

**THE WORK AND ORGANISATION OF
LOCAL CHURCHES AND SYNAGOGUES:**

**FOUR ENGLISH CONGREGATIONS IN
THE 1990s**

A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is about the work and organisation of local religious congregations in England. It focuses on the congregations of two religions - Christianity and Judaism; that is, on 'churches' and 'synagogues'.

In Chapter One, the study is positioned within the academic field of social policy and administration. Chapters Two, Three and Four review literature on the historical and societal context within which churches and synagogues operate, the role of religious functionaries and organisational features of congregations. Four organisational themes cutting across denominational and religious boundaries are identified: purposes and goals; roles and role relationships; organisational change; and denominational institutions.

Chapter Five develops an approach for an empirical study and gives an account of fieldwork in an inner-city Roman Catholic church; a black-led Pentecostal church in an industrial town; an Anglican church on a housing estate; and a suburban Reform synagogue. Organisational features of the four case congregations are presented in Chapter Six.

In the following four chapters the organisational issues which arise in the congregations are described and analysed. Chapter Seven presents the perceived issues in congregations around setting and implementing goals. Chapter Eight looks at clerical roles and Chapter Nine at the roles of lay employees and volunteers. Chapter Ten discusses organisational change, the links between congregations and their denominational institutions, and organisational structures.

... continued

Finally, in Chapter Eleven, the study findings are drawn together and re-examined in the light of the earlier literature. The way in which the case studies elucidate and develop knowledge about the work and organisation of congregations is discussed. It is suggested that further progress towards the development of theory on congregation organisation could be made by conceptualising congregations as voluntary organisations.

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THE WORK AND ORGANISATION OF LOCAL CHURCHES AND SYNAGOGUES: FOUR ENGLISH CONGREGATIONS IN THE 1990s

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The village church surrounded by cottages and an inn, its steeple visible across the countryside, its graveyard open to all, its priest an integral part of the local community - this is still a widely-held image of 'the local church' in England. For centuries this image has, to some extent, reflected reality. Even now, in spite of urbanisation and secularisation, there are parts of England in which one religious building, often Anglican, is the centre of a small community; not only physically but also spiritually and socially.

But for several hundred years, this image has been only a partial reflection of the reality of religious organisation at the local level. Diversity of religious commitment has existed at least since Henry VIII's break with the Roman Catholic Church in the sixteenth century. Subsequent immigration and industrialisation encouraged religious pluralism. Today a wide variety of Christian groupings find institutional expression at the local level. Other major religions, including Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism and Judaism, are also well-represented in England.

The theology, history and sociology of local religious institutions have been, and continue to be, the focus of much academic attention and analysis. Descriptions and explanations of their existence and the functions they perform in society are plentiful. Scholarly research offers responses to major questions about, for example, the theological underpinning of religious institutions; the rise of different Christian sects and denominations in England; the impact on religious development of immigration and internal population movements; the nature and causes of the 'secularisation' process; and the extent to which religious functionaries are 'professionals'.

Far less academic attention has been paid to the organisation and work of local religious institutions in this country. The aim of this study is to look at this neglected area.

SOME PRELIMINARY BOUNDARIES

Any study which tried to encompass all kinds of local religious institutions, or even a representative sample of them, would have to be pitched at the most general of levels. But a broad-brush approach of that kind would not sit comfortably with organisational analysis which generally demands a more detailed approach; one which examines environments, structures, processes, participants and goals of organisations and groups of organisations.

A single, wide-ranging study could hardly begin to fulfil such criteria. A more useful approach would be to conduct a series of focused, but interlinked, organisational studies. Each one of these projects, whilst retaining an awareness of the broader context within which religious institutions operate, would concentrate on the organisational analysis of a small number of institutions only. Taken together, these individual projects would allow a picture to be built up of local religious institutions in this country.

So it is proposed that the current project should be regarded as both exploratory and as constituting the first link in a chain of research projects of this kind. In line with this approach, the study will look at the local institutions of two religions only - Christianity and Judaism; that is 'churches' and 'synagogues' (see GLOSSARY). This will permit limits to be placed on the search for relevant research and theory. At the same time, it will ensure that the project is not dominated by the perspectives of one religion only. In the empirical part of the study, tighter boundaries still will be drawn and example institutions will be studied from just a few denominations (see

GLOSSARY); namely a Roman Catholic church, an Anglican church, a Pentecostal church and a Reform synagogue.

The choice of particular religions and denominations for the current study does not imply any judgements about the value or interest of those included or not included. It is no more than a reflection of the universal research problem of drawing appropriate and manageable boundaries around the research task.

THE KNOWLEDGE GAP

It was suggested earlier that relatively little academic attention has been paid so far to the internal organisation and work of local religious institutions in this country. There is a body of knowledge known as "ecclesiology" which deals with the theology of church structures (Longley, 1988a; McCann, 1993). And social scientists have taken an interest in aspects of churches and synagogues; for example attendance at synagogue services (Gould, 1984) and the work of Catholic parishes (Ward, 1961). But there have been very few academic studies of local religious institutions which have been, in any sense, organisationally focused; even fewer have extended their interest beyond a single denomination. Conversely, few scholars with a general interest in organisational analysis have examined local religious institutions.

Three notable contributions which have been made to the UK literature are by Ranson and his colleagues (1977), by Reed (1978) and by Rudge (1968). Reed offered a "theory of oscillation" as an explanation of the interpersonal processes which he observed in church life and Rudge applied systems analysis to the work and problems of "ecclesiastical administration" in the UK and North America. The study by Ranson, Bryman and Hinings, by contrast, was a wide-ranging empirically-based study which used organisational analysis to examine the beliefs of religious functionaries (see GLOSSARY) in Anglican, Catholic and Methodist churches.

In addition to these few organisational studies, there are two other main sources of material about the organisation of churches and synagogues in this country. First, there are empirical and theoretical accounts which, although focused elsewhere, incidentally contain material about the internal organisation of religious institutions. For example, there are a number of sociological analyses of the work of priests and other religious functionaries (Russell, 1980; Towler and Coxon, 1979). Second, there are in-house documents, journalistic commentaries, prescriptive handbooks of advice and autobiographical descriptions written by those actually involved in religious institutions. These do not constitute systematic research. Yet they may be useful in providing background information and in sensitising us to the day-to-day experiences of key actors within religious organisations.

In sum, there is material on which to build, but there is also a major gap in scholarly knowledge about local religious institutions in this country - the organisational dimension. This gap has been referred to by a number of scholars. As long ago as the early 1960s, for example, Freedman and Gould made a plea for a "careful study of the place of the [Anglo-Jewish] minister in his congregational setting" (in Gould and Esh, 1964, p.146). A few years later, Martin (1967, p.12) pointed out that "the local church has been barely studied at all in England as a unit". Nevertheless, as Ranson and his colleagues (1977) say at the beginning of their own study of Anglican, Catholic and Methodist clergy, the tendency amongst academics has continued to be to shy away from studying the organisational aspects of religious institutions.

Thus the identified topic area, although neglected up to now in this country, has been noted as being of academic interest. So one major motivation for this study is to start to fill a gap in knowledge. A second motive is provided by the growing evidence that the practical organisation of local churches and synagogues is a highly complex task which can raise major problems and issues for religious and lay leaders.

PROBLEMS AT THE GRASS ROOTS

The national, local and religious press provides numerous examples of practical problems of organisation in churches and synagogues. Working party reports and 'insider' accounts published in recent years confirm the anecdotal evidence provided by the press. In this section some of the problem areas are briefly noted, using examples drawn from press articles, reports and popular polemical writing readily accessible to the interested layman in the UK.

Numerous writers refer in some way to doubts and debates about the current goals and purposes of local religious institutions. A particular concern is to reconcile theology with practical, organisational considerations; to build institutions which are capable of responding to, and surviving in, modern society but which, nevertheless, remain a true reflection of traditional religious teaching (Card, 1988; Gill, 1988; Hare, 1990; Jewish Chronicle, 1988). Questions are raised, for example, about the community role of churches in the late twentieth century (Vincent, 1988); whether synagogues and churches are regarded by their members as anything other than 'clubs' (Moore et al, 1986); and the relative authority of clergy and laity (Dunn, 1990; Paul, 1964). Within the Catholic Church, the debates about how to implement the decisions of the Second Vatican Council at the local parish level continue thirty years on (Mahoney, 1989). The period immediately preceding the admission of women to the Anglican priesthood saw numerous articles in the popular press about the appropriate role of women in religious institutions.

Another inescapable theme of popular concern is unhappiness and discontent among religious functionaries - priests, clergy, rabbis and so on (Coate, 1989). This unhappiness may be regarded as reflected in shortage of priests (Rice, 1990) and rabbis (Levitt, 1988); high turnover and 'defections' (Bayfield, 1986; Parish, 1988); 'burnout' (Rayner, 1991); or in public confrontations between clergy and lay leaders (Sacks, 1992). Various reasons are advanced for this generally low morale, including

uncertainty about the role of religious institutions in modern society (Lang, 1990); too little authority given to local appointees by central church institutions (Card, 1988); the multiple tasks faced by clergy (Greenwood, 1988); and lack of preparation of student clergy (Finney, 1989; Palmer, 1990).

These kinds of problems - around goal uncertainty and clergy discontent - are common knowledge to any lay person who is involved in institutionalised religion in this country. Suggested responses have included the development of better career structures (Corney, 1988); organisational training (Shamash, 1987); counselling for religious functionaries (Oulton, 1987); a return to grass-roots generated ministry (Card, 1988; Moore et al, 1986); better 'management' of local churches (Bull, 1988); and giving more power and responsibility to the laity (Greenwood, 1988; Hebblethwaite, 1988).

Some denominations have attempted to respond to problems more comprehensively by commissioning reports to examine their 'crises'. Two examinations of the Church of England in the 1960s, for example, recommended major organisational restructuring, with clergy deployed on a regional basis and an increased use of lay and non-stipendiary ministers (Paul, 1964; Morley 1967 quoted in Moore et al, 1986). A more recent report (Tiller, 1983) suggested that specialist teams of clergy based at the diocesan (regional) level of the Church of England would be an appropriate response to the shortage of local priests. Within the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain, the report of a working party on "Rabbinic Manpower" (RSGB, 1986b), was intended to initiate a dialogue between local congregations and their rabbis such that "both sides will arrive at a better recognition and understanding of their respective roles..." (RSGB, 1986c, pi).

AN ORGANISATIONAL STUDY OF CHURCHES AND SYNAGOGUES

Thus, there is substantial anecdotal evidence that local churches and synagogues are currently experiencing a number of major organisational problems. Yet we lack a specialist body of knowledge about how these institutions conduct their activities; a body of knowledge which could describe the organisational features of local churches and synagogues and help to suggest explanations or solutions to organisational problems.

Chapter One proposes a social science framework for the conduct of such a study of the organisation of local religious institutions. It also argues for including the study within the field of social policy and discusses the literature to be used. Chapters Two, Three and Four provide a review of what is already known about the subject: about the historical and societal context within which churches and synagogues operate; about the role of religious functionaries; and about the organisational features of churches and synagogues. In later chapters, case studies are used to build on existing knowledge about the organisation of local religious institutions.

CHAPTER ONE: THE STUDY FRAMEWORK

This chapter sets out a social science disciplinary framework for an organisational study of churches and synagogues. Part A discusses the issues raised by social scientific investigation of sacred institutions and the implications for the current study. Part B locates the study within the academic field of social policy. Finally, Part C discusses the scope of the literature to be reviewed, in preparation for the conduct of an empirical investigation.

PART A: A SOCIAL SCIENCE BASE

SOCIAL SCIENCE AND THE STUDY OF CHURCHES AND SYNAGOGUES

To social scientists unfamiliar with theological debate and the nature of religious belief, the suggestion that churches and synagogues are social phenomena and therefore a proper object of social scientific investigation, may not be problematic. However, there is a body of theological opinion (mainly Christian) that strongly dissents from this proposition, emphasising the separateness of religious institutions and the impossibility of capturing the "essence" of religion (Beckford, 1973, p19).

So in this first part of Chapter One, reasons are given for locating the current study within a social science framework. The nature of the debate between social scientists and theologians about the study of religiously-based institutions is outlined. It is then argued that the organisation of churches and synagogues is an appropriate subject for study by social scientists.

