good Enough Mentoring’.” ‘Good Enough Mentoring’ is a concept that G-dman devised “in pastoral counseling while working with African Descendent Men.” According to G-dman:

1. ‘Good Enough’ sounds almost demeaning; deficient but really addresses what is sufficient to facilitating a person's growth toward their own being.
2. ‘Good Enough Mentoring’ is a living relationship committed to the well-being of another.
3. ‘Good Enough Mentoring’ is a mentoring relationship that is designed around whatever is "good enough" or whatever is sufficient for the growth of another.

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4 Ibid., 36.
5 Ibid., 36.
6 Willie G-dman. Interview dated March 26, 2013 (Interdenominational Theological Center).
“The mentor works and leads himself to the well-being of his male client. This is looking across and each other seeing each other, understanding and appreciating each other, lending oneself to another. So therefore in this process the mentor and the mentee experience growth.”

Undergirding ‘Good Enough Mentoring’ is the social political understanding of blackness. In ‘Good Enough Mentoring’ the pastoral counselor is social politically Black. What that means is that generally starting out from a context of African American descendedness with an understanding borrowed from James Cone in an understanding of Blackness being a term of designation of liberation. One who is Black is absolutely committed to Black liberation and is in absolute opposition of anything that is oppressive. To be absolutely committed to liberation is Cone. To be absolutely in opposition of anything that is oppressive is G-dman. To be Black is to be absolutely committed to Black liberation.

G-dman states that “‘Wo-Mentoring’ is out of this framework of Blackness as well. ‘Wo-Mentoring’ is to be absolutely committed to liberation but to be absolutely in opposition of anything oppressive. To be absolutely in opposition of anything oppressive can be applied to any endearing structures that are dear to us: the church, education, denomination, interpretation of the bible, whatever is dear to us.”

In the interview G-dman further defines “‘Wo-Mentoring’ as a companion concept or a parallel concept of ‘Good Enough Mentoring’. It literally comes down to the description of the female counter part of ‘Good Enough Mentoring’. The Wo-Mentor sits with her Wo-Mentee and lends herself to the well-being of the Wo-Mentee. And both of them grow.” “The Wo-Mentor is a Black woman who is absolutely committed
to Black women’s liberation and stands in opposition of anything that is oppressive.”

Wo-Mentoring is essentially the concept that undergirds the Women in Leadership conference.

LIMITATIONS

Limitations can be found within the time constraints that are available to these women with respect to childcare, time after work and other unforeseen obstacles that presented themselves. Another limitation was the Women in Leadership Conference needed to be small enough for group interaction. This limited the number of participants in the conference. The planning did not take into account the inability to extend this project to further meet the needs of the participants. Finally, the project needed a planned follow-up session. This project would be more effective if the sessions were completed over a period of time for a couple of hours a day.

It is my hope that this project could be duplicated where and perhaps adjusted so that additional workshops on various subjects could be added, such as time management, writing skills (resume writing), and personal etiquette. Another future project would be to interview more women leaders in anticipation of writing a book on the ministry of these remarkable women.

Finally, another project would be to do a survey on women in leadership to actually determine exactly what types of positions women in leadership currently hold, as well as the obstacles women experience with suggestions for future women in the church.
CONCLUSION

Women are still having a difficult time rising into positions of leadership in the church. I believe we will continue to have many obstacles such as sexism in the church, cultural differences and the inner struggles through the various expected roles. What is required is for the church culture to dialogue and be diligent in making changes in the leadership of the church. Some of these changes occur if there were dialogue exchange between male and female clergy; opportunities provided for women who are qualified to be placed in positions of leadership; counseling and support to women who have experienced oppression in the church; and programs and methods to sensitize the churches of the possibilities of women in leadership from hierarchy down.

In summary, I believe that as women in leadership continue to explore the gifts and graces that God has given to us, unfortunately women continue to experience oppression willingly or unknowingly from the patriarchal culture. However, it is up to the women who have the desire to lead, to prepare themselves and make the difficult task of being change agents for others to follow to press the issue for liberation. But, women must first look deep within to uncover their God given and learned talent. The inspiring quote by Marianne Williamson from her book, *A Return to Love: Reflections on the Principles of a Course in Miracles* helps us see the reality of how some women feel within.

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to
make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.”

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CONSENT FORM – INTERVIEW WITH AUDIOTAPING

Consent to Participate in Research

Women in Leadership

Introduction and Purpose
You are invited to take part in a research study of African American Women Leaders. You were selected as a possible participant because of your achievements as a leader in your field. The purpose of this research is to listen and record the stories of various women in different leadership stages, to understand the culture by which these women transcended and to assist future women who have the potential to be leaders.

Procedures
The interview will be a one-time interview at a time and location of your choice. The interview may take anywhere from one to two hours. Please answer the questions to explain your experiences in your own words. With your permission, I will audiotape and take notes during the interview to ensure that we capture your exact words. The taping is to accurately record the information you provide, and will be used for transcription purposes only. With your consent, a third party note taker may be present.

Benefits
It is hoped that the research will contribute to women understanding the achievements and or obstacles women leaders encountered and how it affected within the African American church.

Risks/Discomforts
I anticipate minimal discomfort from the questions asked during this interview, however, if any question makes you uncomfortable or upset, you are free to decline to answer at anytime, or stop the interview at any time.

Confidentiality
Your study data will be handled as confidentially as possible. If results of this study are published or presented, I may quote what you say in things we say or write but will never use your individual names and other personally identifiable information unless you give explicit permission for this below. To minimize the risks to confidentiality, I will store all audio recordings in encrypted computer files; there will be limited access to study records; pseudonyms will be used in transcripts. If you have any questions about confidentiality, please feel free to ask at any time. When the research is completed, I will save the audio files and notes on CDs for use in future research done by myself or others. I will retain these records indefinitely. The same measures described above will be taken to protect confidentiality of this study data.

Compensation
You will not be paid for taking part in this study.

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Interviewer
The interviewer is Lavonia K. McIntyre, a doctoral student at the Interdenominational Theological Center. There will be some interviews conducted by Juanita Sheppard a M. Div. student at the interdenominational Theological Center. There may also be a recorder present.

Rights
*Participation in this research is completely voluntary.* You are free to decline to take part in the project. You can decline to answer any questions and are free to stop taking part in the project at any time. Whether or not you choose to participate in the research and whether or not you choose to answer a question or continue participating in the project, there will be no penalty to you or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Questions
If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact Lavonia K. McIntyre. I can be reached at 404-758-5212 or macjam@bellsouth.net.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Dr. Beverly Wallace at the Interdenominational Theological Center at 404-527-7762 or e-mail revbwallace@gmail.com.

CONSENT
You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep for your own records.

Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in this study.

Participant's Name (please print)

Participant's Signature Date

[Optional/If applicable]
If you agree to allow your name or other identifying information to be included in all final reports, publications, and/or presentations resulting from this research, please sign and date below.

Participant's Signature Date

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APPENDIX 2

Demographic Information

1. What is your name?

2. Contact information?

3. What is your position or title? Are you considered as paid staff or lay leader?

4. What are the main duties/responsibilities of your position?

5. What is your level of education?

6. Age range: 18-24; 25-40; 41-55; 56-70; 70+
Interview Questions

1. What is your denomination? **

2. What did your home church look like? Who was mostly in the pulpit, on the ministerial staff or in leadership positions?

3. What is your position or title? Are you considered as paid staff or lay leader? **

4. How long have you been actively involved in ministry? In your current position?

5. Do you consider your position a calling from God?

6. When did you first notice your calling? How did you come about accepting it? What was the church’s reaction to your acceptance?

7. What are the main duties/responsibilities of your position? **

8. What is your level of education? **

9. Do you consider yourself a leader?

10. Has this level of education helped or hurt in your leadership/ministry endeavors?

11. Did you feel you needed a specific level of education to obtain your goals? (Follow up question)

12. Have there been any past or present barriers/obstacles that you have experienced as a woman in leadership/ministry?

13. When you hear the term "glass ceiling" what comes to mind?"

14. Now, when you think about a "glass ceiling" as it pertains to you, what feelings come up? (say the first feeling that pops into your mind).

15. Would you be willing to share 1-2 of your experiences that affected you in leadership/ministry (positive or negative)? How did you handle or respond to these experiences?

16. What type of backlash (if any) did you experience as a result of your response? (Follow up)

17. Who do you consider your community?
18. Have you reached the "glass ceiling"? If so, what assistance could your community provide to help you to break past this point?

19. What motivates you to continue on the journey? Do you have a support system?

20. In achieving the level of leadership you have at this point, have you intentionally begin any outreach to help other women reach their goals; or as a result of your experience?

