A Critical Analysis of ‘Policy Governance’ as a Model for Church Leadership.

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A Critical Analysis of ‘Policy Governance’ as a Model for Church Leadership.

Synopsis

In recent years, many churches have chosen to implement a form of governance known as Policy Governance (PG), a model originally developed by Dr. John Carver for the governance and leadership of non-profit organizations. The ideological core of PG is that effective leadership is the result of the establishment, and proper use, of policies; and the primary role of effective governing boards is to concern themselves with the establishment of those policies.

In order to achieve this the Policy Governance Model aims to produce a culture change in an organization, to create an environment where the board (eldership or leadership team in a church context) is set free from involvement in management in order to concentrate its time on providing an effective leadership function. The CEO (in the church context Senior Minister) is then correspondingly set free from board ‘meddling’, and so empowered to develop and exercise strategies that will achieve the organization’s goals. The board provides leadership by setting policies which are succinct ‘minimum verbiage’, global policies for the organization’s ‘Ends’ or mission objectives, and also Executive Limitation policies, or boundaries, within which the CEO is given total freedom to achieve the organization’s goals.

This study critically analyses the Policy Governance model, to assess its theological legitimacy in the light of the principles that underlie New Testament ecclesiology, and agrees with the consensus of scholarly opinion that the NT does not provide any prescribed model of church structure and leadership for all times and places. The position taken is, that it is the Trinity that informs the shaping of ecclesial communities, and the NT shows a process of development in the leadership structures of churches, having both pragmatic and theological aspects. Such a ‘developmental flux’ actually provides, subject to the NT essences for Christian ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΤΑ, a ‘divine permission’, or freedom, for churches to develop Trinity-reflecting structures appropriate to their context. The PGM does actually provide the freedom for a congregation to construct a model appropriate to its situation, a freedom reflecting the ‘divine permission’. The Carver model also uses language that resonates more with an organic rather than a technocratic model, and such a model allows the possibility of a congregation that reflects the ‘unity-with-functional-diversity’ characteristic of the Trinity. This reflects the model that we see in Paul’s ‘body’ analogy in 1 Corinthians 12, and which can allow the gifts and abilities of members to be harnessed in freedom for the benefit and growth of the whole.

However, a major concern is the question as to whether the PGM will foster an environment that encourages and nurtures the type of Trinity-reflecting communities witnessed by the NT. Other concerns relate to the secular nature of the Carver model,
which, if uncritically applied, may provide opportunity for the ecclesial vision of Christ to be usurped by the ‘principalities and powers’, resulting in a reliance on human endeavour for effective ministry, rather than it being a direct work of the Spirit and the grace of God. In the light of these concerns, an in depth analysis of five significant churches which have implemented policy governance, has been carried out involving pastoral staff, elected leaders and office bearers, and congregational members.

The dialogues with staff and members of these churches indicate agreement, by the overwhelming majority, that significant benefits in terms of the ministries and mission of the churches have resulted. However, there is also a widespread perception that there are negative effects, particularly in terms of a lessening of the accountability of the leadership to the congregation, and a diminution of pastoral care for members, which have resulted from the new models.

Despite the real concerns regarding the Policy Governance model however, our conclusion is that, in the light of the theological and pragmatic insights gained in this study, it is possible to construct an adjusted Carver-based model of governance for the contemporary evangelical church that would preserve its triune characteristics.
Acknowledgments

The production of a work like this is the fruit of several years of labour, particularly when it is carried out in the context of pastoring a very busy and growing parish. For it to be achieved, requires the support and assistance of many others, without whom the thesis would not have been completed. For this reason, I wish to acknowledge and express my thanks to a number of people for their contribution in various ways, primarily, to my wife Sandie for allowing me the time for the research, and for the development of the thesis, which often involved significant periods of absence from home.

My thanks go also to others: To the staff and leadership of Fairy Meadow Anglican Church who allowed me the time to do the work, and the members who encouraged me to persevere; to my supervisor the Rev. Dr. Jeff Pugh, of the Bible College of Victoria, for keeping me ‘on track’ with his helpful and insightful comments; to the Senior Ministers, staffs and members of the churches that participated in the study, who gave me their valuable time, and helped in many other ways; and to Vanessa Turner for proof reading the document.
Chapter 1 - Policy Governance - The Background

In recent years, many businesses and churches have chosen to implement a form of organisational governance known as Policy Governance (PG). The intention of this study is to carry out a critical analysis of the theory of PG, and of churches that have developed a Policy Governance Model (PGM). In this task, we will use a lens of theological indicators distilled from the New Testament for the development and mission of the New Humanity Christ came to form, and which we will call Ontological and Functional Essences. In this aim, it is important to note that we are not implying that the Bible can be used as an organisational, or church structure, text book; but rather that it paints a picture of the ethos which will shape a church wishing to reflect a New Testament inspired Christian ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΤΑ.

Background

The author of this study serves as the Senior Minister of an Anglican Church, and it is central to our annually reviewed Parish Vision document, that we seek to be a “Church for the 21st Century”. It flows from this that we are continually looking for ways to structure the church that will be more effective, particularly for evangelistic ministry, in this century, and in the Australian culture. Part of this ongoing self-assessment, is an examination of the governance of the church. If, as Le Roy Long Jnr asserts, “... patterns of governance determine how ecclesiastical systems work ...”,¹ then it may be that one way to help our ‘ecclesiastical system’ function better is to develop an improved form of governance.

To an extent, the governance of an Anglican church is controlled by Synod ordinances; however, beyond this there is a great deal of freedom regarding how a particular parish is governed, especially now in the case of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney,² which is loosening some of the former synodically imposed restrictions in order to encourage and facilitate evangelism. It is in this context that we wish to examine alternative

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² The diocese in which the author serves.
governance models adopted by various Australian churches, particularly that of Policy Governance.

One of the key values of our Parish Vision is that of ‘Flexibility’ in the way we do church and mission, and it is this which makes PG of particular interest because of its claimed potential to free up, and therefore empower, both eldership and pastorate in terms of the flexibility of their leadership, decision making and strategy development. Parish Councils, which are to a limited extent the governing ‘boards’ in the Anglican Church, have a marked tendency to bog down in a mass of management and maintenance matters, and so fail to deal adequately with the bigger issues, with a resulting failure to exercise appropriate leadership. It is in this context that the PGM may have something to offer by potentially freeing and empowering councils to provide leadership by concentrating on the bigger issues, and is therefore worth examination.³

**History**

The person usually accredited with the development of the Policy Governance Model, Dr. John Carver, sets out his basic thesis for a new empowering of boards for leadership in his book “Boards that Make a Difference”.⁴ An article on Dr Carver’s website claims Policy Governance to be-

> “an integrated board leadership paradigm . . . a groundbreaking model of governance designed to empower boards of directors to fulfil their obligation of accountability for the organizations they govern. . . . (which) enables the board to focus on the larger issues, to delegate with clarity, to control management’s job without meddling, to rigorously evaluate the accomplishment of the organization; to truly lead its organization”.⁵

A fundamental claim in the same article, is that Policy Governance separates-

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³ This is a perceived potential benefit in an Anglican context, but it is possible that the benefits PG may offer will vary according to the type of church context and ecclesiology.
⁵ The Policy Governance® Model; http://www.carvergovernance.com/model.htm
“issues of organizational purpose (Ends) from all other organizational issues (Means), placing primary importance on those Ends. Policy Governance boards demand accomplishment of purpose, and only limit the staff's available means to those which do not violate the board's pre-stated standards of prudence and ethics”.

An initial working definition of the Policy Governance Model, in the context of churches, is that it is a model where the board (eldership) seeks to create a ‘culture of trust’ by establishing agreed ‘policy’ boundaries within which the Senior Minister is entrusted with largely unfettered strategy and decision making freedom, without the need to consult boards or other stakeholders. In a sense, the Senior Minister, acting as a CEO, operates within an ‘ends justifies the means’ environment, to the extent allowed by Christian ethics. In fact, it is a key claim of the proponents of the Policy Governance Model that it is an Ends, or results, focussed model, in which the CEO is executively free to operate within result-orientated policy boundaries.

In parallel with the freedom granted to the CEO, the PGM is intended to liberate the board also from operational and management matters, so that it is freed to concentrate on the bigger and visionary issues; in fact, as Carver claims, “to truly lead its organization”. Such a result, if imported into the church context, may have the potential to be of great benefit for ministry and mission.

**Overall Aim**

Our ultimate purpose is to provide insights into a number of key issues regarding the legitimacy, and usefulness, of PG as a model for 21st century churches, and discern potential benefits of PG for the enhancement of Gospel ministry, these being:

Firstly, the issue of the structural and organizational implications of the theory of PG, that is the actual structure of the governance of an organization that results from the faithful application of PG theory.

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8. The Policy Governance® Model; http://www.carvergovernance.com/model.htm
Secondly, is the issue of the theological implications of PG, that is, whether a PG model of church governance is compatible with New Testament relational guidelines for Christian community, and the leadership of such a community.

A third issue, particularly important in the Australian context where many bemoan the missional ineffectiveness of the local church, is the pragmatic question of benefit. That is, the degree to which the implementation of the PGM does in fact bring about an empowering of boards and ministers, and to which there are demonstrated benefits for the facilitation of ministry, particularly mission, in the contemporary culture. In examining the basic assumptions of the PGM, a model developed for secular not-for-profit organizations, we will refer to contemporary theories of organisational culture: e.g. those discussed by E. Schein,\(^9\) and M.J. Hatch.\(^10\)

Further to the question of benefit, we will also examine whether PG is able to foster a more organic model of social structure as pictured in the New Testament,\(^11\) rather than the more common static, bureaucratic, and inflexible models often found in churches.\(^12\) Such a model would be one that is able to be changed by, and develop with “the numerous interactions that shape and transform social structures on a continuous basis”,\(^13\) in the world in which we do church, a world which is increasingly “different, more complex, more fast paced, and more culturally diverse.”\(^14\)

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In summary, the focus of the purpose of this study is to:

i. Understand the basic theory and claims of the PGM;

ii. Seek to discern the ‘essences’ that should shape a church wishing to sustain New Testament guidelines, as a lens for the examination of the PGM for the contemporary church;

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\(^9\) Edgar Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (3rd Ed, San Francisco: Jossey- Bass, 2004). Schein’s thesis is that in order to produce organisational change, organizations must become “learning cultures”, engaging in and leading through a constant process of change.


\(^11\) In this study we use the term “organic” to use the analogy of the church as a growing organism, rather than a technocratic or mechanical model.

\(^12\) Mary Jo Hatch, p.173. In static models “social structure stays fairly constant over a fairly long period of time”.

\(^13\) Mary Jo Hatch, p.173

\(^14\) Schein, p.393
iii. Examine whether the PGM delivers on its claims, particularly the impact of implementation of the Carver Model upon the culture, ministry and mission of a church; and

iv. Discern the degree to which it is legitimate, through adjustment of the Carver model, to construct a PGM for governance and leadership, and one that may offer potential benefits for church ministry and mission, particularly in the culture of twenty first century Australia.
Chapter 2 – Policy Governance Unpacked

John Carver’s basic thesis is that boards are usually made up of very competent “intelligent, caring individuals (who) regularly exhibit procedures of governance that are deeply flawed”,¹ five a situation that, it must be said, also arises on church boards, councils and elderships. The fundamental reason he gives for this is that the design of the board job description is usually poor, in that it “does not focus on the policy aspect of organization”,² resulting in the board being either tied up with management issues or just acting as a rubber stamp for the CEO. In either case the health and effectiveness of the organization is damaged. The key aim of the Policy Governance Model is to produce a culture change in an organization, in order to create an environment where the board is set free from involvement in management in order to concentrate its time on providing an effective leadership function. The CEO is then correspondingly set free from board ‘meddling’, and so empowered to develop and exercise strategies that will achieve the organization’s goals. Carver claims that PG can work whatever the board type that faces the task of governing.³

In this Chapter, we will outline the basic theory of the PGM as developed by John Carver, in terms of how the board and organization are structured and operate, and the intended outcomes of such a model. In Chapter 4, we will critically examine the model in regard to its appropriateness for church governance.

Policy As A Leadership Tool

Policy Governance draws a clear distinction between governance and management, such that governance is not just “management writ large”,⁴ but is a separate entity. An important claim for PG, one that may be of relevance for church boards and councils, is that “A modern approach to governing will enable a part time, possibly inexpert group of persons to lead”.⁵ This relates to a key aspect of the PGM i.e. that it is not the job of the

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¹ Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.9.
² Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.29.
⁴ Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.21.
⁵ Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.22.
board to manage, but rather to lead, and this is done by setting policies which “clarify, inspire and set a tone of discourse that stimulates leadership in followers”. In fact, for Carver, it is policy-focussed leadership that is the hallmark of (good) governance.

The intention of the PGM is that boards do not try to control every aspect and activity of the organization’s life, but rather aim to inculcate policies which will direct and shape the goals, strategies, decision making and functioning of a healthy organization. This is the culture change which is central to the aim of PG and which reflects more of an organic way of thinking, rather than a mechanistic or technocratic one. This would seem to have whispers of the New Testament’s organic ‘body of Christ’ ethos about it. Essential to Policy Governance is the concept of policies being used as a leadership tool, in fact Carver’s claim is that “policies . . . . . present the most powerful lever for the exercise of leadership.” The aim of the PGM is to provide greater strategic leadership, the achievement of which, according to Carver, requires “. . . the redefinition of policy and policymaking.”

In this model, the term ‘policies’ represents the ‘values’ and ‘perspectives’ of an organization. Values, that is what is believed to be important, dominate the policies which tell staff what to do or not to do, while perspectives, that is the ways of looking at things, dominate the policies that codify the board’s own processes and relationships.

In the PGM, it is assumed that all of an organization’s plans, activities, decisions etc. depend on its values and perspectives, whether these have resulted from considered debate or have arisen by default.

Carver’s argument is that policies, as an expression of values and perspectives, have a powerful effect on an organization’s operations and effectiveness, and if this fact is not recognised then negative effects can result, while if “recognised and properly used, . . .

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20 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.29
21 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.25
22 Organic is used here in the sense of being like a living organism, that grows, and self adapts in response to its environment. This in contrast to a technocratic model that, like a machine, is inflexible and does not on its own adapt to changing circumstances.
23 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.25
24 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.20
25 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.22
26 P. Drucker, The Effective Executive (London: Pan Books, 1967) pp. 57f. says that any organization has a “commitment to values . . . something the organization stands for”.
27 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.24
28 E. Schein, Organizational Culture and Leadership (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004) p. 25ff. illustrates this by his three levels of culture concept, where structures and actions ultimately spring from underlying beliefs and assumptions.
offer leaders the key to effectiveness."  

Here is the ideological core of PG, that effective leadership is the result of the establishment, and proper use, of appropriate policies, and it is the board’s primary job to establish and to pronounce them.  

**Policy Categories**

In the PGM, the policies that govern an organization are divided into four categories. Carver claims that the “. . . explicit use of these categories will profoundly alter the nature of board dialogue, documents, accountability, and, ultimately, the capacity for strategic leadership”.

**Ends or Mission Related Policies**

The primary role of the board in the PGM is to create and sustain the reason for the organization to exist, and this reason is the “production of worthwhile results”. The policies which deal directly with this, are the board’s Ends policies and relate to “the satisfaction of human needs”. Such needs may be those of the members of the organization, or other stakeholders. These Policies govern and clarify the Ends, or results, that the organization exists to achieve, thus the PGM is very much a results-driven model of governance, and therefore boards seeking to exercise the leadership-for-results function need to start in their policy-making with the human needs to be met.

A Carver type Ends policy has various characteristics-

i. It is outwardly focussed, or in Carver’s words “leadership for results begins outside”.

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29 Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p.24
30 Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p.25
31 Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p.30ff
32 Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p.34
33 Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p.50
34 Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p.50
35 In a church context such Ends could be described as “More and Better Disciples”, which is the Mission Statement of Careforce Church, Mount Evelyn, Victoria.
36 From a church perspective, the primary need is to be reconciled to God.
37 Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p.51
ii. It is one that avoids the mistake of confusing ends and means, or as Kirk puts it, “for a board to take advantage of the ends-means opportunity for governance, it must recognize the ways in which ends and means are confounded (sic),” or to put it another way, know the difference between ends and means.

iii. Carver states that, “A powerful Mission is a broad Ends statement”, and, that stating a mission, i.e. defining the Ends, “is potentially the most powerful, single action a board can take.”

An example of such a Ends-driven Mission statement is shown in Table 2.1.

### Table 2.1 METROPOLITAN INDIANAPOLIS BOARD OF REALTORS

**“ENDS POLICY”**

The Mission of the Indianapolis Board of Realtors is enhanced demand for Realtor services. In pursuit of this mission, MIBOR will bring about results in five areas:

1. A positive public image of Realtors.
2. A highly skilled Realtor membership.
3. A favorable environment for Realtors’ commerce in real estate.
4. Accurate and timely information and business tools for the conduct of Realtors’ business.
5. Free housing choice and equal professional services to all persons as prescribed by the Voluntary Affirmative Marketing Agreement and the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Realtors.

### Executive Limitations Policies

The Executive Limitation Policies (ELPs), set the boundaries within which the CEO and staff must operate when determining strategies to achieve the designated Ends. Such boundaries can be described as the standards of prudence and ethics, and represent

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39 Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p57. Is clear that “activities are always means”.
the limits of ‘unfetteredness’ which limit the choice of staff organizational, strategic and management means. In Carver’s words, “with regard to executive means the board should remain silent except to state clearly what it will not put up with”. In contrast to the Ends policies that are positive and prescriptive, the Executive Limitation policies are put in negative and proscriptive terms, that is they describe the freedom envelopes, or limits of ‘unfetteredness’, for the CEO’s actions.

In the PGM, the board’s only concern is to set value-based policy limitations for the executive and not be concerned with actions within those limitations. In this way “a small number of policies can enunciate the board’s values with respect to minimum levels of prudence and ethics”. Through this category of Executive Limitations the board, without any direct involvement, can control a large range of executive means, and this is claimed to be a far more efficient way of using the board’s energies and time.

These limit-setting policies deal with the realities of organizational life, and cover a whole range of organizational operations, such as financial, personnel, marketing etc. One example would be a limit setting policy that “establishes the boundaries of an acceptable monthly or quarterly financial status”. These policies should be “minimum verbiage” policies that are intended to give the board “control over the complexity and details of staff operations”, yet at the same time setting it “free from the complexity and details of staff operations”.

**The Board-Executive Relationship Policies**

The third Policy category is the set of policies that govern how the relationship between the board and the CEO operates. This Carver considers the most important single relationship in the organization, in part because the health of this relationship affects the degree of the CEO’s effectiveness. These policies deal with the manner in which power is passed to the CEO, and the executive machinery; and how the use of that power is assessed. They also deal with the board’s approach to delegation, and

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43 Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p.79
44 Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p.79
45 Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p.91
46 Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p.74
47 Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p.101
together with the Ends policies define the CEO’s job description. Carver sees “a powerfully designed CEO position” as a key to board excellence, particularly because it enables the board to avoid entanglement in management and concentrate on long-term leadership and vision.

In the PGM, the CEO is accountable to the board for achieving the results established by the board’s Ends policies, using any means available that are a “reasonable interpretation” of the board’s Executive Limitations policies. Beyond this, the CEO is completely responsible for the management and direction of the organization, and all staff are accountable to the CEO only, not to the board. If the board-executive relationship policies are well designed, the CEO can expect “the board to stay out of management”, and is thereby set free, and empowered, to creatively develop strategies which will achieve the required organizational results. It is in this policy category that the separation of the governance and management functions is most clearly emphasised as a fundamental component of the ethos of the PGM, and which requires a culture of trust to exist between the board and the CEO.

In this way, the Board in effect has only one employee, or person accountable to them, namely the CEO, who is solely responsible for the organization meeting its Ends. The CEO therefore, is the nexus through which all board delegation is channelled and all organizational accountability received. It is for this reason that the design of the board-CEO policy is so vital; a poorly designed one will either disempower the CEO through the board becoming involved in management, or reduce the board to little more than a rubber stamp. In this model the board functions, and only has authority, as a single entity such that the CEO is accountable to the board acting as a unit, not to any individual member.

In terms of evaluating the CEO’s performance “The CEO’s only job is to make everything come out right!”; or to put it another way the sole role of the CEO, and his sole accountability, is to achieve the board’s Ends policies without breaching its Executive

48 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.102
49 Carver John and Carver M, Reinventing Your Board, p.129
50 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.118
51 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.113
Limitations policies, as exampled in Table 2.2. The achievement of executively limited Ends is the only thing the CEO is charged to do, or to put it another way, “Monitoring executive performance is synonymous with monitoring organizational performance”; and so evaluation of the performance of the organization as against Board policies should be the only basis for evaluation of the CEO. It is important to note therefore, that evaluation of the CEO should only be against what he or she was clearly charged to do.

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<td>“City Manager Job Description.”</td>
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<td>As the Council’s single official link to the operating City government, the City Manager’s performance will be considered to be synonymous with organizational performance as a total. Consequently, the City Manager’s job contributions can be stated as performance in only two areas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. City government accomplishment of the provisions of Council policies on Ends.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. City government operation within the boundaries of prudence and ethics established in Council policies on Executive Limitations.</td>
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The Board Process Policies

This fourth policy category deals with the process of governance itself; i.e. the manner in which the Board carries out its duties in representing the ownership. This policy functions as the board’s job description, which in the PGM comprises three primary responsibilities, or job outputs, which Carver calls “the irreducible contributions of governance”.

52 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.106, cites a Board-CEO policy example from Burnsville City Council.
53 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.114, cites Summit Pointe “Monitoring Executive Performance” Policy.
54 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.115. The only evaluative questions to be asked regarding the CEO's performance are, “What did we charge the CEO to accomplish? What did we prohibit him or her from doing? How did he or she do against only those criteria?
55 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.134.
56 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.134
These are, firstly, to provide the linkage between the organization and the ownership, that is, as Carver puts it, “Boards are organs of ownership, not organs of customership (sic)”.\textsuperscript{57} Secondly, the Board Process policies deal with how the board will provide strategic leadership to the organization, that is the development and explication of the Ends policies, or the results desired by the ownership. The board’s task is “to determine not what the organization does but what it is for”.\textsuperscript{58} The third Board job output is to gain assurance of the CEO’s, in PG the same as organizational, performance.\textsuperscript{59} The criterion for judging the CEO/organizational performance is “any reasonable interpretation by the CEO of the board-set policies”,\textsuperscript{60} thus “the CEO can only be evaluated against two policies—Ends and Executive limitations”.\textsuperscript{61}

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The claim for the PGM is that it is through the discernment and implementation of these four categories of policies that the board gives and withholds the permissions that govern the goals, actions, limitations and strategies of the management function. In fact, as previously noted, Carver sees policies as the most powerful lever for leadership, a concept supported by the claim of Peters and Waterman that “Clarifying the value system and breathing life into it are the greatest contributions leaders can make”.\textsuperscript{62} Thus, the basic aim of PG is to redesign the board function to produce a board that is more effective, indeed one that “makes a difference” by providing “strategic leadership to the organization”.\textsuperscript{63}

**Accountability**

Public, non-profit organizations may have many stakeholders, e.g. taxpayers, suppliers, members, the public, patients, clients, students, supporters etc; however, in PG the accountability of the board is determined by a particular set of stakeholders described as the “Moral Ownership”.\textsuperscript{64} This is a term coined by Carver, and refers to a special class

\textsuperscript{57} Carver, John and Carver, M, Reinventing Your Board, p.48  
\textsuperscript{58} Carver, John and Carver, M, Reinventing Your Board, p.135  
\textsuperscript{59} Carver, John and Carver, M, Reinventing Your Board, p.117  
\textsuperscript{60} Carver, John and Carver, M, Reinventing Your Board, p.129  
\textsuperscript{61} Carver, John and Carver, M, Reinventing Your Board, p.119  
\textsuperscript{63} Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.34  
\textsuperscript{64} Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.120
of stakeholders defined as “those on whose behalf the board is accountable to others”. Many people may be stakeholders in an organization, as for example in the case of a state school where the parents and students are stakeholders, but it is the community at large that constitutes the ‘ownership’. The adjective ‘Moral’ is used to describe those who have a social obligation of trusteeship, not necessarily a legal one.

Diagram 2.1 – The Carver Accountability Graphic

A board may have responsibility to provide benefits to a range of people, covered by its Ends policy, but its accountability is to the Moral Ownership, those who “morally if not

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65 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.121
66 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.121. Uses ownership and trusteeship in a way that “are only occasionally legal realities”. 