STUDYING SACRED INSTITUTIONS

The argument ~~against~~ the involvement of social scientists in the study of churches and similar institutions, as expounded for laymen by an eminent Methodist minister, is that:

"In our context, 'episcopal ordination' ... 'local congregational independence', 'the democratic process' ... and all else, are 'nothing'. The only thing that counts is new creation in the power and Spirit of God in Christ" (Barnett, 1988, p52).

In other words, religious institutions are "sacred" and "set apart" (McGuire, 1987, p9); underpinned by such unique purposes and inspirations that it is inappropriate to apply to them tools and concepts of social science which were developed initially for the analysis of secular institutions. Religion and the secular world, it is asserted, are concerned with

"two different normative systems which have two different theories of knowledge, two different approaches to reality, two different methods of extending knowledge, and two different attitudes of mind" (Moberg, 1962, p334).

It follows from this approach that, for example:

"The patterns of affective neutrality, role specificity, performance expectations, self-orientation, and even universalism, which characterize the dominant organisational mode of Western society, are all, in greater or less degree, alien to religious institutions, roles, relationships and values" (Wilson, 1968, p428).

It also follows that the "construction of reality" (Berger and Luckmann, 1967) by actors in such institutions must be of a totally different kind from that in secular institutions. Words and key concepts of one kind of institution may be unknown

or perceived and interpreted in totally different ways in the other. Faith, for example, is a concept central to theological discussion but is discussed in other ways and in other language in sociological literature (Moberg, 1962, p67). And Bartholomew (1981) and Carroll (1981) point out that the concept of authority is understood differently in secular and sacred institutions. Church authority, Bartholomew argues (p118), is unique in that it is "derived from Christ" and therefore "external to the social order".

"Authority has importance in the organizational life of a religious group, just as it is a significant sociological variable in any organization. However, authority is also a theological concept, and one about which religious groups are frequently quite deliberately articulate".

The corollary of this view that sacred institutions are unique, is an argument that social scientists should not meddle in a world for which they are not equipped and which is "beyond human scrutiny" (Hill, 1973, p7). However, there is a substantial body of contrary opinion, which includes committed and practising members of religious denominations, that rejects this approach (Berger, 1967; Carroll, 1985; Martin, 1967; Whitehead and Whitehead, 1981).

THE ROLE OF THE SOCIAL SCIENTIST

Without denying the truth or worth of religious belief and teaching, and while accepting that religious institutions may not be "fully intelligible to the finite mind of man" (Dulles, 1978, p5), it can nevertheless be acknowledged that students of society, and indeed religious institutions themselves, have much to gain from empirical investigation by social scientists (Jackson, 1974). There can be, as Brinkman (1988) suggests, two different "registers" of thought about religious matters. Each has its own validity and the pursuit of one does not preclude the pursuit of the other. In practice, the two different approaches can inform each other.

This is demonstrated, for example, by Finney's guide to church leadership (1989, pxii) which aims

"to lay a firm foundation for a scriptural understanding of leadership and to link it with the most useful material from management theory".

So churches and synagogues can be perceived not only as divine creations, but also as "communities of faith" (Gerard, 1985, p51) and as "human creations, amenable to analysis by empirical methods and to planned change efforts" (Carroll, 1985, p319). They "arise and exist" within "a social fabric of communication and human interaction" and are thus "social organizations" (Moberg, 1962, p4), open like other institutions to the impact of their social environment (Beckford, 1985; Scherer, 1980, p2). The overall purpose may be religious and sacred, but

"this overall task breaks down into many particular items which may range from building a church extension to establishing a youth club" (Finney, 1989 p16).

"Congregations are, in Paul's words, "earthen vessels" - human institutions shaped by a myriad of social influences" (Carroll et al, 1986, p48).

Dudley (1983, p212) goes further and argues that churches positively need the organisational insights of social science, in addition to theology, to ensure success. He says that:

"social sciences, along with theology and the personal spiritual disciplines of the pastor, are essential to the resources used by the Holy spirit to shape and strengthen church leadership."

Similarly, Gustafson (1961, p9) suggests that churches can only fulfil their spiritual mission by also recognising the need for the development of "political processes" and the use of "social power". This view is supported by "the frequent finding that, even for highly enthusiastic and spiritual movements, the key to success is effective organisation" (Beckford, 1985, p131).

Arguing a similar case for the social scientific study of Jewish social organisations such as synagogues, Klausner (1981, p192) explains:

"Sociological concepts are intellectual tools of Western civilization - more particularly of European rationalism. The study of Jewry in a sociological frame of reference is a reconstruction, in a rationalistic scientific schema, of the reality constructed by the Jews living in it. The selectivity inherent in these concepts obscures the essentially Jewish. However, through these concepts, Jewish particularity may be understood and intellectually evaluated by comparison with the social life of other communities."

In sum, the assertion that there is a category of sacred organisations which are totally distinct from secular ones and which are therefore not proper objects of study by social scientists, is hard to sustain (1). Indeed, some recent writers on the sociology of religion have argued for "new approaches" which positively "encompass the qualitative aspects of belief" (Roof, 1985, p82) since the boundaries between the secular and the sacred are more appropriately seen as "amorphous and permeable" (Greeley, 1982, p1).

IMPLICATIONS OF A SOCIAL SCIENCE FRAMEWORK

This analysis of the debate about the study of sacred institutions, suggests that the arguments which support the application of social science tools to the analysis of churches and synagogues, are persuasive and that they justify proceeding with an

empirical study within a social scientific framework. Nevertheless, the very existence of the debate signals important lessons. It emphasises that, while taking a social science approach, one should also be sensitive to the special and distinctive features of religious institutions, even if the study of those special features belongs mainly within the realm of theology (Carroll, 1985; Poloma, 1989).

"The Church cannot be understood socially without studying its system of beliefs, for its particularity is defined by its beliefs" (Gustafson, 1961, p99).

Students of religious organisations must try to see them both

"as organizations among other organizations and thereby possessing the same structural attributes and processes as are common to all organizations; and also as unique and possessing distinctive attributes by virtue of their transcendent outlook and commitments" (Scherer, 1980, p4).

The aim in this project, then, is to positively acknowledge "the transcendent dimensions of the church's life" (Carroll, 1985, p321); to acknowledge, for example, the idea of a partnership or "covenant" with God that underlies Jewish organisational forms (Elazar, 1978; Roshwald, 1978; Sacks, 1990), or the fact that Christian theological considerations "frequently sanctify particular organizational forms or proscribe certain institutional arrangements" (Wilson, 1968, p436). Similarly, in analysing decision-making processes and structures in churches, the researcher needs to take account of the role of "discernment"; the process "that integrates prayer and decision-making" (Coghlan, 1987, p47).

Caution is also needed about attempting to analyse such special religious features using inappropriate concepts (Brake, 1987, p43; Hutton and Reed, 1975, p25; Jackson, 1974, p191). As Martin (1980, p2) says,

"[when] we describe man's activity as a social being we cannot insert a separate mysterious X as a God variable. God is not a part of the ensemble of variables. Nor is he a residual factor left over when the rest of the variance has been satisfactorily accounted for".

The study will follow Ward (1961, p27) by "not calling in question the validity of that which eludes [the researcher's] techniques of investigation". As McGuire (1987, p5) argues, "Important dimensions of religion may not be accessible to sociological interpretation".

On the other hand, the study will not attempt to use the concepts of both social science and theology (in contrast with, for example, McCann, 1993). The aim will be to conduct a study within an avowedly social science framework, while remaining sensitive to the impact of theology on the participants in religious institutions. As a social scientist, the questions to be asked about the nature of religious institutions will differ from those that might be asked by a theologian. Thus, for example, Douglas (1990, p513) has pointed out that

"Theologians can ask 'What is sin?' Anthropology can only ask 'What ideas do people have about sin?'."

Chapter Five will discuss further the methodological implications of the need for sensitivity to these distinctive sacred features of religious institutions. In the next part of this chapter, an approach to the study of local religious institutions within an overall framework of social science, is proposed.

PART B: RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIAL POLICY STUDIES

A SOCIAL POLICY STUDIES APPROACH

Having decided to locate the study of local religious institutions within a social science framework, the question arises as to the most suitable disciplinary framework. In this part it is argued that it is appropriate to include the study of local religious institutions within the inter-disciplinary field of social policy studies.

LOCAL RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS AND THE LINK WITH SOCIAL POLICY

Since at least the late 1970s, there has been a trend in UK public policy to place increasing emphasis on non-governmental institutions as a means of meeting human needs of all kinds (Brenton, 1985; Le Grand and Robinson, 1984). In the broad field of human service provision, both the commercial and the voluntary sectors have expanded their roles and there are expectations that they will continue to do so (Billis and Harris, 1986; HMSO, 1989). These rising expectations extend to churches and synagogues as well (Longley, 1988b). They are becoming an integral part of a pluralist welfare-delivery system (2).

In addition to meeting the spiritual needs of their members through a variety of formal and informal activities (Winter, 1973), churches and synagogues attend to other social needs of members through social activities, informal neighbouring and mutual-aid forms of care (Hornsby-Smith, 1989; Keith-Lucas, 1962). Increasingly, the social welfare role of churches and synagogues extends beyond meeting the needs of their own members, to meeting those of their surrounding local communities (Ballinger, 1988; Broady and Hedley, 1989; Clark, 1988; Fineman, 1989). Thus, the institution of the Social Fund in April 1988 to replace one-off payments by the

Department of Social Security, was widely reported to have resulted in people turning to churches for help (Dunn, 1989).

In this case local churches became reluctant players in the welfare provision field, but there are also recent examples of more positive moves by churches and synagogues to broaden their involvement in direct services to meet social needs. For example, the Church Urban Fund, set up in 1988 following the Church of England's report 'Faith in the Inner Cities', funds major social, community and employment projects promoted by inner-city churches (Miller, 1993; William Temple Foundation, 1991; Wolmar, 1989). And an action-research project in Kent has examined ways in which local churches can contribute to 'community care' provision (Clark, 1989).

The claim that churches and synagogues are an integral part of the current social welfare system, rests not only on this accumulating evidence of their involvement in social welfare provision (that is, social policy implementation), but also on their advocacy activities which are intended to influence social policy formulation. They may be involved in local social action and community development projects (Bowpitt, 1989; Clark, 1988; Finneron, 1993; Tiller, 1988) or they may join with churches and synagogues of their own and other denominations in a more overtly pressure group role (Davie, 1990; Forrester and Skene (eds), 1988).

In fact, the link between religious institutions and social welfare has deep historical roots in England (Harris, 1993). The tendency to separate church activity from 'welfare' can be conceptualised as part of the 'secularisation' process which differentiates between institutional spheres (Martin, 1978b). Pemberton (1990) and Ware (1989), for example, have pointed out that current ideas about charity and philanthropy are rooted in the Judaeo-Christian tradition of helping the poor and disadvantaged. The Elizabethan charity law represented a secularisation of philanthropy in which the State sought means to alleviate the plight of the poor and removed the monopoly hitherto enjoyed by the church as a conduit of individual

charity. Many of the major national welfare charities founded in the nineteenth century had a religious base (Butler and Wilson, 1990; Collins and Hickman, 1991).

Since churches and synagogues are visibly involved in both formulation and implementation aspects of social policy, there is a prima facie argument that they are the legitimate concern of students of social policy. Social policy studies have traditionally focused on "the development of collective action for the advancement of social welfare" (Donnison, 1973, p35); and on responses to "social problems" (Brown, 1982, p13). Until recently this has meant, in practice, that academic interest in the UK has centred on governmental institutions. But this has started to change along with the changes in social policy described at the beginning of this section. Studies of social policy and administration have begun to encompass not only the private, commercial welfare sector (Higgins, 1988), but also the voluntary sector (Billis, 1993a). So the boundaries of the field of study have expanded, as foreseen by Heisler (1977, Preface):

"As society changes ... many social problems will have the objective consequences of solution by means and agencies not commonly regarded as social services and so the logical concomitant of this functional interest is the no-man's land of the frontier."