21. What practical advice would you give to other women in leadership/ministry who may experience the similar challenges?
Reverend Nellie C. Williams

Reverend Nellie C. Williams is an Associate Pastor in the Atlanta Rome District of the Sixth Episcopal District of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church which is comprised of the state of Georgia. Her main duties include assisting the pastor and teaching bible study. Rev. Williams received her Master of Divinity Degree from Phillips School of Theology from the Interdenominational Theological Center in 1992. She is an ordained Elder in Full Connection in the C.M.E. Church.

Rev. Williams is the first woman pastor in the Sixth Episcopal District under Bishop Joseph C. Coles, Jr. the presiding prelate. She pastored the following assignments; Saint James C.M.E. Church, Lagrange, Georgia, Saint Mary’s C.M.E. Church, Elberton, Georgia, Greater Hopewell C.M.E. Church, Atlanta, Georgia. She served in the Jamaican Conference under Bishop L. L. Reddick and New Hope C.M.E. Church, Bynum, Alabama in the Fifth Episcopal District. Recently Rev. Williams served as Bible study instructor at Holsey Temple C.M.E. Church and currently as Assistant Pastor at Good News C.M.E. Church.

Bishop Joseph Coles, Jr. assigned Rev. Nellie Williams’ to her first pastoral assignment as the interim pastor of Saint James C.M.E. Church in Lagrange, Georgia. She “was supposed to be an interim pastor until such time as a qualified pastor could be found.”

My first pastorate was very difficult. There were some supportive people but some people really fought against me, but God sustained me. LaGrange was sixty miles. I did that for seven years. Not only was it challenging with the church itself but in the conference being the only
woman because the men could not receive me as an equal. I was in my early thirties. They saw me more of a sexual object I guess, so when we go to conferences they would always be knocking at my door. So I would take my son with me so I would not have to deal with that. They rarely saw me as an equal. That was an adjustment. The other thing was the Baptist preachers in that area. They would come to revivals and things at my church and they would come up on the pulpit, but I was not allowed in their pulpits. One time I went to a funeral and went in with the other preachers and sat in the pulpit, because back then I was young, the pulpit was important and I was asked out of the pulpit. That was some of the challenges not only in the church but in the conference as well as in the community.

How did you feel at Annual Conference?

It was lonesome. I had nobody to identify with. I had nobody to know the pain I was going through or to be able to share that. You know nobody else was in that position but me. So for a long time I was the only person.

Have there been any past or present barriers/obstacles that you have experienced as a woman in leadership/ministry?

Oh yeah, definitely so. Just being assigned to a church itself when no women assigned was going through the barrier of sexism. The barrier of people getting attuned to women preaching as women rather than women preaching as men is a barrier. One of the things when women used to preach they used to think they had to imitate men. The congregation actually had to get used to a woman preach as a woman rather than as a man. Dress was an issue. When I went to LaGrange I preached in what I had on, a dress or something. The church bought me a robe. The men used to sit over in the stewards’ corner said ‘Rev. Williams, you need to wear a robe because we just get distracted because instead of us listening to the sermon we’re looking at your legs. So, I had to start wearing a robe. I found out that you could be a woman in a way, but you couldn’t be a woman in another way because it was too distracting. You had to have respect for the fact that it could be distracting. You know, you really wanted people to hear the word – you didn’t want to be a distraction. That was part of my learning process.

I think the experiences made me a stronger person to have to go through that. I had to learn a lot. Not only did I have to learn how to be a pastor, but I had to learn how to be a pastor in adverse conditions. It made me a
stronger pastor. It also made me know the difference between how women could actually get closer sometimes than men could. For instance, the majority of our congregations are women; whereas a man may have a problem going to visit a woman by himself a woman doesn’t have that problem so I was able to get closer to my congregation. On the other hand there were very few instances where you had to go visit a man, but then of course I learned in that instance some of what they went through because I would always ask somebody to go with me in that case because you still didn’t want to be put into a bad position. I think I learned how to be a good pastor, how to care for my people. Even though I think it wasn’t always appreciated. People didn’t always understand the sacrifice.

What practical advice would you give to other women in leadership/ministry who may experience the similar challenges?

Just to know that God has called them and not man. Just hang in there and do what God directs them to do. Continue to utilize your gifts. I would tell them to continue to use the gifts that God has given us. And just be strong for each other. The hurting part was people of my same caliber did not support me and the same thing could have happened to them that happened to me. They were afraid. You know it reminds you of disciples who left Jesus hanging there on the cross because they were afraid the same thing would happen to them. Rather than standing together and being supportive of this person, they ran, they couldn’t see. I think about the many ministers, not only females but males, that have been lost during these last years in the C.M.E. church and it seems that nobody cares. They were good people. Just keep supporting each other and keep caring about each other.
Bishop Teresa E. Snorton

Bishop Teresa E. Snorton is Presiding Prelate of the Fifth Episcopal District of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church which is comprised of Alabama and Florida. She is the Chief Executive Officer for the Fifth District (Florida and Alabama), supervisor of the pastors and churches in the District. Bishop Snorton has earned Bachelor of Arts, Master of Divinity, Master of Theology, and Doctor of Ministry. She also is a certified Clinical Pastoral Educator and Board Certified Chaplain. She is an ordained Elder in Full Connection in the C.M.E. Church.

Bishop Teresa Snorton has the distinction of being the first woman elected and the 59th Bishop in the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. This is one of many other ‘firsts’. She is one of two women who were the first women assigned by Bishop Othal H. Lakey to the Kentucky District which is in the Second Episcopal District. She was also the first black chaplain, Central State Hospital, Louisville, Kentucky, first black faculty, Medical College of Virginia Department of Patient Counseling, first black female faculty, Emory Center for Pastoral Services and first black and first female Executive Director, Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc.

Have there been any past or present barriers/obstacles that you have experienced as a woman in leadership/ministry?

I went through seminary saying ‘I don’t want to pastor’. When I came out of seminary Bishop Lakey had just got appointed to the second district. He was a newly elected bishop and he asked me did I want a church and I said ‘well sure’. At that point in time I’m at ‘whatever, I’ll do it’. I said it without really giving it a whole lot of thought but I think my seminary experience had awakened the womanist and the feminist in me that wanted to be treated equally. So I went ‘I’m a CME minister, of course I want a church’.
I went to this church in a neighborhood in Louisville, Kentucky where there were essentially four churches, the CME church, a Baptist church, a United Methodist church, and a Christian church – Disciples of Christ – and these four churches had a lot of activities that they did together. They had a choir union and stuff where they would go back and forth between the churches and immediately my presence there was a problem. Bishop Lakey tells the story that the trustee chair called the presiding elder and said ‘ya’ll done threwed us away, ya’ll done sent us a woman preacher’. When I was sent there, there was a real sense even in the church; they had a lot of ambivalence.

That same year Bishop Lakey appointed me another woman so we were the first women to pastor churches in Kentucky as the appointed pastors. This was just really a new thing. Not only didn’t the church want me then they recognized pretty quickly that the Baptists were going to have major issues with a woman in the pulpit. It was very painful, sad, somewhat of a distraction when you can’t do ministry because there are people who felt like you shouldn’t be there. I’m not sure how I came to this realization but I had decided fairly early on that I was not going to defend my right to be a minister. I’ve always said that if you have a problem with me being in ministry talk to God because God is the one that called me. I did not choose this for myself. If you have a problem with it I’m just not going to get into debate about what the bible says, the scriptures or anything like that. It’s pointless. I don’t have to fight that battle. I tried in the local church I was pastoring to communicate that same ‘we don’t have to be apologetic about who we are as C.M.E.’s and if people don’t want to fellowship with us...’ even when we went to the Baptist church I wouldn’t sit in the pulpit. Internally it was very painful but I would never project that out externally and say ‘we’re not going to go down there because they won’t let me sit’. They wanted me to speak from the floor, fine. It was really their issue, not mine.

I think one of the most painful moments was there was a young man who was an associate or something; he was one of the ministers at the Baptist church in the community. He had grown up there. He had gotten selected to go to a larger Baptist churches in Louisville as their associate minister with one of these well-known Baptist preachers. He was a community boy. The community was surrounded on one side by the airport, on another side by the railroad and on another side by the expressway. It was a real self-contained community. Everybody was really proud and excited he got promoted to this church. He had been the youth revival speaker, every year since he had gone into ministry, probably five or six years.

Spring came around the first year I was there and it was time for the revival and we had publicized it and announced that he was preaching. I had never heard him but everybody said he was a good young preacher and could do a good revival. The Sunday before the revival started we
had gotten to church and he had put a note under the door of the church saying he could not do the revival because the church had a woman pastor. That was painful for me, not because of what it said about me but the look on the faces of the members of the church. These men and women who had nurtured this young man as a child, and who had embraced him when he was young in ministry and who had supported him because he was one of their own in the neighborhood. They were just devastated. They were devastated at first because he wouldn’t come but they were also devastated because he didn’t tell them to their faces. That was probably the most painful experience. I was used to that, but they’d felt rejected and I had to minister to them in the midst of their rejection and to let them know that they were okay.