A Critical Analysis of Policy Governance
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legally own the organization”. For this reason, Carver distinguishes between owners and beneficiaries (although on occasion they may be the same group) - e.g. in the case of a community hospital where the ownership is the community and the beneficiaries are the patients. The Moral Ownership therefore consists of those to which the board is accountable, and this group may be easily discerned as in the case of a city council, namely the voters who elect the Council, or less easily discerned as in the case of a health organization.

The board’s primary relationship is with the ownership, as shown in Diagram 2.1, on the behalf of which it acts as a trustee. The board is expected to reflect the values of the ownership, these values being the controlling influence on the board’s decisions and activities. Thus a board should lead by developing policies shaped by the values and perspectives of the ownership, not by the executive. The “Governing Style Policy” of the Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine shows a good example of the distinction between board and executive roles. Important statements in this policy are-

“The board will govern with an emphasis on (a) outward vision rather than an internal preoccupation, (b) strategic leadership more than administrative detail, . . . . (c) a clear distinction of board and chief executive roles, . . . .”

Designing Policies

One of the key faults with boards, according to Carver, is their job description, and so his purpose “is the redesign of the board job”. Carver requires that boards should have carefully constructed job descriptions that are specifically designed to create, shape and sustain the PGM: that is, to produce boards that ‘make a difference’ in terms of providing a strong leadership function through policy making. Such boards will be proactive in policy-making, rather than being reactive to management issues, or only an

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67 International Policy Governance Association. POLICY GOVERNANCE SOURCE DOCUMENT (www.policygovernanceassociation.org/PG-SOURCE-DOC.doc)
68 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p 123-Cites, in this regard, the example of the Canadian Mental Health Association, Winnipeg Ownership Policy which states that “The “moral ownership” of CMHA, Winnipeg Region Inc. shall be perceived conceptually as primarily as all persons residing within the boundaries of Winnipeg, and secondarily, all persons residing outside of Winnipeg.”
69 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p 125
70 Carter C, Lorsch J. Back to the Drawing Board: Designing Corporate Boards for a Complex World, (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2003) pp2 and 4. Claim that the root cause of the problems most boards have is that there is “inadequate attention to the way each board is designed”, and there is a need of a “thorough . . . overhaul of design and practice.”
71 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p 120.
approval-giving body that impinges too much on and/or duplicates the management function. In fact, Carver sees that when a board functions as an approval type board, of budgets, plans etc, this process actually cripples strategic leadership.\textsuperscript{72} An example of a well-designed policy, revolutionary for some, is where a board does not approve a budget at all but “enacts a board budget policy”.\textsuperscript{73}

\textbf{Policies Come in Sizes}

Policies in each of the four categories can be arranged by size, and as in the case of different sized mixing bowls (Carver) can be “nested” inside each other.\textsuperscript{74} The establishment by the board of the ‘values and perspectives’-representing global policy in each category, sets boundaries to the next level of policies, therefore limiting the number of decisions to be made at that level. This in turn limits the reach of the next level of policies and so on, as in the case of a decision to buy a new car. If the ‘global’ policy is that the value of the car cannot exceed $25,000, then ‘policy’ choices on engine size, transmission type etc. are limited by, that is ‘nest’ inside, the overall global policy decision.

This, what Carver calls the “logical containment of policies”, necessarily limits the work the board has to do.\textsuperscript{75} When the board, instead of trying to be involved at some level in the myriad of decisions required to be made in an organization, concentrates on setting the global policies in each category, then it only has to deal with those first level policies. The setting of these first order policies also limits, and therefore reduces, the volume of decision-making throughout the organization. It can be said that \textit{logical containment of policies} results in \textit{logical containment of decision-making}. Thus “The CEO . . . inherits the right to make choices within the second and subsequently smaller levels”.\textsuperscript{76} These choices are now smaller than they would have been if the board had not set the major policy, because these choices and policies have to ‘nest’ inside the major policy. For example in the budgetary area, if the board sets a global budget policy of a certain expenditure

\textsuperscript{72} Carver, \textit{Boards That Make a Difference}, p.27
\textsuperscript{73} Carter and Lorsch, p.9- Have a section on ways of designing boards in order to create behaviours which make the board more effective.
\textsuperscript{74} Carver, \textit{Boards That Make a Difference}, p.41
\textsuperscript{75} Carver, \textit{Boards That Make a Difference}, p.40
\textsuperscript{76} Carver, \textit{Boards That Make a Difference}, p.41
limit, then the CEO’s decisions on expenditure are limited to what will fit, or ‘nest’, inside that global limit.

The main aim of the Policy Governance Model is to produce a ‘trust environment’ in an organization, that is an environment where the board is set free from involvement in management and so empowered to concentrate upon providing an effective leadership function. Such leadership is given in two ways: primarily, by providing direction through the elucidation of Ends policies that state the desired outcomes of the organization’s operations, these Ends policies being the expression of the Moral Ownership’s values and perspectives. Secondly, the board defines the envelopes of freedom, Executive Limitation Policies, within which the CEO is set free from board meddling, and so empowered, by being trusted, to develop and exercise strategies which will achieve the organization’s goals.

In this chapter, we have examined the ideological core of PG, which is that effective leadership is the result of the establishment, and proper use, of policies; and the primary role of effective governing boards is to concern themselves with the establishment of those policies. As a basis for a critique of PG, we now turn in the next chapter to seek what can be distilled from the New Testament in regard to the shaping of church leadership.
Chapter 3 - The Voice of the New Testament

As a basis for analysing the PGM as described in Chapter 2, we will now seek to discern the theological indicators that can be distilled from the New Testament for the development, leadership and mission of the community that Christ came to establish. From this analysis, we will argue two things, firstly, that it is the Trinity which provides the basic model for Christ’s new community, and secondly, that the NT prescribes no specific structure for us to adopt. Rather, the NT evidences a process of development, with both pragmatic and theological aspects, that, subject to the NT essences for Christian ἁγιος, actually provides a ‘Divine Permission’, or freedom, for churches to develop Trinity-reflecting structures appropriate to their context.

Again, it should be noted we are not seeking to imply that the Bible can be used as an organizational, or church structure, text book; but rather to look at the picture the NT paints of the ethos which should shape a church wishing to reflect a New Testament inspired Christian ἁγιος. For, as Miroslav Volf says –

“An ecclesial model acquires theological legitimacy through an appeal to the New Testament witness concerning the church, and through reflection on how faith in the triune God and salvation in Jesus Christ is to intersect with the cultural locations in which churches live”. 77

Further, it is in the light of the NT voice that, as Moltmann reminds us, the church is required to “give an account of itself at all times to the God who has called it into being”. 78 In this context, one thing that should be stated at the outset, in contrast to Carver for whom an organization exists for the benefit of some human grouping, is that the owner of the church is the God who called it into being. 79 This flows from the fact that “God Himself is the owner of all things, and especially of His churches and the various ministries that

79 This Divine ownership is emphasised by Peter when he says that the church is a “people for His (God’s) possession” (1 Peter 2:9 RSV mg).
purport to be Christian”, not the congregation, or any subset of it. Paul reminds Christians of this divine ownership when he writes, “you were bought at a price” (1 Corinthians 6:20), and it is under this divine ownership that the NT witnesses to a number of characteristics that are of the essence for a church to be a church.

**A New Testament Shaped Church**

**Trinity Reflecting**

As one looks at the NT images of the church, we see a community of intimate relationships; primarily the relationships of congregational members with Christ, indeed this is what Jesus prayed for in John 17:21. There is however a second relational dimension in that, just as the stones in a building touch each other (1 Peter 2:5), and the branches of the Vine are intimately grafted onto the Vine stem (John 15:5), so the members of the congregation, the organs in the spiritual ‘body of Christ’, are intimately connected with each other.83

This relational dimension goes much further however than mere connectedness. The NT witness indicates that the church can be described as a mutually intertwined community, i.e. a community that reflects, but is not exactly the same as, the perichoroid nature of the Trinity.84 This is in fulfilment of Jesus’ high priestly prayer, that “all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us.” (John 17:21).85 Jesus’ prayer can even be seen as a prayer for a mutual indwelling of the church’s members with the members of the Trinity, which not only ultimately but according to Volf “should also be its present experience”.86
This Trinity-reflecting characteristic of the church,\(^{87}\) consists of a set of mutually nurturing spiritual relationships, such that the pain, or the joy, of one member affects the others, one which demands mutual care and responsibility (1 Corinthians 12:25,26), and that demands time spent in mutual encouragement and exhortation (Hebrews 10:25).\(^{88}\) Above all, those in this relationship are to sacrificially love each other “as I have loved you” (John 15:12). This relational dimension is why Miroslav Volf sees the primary definition of the church as being the “Image of the Trinity”, where the church is essentially a community of Trinity-reflecting relationships, the primary purpose of which is to reflect the image of God, indeed “to show what God is like to creation”.\(^{89}\)

It is clear that those called to participate in this Trinitarian reflection, through faith in Jesus Christ, are also called to reflect the eschatological new community.\(^{90}\) It is a community, as portrayed by the New Testament authors that “is the anticipation of the eschatological gathering of the entire people of God”.\(^{91}\) This is a community that is highly relational,\(^{92}\) and the NT indicates that an essence of the church of Christ is that it is marked by a spiritual intertwining of the lives of its members,\(^{93}\) which must be taken into account in any governance structure implemented.\(^{94}\)

**Organic**

Most of the images and metaphors for the congregation in the New Testament have an organic dimension,\(^{95}\) in that they picture it as a living thing, not merely an organization

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\(^{87}\) Where members are “members of each other”(Romans 12:5 RSV), in marked contrast with members of human organizations.

\(^{88}\) Ronald W. Richardson. *Creating a Healthier Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996) p. 25. expresses this as “no one lives or acts in isolation, and we are all affected by each other’s behaviour”.

\(^{89}\) Stanley Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman and Holman, 1994) p.230, 231, argues that the Divine image is in fact “fully present only in community”, so that in order to image God, Christians must seek to form the NT imaged ἔκκλησια.


\(^{91}\) Volf, p.128

\(^{92}\) Derrick Sherwin Bailey, *Sexual Relations in Christian Thought* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959) p. 267, says the church should increasingly reflect the eschatological community, a community “in whom . . . . (God’s) own nature should be mirrored”.

\(^{93}\) That is they form one (spiritual) body. (1 Corinthians 12:12)

\(^{94}\) Grenz, p.224 also sees the church as community that is intended to be the image of God, and is primarily a social rather that an individual concept.

\(^{95}\) Organic in the sense of a biological organism that is free to, and does, harness all available resources in the most efficient way to maximise growth, and will adapt to changing circumstances as required for this end. This is in contrast to a technocratic, meaning machine-like, model that operates according to a set of fixed rules and will not adapt unless told to. The NT pictures an organic model for the church (e.g. 1 Corinthians 12) rather than a technocratic (machine) model.
or structure. 96 Like all organisms, the church through its members is expected to reproduce by bearing fruit for the kingdom of God; 97 and, importantly for this study, this most readily happens when the environment, or culture, is most suitable.

**Functionally Diverse**

The Trinity-reflecting, organic nature, of the church means that the functional diversity of the Trinity should also be a characteristic of the congregation. 98 Thus, there is a variety of χαρισματα, all given for the “common good” i.e. the good of the spiritual organism, the Body of Christ, 99 as we see in 1 Corinthians 12:7. 100 Yoder notes Paul using the term the “fullness of Christ” to describe “a new mode of group relationships, in which every member of a body has a distinctly identifiable, divinely validated and empowered role”, 101 in contrast to the widely accepted social-ecclesiastical structures of today, 102 where only a few have “the special role of minister”. 103

**Servant Centred**

The church is to be a servant community, because servanthood is the very nature of the One who, while being God, “made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant” (Philippians 2:7). The NT signals the church to be a hupertassic community, 104 one where members are mutually submissive, 105 and follow Jesus example and instruction that they “ought to wash one another’s feet” (John13:14). It is to be a community where leadership is to be shown not by hierarchy, or status, nor by “great men exercising authority” (Mark 10:42-45), but by servanthood.

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96 We see this most strikingly when the church is pictured as a ‘Body’, the Body of Christ, of which each Christian is a member (1 Corinthians 12), but also when the Church is described as a plant, a Vine (John 15) onto which new Christians are grafted.

97 “This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.” (John 15:8)

98 The members of the Trinity each have particular emphasis in terms of function - the Father is the Creator, the Son the Redeemer of a fallen creation, and the Holy Spirit is the regenerator, teacher and guide.

99 When each part “is working properly”, the Body of Christ, the church, is built up - Ephesians 4:16 (RSV)

100 ἀπὸ τοῦ συμμέτρου is generally translated this way although ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ is absent. See Gordon Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1987) p.588

101 John Howard Yoder, p.47.

102 John Howard Yoder, p.48.

103 That the exercising of a variety of gifts for the building up of the whole is a model indicated for a variety of different NT churches, e.g. in Rome, Corinth and Ephesus, suggests that functional diversity is an essential characteristic for a “church” no matter where and when it exists, and this arises from the Trinity-reflecting nature of ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ. (Romans 12, Ephesus 4 and 1 Corinthians 12).

104 From ὑπερτασσόμενον e.g. Ephesians 5:21 meaning to “put ones self under”.

105 This is not to deny that in some situations there is need for a one way submission, e.g. from the led to those whose role it is to lead, however the leading itself must be as an act of servanthood.
Word Shaped

In Isaiah 55:11 God says of His Word “it shall accomplish that which I purpose”, and this is no less true of the way in which He shapes and guides the church ‘to be’ and ‘to act’ according to His purpose. We read in 2 Timothy 3:16 that it is the Word of God which teaches, reproves, corrects and trains the people of God, the members of the congregation.\textsuperscript{106} It is as God’s Word is taught and studied that it dynamically transforms the minds of the leadership and membership of a congregation, and so shapes the new community founded on Christ in the will and reflection of the Trinity, by whom it was called into being.\textsuperscript{107}

Christ Centred

We have already seen that the church should increasingly reflect the eschatological community, and just as that community is formed around God and His Lamb, as is seen in Revelation 5, so should the presence of God through His Christ be central to the church. The centrality of the presence of Christ in the definition of a true church is also highlighted by Volf, who argues, with Ignatius,\textsuperscript{108} “wherever Christ is there is the universal church”.\textsuperscript{109}

Purposeful

The NT voice however not only speaks ontologically, of what the church is, but also functionally, in that it signals a purpose for the church, that it is a community of sent ones, “as the Father sent me so I send (\textit{ἀποστέλλω}) you” (John 20:21). Indeed, it is ‘a church to go’.\textsuperscript{110} It is the achievement of the Lord’s, not man’s, purpose for the church, that must necessarily shape the leadership, and governance structures put in place.

\textsuperscript{106} Strictly speaking this is directed to one man, Timothy, but is clearly applicable for equipping any man (or woman) of God, as v. 17 indicates.
\textsuperscript{107} John Smythe “Works” 252 (cited by Volf p.132), expressed the view that it is biblical organization which is a mark of the true church for “God’s word doth absolutely describe unto vs the only true shape of a true visible church”.
\textsuperscript{108} Ignatius, Letter to Smyrna. 8.2
\textsuperscript{109} Volf, p.129
\textsuperscript{110} This ’sent’ nature of the church reflects the fact that God is a purposeful God, the God who “chose us in Christ” and predestined us according to “the purpose of His will . . . that we might be for the praise of his glory”. Ephesians 1:4, 11, 12.
This ‘sent’ function of the church is to be a missionary church, i.e. to engage the world alienated from God, as God’s ambassadors and agents of reconciliation between fallen humanity and God (2 Corinthians 5:18-20). The church is “. . . called and sent to be the unique community of those who live under the reign of God”; indeed to be the “. . . harbinger of the new humanity that lives in genuine community, the form of companionship and wholeness that humanity craves”.\textsuperscript{111} It is an obvious, and logical, outworking of the concept of the church as a Trinity-reflecting community, that the church should reflect the God who “so loved the world” (John 3:16) by exercising God’s type of love to the world through the church’s “ministry of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:18,19).\textsuperscript{112} This functional dimension is particularly relevant in the context of discussion of the ability of PG to facilitate the church’s ends or purposes.

**Legitimated Leadership**

Few would argue with the proposition that human bodies, institutions etc. need both leadership and organization if they are to be effective in achieving the goals and aims for which they exist. Such is no less true of the church, which, while it has many other dimensions, is at one level an organization.\textsuperscript{113} In Paul’s famous body analogy in 1 Corinthians 12, this body is not just any random collection of organs,\textsuperscript{114} but rather is an organized body; one, if it is to be healthy, in which the organs are arranged as a functioning unit, according to God’s purpose (1 Corinthians 12:24).\textsuperscript{115}

Importantly in the context of this study, the NT assumes that certain ‘organs’ in the body, namely those with leadership gifts, are necessary and will appear (e.g. Romans 12:8, Ephesians 4:11f).\textsuperscript{116} It is in their use of these gifts, that the leaders are to be held

\textsuperscript{111} Darrell L. Guder (Ed), *Missional Church* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1998) p.103
\textsuperscript{112} Grenz *Theology for the Community of God* pp. 29-30, puts the Kingdom and community motifs together, and sees the purpose of the NT shaped community as establishing the Kingdom of God
\textsuperscript{113} While some would argue that there is no leadership in the Trinity, it seems to this writer that the Father provides the leadership function- it is his work that Christ carries out as in John 5:36.
\textsuperscript{114} As Paul asks, what use would the body be if it were all eyes! (1 Corinthians 12:19).
\textsuperscript{115} John Howard Yoder, Preface viii, describes the church as a “polis”, “namely, a structured social body (which) has its ways of making decisions, defining membership, and carrying out common tasks.”
\textsuperscript{116} K. Giles, *Patterns of Ministry Among the First Christians* (Melbourne: Collins Dove, 1989) p.54 describes the church as “a living organism where leadership emerges to bring about the full maturity of every member”.

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accountable for the equipping of the saints (Ephesians 4:11), in order to lead the church to maturity (v.13), so that the body grows and builds itself up in love (v.16), such that in His body Christ is glorified. In the NT communities, leaders, as God’s stewards, are accountable to the congregation for godly leadership (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9), and this will depend upon the degree to which the leaders are themselves being shaped and guided through the Word. Accountability is not however one way, for the NT also holds the membership of the new communities accountable for supporting the leaders in their particular role.

None of the characteristics discussed above prescribe a particular structure or leadership model for later churches. However, they do suggest ontological and functional factors, which are of the essence for the ecclesial community that Jesus came to establish, and which any governance model for such a community at any time in history would be required to both facilitate and nurture.

The Developmental Flux

Words and Models

When it comes to matters of church governance, a general overview of NT scholarship on this issue indicates that, rather than there being any clear NT-promoted governance model for the church, what actually seems to confront us is some confusion, at times ambiguity, and a developmental flux. Volf’s view is that “exegetes speak of the several

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117 John indicates that leaders are to be held accountable for how they lead, and indeed the congregation is to “test the Spirits to see whether they are from God”. This he says to a congregation in which there were (or had been) ungodly leaders (prophets - 1 John 4:1).

118 For example, the members are to “obey your leaders and submit to their authority” (Hebrews 13:17); give elders double honour, especially those who lead through preaching and teaching (1 Timothy 5:17); and to protect them against slander, through the requirement for multiple witnesses (1 Timothy 5:19).

119 Such a community is what we might call a ‘Community-with-a-Purpose’, and to be effective, needs both organization and leadership. As Paul indicates in 1 Corinthians 12:17-26, it would be pointless if there was not structure and order to the body with all the required organs in place. Moreover, if all were disorderly and chaotic, the body (congregation) would be like an army where the bugle did not give direction in terms of warning and command (1 Corinthians 14:8) i.e. a situation where there was no clear command and control structure. So says Paul, in the church “everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way”. (1 Corinthians 14:40)
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A Biblical Mandated Model

One view of the church is that of Alexander Strauch, who calls for a return to what he describes as a biblical model of eldership, \(^{122}\) and argues that this was a collegiate, flat-management type, eldership, mandated for all times. \(^{123}\) While Strauch’s basic thesis is at odds with most scholarly views, his assertion that there was some movement from a flat management collegiate structure to a \textit{primus inter pares} model, \(^{124}\) does indicate a pragmatically driven development over time in the NT churches. \(^{125}\)

The Charismatic Versus Office Debate

One significant area where there is uncertainty is in the issue of how leaders in the NT church came to be leaders. Some commentators see the NT picture of leadership as a matter of \(\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha\tau\alpha\), that is those who were the leaders in the NT churches became so because they had a natural \(\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha\) of leadership, \(^{126}\) which was evident to others, \(^{127}\) such as indicated in Romans 12:8 where the use of \(\pi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\alpha\mu\epsilon\nu\sigma\) appears to refer to a specific \(\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha\) of leadership. \(^{128}\)

Campbell argues, \(^{129}\) that in Paul’s churches leadership was exercised by those who had self evident leadership \(\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha\), and it was only later, when the number and spread of

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\(^{120}\) Volf, p.21
\(^{121}\) Volf, p.17, cites Franz-Xavier Kaufmann, \textit{Kirche}, p7, as seeing these differences as “. . . the best chance of survival.”
\(^{123}\) He then seems to weaken his position to an extent by allowing that there were both \textit{primi inter pares} and \textit{primus inter pares} principles operating in the NT- That is “firsts” and “first” among equals.
\(^{124}\) Strauch, p.47f. Notes that Jesus chose Peter, James and John as \textit{primi inter pares} among the twelve, and Peter as \textit{primus inter pares} within those three, with Paul also adopting the \textit{primus inter pares} principle with Timothy (1 Tim. 5:17).
\(^{125}\) Strauch, pp.47-49. That is the development of a first among equals, who is a leader set apart (and possibly paid) for the purpose of maximising time for ministry
\(^{126}\) As part of this argument, it is claimed that the reason Paul (in what some claim to be the truly Pauline letters) does not mention elders, is because “for him leadership is about charisma not status.”
\(^{127}\) In this view leadership was by the Spirit-driven use of the gifts of certain members without any officially elected leadership. Such a view is often based on Paul’s body model for the church where the Spirit gives gifts (1 Cor. 12:7) some of which are leadership gifts, such as prophecy, knowledge, teaching etc, in the sense that they give direction to the congregation.
\(^{128}\) George Wigram, \textit{The Analytical Greek Lexicon of the New Testament} (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1983). Has \(\pi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\alpha\mu\epsilon\nu\sigma\) as meaning to set over, to appoint with authority. The middle voice participle as used in Romans 12:8 has the sense of to preside, superintend, or govern.
\(^{129}\) R. Alistair Campbell, \textit{The Elders} (Edinburgh: T and T Clark,1994 ) p.189
churches required a more structured organization,\(^{130}\) that appointed elders appeared.\(^ {131}\)

In the charismatic leader view God just raised up leaders with the appropriate gifts for the church at the time.\(^ {132}\)

Contrary to this view however, is the argument for a more structured church, one with ‘appointed’ leaders who were ‘office’ bearers.\(^ {133}\) It may have been of course that those appointed were already recognised as those gifted for leadership, and all Paul was doing was ratifying their position.\(^ {134}\) However, when we come to the Pastoral epistles we do find instruction by Paul to Titus (Titus 1:5-9) to appoint elders in every town,\(^ {135}\) and in his selection criteria there is no specific mention of a \(\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha\) of leadership.\(^ {136}\)

Whatever the case, it seems clear that by the time of the writing of the Pastoral letters, there are indications that leadership was becoming a more formalised affair. Again, it is important to note, a point to which we will return, that we see a trend of ‘development’ in the nature of leadership with time.

**Leadership Terms**

In the NT, the terms we most commonly meet for leaders are \(\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\iota\upiota\sigma\rho\sigma\), \(\epsilon\pi\iota\sigma\kappa\omicron\omicron\omicron\sigma\) and \(\delta\iota\alpha\kappa\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\sigma\), in English, Presbyter, Bishop and Deacon, or Elder, Overseer and Deacon. However, when it comes to the exact meaning and function of these terms, there seems to be quite a degree of ambiguity, which probably accounts for what is a quite varied range of views among biblical scholars.

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\(^{130}\) For example, at the time of the Pastoral Epistles.

\(^{131}\) Sohm cited by Campell, p.7, “Such a church knows nothing of legal organization. Christ is head and His authority is recognised through the use of the \(\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha\).”

\(^{132}\) If however this was the case, that there were not appointed elders in the Pauline churches, we are still left with the problem of the statement in Acts 14 by Luke that records Paul as appointing elders.

\(^{133}\) For example when “they” (Paul and Barnabas) appointed (\(\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha\)) \(\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\iota\upiota\sigma\rho\sigma\) in Acts 14:23, this implies a more structured leadership rather than one where only those with the recognised \(\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha\) of leadership led.

\(^{134}\) Another possibility is that he may have recognised his own gifts in them.