There are, then, many arguments which confirm that the study of local religious institutions can be encompassed within social policy studies. Not only are churches and synagogues involved in both implementation and formulation aspects of social policy, but also the academic field of social policy has itself developed to explicitly encompass private, nongovernmental organisations; a category of institutions which includes local religious institutions (Clark, 1989; Scherer, 1972; Smith, 1991; Wuthnow and Hodgkinson (eds) 1990) (3).

A SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION APPROACH

This section refers briefly to the tradition within social policy studies on which the current study will draw, and outlines some implications for the conduct and scope of the project.

The academic field referred to here as social policy studies has traditionally encompassed various elements of the social policy process (Smith, 1988) including "an environmental system, the political system and the organizational system" (Fudge and Barrett, 1981, p251). Some scholars have concentrated on studying just one element. Others have argued that the elements are interlinked to such an extent that they cannot be meaningfully studied in isolation one from the other (Dunsire, 1973; Glennerster, 1988).

While accepting this view of the social policy process as a seamless web, it can still be argued that empirical studies focused on one element can be useful in building up a total picture of the policy process. Thus, it is proposed in this study of local churches and synagogues to follow the tradition of 'organisational' or 'administrative' studies within the broader field of social policy studies. The study will be about the "structure and administration" of services (Brown, 1982, p18); and "executive action" (Kathleen Jones quoted by Pinker, 1971, p4). It will be a study of the kind which seeks to "shed light on particular institutions or systems" (Titmuss, 1986, p58) and "to identify and clarify problems" (Donnison, 1973, p36). In this respect, it will be a contribution to that part of the policy-focused literature which is concerned with

"the analysis of organizations: understanding the way they operate, prescribing administrative structures, examining the behaviour of groups and individuals in an organizational setting" (Barrett and Fudge, 1981, p9).

In line with locating it within the 'social administration' tradition, the study will use the concepts and tools of a range of other disciplines; drawing "light from any discipline that appears to be relevant" (Donnison, 1973, p36). This "interdisciplinary way of studying certain social institutions, problems and processes in society" (Titmuss, 1986, p57), is necessitated by the fact that "the provision of social services, like other forms of human behaviour, can only be fully comprehended by calling on a wide range of theoretical disciplines" (Forder 1974, Preface).

Overall, it is likely that the religious element in the study will result in the balance of disciplines drawn upon being slightly different from that used for social administration studies of secular welfare agencies or community associations. But the general approach will follow Waldo (1956, p49); it will try to open upon the subject "all the windows we can find".

This wide-ranging approach is in keeping with the complexity of the study object and its hitherto unexplored nature. As an experienced scholar of local churches in North America has argued:

".....the accumulation of several disciplines is necessary to fathom the diverse and complex interaction that characterizes the local church" (Dudley, 1983, Preface).

And Beckford (1973, p21), another established scholar of religion, says:

"The more open and flexible the approaches to religious organization are, the more likely it is that insightful and imaginative analyses will be achieved in the long term."

The following part of this chapter discusses in more detail how literature relevant to the empirical stage of the study can be reviewed, using the social administration tradition as one guideline.

PART C: REVIEWING THE LITERATURE

THE SCOPE OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

A major aim of this study is to start to fill the gap in knowledge about the work and organisation of local religious institutions in England. How, then, should an empirical study of the work and organisation of churches and synagogues proceed?

Part A of this chapter suggested a social science framework for the study, and Part B argued that, within the social sciences, the field of social policy studies provides a suitable disciplinary home. The next task is to provide a foundation for the empirical phase of the study by seeking out the existing literature which can in some way throw light on the work and organisation of churches and synagogues. So this final part of Chapter One discusses the scope of the literature which is to be reviewed in the following three chapters.

A BROAD PERSPECTIVE

The corollary of adopting a social administration approach is to take a wide-ranging, inter-disciplinary approach to the study as a whole, and to the search for relevant literature in particular. The need for a broad approach to the literature search is reinforced by two other features of the study topic.

First, the focus is on local churches and synagogues. But they are affiliated to wider organisations and networks which may have an impact on local organisational dynamics. In the case of episcopal churches such as those of the Church of England or Roman Catholicism, official statements may indicate reluctance to conceptualise individual churches as anything other than an integral part of a more important organisational whole (Jackson, 1974). So the search for relevant literature will extend

beyond local churches and synagogues themselves and include relevant material about their denominational and ecumenical organisational context.

The other feature of the study topic which has implications for the scope of the literature to be considered, is its inclusion of institutions from two religions and several denominations. In keeping with this, the initial literature search will be sufficiently wide to ensure that it is not restricted to a narrow range of denominations or only one religion. This point demands particular care because many social scientific works that appear at first glance to be taking a broad approach are in fact focused on one denomination or religion only - often the one in which the author participates (4).

SOME BOUNDARIES

While three points - the inter-disciplinary approach, the organisational structures of local religious institutions, and the cross-denominational perspective - together provide a strong argument for a broad-ranging literature review, some boundaries must clearly be set. These can be drawn out from the arguments presented in previous parts of this chapter.

One major boundary-marker, for example, is provided by the social administration tradition. Writers in the field have considered material from a range of disciplines in their search for concepts and theories relevant to the problems they have studied. But organisational and administrative material has tended to constitute the major source, with other social science disciplines being drawn upon in a more ad hoc fashion. In a similar way, the core of the literature discussed will be from organisational sociology. The sociology of religion will also feature prominently. Other disciplines will be drawn upon more selectively; social and industrial psychology, philosophy, history, anthropology, and the management sciences.

Finally, as discussed in Part B, the review will attempt to be sensitive to the theological aspects of religious organisation.

A second selection criterion is the approach and methods of authors. Academic, research-based writings will constitute the core of the literature reviewed. They will be supplemented by 'in-house' documents; for example, handbooks, constitutions and working party reports, which provide useful indications of current organisational issues and official goals. 'Practitioner accounts' will also be included; for example, descriptions of personal experiences and books of guidance written by clergymen and involved laymen. Since many of the latter are highly and widely educated, often combining both theological and social scientific learning, their writings may be more systematic in approach, provide more organisational insights, and be closer to academic discourse, than practitioner accounts from other fields. Lampard's (1975) handbook, for example, provides an application of the sociology of religion to issues arising within Methodist churches; and Carr's exploration of "The Priestlike Task" (1985) aims to apply organisational theories developed at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations to the task of "ministry" in Anglican churches. Again, a recent book by an Irish priest (McCann, 1993), discusses ways in which organisational theory might be applied to churches and proposes a complex schema for categorising them.

A third boundary-marker is geographical. The empirical phase of this study will be concerned with local religious institutions in England. So literature based on the English experience, supplemented by material from the rest of the UK, will be the focus of examination. The question arises as to what extent material derived from other countries should also be encompassed. As Berger (1967, p26) says, "... there are certain uniformities to be observed cross-culturally" in religious institutions. For pragmatic reasons, non-English-language publications will generally be excluded, but this leaves the possibility of using literature from a number of places, including the

usual sources of English-language social science material such as the United States, Canada and Australia.

The paucity of research-based organisational studies of local churches and synagogues in England which was referred to in the Introduction, provides a strong prima facie case for including other relevant English-language studies within the boundary of the literature review. However, this material will be used with caution because there is evidence that religious organisational activity is strongly influenced by its cultural and societal context (Goulston, 1968; Hill, 1973; Hout, 1958).

Looking specifically at the United States, the profound influence of history and culture on the form and function of religious institutions has been demonstrated by a number of writers (Ashbrook, 1966; Bellah et al, 1985). Kraut (1989, p9), for example, shows that the structures of American Judaism "were fashioned or evolved gradually so as to make Judaism compatible with American culture". Membership of synagogues in the United States is no longer primarily a means of Jewish identification, but rather a demonstration of being truly "American", since affiliation to a religious organisation has become "part of American mores" (Blau, 1969) and a "way of joining the American mainstream" (Cohen, 1983, p44).

In fact, a key place is occupied by voluntary religious association in American history and a high value is still placed on "the separation of church and state, religious pluralism, religious tolerance, and religious liberty" (Schroeder et al, 1974, p2). Churches and synagogues in the US provide valued opportunities for social interaction and caring "in an otherwise atomized and commercialised society" (Wuthnow, 1990, p13). Berger and Luckmann (1963, p417) refer to the high "popular participation in organized religion" and the "conspicuous piety of the cis-Atlantic masses". This contrasts with the organisational history and environment of English churches and synagogues where the general trend has been to "marginalise" religious activity

(Martin, 1978b, p28) and to lose confidence in institutional forms of religious expression (Barker et al, 1992).

On the other hand, it should also be noted that Luckman (1969, p148), after a detailed comparison of American and European religion, concludes that:

"With one exception - the relatively high involvement of Americans in church religion - the differences seem less significant than the similarities".

He attributes this to the fact that in all modern societies "church-oriented religion has become a marginal phenomenon".

So caution will be exercised in drawing on literature from the United States and other non-UK countries. Those historical and sociological differences which have implications for the organisation of contemporary religious institutions will be taken into account. But, in general, the literature review which follows will take a wide-ranging, inter-disciplinary approach.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER ONE

Parts A and B, presented reasons for conducting a study of local churches and synagogues within a social science framework, specifically within the field of social policy studies. The proposed study was placed within the social administration tradition of social policy studies. Finally, using the social administration tradition as one guideline, Part C outlined the scope of the literature to be examined as a basis for the development of an empirical study.

The study is now at the stage identified by Miles (1979, p591) in which it has a "rough working frame". Chapter Five will discuss in more detail the development

of a methodology suited to the study purposes and focus. Before that, in the following three chapters, existing literature on the study topic will be explored, drawing on a range of social science disciplines.

Thus the study strategy is to develop "explicit preliminary frameworks quite early" while recognising that they will have to be revised "repeatedly over the life of the project" (Miles, 1979, p591).

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. The argument that firm boundaries should not be drawn for analytical purposes between sacred and secular institutions, is given added weight by the observation that 'secular' institutions and organisations have themselves been heavily influenced by the 'sacred'. Thus, for example, Pugh (1984, p9) traces organisational ideas about decentralisation and hierarchy to the establishment of tribal judges by Moses, and Milofsky (1979, p65) suggests that "paradigms for organizational professionals are drawn from churches". Elazar (1978) has drawn attention to the influence of Jewish notions of 'covenant' on modern political forms; and there is a clear link between Weber's concepts of different kinds of authority and both Jewish and Christian forms of organisation. See also Israel (1966) on rational-legal authority and Hebraic culture and Carroll (1981) and Hill (1973) on charismatic authority and Christian organisation.

2. These expectations were reflected in the Department of the Environment setting up the "Inner Cities Religious Council" to "Help religious groups obtain funding for social projects in the cities, and to improve communication between those groups and the Government" (The Tablet, 1992).

3. In fact, the inclusion of religious institutions within the ambit of an academic field which has traditionally focused on governmental institutions is not a major conceptual leap. Tiller (1983, p52) reminds us that the very roots of current public service are religious. 'Ministry', he argues, is usually associated with churches but:

"Ministry is service to individuals or to a community. In this country the tradition of public service was formerly expressed by the description of government departments as ministries and the government itself as an administration".

4. See the Anglican perspectives of Jackson, 1974; and the Christian perspectives of McCann, 1993; Martin, 1967; and Moberg, 1962. The generalist tone of the titles of their works are misleading.

CHAPTER TWO: THE WORK AND ORGANISATION OF LOCAL CHURCHES AND SYNAGOGUES: HISTORICAL AND SOCIETAL CONTEXT

A major aim of this study is to start to fill the gap in knowledge about the work and organisation of local religious institutions in England. There have been very few systematic academic studies of churches or synagogues which have had a specifically organisational focus; even less which have looked at more than one denomination. But there is material on which to draw and build.

This, and the following two chapters, provide a foundation for an empirical study by reviewing the literature which in some way throws light on the work and organisation of local churches and synagogues in England. This chapter examines the historical and societal context within which churches and synagogues operate.