When you hear the term “glass ceiling” what comes to mind?

Man-made limits; I don’t really like the term “glass ceiling” because it has a lot of reality to it. Reality usually means there is exclusion. There is a point at which somebody can’t go any further. Back in the 1980s, when pastoring in a small city in Kentucky, I was not readily accepted by the Baptist male preachers and often left out of community ministry events. I left the congregational pastorate at a time when one Bishop said “We should promote you to a larger church, but I don’t think they would accept a woman”. When I was seeking the office of Bishop, I heard a few comments that “the church was not ready” for a woman Bishop.

Do you think you broke the “glass ceiling”?

Well, yes and no. I say yes because it was a significant historic event for the church to actually elect somebody who was a woman when they had never done that before. But I’m a novelty and in some ways a token and I’m not oblivious to what that really means so I think that the reality of the “glass ceiling” being broken is where we can elect people regardless of their gender and simply on the basis of their qualification and credentials. I think there are still too many politics in the church for us to entertain that as the primary reason we elect bishops. I think we go with popularity, connections, who you connect to, who’s supporting who, and by the grace of God most of the time we end up getting qualified people. It’s been really interesting with 2014 coming up the things I’ve heard people say things like ‘we don’t need to elect another woman because the novelty will wear off and it won’t be anything special anymore’ and to the other end ‘we’ve got to elect more women’. I’ve heard this wide variety of things.

I think the ‘ceiling” is still there. I think I was able to break through for a number of reasons. I think primarily the church needed to
do something different to represent a paradigm shift from the old to the new. You know as well as I know that there has been a lot of disenchantment, a lot of frustration, a lot of contention, a lot of anger and hostility about the way some decisions have been made in leadership and fiscal responsibility. At the 2010 General Conference there were two options; either there’s going to be a big fight or something needed to happen that would change the trajectory of the church. That’s how I understand my election – the populace and the delegates chose the latter. ‘Let’s elect a woman and see if that doesn’t do something to change this thing’. I think the same is true with the election of the African bishop. I think it was a way for the church to embrace a new paradigm shift. I think the other reason why I was also palatable as a candidate is because of the relationship that I’ve had with all the bishops.

While I have not pastored in the traditional sense I have offered myself as a resource to all the bishops and to the church in general doing workshops and leading ministry retreats and doing one-on-one counseling and pastors in trouble and consulting and preaching and most of them had a sense ‘we know who she is; we know where she is coming from; she’s been around; she’s a good Methodist; she understands the church’. In some ways I think my election was a way to embrace change but feel like it was a safe change. I don’t want to sound egotistical or arrogant, I think whoever we elect next as a woman will encounter the “glass ceiling” again.

What practical advice would you give to other women in leadership/ministry who may experience the similar challenges?

- Maintain a strong prayer and meditation life.
- Have a few good friends in whom you can confide.
- Get into therapy to resolve any issues.
- Don’t give up when others try to discourage you.
- Have some male ministry friends.
- Get consultation; glean from the wisdom of others.
- Don’t ever try to defend your call or your right to be a minister!

Do you have any departing remarks?

I think there are some things that women...you know it’s kind of like I feel as if I’ve lived as a double minority. As African Americans we know we’ve usually had to be more qualified and so I would say to women trying to scratch that “glass ceiling” don’t be bitter about the extras that will be required of you. Just accept them as a reality – you will need to be better prepared, better informed; it’s just a reality. But ultimately it makes you a better person. Everything gained and nothing lost in that regard.
Presiding Elder Jane Elizabeth Thomas

Elder Jane Elizabeth Thomas is Presiding Elder of the Macon-Barnesville District of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. She monitors the 38 churches on the Macon-Barnesville District, training pastors, training officers, and collecting funds for the District and reporting to the Central Georgia Conference. Elder Thomas has earned the Bachelor of Arts, Master of Divinity and Master of Christian Education. She is an ordained Elder in Full Connection in the C.M.E. Church. Elder Jane Thomas has the distinction of being the first female Presiding Elder in the 6th Episcopal District in the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church appointed by Bishop Othal H. Lakey.

Have there been any past or present barriers/obstacles that you have experienced as a woman in leadership/ministry?

The first church that I ever pastored was Stouts Chapel in Savannah, GA. The Board of Examiners at Stouts Chapel really didn’t appreciate Bishop Joseph Coles assigning me to pastor. What happened was there was a pastor there but he lived in Brunswick and he attended ITC. There were Sundays when he just didn’t show up at all. The Presiding Elder, at that time Presiding Elder Henry Jones and Bishop Coles got together and asked would I pastor the church. They realized that I did not have the orders. I was only a deacon at that time. I said I would and I did. Again folk, especially men, were upset with Bishop Coles. They said to him that I would never survive and they just had a problem with him assigning me to pastor that church. I stayed there three and a half years. When I went there we had a restroom on the outside, but when I left there we had restrooms on the inside, the church was completely renovated. Bishop Coles came to do the dedication and it was difficult for him to even preach, he cried the whole time that he was there because of the ridicule and what he was able to see God do in spite of those who challenged him. It was from there that I actually went to the Jeffersonville circuit.

Initially coming into ministry pastoring I remembered being assigned to the Jeffersonville Circuit which was at that time comprised of three churches, Williams Chapel, Baugh’s and Shiloh. When I was
assigned and I scheduled a planning meeting for one Saturday. (Even though) I was assigned to Jeffersonville I was actually still living in Savannah. Tuesday night I got home and my son was visibly disturbed. I inquired as to what is going on, he said that he received a phone call and the man said to him ‘tell your mother we will not accept her as a preacher/pastor of our church’. Of course he was able to get the name and a number; so I took care of him – fed him, fed my children and got them ready for bed and talked to them about how sometimes you just don’t understand why people do what they do but it doesn’t mean that it’s the end of the world and that we live through certain things. After they had fallen asleep I called Mr. Will. I said to him ‘don’t ever call my home and speak to my children about anything. Have the decency to wait to speak to me before you open your mouth.’ He said ‘well they told me to call you to tell you that it doesn’t matter that you have scheduled a meeting with us we’re not going to have a meeting because you’re not going to be our pastor’. So I said ‘you tell them, say that I said I will be there on Saturday like I said before’ and hung up the phone.

Sure enough I went that Saturday – the meeting was at Baugh’s, Baugh’s was one of the churches. At Baugh’s when I pulled up you would have thought it was a concert or something, cars were everywhere, folk were standing out on the street – the streets were lined. I drove up, went in and folk were standing all against the wall, in the aisle, sitting on the floor and the pews, everywhere. So I introduced myself, and I could feel the tension. I said to them ‘my name is Jane Elizabeth Gray Thomas and I have been assigned to pastor the Jeffersonville Circuit. I plan to do that and even with all of you here I don’t foresee any reason as to why I can’t do that’. It was after I had asked when did each church meet and they told me that Baugh’s would meet on the first Sunday, Shiloh on the second Sunday, Williams Chapel on the fourth Sunday and so my question was what happens on the third Sunday. ‘Nothing’ was the response. So I asked ‘okay I need to find out what it is we will do on that third Sunday’. I asked if there were any questions, comments or concerns after going through my entire agenda and General Hughes (at that time I think he was like 90 something years old) said to me ‘you didn’t mention anything about salary’. I said ‘no, I didn’t’. ‘Well this is what we pay you’. I said ‘now wait a minute, that’s not true’. I said ‘I didn’t mention anything, but I did my homework and that’s not what you pay’ and I pulled my sheet out and I said ‘this is what you pay’ and he said ‘we’re not going to pay you that’. I said ‘I believe you will, it’s just a matter of time’. At that point again everything went totally silent. I asked again ‘are there any questions, comments or concerns’ and I gave a prayer and we dismissed.

But that’s not to say that things did not continue to happen to fight against me being female. At Shiloh they said – as a matter of fact Shiloh
refused to pay me a salary at all. There were three women in the church and they opted to pay me a salary. Every Sunday, they got paid weekly and they would pay me weekly. After the church body got the message that I was being paid by these three women the church decided that they would pay me and it was to my disadvantage because the three women paid me more than the church was paying me. By the grace of God it eventually resolved itself.

A lot of the male preachers just didn’t think a woman should be over them and they verbally expressed that, which they had that right to do, and my take on that is simply this – if I begin to apologize for the blessings that God gives me then that’s saying to God that I’m not appreciative. For me it goes even deeper than that because every male child that you know if it had not been for their mothers in their lives they wouldn’t be where they are and if I apologize it means that I’m disrespecting every mother, every grandmother and every female who was poured into a child’s life and every female child that is to be born; and I will not do that. What happens is I think that these men have weak women in their lives; women who have to respond to them and cater to them. Women who are in some ways are not allowed to think for themselves and they try to put all of us into that category and we do not all fit.