\(^{135}\) \(\kappa\nu\theta\iota\sigma\tau\iota\mu\alpha\) meaning to place set, appoint

\(^{136}\) H. Kung, *The Church* (London: Search Press,1968) p.393, Argues that it may also have been the case that both structured and charismatic leadership existed side by side, as in a sense they still do, and that “charisma and diaconia are correlative concepts”, such that we can speak of a “fundamental and charismatic structure to the church”.
Elder (Πρεσβύτερος)\textsuperscript{137}

This is a term of considerable uncertainty with a range of views among scholars, for example, who were the elders Paul ‘appointed’ in Asia and how were they selected? Were they ‘charismatic’ elders as described above,\textsuperscript{138} where Paul merely formalised their position?\textsuperscript{139} Were they the result of an election process?\textsuperscript{140} Was the selection and appointment by Paul alone?\textsuperscript{141} Alternatively, did eldership arise from Christians already recognized as important community members,\textsuperscript{142} wealthy and heads of significant families,\textsuperscript{143} to whom respect was instinctively given,\textsuperscript{144} such that they naturally became leaders?\textsuperscript{145} Again, in the case of the Jerusalem ‘elders’, it is not certain what these elders were,\textsuperscript{146} the only thing being clear is that they existed and had a recognized status alongside the apostles.\textsuperscript{147}

Bishop (Επίσκοπος, Μονοσκόπος)

Here there is similar uncertainty as to the meaning of the term ‘Bishop’ in the NT, but it seems to relate more to being an ‘overseer’,\textsuperscript{148} i.e. to function rather than official position.\textsuperscript{149} In Acts 20, Paul in warning the Ephesian πρεσβύτεροι (plural) to guard the flock “of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers”, uses the term επίσκοποι,
It seems Paul is talking to people who have a status of elder (v.17), but their function is that of bishop, i.e. an overseer of the church of God (v.28). Later, in the Pastoral epistles, we see evidence of elder, bishop synonymity. When Paul writes to Titus in 1:5, he instructed him to appoint elders (πρεσβυτέροι) in every town, but then (v.7), as he lays out the requirements for such elders, switches the word for those being appointed and starts to use the term Bishop (ἐπίσκοπος). Further, it can be argued that later on in the development of the church another role, not yet being given a title, is emerging; that of the μονοσκόπος. What can be said is that there seems to have been a development in the meaning and role of the ἐπίσκοπος, away from synonymity with πρεσβυτέρος.

**Deacon (Διακόνος)**

This again is a term with wide currency in the ancient world, and its meaning also is somewhat unclear. It is sometimes said that the first Christian Διακόνοι (deacons) appear in Acts 6 in the context of the problem of food distribution to Hellenistic widows, however this is arguable. What importantly we do see here however, is the pragmatic development of some sort of structure, even if not recognised as such, to meet the ministry needs of the time. We do find Διακόνοι named as such elsewhere in the NT.

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150 K. Giles, Patterns of Ministry Among the First Christians (Melbourne: Collins Dove, 1989) p.87, sees more than one Bishop because there was more than one house church, and the council of elders was an overarching structure for the town or city.

151 Grenz, p.727. Argues that in effect the terms are effectively synonymous.

152 The position of this study is that Paul was the author of the letters to Timothy and Titus.

153 Campbell, p.122. Argues for the interchangeability of the two terms, his view being that house-church leaders were called ἐπίσκοποι (Overseers) who were also πρεσβυτέροι (elders) in the sense of their social standing as house owners and well-to-do, not because of office. These ἐπίσκοποι were together the elders of the church, where the church was the collection of house churches in a city.

154 This is the single bishop, or overseer, who had oversight over several house churches, and sometimes in several towns, as exemplified by Titus (1:5), a role more like the overarching authority figure which is more familiar to modern day Christians.

155 It is certainly the case that the μονοσκόπος was an established figure and role by the time of Ignatius, at least in his area of influence.

156 Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch. Ephesians 5:3. In his letters Ignatius, assumes that the churches of the Roman province of Asia have μονοσκόποι over them, and this bishop has for Ignatius a very high status, as one who stands as a representative of the whole congregation, and someone who should not be resisted.

157 The term where used in the early NT church largely refers to an elder-bishop of a house church, although there is disagreement about their origin, status and role. Then by the time of the Pastorals there appears to be some development (although still not named) to the existence of the μονοσκόπος, a role specifically named, and assumed to be the norm, at least in some areas, by the time of Ignatius.

158 Giles, p.49f. canvasses this.

159 Giles, p.49f. states “there is in the NT a confusing range of the uses of the διακόνος (from διακόνειν) group of words which is used “non-theologically and theologically in a number of ways.”

160 The base meaning of the verb διακόνειν is to “wait on tables” or “to serve”.

161 The seven chosen for the task are not actually called Deacons here, and several of them move on from this primarily servant task to other ministries. For example, Philip in Acts 8:4-8 and 26-40.

162 In 1 Timothy 3:8-13 the deacon is clearly differentiated from the elder-bishop in the previous verses by a similar but separate set of selection criteria.
record, but this does not seem to relate to a specific office. Whatever the exact case, on the basis of the NT evidence the role of deacon was not one of primary leadership, but rather a secondary support function to the elder-bishop.

The above is, as necessitated by space, a very brief overview of the issues, but importantly, what is indicated to us by the NT evidence, is the development of a ministry **structure**, if an informal and varying one, in the NT churches. Later, Ignatius indicates three types of ministerial position, the bishop, the presbyter, and “my fellow slave the deacon Zotion”, again implying a church structure.

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**The Divine Permission**

While the NT does not prescribe a particular church leadership model, what the NT story reveals to us is a process of development and evolution in the way the leadership function was executed. This ‘developmental flux’ seems to have been influenced by two factors, a pragmatic need for organization, and a concern for theological purity.

**A Pragmatic Need**

In the initial stages of the NT drama we see Paul and others travelling, winning converts, setting up churches, and either sanctioning the functioning of charismatic leadership or personally appointing ‘official’ elder-bishops. However, there would have come a time when the apostles would have no longer been able to visit and

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163 For example in Philippians 1:1; Titus 3:1 and 8; 1 Peter 4:11, and in the latter there seems to be reference to certain people with the gift of servanthood who are exhorted to serve in such a role.
164 Giles, p. 87. Argues that in the Pastorals there are a number of house churches in which *ἐπισκόπος* is the title given to the host and leader of the house church, and *διδάκτης* is the title given to senior respected Christians who provide a general caring ministry to group members.
165 Giles, p. 59f. Sees the *ἐπισκόποι* as hosts of house churches while *διδάκται* are senior members.
166 Giles, p. 68. Indicates a possible way in which the deacon as an office may have developed from a function.
167 Ignatius, Magnesians 2
168 This model was not however ubiquitous, for Clement of Rome’s First letter to the Corinthians does not imply a *μονοβασιλέα* in that city.
169 W.K. Lowther Clarke (ed), *The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1937) p. 24 says that in regard to a monarchical bishop there is “no hint of a person in this position in Corinth”.
170 Or both initially, the evidence is unclear.
oversee the increasing number of churches.\textsuperscript{171} If the new churches were not to become isolated and unguided units then a replacement leadership structure for local churches and the wider Christian movement would have become a practical necessity.\textsuperscript{172}

For instance, early on in the life of the fledgling church in Acts 6, we see the choosing of seven men for the servant task of organising food distribution as a response to the exigencies of ministry demands. This is a small but important example of the church creating specific ministries and developing a church structure, even if they did not think of it as such, on the basis of what is required for the ministry and mission needs of the hour. While this may appear primarily to be a pragmatically driven response, it is also a theologically based decision. One which was made to ensure that the mission of the church was not hampered by the ‘Twelve’ being sidetracked away from their primary God-given ministries of Word and prayer. This was not a hierarchical ‘pulling rank’ exercise, but an example of Trinity-reflecting, egalitarian functional differentiation.\textsuperscript{173}

As the number of churches increased in a city, the leaders (elder-bishops) of the house churches would have had cause to meet as a leadership college, or council, for the church in the city, even if initially only on an informal basis.\textsuperscript{174} With the increase in the number and spread of churches, there would have been a corresponding rise in the number of ministry, organizational and theological issues that needed attention. It was to deal with such issues that Paul located specific people ‘on site’, for example Titus and Timothy, and thus arose the de facto area overseer, who in effect functioned as a मोनोσκοπος.\textsuperscript{175} The fact that the words ἐπισκόπος, πρεσβύτερος and διάκονος appear to mean different things at different times and places is also an indication of what we might call a governance flux.\textsuperscript{176} This developmental process, is further argued by Giles when he says that “ . . . Luke consistently implies that leaders rose to meet specific needs on a

\textsuperscript{171} Often because they were in prison, had died, or because of the sheer number of churches and their geographical spread.

\textsuperscript{172} Even in the OT we see examples of the same sort of pragmatically driven evolution of ministry structure as when Moses under the urging of his father-in-law appointed judges/elders to assist him in his ministry because of its heavy demands. Exodus 18:13-27.

\textsuperscript{173} By the time of Ignatius this had been lost, at least in some areas, and subverted to an hierarchical structure, as exampled by the formation of the supreme मोνοσκοπος.

\textsuperscript{174} It is such a group, elders who are seemingly leaders of the churches in Ephesus, that Paul summons to give his last instructions in Acts 20.

\textsuperscript{175} Giles, p.85. Sees this developmental process in train when he says that the pastoral letters provide “the most advanced picture of Christian leaders found in the New Testament” and are “a development and not a radical departure.”

\textsuperscript{176} We have already seen that even Strauch, who argues for what he considers to be a NT mandated flat management leadership model for all times and places, is forced to allow some movement from his collegial structure, to a primus inter pares development, even a paid one, for pragmatic reasons.
quite pragmatic basis”, and “In the Apostolic age, church life was dynamic and fluid. Leaders emerged to meet needs, and as the Holy Spirit initiated”.

Even the limited evidence of the NT shows us that there was a process in train, which was not totally theologically-driven, but in part required by the ministry and organizational exigencies of the growing and spreading church seeking to carry out God’s program. Further, the cultural context in which churches minister changes, and so, while the ontological and functional essences of the church remain the same, the way the church engages the presenting culture will need to be in flux, as will its leadership model, in order to meet contemporary mission needs.

Theological Purity

A second reason for the Developmental Flux, appears to have been a perceived need to maintain theological purity, out of a concern to protect the church against the activity of the ‘Powers’ (εἰκόστοιχον Ἐφεσίων 6:12). H. Berkhof, understands the “rulers of this age” (1 Corinthians 2:8), as being “super earthly realities” who are identical with the Powers, and it was these invisible Powers that lay behind, and used, the visible authorities of “Jewish piety, the law and the Roman state”, to bring about the crucifixion of Christ. Paul is aware of the danger of the Powers when he warns the Colossians “See to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human traditions, according to the Powers (στόιχεια) and not according to Christ” (Colossians 2:8).

One way in which the Powers may have threatened to damage the ministries of the new churches, was possibly through the incompetence, due to immaturity, of the membership to govern themselves. Fundamentally, while the NT has a very high view of the church as the bride of Christ (e.g. Revelation 21:2), there is also ample evidence

177 Giles, p.8
178 Grenz., p.28. Argues that the church, is a community that is commissioned to be an agent of God’s program, that is the establishing of the Kingdom of God, “that order of perfect peace, righteousness, justice and love that God gives to the world”.
179 Paul also uses a number of other names.
181 Walter Wink, Naming the Powers (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984) p.5. Sees the “principalities and powers” as having two poles, that he calls “the inner and outer aspects of any given manifestation of power”. The inner pole is the spirituality, the inner driving force, of organizations, institutions, corporations and structures. Outwardly, these take the guise of political systems, appointed officials, laws, the church, nation or economy. A Power becomes demonic when it places itself above God’s purpose.
182 As churches were established, they were often led by immature Christians, such immaturity being an opportunity for the Powers to gain control.
of its imperfections in terms of false teaching and spiritual immaturity. This created a need to provide safeguards against the activity of the Powers, in order to maintain theological purity, and this would have been one of the factors driving the governance and leadership dimension of the Developmental Flux.

In this context, we see Paul putting leaders in place to be accountable for, among other things, the theological purity of the churches, for example in asking Timothy to stay in Ephesus in order to “command certain men not to teach false doctrines”, “nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies” (1 Timothy 1.3,4). Similarly, Paul leaves Titus in Crete to deal with the false teaching of what appears to be a party of Judaizers “the circumcision group” (Titus 1:10). He also commands Timothy to rebuke where necessary from the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16).

Again, John in his letter to the “elect lady” (2 John 1) instructs the church to put what can be described as a ‘policy’ of exclusion in place, to refuse fellowship to heretical teachers, again to protect the theological purity of the church. Conversely, in 3 John 5-8, Gaius is instructed to continue his ‘policy’ of helping travelling teachers of true doctrine.

While it is true that the NT pictures a high view of the church, it also provides a reality check in acknowledging that the Powers are at work in human agents (Ephesians 6.12). This fact led the NT churches to put in place strategies (even if not consciously recognised as such) to keep the church on track. These included –

i. The acknowledgement, or election, of leaders: presbyters etc. and authority figures such as John. (3 John 9)
ii. The placement of leaders (e.g. Timothy, Titus etc) in specific locations to provide correction and guidance.
iii. The encouragement of polices that support and protect orthodox ministry. (3 John 5-8)
iv. The implementation of policies (boundaries) that exclude false teaching. (Titus 1:10, 2 Timothy 3:16)

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183 The depressing range of issues that Paul had to deal with in Corinth is one example of this. The pages of the NT also indicate that the writers were dealing with many non-Christian influences in the fledgling church, Judaizing, Gnostic, Docetic, among others.

184 Those who effectively wanted to demand that people must take on the demands of the Jewish law in order to become Christians.
v. The implementation of ‘limitations’ on the behaviour of church members (1 Corinthians 5:1-5).

vi. The exhortation to use the power of the Spirit to oppose the Powers through incessant prayer (Ephesians 6:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:17).

All this indicates a concern for the maintenance of the pure gospel in the face of corrupting spiritual influences. This concern resulted in the implementation of structures, limitations and boundaries, in order to maintain control of immature leaders and members, and resist false teachers.

As we seek to develop church leadership and governance structures for contemporary churches, one of the most helpful things to be gained from the NT is that there was a development process in train, one influenced by both pragmatic and theological concerns. It can be argued that this developmental flux may well be the reason there appears to be a number of models of leadership hinted at in the NT at various times, but that is as far as it goes, and none of these hints clearly mandates a model for the church wherever it exists. For this reason we can agree with Volf who remarks-

"the NT does not contain any unified, theologically reflected view of church organization, but rather only the various witnesses concerning the manner in which the early churches regulated their own lives within various cultural spheres. Hence, any biblical grounding must be based within a theological framework if it is not to degenerate into mere biblicism". 185

Banks, 186 also argues for an unclear voice in regard to leadership models, in that “the varied and imprecise terminology used by Paul, its comparatively infrequent and unemphatic occurrence in his letters . . . all confirm the view that formal positions within the communities are nowhere in mind”. 187

185 Volf, p.245
186 Banks, p. 150
187 This unclear voice may well be the reason that contemporary scholars have a variety of views on how NT churches were led and also on the meaning of such terms as presbyter, bishop and deacon.
The Shaping of Leadership

As we have seen, the NT does not prescribe a specific church leadership model, however we have seen that it is possible to distil factors, essences and permissions, which should influence the establishment of the governance and leadership structures of a church wishing to be shaped by the NT witness. These can be stated as - Ontological and Functional essences, and the Divine Permission.

Ontology and Function

Our study so far reveals that there are certain *sine qua non* characteristics regarding what the church is (ontology) and what it does (function), if it is to be a church shaped by the NT witness and faithful to Jesus missional mandate for His new community. The NT picture of the church is that of a dynamic, Trinity-reflecting, spiritual organism that is highly relational; a community in which members are intimately members of each other; one which reflects the relationships within the Trinity; an eschatological community, that “is the anticipation of the eschatological gathering of the entire people of God”.\(^{188}\) It follows that any leadership and governance model put in place for a church, must be one which nurtures, facilitates, protects and promotes the organic-triune community of relationships between functionally diverse members.

It is however, not just a question of what the church is, but what the church does. God has created and designed His church for a purpose, that is, to build His Kingdom, indeed to “co-operate with him in the completion of the divine program for history”.\(^{189}\) The implication of this is, that the leadership in place must be such that the Spirit-given gifts of the individual members of the congregation are harnessed, developed and released for the purpose of God’s program.

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\(^{188}\) Volf, p.129  
\(^{189}\) Grenz, p.125
The Divine Permission

Arguably, the reason the NT does not speak clearly regarding a model of church leadership and structure is that God was quite frankly not interested in giving us one! With great implication for leadership and governance in today’s church, this divine omission, of a prescribed leadership model, can be argued to be a divine permission, for the development, with due cognisance of the NT essences for Christian community, of appropriate models to meet the ‘needs of the hour’.

Beside the theological winds that informed and sculpted the NT and early churches, there are two other factors that appear to have been influential in the shaping of early church leadership. Firstly, the need arose for organizational flexibility as the church grew and spread, according to the situation of the time. Secondly, as the NT witnesses to us, there was a need for maintaining the theological purity of the spreading church against the corrupting influences of false teaching imported from the religious smorgasbord surrounding the growing church. There is no reason to think that we have less permission than the NT Christians, to construct governance models today that, while shaped by the ontological and functional essences of the NT witness, meet the ‘needs of the hour’.

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To this point in our study, we have reviewed the aims and claims of the Carver type Policy Governance model for not-for-profit organizations, and in this chapter sought to discern the voice of the NT in regard to issues of governance and leadership for churches wishing to reflect that voice. In the next chapter, we will critique the Carver model, as a model for churches, through the lens of the NT indicators discerned above.

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190 Giles, p.8. Claims that “. . Luke consistently implies that leaders arose to meet specific needs on a quite pragmatic basis.”
191 Giles, p.10. Calls this the “structural evolution” of the early churches.
Chapter 4 - A Critical Analysis of PG Theory

In Chapter 2 we saw that the design aim of the Carver PGM is to create an environment in an organization where the board is empowered to provide an effective leadership function, while, at the same time, the CEO is released from board meddling. In this way, the CEO is set free, to develop and exercise strategies that will achieve the organization’s board-set goals within the policy limitations the board puts in place. We now turn to examine the degree to which the Carver model resonates with the witness of the NT in regard to Christ-based ecclesial community, as discerned in Chapter 3, that must inform a church community, and its God-designed purpose.

Ownership and Accountability

The NT indicates that Christians are subject to two accountabilities: primarily, they are accountable to the Lord as Paul reminds his Corinthian opponents by saying that “it is the Lord who judges me” (1 Corinthians 4:4). Secondly, Christians are accountable to each other, this accountability involving mutual submission (Ephesians 5:21), mutual exhortation of those who fall away (Hebrews 10:24), and the confession of sins to each other (James 5:16). This matter of accountability relates to that of ownership.

Moral Ownership

In the Carver-type PGM, the board is accountable to the “Moral Ownership” of the organization, as shown in Diagram 4.1, that is, those who “morally if not legally own the organization”. The board’s primary relationship is to this Moral Ownership, on behalf of which it acts as trustee.

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192 For Carver the board leads when it sets directions for the organization through Ends policies, and then defines the limits of the means that may be used to achieve those Ends.
193 Moltmann, p.303. Argues that the ministries in the church are to “serve the kingdom of God and not the interests of the existing church . . .”
194 Moltmann, p.1. Says that “it is . . . before the Divine forum that (the church) will reflect upon its life and the forms that life takes, what it says and what it does not say, what it does and what it neglects to do”
195 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.120, e.g. stakeholders such as taxpayers, suppliers, members, the public, patients, clients, students, supporters etc.
196 International Policy Governance Association. POLICY GOVERNANCE SOURCE DOCUMENT (www.policygovernanceassociation.org/PG-SOURCE-DOC.doc
197 In this trustee role the board is expected to set policies which are the reflection of the values and perspectives of the ownership; these values and perspectives being the controlling influence on the board’s decisions and policy setting.
However, in tension with Carver, for the church the Moral Ownership resides in God, not in the congregation, or any subset of it. For Carver, the ownership of an organization is some human group of stakeholders, and this way of thinking can also permeate the church, where the congregation believes that, while there is a ‘board’ (eldership, parish council etc) that they in some way elect to ‘run’ the church, it is the congregation that is

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198 Pilgrim Platform (http://www.pilgrim-platform.org/christiangovernance.htm, June 2005) “God Himself is the owner of all things, and especially of His churches and the various ministries that purport to be Christian”.

199 For example, the community (as in the case of a community hospital), or beneficiaries such as shareholders (as in the case of a public company), or parents (as in the case of a parent controlled school).
the actual ownership. However, although the board (eldership) of a church is part of the hupertassic community, and as such has accountability to the membership, this does not however make the membership, or any subset of it, the owner.

The existence of a theological tension between Carver-type ownership and the ownership of a NT-shaped church is shown also in the statement that “As owner-representative, the board is both servant to, and leader of the ownership”. In the church however, it is clearly not the role of the leadership to lead its owner, God, rather it is to follow God’s leadership through Word and Spirit. The leadership function is a delegated one, and involves the ‘follower-ship’ of the primary church leaders, that is following the owner, God, by putting into practice His values and perspectives. However, this will depend on the degree to which the Owner’s (Christ’s) voice is heard expressing these values, and there are a number of factors that will affect whether or not this is the case.

Firstly, it will depend on the extent to which the congregation discerns and elects godly leaders. Secondly, it is essential that the leadership understands that it is differentiated by function not status and is accountable to the body. Thus, leaders as fully part of the hupertassic community must subject themselves to the ministry and discernment of others, “who weigh carefully what is said” (1 Corinthians 14:29). In particular, they must be aware that the Lord can speak though other members of the congregation. Any governance model that tends to imply, even if unintentionally, only a vertical accountability, as PG can do, with leaders having a special status, runs the risk of reducing the input of the voice of Christ discerned by others. Such a model can tend also to militate against the intertwined nature of the NT community prayed for by Jesus (John 17:21), if it encourages a leadership caste.

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200 Such a way of thinking reflects one type of human and secular management model, into which PG fits quite well, a model where the board exists to provide benefits to the patients, shareholders, parents etc. This (for the church) false assumption is reinforced by the fact that the congregation is usually the major provider of funds.
202 John 10:4, “My sheep know my voice and they follow me”.
203 Richard M. Biery, Response to Issues Raised Concerning Ownership, Biblical Governance for Christian and Nonprofits. (http://www.pilgrim-platform.org/christiangovernance.htm , June, 2005) wants to argue, in support of the use of the PGM for churches, that the church ‘board’ has dual ownership, God and members, which he calls the “temporal moral ownership”. However, he seems to be confusing ownership and accountability.
204 Ones who are “not overbearing, not quick tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain” and “who is hospitable, loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined”, and who hold fast to the gospel message so that they can encourage others by sound doctrine”. Titus 1:8,9.
On the basis of the above, any church governance model must reflect the ontological essence of divine ownership and ensuing accountability. This essentially involves replacing the Carver model of human “moral ownership” with the ownership of God, and if we were to graphically represent this as a NT nuanced policy governance model, it would require amending Diagram 4.1 to something like Diagram 4.2.
Beneficiaries

As we assess the PGM, we also find that the issues of ownership and accountability relate to the matter of benefit; that is to whom are the benefits of the organization’s operations and activities to flow. On the one hand, Carver sees PG as being “oriented to obtaining results for people”, on the other, the NT has a different agenda, and speaks of the ecclesial community as primarily existing for the ‘End’ of bringing Glory to God. This is in contrast to creating, building, joining or leading an organization for the purpose of benefiting self, or any group of human beneficiaries. Thus the church, is firstly about achieving results for God and His Kingdom, not for the congregation, or any sub-set thereof, that is, the church’s activities, ministries, and its fruit, exist to draw people to the Moral Owner, God Himself. Thus, the main accountability of a church leadership is for fostering a kingdom-building community that works for ‘benefit’, i.e. Glory, which flows to God.