PART A: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF CURRENT ORGANISATION

HISTORICAL FACTORS

It would be misleading to study the organisation of contemporary churches and synagogues in isolation from their historical roots (Jeavons, 1992; Meyer and Brown, 1977). In this part of the chapter, historical factors which illuminate organisational features of today's institutions are drawn out from the literature. Special attention is paid to issues of authority, organisational structure and organisational environment (Perrow, 1970) and to the way in which historical interpretations have an impact on current organisational debates. Similarities between institutions and denominations, as well as differences, are noted. No attempt is made to provide complete descriptive

organisational histories of churches, synagogues, denominations or religions; the purpose is merely to pinpoint some key historical factors.

AUTHORITY AND LEADERSHIP

The concepts of authority and leadership are of central importance to theologians (Bartholomew, 1981; Carroll, 1981). They are also useful social scientific tools for understanding the organisational development of churches and synagogues, especially the relationship between laymen and religious functionaries (see GLOSSARY) (Carlin and Mendlovitz, 1958). This section, then, indicates some of the issues surrounding authority and leadership which emerge from the historical literature.

The founding of 'The Church' (see GLOSSARY) is reflected in New Testament references (Ashbrook, 1966) and is attributed by Christians to Jesus himself. He is the ultimate source of authority and legitimacy for church activities, although

"he did not draw up its precise constitution or method of government, its discipline or its exact orders of worship" (Davies, 1988, p37).

There were no positions of special religious authority in the earliest period of the Church (Kane, 1960) and the first Christian congregations were modelled on synagogues (Hopewell, 1987; Scherer, 1972). However, specifically Christian organisational frameworks quickly emerged to facilitate the gathering together of followers, to spread Christian teachings and to ensure the exclusion of 'heretics'. These structures were generally hierarchical and authoritarian, with 'membership' based on acceptance of doctrine rather than religious inspiration (Drane, 1986).

A distinction was made between the laity on the one hand, and bishops, priests and clergy on the other (Davies, 1988; Drane, 1986). These latter had special authority by virtue of having been called by God and their ability to interpret teachings

(Davies, 1988, p40), whilst the laity had to be officially recognised before they could participate and were seen as auxiliaries and supporters to the work of clergy (Doohan, 1984). Thus, the concept of charisma ('the gift of grace') was central to authority and power relationships in early Christianity (Drane, 1986; Russell, 1980). It was

"primarily concerned with the way in which Christian organization was attached to this quality of spiritual endowment rather than any other principle of administration" (Hill, 1973, p147).

Despite the challenges to clerical authority posed by the Reformation, this general approach to religious authority and leadership remained the dominant model for Christians throughout the ensuing centuries (Russell, 1980). The emergence and development of a separate group of professionals was "a potent force for organizational differentiation and elaboration" (Scherer, 1972, p82). However, alternative authority models based on different interpretations of early Christianity - for example "collegial ministry" (Hill, 1988), "community ministry" (Schillebeeckx described in Card, 1988) and "lay ministry" (Doohan, 1984) - from time to time provided inspiration for groups and denominations which, to varying degrees, dissented from the models adopted by the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches (Barnett, 1988; Carr, 1985; Davies, 1982). Bonham-Carter (1952, p189), for example, explains how 'nonconformists' in the nineteenth century viewed the Anglican parson as "a permanent official who controlled their destinies"; whereas their own minister "was one of themselves; not permanent at all, for he held office by permission - their permission".

Debates about authority and leadership have continued into this century within and between different Christian denominations (Barnett, 1988; Card, 1988; Doohan, 1984) and they affect the work and procedures adopted by local churches. Catholic churches, for example, are still struggling with the organisational and ritual implications of the idea of a 'lay-centred' church, inspired by deliberations and

decisions of the Second Vatican Council (see GLOSSARY) which closed in 1965 (Doohan, 1984). And the current popularity of less formalized and less institutionalized forms of Christian expression - from the 'basic communities' of South America to the fundamentalist Protestant 'house churches' in England - generally rests on theological interpretations which emphasise the importance of individual experience, self-development and 'grass-roots' organisation (Card, 1988).

The institutional roots of synagogues are less obviously theological and more cultural and social. They are thought to have developed several centuries BC to provide local religious services for those Jews unable to worship at the Temple in Jerusalem (Lieberman, 1970). Later, in the diaspora, they were places where Jews gathered to study and pray. As Heilman (1976, p64) explains, the synagogue "unlike places of worship in other religions, was never the result of human implementation of a divine decree". This had implications for the way in which leaders and leadership was viewed. Synagogues differed from most churches in two major respects.

First, relationships and structures within synagogues tended to be influenced more by traditional Jewish ideas about partnership and voluntary agreement than by notions of hierarchy and obedience (Elazar, 1978; Israel, 1966)). Second, leadership was vested in lay people, even for acts of worship (Gottschalk, 1967). In effect, there has been no Jewish 'priesthood' (see GLOSSARY) since the first century AD (Hardon, 1971).

"The synagogue has never been, and is not today, a place where religious sacraments are performed. It is not presided over by priests, nor are any mystical rites performed in it" (Maccoby, 1989, p59).

Thus, issues of authority within synagogues did not arise in a manner analogous with churches. Leadership in matters of Jewish law and practice generally rested with rabbis; that is, teachers or scholars who had authority not by virtue of 'a calling', personal magnetism or descent (Israel, 1966), but by virtue of their great learning

(Maccoby, 1989; Shankman, 1965; Yaffe, 1968) (See GLOSSARY). Rabbis were central figures in Jewish communities (Carlin and Mendlovitz, 1958) but were not necessarily associated, at least until recent times, with one particular synagogue (Lieberman, 1970; Neusner, 1972; Sharot, 1975). Nor were they generally seen as prime leaders in synagogue organisational matters. There was a strong tradition of lay leadership of synagogues and other Jewish organisations (Rosensweig, 1970).

In fact, the idea of a synagogue 'employing' a rabbi, one of whose prime functions is to lead acts of worship, is a relatively recent innovation amongst Northern European Jews (Rosensweig, 1970), one apparently modelled on local churches (Goulston, 1968; Polish, 1986; Sharot, 1975) in which one person "combines the sacerdotal (priestly) and teaching roles" (Maccoby, 1989, p7). It has never sat comfortably with the tradition of rabbis as primarily scholars and teachers, or with the tradition of strong lay leadership, democratic organisation and voluntary association within synagogues (Elazar, 1978; Maccoby, 1989). There are numerous recorded examples of major disputes between rabbis and lay leaders of synagogues over who should control whom (Goulston, 1968; Leigh, 1973; Newman, 1977).

Thus, questions about authority and leadership have, historically, been of central importance, although they have been manifest in different ways in churches and synagogues. They have been closely related to issues of organisational implementation; the search for structures consistent with prevailing views on leadership and authority (Thompson, 1970). The next section, then, looks briefly at the history of organisational structures in local churches and synagogues.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

As mentioned in the previous section, the model for the development of 'The Church' has been generally hierarchical and authoritarian. This has had implications not only for the nature of the relationship between local clergy and laity discussed above, but

also for the relationship between local churches and their 'parent' denominational structures. Generally, there was strong ecclesiastical control within denominations, especially within those with an episcopal (bishop) structure (Barnett, 1988). So local churches had limited opportunities for controlling or influencing matters such as appointment of clergy, forms of service, or even church architecture and furniture. Only the non-episcopal denominations, whose local churches and chapels were financially self-supporting, were able to retain a substantial degree of congregational autonomy (Gay, 1971).

Synagogues, by contrast, from the time of the resettlement of Jews in England in the seventeenth century, were self-governing, autonomous communities, independent of civil organisations and not part of any wider Jewish organisational framework (Elazar, 1978; Freedman (ed), 1955). During the nineteenth century, however, synagogues started to group together into wider associations and this gave rise to issues of ecclesiastical and financial control (Goulston, 1968; Leigh, 1973; Newman, 1977). Drives towards centralized control were evident in the establishment in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries of the 'United Synagogue', the 'Federation of Synagogues', the 'Association of Synagogues in Great Britain' and the 'Jewish Religious Union' (Freedman (ed) 1955; Romain, 1985) (1).

Thus, contemporary churches and synagogues operate within a historical context of strong pulls towards centralisation and denominational control, in which ecclesiastical factors and financial factors have been closely interlinked. The extent to which local institutions have been able to be autonomous in theological and ritual matters has tended to be related to the extent to which they have been financially self-supporting.

It would be misleading, however, to analyse the development of organisational structures solely in terms of internal ecclesiastical and financial imperatives. The organisational history of local churches and synagogues also reflects environmental influences - a topic which will be discussed in the following section.

THE ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Societal context emerges from the historical literature as having been of prime importance for the organisation of synagogues and local churches. The functions which local religious institutions have aimed to fulfil, and the organisational structures established to achieve them, have been guided not only by religious doctrine but also by pragmatic, economic and social imperatives (Currie et al, 1977).

Anglican churches, for example, enjoyed a period from the Reformation to the end of the seventeenth century when it was assumed for official purposes that every member of the local population was a member of the Established Church; all those within the parish served by a particular Anglican church had financial and ritual obligations to it (Barnett, 1988; Gay, 1971). At the same time, the parish church took on major responsibilities in respect of the populace's religious, social, and moral welfare (Martin, 1978b) and local clergy and church wardens carried out a number of broad administrative functions (Jackson, 1974; Russell, 1980).

This kind of link between sacred and secular functions is in the very nature of an 'established' church (see GLOSSARY), but it has manifested itself historically in local churches of other denominations as well. Methodists and 'nonconformists', for example, attempted to provide responses to the spiritual and social needs of classes and groups neglected by the Church of England (Barnett, 1988; Gay, 1971; Hill, 1973).

The relationship between sacred and secular aspects of church organisation was also apparent in the impact on Christian clergy (see GLOSSARY) of changes in secular society in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The growth of literacy, the rise of other caring professions, organisational differentiation and complexity, and the development of ideologies competing with Christianity, have all been noted as having

had important effects on the role and work of local clergy (Carr, 1985; Martin, 1978b; Russell, 1980).

The influence of contextual societal factors on organisational development and responses is also evident in the history of local synagogues in this country. The effect of the 'Emancipation' of Jews in Europe (see GLOSSARY) from the end of the eighteenth century, was to change the function of synagogues from being a central institution of a "miniature Jewish homeland" within the host country, to an institution with more limited educational and ritual responsibilities for a population in closer contact with non-Jewish society (Polish, 1986, p4) (2). As Hardon (1971, p45) describes,

"... Judaism took on more and more the features of the rest of society, where organizations with specific functions replaced, in fact if not in theory, the role of the synagogue as the heart of the Jewish community".

These changes had a commensurate impact on the role and status of rabbis. The impact on Jews of integration and secular learning was an erosion of the competence of lay people in specifically Jewish topics. There were also raised expectations based on knowledge of the work of local churches and priests (Carlin and Mendlovitz, 1958; Goulston, 1968). So, on the one hand, rabbis were obliged to take on educational, pastoral and ritual functions formerly performed by laymen. On the other hand, they were no longer necessarily central figures in a fairly closed local Jewish community (Shankman, 1965; Sigel et al, 1980).

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the efforts of Jews to assimilate to English society were evident in the organisational forms and business procedures adopted by the emergent movement of 'Jewish United Synagogues' (Romain, 1985); in the creation of the office of 'The Chief Rabbi' closely modelled on that of the Archbishop of Canterbury (Newman, 1977); in the search for "English gentlemen" as "ministers

of religion" (Goulston, 1968, p59); and in the establishment of the 'West London Synagogue of British Jews' from which the present-day 'Reform Synagogues' movement developed (Leigh, 1973).

The waves of Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, not only caused changes in the aims and purposes of the United Synagogue, but also gave rise to yet another grouping of synagogues, 'The Federation of Synagogues', which aimed to meet the religious and welfare needs of the more pious, largely working-class, Jewish immigrants. Indeed, the themes of class, status and immigrant absorption permeated the history of Anglo-Jewry during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and left a legacy of organisational fragmentation (Leigh, 1973; Newman, 1977; Romain, 1985).

Martin (1978a, p28) notes such "status divides" as being common in English religious organisations. The historical development of non-conformist churches, for example, was closely tied to class interests (Barnett, 1988; Bonham-Carter, 1952; Davies, 1988). And Roman Catholic churches have a long tradition of providing points of identity for immigrant groups (Currie et al, 1977).