When you hear the term "glass ceiling" what comes to mind?"

When I hear the term “glass ceiling” I just think of things happening but you’re never really reaching the top. It would be sad that you can obtain everything you want or you can reach the top or you can go to the highest level as easily as someone else but somehow there is a shattering over there that whenever a female gets to the top then some other law or ordinance comes down as to why you can’t really lift up the glass.

But in my spirit I just feel that (Lord help me) Bishop Snorton being elected was not intentional and because it was not intentional I think, when I say intentional – intentional by the church. Caps are going to be placed on every open vessel now to make certain that it does not happen so soon again, so that’s where I am with that. It will happen, but now you go back and you look at the areas that you didn’t cover before and you cover those areas now even if you have to proxy someone to do so.

What practical advice would you give to other women in leadership/ministry who may experience the similar challenges?
You have the tools you need but you just need to make certain that everything is in the right perspective. Your timing is your timing; it's not predicated upon anyone else. We all have our timing. The distance has already been predetermined for each one of us. We're not all doing the same things at the same time. Understand this. Always look at yourself as being the person that God has called you to be and only you can tell me who God has called you to be. Keep that focus, you don’t have to wear it on your shoulders, but keep it in front of you so that you are always moving toward that perfection.

You be faithful to who God has called you to be. You do not have to emulate anyone. You are equipped with whatever you need. It’s up to you to be open enough to let what God has placed into you grow, develop and materialize.
Mrs. Barbara Christian Campbell

Mrs. Barbara Christian Campbell is a member of Shy Temple Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. She is a retired educator and currently a licensed real estate broker. Mrs. Campbell has a Master's Degree in Education and an Honorary Doctorate. Master's from

Barbara Campbell has held many civic leadership positions. She became the first African American chair for the DeKalb Democratic Party, a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, chartered the 4th Congressional District caucus, Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney's Congressional District representative for the National Association of Realtors and Congressional District representative for Congressman Hank Johnson.

Mrs. Campbell is the first woman elected Connectional Lay Council President of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. One of the major duties is to conduct the Lay Council meeting to preside over that meeting. In the interim my duties are outlined in the discipline; specifically to enforce the Lay Council manual; to work with other Lay Councils; and to help to do workshops and training. As Connectional Lay Council President of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, she is not a paid staff person nor does she have a budget. As a matter of fact Barbara Campbell did not initially intend on running for the position.

I consider my election a calling from God. I went to the conference; I had talked with our previous Prelate about someone from Georgia running to feel him out. He said 'Georgia can't get anyone else. We've got the connectional Young Adult president; we've got the Ministry to Men general secretary. The Bishops will not allow Georgia to have anyone else'. I just sort of acquiesced and pondered it. Before I got there the general secretary sent me a letter asking me to be the credentials
chair. I thought ‘okay’, to be on the Credentials Committee. I had gone to the floor several times during our lay council meetings so that when we met at the conference the credentials committee we had to elect a chair. Right away someone that I don’t even know said ‘let’s get Sister Campbell, she’s been to the microphone a couple times I like how she talks’. I became the chair. As the chair of the credentials committee I started working with the elections chair. As credentials I had to keep going to the microphone and keep making announcements and statements so it was really visibility there. When the person from the elections committee got the nominations she said ‘I didn’t see your form’. I said ‘I didn’t turn one in’. She said ‘you need to run’.

I said, ‘let me see if I can get a male to run since this is traditionally a male position’. I went to the 6th Episcopal District and none of the men wanted to run and finally they said, ‘you do it, you go for it’. I said ‘will you support me if I go for it?’ I went to the males and the females and I said ‘okay, I’m going for this. I need your support because I need my home state’. They all said ‘go for it’. Five minutes before the ballots needed to be turned in I turned mine in. That actually gave me an edge because nobody could rally and form any kind of little, the way we do political things, forces because they were not aware. I guess, a case in point, the General Secretary didn’t do it in the orders. He just let everybody go up – the secretary go up, the Vice President could go up, everybody could make their speeches. I kept letting people go in front of me because I wanted to hear what they had to say and there was no order so I was the last one to speak. I said ‘I didn’t open the door, but I’m going to try to close it’. After I made my speech, which is kind of my gift, I felt really good about it. But no campaign literature, that’s not my style. The rest is history.

Two Bishops approached me about the election the next day. One said to me ‘Did you tell your Bishop you were running’? I said ‘no sir, I did not’. And I know they knew what had taken place prior. He said ‘Why didn’t you tell you Bishop’? I simply said ‘because I wanted to win’. He said ‘ummm’. Our presiding Bishop was not pleased and did not meet with us that night when the caucus met.

Have there been any past or present barriers/obstacles that you have experienced as a woman in leadership/ministry?

I think there have been barriers but because I have a lot of firsts. I know those firsts are not because I’m great; I know those are the Lord’s. I think gender is a barrier even among women. We are barriers to each other, so it’s not just male. But I think we work so hard and most times we do twice the work because we have to prove something to others. That
has not changed. We are self-driven to make a point that we can do this job and that it’s not gender-based it is agenda-based. There are still barriers. They are not just barriers that I speak of in generalities. We can look at the pay a male makes and the pay a woman makes. We can look at the leadership jobs. There is a reason we have not elected a woman there are barriers and there is a ceiling. They want you to hit that “glass ceiling” real early. You know we’re going to crack it and break it eventually where we can just go on through it. I think there are still barriers and I think women should realize that we do not have to be barriers to each other. Women outnumber men in this church. Women outnumber voters in this country. If we want a female president we can do it. If we want a Bishop we can do it. I think women really have to start working with women before we can go anywhere else. We are our own barrier.

Are there experiences in church that have affected you in leadership?

I think decisions that I have made when I have not gone along with leadership. When I have voted against what leadership promoted. It had an impact on positions because we are an appointment church we may have ratification of it, but it is basically a done deal. One example was during the General Conference in ’98. One most recently from our Annual Conference when I stood up against something the Bishop was saying in terms of a female who wanted to be a delegate and the conference didn’t know he had come to her prior and told her not to run. She decided to run anyway, ‘Okay, I’m not just a missionary I’m a Christian educator, I’m a lay person, and I’m a Sunday School teacher... Before she could even finish her statement he cut her off. He basically said, “If anyone votes for this person I will take half of your delegate money from you.” I said ‘Lord, I know this is wrong’. When I stood up I was ignored. Several times I tried to get the attention of the chair. Finally I said ‘delegates’ and I read from the laws of our church. That day I was not afraid. I knew that Bishop would try to embarrass me but he could not. I was so grounded in what I was saying that when he was talking I had a smile on my face. I said ‘This is the church’. And you know what I like about my people they don’t have to stand up to be standing with you. I know my people. They were standing with me sitting down and I know that the way our system works it could operate so negatively any time you have a system where you can say ‘I can move you anytime to any place...’.

What practical advice would you give to other women in leadership/ministry who may experience the similar challenges?
First, don’t use your femininity or your gender as an excuse. Leadership is leadership. Don’t go to your female mode. Don’t start crying. There is an equal playing ground here, once you step on that ground. Be more specific about the issue or the situation, the details. Don’t make the fact that you are female the number one thing that stands out. We know you are a female. We see you are a female. You’ve got female characteristics. You look like a woman. Find out who you are and what is comfortable for you. Don’t imitate. Be original. Be creative. Know who you are. I think that as in any female leadership, you are going to have to do more. Any leader has to do more. Leaders have to do more because leaders lead. And to lead you have to do more. It’s all about relationships. I think calling people, sharing with people, random acts of kindness. You have got to do so much ‘til they say ‘you know we have never had a better leader here’. Communication is so key, personal communication. Random acts of kindness. Never quit growing. Never quit reading. Never quit modeling effective leaders. Never quit striving. Never quit stating your position. Work where you are but don’t let your position go where people you should be. Sometimes you’ve got to be, they call it aggressive, I call it assertive. Show how you are a fit. ‘I think I’m a real fit for this position. Let me tell you why. And if not this year, would you look at me next year’? Put your position out there.
APPENDIX 4

Oath of Confidentiality

Confidentiality

When we are sharing experiences, it is not meant to be passed around.

Respect
It is important that we not judge other peoples experiences. We all have different experiences and respond in a different way. Everyone's experiences are equally valid. We treat others how we would like to be treated.

Support
It is important to give support to those who are reluctant to speak. When someone is speaking, listen and give your full attention and support.

Sharing
Life experiences, both as children and later as adults, are purely personal. When there is sharing, it helps and increases understanding among one another.

Trust
We are trying to establish trust among the group. It is important that we trust one another. Without trust true exchange will not happen.