Hupertasssic Accountability

The second accountability for Christians is what we might call hupertassic, or horizontal, accountability, i.e. being accountable to each other. In this context, we have already seen that the NT evidences the need for, and expectation of, a leadership function. Such leadership occurs when people with a range of leadership-type gifts exercise them in the congregation, however, this is a matter of function not status. An ecclesial community that is egalitarian but functionally differentiated is a reflection of the Trinity, with equality between members together with a degree of variation in function. This flat, anti-hierarchical, mutual accountability structure, such as we find for

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205 Carver, Reinventing Your Board, Preface xv
206 As Paul writes “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31).
207 CRTA Center for Reformed Theology and Apologetics (http://www.reformed.org/documents). This primary, God-glorifying purpose is stated clearly in the answer to the first question in the Westminster Shorter Catechism- “Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.”
208 Of course, it is certainly true that members of the church do receive benefits from the activities and ministries of the church, however providing benefits now is not the primary ‘End’, in policy governance terms, of the ecclesial community. Indeed, being a faithful member of a Christian community in many parts of the world results in treatment that can only be described, humanly speaking, in terms of benefiting, such as persecution.
209 As previously mentioned from ἀντίθετος, e.g. Ephesians 5:21 meaning to “put ones self under”.
210 Indeed those who do not have leadership type, and probably less public, gifts are to be equally honoured, in fact, in what may be the first example of affirmative action, such people are to be more especially honoured (“we treat with special honour”- 1 Corinthians 12:23) to make the point that they are not of inferior status.
example in 1 Corinthians 12, where no member has a higher status than another, logically flows into the mutual submission injunction of Ephesians 5:21- “Submit to one another out of reverence to Christ”. All this is not a picture of an hierarchical structure, but a community in which mutual submission is always built into the structure.

Therefore, while the leaders of a congregation have special roles in the exercise of their leadership functions, they also, as members of the body of Christ, are subject to this ‘putting ones self under’, and so must be accountable to the congregation. Such a

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211 This mutual submission theme is reinforced in Philippians 2:3-8 where, after the model of Christ, the injunction is to “consider others better than yourselves”.

requirement necessitates a flat mutual accountability structure such as the one indicated in Diagram 4.3.

This imperative for mutual submission logically carries with it the requirement for mutual accountability, and this brooks no exceptions, meaning that while the leadership is accountable to the membership, there are also accountabilities flowing from the membership to the leadership.212

A Trinity Reflecting Community

We have already asserted that the only ‘model’ we have been given for a congregation is in fact the Trinity. This then begs the question, as to whether a PG model of governance will allow and foster the Trinity-reflecting, organic community pictured by the NT, a servant community that is egalitarian while being functionally differentiated.

In any reasonable sized organization, the CEO and/or chairperson etc. are usually seen as the pre-eminent persons, who have status and power, and are therefore more ‘important’ than others. Even in the church, the Senior Minister is usually perceived as someone with the same attributes of status, and the PGM, because of the strong emphasis on the CEO being the nexus between the board and the organization, would seem to be just as much, if not more, prone to exalting this position. Thus, in a church context, this may militate against the NT ontological essences of egalitarianism, servanthood and mutual accountability.213

To deal with these issues, if a PGM is implemented, it would be necessary for Trinity-reflecting, community-building and sustaining policies to be established in the Ends and operational policy mix, in order to reinforce the fact that church members are not differentiated by status but by function. An example of this would be the board member as board member, to whom the Senior Minister is accountable, while at the same time,

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212 For example, to respect their authority, and esteem them (1 Thessalonians 5:12f); also to obey them and submit to them (Hebrews 13:17).
213 However, it must be stated that this is a danger no matter what form of governance model is adopted for a church, because people tend to import a secular, and often hierarchical, view of organizations and management into their understanding of how leadership ought to be conducted in the church.
the board member in their role as leader of a ministry in the church, is accountable to the Senior Minister.\textsuperscript{214}

**An Organism**

The empowerment aspect of the PGM reflects an organizational theory known as ‘Organic’, in that it is flexible and one in which “employees are encouraged to apply their skills as needed, fitting into changing work patterns in whatever way they find to be useful”\textsuperscript{215}, organic because “like . . . living things they adapt flexibly to changing circumstances”.\textsuperscript{216} Such a model would appear to allow the members of, or work group within, an organization significant freedom to use their gifts, and develop strategies in the most effective way for their contribution to the organization’s Ends. Operation within such ‘envelopes of freedom’ allows the individual cells (ministry units) to be free to grow and develop in a healthy way for the benefit of the whole. This would seem to fit quite well with, rather than oppose, Paul’s “body” concept for the ecclesial community described for example in 1 Corinthians 12, and would allow the \(\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha\tau\alpha\) given to members by the Spirit, freedom to develop and operate in a functionally differentiated way.

**Collegiality**

One of the strongly held principles of the PGM is that the board acts collegially, that is it “is a set of individuals operating as a single identity”,\textsuperscript{217} and as such acts as a unit within which members have no status or authority when acting individually.\textsuperscript{218} As we have noted,\textsuperscript{219} there is some evidence in the NT for elders acting together as councils.\textsuperscript{220} From this, we can possibly infer that these elders in some sense acted together as a ‘board’

\textsuperscript{214} This may be described as ‘situational, or fluid accountability’, i.e. the member’s accountability relationship with the Senior Minister varies as their function varies.
\textsuperscript{215} Mary Jo Hatch, p.76
\textsuperscript{216} Mary Jo Hatch, p.77
\textsuperscript{217} Carver, 	extit{Boards That Make a Difference}, p.16
\textsuperscript{218} Carter and Lorsch, p178, Argue that, regarding board members, the issue is “how they function as a group”.
\textsuperscript{219} From Acts 20, where Paul summoned the \(\pi\rho\sigma\beta\iota\gamma\tau\rho\omicron\omicron\) (plural) of the church in Ephesus (Acts 20), to make his final farewell and to give last instructions.
\textsuperscript{220} Giles, p.87, Sees more than one Bishop, because there was more than one house church, and the council of elders was an overarching structure for the town or city.
or council with responsibility for the church in the city where, if Campbell is correct, 221 the church was the collection of house churches in the city. 222

Whatever the case, there seems to be nothing in the NT witness that prohibits a Carver type collegial governance, however, a more likely barrier to the implementation of this aspect of PG may be the existing structures, and constitutions of current denominations, particularly those with an Episcopalian structure. 223

Servanthood

We have established that leadership is a function not a status, and like all functions in the body of Christ it is “for the common good” (1 Corinthians 12:7), that is to serve the body. 224 Indeed, in the ecclesial community context, the board (eldership) primarily exists to serve God the owner of His church, and does this by exercising its leadership function to promote the health and the building up of the congregation (Ephesians 4:16). 225 In this regard, there would not appear to be anything in the PGM that would in itself prohibit servant-leader roles for the board and the Senior Pastor, 226 however, if servanthood is exercised just because of policies there may well be a danger here of ‘law’ taking over from ‘Grace’.

The PGM structure as shown in Diagram 4.1, does not naturally encourage a sense of the board being a servant, but tends to emphasise an hierarchical leadership role, with accountability largely vertically upwards. Some amendment would need to take place to the basic PGM organizational diagrammatic in order to emphasise a flat

221 Campbell, pp. 172-175.
222 There also seems to have been a council in Jerusalem (Acts 15), where a council of elders and apostles met in some sort of collegial way to deal with the issue of to what extent the law should be required to be kept by new gentile converts. In this James seems to have been acting to some extent as a primus inter pares (Acts 15:13ff).
223 For example, the Rector of an Anglican Parish has, at least in theory, almost monarchical status, and for most decisions has the power of veto over any Parish Council (board) decision. For such collegial governance to be implemented in such a denomination would either require a significant constitutional change that could only be wrought by synod legislation, or by the parish incumbent permitting such governance to be put in place on an extra legal basis.
224 Carver, The Policy Governance Field Book, Preface xvii - Carver himself does use the term servant-leadership in respect to the role of the board, but what he means by it is that “As owner-representative, the board is both servant to and leader of the ownership”.
225 Robert Greenleaf, Servant Leadership- A Journey Into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness (New York: Paulist Press, 1991) pp.10 and 19. States that in order to be effective the servant-leader needs to be a servant first. This is because “…the only authority deserving allegiance is that which is freely and knowingly granted by the led to the leader in response to, and in proportion to, the clearly evident servant nature of the leader.” This is not however the theological reason for leaders to be servants, which is the model of Christ who took “the very nature of a servant” (Phil. 2:7).
226 It is not intrinsic to the Carver PGM that the board serve the membership, it is only required to serve the Ownership. However, in a church context the Carver model gives the freedom for Board Process policies to be put in place that would require the leadership to serve the membership, e.g. by working for their spiritual health.
accountability/servant relationship within the body, where the board and the Senior Minister both function as organs in, as well as servants of, the body, as already indicated in Diagram 4.3.

**Leadership**

Central to the aim of the PGM, is the belief that, for a board-led organization to be most effective, the primary role of the board is to exercise a strong leadership function. The board establishing policies for mission and means, without meddling in strategic, operational, and functional activities, these being entrusted to the CEO and the Executive, provides such leadership. This requires the creation of a ‘culture of trust’, where the board frees up, and ‘trusts’ the executive to get on with the job of achieving Ends as it decides. However, it should be noted that this ‘trust’ is limited to the extent of the policy limitations the leadership sets, which in fact is an implicit, if unconscious, acknowledgement that we live in a post Edenic world of fallen human nature, where that nature will tend to act for self rather than according to the ‘Owner’s’ will. There would not appear to be however, any reason that, in cognisance of the NT essences, precludes a church from choosing a policy based leadership model.

**Recognising the Powers**

The Powers we have referred to in Chapter 3, are the agents of the “father of lies” (John 8:44), and exert rule over men to achieve their Christ-opposing Ends, by using many human motives, traditions, structures and practices, even though at first sight many of these may be considered ‘good’ in themselves. We have seen that in the NT policies and strategies were implemented to protect the purity of the gospel, but it is noteworthy that many of these can be described as ‘secular’ ways of dealing with problems in human organizations, perhaps to an extent reflecting Roman organizational practices. Limitations run the risk of becoming a new legalism in a church context, because they

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227 Aubrey Malphurs, *Leading Leaders: Empowering Church Boards for Ministry Excellence* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2005) pp.7,8, is also of the view that there is a need for a new paradigm for board leadership, and that “we must train leadership at the board level”.

228 A world in which the “truth of God is suppressed” (Romans 1:18).

229 For example, the Powers will use church members’ preferences to convince them there is a certain rigid way we ‘must’ do church; or to adopt certain prohibitions on food and drink; or practice legalism rather than grace in matters of behaviour; or be influenced by public opinion, or by the allegedly ‘democratic’ opinions of church members.
can be co-opted by the Powers, bringing bondage through the restriction of the work of the Spirit. For this reason, such policies and limitations must be minimized, so as not to diminish the mutually accountable, Trinity-reflecting relationships, or lose the freedom to exercise Spirit-given gifts, the NT indicates for ecclesial communities.

A related danger in a PGM is that a ‘slavery to success’, or results, may be established by the Powers, when for example success is measured in attendance figures or numbers of activities only, without due cognisance of the NT essences for organic-triune relationships. The Powers can use a pre-occupation with such targets to once again bring into bondage those whom, and the church that, Christ has set free. (Colossians 2:8, 14ff and 20).

The above caveats however, must be viewed in the context of the evidence, as we discussed in Chapter 3, that in the NT churches some protective, that is limiting, measures were put in place to guard theological purity.²³⁰ In parallel with these measures, it is important to note the last of the strategies we discerned in Chapter 3, the exhortation to incessant prayer (Ephesians 6:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:17). This is an essential acknowledgement of the need for the power of the Spirit of God to guide and build Christian community, and to deal with the machinations of the Powers.

Having examined the PGM through the lens of the NT essences, the question to which we now turn, is the degree to which the underlying ethos of the PGM, its aims and its means have theological legitimacy.

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Policies

Ends

The PGM is highly results focussed, and according to Carver “offers a powerful approach to governance, one that is conceptually whole and oriented to obtaining results for people rather

²³⁰ Again, it should be noted that the danger of a new legalism, or ministry-by-rules, is present with any church governance structure.
than promoting organizational busy-ness", \(^{231}\) with a heavy emphasis on the Ends policies, and their achievement. For a congregation, these Ends must relate to God’s purpose for His church, \(^{232}\) which as we have seen is the building of His Kingdom to His glory. However, there is nothing intrinsic to the Carver model that prohibits or constrains the establishment of godly, NT sculpted, Ends by the leadership.

**Executive Limitations**

Executive Limitation policies are the proscriptive envelopes of freedom, within which the CEO and the executive are given freedom to operate for the purpose of achieving the prescribed Ends, the intention being that such envelopes of freedom are to be as large as possible. \(^{233}\) While it is not intrinsic to the Carver model, there is no reason why the ontological and functional essences, distilled from the NT for the new community, \(^{234}\) may not be prayerfully used to shape the limitations policies of a church. \(^{235}\)

**The Board-Executive Relationship**

The policies in this category deal with the manner in which power is passed to the CEO and the executive machinery, and how the use of that power is assessed. In the PGM, the CEO is a clearly defined nexus as the only employee of, or person accountable to, the board for achieving the results established by the board’s Ends policies. Beyond this, the CEO is completely responsible for the management and direction of the organization. In a church context such a structure would vest great responsibility and power in the Senior Minister, \(^{236}\) but there is no theological reason per se why a suitably gifted and spiritually mature Christian should not be this ‘organ’ in the body, in the exercise of the Divine Permission, as shown in Diagram 4.3.

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\(^{231}\) Carver, *Reinventing Your Board*, Preface, xv

\(^{232}\) We have discerned ‘purpose’ as being one of the ‘essences’ for the church indicated in the NT.

\(^{233}\) The Policy Governance® Model; [http://www.carvergovernance.com/model.htm](http://www.carvergovernance.com/model.htm). “Policy Governance boards demand accomplishment of purpose, and only limit the staff’s available means to those which do not violate the board’s pre-stated standards of prudence and ethics.”

\(^{234}\) The Pilgrim Platform (http://www.pilgrim-platform.org/christiangovernance.htm, June, 2005). Christians are not free to determine governance policy, but must first and foremost understand, translate, communicate and institute the governing policies of Scripture.

\(^{235}\) One possible benefit of appropriate ELPs being in place in a church context, would be to protect a congregation against the excesses of a strongly charismatic leader, or conversely, a godly leader against undue influence by an ungodly congregation.

\(^{236}\) In a way that is often not the case in some other more hierarchical and legalistic models, such as can occur in some congregational, or rigidly applied Episcopalian, models, where responsibility is given but without the freedom to meet that responsibility.
If shaped by the NT voice on leadership, the Senior Minister’s role in a church context would need to be understood, and emphasised, as an *huperassias* position. That is one in a mutually submissive and servant relationship with the congregation, but which, *for the execution of the person’s leadership function*, most definitely has legitimate power, which, as we have noted already, is to be respected.\(^{237}\)

A second function of the Board-Executive policies, is to evaluate the CEO’s performance. In the PGM, the sole accountability of the CEO is the achievement of the board’s Ends without breaching the board-set ELPs.\(^{238}\) However, the secular ethos of PG does not intrinsically allow for the fact that the sovereign God sends, or does not send, the rain on the just and the unjust. In a church context, even though the board may set in place Ends and limitation policies for the Senior Minister that reflect the NT essences, the fruit of the ministry is still dependent on the sovereign grace of God.

An additional issue that arises here, is the question of how results are quantified in any case. While it is not hard to measure the activities of a church, it is much harder to measure the results of those activities. We have seen that the purpose of the church is to be an agent of God’s kingdom building activity, yet the growth of this kingdom often happens slowly and secretly behind the scenes as the ‘Parable of the Yeast’ indicates. (Matthew 13:33). Ultimately, it is God who will test what is wood, hay and straw or gold, silver and precious stones. (1 Corinthians 3:12), and so in a church context, an amended PG model that reflects the sovereignty of God is required for evaluating the Senior Minister.

**The Board’s Job Description**

The board’s job description,\(^ {239}\) comprises three primary responsibilities.\(^ {240}\) These are -

- Providing the linkage between the organization and the ownership; the development

\(^{237}\) Such power could be used to confront errant members when this is required.

\(^{238}\) In effect, as we have seen earlier, this reflects a secular management ethos that assumes that the results of an enterprise are to a large extent directly linked to the efforts and competencies of the leadership. For a church this poses a theological problem, for on the one hand, it is indeed true that the NT indicates that the congregation will grow “as each part does its work” (Ephesians 4:16), including the leaders. On the other hand however, congregational growth is also dependent upon the sovereign will of God, who “whether the farmer gets up or sleeps” makes the crops grow, and who should be consulted before we make our plans.

\(^{239}\) These are the policies that describe the way in which the board governs its affairs.

\(^{240}\) Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p.134, calls these the “irreducible minimum contributions of governance”. 
and explication of the policies of governance; and the assurance of executive performance.

Firstly, in its linkage function, the board acts as the trustee for the ownership and in this regard is responsible for communicating the ownership’s values, through the setting of policies, to the CEO, and conversely, communicating the performance of the organization to the ownership.\textsuperscript{241} In a church, there would not appear to be any theological reason why the leadership may not set and communicate policies according to the voice of Christ, for which it is accountable to the ‘Owner’, while also providing an accountability path from the ministry team to the congregation.

Secondly, the board is responsible for developing and setting the explicit policies that will achieve the results desired by the ownership, in a way that is acceptable to the ownership. As we have already acknowledged in the church’s mission, any ‘achievement’ is ultimately in the hands of the sovereign God. This does not mean however that the church leadership should not prayerfully, and with the assistance of others in the congregation, seek to develop godly Ends and means policies.

There is evidence from both Jesus’ and Paul’s ministries that strategising has divine support, and indeed is linked to the Divine Permission to construct governance structures to meet the needs of the hour. Jesus clearly made strategic choices in how he spent his ministry time, for example, it is evident that He chose to commit most of His earthly ministry time to Jews, and on only three occasions,\textsuperscript{242} is he recorded as ministering specifically to Gentiles.\textsuperscript{243} In another example, he indicated that preaching God’s message was a higher priority than healing the physically sick, as important as that is,\textsuperscript{244} further he also set his own program, for example going up to Jerusalem at the time he considered right.\textsuperscript{245}

\textsuperscript{241} Clearly, in a NT shaped ecclesial community, while the board can set Owner (God) reflecting policies for the Senior Minister to operate within, it would not be in the business of reporting to the Owner, who already knows the Senior Minister’s and the staff’s ‘performances’, and further will judge them by His own standards, rather than humanly constructed ones.

\textsuperscript{242} The healing of the Syrophoenician woman’s daughter (Mark 7:24ff); the Centurion’s servant (Matthew 8:5-13); and the demoniac(s) (Matthew 8:28-34).

\textsuperscript{243} He made his primary mission to the people of God (the Jews), the people out of which he wished to create the fledgling church. In this regard, he chose only Jews for his twelve disciples, and out of those twelve he deliberately chose three to whom he gave special attention—Peter, James and John.

\textsuperscript{244} Luke 4:42-44.

\textsuperscript{245} John 11:6
We also see strategy in Paul’s ministry, for example, he chose to spend most of his church planting time establishing gospel bases in Ephesus and Corinth, and this was almost certainly a strategic decision. Such a strategizing function of the Leadership Team of a church, in its role of explicating the policies of the ‘owner’, would be a legitimate function for an organ in the “body”.

A question that arises in this area of how the board makes policies, is that of how the voice of Christ is heard in the process. In the case of a church, the voice of Christ has the opportunity to be heard in the membership’s prayerful choice and election of godly board members; it is heard through the input of members to the congregational meetings (1 Corinthians 14:26-33), of which the leadership will be part; and it is heard in the prayerful deliberations of the board in its policy-setting role. However, the fact is that the effectiveness of the leadership will, to a large extent, depend upon the godliness and spiritual maturity of those elected to the board. Ultimately it is in the hands of, and the responsibility of, the congregation as to whom is elected. This process can provide opportunity for the Powers through abuse by unprayerful and ungodly people, political manoeuvring and the manipulations of false teachers.

In its third function, the board is responsible for monitoring and reporting on the performance of staff, i.e. that the staff meet the criteria it has set. However, in the PGM the board’s only employee is the CEO, and so the evaluation of the organization and the staff are the same as the evaluation of the CEO. In a church context this may become quite confusing because some board members will almost certainly be ministry leaders in their own right, and thus be accountable to the Senior Minister for their area of ministry. For this fluid accountability to operate without confusion, requires a clear distinction to be made and enforced, between the board member as board member, and the board member as ministry leader.

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246 The reason being that these cities were major Roman trade and communication centres, and people converted there would be agents of spreading the gospel to the far flung corners of the empire. Paul also made strategic choices as to where he would minister, specifically seeking to go to the places where the gospel had not been proclaimed before.  
247 This is not really just a question only for a PG governed church but for any church.  
248 Again this is true of most other forms of governance.  
249 This is an example of how in a hypertassic community, while there is general submission of members to each other, there may also be unidirectional submission to persons when they are carrying out their specific roles.
A Secular Model

One of the concerns expressed regarding the appropriateness of the PGM for a church, is that it reflects a secular worldview. It is certainly true, that the Carver model in part echoes what is described as a ‘modernist’ perspective on organizational theory, whereby the organizational culture is “a tool of management, . . . . . and a variable to be manipulated to enhance the likelihood of achieving desired levels of performance . . . .”\(^{250}\) This is a way of structuring organizations, which assumes that the creation of the right kind of culture in an organization, ‘a culture of trust’ in the case of the PGM, will produce the required results, or ‘success’,\(^{251}\) and this ‘formula for success’ may well be open to co-option by the Powers. Another way in which PG reflects a secular world view, and falls short of the NT vision of a new humanity, is that, rather than being of the order of Redemption (bringing about the regeneration of the sinner), it operates as a creation ordinance. i.e. it sets boundaries not to be crossed, e.g. “You shall not eat of the tree” (Genesis 2:17), in order to restrain sinful behaviour.\(^{252}\)

One thing that should be noted however, in critiquing the Carver PG Model is that it is really not ‘A’, that is singular, model at all, rather it provides an organizational envelope within which any number of models will fit, certainly under the CEO. In PG the board develops Ends, and all the CEO is required to do is to ‘make it happen’, using any organizational model considered to be appropriate for the task.\(^{253}\) Such a freedom envelope would, importantly in a church context, also allow for the organizational model accountable to the Senior Minister to be an NT shaped organic one.

A Culture of Trust

Central to the PGM, is the creation of a culture of trust, by which is meant the

\(^{250}\) Daniel R. Denison, cited by Hatch. p. 231

\(^{251}\) W.E. Schneider, *The Re-Engineering Alternative* (Burr Ridge: McGraw Hill, 1994) p.103, describes this as a “Cultivation Model” which is designed to “Create and provide the conditions whereby the people within the organization can grow, develop and strive to accomplish the highest order purposes (sic) possible”\(^{252}\)

\(^{252}\) This of course may be said of any governance system that seeks to limit freedom.

\(^{253}\) Hatch, pp.182-188. Gives examples of a range of potential models that range from a ‘Functional’ model where the CEO oversees a range of defined function areas in the organization, through to a ‘Matrix’ model where skill-defined human resource pools are applied varying (with time, location, priority etc) to a range of projects or required outputs.
organizational environment which informs, shapes and facilitates the organization’s life and output. A comment on Carver-type PG that can be made, is that it is ironical that the very setting up of a system the key aim of which is to create a culture of trust, in itself implies a fallen world and lack of trust in the first place. While this is true, the fact of the matter is that we, including the church, do live in a fallen world and we need to develop systems that work best in that situation. A question to be asked then, given the fact of the falleness of church members, is whether the PGM is a better system than others. The PG model, while implicitly acknowledging the reality of human nature, really seeks to maximise the potential ‘good’ in people, such that if allowed maximum, but not unlimited, free rein to work, people will work more effectively and produce better results. Indeed, in a church context, a large degree of ‘unfetteredness’, may allow for the Spirit to shape members into the people God wants them to be. Conversely, more traditional hierarchical and highly structured models that are much more controlling, tend to assume the ‘bad’ aspect of human nature, and do not necessarily foster or allow for growth and productive expression of God-given giftedness.

Theological Legitimacy

As we have looked at the PGM through the lens of the NT, we have noted that there are various aspects of the model that have a degree of compatibility with the essences which we discern in the NT for the shaping of the Christ-centred new community. One of these is the freedom, or flexibility, the PGM gives to construct appropriate models, a freedom reflecting the Divine Permission. Secondly, Carver tends to use language that whispers more of an organic than technocratic model. Such a model does allow the possibility of a congregation that reflects the unity with functional diversity characteristic of the Trinity; one which can allow the gifts and abilities of members to be harnessed in freedom for the benefit and growth of the whole.

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254 When Carver uses the word culture it is not meaning one of the many common definitions, rather he means the creation of a range of ’envelopes of freedom’ which maximize the growth (in terms of meeting the Ends) of the organization.