In sum, the historical literature indicates that the societal context within which local churches and synagogues operated has generally had an important impact on their work and organisation and on the expectations placed on their religious functionaries (see GLOSSARY). In fact, as will be indicated in Part B of this chapter, environmental factors have continued to exercise major influences on the organisation of local churches and synagogues up to the present day.

THE QUEST FOR AUTHENTICITY

So far, this part of Chapter Two has outlined issues of authority, organisational structure and organisational environment which have emerged from the historical literature and which provide a background to current organisation of churches and synagogues. But historical factors can be more than merely contextual; in the case of church and synagogue organisation they may also be an integral part of current organisational debates, particularly debates about institutional goals and purposes. As will be outlined in this section, a number of commentators on churches and synagogues compare current purposes and structures with historical accounts. Often these comparisons cast unfavourable light on the current situation and they may also be precursors to pleas for a return to the historic authentic core of a particular religious institution (Beckford, 1973).

A prominent theme in the literature is discussion of the contemporary role of religious functionaries (see GLOSSARY) in terms which imply that there is a true, essential or traditional role which modern institutions have moved away from. Thus, Blizzard (1956, p509) regards "preacher, priest and teacher" as the traditional role of the Protestant minister, with pastor as a "neo-traditional role", and "administrator and organizer" as a "contemporary" role. And Jackson (1974, p191) argues that clergy should not be seduced by "social work" interpretations of the world but should retain and value their own distinctive views about "God, human destiny, sin, conversion, grace". He deprecates the use of the concepts of "role" and "job specification" in relation to priests and favours a return to the "traditional" concept of "office" which "stands for that which one ought to do in the way of service, for the duty attaching to one's station, for a position of trust, authority or service under constituted authority."

Similar debates about the authentic rabbinical role are evident in the literature on synagogues. A number of authors (for example, Gottschalk, 1967; Neusner, 1972;

Saperstein, 1977) draw attention to the range of expectations currently placed on synagogue ministers and argue that the "traditional" or "essential" role of the rabbi as learned scholar and teacher "is being relegated to an inferior position, and the roles of preacher, pastor, rector, and priest are coming to occupy the resulting void" (Sklare, 1955, p178). Glaser (1986), Neusner (1972) and Sigel et al (1980) argue for a return to the traditional rabbinical role which has "authenticity and authority" (Neusner, p48), "earned by scholarship and by the ability to apply that scholarship in meaningful, relevant ways" (Glaser, p93).

This kind of historically-based discussion about 'authenticity' extends in the literature beyond the roles of religious functionaries to churches and synagogues as a whole. In the case of local churches, the search for an organisational 'essence' or 'core' may go hand in hand with a concern about the range of tasks to be encompassed. Carr (1985), for example, argues that the prime task of a church in history and theology is "apostolic" and that

"any attempt at organization that does not take as its first principle the church's task will prove suspect" (p69).

At the same time, he says, churches must learn

"to manage the institution's boundaries" and to avoid taking on boundary-less tasks of "responding to all society's casualties" (p44).

In the case of local synagogues, the concern about tradition and authenticity tends to refer to their historically multi-purpose nature; as places of prayer, places of study and places of meeting (Heilman, 1976, p63). As with churches, it is argued that the impact of trends in modern society has been to increase the tasks and functions placed on synagogues, to the extent that their 'original purposes' are obscured. Neusner

(1972) and Gottschalk (1967), for example, urge that the synagogue be restored to its place at the centre of local Jewish "community".

Wilson (1966, p137) comments that this kind of "reinterpretation" which emphasises "traditional preoccupations and distinctive competence" is characteristic of "religious leaders who are conscious that they are losing social influence and privileges". However, the literature seems also to reflect a genuine desire to move to another stage of organisational development without losing valued organisational features or losing touch with the over-arching mission. Thus, recent debates within Roman Catholic churches following the Second Vatican Council (see GLOSSARY) have sought to develop an "authentic" role for lay people while retaining the "essence" of the priestly task (Bishops Conference, 1986, p24). And on synagogues, Sandmel (1973, p146) asks a series of probing questions and suggests a range of possible responses in order to try to clarify "the nature of Rabbinic service" in an age when "the bulk of Jews are so indifferent as to be outside the synagogue even when they pay their dues".

The liveliness of these contemporary debates about 'authenticity' reinforce the over-all impression given by the literature referred to in this part; that historical experience and interpretation should be regarded as an intrinsic part of the work and organisation of contemporary churches and synagogues. Scherer (1972, p98) for example, has demonstrated that, in Christian denominations, the "infusion of historically conditioned forms with ultimate value can be a barrier to change...". Thus, historical factors are explicitly included in current organisational issues to an extent which does not normally apply in secular organisations (Miller, 1983).

Part B of this Chapter turns from historical factors to focus on the present-day societal environment of local churches and synagogues.

PART B: THE SOCIETAL CONTEXT

THE SOCIETAL CONTEXT

The historical analysis provided a number of examples of the way in which factors in the surrounding society have affected the organisation of local churches and synagogues. Conversely, the work of religious institutions has had impacts not only on their own adherents, but also on the wider community. Contemporary churches and synagogues interact with their organisational environments too, although not necessarily in the same way as their antecedents (Perrow, 1970).

This second Part of Chapter Two draws out from the literature key factors in the current social environment of churches and synagogues which affect their work and raise organisational issues. It also outlines the range of functions which churches and synagogues perform within the context of the wider society and indicates how these are linked with debates about their organisational goals and purposes.

THE IMPACT OF A SECULAR SOCIETY

The literature suggests that, starting in the Middle Ages, 'secularisation' occurred in Europe; and that the trend has accelerated over the last two hundred years. Religion, it is said, has been displaced as the central focus of individual lives, as the source of society's dominant values, and as the prime legitimating system (Demerath and Williams, 1992; Wuthnow, 1990). The 'Enlightenment' of the eighteenth century; the move away from agricultural employment and rural living; scientific developments; the proliferation of large-scale formal organisations; and widespread education - all these have been identified as trends which have contributed to, and been encouraged by, the secularisation process. The concepts of urbanisation, industrialisation, bureaucratisation and professionalisation are cited as both

components and explanations of secularisation. (A summary of the process of secularisation and the key writers is found in Gerard, 1985 and Tschannen, 1991.) One outcome of secularisation, it is argued, is that today both religious institutions and their adherents are marginalised in relation to the broader society and may experience a sense of crisis (Goldner et al, 1973; Lenn and Associates, 1972; Russell, 1980). Martin (1978a, p13) describes the situation in England:

".....to be 'religious' is to be somewhat odd. Meanwhile, each sphere of life has been largely released from religious conceptualisation and ecclesiastical influence: political ideology, education, economy and welfare."

The extent to which the theory of secularisation is valid, and the nature and causes of the process, are subjects of debate in the literature (see for example, Berger, 1967; Demerath and Williams, 1992; Gerard, 1985; Hammond (ed), 1985; Martin, 1978b; Sacks, 1990; Wilson, 1966). But the general point seems uncontentious: churches and synagogues operate within a context in which institutional religion is perceived as relatively unimportant, both to the majority of individuals and to society as a whole (Berger and Luckmann, 1963; Currie et al, 1977; Fletcher, 1990; Stamp, 1986).

In a secular society, churches and synagogues cannot realistically make universal claims to authority and allegiance (Carlin and Mendlovitz, 1958; Carroll, 1981; Jackson, 1974) and the activities which they sponsor are no longer the centre of communal life (Goldner et al, 1973; Kohn, 1983; Martin 1978a). There are pressures on them to conform to secular organisational structures and procedures (Brannon, 1971; Dempsey, 1989; Luckmann, 1969). They are, in effect, voluntary associations competing with a range of religious and other organisations for the attention and loyalty of their members (Carroll, 1985; Hornsby-Smith, 1989; Morgan, 1992; Warner, 1993). The question that arises for the present study, is how does this secular societal context affect the work and organisation of churches and synagogues?

It seems that secularisation has raised a major dilemma for churches and synagogues. On the one hand, they can choose to fight against it. They can attempt to preserve 'traditional' or 'authentic' values, practices and structures; as in the 'conservative' or 'strict' churches which may even go so far as to impose stigmatising conditions on members (Iannacone, 1990). But this may threaten organisational survival by alienating potential members and through "rigidity and legalisms" (Poloma, 1989, p4). Alternatively, they can try to accommodate to the surrounding secular society. This path may help to retain and attract members in the short term. But, in the longer term, it may reinforce anti-religious trends. And churches and synagogues which adapt may lose the very distinctiveness which attracts the remaining members (Archer, 1986; Beckford, 1985; Lenn and Associates, 1972; Luckmann, 1969). In the United States, this perverse consequence of adaptation is seen as the explanation for the long term growth in theologically conservative churches and the decline in theologically 'liberal' churches (Warner, 1988).

The fundamental question about whether to accommodate to secular society or fight against it, underlies a number of other issues that have been debated within local religious institutions in recent years. For example, what is the nature of God in an age in which scientific knowledge has apparently superseded the supernatural (Robinson, 1963)? How important is it for religiosity to be expressed publicly and through institutions (Berger and Luckmann, 1963; Lieberman, 1970; Russell, 1980)? And is institutional survival more important than theological understanding (Anderson, 1983)? The deliberations of the Second Vatican Council (see GLOSSARY) can be regarded as a reflection of the same fundamental dilemma (Doohan, 1984; Goldner et al, 1973).

In practice, local churches and synagogues have tended to seek compromise solutions which preserve some of their traditional approaches, whilst at the same time recognising the imperatives of the secular society (Dempsey, 1983; Lenn and Associates, 1972; Newbigin, 1988). Responses noted in the literature include 'house

churches' and fellowship worship groups; organisational restructuring; an increased leadership role for laypeople; ecumenical activities; welcoming couples of mixed religion; increased involvement in social welfare and community development activities; combining of social and prayer events; and the use of everyday language for prayer (Borts, 1990; Goldner et al, 1973; Sacks, 1990; Stamp, 1986).

Some commentators regard compromises of this kind as acceptable and, indeed, in keeping with tradition. Dulles (1978, p152) says, for example, that church ministry has adjusted in every age "so as to operate more effectively in the social environment in which it finds itself." Newbigin (1988) confirms that it has always been the case "that the structural forms of the Church are determined by the secular reality". He regards this as "true to scripture" and argues that the means through which churches fulfil their religious aims is precisely by responding to "the actual realities of humanity" in particular times and places. Similarly, Lenn and Associates (1972, p384) argue that externally-induced crises and corresponding "adjustment mechanisms" have been intrinsic to the history of organised Judaism.

On the other hand, as indicated in Part A, many writers have expressed disquiet about what they see as the tendency to erode the 'authentic core' of organised religion through accommodation to the demands of a secular society. Goldner et al (1973, p125) for example, argue that in the Catholic Church, "the shift from the use of Latin to the vernacular" and the "growing acceptance of the celebration of Mass in the homes of laymen" have reduced the "distance" between priest and people, but, at the same time, the new practices have decreased the "majesty" and the "mystery" embodied in the priestly role.

Particular concern has been expressed about the impact on religious institutions of management theories and organisational structures derived from the secular world (Beckford, 1973). Organisational theory is regarded by a number of writers (for example, Anderson, 1983, Carroll, 1985 and Jackson, 1974) as obscuring the

distinctive, nonrational, core of church life. Brake (1987, p19) deprecates the way in which modern Methodism

"has committed itself to business management structures, without asking whether they are appropriate to the Church and the fulfilment of its mission."

And in an analysis of Anglican parishes, Hutton and Reed (1975, p25) say:

"Unfortunately the business men have called in business consultants whose organisational theories based on industrial and economic models have mesmerised the clergy so that they have capitulated to so-called expert advice, which has the effect of turning the church into a manufacturing company with plants scattered all over the country."

Thus the literature suggests that the work of contemporary churches and synagogues takes place within the context of fundamental debates about the extent to which accommodation should be made to the secular environment. The next section, then, looks more specifically at the impact of secularisation on the work of religious functionaries.

RELIGIOUS FUNCTIONARIES IN A SECULAR SOCIETY

Since religious functionaries usually carry major responsibility for implementation of church and synagogue policies (Fichter, 1954), and since they work at the interface between their institutions and the surrounding society (Beckford, 1973), they are particularly affected by the dilemmas raised by the secular society (Anderson, 1983; Lauer, 1973). The clergyman's role

"appears to be the hub around which so many of the problems which face the contemporary church are located" (Russell, 1980, p4).