Oath of Confidentiality

I, __________________________, understand confidentiality. What is said will stay here and I will listen with respect. All information given out or discovered about any of the participants shall be held in confidence by me. I will not discuss what anyone says with anyone during and after this workshop.  

Signed: __________________________

Date: __________________________

________

1 Excerpts from this confidentiality statement was compiled from Starting a Support Group. Equay-wauk (Women's group); http://www.seniors.alberta.ca/pdd/fms/BeingGoodEmployer.pdf (August 14, 2012).
APPENDIX 5

Demographic Questions

Circle the appropriate answer to each question.

What is your age group?
  18-30
  31-40
  41-50
  51+

Are you:
  Single
  Married
  Separated
  Divorced
  Widowed

Do you have any children?
  Yes
  No

Are you employed?
  Unemployed
  Employed
  Full Time
  Part Time

What is your level of education?
  High School
  High School Diploma
  GED
  College
  College Graduate
  Post Secondary
  Master's Degree
  Doctorate
**Participant Questions**

**Pre/Post Test Measurement**
Do respondents have a better sense of what leadership is and are they able to articulate it in their own words.

**Participant Questions**
1. In your opinion, who do you consider to be a great leader?

2. Who has had the most influence in how you model your life? (Name 2 people).

3. Are you aware of your gifts and talents? If so, list them.

4. Do you have a 1, 3, and 5-year vision plan (personal, professional)?

5. Are there currently any programs that nurture your growth as a leader within your local congregation?
6. Do you currently or have you in the past served on any committees or boards?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

7. What characteristic would you like to strengthen to build your leadership confidence (i.e., goal setting, time management)?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

8. Are there any barriers (home, job, etc.) that would impact your growth in leadership? If so, list them.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

9. What is the most important issue you are dealing with right now?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

10. What one thing can we do to help you move forward?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX 6

Assessment

From *Leveraging Your Leadership Style* by John Jackson and Lorraine Bossé-Smith

Read the following questions and circle the answer that you feel best describes you.

Do be honest and answer each question as you really are. Remember, answers are not "right or wrong."

Do not answer questions as you would "like to be" or wish you were. The assessment is only as accurate as your honesty.

Do go with your first response or "gut" feeling as it is likely the most accurate.

Do not spend a lot of time analyzing, thinking about, or contemplating and answer.

1. I would describe myself as mostly...
   A. Outgoing, but I like to get things done
   B. outgoing and I like interacting with people
   C. Reserved but enjoy one-on-one relationships
   D. Reserved, and I like systemically analyzing or planning things

2. If you asked a close friend or family member about me, he or she would say that I am...
   A. A stable, supportive person
   B. a driven and goal-orientated individual
   C. A cautious, organized individual
   D. An inspirational, fun person

3. When I have a choice, I like...
   A. A structured, calculated pace with little change
   B. a fast, intense pace with purpose
   C. A fast, high-energy pace with lots of change
   D. A slow, methodical pace with no change

4. In my opinion, rules...
   A. can be bent or broken. There are too many anyway
   B. can help people get along by providing stability and certainty
   C. are for other people
   D. are necessary for a structured and orderly world

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5. Given a choice, I would prefer to wear...
   A. sharp and classy suits or business suit.
   B. tried and true classic clothes that are practical
   C. bright, fun colored outfits that are hip and trendy
   D. calming, subtle-colored clothes that are comfortable

6. Under stress, I may...
   A. get impatient and bark
   B. retreat to solitude and withdraw emotionally
   C. become quite talkative and disorganized
   D. over analyze and become critical

7. My life motto is....
   A. everything is done for a reason
   B. go for it
   C. all for one and one for all!
   D. We need each other

8. When making decisions, I...
   A. quickly decide and press on
   B. tend to follow the popular opinion
   C. ask a close friend what he or she thinks
   D. gather information and research in order to make the right decision

9. At a party or large gathering, I am likely to...
   A. find an excuse not to attend. I don't like parties
   B. enjoy mingling and meeting new friends
   C. look for a friend or someone i know and usually hang out with just that person
   D. make an appearance, shake some hands, and leave if there is no particular reason for me to be there (or -if there isn't anything in it for me)

10. Given a choice, I would prefer to drive...
    A. a fast sports car
    B. a reliable, modest midsize car
    C. a fun, new, and trendy vehicle
    D. a practical, economical car

11. When communicating with others, I tend to...
    A. listen more than I talk
    B. state my opinion directly
    C. speak precisely and accurately
    D. talk more than I listen

12. When given a project to complete, I immediately...
A. process and analyze to determine the most strategic course of action  
B. ask questions regarding the time frame, workload, and requirements  
C. delegate with directive  
D. talk it over with others and see who can help  

13. When presenting to the board, I...  
A. methodically address concerns and issues raised  
B. quickly get the bottom line/financial implications  
C. share accomplishments before getting to the facts and figures  
D. provide all facts, figures, and numbers along with forecasts and predictions  

14. When presenting, I rely upon...  
A. my ability to communicate quickly and effectively  
B. my latest, greatest techy gadget that complements my communication  
C. my PowerPoint computer presentation that keeps me on track  
D. my slides, graphs, and Excel spreadsheets to present data  

15. I spend the majority of my work day...  
A. with the pedal to the medal  
B. reviewing data and formulating strategic plans  
C. motivating, inspiring, and working through my team  
D. Meeting one-on-one with staff to ensure everyone is on track  

16. When a crisis arises, I will...  
A. Inform people of the challenge and rally them around it  
B. share the situation with everyone and petition suggestions  
C. stop the bleeding immediately, then determine the next steps  
D. refer to policies and procedures on how to respond properly  

17. I stay motivated by...  
A. doing things correctly and efficiently  
B. working with a team toward a common goal  
C. keeping my focus on the end goal or challenge  
D. encouraging others and receiving warranted recognition  

18. I manage my time by...  
A. Structuring the day and planning each step out thoroughly  
B. being fluid with my day and priorities  
C. doing what will get me the most results the quickest first  
D. methodically planning out the day  

19. When giving performance reviews to employees, I tend to...  
A. discuss each and every area needing improvements with kudos last  
B. build up the relationship first then address some minor concerns
C. provide more encouragement than constructive criticism
D. not make time for them or rush through with little feedback

20. When I get an idea, I...
A. get everyone working on it, even if we have to change direction
B. tell everyone about it without any direction
C. discuss it with the team and solicit feedback
D. research and analyze it thoroughly before presenting to anyone

Using the table below, circle the letter that corresponds with each question. Then count up the number of circles in each column and enter the total at the bottom. The column that contains the highest number is your BIT profile!

NOTE: If you have two columns that are the same number, review the brief description below and select the BIT profile you relate with most. You may want to read both of those chapters in order to truly understand your leadership style.
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Total

Fit Commander Coach Counselor Conductor Profile

168
APPENDIX 7

LESSON PLANS

Leadership Workshop Agenda
September 14-15, 2012
Saint John Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
240 Key Street, Monticello, Georgia 30164
Pastor Lavonia K. McIntyre
Bro. Tommie Benjamin, Assistant to the Pastor

Facilitators:
Rev. Lavonia K. McIntyre          Pastor St. John CME Church
Elder Juanita Sheppard            Associate Minister New Beginnings Full Gospel Baptist
Evangelist Melissa Horton         Assistant Pastor Springfield Baptist Church
Rev. Amina McIntyre               Director of Specialized Ministries CME Church Choreographer

Friday, September 14, 2012
7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.    Registration
7:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.    Devotion, Pre-test, Oath of Confidentiality
7:30 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.    Introduction
7:50 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.    Break
8:00 p.m. - 8:55 p.m.    Plenary: Leadership; Traits Test
9:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.    Closing

Saturday, September 15, 2012
9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.    Continental Breakfast
9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.    Devotional, Break out into groups
9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.   Breakout Session 1: Bible Study
10:00 a.m. - 10:50 a.m.  Breakout Session 2: Goal Setting Part 1
10:50 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.  Break
11:00 a.m. - 11:50 a.m.  Breakout Session 2: Goal Setting Part 2
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.   Lunch
1:00 p.m. - 1:50 p.m.    Breakout session 3: Communication
1:50 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.    Break
2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.    Breakout Session 4: Interviewing Skills
3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.    Closing: Post-Test, Prayer and Rededication
Lesson Plan

Plenary: Leadership

Learning Objectives
The participants will define leadership.
The participants will identify leadership traits.
The participants will identify their leadership style.