255 We have noted that while the NT does have a very high view of the church as the Bride of Christ (Revelation 21:2), we see also, as the developmental flux evolves, the implementation of accountability structures to deal with false teaching and error. These can be seen as a realistic acknowledgment of, and safeguard against, the fact that the Bride, while being eschatologically pristine, is temporally flawed.
Another essence we have discerned for a NT shaped church community, is that it is purposeful, i.e. it exists to bear fruit for the Kingdom of God, and this is a principle that sits well with the Carver PGM which is strongly mission, or Ends, orientated. Further, we have seen that there is no reason why the values of the Lord, as the church’s owner, should not be expressed in the policies the eldership sets in a PGM, i.e. or that the mission and limitations policies should not be sculpted by the NT voice.

However, despite these relative harmonies, our analysis has indicated significant theological tensions and concerns regarding the PGM that must be addressed in order for it to be appropriate for a church. Firstly, there is the question as to whether the PGM will foster an environment that will encourage and nurture the Trinity-reflecting community that is pictured in the NT. We have seen that the diagrammatic representations Carver provides for the structure of the PGM tend to imply an hierarchical structure, even if this is not wholly intended. Such a structure if applied uncritically, would not seem to reflect an ethos of mutual intertwined-ness between the high leverage roles of board/eldership and the Senior Minister, and the general members of a congregation;256 nor obviously indicate a community characterized by mutual servanthood and accountability. Related to this is another important issue, i.e. the matter of how the principles for shaping the ecclesial community witnessed by the NT, should be applied to contemporary churches that may in fact be much larger, by a factor of one hundred or more, than those in the early Christian era.257

The second area of tension is that of Ownership, and the related issues of Accountability and Benefit. The voice of the NT makes clear a number of things viz:- that the ownership of the church (the Moral Ownership) rests solely with the God who purchased it through Christ; that the primary accountability of the leadership is to Him not to the congregation; and the primary beneficiary of the church’s life and ministry is also to be Him, in terms of Glory. This is in tension with the natural application of the Carver model which, directly applied, would tend to imply that the primary accountability of the leadership is to the congregation, as the perceived stakeholders and “Moral Ownership”. In order to fully to reflect the voice of the NT in regard to ownership, it is necessary to redesign the Carver structure.

256 It again must be stated however, that this is already a problem for most governance structures used in churches.
257 As is the case with all the churches sampled in this study.
Thirdly, if a PGM is to be implemented in a church, for the board (elders) to set policies that reflect the values and perspectives of the Owner, the voice of Christ must be heard by the leadership. The vagaries of some sort of democratic elective system, particularly in an immature congregation, may mean that a spiritually immature leadership comes into being that is more driven by a secular, political world view, self or party interest. Thus, the mechanism for choice of the leadership should be such as to work against this danger.

Another concern is that, when viewed through the lens of the NT essences, it could be argued that the hierarchical model of PG has a tendency to disempower the congregation, because of the loss of direct access to the leadership, and of direct congregational input to the content of Ends and Limitation policies.

We have also highlighted in the Carver ethos, a concern regarding a secular world view that appears in its assumption that the creation of the right kind of culture in an organization will automatically produce the required results. However, from a biblical perspective, such a view makes insufficient allowance for the effect of human sinfulness, or of the fact that it is by grace not just human effort that ‘results’ are achieved.

These are all issues to which significant attention needs to be paid, with ensuing appropriate amendment according to the essences voiced by the NT for a Christ based ecclesial community, if a Carver based PG model is to be used for the leadership and governance of a congregation.

So far in this study, we have looked at the theory of the PGM and critiqued it using a range of indicators for an ecclesial community shaped by the NT ethos. Now we will turn to some samples of the experiences of churches that have sought to implement a PGM, to seek to discern whether, and with what theological legitimacy, this implementation has proved to be beneficial, and the degree of variation from the Carver model that has occurred, and why.
Chapter 5 - The Ecclesial Experience

In this chapter, we move on to examine the practice and experience of a number of churches that have chosen to implement a form of policy governance. In each church a range of people were interviewed, both staff and non-staff, who have been players in the process of implementation of a new governance structure over a number of years in their church. These have been given pseudonyms as indicated in the lists of Dramatis Personae. From this point on in this study, we will generally use the terms Leadership Team (LT), rather than board or Elders, Senior Minister rather than CEO, and Ministry Team (MT) for those responsible for the day to day ministry operations of the church.

The Stories

Beachside Community - A ‘Spur to Growth’.

The Background

Beachside Community is a large church with a congregational governance tradition, which has been located on its current site in the suburbs of one of Australia’s capital cities for several decades. It has a weekly average attendance of over 1500, and has experienced significant growth for several years.

Beachside is a church which congregational member Fred Barry describes as contemporary but theologically conservative, and that, while set in a well off area, attracts people from a wide range of backgrounds. A number of the members referred to a high academic standard being part of the cultural make up of the church. It is clearly an entrepreneurial church with a wide and expanding range of ministries, and as Harry Bennett commented, a major characteristic of Beachside is that it is a church “with an eye to the future” and so needed “a large church management style”.

258 It should be noted that all the Senior Ministers taking part in this study were male, this being reflected in the pronouns used.
Over a decade of growth brought about the need for a new form of governance for the larger and still growing church, because the sheer number and complexity of daily decisions needed began to outstrip the elders’ ability to make them, through unavailability and/or lack of adequate information. This made it evident that there was a need to remove the existing elders from micro-management, and as Mark Smith the Senior Minister said, a new form of governance became a “sheer necessity”. Harry Bennett’s view on this is that a new form of governance was required because “small church thinking does not work” and they needed a model that would not inhibit growth.

**Beachside Community-Dramatis Personae**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Bio-data</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mark Smith</td>
<td>The long time Senior Minister, an entrepreneurial personality. Very self assured.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred Barry</td>
<td>A middle-aged man who has been a member for 10 years plus. He has served in a number of ministry roles, and has a somewhat cynical manner when analysing the church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Evans</td>
<td>A long time member and current staff member. Close to the life of the church.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carlie James</td>
<td>A staff member of the church for several years, involved in policy development. Appears supportive but questioning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francis Lloyd</td>
<td>Medium term member (5 years +). Very involved as Chair of the Leadership Team. Has an academic style, and is a reflective thinker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Bennett</td>
<td>A very long time member who has been involved on the board and in finance, and is very experienced in wider church matters.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Commenting on the need to change, Paul Evans’ view is that the larger church with an expanding number of ministries needed a leadership and governance structure that would provide “overall direction” for the church (i.e. a common track to run on), without each ministry area “doing its own thing”, opinions that were also echoed by Fred Barry. That this need for direction was a one factor in the search for a new governance structure, was also a view expressed by Carlie James. She also commented that, as a growing church, more structure was needed because “the Senior Minister cannot micro-manage everything”, and a model was needed that would “empower all ministers so there would not be a need to constantly check back for approval”.259 For Pastor Mark a policy governance path was one they “had to go down” in order to stop LT micro-management.

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259 Another factor that influenced Beachside Community’s decision to adopt a policy governance type structure according to Harry was the church’s “strong emphasis on quality” and “quality requires structure”, which policy governance provides.
but at the same time allow the LT to put policy controls in place, and all of those interviewed agreed that these two aims were being achieved.

In the view of those involved, the main reason for the decision to seek to adopt a new leadership and governance structure for Beachside Community was a pragmatic one; to provide for suitable management and leadership of an entrepreneurial and ever growing church that would facilitate its aims. Indeed, Carlie is of the view that one of the reasons the policy governance path was chosen was to move the church to an aims or outcomes based model, or, as Carver puts it, one that is “oriented to obtaining results”.\textsuperscript{260} Pastor Mark noted, that policies are also important as a protection against litigation and vexatious claims, in that they can be used to show that due process has been followed, or can provide a way to deal with such claims.

Conversations with staff and congregational members, suggest that the choice of model implemented was largely in the hands of the Senior Minister, indeed according to Paul the congregation was not consulted on the governance structure being adopted. This seems to be borne out by the fact that, while some had a limited understanding (Paul and Carlie), there was not a great awareness of what model had been chosen or why, in fact the congregation is very much “out of the loop” in terms of the reasons behind the changes.

**The Effects**

As a result of the changed governance regime at Beachside Community, there has, in Fred’s words, been an “increased effort to make clear the difference between what the Leadership Team does and the Ministry Team does”, and there has actually been a considerable degree of separation of governance from management, however this is by no means complete. Paul commented that the LT is still struggling with its role and, while decisions are to a large extent based on policies, in reality many decisions the LT makes are still on management issues. In Carlie’s view, the strong leadership from the LT, that the Carver PG is intended to create, is not yet a reality, and the inference is that the real leadership function is still in the hands of the Senior Minister.

\textsuperscript{260} Carver, Reinventing Your Board, Preface xv.
Harry believes that the model being implemented has succeeded to a large extent in separating the LT from management, and in freeing up Pastor Mark to do his job, such that many things are now dealt with by staff that previously would have been Leadership Team actions and decisions. However, according to Harry, there still seems to be some direct contact between LT and congregational members, largely of a pastoral nature, despite the fact that the only person officially accountable to the LT is the Senior Minister, as in the pure Carver PGM. According to Francis, the LT now “trusts the Senior Pastor more to get on with the job” compared with previously, this being some evidence of a PG created ‘culture of trust’ of the type the Carver PGM is intended to create.

An effect not intrinsic to the Carver model, that appears to have resulted from the changed governance regime, is that there does seem to have been devolution of responsibility, with freedom to act, to levels of ministry under staff members other than the Senior Minister, with each ministry team leader being empowered to develop their own ministry area. This has occurred in parallel with, what the study participants perceive to be, a more focussed approach to ministry, with clarity regarding objectives, ways of achieving them and who is responsible. According to Paul, an additional result of this more focussed approach is that it led to the development of a Strategic Plan for the church’s future life and ministry. While not expressed explicitly in this way, the Strategic Plan functions in part as an Ends policy document.

On examination of the leadership and governance model in place at Beachside Community, it becomes apparent that in fact the relationship to the Carver model is now, in the words of Mark “quite loose”, although it needs to be acknowledged that this is a work in progress. Further, the NT indicated essences for KOVÔVÎG do not seem to have been much considered, rather the changes that have occurred seem more to have been matters of pragmatism. This may reflect the secular ‘if we work smarter then the results will come’ dimension of the Carver model.

Initially, as with Carver, the intention was that the LT develop the policies, but in reality, according to Pastor Mark, this created a log-jam because the LT took too long to produce policies, and so what actually happens is that the policies are produced by the Senior Minister and staff, for the LT to amend and approve. Conversations with study participants suggest a number of possible reasons for this, one of which is that the
policies are too complex, perhaps because the Carver model has either not been properly understood, or applied rigidly enough. For Carver ‘simpler is better’, but some Beachside policies are up to 35 pages in length and as such would indeed create a log-jam if the LT was required to produce them. Another reason is the leadership style of the Senior Minister, who may well want to retain ‘control’ by producing policies himself. A comment made on the effect of policies by Pastor Mark, was that while the idea of PG was to free him up, and indeed in many ways this has occurred, he also has felt constrained by policies in some areas, compared to the freedom he had previously.

The policies that have been created so far appear to have been developed because of the needs of the moment, in other words there is no systematic policy development, rather policies are created “on an ad hoc basis” (Francis) when the LT or staff feels one is needed. Whatever the case, the LT is not really the policy-maker, but more a group that amends and approves policy.

In terms of the mission of the church, Francis observed that this had been clarified by the new model, and that this was a policy-driven effect that focused the church’s areas of mission, or in Fred’s words that “Outreach has been more focused and targeted by the policy framework”. When the question of specific Ends policies was raised, several interviewees pointed to the church’s rather long mission statement, that can be summarised as ‘to Make More, Better and Multiplying Disciples’ but there seems to be little evidence of specific Ends policies being defined.261

Several participants expressed concerns regarding the PG model implemented. Francis believes that there is a danger of a “loss of servanthood”, and Carlie feels that there is also a diminution of “care and compassion”. It may be, that this is an expression of the sense of the loss of the previous elders’ role that some feel provided for better pastoral relationships. These concerns may also perhaps reflect a lack of the NT voice in the development of the model, and may flow out of, what at least some of the participants consider to be, an impersonal mechanistic model which devalues the relational, Trinity-reflecting dimension of congregational life. Another reservation expressed along the same lines is that the model as applied was in danger of ignoring “the sovereignty of

261 As a related but more general comment on this focussed-ness there is a view that the PG structure at Beachside “gets everybody going in the same direction”.
God”, and the “work of the Spirit”, by assuming that well operated human structures were the key to success, something that is an intrinsic problem for churches wishing to use a PG model.

Beachside Community has been implementing, over the last ten years, a policy governance model that, although it appears to have been initially inspired by Carver, has now significantly deviated from that model. It has governance policies put in place, but these are mostly policies devised by the Senior Minister and the staff rather than the Leadership Team. There has been to a significant extent separation of the LT from the management function.

The participants in the study have perceived a number of benefits for the church, the main one of which seems to be a freeing up of the Senior Minister and, although this is not intrinsic to Carver, also other ministry leaders, both paid and unpaid, to get on with the job of ministry. There also seems to be a ‘culture of trust’ in the church, although it is not absolutely clear as to the degree to which this is a result of the PG model put in place, or a trust resulting from the ministry of a long standing and successful leader.

However, concerns were also expressed regarding a number of negative effects of the new model, problems that our study has predicted as potentially arising from the uncritical application of the Carver PGM. These are related to the fact that when implemented in a church, the model can be applied in a mechanistic way, like a set of rules for a ‘machine’ to run by to produce results. This can lose sight of the immanence of God, the need for His grace in church life and ministry, and also the NT essences of organic, Trinity-reflecting mutual servanthood.

**New Life Community - Governance for a new church**

**The Background**

New Life Community is a denominational church that came into existence through the amalgamation of several separate churches within the last ten years, such churches
traditionally having a congregational governance structure. New Life is situated in a light industrial area in an Australian capital city, and has deliberately structured itself as a multi-congregational church, that is a church that seeks to create a variety of very different congregations so as to reach a range of community groups in the contemporary ‘post modern’ context.\(^\text{262}\) The current aggregate attendance average across its congregations is between 200 and 300 per week.

### New Life Community-Dramatis Personae

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Bio-data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malcolm Peters</td>
<td>A visionary and entrepreneurial leader, who wants to really engage the 21st Century Australian culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Drake</td>
<td>A member since before the new governance process started.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heavily involved in the ministry of the church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max Davies</td>
<td>A young but nevertheless long time member who has been through all of the process so far. He is a member of the Leadership Team and is involved in congregational leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben Rankin</td>
<td>A Church member for a long time, now a ministry leader with particular concern for the disadvantaged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rex Neaves</td>
<td>Leadership Team Chair and member who had been through the whole process. Helpful and enthusiastic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Tate</td>
<td>The newest member interviewed but his previous church experience elsewhere provided a useful background for his analysis of what was happening in New Life Community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Newall</td>
<td>Formerly a member of the old Eldership, now a Staff person who appears to feel somewhat disenfranchised by lack of access to the Leadership Team under the governance model</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the amalgamation had taken place, a group was formed to address the question of what type of governance the new church should have. According to Senior Minister Malcolm Peters, they examined the NT with a view to ascertaining whether it provided a model for church governance and leadership, before coming to the conclusion that no such specific model was indicated. This then led them on a wider search for a preferred model for New Life Community.

A number of criteria were considered essential to the new governance structure. These included, a desire that the congregation retained ultimate authority; that it would provide the freedom and flexibility required for a growing multi-congregational structure; that the ‘eldership’ would be free from being involved in management issues with the resulting

\(^{262}\) From a New Life Community publication - undated but around 2001
slowing down of decision making; and that it would encourage and not constrain growth. It was in this process of looking for a governance structure for the new church, that Pastor Malcolm says they discovered the Carver PG model, and this they have, in his words, “closely” adopted. Chair Rex Neaves, who has studied the Carver model, says he was impressed by it because he saw that it would “do the job for a larger church”, and as a consequence the church has deliberately tried to adopt that model.

In the new structure, the Leadership Team is responsible for legal matters, property issues and policies. In Martin Newall’s view, the LT has definitely been disengaged from management issues which are now solely in the hands of the Senior Minister and the MT, with the SM being the nexus through which accountability to the Leadership Team for these matters flows. As the LT members are all elected church members, this also provides ultimately an accountability path from the SM through them to the congregation.

The integrating ministry factor of the multi-congregationalism at New Life Community is the church’s three “Core Values” which relate to the Building of Community, Practical Love (Compassion) and Growth in Spirituality. These three form the controlling environment for all New Life activity, and are the measure against which each congregation, ministry and mission is to be evaluated. Each core value is considered to be an aspect of “what it means to follow Jesus”, and in a sense they could be seen as representing Carver’s “Values and Perspectives” of the “Ownership” (God), although this linkage does not appear to be made in the available literature and may not be intended. There is not much evidence of significant biblical argument in the published New Life documents for the adoption of these particular core values, and it could be asked as to whether they are sufficiently comprehensive to represent the ‘Owner’s’ values in any case.

The Effects

According to Chair Rex, the reality is that the LT finds itself short of time to develop policies and acts more as a policy approval body, the policies largely coming from the

263 From a New Life Community publication- undated but around 2001
Ministry Team. He also indicated that from his perspective there is a lack of clarity as to what exactly were the church’s Ends policies.

Pastor Ben Rankin sees that the new system has freed the LT from micromanagement so that it can concentrate on the bigger picture, and this according to Mary Drake has empowered the Senior Minister to get on with the job of promoting and managing the church’s ministry and mission. This is something that Max Davies considers to be a great improvement compared to the significant constraints imposed on decision making and ministry progress by the governance structures formerly in place in the constituent churches. The key word that repeatedly arose in conversations with study participants, in regard to the effect of the governance system on the Senior Minister, was ‘empowerment’, that is being empowered to be more effective in his role.

Martin made an interesting point, echoed in other churches, when he said that because ministry area leaders (staff and unpaid) also have freedom within policy limits, a consequence of this is that the Senior Minister sometimes has to accept decisions with which he is not in agreement.

Another effect noted by Chair Rex, as well as in other churches, is that some congregational members expressed regret at both the lack of access to the Leadership Team, as the pastoral elders they had been used to under the previous governance system, and also at what is, at least perceived to be, a lack of communication to the congregation by the leadership. It seems there is an impression, that the drive for efficiency in mission has led to a diminution of care and mutual servanthood. This may also be seen as a perception of reduced accountability of the leadership to the congregation.

Max believes that many in the church have experienced significant benefits as a result of the implementation of the new governance system. In particular, although this is not intrinsic to Carver, there has been a devolution of decision making within policies to lower levels of ministry such as mission teams, and this has resulted in more members being involved in leadership in different parts of church life, and with real decision making capacity. Pastor Ben reinforced these comments, saying that the membership could “see that more worship and mission groups were being given authority to make their own
decisions”. This could be an indication that the church is operating more in accord with the organic essence for ecclesial community indicated by the NT. In his view also, because of the clear authority given to ministry and mission team leaders, the congregation has a clearer idea of whom they can speak to regarding concerns, or for direction.

As far as the Mission of the church is concerned, there is a view among participants that this has been enhanced because, according to Pastor Malcolm, “decision making capacity is put in the hands of the people doing the mission”. The PG model in place operates such that the various ministry teams are empowered and set free to discern and pursue mission opportunities in a way that, in the words of Max, would have “been blocked” under previous governance structures.

One particular problem that has arisen at New Life, noted from discussions with study participants, is the case where a particular ministry unit, exercising its executive freedom, had chosen not to seek to grow. This seems to be a case of what can happen when a ministry group or congregation is given freedom and responsibility for its own actions without clear policies, especially Ends policies, being put in place. This may reflect the concern we have seen evidenced in the NT to put controls in place on the exercise of freedom.

New Life Community Church, which in many ways has had the best opportunity for putting a new governance structure in place because it is in effect a new church, has chosen after research to implement a Carver type PGM. However, the Leadership Team finds itself short of time to develop policies and acts more as a policy approval body, the policies largely coming from the ministry team. There also seems to be a lack of clarity regarding the church’s Ends policies, and this may have already contributed to some difficulty as noted previously.

The model implemented has relieved the LT of management responsibilities, and by general agreement has empowered and set free Pastor Malcolm to get on with the job of promoting the ministry and mission of the church. This empowering has also flowed
on to a devolution of decision making to lower levels of ministry such as mission teams, and also resulted in more members being involved in leadership in different parts of church life, and with real decision making capacity. This appears to suggest that a model that more reflects the organic NT essence has developed.

The membership retains ultimate control, because it elects the LT members for a limited term, and the Senior Minister is accountable to the membership through the LT. However, some members feel a sense of disenfranchisement from the ministry decision process, a loss of leadership accountability, and access to pastoral elders formerly available to them.

**Living Waters Church - Releasing the constraints.**

**The Background**

Living Waters Church is a member of a long standing Australian denomination with a congregational form of governance, located on the same site for many decades in a suburb of one of Australia’s major cities. The growth it has experienced over the last decade or so, both in attendance and range of ministries, has brought about the need to redevelop to provide more appropriate facilities. Currently the weekly attendance average is over 400.

It has been blessed with a succession of long pastorates and, according to all study participants, a stable history with very little conflict or congregational turmoil. Senior Minister Ray Denham sees it as an “un-political church” with “good DNA”. In Bill Dunn’s view, the church has become a very caring community over time and very open to newcomers, this openness in part due to the fact that it does not emphasise denominational distinctives and rules but seeks to embrace all, whatever their denominational background. This view was supported by Pastor Richard, who believes Living Waters has a “very open mind as to how to do church.” Most of the participants in the study attested to characteristics such as openness to culture change, flexibility of worship styles, and a deliberate desire to be “user friendly” to newcomers, as contributing to what Georgina Bell describes as “a great community feel”.

A Critical Analysis of Policy Governance

65
A Critical Analysis of Policy Governance

A Desire for Change

Around fifteen years ago many members of the church, particularly in the leadership group, became aware that change was required; this awareness arising from a sense of dissatisfaction driven by two factors that participants tend to connect with each other. The first factor was, what Pastor Ray described as, a "cumbersome" leadership and governance structure which involved up to four separate leadership groups, all of which were involved in decision making, and was a model “that had good people sitting in a room achieving nothing except attending a meeting once a month”. As the LT Chair Bill Dunn put it, “people were spending more time in meetings than on ministry”, this view being supported by Pastor Ray who described the structure as being a “bottleneck to ministry”. The second area of dissatisfaction concerned the fact that, while in the medium past the church had grown significantly, more recently Living Waters had reached a plateau, and there was a belief that this was linked at least in part to the governance and leadership structure in place. A key factor in all of this Pastor Ray says, was that this sense of dissatisfaction created “a good environment for change”.

Consequently, the church embarked on a deliberate quest to explore other governance options, the first stage of which was to set up a task group. This task group, which included the Senior Minister, prepared a questionnaire to which a number of Australian

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**Living Waters Church-Dramatis Personae**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Bio-data</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ray Denham</td>
<td>The Senior Minister who has been at the church for a very long time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ros Ellam</td>
<td>A congregational and also staff member. Enthusiastic and supportive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Johns</td>
<td>Long time staff member with people centred pastoral nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Bates</td>
<td>Very long time congregation member, enthusiastic and supportive, who has experienced the old governance system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Dunn</td>
<td>A long time congregational member and also a Board member.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Ames</td>
<td>A congregational member for many years and now on staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgina Bell</td>
<td>Very long time member also on Staff, who is enthusiastic about the church. Had experienced the old governance system.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
churches were asked to respond. The churches contacted were those considered to be positive models of a larger, but not considerably larger, size than Living Waters, and the questionnaire sought to elucidate what worked well, or did not work well, in terms of governance.\textsuperscript{264}

At the completion of its investigations the task group reported to the church board with its recommendations, which in fact were that the Carver model of PG should be implemented. This proposal was then taken to a congregational meeting for approval.

**The Unfolding Story**

About seven years ago Living Waters commenced implementation of its new governance model based on the Carver PGM. Ros Ellam said, that one of the effects of the new governance structure was that it created awareness of the need for a strategic plan, because it showed up the lack of direction and focus in the church’s ministries. As Senior Minister Ray put it, the development of the new governance system highlighted the church’s lack of Ends policies, policies to reach the community and for overseas mission, and forced them to ask questions such as “Why are we here? Where are we going? What is our purpose?” etc. This led to the preparation of a five-year Strategic Plan that is based on a set of ‘Core Values’, which shape everything else the church does. These values are founded on a set of biblical principles that could, to an extent, be seen as expressions of the ‘Values and Perspectives’ of the Lord as owner. The Plan contains a series of objectives each directly linked to a ‘Core Value’, these objectives having measurable components attached to them, for example how many new programs would commence in a certain period. It appears that, in part, the Strategic Plan functions as Living Waters’ ‘Ends Policies’ document, and was largely produced by the Senior Minister and the MT, but then approved by the LT.