Moreover, the secular environment does not only affect them indirectly via their churches and synagogues as described in the previous section, it also has a direct impact on them as individuals.

Questions are raised, for example, about the nature and boundaries of the role of clergy and rabbis (Tiller, 1983; Towler and Coxon, 1979). Education and professionalisation in the surrounding society have tended to diminish the importance and distinctiveness of some of their traditional functions, with

"the encroachment of non-religious specialists into areas that were previously the domain of religious expertise" (Beckford, 1985, p129).

Healing and comfort, for example, are provided by doctors, counsellors and social workers (Dunstan, 1967; Goldner et al, 1973; Ranson et al, 1977). Advice on redress of wrongs and judgements about 'correct' action are now offered by lawyers (Neusner, 1972; Ranson et al, 1977). 'Almsgiving' has been largely replaced by the activities of statutory and voluntary welfare agencies (Card, 1988; Russell, 1980). And the specialist educational role of religious functionaries has also been eroded as secular knowledge has come to be more highly valued than religious knowledge (Russell, 1980), and as laymen have acquired expertise which was formerly the preserve of clergy and rabbis (Carroll, 1981; Neusner, 1972; Towler and Coxon, 1979).

Doubts about the nature and purpose of the role of religious functionaries accentuate, and are accentuated by, their loss of status and authority, another concomitant of secularisation (Carroll, 1991; Glaser, 1986; Russell, 1980). The functionally diffuse, generalist nature of their contemporary role attracts little respect in a society which encourages specialisation (Martin, 1978b; Sharot, 1975). The only remaining distinctive aspect of their work - the religious core, especially leading public worship - is less widely valued (Carlin and Mendlovitz, 1958; Carroll, 1991). Writing of the

contemporary role of the Catholic priest, Goldner et al (1973, p123) describe the loss of both distinctiveness and status:

"The exclusivity of the priest as a purveyor of services for Catholics has almost disappeared. Thus, the priesthood is challenged both in terms of its proper professional role and of the creation of opportunities to exercise that role."

Sacks (1990, L5) summarises the role of religious functionaries in the modern world:

"Wherever the man of God turned, he found someone else already doing his job. Religion was the ineffable become the unemployable."

A third direct effect of secularisation on religious functionaries is that they tend to be subject to competing expectations; to perform their traditional functions and, at the same time, to exhibit knowledge of the secular world and conform with its norms. Waxman (1977) and Marcus and Peck (eds) (1985) talk of the expectations placed on contemporary rabbis to have secular learning and to be worldly-wise, in addition to having specialist Jewish knowledge. Lauer (1973, p189) describes the "continuing punitive experiences" of clergy faced with inherently irreconcilable demands.

"To compete, yet to love, to be a man of God, yet equally apt in organizing and administering, to be diligent in study and prayer, yet faithful in visiting, listening, planning - both the multiplicity and inconsistency of the demands are evident" (Lauer 1973, p195).

A range of individual responses to this combination of loss of role, low status and competing expectations are noted in the literature. There are high drop-out rates and recruitment difficulties (Greenwood, 1988; Russell, 1980; Towler and Coxon, 1979). For those who remain in post, stress is common. Wilson (1966) speaks of lack of confidence of clergy in the intellectual content of religion and Goldner et al (1973,

p128) see "a lack of confidence in the institutional and doctrinal structure" of churches amongst Catholic priests. Neusner (1972, p48) describes the "bitterly disappointing" lives of modern rabbis who compare themselves unfavourably with the 'scholar-saint' rabbis of the past and then doubt "the authenticity and authority" of their own work.

Dunstan (1967, p438) links these kinds of crises of confidence with lack of professional pride;

" ... as a profession we have come to disbelieve in the knowledge characteristic of our profession, or indeed that there is any such knowledge."

There appears to be a consequent tendency for religious functionaries to model themselves on other professionals and neglect the development of their own distinctive contribution (Martin, 1978b; Jackson, 1974; Towler and Coxon, 1979). Glaser (1986, p94), for example, talks of the response of American rabbis to their "secularized", educated congregants.

"We found ourselves reacting all the time to the fads and the crises, becoming psychiatric social workers and political reformers and community organizers, while not realizing that we were a mere echo and temporary substitute for the experts in those fields ... we were neglecting our own special realm of Jewish, and rabbinic, legitimacy."

In general then, the literature indicates that the effect of secularisation on religious functionaries has been to call in to question their purpose, authority and status, and to subject them to competing expectations. The suggestions about the ways in which rabbis and clergy respond to these pressures are consistent with the observed diffuseness of clerical and rabbinical work in practice; a topic which will be discussed further in the next chapter. The remainder of this Chapter turns from looking at the

impact of the social environment on the work of churches and synagogues, to looking at the contribution which they themselves make to society (Klein, 1967).

THE ROLE OF CHURCHES AND SYNAGOGUES IN SOCIETY

Although secularisation has removed from local religious institutions their former central and dominant position at the local level, they remain an important component of society and contribute to it in a variety of ways (Moberg, 1962; Sacks, 1990). This and the following section outline the range of activities and functions currently performed by churches and synagogues and indicate some of the related debates about their organisational goals and purposes. As in previous sections, the UK literature will be supplemented by drawing selectively on literature from other countries in order to ensure a wide focus. However, it must be pointed that the societal functions which churches and synagogues perform are especially subject to cultural influences of the kind discussed in Part C of Chapter One. Thus, throughout this section non-UK sources are specifically noted.

The literature suggests that, despite secularising influences, churches and synagogues continue to perform 'traditional' functions to some extent. They may retain, for example, their moral leadership role, both amongst their own members and within the broader society (Dempsey, 1989; Jackson, 1974). Roof's study (1976, p206) of North Carolina Episcopalians, for example, found that

"... institutional church-type religion ... functions to symbolize and legitimate traditional values and life-styles."

Similarly, Bellah et al (1985, p227) explain that

"Through reminding the people of their relationship to God, it [a local religious congregation] establishes patterns of character and virtue that should operate in economic and political life as well as in the context of worship."

In the UK, the role of churches in providing moral leadership for individuals is probably declining (Barker et al, 1992). However, on a broader level, it seems that secularisation has actually reinforced the distinctive 'prophetic' role of religious institutions in setting an example and taking a critical moral stance. Thus Coate (1989, p41) suggests that churches, synagogues and mosques have come "to function as a sort of conscience to society".

Studies of clergy and rabbis indicate that congregants and members of the broader community expect from them, and their families, exemplary behaviour and punctilious religious observance, even though they themselves (that is, the laity) have neither the knowledge nor the desire to abide by such standards (Bantom, 1969; Martin 1978b; also US refs Carlin and Mendlovitz, 1958; Lauer, 1973). Bulka (1986, p98) refers to the phenomenon of "vicarious religion" by which people expect to achieve "salvation by association" with rabbis in American congregations. Similarly, Dempsey (1983, p114) describes the situation in an Australian Methodist congregation.

"As the man of God par excellence, there fell on the minister's shoulders the responsibility for a sacrificial life which in theory was to be led by all Christians."

Churches and synagogues have also retained another 'traditional' function; as the location of life-cycle, national and seasonal celebrations (Ecclestone (ed), 1988; Jackson, 1974). This function is, in turn, part of a broader function of creating and encouraging community attachment at the local level. For example, churches and synagogues might be involved in interaction with other religious congregations, voluntary groups and local social networks (Cantrell et al, 1983; Martin, 1988); or

in providing and organising informal care (Carr, 1985; Greenwood, 1988). Examples of the growing contribution being made by churches and synagogues to welfare service provision in the UK were given in Chapter One.

In practice, local religious institutions, even within the same denomination, vary as to how much emphasis they put on this kind of outward-facing, communal work, as opposed to 'associational' work geared more immediately to meeting the needs of their own members (Ecclestone (ed), 1988; Jackson, 1974; Smith, 1991). In a study of Anglican parishes, for example, Hutton and Reed (1975, p9) found:

"Some parishes focused more on the God-ward aspect of church life, stressing the need for worship and the responsibility to proclaim the Gospel, while others concentrated on the Man-ward aspect, emphasising the social and community needs of the neighbourhood".

The literature indicates that debates about the appropriate balance between the two approaches are common and are not confined to the Anglican church which, as the 'established church' in England (see GLOSSARY), has a special interest in the issue (see, for example, Greenwood, 1988; Ecclestone (ed) 1988; and Tiller, 1983). Elazar (1983, p242), on the basis of his studies of American Jewish organisations, argues that:

" ... it is absolutely vital that the synagogues cease to be considered the private property of their members and be recognized for what they are - public institutions bearing significant communal responsibilities".

His argument rests on sociological considerations about Jewish identity. In Christian organisations, similar general arguments for a communal approach may be underpinned by theologically-based considerations about the 'true' mission of a local church (Martin, 1988).

MEETING MEMBERS' NEEDS

Irrespective of the extent of their interest in broader issues of community involvement and development, local religious institutions appear to perform important societal functions in fostering group integration and identity, at least amongst their own members (Brannon, 1971; Herman, 1984; Warner, 1993; Wuthnow, 1990). Dempsey's study (1983) of a suburban Methodist church in Australia indicated that the church served in effect as a club for congregants, providing "comfort not challenge" (p126), and confirming their views and values through opportunities for interaction with like-minded people.

In fact, churches may regard their potential for creating group solidarity as a strong selling point in the 'market' of competing, mostly secular, voluntary associations and clubs (Currie et al, 1977; Longley, 1988c). Some have introduced activities specifically intended to foster social interaction amongst members, for example refreshments after services and lay pastoral visiting.

Such moves can be controversial. They attract criticism not only from those who feel that local churches and synagogues should put their major efforts in to reaching out to the community, but also from those who want to retain what they consider to be traditional or authentic forms of religious expression. Thus, Stamp (1986, p142) writes disparagingly of the growing "emphasis on the rite of coffee" in Anglican churches which turns "church-going" (that is, attendance for acts of worship) in to a "social activity"; and Carr (1988, p115) regrets the current trend whereby the "eucharist becomes a social event - shaking hands is increasingly the focus of the rite."

For synagogues, which have traditionally regarded 'meeting' as a key purpose alongside 'prayer' and 'study', sponsoring of social activities is unlikely to be controversial (Glinert, 1985; Heilman, 1976).

"By their very nature, synagogues are geared to be relatively intimate associations of compatible people" (Elazar, 1983, p211).

In fact, there is evidence from America that the contemporary situation, in which Jews less commonly live together as an organic community, has increased the demand for synagogues to serve as an "arena for ethnic-based socializing and identification" (Cohen, 1983, p43) and to provide other activities, such as child education, which reinforce Jewish identity and group survival (Sklare and Greenblum, 1967 (3). Fein et al (1983, p294) mention with surprise and disapproval the 'failure' of the American Reform synagogues they studied "to foster friendship".

In providing services and activities which contribute to group identification and group solidarity, local churches and synagogues not only make a general contribution to society, they also help to meet individual psychological needs for "empathy and intimacy" (Bellah et al, 1985, p232) and for membership of "a caring community" (Anderson and Jones, 1978, p70). As Dempsey (1989, p11) says:

"....church oriented religion can provide the social context in which self-realisation, the experience of the bondedness of close relationships and a sense of belonging can occur."

In addition, churches and synagogues help to meet individual psychological needs in another, more basic, way. They can act as centres for the expression of "folk religion" (Hutton and Reed, 1975, p15; Jarvis, 1976; Martin, 1988). According to Berger (1967), there is a "human craving for meaning" and for "a force against terror"(p22) which institutional religion is able to meet.

"The inherently precarious and transitory constructions of human activity are thus given the semblance of ultimate security and permanence."(p36)

Although religious commentators have expressed disquiet about the appropriateness of providing this kind of "shelter from the storm" (Greenwood, 1988, p24), both churches and synagogues continue to offer "instant and familiar responses" (Carr, 1985, p30) and to provide defence against "the anxiety and fear of life" (Anderson and Jones, 1978, p87).