Introduction
The facilitator will discuss the overall workshop.
The definition of leadership will be explored from the viewpoint of different authors.
The facilitator will discuss different leadership traits.
The facilitator will define Transformative Leadership.
The facilitator will utilize the interviews of Women Leaders in the CME Church.
These interviews will introduce the participants to women in the CME Church who are: Visible Leaders in the church
First in their perspective areas:
First Women Lay leader Mrs. Barbara Campbell
First Women Pastor in the 6th Episcopal District, Rev. Nellie Williams
First Women Presiding Elder in the 6th Episcopal District, Elder Jane Elizabeth Thomas;
First Woman Bishop in the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
Bishop Theresa Snorton, Presiding Prelate
These interviews will also highlight barriers and obstacles that they experienced.
Finally, the interviews will highlight practical advice for the participants to follow.

Activities
The participants will take a pre-assessment.
Discussion: Ask the students:
How do they define leadership?
What types of traits or characteristics should leaders have or possess?
What leadership traits do you have?
The participants will complete the "Behavior Individual Traits" questionnaire by John Jackson and Lorraine Bossie.
The facilitator will discuss the four different styles of Leadership: Commander, Coach, Counselor, and Conductor.
The facilitator will discuss the Biblical leadership styles: Midwife, Choreographer, Weaver, and Intercessor.
The facilitator will provide each participant with 5 paper clips. Ask each person to
connect the paper clips in 3min.
The participants will discuss cooperation as it relates to leadership.

Handouts and Presentations
BIT Assessments, score sheets and profile descriptions
Four Biblical Transformative Leaders

Assessment
What is your definition of leadership?

Wrap up
Divide the group into the four biblical transformative leadership categories.
Dr. Jeanne Porter in her book \textit{Leading Ladies} uses women leaders in the Old Testament to depict leadership qualities for women in leadership. These qualities are described as "four images of leadership: the leader as Midwife, the leader Choreographer, the leader as Weaver, and the leader as Intercessor."

- The leader as Midwife helps give birth to ideas and dreams, developing and nurturing people to realize their God-given potential. Puah and Shiphrah Egyptian midwives represent the leader as Midwife. Exodus 1:15-21

- The leader as Choreographer transforms the independent dance of individuals into the graceful, synchronized movement of collective purpose. Miriam, the prophetess, sister of Moses represent the leader as Choreographer. Miriam encourages us to dance and celebrate. Exodus 15:19-21.

- The leader as Weaver sees beyond the present reality and braids the fibers of a hopeful future. She brings together the right people, knitting the relationships that unite and strengthen the group, giving them reason and means to work together for a better alternative. Deborah, the judge, represents the leader as Weaver.

- The leader as Intercessor is strategically placed to influence the lives of others. She facilitates the liberation of a group of people by telling the story of those who have no voice or who are not in place to tell their own story. Esther, the Queen of Persia, used her position of power to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. \cite{Porter2000}

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Lesson Plan

Breakout Sessions: Bible Study
Leading Ladies: Transformative Biblical Images for Women’s Leadership
Dr. Jeanne Porter, Ph.D.

Learning Objectives
The participants in groups will examine the images of leadership according to the book Leading Ladies: Transformative Biblical Images for Women’s Leadership: Midwife, Choreographer, Weaver, and Intercessor.
The participants will describe the characteristics of the particular image of leadership for their specific group.
The participants will study the Biblical Leader as it relates to the image of leadership.

Introduction
The facilitator will define leadership according to the book Leading Ladies: Transformative Biblical Images for Women’s Leadership.
The facilitator will discuss the four images of leadership (midwife, choreographer, weaver, intercessor)
The facilitator will further introduce the specific image for her group.
The facilitator will discuss scriptural text associated with the Biblical image.

Activities
Introduce the Biblical Image. Ask these questions.
What are the character’s leadership qualities?
What characteristics do you have that are similar to the Biblical image?
The facilitator will discuss the questions outlined in the specific Biblical image chapter.

Assessment
Each participant will identify their specific leadership qualities.
Lesson Plan

Breakout session: Goal Setting
The Path by Laurie Beth Jones
Success The Glen Bland Method by Glen Bland
The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen R. Covey

Learning Objective
The participants will define vision, mission, and goal.
The participants will understand the difference between vision, mission, and goal.
The participants will write a vision, mission, and one goal each (one year goal and five year goal).

Introduction
The facilitator will define a vision, a mission and a goal.

A. According to the book Vision Made Real, "A vision is the impulse pulling us to discover who and what we are. Vision is the manifestation of our creative imagination and the primary motivation leading us to action. Vision encourages us to see beyond our present reality – to create mental images that inspire us to take action to make them real in actual life."

B. According to the book The Path, "A mission statement is a written-down reason for being – whether for a person, or a company. It is the key to finding your path in life and identifying the mission you choose to follow."

Jesus' personal mission statement, Luke 19:10: “For the Son of man came to seek and save what was lost.” Luke 4:18: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour (NRSV).”

A personal mission statement:
1. Helps you make decisions in both your work, home, and church.
2. Helps you navigate the world of relationships where seemingly so few of us can exert much control.
3. Acts as both a harness and a sword – harnessing you to what is true

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4 Steve Wiltshire. Vision Made Real, (Portland, Oregon: Lifeline Press, 2003), 53

about life, and cutting away all that is false.6

Three elements of a good mission statement:
1. A mission statement should be no more than a sentence long.
2. It should be easily understood by a twelve year old.
3. It should be able to be recited by memory at gunpoint.7

C. According to the book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, “A goal gives your mission statement momentum. Goals create a plan of action and help measure whether or not you are successfully living your mission statement. With every goal you set, ask yourself what, why, how, and when.”8

Activities
The facilitator will define vision, mission, and goal.
The participants will analyze their situation.

Is my present situation satisfactory or unsatisfactory?
What makes my present situation satisfactory?
What makes my present situation unsatisfactory?
How can I change my present situation?
Do I want to change my present situation?
Am I straightforward and honest with myself?9

The participants will write a vision statement.
The participants will write a mission statement.
The participants will write one personal, spiritual, education and recreational short range goal, (One year or less).
The participants will write one personal, spiritual, educational, long range goal.
What is your plan?
How will you do it?

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6 Ibid., xvii.


8 Stephen R. Covey. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003), 53

Checking Your Vision

From *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

Stephen R. Covey

What am I doing right now with my life? Does it make happy? Do I feel fulfilled?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What do I keep gravitating toward? Is it different from what I am currently doing?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What interests me right now?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What fills my soul?


What can I do well? What are my unique traits and strengths?
My Plan

From Define Your Own Way
Nicole Roberts Jones

Within the next year, I would like to accomplish …

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Within the next five years, I would like to accomplish …

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What do I want/need to complete as far as education and training (for example, take a six month course, apply to school, go to counseling with my mate, go to counseling for myself)?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What kind of help do I need to get started (school application, counseling appointment, etc.)?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What do I want/need to have completed to work toward my dream in the next five years (perhaps complete college or graduate school, become certified in my chosen field, save to buy a house)?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Goal Planning

From *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*
Stephen R. Covey

Long-Term Goal (What):

Deadline (When)

Importance to Mission/Role (Why):

Steps (How)  Deadlines

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Lesson Plan

Breakout Session: Communication

*5 Leadership Essentials for Women: Developing Your Ability to Make Things Happen*

Linda Clark

**Learning Objectives**
The participants will identify the three distinct models of communication as outlined in the book *5 Leadership Essentials for Women* (pg. 13-23).
The participants will recognize the *Ten Tips for Effective Listening* as outlined as listed in the book *5 Leadership Essentials for Women* (pg. 37-44).

**Introduction**
The facilitator will introduce the story of Abigail found in 1 Samuel 25.

The participants will discuss the three models of communication:

One-Way Communication: The communication comes from the communicator. It places the entire responsibility for the success of communication on the person sending the message. The audience (the receiver) plays no part in the communication process.

Two-Way Communication: The communicator sends a message. The audience (the receiver) gives responses or feedback.

Transactional Communication: We construct our views of ourselves, of others, and of meaning as we communicate in relationship with others. Communication is a process.

Communication is a gestalt (set regarded as whole), a totality depending on all our systems. Our internal systems (attitudes, emotions, understanding, background, psychological well-being, physical health, etc.) interface with our external systems (situation, time, place, urgency, ritual, etc.) to provide an opportunity to gain understanding.

Communication is perceptual, creative. No two people perceive the same event in exactly the same way. Our frames of reference are necessarily different because of the differences in our backgrounds, information, interests, attitudes, etc.

Communication is uncertain. We can never predict exactly what will happen in a communication situation. 13

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What type of communicator is Abigail?

What type of communicator are you?

Are you a good listener or a bad listener?

What does listening have to do with being a good leader?

Discuss the obstacles that effect listening.

Discuss the Ten Tips for Effective Listening.

Exercise
Each participant will select a partner. One person will spend two minutes telling something about herself to her partner. The partner will listen and repeat what she heard. This exercise is to be repeated with the partner talking next and the other listening.