The study participants all attest that the implementation of PG has been instrumental in bringing about many beneficial changes in the life and ministry of Living Waters. Not the least of these, has been the change in the role of the former elders, from a primarily

\textsuperscript{264} Senior Minister Ray comments that one of the results of this exercise was to show how widespread problems of church governance were across Australian churches.
pastoral one to the LT responsibility for legal, fiscal and policy matters, with disengagement from ministry decisions. As far as such decisions are concerned, the responsibility lies solely with Pastor Ray not the Leadership Team, and the Ministry Team is solely responsible for the day to day ministry, all the members of which have their specific areas of responsibility. Senior Minister Ray feels himself to be 'empowered' by the LT in a way that was not possible under the former model.

While many of the policies put in place have originated from the Ministry Team, LT chair Bill believes that more recently there has been some change to a situation where more of the policies are LT instigated. According to Richard Johns, and as the Carver model requires, LT members have no individual authority, with the nexus between the LT and the operational church being the Senior Minister.

Living Waters study participants were agreed on a number of things. Firstly, that the new church structure has generally freed up people to get on with concentrating on their ministry, by reducing meetings and focussing effort more productively. Secondly, that the Senior Minister has the trust of the LT to get on with implementing policy and mission. Also, though again not intrinsic to Carver, participants believe that ministry area leaders are now trusted to develop their areas, also being given their own budget allocations. This freedom flows through to the membership, with members being encouraged and trusted to develop their own areas of ministry in accordance with the Strategic Plan, and to take responsibility for the ministry's life and structure. In the words of Richard Johns the key words that describe the outcomes of the new structure are “Freedom, Trust and Direction”.

One of the few comments that was not positive in regard to the new structure was made by Susan Ames, who thought that there was some feeling of disenfranchisement from the decision making process, particularly by older members. This may indicate a lack of the horizontal accountability indicated in the NT for ecclesial community. On the other hand, it may be due to a lack of congregational understanding, i.e. a knowledge vacuum.

Living Waters has put in place a number of specific policies, such as a policy for staff
dispute resolution, and also one for the initiation of new programs and groups. There are only around 30 policies in place, however, it should be noted, that the Strategic Plan

Table 5.1 Living Waters Community Church – New Group Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publication Date</th>
<th>May 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To provide guidelines following the request to establish a new group in the church. The following guidelines recognise the desirability of a formal approval process to ensure all new groups are consistent with the Core Values and Strategic Plan of LWCC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>To apply to any LWCC member who desires to commence a new program or activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicability</td>
<td>To apply to any LWCC member who desires to commence a new program or activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Individuals or groups requesting the formation of a new program, to place in writing a broad outline of their proposal and submit it to the MT. The MT is to prayerfully consider whether the proposal falls within the Core Values of LWCC and is consistent with the Strategic Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The MT to assess that necessary resources would be available to enable the proposal to succeed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minister/s are to maintain oversight and supervision of the new program.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

also contains several other policies within itself. Pastor Ray acknowledged a “slowness” in producing policies and said that by this stage there should be more. This slowness however, is not necessarily because the policies are lengthy as the example in Table 5.1 shows, but it may be that many are ministry team-driven and it becomes a workload issue. It should also be remembered that the Carver model calls for as few, minimum verbiage, policies as possible, in the belief that “a small number of policies can enunciate the board’s values with respect to minimum levels of prudence and ethics”, ²⁶⁵ so that the board, without any direct involvement, can control a large range of executive means.

It was a sense of dissatisfaction with their ineffectiveness in reaching the community, and a perception that, at least in part, this was linked to a clumsy leadership and governance structure, that created a desire at Living Waters for a ‘better way’. The

²⁶⁵ Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.79
search for a new way ultimately led to the implementation of a Carver type PGM, the results of which are considered to have been very beneficial by the overwhelming majority of participants. The perceived benefits include - a clear direction for the church in its ministry and outreach; a reshaping of the Leadership Team’s role away from management and ministry; a freeing up and empowering of the Senior Minister, and also other ministry leaders; and a general trusting of members at all levels to get on with developing and executing ministry and mission projects.

**Cityside Church - Breaking with the past to set up for the future.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Cityside Church- Dramatis Personae</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interviewee</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron Nelson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harriet Nixon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Moor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walter Richard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Gates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hank Berry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blake Paul</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Background**

Cityside Church is a denominational church, proud that it is one of the founding churches of its area. It has a long, although sometimes stormy, history on its present site, that is not far from the centre of an Australian capital city. Senior Minister Ron Nelson describes it as a church that had been very conservative in its life and decision making processes, but now was characterized by variety and spontaneity. George Gates says that the church consists of mainly professional people, but that this is now changing as the church is starting to attract new families from different socio-economic backgrounds, drawn largely by its accepting and welcoming atmosphere. A number of other participants echoed this latter characteristic.
The process of governance change started about five or six years ago. The previous governance system consisted of Elders and Deacons’ groups, plus another group made up of a combination of official position holders. There is a general consensus among the study participants, that the basic reason for change was a developing awareness that the existing governance system was simply not working, mostly due to the lack of clear role descriptions and distinctions. The decision to develop a new governance structure was largely initiated and driven by Ron Nelson, who was dissatisfied with, what he describes as “the baggage” of the former governance structure, that in his view was “clumsy and cumbersome” and needed to be changed. The search for a new governance system involved the Senior Minister, other staff and a church consultant, and included dialogue with other churches using a PG model.

Wally Richard, the chair of the LT, said the structure developed was initially based on the Carver model, but that they “had not locked into it”. Intriguingly, the perception among most of the study participants as to how this is operating varies considerably. One described the new structure as a “messed up version of Carver”, others thought it was operating close to Carver, yet others really didn’t appear to know. Discussion with church members and examination of church documents reveals that the structure consists of a Leadership Team to which the only person accountable is the Senior Minister, acting as a nexus, and a Ministry Team led by the Senior Minister who describes it as the “soul” of the leadership. Both the Leadership and Ministry team members are elected by a congregational meeting. Barbara Moore understands the structure to be one where the Leadership Team sets global guidelines and then gives these to the Senior Minister, who then takes them to the Management Team as guidelines for operation. Indeed, in practice this seems to be the case, and the LT’s ongoing role is to meet with the Senior Minister regularly, to receive reports on how the church is operating, not to give him direction. However, Harriet Nixon, one of the LT, thinks that the members of the LT are “still struggling with their role”.

Rather strangely, most of the study participants were lacking in clarity regarding the church’s ‘Policies’, this despite the fact that the Leadership Team has produced a five page global policy document, that is effectively a set of policies that prescribe the ‘outcomes’ the LT sets for the mission of the church. It also sets out the boundaries
within which these outcomes should be pursued. These, what are global policies, for the most part actually fall quite neatly into the Carver PGM’s four policy categories.

A difference of emphasis in regard to the Carver model is in the Executive Limitations category, where the policies are couched in way that is prescriptive rather than proscriptive. A summarized version of Cityside’s policies is shown in Table 5.2.

The Effects

Hank Berry observed that under the new system Senior Minister Ron does have more freedom to run the church without interference from what is now the Leadership Team. Blake Paul believes that this freedom has had a flow on effect in that Senior Minister Ron is now “willing to let go of more”; this comment being echoed by George Gates, chair Walter, and also by Barbara, who also added that this was only the case in areas where the “Pastor considered ministry was being exercised competently”.

A significant benefit since the governance restructure, according to the Senior Minister, is that the Management Team is a “genuine group of leaders” with each member being delegated responsibility for a specific area of ministry. Again, we see here an effect not intrinsic to the basic Carver model, and that is an empowerment and freedom that flows down from the Senior Minister through the whole organization. Such empowerment, attested by many survey participants, allows the church to operate in a more organic, rather than technocratic, way.

As far as changes perceived by the congregation are concerned, a range of views were expressed. Most participants referred to a ‘freeing up’ of ministries, greater opportunities for ministry, and a greater trust of ministry leaders “to get on with it”. However, as in other churches, reference was made to a feeling of disenfranchisement by some members, because of the removal of elders, a sense of they “did not know who to talk to”, and a lessening of pastoral care. Harriet’s comment on this latter concern was that the level of pastoral care is not reduced, but now is exercised in a different way, through small and sub-congregational groups, not always obvious to most of the congregation.
Table 5.2- A Summary of Cityside Church’s Global Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carver Model Categories</th>
<th>Cityside Global Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ends or Mission Policies</strong></td>
<td>i. The church exists to bring people in the community and beyond, into a relationship with Christ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. The church exists to disciple believers in the Christian faith.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii. The church exists to equip members for ministry and to share their faith.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Executive Limitations Policies</strong></td>
<td>The Senior Pastor shall –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Restrict church activities to what is biblical, ethical and wise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Hold the membership and leadership to biblical standards of morality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii. Ensure that expenditure decisions do not risk financial jeopardy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iv. Ensure that the Treasurer monitors financial affairs of the church to ensure budget compliance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>v. Ensure church assets are protected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vi. Ensure that the church maintains regulatory compliance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vii. Ensure appropriate treatment and care of the members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>viii. Ensure that appropriate rules and grievance procedures are in place for staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership Team-Executive Policies</strong></td>
<td>i. The Leadership Team is to hold the Senior Pastor, who has the authority to act as the primary leader of the church, accountable for the church’s operation in accordance with the Executive Limitations policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. The Leadership Team will meet with the Senior Minister not less than monthly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii. The Leadership Team will communicate with the church through the Senior Minister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iv. Only decisions of the Leadership Team as a whole are binding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership Team Process Policies</strong></td>
<td>The role of the Leadership Team is to -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Develop policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Monitor the performance of the Senior Minister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii. Monitor the state of the church.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In terms of the mission of the church, there is consensus that the current governance and leadership structure has freed up members and, according to Blake Paul, given them more opportunity to be involved in mission activities and projects. Barbara Moor also made the comment, that the development of the new structure had caused a new focus on their mission, with the asking of questions such as, what is our mission? Where are we heading etc? Again, this seems to be a common ‘spin off’ for the churches sampled in this study; that is the initiation of the new governance structure becomes a catalyst for a re-examination of the church’s reason for being.

Cityside’s governance and leadership change came from a general sense that the old system was not working, but was largely initiated, and driven, by the Senior Minister. The Carver model was the initial basis for the current structure, and while not well understood by many of the participants, the model in use is actually very close to that of Carver. It may indicate communication issues, but most of the key players interviewed had a limited understanding of what the model is and how it is intended to work.

There seems to be general agreement at Cityside Church that the governance change has been beneficial, with greater efficiency of the operation of the church, a freeing up of the Senior Minister to get on with his primary role, and a parallel encouragement and empowering of the congregation to engage more in ministry and mission. However, again there is among some members, a sense of disenfranchisement both from the personal pastoral care perceived to have been available from the former ‘elders’, and also from the decision making process.

**Mountain View Community Church - To cope with size.**

**The Background**

Mountain View is a very large church set in a light industrial park in one of Australia’s capital cities, on a site it has occupied for over ten years. It is part of a medium size denomination, which has experienced great growth over the last 20 years or so.
According to Oscar Read, growth has been facilitated by its highly outwardly focussed ethos, including a deliberate policy of planting new congregations, and, in the view of Gene Moore, a high emphasis on winning the lost. Mick Burge made the comment, one echoed by every other study participant at Mountain View, that a key characteristic of the church was its balance of “Word and Spirit”. This balance, according to Mick, made people feel “this was a safe place” and resulted in the church drawing people from all types of backgrounds. Another characteristic of the church, stated by the Senior Minister Rob Sider, is that it has sought to engage contemporary culture, especially with the style of its worship, and this has been a major factor in its growth.

Mountain View has been a growing church for a long time, even before its move to the current site, and it is that growth that has been the catalyst for a search for new forms of governance, something that has actually been more of a process than an event. Hank Dawes said that there has been an ongoing need to evolve the governance structure each time it becomes apparent that “the existing model doesn’t work”. Mick Burge’s view is that a new governance structure was needed in order “to manage the sheer number of groups and activities”, and also “to make sure everybody was going in the same direction”.

An additional reason for change, mentioned by several participants, was for the protection of staff in a litigious society, or as Senior Minister Sider put it, in the “government environment in which we work”, i.e. one of Occupational Health and Safety,
Child Protection legislation etc. Policies provide protection to an extent because they can be used to show that “due process has been followed in the event of dispute”.

Charles said that there had been a process set up to examine the governance of the church, and this involved a church meeting to discuss proposed changes. However, the model is largely the product of the Senior Minister’s research and insight.

**The Structure**

The current governance structure was implemented about five years ago, and has been developed to facilitate the expected growth indicated by its main End as stated in its Vision, which is to “Make Disciples”. The ethos in which this is to be done is indicated by the church’s Values statement, which reflects one of the NT essences for **κοινωνία**, i.e. to be Word-shaped, and in this regard, each of the stated values is accompanied by what the church believes to be supporting biblical references.

The structure in place at Mountain View is a continuation of the church’s congregational tradition, where “ultimate authority and major decisions are reserved for the members.” In this structure, there is a Leadership Team, to which the Senior Minister is accountable for the operation of the church. According to Arnie, the role of the LT is to deal with issues of overall direction, property and finance, and not to be involved in management. In Hank Dawes’ view, there is a strong two way trust between the LT and the Senior Minister, who is responsible for doctrine, mission and practice, and to set the goals (Ends) of the church. Rob Sider says that what in effect has happened is that the congregation has delegated authority to the LT, and the LT has delegated authority to the Senior Minister. It is not certain however, how much of this trust is due to the long and successful pastorate of the current Senior Minister, rather than being intrinsic to the governance system that has been implemented.

While the LT has input to policies, it does not make or lead through these, rather being a consultative and policy approval body. Thus, the LT does not lead the church, rather,

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as was stated by both Hank Dawes and Rob Sider, Mountain View is a “Staff led church”, this also being stated in the Policy Manual.

Under the Senior Minister, there is a ministry team made up of staff and also a departmental team, both of which groups have input into policy making. The LT is made up of the Senior Minister and some senior staff plus a number of congregationally elected members. This model provides some accountability of the Senior Minister, via the LT, to the congregation, but this is limited because of the ‘established’ component of the LT membership that is not elected.

**Mountain View Policy Manual**

This is a weighty document with approximately fifteen major policies, each of which ranges in size from 2 to 29 pages, and includes many detailed policies on such things as sexual misconduct, women in ministry, staff conditions of employment, de facto relationships, even covering quite detailed issues such as policies on petty cash use, vehicle reimbursement rates etc. The size of the manual is many times larger than a Carver-type “minimum verbiage”, global policy document, and as such is not one that the LT could operate.²⁷⁰

**The Effects**

A beneficial effect of the implementation of the current governance structure in Mick Burge’s view is that, in comparison with the past, there is now clarity regarding areas of responsibility and accountability, with roles now clearly defined. In addition, the Senior Minister now has more freedom and flexibility, and further, this freedom has had a flow on effect to all areas of the church’s ministries, with more opportunities to take initiative being opened up. Hank believes that members “are now released, and trusted to make decisions in their own areas of ministry”, a belief shared by Rob Sider, whose view is that the members now “own the ministries in which they are involved”. In terms of the Mission of the church, Mick says that this is now more focussed and sharper, with a more efficient

²⁷⁰ Some of the Mountain View policies may be considered by a LT in a Carver type PGM, as necessary second or third tier policies that they would want to put in place. It is more likely however, that in a Carver PGM it would be the Senior Minister who, within any reasonable interpretation of the LT-set Executive Limitation Policies, and using his LT granted freedom, would put in place many such policies for the management of the church.
use of resources. Against these perceived benefits, Mick said that there are some members, who have experienced former eldership models, who feel disenfranchised in terms of direct input to decision-making, and access to the leadership.

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Overall, Mountain View has a large number of, sometimes quite detailed, polices for its ministries, operations and activities, and it is probably true to say that it is as much a policy managed church as a policy governed church. In this, it lacks the leadership through LT-set policies of a Carver PGM. However, the implementation of a policy environment for ministry appears to have produced many of the benefits we have seen in other churches, such as a greater sense of direction, a separation of governance and management, a freeing up of the Senior Minister, and an empowering of the ministry of church members.

Again, we see an element of concern from some members, in terms of a loss of accountability by the leadership to the congregation, and a loss of input to decision making. In this regard, the accountability of the Senior Minister to the body via the Leadership Team is potentially weakened, because the congregation elects only some of the members.

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In the preceding chapter, we have examined the experiences of churches that have sought to implement a PG model of governance. In the next chapter, we will seek to discern the themes and issues that emerge from those experiences.
Chapter 6 - Common Narrative Threads

In the churches participating in this study, the degree to which the actual Carver PGM has been implemented varies considerably, ranging from one where it is only part of the informing material, to a church that has a set of global policies matching very closely ones that we would expect to see in a Carver model. In this chapter, we move on to examine the themes that emerged from our dialogue with the various churches, and also suggest some factors that may be reasons for the variation in resulting models.

Initiating Factors

Pragmatics Driven by Dissatisfaction

In each church, the instigating factor that promoted the search for a new governance structure was a growing awareness by the church leadership that their existing governance and leadership system was cumbersome, and militated against effective ministry and mission. As the churches sought to grow, the existing eldership systems were simply incapable of being sufficiently informed, or having enough expertise, or time, to make management decisions, resulting in a "bottleneck to ministry". In some cases it was the Senior Minister, in others a broader group of leaders, who came to the view that a new system was required. This needed to be one that would enable the ministry teams to get on with their job without interference by the Leadership Team, while at the same time ensuring the Leadership Team, as elected congregational representatives, retained oversight of the church. The implementation of a new system for these reasons is, in part, an echo of the process of change, the 'developmental flux', which we have discerned in the NT story.

The Promotion of Growth

Another factor instigating the quest for change, often stated by study participants, was

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271 In a sense, New Life Community is an exception, in that it is virtually a new church. However, the leadership’s comments on previous governance systems relate back to their experience of those in the constituent churches.

272 It should be noted that at Mountain View only part of the LT is congregationally elected.
the need to ‘free up’ cumbersome ministry structures, and so promote and facilitate mission and growth by being appropriate for a larger church. In this regard, the Carver model of PG was seen as particularly attractive because of its outcomes, or Ends, emphasis.

The Search and Acceptance Process

Each church sampled carried out research, formal or informal, to identify a suitable new system of governance; this ranged from research by the Senior Minister alone, to the deliberate establishment of a task group to mount a wide ranging survey of other churches for possible governance options. Interestingly, there appears to have been very little direct congregational involvement in the research and decision processes. In fact, a number of participants made the observation that their congregation has been very much “out of the loop”, in terms of the reasons behind the changes. One reason for this may be because when congregational meetings were held to inform, explain and present the proposed governance changes “they were very poorly attended”.

A Knowledge Vacuum

Another theme that emerged, with some variation between churches, is that many staff and Leadership Team members, while having varying degrees of awareness of the Carver model, do not appear to be particularly cognisant of the details of the model being implemented in their church, and how it is supposed to work. A number of reasons emerged for this, such as the fact that many were not involved in the search and decision making process; or they were not educated in the adopted model; or even that they were not particularly interested in knowing about it. Where this knowledge vacuum is the case, there is the potential danger that it is the Senior Minister who is likely to become the ‘expert’ regarding the model, and thus the one with the greatest ability to influence how the model operates.

Accountability

The overall structures adopted by the various churches in this study all put
accountabilities in place, at least in theory, such that the Senior Minister is accountable to some overseeing body, we are calling the Leadership Team. In turn, the Leadership Team understands that it is accountable to, and in every church sampled is actually elected by, the membership.

In all the participating churches, it appears to be reasonably well understood that the Senior Minister is accountable to the Leadership Team, and thereby indirectly to the body. The structures developed in the sampled churches in theory provide, even if indirectly, for the mutually submissive yet functionally differentiated accountabilities we see reflected in the NT. That is, the Senior Minister both serves the body when functioning as leader, yet is also in a submissive relationship with the body, by means of an accountability path through the membership-elected Leadership Team. This is not the direct, intimate, every member, mutual care and accountability model of the congregation that seems to be indicated for Κυρίες Θεός in the NT letters, for that is plainly impractical for a larger church. Rather, it is a pragmatic development, an exercise of the ‘divine permission’, to ensure there is accountability in the larger contemporary context.

An issue that emerged from dialogue with study participants, and from examination of written documentation, is that generally there is not much awareness of the accountability of the churches’ Leadership Teams to the Lord as the ‘Moral Owner’, nor of their responsibility for expressing His values and perspectives in policies that provide leadership. This may reflect something noted in the study that, although many church documents quoted bible references in various places, there was not strong evidence of significant theological reflection on the NT essences for Christian Κυρίες Θεός in the development of the new governance systems. There seems often to be a tendency to focus on the pragmatic and organizational aspects of the governance of the church, rather than on the One for whom it is to be governed.

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273 For example, the mutual suffering and rejoicing enjoined in 1 Corinthians 12:25f.
274 It is duly acknowledged, that some theological reflection may possibly have taken place but not reported by participants.
275 Having said this, the written Core Values of the Living Waters’ Strategy Plan, while not Policies as such, do have a biblical base.
A Culture of Trust and Empowerment

The strongest perceived positive outcome that emerged from the dialogues with churches is that of empowerment. The general consensus across the sampled churches is that the Senior Minister has been set free from interference by the Leadership Team, and empowered to get on with the job of promoting and managing the church’s mission and ministry. This disengagement of Leadership Teams from management and ministry issues, and trusting the Senior Minister to run these things, appears to be at least some evidence of a PG engineered ‘culture of trust’ such as the Carver PGM intends to create. An example of this is in the case of Living Waters Church, where the new model has radically reduced the number of meetings, especially for the Senior Minister. However, it is not always clear the degree to which the acknowledged trust may in some cases relate to the long-term nature of the Senior Minister’s ministry.

A significant finding of this study, although it is not intrinsic to Carver, is that this empowerment of the Senior Minister has produced a cultural contagion with a flow-on effect to ministry staff and ministry team leaders, who are now given increased executive responsibility. In each church, those involved in the study claimed that the freeing up of the Senior Minister has also resulted in the devolution of decision-making, within policies, to lower levels of ministry, such as mission teams, so that more members are involved in leadership in different parts of church life, and have real decision making capacity. Malcolm Peters of Living Waters Community described this as “decision making capacity (being) put in the hands of the people doing the mission”.\(^{276}\) In all the churches surveyed, it appears that this changed culture has led to a freer, more organic body, where the members have the freedom to develop and use their gifts for the benefit of the whole. This culture resembles the core features of the charismatic and organic essence of Pauline ecclesiology, rather than the constraining structures so often seen in many churches.

Policy Creation and Leadership

The function of governance boards in the Carver model is to create policies which

\(^{276}\) This empowerment of members for ministry is one of the stated Core Values of Living Waters Church.
provide strong leadership to the organization. However, for this to operate properly it requires that the Leadership Team understands its role, and is sufficiently strong to insist on its leadership through policy-making function. It became evident in dialogue with Leadership Team members of the various churches that their understanding of their policy making role is often very limited.

This is the area that seems to have presented the greatest challenge in the implementation of PGM, and the fact is in most of the churches the Leadership Teams are not functioning as policy makers, and therefore are not fulfilling the leadership role. In the one church that clearly did have a Carver-type set of global policies, it is not very evident that the members understand this as leadership. The lack of policy construction by the Leadership Teams in most of the sampled churches significantly detracts from the effectiveness of the model, and an awareness of this lack of leadership was reflected in some responses from survey participants. In most cases, getting the Leadership Team to produce policies had been tried, but was perceived not to have worked well. Allegedly, the Leadership Teams took too long to produce policies and so in practice the policies are actually produced by the Senior Minister and the MT, for the Leadership Teams to then amend, if they desire, and approve. The fact is, for the most part in participating churches, that the locus of leadership lies in the Senior Minister-led Ministry Team, rather than the Leadership Team.

There is also the issue of those who are elected to leadership positions. The Carver PGM if applied to a church, requires the Leadership Team to express the owner's (Christ's) values and perspectives in the form of policies. This would assume that the congregation elects godly people, who are biblically and theologically literate enough to do this, and the Leadership Team members are being shaped in their decision-making by the NT as a dialogue partner. All this is problematical, and in any case, it is most likely that it is the Senior Minister and some staff members who are the most biblically and theologically trained members of the church. This is an area of potential weakness of the direct application of the Carver model to a church.

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277 Such as the summary of Cityside Church's global policies, shown as Table 5.2.
That the policies are not many, as is generally the case, may not necessarily be a major problem, if they are constructed properly, for as Carver says “a small number of policies can enunciate the board’s values with respect to minimum levels of prudence and ethics”. Through even a small number of Executive Limitations policies the Leadership Team, in the church context, can control a large range of executive means, as in the case of Cityside Church.