Reed (1978) argues that local religious institutions not only offer explanations and security to individuals, they also offer a way of meeting individual needs for "dependency". This theme has been developed by a number of writers, many of whom argue that clergy and rabbis, on whom the dependence of congregants is often "projected" (Hutton and Reed, 1975, p20), suffer extreme stress as a result (Carr, 1988; Dempsey, 1983; and Freedman, 1988).

In short, the literature suggests that, in addition to providing moral leadership, developing community, and promoting group solidarity, churches and synagogues in contemporary society fulfil a range of socio-psychological needs (Dempsey, 1989). So although their relative importance for individuals and society may have been diminished by the secularisation process described earlier, churches and synagogues remain an important component of, and contributor to, contemporary society.

For churches and synagogues themselves, the carrying out of these societal functions can give rise to fundamental debates about their goals and purposes (Brannon, 1971). For example, what is the relative priority of the needs of the local community, the needs of members as a group, the socio-psychological needs of individuals, and the requirements of denominational structures? And to what extent can, or should, specifically 'religious' purposes be distinguished from other purposes?

INTERACTION WITH THE ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

This part of Chapter Two has discussed separately the impact of the surrounding society on local churches and synagogues and the role that they themselves play in society. In practice, there is a constant interaction between local religious organisations and their environments such that it is rarely possible to distinguish clear, one-way influences (Beckford, 1973). Carr (1985, p9), for example, describes how a church is "sustained by a continuing interaction between the church and the communities in which it is set". And Davie (1990) argues that churches both reflect and create their institutional context.

The approach to the literature employed here is broadly consistent with conceptualisations of organisations as 'open systems' which affect, and are affected by, their environment (Hannan and Freeman, 1977; Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). Open systems theory sees organisations as responding to a multitude of interest groups or "constituencies" to which they must adapt in order to survive (Perrow, 1986). An exchange takes place between organisations and their environments in which organisations earn support from their constituencies by offering resources of value to them (Beckford, 1973; Scherer, 1980; Tsui, 1990).

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER TWO

This chapter has been concerned with the context within which local churches and synagogues carry out their work. Part A drew out from the literature some historical factors which illuminate organisational features of today's institutions. It looked especially at historical writings about authority and leadership, organisational structure

and the surrounding society and it concluded by drawing attention to contemporary debates about 'authenticity' which are grounded in historical interpretations.

The second part of the chapter discussed the social environment of local churches and synagogues, emphasising the problems and dilemmas posed by the need to operate within a secular society. It also outlined the range of functions which churches and synagogues may perform within society and indicated that there is a process of continual interaction between local religious institutions and the surrounding society.

Following this examination of the historical and societal context within which local churches and synagogues operate, Chapter Three moves on to look at the literature on the work and roles of clergy and rabbis.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. The extent to which the contemporary 'United Synagogues' denomination is able to enforce such ecclesiastical control over local synagogues was vividly illustrated by the 'Jacobs Affair' in 1964 which was widely reported in the British national press. Rabbi Dr Louis Jacobs was invited by the Board of Management of the New West End Synagogue to become their Minister. This was against the wishes of the Chief Rabbi who was and is the "ecclesiastical" head of the United Synagogue movement. According to Newman, (1977, p184) "The legal position was quite clear. No minister could legally be appointed a minister of a synagogue within the United Synagogue unless a certificate of moral and religious fitness had been issued on his behalf by the Chief Rabbi: without that he could not even don 'canonicals', sit in the minister's place, or preach a sermon." Accordingly, the Board of Management of the New West End Synagogue was forced to resign and was replaced by officers nominated by the United Synagogue. Those who favoured the appointment of Rabbi Jacobs founded an independent congregation.

2. Polish (1986) sees this as a trend of synagogues becoming more like local churches. Thompson (1970) and Russell (1980), however, suggest that local churches also underwent a similar change in the nineteenth Century from a communal ('Gemeinschaft') to associational ('Gesellschaft') form.

3. Because Judaism is an "ethnic religion" (Martin, 1978a; Sklare, 1955) in which religion and race are closely linked, synagogues are expected, as a matter of course, to meet needs for ethnic identity and solidarity. A similar function of binding minority ethnic groups (Martin, 1988) is performed by some local Christian institutions, for example Roman Catholic churches for Irish and other immigrants and Protestant evangelical churches for black people (Currie et al, 1977; Martin, 1988). In the United States, affiliation to a religious congregation can also serve a broader function. Since religious affiliation is the norm, joining a church or synagogue helps

an immigrant to integrate into the wider community, to become a part of "the American mainstream" (Cohen, 1983, p44). In the UK, however, as discussed in Part B, religious affiliation is a marginalised activity. Thus joining a religious congregation generally only helps ethnic minorities with their immediate needs for group identification; it does not so clearly link them in to the broader community.

CHAPTER THREE: THE WORK AND ROLES OF CLERGY AND RABBIS: THE LITERATURE REVIEWED

This Chapter looks at the work of religious functionaries (see GLOSSARY) within the context of their respective institutions. It makes some preliminary points about the nature of the literature on the role of clergy and rabbis before going on to look at the range of functions that can be encompassed within their roles and at the problems they face in implementing them.

THE WORK OF CLERGY AND RABBIS

THE NATURE OF THE LITERATURE

The extensive literature on the work of clergy and rabbis at the local institutional level is based in several different disciplines and uses different terminologies and conceptual frameworks to analyse 'work', 'roles', 'tasks' and so on. In order to minimise confusion, this chapter follows the conceptual framework, and the related terminology, provided by a social administration text, which itself drew on a range of antecedents in the sociological and administrative literature (SSORU, 1974). Thus, the term 'role' is used to refer to "a set of expectations of behaviour in a given social situation" (SSORU, 1974, p266), and the term 'functions' to refer to duties "prescribed for a particular position within an organisation" (p257). 'Functions', in this conceptual framework, are "ends or purposes" (p59) such as casework or community organisation. They are ongoing and open-ended "in contrast to 'tasks' which imply some specific objective and time limit" (p257).

A second noteworthy characteristic of the literature is its quantity and its variety with regard to sources and approach. There are numerous prescriptive accounts of the role of clergy and rabbis drawn from personal experience, theology, historical analysis

and/or organisational theory (for example, Anderson and Jones, 1978; Katz and Schoen, 1963; Russell, 1980; Saperstein, 1977). These can be used to supplement the many descriptions and analyses based on systematic research into the expectations placed on religious functionaries and observation of what they do in practice (for example, Dempsey, 1983; Fichter, 1954; Hutton and Reed, 1975; Moberg, 1962; Sklare, 1955). There have also been a number of attempts made to classify the constituent functions of the clerical or rabbinical role: for example, Blizzard (1956) in relation to the role of Protestant ministers in the United States; Sklare (1955) on Conservative rabbis in the US; Russell (1980) on Anglican clergy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; Stewart (1969) on Catholic priests in the US; and Tiller (1983) on clergy in the contemporary Church of England.

Finally, the nature of the findings and themes in the literature is noteworthy. Since at least the 1950s, a process of continual modification of earlier writing about clerical and rabbinical roles has been taking place so that this body of literature is now relatively mature. Lists of functions and analytical frameworks appear to have crossed and re-crossed national, religious and denominational boundaries - often with scant attention to the niceties of academic reference. At this stage it is frequently impossible to identify the primary source of particular ideas, or to discern on which side of the Atlantic they originated.

This is not essential for the purposes of this chapter, which aims only to identify findings and theories which throw light on the work of contemporary churches and synagogues. However, the point should be noted, since the thematic presentation of the literature which follows here tends to suggest clarity and neatness where, in practice, little exists in the sources referenced. Moreover, the distinction made in the previous chapter between UK and North American based material, is less easy to make in this chapter. In effect, the literature on the role of clergy and rabbis is extensive, but often derivative or muddled.

THE FUNCTIONS OF CLERGY AND RABBIS

Much of the literature on the work of clergy and rabbis draws heavily on a few key empirical studies such as those by Blizzard (1956), Fichter (1954), and Sklare (1955) in the United States, and that by Towler and Coxon (1979) in the UK. This section builds on the available descriptive and prescriptive literature to describe the range of functions which could fall within the role of a religious functionary. The aim is to look as broadly as possible at the potential scope of the role of rabbis and clergy in order to throw light on issues arising in the work of synagogues and churches.

A long list of tasks can be derived by looking across the range of literature and the categorisations and descriptions provided by authors. Here, eight functions, which encompass the activities most commonly referred to, are identified:

- Preaching;
- Celebration;
- Education;
- Pastoral Care;
- Community Leadership;
- Public representation;
- Administration; and
- Management.

Although they overlap to some extent, the classification maximises the conceptual distance between functions, each of which is described briefly below. In moving through the list of functions we are, in broad terms, moving from the most, to the least, 'spiritual' and distinctive aspects of the role of religious functionaries.

Preaching

The preaching function refers to sermons, or public addresses, usually within the context of corporate acts of worship. It is conceptually akin to both the education and pastoral care functions (discussed below), since preaching may include not only teaching and lecturing (Goulston, 1968), but also spiritual guidance, and advice about handling personal and social problems (Blizzard, 1956). But it has its own distinctive core; prophetic witness, oration and theological interpretation (Coate, 1989; Katz and Schoen, 1963). Stewart (1969, p86), for example, describes the Catholic priest as a "prophet"; an "advocate of the oppressed, protestor against injustice".

Celebration

Preaching is one aspect of public worship. The leading of such worship - acting as "celebrant" (Ranson et al, 1977; Russell, 1980) - constitutes a second function of religious functionaries. It includes activities such as the public reading of prayers and singing (Maloney, 1983) for a range of liturgical and life-cycle occasions including religious festivals, national celebrations, marriages and deaths (Carlin and Mendlovitz, 1958).

Within Christian denominations the celebration function may also include the responsibilities of 'a priest'; "an individual set aside for cultic functions especially prayer and sacrifice" (Dulles, 1978, p151); and a "professional guardian of the sacred" (Martin, 1978b, p291). Priestly duties involve acting "on behalf of others" (Carr, 1985, p55) and being "a mediator ... between God and the people" (Fichter, 1954, p125) in the performance of sacred rituals (Hoult, 1958; Moberg, 1962). Although there is no longer a Jewish priesthood (see GLOSSARY), rabbis may also carry out ceremonial and ritualistic tasks during acts of worship in synagogues (Goulston, 1968; Saperstein, 1977).

Education

The education function includes teaching both children and adults, running schools, and training others to provide educational services (Dempsey, 1983; Shankman, 1965). Teaching may take place within the church or synagogue or in other sacred or secular settings (Fichter, 1954). It may involve giving lectures and public addresses, formal class room teaching, facilitating informal study and discussion groups, and some kinds of preaching (Carlin and Mendlovitz, 1958; Stewart, 1969). The education function includes being a "spiritual guide" (Maloney, 1983, p182). For rabbis in particular, the idea of studying is often implied in the education function; that is, it is suggested that in order to be able to teach others, rabbis must themselves be scholars - of sacred texts, theology and philosophy (Neusner, 1972; Saperstein, 1977; Sigel et al, 1980).

Education is not confined to the imparting of religious knowledge. Recent writers have drawn attention to the way in which religious functionaries can be 'enablers' for lay-people, raising their levels of religious and spiritual awareness and helping them to develop leadership skills (Bulka, 1986; Greenwood, 1988). A report prepared for the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (1986, p25) suggested that lay people expect a Catholic priest to be "leader, facilitator, drawer-out of talents".

Pastoral care

The pastoral care function includes visiting the sick and isolated, comforting the bereaved, counselling, and giving advice - not only amongst members of a particular church or synagogue but also within the wider community (Russell, 1980). Pastoral care may include not only one-to-one casework but also group welfare work, with homeless young people for example. The titles of 'pastor', 'minister' and 'father', reflect the ascription of the pastoral care function to religious functionaries. Clergy

and rabbis are expected to make a distinctive contribution to care activities because of their spiritual attributes (Coate, 1989).

The importance of the pastoral care function is acknowledged by writers on the role of both clergy and rabbis. But there are differences in emphasis. Being a 'pastor' is an uncontroversial aspect of the role of Christian functionaries, but a number of commentators on the rabbinic role point out that care was historically a function performed by members of the Jewish community themselves (Glazer, 1967; Neusner, 1972). Sigel et al (1980) see rabbinic involvement in care as a "recasting" of role and Saperstein (1977) regards it as an "imitation" of the role of Protestant ministers.