Handouts
Ten Tips for Effective Listening
Now Samuel died; and all Israel assembled and mourned for him. They buried him at his home in Ramah. Then David got up and went down to the wilderness of Paran.

David and the Wife of Nabal

2 There was a man in Maon, whose property was in Carmel. The man was very rich; he had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. He was shearing his sheep in Carmel.

3 Now the name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail. The woman was clever and beautiful, but the man was surly and mean; he was a Calebite.

4 David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep.

5 So David sent ten young men; and David said to the young men, 'Go up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name.'

6 Thus you shall salute him: 'Peace be to you, and peace be to your house, and peace be to all that you have.

7 I hear that you have shearers; now your shepherds have been with us, and we did them no harm, and they missed nothing, all the time they were in Carmel.

8 Ask your young men, and they will tell you. Therefore let my young men find favour in your sight; for we have come on a feast day. Please give whatever you have at hand to your servants and to your son David.'

9 When David's young men came, they said all this to Nabal in the name of David; and then they waited.

10 But Nabal answered David's servants, 'Who is David? Who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants today who are breaking away from their masters.

11 Shall I take my bread and my water and the meat that I have butchered for my shearers, and give it to men who come from I do not know where?'

12 So David's young men turned away, and came back and told him all this.

13 David said to his men, 'Every man strap on his sword!' And every one of them strapped on his sword; David also strapped on his sword; and about four hundred men went up after David, while two hundred remained with the baggage.

14 But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, 'David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he shouted insults at them. Yet the men were very good to us, and we suffered no harm, and we never missed anything when we were in the fields, as long as we were with them; they were a wall to us both by night and by day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep. Now therefore know this and consider what you should do; for evil has been decided against our master and against all his house; he is so ill-natured that no one can speak to him.'

18 Then Abigail hurried and took two hundred loaves, two skins of wine, five sheep ready dressed, five measures of parched grain, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs. She loaded them on donkeys and said to her young men, 'Go on ahead of me; I am coming after you.' But she did not tell her husband Nabal.

20 As she rode on the donkey and came down under cover of the mountain, David and his men
came down towards her; and she met them. 21 Now David had said, ‘Surely it was in vain that I protected all that this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belonged to him; but he has returned me evil for good. 22 God do so to David and more also, if by morning I leave as much as one male of all who belong to him.’

23 When Abigail saw David, she hurried and alighted from the donkey, and fell before David on her face, bowing to the ground. 24 She fell at his feet and said, ‘Upon me alone, my lord, be the guilt; please let your servant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your servant. 25 My lord, do not take seriously this ill-natured fellow Nabal; for as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him; but I, your servant, did not see the young men of my lord, whom you sent.

26 ‘Now then, my lord, as the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, since the Lord has restrained you from blood-guilt and from taking vengeance with your own hand, now let your enemies and those who seek to do evil to my lord be like Nabal. 27 And now let this present that your servant has brought to my lord be given to the young men who follow my lord. 28 Please forgive the trespass of your servant; for the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house, because my lord is fighting the battles of the Lord; and evil shall not be found in you as long as you live. 29 If anyone should rise up to pursue you and to seek your life, the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living under the care of your enemies; he shall slay him from the bow of a sling. When the Lord has done to my lord according to all the good that he has spoken concerning you, and has appointed you prince over Israel, 31 my lord shall have no cause of grief, or pangs of conscience, for having shed blood without cause or for having saved himself. And when the Lord has dealt well with my lord, then remember your servant.’

32 David said to Abigail, ‘Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who sent you to meet me today! 33 Blessed be your good sense, and blessed be you, who have kept me today from blood-guilt and from avenging myself by my own hand! 34 For as surely as the Lord the God of Israel lives, who has restrained me from hurting you, unless you had hurried and come to meet me, truly by morning there would not have been left to Nabal as much as one male.’ 35 Then David received from her hand what she had brought him; he said to her, ‘Go up to your house in peace; see, I have heeded your voice, and I have granted your petition.’

36 Abigail came to Nabal; he was holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. Nabal’s heart was merry within him, for he was very drunk; so she told him nothing at all until the morning light. 37 In the morning, when the wine had gone out of Nabal, his wife told him these things, and his heart died within him; he became like a stone. 38 About ten days later the Lord struck Nabal, and he died.

39 When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, ‘Blessed be the Lord who has judged the case of Nabal’s insult to me, and has kept back his servant from evil; the Lord has returned the evil-doing of Nabal upon his own head.’ Then David sent and wooed Abigail, to make her his wife. 40 When David’s servants came to Abigail at Carmel, they said to

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her, 'David has sent us to you to take you to him as his wife.' 41 She rose and bowed down, with her face to the ground, and said, 'Your servant is a slave to wash the feet of the servants of my lord.' 42 Abigail got up hurriedly and rode away on a donkey; her five maids attended her. She went after the messengers of David and became his wife.

43 David also married Ahinoam of Jezreel; both of them became his wives. 44 Saul had given his daughter Michal, David’s wife, to Palti son of Laish, who was from Gallim.
1. **Stop talking!** As long as you are talking, you cannot be listening.

2. **Behave as you think a good listener should behave:**
   a. Put the speaker at ease.
   b. Show you are interested.
   c. Establish good eye contact.
   d. Give nonverbal signals that you are paying attention.
   e. Be patient. Give the speaker plenty of time.
   f. Don’t react emotionally.

3. **Listen for the main points.** Build a mental outline. Take notes if that helps.

4. **Concentrate.** Keep your total focus on the person speaking.

5. **Be open-minded.** Don’t make up your mind in advance about what the speaker will say or how you will react to it even if you disagree. Then assess the conflicting ideas carefully to determine where you want to stand on the issue.

6. **Watch out for words that elicit emotional reactions from you.** We all have signal reactions to certain words. Identify those words for yourself and slow down your reactions to them. Force yourself to get past the words in order to understand the person speaking them.

7. **Defer judgment.** Wait until you have heard and are sure you understand the entire message before you make decisions.

8. **Listen empathetically.** Seek to approach the message from the other person’s perspective instead of your own.

9. **Ask questions.** Questions show your interest and encourage the speaker as well as clarify the message for you.

10. **Stop talking!**

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Lesson Plan

Breakout Session: Interviewing Techniques
*Define Your Own Way* by Nicole Roberts Jones

**Learning Objectives**
The participant will recognize that leadership is a team process.
The participant will acquire basic interviewing techniques.
The participant will identify a mentor.
The participant will develop interview questions.

**Introduction**
The facilitator will introduce chapter 6 in the book *Define Your Own Way* by Nicole Roberts Jones, 'Who is on your team?' Only you can choose your team.
- Who is on your team?
- In whom are you investing your time and energy?
- Who is investing their time and energy in you?
- Who are your friends?

Who is your mentor? A mentor is a more experienced person who can guide you toward your goal.

Who is your motivator? A motivator is someone who consistently encourages you to work toward your dream and who helps keep you excited and on target.

Who is your counselor? This person is someone who will listen, will not allow you to wallow in the negative and who will help brainstorm ways to get you out of negative thoughts and circumstances.

Who is your confronter? A confronter is someone who will tell you the truth, tell it like it is, analyze and evaluate your behavior and tell you about it in a way to help you improve.

Who is your cheerleader? A cheerleader is someone who makes you feel good about who you are and where you are.

Who is/are your sista friends? A sista friend is someone you hang with, makes you laugh, and takes you mind off your stress.

Who is your mate? A mate believes in you, loves you unconditionally, and supports your dream.  

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Finally, who is your prayer partner? Your prayer partner is someone who prays for you, your situation and your well-being. The facilitator will provide suggestions to interview the participants mentor.

Activities

The facilitator will ask each participant to select a mentor (church member, family member, community person, etc.) and a Biblical mentor.

The facilitator will solicit suggestions of possible questions the participant might ask the mentor.

Suggested questions could include:
- How long have you been a member of the church?
- Did you participate or lead any activities, boards or ministries in the church?
- Do you consider yourself a leader?
- Is there any advice you could give me to help me grow?

The participant will gather information on her Biblical mentor.

The participant will interview their selected mentor.

Handouts
- Ten Tips for Effective Listening
- Interview Guidelines
Interview Guidelines

Revised from Oral History for the Local Historical Society by Willa Baums
Oral History Interview from Experience: Rev. Lavonia K. McIntyre

This information is adapted to fit church history interviews.

A. Determine what you need to know.
   a. Basic information on the person: names, dates, places; places of birth, deaths, marriage;
   b. More comprehensive information on specific individuals: church membership, church programs, projects, stories, feelings, opinions, explanations.

B. Identify the interviewee or interviewees who are likely to have the needed information.
   a. Interviewing the older members of the church is a priority.
   b. Members of the immediate family and other close kin may help you prepare interviews with older church members.
   c. Sometimes unrelated people have information on the family.