As far as Ends policies are concerned, with the exception of Cityside Church, there seems to be little evidence generally of specifically defined Ends policies in most of the surveyed churches, although the strategic plans of some do contain goals which may well function as Ends. This lack of Ends policies was reflected by participants’ general lack of clarity as to what exactly were their church’s ministry objectives.

A Nexus

One of the key components of the Carver model is that the CEO, or Senior Minister in the case of a church, is solely responsible for all management. In that model, the CEO becomes the nexus through which accountability for the operation of the organization (church) flows to the board (Leadership Team), and thence to the congregation. In all participating churches, this was clearly intended to be the case, although some participants were of the view that this nexus was often circumvented, especially where pastoral issues were involved. This occurs when church members tend to continue to directly access board members in regard to matters for which, under the PGM, the Senior Minister should be solely responsible. Such a tendency may well be a response to the sense of disenfranchisement we have discerned among some church members, which, as in the case of Martin Newall of New Life Community, also includes at least one staff member reporting directly to the Senior Minister.

278 Carver, Boards That Make a Difference, p.79
279 For example, the Strategic Plan of Living Water’s Church has goals for the establishment of community outreach programs, additional worship services, a specific numerical goal for small group and church attendance, as well as others.
280 Carver, Reinventing Your Board, p.5. This may be a lesser issue in some of the churches, given that the governance implementation process in some churches is still in its early days and that Carver suggests Ends policies should be the last to be established.
Ends Policies and Strategic Plans

In discussion with survey participants regarding the reasons for their church’s search for a new governance structure, a repeated response was the need for focus and direction, so that they were “on the same page”, or “going in the same direction”. A common theme from the same participants was that this sense of direction and focus has been an outcome of their new structure, because the very process of implementation had begged the questions “Where are we going? What is our purpose?” etc. The research for, and the implementation of, new governance structures in several of the churches, has also brought about the creation of a Strategic Plan, which has become the guiding document for church life and ministry. It seems whatever else the implementation of a PGM achieves, it does bring about a new focus on the church’s ministry outcomes, and the means of achieving them. It also tends to initiate an evaluation of a church’s planning, direction and strategy, particularly in churches where this has not been a common practice. The Strategic Plans which have emerged in effect, while not expressed explicitly in this way, function in part as ‘Ends Policy’ documents.

Policies That Constrain

In the Carver PGM, policies are designed to give freedom of action to the Senior Minister, within the limits set by those same policies. These limitations however, may also mean that the policies sometimes act to constrain action. An example of such constraint given by one Senior Minister was his view that,281 in comparison to freedom he had previously enjoyed, it was now harder for him to employ a new staff member, even though he knew the person he wanted, because he had policy steps to comply with before the appointment could be made.282 However, such a situation indicates that the EL policies are not just global “minimum verbiage” policies, but are too specific and constrain the Senior Minister in a way the Carver PGM does not intend.

281 Mark Smith of Beachside Community.
282 Another example cited, was where available monies for ministry were now compartmentalised by budget policies, with a cap limiting expenditure on each compartment. This now constrained a previous freedom to reallocate funds as he saw fit.
As we have already noted, one potential benefit of appropriate Executive Limitation Policies being in place, would be to protect a congregation against the excesses of a strongly charismatic leader. Conversely, they can function to protect a godly leader against undue influence by an ungodly congregation.

**An Analytical Measure**

The participants in each church sampled in this study indicated that the new governance system has brought about an increase in trust between the Senior Minister and the Leadership Team. There are also indications of beneficial changes in the churches in terms of ministry and mission. In order to provide some sort of graphical analysis of the perceived changes, each participant was asked to respond to two statements, the results being shown as Charts 6.1 and 6.2.

The first statement was-

“As a result of the changed governance system in your church-
There has been an increase in trust between the Leadership Team
and the Senior Minister.”

![Chart 6.1 A Culture of Trust](image)

This graph shows, that there is a strong perception that the ‘Trust’ dimension, (i.e. giving each other freedom to get on with the job) has significantly increased in the way the Carver model intends.
The second statement was-

“As a result of the changed governance system in your church –
The ministries of the church have been enhanced.”

Chart 6.2 An Enhanced Ministry

This graph shows a perception that the changes in governance have generated significant ‘flow on’ benefits throughout the ministries and mission of the participating churches, in a way not intrinsic to Carver.

Expressed Concerns

While there was consensus among those interviewed in this study, that the implementation of PG structures have been beneficial to their churches, a number of concerns emerged. One is a concern that in PG, where everything is controlled by, and operates according to, Policies, this can create a danger of ignoring “the sovereignty of God”, and the “need for Grace and the work of the Spirit”, by assuming that well thought out and implemented human structures are the key to ‘success’. Such a dependency would amount to a triumph of the Powers, in substituting human ingenuity and effort for the work of the Spirit. Some participants also expressed a concern that the model where everything runs to a set of rules, with each minister and member getting on with their own job according to those rules, has a tendency to lead to a devaluing of personal
relationships, a loss of mutual servanthood and a diminution of the “need for care and compassion”.  

Another theme that appeared in all the participating churches, was that of a sense of disenfranchisement, or distancing, by some members, who expressed regret at the lack of the type of access to the Leadership Team as pastoral elders they perceived existed under previous governance systems. In the area of pastoral care however, it may be this is a matter more of perception than fact, and, as one participant put it, “there is a lack of awareness that pastoral care is now being provided in other ways not very obvious to all; e.g. through the ministry of small groups”. This perception does however indicate an awareness of a changed culture, and that a ‘felt’ alien value, or process, has been forced into the existing church culture.

In addition to this, some perceive a loss of accountability to the congregation by the leadership and, in terms of the requirements for mutual accountability discerned in the NT, this may indicate an accountability breakdown. However, while this may be the perception, the new structures do make provision for the Senior Minister to be accountable to the congregation, even though indirectly, via the congregation appointed Leadership Team members. Whatever the case, the latter two concerns, some disenfranchisement of the membership, or distancing from the leadership, and unclear accountability, do appear to indicate a loss of the NT essences for accountability and intertwined-ness.

One particular issue noted in this study, is the danger of empowering, or giving freedom to, ministry groups without adequate policies being put in place, either Ends policies to tell a ministry group what it exists for, or limitation policies to provide sufficient guidance for the particular ministry or activity. A particular example was cited, where a congregational group had exercised their freedom, not for the benefit of gospel ministry but for self-interest. This resulted from a lack of relevant Ends and Limitation policies being in place, which allows the self-centredness of church members to work in ways

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283 A concern of Carlie James of Beachside Community
284 As Harriet Nixon of Cityside Church believes to be the case.
285 It should be noted, that these concerns were largely expressed by long term members, rather than more recent arrivals, who, if they stay in the church, are more likely to accept the new structure.
286 This will be a problem for any church over a certain size where the leadership cannot know every person individually.
that damage the church’s mission. As we have seen, a concern such as this appears to have led to accountability arrangements being put in place in the NT churches.

**Deviations from Carver**

One thing our data reveals is that the models in operation vary as to their faithfulness to the Carver model. The reasons for this deviation are complex, however a number of factors are discernable.

**Policy Overload**

In some cases the policies developed may be too many and/or too complex for a Leadership Team to develop, perhaps because the Carver model has either not been properly understood, or not applied rigidly enough. The intention of the Carver model is that policies should be short, concise minimum verbiage policies.\(^{287}\) Where policies are long, complicated or there are too many of them,\(^{288}\) this is likely to place an impossible load on the policy making body, the Leadership Team, such that they do indeed become a “roadblock”.

**Leadership Style**

A second reason for deviation from Carver’s ideal, that became evident through the study, is the leadership style of the Senior Minister (SM). Discussions with Senior Ministers and those involved in the process indicate two styles affecting the degree to which the resultant model reflects Carver’s intention. One approach, is where the SM is a strong and entrepreneurial leader, and the major objective of the governance change is, in the mind of the SM in particular, fairly limited; namely to prevent meddling by the Leadership Team in the ministry operation of the church, while still allowing the SM to control the production of the major policies.\(^{289}\) In this case, the result is a form of policy governance but one that has moved significantly away from Carver. A factor that

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\(^{287}\) Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p.79

\(^{288}\) As discussed in Chapter 5.

\(^{289}\) Mark Smith indicated that some policies are now being written with “escape clauses” which allow him to override them if he feels it is necessary.
reinforces this effect is where the Leadership Team members are quite content to let a ‘trusted’ Senior Minister do the job of setting policy.

Alternatively, where the Senior Minister has a different style, and may not even have been the primary initiator of change, then the resultant governance model is likely to be much closer to the Carver PGM. This approach is where the aim of the SM was to produce a whole-church beneficial effect, not limited to the SM’s role alone but one that would encourage the ministries of the church to operate more organically.

**A Knowledge Vacuum**

The knowledge vacuum which we have highlighted earlier, may well mean the Leadership Team will not realise, or at least be effective in, its leadership through policy-making role. The result, at least in the way the leadership functions, will be a contributing factor to the tendency to deviate from the Carver model of governance.

**Lack of Competency**

Another possibility for the failure of a Leadership Team to realise its full policy-making function, although in the study this was only hinted at, could be where there is a lack of competency among those elected to the Leadership Team, such that they are not considered able to effectively be policy makers. Where this is the case then the governance model in place will be a deviation from the Carver model, because there will be a tendency for the Senior Minister and the Ministry Team to take the policy making role on themselves.

Whatever the case, it became evident that most of the Leadership Teams in the sampled churches are not in fact leading through policy making, but are functioning more as groups that amend and approve policy. A matter that arises from this is that, if the Leadership Team is not really setting policies, then this will tend to weaken the accountability link from the Senior Pastor via the Leadership Team to the congregation.

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290 In part, an exception to this appears to be Cityside church, where as we have noted, the LT has set global policies, although they still seem to be unclear as to their role.
Summary

From our investigation of churches that have attempted to implement a PGM, a number of common threads have emerged. Firstly, a noteworthy observation is that, while all the participating churches have governance systems that have at least some similarities with the Carver model, none have adopted it exactly. The main illustration of this is the fact that in these churches, it is not normally the Leadership Team that produces global policies; rather it is usually the Senior Minister and the Ministry Team.

This appears to be for a number of reasons, ranging from the policies produced being far too large for the Leadership Team to realistically cope with, through a lack of knowledge of how the model is supposed to work, to there being some reluctance on the behalf of the Senior Minister to let go of the policy-making role. Importantly, in the latter case, there seems to be some indication of an inverse relationship between the degree to which the Senior Minister has an entrepreneurial style, with trust accredited on the basis of ministry ‘runs on the board’, and the closeness to the Carver PGM of the model adopted.

Secondly, we have discerned a number of benefits from the implementation of a PG system, an important one of which is that the overwhelming majority of study participants believe that there has been a large degree of empowerment of the Senior Minister to run the church, without operational meddling from the Leadership Team. This freedom seems, in a related phenomenon, to produce an effect not intrinsic to Carver in that it becomes a contagion through all levels of ministry in the church. This appears to be an example of where changing the system, the cultural artefact, changes the cultural core assumptions, especially if the changes are observed to be ‘successful’.\footnote{Schein, gives an example of such a phenomenon, pp.28, 29.} Indeed, in a Carver type model, this is what is intended, that is to cultivate a new culture,\footnote{W.E. Schneider, The Re-Engineering Alternative (Burr Ridge: McGraw Hill, 1994) p.103, describes this as a “Cultivation Model” which is designed to “Create and provide the conditions whereby the people within the organization can grow, develop and strive to accomplish the highest order purposes (sic) possible”.} and the analytical graphs in this chapter show clearly that church members generally perceive this to be the case. The effect of the new culture appears to be that it operates organically, i.e. it encourages the free, organic,
development and use of members’ Spirit-given gifts “for the common good” (1 Corinthians 12:7). The overwhelming majority of participants are of the view that this contagion has brought about great benefit to the ministries of their respective churches.

Another beneficial outcome of the new governance systems, appears to be that they act as a catalyst for the focussing of the direction and mission of the churches. This re-focussing effect in most of the churches has resulted in the production of a strategic plan, or medium-term vision document.

As well as the above positive outcomes however, the study also revealed some common concerns across the churches, both theological and in terms of ministry, which it would be necessary to address in any proposed governance model. One of these is a sense by some members of a loss of accountability of the Senior Minister to the congregation. Another is a perception of the diminution of personal pastoral care compared to that previously operating under former eldership and deacon systems. Whatever the reality, these concerns do show some congregational awareness of a cultural change wrought by the change in governance system from formerly known pastoral and decision-making elderships.²⁹³

We also noted, that there is not strong evidence of significant theological reflection on the NT essences for Christian  \( \text{KOINÒVIA} \), in the development of the new models. This may well reflect the heavily pragmatic motivation our study has revealed for the implementation of new governance systems. It may also be, that the perceived loss of accountability and relational pastoral care, in a drive for efficiency and ‘success’, is some indication of the co-option of the heavily results-orientated PG model by the Powers. This is significant in the context of our analysis of the Carver PGM through the NT lens, which has already highlighted theological concerns, such as whether a PG system, with its underlying secular worldview, may corrupt rather than foster Trinity-reflecting relationships.

An additional concern arising during the study is that there is a general knowledge vacuum regarding the understanding of the structure of the governance models in

²⁹³ This change will in any case be partly due to the generally increasing size of the churches, which makes a true leader-pastor ministry virtually impossible to maintain for the Senior Minister.
place. This lack of knowledge in some cases extends to Leadership Team members themselves and this most probably reduces the effectiveness of the models implemented.

We now move on in the next chapter to examine what adjustments need to be made to the Carver model, in the light of the theological and pragmatic insights of our investigations, in order to construct a PGM that is suitable for the contemporary church.
Chapter 7- Policy Governance for Anychurch

In “Missional Church”, edited by Darrell L. Guder, it is argued that “the current predicament of churches . . . . . requires more than a mere tinkering with long-assumed notions about the identity and mission of the church.”294 If it is true, as we believe it is, that “Polity still affects how denominations function . . .”,295 and “patterns of governance determine how ecclesiastical systems work . . .”,296 then, in the context of seeking to more than “tinker” in order to improve missional effectiveness, the issue of church governance must be one of the factors examined, as we have been doing in this study.

In this concluding chapter, we now move from our observations of what seems to be the case in the participating churches, to seek to tentatively suggest a potential, NT sculpted, PG model for a contemporary church. This we do both in the light of the ontological and functional essences we have distilled from the NT, and the benefits and concerns discerned in this study. In order to facilitate understanding, we will construct an indicative outline of a possible global policy document (Table 7.1), that, while being a NT nuanced adjustment of the Carver PGM in response to theological concerns, also seeks to retain the benefits participating churches have experienced. In so doing, it is important to emphasise that there is no attempt here to claim that the whole of NT ecclesiology can be incorporated in such a document.

The Shaping of Governance

Our study has indicated two primary factors that must shape and inform our conclusions regarding the appropriateness of any governance model for a 21st Century church. These are, firstly that the model needs to be shaped by the NT indicated essences for κοινωνία, for we have agreed with Volf that “An ecclesial model acquires theological legitimacy through an appeal to the New Testament witness concerning the church.”297

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297 Volf p.22
Secondly, as we have demonstrated in Chapter 3, the NT documents reveal a process in train, or a ‘developmental flux’, that was influenced by both pragmatic and theological concerns, one that involved the placement of persons, and the initiation of practices, for the exercise of leadership. Subject to the NT essences, we have argued that this gives permission to contemporary churches to construct a model that is, with Volf, a result of reflection on the cultural environment in which 21st century congregations are to minister and mission.

A further reason for this developmental flux is that, while the NT has a very high view of the church as the Bride of Christ, it also provides a reality check in honestly acknowledging that the new humanity is constantly opposed by the Powers, as we have recognized in Chapter 4. Further, the NT gives examples of strategies and policies for the protection of the church against those Powers. This is a response to a progressive realization of a need, in parallel with the growth and practical development of the church, to maintain theological purity. To put it in another way, there was in the NT churches, and always is, a requirement to put in place appropriate church leadership, which oversees the building of Trinity-reflecting relationships, together with the prosecution of the Misseo Dei in the world, while at the same time ensuring adherence to kingdom principles.

The Powers’ opposition may manifest itself in a variety of ways, for example, in the case of a heavily results-focused governance and leadership model such as Carver being applied uncritically to a church, by distorting the Ends to being just about attendance figures at the expense of congregational relationships. For this reason, any governance structure a contemporary church implements, must acknowledge the potential usurping of potentially ‘good’ Ends, e.g. numerical growth, by the Powers. Such danger requires that the development of a culture of prayer (Ephesians 6:18), and submitting to the headship of Christ through the use of the divinely given means of prayer and Word, be high priorities, in order to deal with what is primarily spiritual opposition to the life and ministry of Christ based communities.

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298 Volf p.22
Anychurch Governance Model Essentials

If a Carver-type system of governance and leadership for a church is to be developed, then our study has indicated that certain factors must inform the reshaping of the basic Carver model.

A Trinity Reflecting Community

We have argued that the NT images of the church indicate a dynamic spiritual organism, one that reflects the relationships within the Trinity; a highly relational community, where there is a mutual intertwined-ness of members’ lives. In fact, it is to be a community which is a Trinity-reflecting fulfilment of Jesus’ high priestly prayer that “even as you, Father, are in me and I in you, . . . they may also be in us” (John 17:21). This is a community in which members are intimately members of each other; one which is being built on the foundation of Christ, on whose servant nature the relationships within this community are to be modelled (Philippians 2:1-11), i.e. it is to be a servant community, serving God, others and the Creation. The governance and leadership model for Anychurch must reflect and foster these Trinity-reflecting, servant characteristics of the church in three ways.

Mutual Accountability

Firstly, because of the way the Carver model is usually represented (as Diagram 4.1) it implies a unidirectional and hierarchical (organization-CEO-board) accountability flow. Such a structure if applied uncritically, would not recognise or encourage a functional reflection of the essential mutual intertwined-ness of the Senior Minister and congregational members. Although, in a NT informed ecclesial community the primary accountability is to God, in order to maintain NT shaped, mutually submissive relationships, there also needs to be a bi-directional accountability flow between the congregation and the leadership. While the members of the Leadership Team and the Senior Minister are, as to an extent are the members of the Trinity, functionally differentiated from the other members of the body, they are still members of, and

299 Again it must be stated that this is a problem for most forms of church governance.
accountable to, that body. This is the intention of the non-hierarchical modification of the Carver model suggested in Diagram 7.1, where the Leadership Team and the Senior Minister are differentiated (according to function), yet are still clearly ‘in’, and part of, the body.

Diagram 7.1 – Anychurch Policy Governance Model

In a model for Anychurch, the mutual accountability of the Senior Minister and the congregation would be established via the body-elected Leadership Team, a fact that must be emphasised in Anychurch’s policy documents, as is indicated in the Leadership Team-Executive Policies (ii) of Table 7.1.\textsuperscript{300}

\textsuperscript{300} It needs to be noted, as Chapter 4 indicates, that accountability paths within the church are to some extent fluid, according to the particular functions being exercised by members at any given time.
**Mutual Servanthood**

Secondly, as the representation of Diagram 7.1 intends to indicate, there is a relationship of mutual servanthood between the Leadership Team, the Senior Minister and the membership. The Leadership Team, acting as a unit, and the Senior Minister, are organs in the body and serve by exercising their leadership and managerial gifts respectively, while at the same time, they themselves, as members of the body, are being served by the exercise of the gifts of other congregational members.\(^{301}\)

**An Organic Community**

Thirdly, as we have noted, Carver tends to use organic language such as “Work becomes not so much a series of structured mechanical activities as a process of creating and becoming”.\(^{302}\) We have argued that this way of speaking does in fact have some resonance with the ecclesial communities pictured in the NT as dynamic, growing spiritual organisms. In the church, as in a biological organism, each cell, member, is intended to use its abilities, within its design parameters, so that “the whole body . . . . grows and builds itself up in love as each part does its work” (Ephesians 4:16). While the Carver model is designed to give freedom to the ‘board’ and the ‘CEO’ to concentrate their abilities and resources in order to maximise their effectiveness for the benefit of the whole, we have noted an additional effect in churches participating in this study. This effect could be called Carver Plus, which is that the freeing up of the Senior Minister has had a flow-on effect into the church as a whole, with ministry area leaders being encouraged to use their gifts organically i.e. with strategic freedom to initiate and develop ministry and mission areas.\(^{303}\) A model developed for Anychurch must encourage this organic characteristic by the inclusion, in the Executive Limitation category (ix. of Table 7.1), of a policy that allows area ministry leaders and sub-leaders the freedom to use their gifts, within agreed limitations, to develop strategies for the maximum effect in kingdom-building ministry.

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301 For example, in leading public worship, providing pastoral care, using organizational skills etc.
302 Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p.25
303 Again, as we have previously noted with reference to E. Schein, it seems that the change in system has created a change in culture.
Ownership

It might be expected to be self evident that God is the owner of the church, which he created by His choosing (Ephesians 1:4), and purchased by Christ’s blood (Acts 20:28). Yet, functionally, many Christians behave in ways that suggest a belief the church exists for them. The wide prevalence of ‘church shopping’ and ecclesiastical consumerism is a symptom of this, where Christians move from church to church seeking the one perceived to most closely meet ‘their needs’. There is a danger that an uncritically applied Carver-type PGM would reinforce this way of thinking because of its stated intention of providing benefit for the members or stakeholders in an organization. However, while there are indeed intended benefits flowing to members of the church from its ministries and activities, the church is primarily accountable to, and the outcomes or ‘benefits’ of its activities must go to, the Lord in terms of glory being ascribed to Him in the building of His kingdom.

To oppose the danger of the ‘church is for me attitude’, it is necessary to make clear in a church’s governance documents, that it is primarily for God’s glory that the church exists. For this reason, a statement such as ‘for God’s Glory’ should be an essential part of Anychurch’s mission statement, and also be the primary Ends policy as in Table 7.1. It might also be helpful to include something like Diagram 7.1 in Anychurch’s Mission and Vision documents.

Leadership

Essential to the Carver model, is the intention that a board comprised of competent people leads an organization through the setting of global policies. Our study has shown that, in the sampled churches, this leadership function of the Leadership Team is often poorly developed for a range of reasons. The conclusion of this study however, is that there is no intrinsic reason why a Leadership Team cannot provide leadership through policies in the basic way the Carver model intends. If the Leadership Team limits itself to “minimum verbiage” global policies that state the basic mission aims, and global limitation policies (such as indicated in Table 7.1), then this would not be an unmanageable time-demand issue. Detailed policies for specific areas of ministry can
be determined by the Senior Minister and the Ministry Team, leaving the Leadership Team free to monitor the performance of the Senior Minister, which in the PGM equates to the performance of the church, and to make any necessary global policy adjustments from time to time.

**Christ’s Leadership**

The role of the Leadership Team in a PGM for a church, is to set policies that reflect the values and perspectives of the Owner, the Lord. In the NT communities, the leadership is accountable to the congregation for godly leadership (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). For this to be the case, the voice of Christ must inform the policy formation process, and thus, the Leadership Team members must be godly and faithful Christians sitting under the influence of the revealed word of God, in order to be led by the *Revealed Word of God* in their policy development. It is therefore essential that those responsible for the election of such persons, namely the congregation, are educated in the biblical guidelines for leaders,\(^\text{304}\) and that this is a prayerful process, one in which “the spirits are tested” (1 John 4:1). Unfortunately, it is often the case that the nomination and voting processes in churches are lacking in an adequate prayer dimension. Therefore, a second tier policy to govern the selection and election of Leadership Team members would be important; one that ensures that the whole process of electing Leadership Team members, from nomination to appointment, is one that is surrounded by prayer.

In terms of the collegiality of decision making, or requirement that the Leadership Team speak with one voice or not at all, there would seem to be no biblical prohibition of this. There may even be some indication of an embryonic collegial approach to leadership in the case of the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:13-36).

**The Grace of God**

Not surprisingly, as it is a model developed out of a secular worldview, the Carver model pays no attention to the need for the grace of God in the achievement of Ends. Rather, it works on the basis of human effort, i.e. getting results is a matter of the better

\(^{304}\) Such as in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.
management, organization etc. that the new ‘culture of trust’ intends to facilitate. Such a way of thinking, as we have indicated, may be used by the Powers to turn ministry into a human endeavour, rather than an exercise in grace. Therefore, in a PGM for Anychurch it is essential that work of the Holy Spirit and the need for God’s grace be acknowledged and sought, most clearly in the fostering of a culture of prayer, which must surround all church planning, activity and ministry.