C. Determine the best way to gather the information.
   a. Interviews in person are ideal for collection of information locally.
   b. Telephone calls: Calls are used to save time and facilitate response for basic information.
   c. Letters: Letters may or may not yield information.
   d. Record information gathered in person and by telephone in writing.
   e. Inquires by mail should be short and to the point. Questions should be clearly stated and responses should be facilitated through questionnaire format and self-addressed, stamped envelope.

D. Prepare for gathering information.
   a. If possible, know as much basic information about the interviewee before the interview: names, residences, dates, places, etc.
   b. Determine the relationship of informant to you and other known family or church members.
   c. Outline questions for the interview. (Do not state questions word for word, but know the areas of information or list of specific people, places, events, etc.

E. Arrange for interviews with the interviewee.
   a. State the purpose for gathering information and how the information will be used.
   b. Indicate the kinds of information needed.
c. Set up a convenient time and place for the interview (approximately 1 ½ hours).

d. Arrive on time.

e. Interview one person at a time.

F. **Set up the appropriate material for recording information.** Pen and paper are needed for both recorded interviews. These are following suggestions for using a digital recorder.

   a. Secure a tape or digital recorder. Test to make sure it is in sufficient working order.

   b. A built-in microphone is usually sufficient. For persons who are difficult to hear, a remote microphone may be necessary.

   c. Familiarize yourself with the operation of the digital recorder.

   d. Upon arrival for the interview, be sure that there is a quiet room. Place the digital recorder on a table and within 5 to 7 feet from the interviewee.

   e. Check the battery level (use fresh batteries).

G. **Tape the interview in a relaxed fashion.**

   a. Turn the recorder on before the interview begins while you are still chatting with the interviewee. Test the recorder before the interview. Be sure to record the person’s entire name, date and place of interview.

   b. Leave the recorder running even for pauses and short interruptions. Allow the interviewee to answer the questions. Do not try to fill in all the pauses.

   c. Use prepared interview questions that were prepared in advanced to structure the interview, but be flexible if unscheduled, but relevant questions and information come up.

   d. Be a good listener. The interview is not a dialogue.

   e. Take notes during the recording on names, places, dates, events, etc.

   f. Limit the interview to 1 ½ hours. Additional interviews may be necessary.

H. **Provide for storage and retrieval of information.**

   a. Download the digital recorder onto a computer and label. Make a backup copy on a flash drive or cd for storage. Label the information, name, date, place, etc.

   b. Prepare an index of the interview. Record the major topics discussed during the interview.

   c. Determine how the information should be transcribed.

I. **Continue to assess information needs.**

   a. Review information

   b. Revise questions for the next interview.

J. **Enjoy!**
APPENDIX 8
PROJECT INFORMATION

Specifics

Registration Packets
   Pre-Test, Post Test, Oath of Confidentiality, Name Tags, Agenda, Worksheets,
Journal
   32 participants, 4 facilitators

Workshop props
   Color Paper for Groups
      Midwife, Choreographer, Weaver (purple), and Intercessor
   Paper Clips

Meals
   Dinner Friday: Chicken Salad, Pasta Salad, Tuna Salad, Green Salad, Crackers,
   Beverage, Cake (Sis. Annie Farrar)
   Continental Breakfast – Juice (apple, orange, cups), pastries, bagels and cream
   cheese (napkins, small plates), instant coffee and creamer (cups, sugar), fruit (bananas,
   apples)
   Lunch – Sandwiches (Lunch meat, bread, cheese, lettuce, tomatoes, mayo, honey
   mustard), Chips, Cookie or dessert, Water (Three Cases of Water) and Soda.
   Snacks – crackers, chips, fruit

Souvenirs
   Journal
   Books
   Candy
   Pen, Pencils
   Notebooks
   Folders

Honorarium for facilitators
   Rev. Juanita Sheppard
   Rev. Melissa Horton
   Rev. Amina McIntyre

Hotel Accommodations
   Pastor Lavonia K. McIntyre
   Rev. Amina S. McIntyre
Participant List

Facilitators
Pastor Lavonia K. McIntyre
Elder Juanita Sheppard
Evangelist Melissa Horton
Rev. Amina S. McIntyre

Saint John CME Church
1. Dorothy Jenkins
2. Sheila Dennis
3. Althea Rooks
4. Kation Watts
5. Glenda Grier
6. Latrice Thomas
7. Keisha Andrews
8. Monica Bostic
9. Tamara Benton
10. Katrina Whidby
11. Keisha Bridges
12. Eunice Davis
13. Barbara Whidby
14. Latoya Little
15. Mozal Mayfield
16. Tracy Douglas
17. Aderin Watson
18. Angela Bloodser
19. Kathi Roberts
20. Mattie Wilson

Various Churches
21. Minister Trameka Tinsley
22. Pastor Marquetta Brooks
23. Inez Brooks
24. Minister Marcenia Lawrence
25. Doris Moore
26. Shirley Brannon
27. Melissa Strozier
28. Dice Levirate
29. Wydean Davis

New Jerusalem Bible Church
Word Alive Ministries
Word Alive Ministries
Springfield Baptist
Word Alive Ministries
Springfield Baptist
Springfield Baptist
Springfield Baptist
Springfield Baptist

Only 32 slots were available to the members.
Greeting in the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ!

There will be a Women's Leadership Conference which will take place on Friday, September 14, 2012 from 6:00 pm – 9:30 pm and Saturday, September 15, 2012 from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm. This conference is sponsored by Pastor Lavonia K. McIntyre and St. John CME Church. We are inviting you to participate in this conference. There are only 32 slots available, first come first served. If you are interested please sign up. We are asking that participants attend both days.

Thank you

Pastor Lavonia K. McIntyre

Participants

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Scratching the Stained Glass Ceiling:  
*(Inspiring)* Women through the Voices of Other Women

The Women's Leadership Conference is the ministry project associated with dissertation process of Rev. Lavonia K. McIntyre. This conference was birthed out of a need to teach leadership skills to Women, provide inspiration a control through the voices of other women, and to provide a workable road map toward developing their true potential.

**Introduction**

leadership built on liberating justice

is a place to gain strength for the journey

so that we learn to live creatively in the tight circle of choices that are given to us by this social order we all live in

but also plot, scheme, and realize ways to craft that tight circle into a spiral of possibilities for this generation

and serve as the standing ground for the next generation and the next generation and beyond

Emilie Townes in her article *A Womanist Perspective on Spirituality in Leadership* writes in poetic form to portray women who are struggling to be leaders. As this poet aggressively steers us through the maze of stanza we are drawn into the vivid descriptions of the struggle, the pain, the uphill journey and the achievements women are engaged in to be a woman in leadership.

As women leaders we are on a spiritual journey. This does not say that it is not without triumph and struggles. The foundation of our existence begins with the family history and storytelling, religious beliefs and cultural influence. As we mature into adults

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we must build upon those foundational elements. We have, as Emilie Townes stated, “Learned to live creatively in the tight circle of choices that are given to us by this social order we all live in.” It is my desire to enlarge the possibilities for women in leadership.

Women in leadership have had a difficult time rising into positions of leadership in the church. Women in the local church are not realizing their dreams and or achieving their goals because of barriers which include sexism in the church and society, cultural differences and the inner struggles through various expected roles within their family structure. Women in the local church need proper nurturing, guidance and or support in the articulation or the manifestation of their ministerial visions and goals. This includes clergy and lay women. There are barriers such as sexism and cultural differences in church and society which pose challenging obstacles to the development of women in leadership positions. Women in the local church can be supported and resourced to fill positions of leadership.

An issue that is associated with the above ministry issue is the inner struggles of women relative to the various expected roles within their family structure, community and in the church. Women have been placed in specific roles based on culture and family. The motivation is to pave the way for other women who have goals and aspirations to see what they want to do but have roadblocks and obstacles standing in their way.

The purpose of this project is to encourage and inspire women who have the potential to be leaders by assisting them to develop leadership skills enabling them to step forward as true leaders within the local church, district-wide and globally. With this study I hope to inspire women to continue to seek after their goals and aspirations,
understand the culture of the church and assist future women who have the potential to become leaders.
Scratching the Stained Glass Ceiling:
(INSPIRING) Women through the Voices of Other Women

The Women's Leadership Conference is the ministry project associated with dissertation process of Rev. Lavonia K. McIntyre. This conference was birthed out of a need to teach leadership skills to women, provide inspiration through the voices of other women, and to provide a workable road map toward developing the participant's true potential.

The purpose of this project is to encourage and inspire women who have the potential to be leaders by assisting them to develop leadership skills enabling them to step forward as true leaders within the local church, district-wide and globally. With this study I hope to inspire women to continue to seek after their goals and aspirations, understand the culture of the church and assist future women who have the potential to become leaders.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


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