**Policies**

In general terms, policies should be global, short and succinct “minimum verbiage” policies, so as not to create a time, or information, overload for the Leadership Team. Table 7.1 shows an indicative global policy document for Anychurch, based on the insights gained during, and conclusions drawn from, this study. In accordance with Carver, the Mission, or ‘Ends’, policies are largely prescriptive, i.e. they are statements of the primary aims of the church, beginning with bringing Glory to the Lord, the owner. They are also to a degree measurable, for example, it will be possible to say whether the Senior Minister has put in place mechanisms for evangelising the community, or for the pastoral care, or the equipping of members for ministry. It is these policies, which explicate expectations of the Senior Minister.

The Executive Limitations policies (i.e. those governing the ministries of the church under the Senior Minister) are largely prescriptive, in that they set limits not to be breached. They are the envelopes of freedom, such that the Senior Minister is free to operate “within any reasonable interpretation of those policies, and authorized to establish any further management policies, make any decisions, take any actions, establish any practices, and develop any activities necessary to achieve the Mission”. These Executive Limitations, or boundaries, may bring the accusation that ministry is being guided by Law, rather than being exercised in the freedom of grace, i.e. the work of the Spirit. It is certainly true that Christians are regenerated by the Spirit and are to live by the Spirit (Romans 8:5), however, it is also true, that we are in the process of putting to death the “misdeeds of the body” (Romans 8:13), a process that will not be complete this side of heaven. As

305 This is addressed, and acknowledged, in the Executive Limitations category (ii) of Table 7.1.  
306 Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p.100  
307 Church Of Christ in Western Australia, *A Draft Policy Manual*, February 2005  
we have argued in Chapter 3, the NT concern for the theological health of the church is a reflection of this, and the contemporary church must no less than Paul (Ephesians 6:12), acknowledge the presence and activity of the Powers, seeking to deceive God’s people, the church. The ‘reality check’ of the NT must be heeded, and so it is quite legitimate, in fact necessary, to put in place practices that on the one hand allow openness to the work of the Spirit, yet on the other hand provide checks to false teaching and damaging Christian behaviour.

It should be noted, that the implementation of a PGM for a church runs the risk of empowering the Powers by creating a dependency on human structures for ‘success’, i.e. faith in better, smarter management rather that dependence on God’s grace. In regard to this, the construction of any governance system must acknowledge the church’s total dependence on the Lord’s providence and empowering, if prayer-discerned mission ends are to be achieved.

The indicative Leadership Team-Executive policies shown in Table 7.1 have been written to establish the operating relationship between the Leadership Team and the Senior Minister, also to define the accountability relationships between the Leadership Team, the Senior Minister and the congregation. The mutual accountability of these relationships are a NT ‘essence’, yet often get lost as a church gets larger. The Executive Limitation policies should also make it clear that the only person accountable to the Leadership Team is the Senior Minister, who is free to operate within any reasonable interpretation of the Mission and Executive Limitation policies.\(^{308}\) This latter statement is crucial, in that it is this freedom that creates the ‘empowering’ effect that is the aim of Carver, and also allows for the wind of the Spirit to blow where He wills.

The Leadership Team Process policies shown in Table 7.1 show an indicative job description of the Leadership Team for Anychurch. They are extremely simple, namely to develop global policies for the church; to monitor the state of the church, which is the same as monitoring the performance of the Senior Minister,\(^{309}\) and to ensure that the Senior Minister only acts within “any reasonable interpretation” of the EL policies.\(^{310}\)

\(^{308}\) Carver, Board\(s\) That Make a Difference, p.41
\(^{309}\) COC in WA Draft Policy Manual February 2005, states that “The board will view Senior Minister performance as identical to organizational performance, so that organizational accomplishment of board-stated mission and avoidance of board-prohibited means will be viewed as successful Senior Minister performance”.
Table 7.1- Anychurch Global Governance Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carver P.G. Categories</th>
<th>Anychurch Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Els or Mission Policies</strong></td>
<td>The Mission of Anychurch is, by the Grace of God and in the power of His Spirit-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. To Bring glory to God, the Owner of the church.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. To bring people in the community and beyond, into a relationship with Christ.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. To nurture members’ growth in Christian maturity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. To equip members for ministry, and to share their faith.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. To proclaim the gospel of Christ in word and deed in the local community, in Australia and overseas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Executive Limitations Policies</strong></td>
<td>The Senior Minister shall -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Serve the church by exercising authority as the primary leader of the church, within the limitations of Biblical morality.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Ensure that church ministries and activities are not planned and exercised without theological reflection on the Word of God, and acknowledgment of the need for the Grace of God by the development of a culture of prayer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Hold the membership and leadership to biblical standards of morality.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. Ensure that expenditure decisions do not risk financial jeopardy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. Ensure that church assets are not put at hazard.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi. Ensure that the church does not breach statutory regulatory compliance requirements.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii. Ensure that there is not a failure to provide pastoral care.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viii. Ensure that members do not lack appropriate training opportunities to be equipped for ministry and witness.</td>
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</tbody>
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Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference*, p.41
ix. Ensure that, within agreed limitations, policies are developed that do not restrict the freedom of area ministry leaders and sub-leaders to develop strategies for the maximum effect of their ministry area.

x. Submit to the leadership of a leader of a ministry area in which the Senior Minister is a team member.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Team - Executive Policies</th>
<th>The Leadership Team is to –</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. Hold the Senior Minister accountable for the church’s operation within any reasonable interpretation of the Executive Limitations policies.</td>
<td>i. Hold the Senior Minister accountable for the church’s operation within any reasonable interpretation of the Executive Limitations policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Provide the accountability path between the Senior Minister and the congregation.</td>
<td>ii. Provide the accountability path between the Senior Minister and the congregation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Meet with the Senior Minister not less than monthly.</td>
<td>iii. Meet with the Senior Minister not less than monthly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. Communicate with the church only through the Senior Minister.</td>
<td>iv. Communicate with the church only through the Senior Minister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. Have authority only when speaking collegially.</td>
<td>v. Have authority only when speaking collegially.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi. Hold to account only the Senior Minister.</td>
<td>vi. Hold to account only the Senior Minister.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Team Process Policies</th>
<th>The Role of the Leadership team is to –</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. Develop Global Policies.</td>
<td>i. Develop Global Policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Monitor the state of the church through reports by the Senior Minister.</td>
<td>ii. Monitor the state of the church through reports by the Senior Minister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Monitor the performance of the Senior Minister, in accordance with any reasonable interpretation of the Ends and Executive Limitations policies.</td>
<td>iii. Monitor the performance of the Senior Minister, in accordance with any reasonable interpretation of the Ends and Executive Limitations policies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other Issues

#### Education

Conversations with study participants indicated that there is, with some exceptions, a great deal of ignorance on the part of Leadership Teams and congregational members in regard to the exact model of governance their church has put in place, and how it is

311 For example, in a music team.
supposed to operate. Several Leadership Team members made statements to the effect of “we are still struggling with our role”. This we have described as a knowledge vacuum, and it can be argued that this is part of the reason for some of the less positive responses to the new governance systems. As we have noted, perceptions of a lack of accountability, or diminished pastoral care, are a concern for any church over a size where leaders are not able to have a personal relationship with every member, no matter what the governance system. To counteract this, at least in part, a significant effort must be made to explain how leadership accountability is maintained, how mutual servanthood is practiced, and how pastoral care operates in the larger church.

In a PGM for Anychurch, there is clearly a need to address the knowledge vacuum, at least for Leadership Team members and Ministry Team leaders, if the governance and leadership structures are to work as effectively as possible. For this reason, it is essential that the Leadership Team members fully understand their role, viz. leadership through policies and not management; as well as their relationship to, and the role of, the Senior Minister- i.e. in organic freedom, to lead the church, using any means that are a “reasonable interpretation” of the global policies the Leadership Team has set.

Denominational Issues

The churches engaged in this study all have a congregational governance ecclesiology, where the church members have ultimate control, through congregational meetings, as to what happens in the church, and even over the tenure of the Senior Minister.\textsuperscript{312} Such a model can fit relatively easily with a PGM in which the accountability of the Senior Minister is established through the congregationally elected, and limited tenure, Leadership Team, as long as the congregation delegates the primary leadership role to the Leadership Team.

In an Episcopal model however, such as in Anglicanism, in which the Synod determines governance,\textsuperscript{313} it would be more difficult to implement a PGM. The reason for this is that Senior Ministers have greater power, and position security, than in congregationally

\textsuperscript{312} A qualification here is that in the case of Mountain View the Leadership Team is only partially elected, the remainder consisting of executive staff.

\textsuperscript{313} The Synod is effectively the Diocesan parliament.
governed churches, because they are not appointed by, and their tenure is not at the
tenure, the congregation. Further, although at the Annual Meeting the congregation
can make recommendations, it does not have the power to direct the Senior Minister to
do anything. Further, in most dioceses, the Parish Council, while it is an annually
elected body, is not an Eldership, and does not in practice have great authority,
functioning more as an advisory body to the Senior Minister. Any change in this
situation would require synodic legislation, something not likely to happen speedily.

It would be possible however, to develop a strategy to implement a PGM in such a
church with the willingness of the Senior Minister and the congregation. For this to
happen, the Annual Meeting would need to agree to not have a Parish Council, as it can
do in many Dioceses, and elect a Leadership Team to function in the way developed in
this chapter. If this were to be implemented, it would require a long period of education
and discussion such that the congregation members would understand the governance
system being proposed, exactly how it would operate, what are the expected benefits,
and the checks and balances in terms of accountability.

In such a case, the Leadership Team would be a body elected to lead the parish
through the setting of global Policies, and it would require the Senior Minister to make a
voluntary commitment to run the church in accordance with the Leadership Team set
policies.\footnote{For the authority of his office does not require him to do this.} Leadership Team members could be elected for limited terms of two or three
years, with staggered retirement to maintain continuity of leadership, something current
annually elected councils do not necessarily provide, often with significant detriment to
mission.\footnote{It may be decided that Church Wardens, who are under Synod legislation responsible for finance and property, should automatically be part
of the LT, but this would not necessarily be the case, rather they could be part of the Management Team.}

Such a model in an Anglican church would reap the benefits of the freeing up and
empowerment for ministry we have seen a PGM brings, in terms of promoting a more
organic model of church such as the NT voices to us, rather than the hierarchical and
structured model usually associated with Episcopal denominations. The document
shown as Table 7.1 may provide a starting point for the development of a global policy
document for such a congregation.
End Note

In the introduction to this study, we stated that our main purpose was to provide insights into a number of key questions regarding the legitimacy, and usefulness, of Policy Governance as a model for the governance and leadership of 21st century churches. We have also set out to discern potential benefits of PG for the enhancement of the apostolic function of the church, which is to be a missionary church, i.e. to engage the world alienated from God, as God’s ambassadors and agents of reconciliation between fallen humanity and God (2 Corinthians 5:18-20).

We have argued that, while the NT does not give us a specific model for church leadership and governance, whatever model is used must reflect and foster the fact that the church is essentially to be a community of Trinity-reflecting relationships, the primary purpose of which is to reflect the image of God. Further, we have discerned that there are essentially two factors to be distilled from the NT witness regarding the shaping of governance. These are firstly, the essences that must shape a Trinity-reflecting Christian ΚΟΙΝΟΒΙΟΣ, and secondly, the ‘divine permission’ to construct, with due cognisance being taken of the NT essences, a governance and leadership model to suit the ministry and mission needs of the time, so as “to intersect with the cultural locations in which churches live”316.

We have determined that, the ideological core of the Carver PGM is that effective leadership is the result of the establishment, and proper use, of policies; and that the primary role of effective governing boards is to concern themselves with the establishment of these policies to lead the organization, and not to be involved in management. This then separates governance and management, and so the board trusts and so ‘frees up’ the CEO to get on with the job of running the organization.

In our examination of the Carver model, we have seen there are various aspects of the model that may well be compatible with the essences that we discern in the NT for the shaping of a Christ-centred New Community. One of these is the freedom, or flexibility, the PGM gives to construct appropriate models, a freedom encouraged in the church

316 Volf p.22
context by the divine permission. Secondly, Carver tends to use language that whispers more of an organic than technocratic model. Such a model does allow the possibility of a congregation that reflects the ‘unity-with-functional-diversity’ characteristic of the Trinity; one which will allow the gifts and abilities of members to be harnessed in freedom for the benefit and growth of the whole.

One of the essences we have discerned for a NT shaped church community is that it is purposeful, existing to bear fruit for the Kingdom of God, a principle that resonates with the Carver PGM in that it is strongly mission, or Ends, orientated. Further, we have seen that there is no reason why the values of a church’s ‘owner’, the Lord Himself, should not be expressed in the policies the Leadership Team sets for the Senior Minister and the Ministry Team.

However, despite these relative harmonies, we have also highlighted significant theological tensions and concerns regarding the PGM that must be addressed if any such model is to be implemented in a church. These include the question as to whether the PGM will foster the Trinity-reflecting, egalitarian, mutually intertwined and servant community that is pictured in the NT; the question of Ownership, and the related issues of Accountability and Benefit; the need for the Voice of Christ to be heard in the whole governance process; and a perceived tendency to dis-empower the congregation.

Another concern, is the secular worldview underlying the Carver model, a view that assumes that if we get the structure right results will flow, without due cognisance of the NT essence that it is by grace, not just human effort, that ‘results’ are achieved. This highlights the danger, real for any church governance model, of giving opportunity to the Powers to turn the divine mission into a human enterprise. We have noted however, that some of the methods and strategies adopted in the NT churches could themselves be described as ‘secular’ in nature, except for the calling upon God in prayer for guidance, and in acknowledgment of the need of the “sword of the Spirit” (Ephesians 6:17) for effective mission in the reality of the Powers’ activity. These are all issues requiring significant attention, with ensuing appropriate NT influenced amendments.

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317 Technocratic meaning operating inflexibly like a machine, in which certain operations produce certain predictable fixed outcomes.
318 See the comments on Theological Purity in Chapter 3.
made, if a Carver based PG model is implemented for the leadership and governance of a Christ based ecclesial community.

In terms of benefit, it became evident during the study that the implementation of new governance systems in the participating churches has brought about significant benefits for ministry and mission, including a realized empowering of the Senior Minister’s role. Other highly significant benefits, not intrinsic to the Carver model, were widely reported, such as a contagion of empowerment, i.e. the freeing up of the ministries of congregational members, so that the church operates more organically. Further, the implementation of the new governance and leadership systems appears to function as a catalyst for a new focus on the churches’ ministry outcomes or Ends, and the means of achieving those Ends.

The fact of the matter is, that Anychurch will have a governance structure, either one that is planned or by default, the only question being, which one will it be? Our conclusion to our study is that, in the light of the theological and pragmatic insights of our investigations, and duly acknowledging the concerns highlighted, it is possible to construct a Carver-based, although significantly adjusted, model of governance for the contemporary church. In this chapter, we have attempted, in the exercise of the freedom for the shaping of political life and governance we see demonstrated in the NT, to tentatively suggest what such a basic model would look like, i.e. a PGM that takes due account of the shaping of the NT essences, including the essential Trinity-reflecting organic nature of the church. The indicated model also acknowledges the threat of the Powers to infiltrate any ‘system’, and to usurp divine grace as the power for effective ministry and mission. The response to this threat is an emphasis on the need for a culture of prayer and the discernment of the leadership of the Revealed Word of God (Christ) through the revealed word of God (the Bible).

It is my prayer that, even if nothing else is gained, those who take the time to read this study will be provoked to re-examine the way in which we run our churches. Further, that such an examination will inspire the development of leadership models which nurture the health and growth of Trinity-reflecting communities that maximize missional fruitfulness in the 21st century Australian culture for the glory of God. For it is indeed, the glory of the One who, in the ultimate demonstration of love, sacrificed His
Son to bring us from darkness to light, which must always be the primary ‘End’ of church life and activity.
Appendices
Appendix A

Sample Letter to the Senior Minister of a Participating Church

Doctor of Ministry Project through the Australian College of Theology-
A Critical Analysis of “Policy Governance” as a Model for Church Leadership.

Dear

I am writing further to our recent telephone conversation regarding the above research project, and thank you for your willingness to consider being part of this exercise.

Attached is an information sheet outlining the basic aims of the project, the approach that is being employed, and criteria for selecting interview participants, the areas on which the interview sessions will be focused, and the amount of time which it is anticipated participants will be expected to give.

I wish to emphasise that for the church, yourself and other participants, anonymity will be maintained at all stages of the project.

I will contact you by phone in a week or so to talk further regarding your potential involvement.

With much thanks,

Yours Sincerely,

Martin J. Bragger – Doctoral Student

Jeff Pugh- Research Supervisor
Bible College of Victoria
Appendix B

Sample Information Sheet sent to the Senior Minister of a Participating Church

A Critical Analysis of “Policy Governance” as a Model for Church Leadership

Project Background

In recent years, many businesses and churches have chosen to develop and implement a form of organisational governance known as “Policy Governance” (PG). As part of my Doctoral Thesis, I am carrying out a project the intention of which is to critically analyse the theory of PG and of churches which have developed, or are developing, a “Policy Governance Model” (PGM).

The significance of the project is that it will potentially provide answers to a number of key questions regarding the legitimacy and usefulness of PG as a model for 21st century churches, and discern potential benefits of PG for the enhancement of Gospel ministry.

Church Survey

An essential component of the project is a survey of the practice and experience of churches that have implemented a PG Model of church governance, and it is in this regard I am seeking to enlist your help.

It is intended that the research process will comprise on-site interviews with the Senior Pastor, other key leaders, and appropriate lay people who have been involved in, and experienced, the implementation and development of PG in their church. The staff and members who volunteer as participants would need to have been involved in the ministry of the church over the period of implementation. That is they should be able to comment on the “before” and “after” effects and outcomes of the process the church has been through. It is anticipated that this will involve six to ten people if possible.
Participation will be on a voluntary basis, by both the churches involved and the participants within them.

The approach used will be an exercise of qualitative, descriptive narrative research, involving confidential, semi-structured interviews. If it were possible within the organizational constraints of your church life, it I would need to meet with focus groups of leadership and membership, as well as having access to the one on one interviews with relevant ministry leaders and members as volunteers.

**Key Areas to be Explored**

The following areas will be explored with any members or leaders who volunteer as participants.

1. The special characteristics of the church being studied which make it the unique church it is.
2. The circumstances and pressures which brought about the decision to implement a Policy Governance Model.
3. The interviewees’ understanding of the structure of the PGM. being implemented in this particular church, in terms of - the role of the Board, the role of the Senior Pastor, congregational relationships and accountabilities.
4. The degree to which the model being implemented, is PG in its pure form. i.e. how does it compare with basic PG theory?
5. The perspective of the interviewees regarding the main changes which have resulted from the process. In terms of –

   - The way in which the 'Board' operates.
   - The leadership and ministry style of the Senior Pastor.
   - The ministries by, and for, the congregation.
   - The effect on the Mission of the Church.

Recording of interviews will be both by written notes and Audio tape recorders.
Commitment Requested

It is anticipated that a time commitment of up to an hour will be required of Senior Ministers, for both in-person and telephone interviews later to check up on details which may be unclear. This time commitment for other participants would also be around the hour mark.

In addition, it is requested that official documents proposing, and describing, the PG model implemented be made available.

Anonymity

Throughout the project, from survey to reporting of findings the anonymity of both the participating churches and individual participants will be maintained. The final project report will also be made available to participants.
Appendix C

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION to INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS.

Dear Church Member,

This letter is to introduce Rev. Martin J. Bragger to you. Martin is the Senior Minister of Fairy Meadow Anglican Church in Wollongong NSW. He is also involved in Post Graduate research for an Australian College of Theology Doctor of Ministry degree through the Bible College of Victoria. My name is Rev. Jeff Pugh, and I supervise his research. If and when you meet, he will produce his student card, which carries a photograph, as proof of identity.

He is specifically undertaking research leading to the production of a thesis which focuses upon ways that the governance structure of a church can be more effective, particularly for evangelistic ministry, in this century, and in this Australian culture. The particular area of examination in this study is that of the Policy Governance model developed by Dr. John Carver, because of its claimed potential to free up, and therefore empower, Eldership and Pastorate in terms of the flexibility of their leadership, decision making and strategy development.

A number of churches in Australian are being asked to participate in this study, and Martin is particularly interested to be involved with those churches who have been through a process of developing a Policy Governance structure. You are invited to take part as a member of your church, being aware of its recent history and familiar with the way things happen in your church. Again, if too many members from your church volunteer over this time, Martin will randomly select a sample from those willing to take part.

This research will require the audio-taping of interviews of church members like yourself, interviews with the Senior Pastor, and observation of some of your churches' official documents. These interviews are intended to be as open ended as possible, allowing the you, the participant, to tell your story of your experience of the implementation and the effect you believe of the changes in governance have had in the life of your church, placing it in the position where it finds itself today. A sample of guide questions to prompt recollection in the interviews will be supplied to you prior to participating. You should feel free to include any story or interpretation that you believe would provide valuable insight into your church community life.

I would be most grateful if you would volunteer the time to assist in this project, by granting a confidential interview with Martin, of around 50-60 minutes. On occasions, Martin may have to re-contact those who participate a second time to check details of the transcription of the interview if these are unclear or confusing on the tape or to compare these findings to observations of the wider church life requiring interpretation. You can be assured that any information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence. None of the participants interviewed, nor your church, will be able to be
identified in the resulting thesis, report or other publications. You are, of course, entirely
free to discontinue your participation at any time or to decline to answer any particular
questions. I can assure you absolutely, that no other persons or groups within or
outside your denomination will have access to any data that you supply. As Martin does
not sit on any committee bearing upon your pastor’s tenure, progress, or your church’s
standing within the denomination, he can promise you that any matters divulged will be
absolutely secure. You may also have access to and be able to amend or withdraw the
transcript of your interview prior to the inclusion of any component within the body of the
thesis.

Since Martin needs to make a tape recording of each interview, he will seek your written
consent on a form identical to the one attached, for permission to record and transcribe
the interview in preparing the thesis, or other publications. He understands that the
condition upon which this material is made available is that your identity or that of your
church is not revealed within it. The recording will not be available to any other persons
except the examiners of the thesis, if this is required. It may become necessary to
make the recording available to secretarial assistants for transcription, in which case
you may be assured that such persons will be advised of the requirement that your
name or identity not be revealed and that the confidentiality of the material is respected
and maintained. Martin alone will know the whereabouts of any tapes or transcripts and
once examination processes have been concluded and necessary procedures met
these original sources will be destroyed.

Any queries you may have concerning this project should be directed to Martin by
telephone on 02 4285 5011 at work, or e-mail fmac_martin@telstra.com once you have
made the decision to participate.

This research project has been approved by the Behavioural Research Ethics
Committee of the Australian College of Theology. The Secretary of this Committee can
be contacted on 02-9262 7890…

Thank you for your consideration and assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Rev Jeff Pugh.

Professional Ministries Co-ordinator.

Bible College of Victoria,
LILYDALE,
Phone: 03-9735 0011
Email: JPugh@bcv.vic.edu.au
Appendix D

Consent to be Interviewed Form

Researcher Copy
Participant Copy

I ____________________________ (please print)

being over eighteen years old, and of my own free will, hereby consent to be interviewed by Martin Bragger for the purposes of his research connected with his Doctor of Ministry Course. I understand the topic that I will be interviewed about concerns the Governance structure of my church.

I expect that my details will be obscured to preserve the confidential nature of the material I share and that I may withdraw my consent to be interviewed or for the use of any of the materials that may be generated from this interview. I anticipate that I will be provided with a summary document outlining the outcomes of the research verified by the Bible College of Victoria research supervisor.

Participants Name
Date of Interview

Participants Signature

Researcher’s Signature
Appendix E
Sample Interview Questions

Dear

Thanks for letting me interview you. Basically, I would like to hear you reflect upon the main impacts that the change in the governance structure of your church has made on church life and ministry.

These are the sorts of issues I would like to hear you reflect upon.

1. The special characteristics of your church which make it the unique church it is.
2. Your understanding of the circumstances and pressures that brought about the decision to implement a Policy Governance Model.
3. Your understanding of the structure of the PGM being implemented in your particular church, in terms of - the role of the Board, the role of the Senior Pastor, congregational relationships and accountabilities.
4. The degree to which the model implemented in your church has been varied from the basic PG theory.
5. Your perspective on the main changes that have resulted from the process. In terms of -
   - The way in which the 'Board' operates.
   - The leadership and ministry style of the Senior Pastor.
   - The ministries by, and for, the congregation.
   - The effect on the Mission of the Church.

While the above are topics which are of interest to me, I am more concerned to hear what is of interest to yourself, and most vivid in your own memory. Recording of interviews will be both by written notes and Audio tape recorders.

Thanks again

Martin J. Bragger
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