Community Leadership

The community leadership function involves working with groups in activities which are not directly 'spiritual' or 'caring'. It includes initiating, organising, leading and participating in local committees, social and leisure activities, and fundraising events (Lampard, 1975). The expectation is that the clergyman or rabbi will socialise (Fein et al, 1983) and be "active in community affairs" (Moberg, 1962, p490), developing personal links with the members of his or her church or synagogue, as well as institutional links with the wider community (Carlton, 1968). Thus, Hout (1958) refers to clergy who assist with the dispensation of charitable funds by serving as trustees of mainly secular charities, and Carlin and Mendlovitz (1958) describe American orthodox rabbis directing youth activities.

Public Representation

Community leadership, insofar as it includes activities outside the church or synagogue, carries with it a public relations or ambassadorial aspect. But the public representation function encompasses much more than this and the literature is best reflected by distinguishing it as a separate function. It includes positive public

relations work on behalf of a particular local religious institution, denomination or religion, which may be achieved through intradenominational activities, participation in interfaith events, sponsorship of public meetings, appearances on radio and television, and writing for newspapers and journals (Fein et al, 1983; Katz and Schoen, 1963).

The function is described by Fichter (1954, p131) as the "civic role" in which a priest serves as a "symbol and interpreter of Catholicism to the community". Similarly Glazer (1967, p138) describes the Rabbi as a "representative of the Jews to the non-Jewish community" and Heilman (1973, p103) sees the rabbi as "the symbolic model Jew".

The function also includes more active attempts by religious functionaries to persuade people to understand and support their institution or viewpoint. Sklare's study (1955, p174) of Conservative rabbis in the US, for example, found that the rabbi "spearheads the promotional efforts of his congregation". Christian clergy may be involved in explicitly evangelist activities (Lauer, 1973; Maloney, 1983).

Administration

The two remaining functions to be distinguished are more mundane; concerned with organisational maintenance and survival. Administration encompasses a range of coordinative, fundraising, book-keeping, clerical and progress-chasing activities, performed on a day-to-day basis by religious functionaries, or as part of their involvement in committees and groups (Blizzard, 1956; Carlin and Mendlovitz, 1958; Stewart, 1969). Fichter (1954, p130) refers to this work as "the business role" of Catholic priests and Katz and Schoen (1963, p183) describe modern rabbis as "business executives". The traditional terms "clerk" (Russell 1980) and "rector" (Hoult, 1958; Sklare, 1955) reflect expectations that religious functionaries will carry out the administration function.

Management

The management function includes supervisory and control work in addition to activities such as taking initiatives, planning, making policy decisions and institutional development. It is allied to administration and many writers use the term 'business' to encompass both administration and management (for example, Blizzard, 1956; Shankman, 1965). Nevertheless, it is useful to distinguish between the two functions.

The distinctiveness of 'management' is in the idea of institutional leadership (Anderson and Jones, 1978; Fichter, 1961); "a figure to whom all can rally" (Sklare, 1955, p175). The management function also includes being responsible and accountable (Sigel et al, 1980); "maintaining a healthy organisation" (Ranson et al, 1977, p6); and taking responsibility for the viability of the church at the local level (Dempsey, 1983).

Some writers use the terms "management" or "manager" to summarise their total view of the role of the religious functionary. Thus, Sigel et al (1980, p133) describe the rabbi as a "manager of a Jewish institution"; Fichter (1954, p129) regards the Catholic parish priest as the "organizer and manager of the social relationships and structures which center in the parish"; and Anderson and Jones (1978) entitle their book on local church ministers, the "Management of Ministry".

MEETING EXPECTATIONS AND DEMANDS

Taken together, the eight functions discussed in the previous section represent a wide-ranging set of broad expectations. But often there is no specific guidance about how general principles should be implemented (Carlton, 1968). How do clergy and rabbis cope with the implementation of their role in these circumstances? In this and the following sections, the problems of role implementation described in the literature are outlined.

Rabbis and clergy, it seems, face numerous different expectations about how they will select priorities and implement their role - from their peers, from their denominational structure, from lay leaders of their church or synagogue, from active volunteer helpers, from ordinary members, and from the local community. Each of these organisational "constituencies" (Moberg, 1962, p487) has its own perceptions and priorities. The bases for their varying expectations also range widely and may include, for example, scripture, theological interpretations, tradition, personal experience and personal needs.

The religious functionary not only has to cope with the volume and breadth of the expectations (Glazer, 1967; Katz and Schoen, 1963; Shankman, 1965), but also with conflicts between them (Blizzard, 1956; Bowpitt, 1989; Dempsey, 1983; Dulles, 1978), and with the consequences of inevitable failure to meet every demand (Heilman, 1973; Schwarz, 1957). In short, the clergyman or rabbi is expected to be "all things to all men" (Fichter, 1954, p137) and to handle a "plethora of demands" (Lauer, 1973, p194).

In addition to the numerous, often competing, expectations placed on them by their constituencies, local clergy and rabbis also face the day-to-day exigencies of institutional maintenance and survival (Goldner et al, 1973; Wilson, 1959a). Often they are the sole full-time paid employees in local churches and synagogues and there are rarely sufficient clerical, secretarial, book-keeping and caretaking staff - paid or voluntary (Katz and Schoen, 1963). Thus, irrespective of official job descriptions, religious functionaries find themselves obliged to spend large proportions of time performing representative, managerial and administrative functions; from representing the church's viewpoint to the press and ensuring its financial viability, to answering telephones, locking up premises, and dealing with mail (Fichter, 1954). Finally, further pressures are placed on rabbis and clergy by the secularisation trends described in Chapter Two. Contemporary clergy and rabbis are expected to conform with the norms of both the religious and secular worlds.

Religious functionaries try to juggle all these competing demands on their time, to place boundaries around their work, and to adapt to new constellations of expectations as they occur (Lampard, 1975; Russell, 1980; Waller, 1955). They also try to select a 'bundle' of activities which fit together in to an integrated, implementable role (Moberg, 1962; Sigel et al, 1980). Yet there are still more factors to be taken in to account in discussing the implementation of their roles - their own aptitudes and preferences. These will be discussed in the following section.

TRAINING AND PERSONAL PREFERENCES

The expectations of constituencies and institutional imperatives are not the only competing factors affecting religious functionaries. In addition to these external influences, clergy and rabbis naturally have personal preferences and perceptions of how they should implement their role.

They may feel that their own abilities make them more competent to perform some functions than others (Blizzard, 1956; Goldner et al, 1973). Similarly, their perception of their religious calling and their theological perspective may predispose them to emphasise some functions (Coate, 1989; Sigel et al, 1980). Training is also an important influence. Not only does it bestow competence in particular areas (Anderson and Jones, 1978; Jarvis, 1976), it also suggests ideal or authentic interpretations of the clerical or rabbinic role (Blizzard, 1956; Lieberman, 1970; Sharot, 1975; see also discussion in Chapter Two, Part A).

Problems can arise in reconciling these individual preferences with the range of external expectations discussed in the previous section (Gottschalk, 1967; Hadden, 1969; Schwarz, 1957). For example, studies have shown that administrative tasks are the ones which religious functionaries like least and which they feel are least compatible with their religious calling (Lauer, 1973; Lieberman, 1970; Sklare, 1955; Sigel et al, 1980; Thompson, 1970; Towler and Coxon, 1979). Yet these are the

tasks on which they spend most time and which they are under most pressure to perform (Carlin and Mendlovitz, 1958; Dempsey, 1983; Fichter, 1961; Ranson et al, 1977). Blizzard (1956, p508) says of Protestant ministers:

"The theology they hold and the seminary instruction they received place the roles they perform in the parish in one priority order. But they actually spend most of their time doing those things they feel are least important."

The range of external expectations and the conflicts between external and internal influences give rise to demoralisation and stress amongst religious functionaries. They may see their inability to reconcile all the demands as an indication of personal inadequacy or failure (Bulka, 1986; Freedman, 1985; Hutton and Reed, 1975; Neusner, 1972; Shankman, 1965; Sigel et al, 1980). Clergy and rabbis seem to find it especially difficult to acknowledge the stress they experience (Fletcher, 1990); it is thought "not to be quite respectable" (Coate, 1989, p12). In the case of Christian clergy, the problem may be compounded further by ideas about appropriate humility and suffering and inappropriate anger - "What can you expect if you follow Christ - are these not to be accepted as necessary and valuable sufferings?" (Coate, 1989, p145). Moberg (1962, p509) summarises the feelings of helplessness:

" ... frustrated by an unfulfillable self-image of the minister as one ordained to a holy calling, filled with vocational guilt for spending major portions of time on pointless parish piddling, ... embittered by the bureaucracy that makes them office managers, committee maneuverers, and publicity directors instead of scholars and preachers of God's Word ...".

Contemporary ideas about professionalism may aggravate this sense of inadequacy and frustration (Fichter, 1961; Goldner et al, 1973; Struzzo, 1970). As explained in Chapter Two, secularisation has simultaneously lowered the status attached to religious occupations and increased the status attached to being a specialist or

professional. Modern religious functionaries like to think of themselves as 'professionals' in view of the depth of their training and knowledge and the breadth of their skills (Carroll, 1981; Elazar, 1983; Greenwood, 1988; Sigel et al, 1980). Yet the very multiplicity of demands made on them and the fact that they apparently have little distinctive competence, reduces them to generalists (Beckford, 1973; Blizzard, 1956; Carlin and Mendlovitz, 1958; Sigel et al, 1980; Towler and Coxon, 1979) who, in contemporary society, carry a lower status (Fichter, 1961; Martin, 1978b; Neusner, 1972).

It is in their relationship with lay members of their own congregations that the conflicting expectations placed on clergy and rabbis and the problems they experience in role implementation, are most frequently and clearly manifested (Menitoff, 1987). This is reflected in a body of literature specifically addressing the clergy/lay relationship which is the focus of the following section.

THE RELATIONSHIP WITH LAYPERSONS

The difficulties of role implementation described in the previous two sections have implications not only for clergy and rabbis themselves, but also for groups and individuals with whom they interact; laypersons in particular. In fact, the lay members of churches and synagogues are not only immediately affected by the way in which religious functionaries implement their role, they are themselves an important component of the web of expectations and demands within which role implementation occurs (Beckford, 1973). Ward (1961, p28) describes the relationship between a priest and his parishioners as "the most important single factor in the social structure of a parish" and Dempsey (1969, p59) found that the nature of minister/lay relations in the church he studied was "the fulcrum upon which all else seemed to turn". Thus this final section of Chapter Three will focus on the interaction between religious functionaries and laypersons.

The historical and theological context of the relationship has already been referred to in Chapter Two. In Christianity, the relative authority of clergy and laity has been a key issue since the earliest days of 'The Church' (Hill, 1973) and it has re-emerged in recent decades as a subject of vigorous debate (Bishops Conference, 1986; Card, 1988; Greenwood, 1988; Reed, 1980). Within the Roman Catholic church, for example, the role of the laity was one of the major concerns of the Second Vatican Council (Doohan, 1984; Hill, 1988). Although some writers have suggested that the importance of the laity in Protestant churches was established during the Reformation (Card, 1988; Harrison, 1960b), the Church of England has had a number of reports in recent years arguing that the lay role in church ministry should be reaffirmed and strengthened (Paul, 1973; Tiller, 1983).

This theologically-based emphasis on the 'priesthood of all the baptized' or 'the priesthood of all believers' is found within most Christian denominations today (Dempsey, 1983; Doohan, 1984), yet in practice it has not been universally accepted. Reed (1980, p1), for example, has pointed to the "persistence of clericalism" in the Church of England. Brake (1987, p22) argues that the concept of "the ministry of the whole Church" still has to be more widely accepted in Methodism and he urges ordained ministers to "take initiatives to make this a reality". In local Roman Catholic churches, lay initiatives and eagerness to participate can be stifled by priests who are reluctant to implement the directions of the Second Vatican Council and accept the implied changes in their own roles (Bishops Conference, 1986; Hill, 1988). The expectation remains among some priests that the role of the laity is "to pay, pray and obey" (well-known phrase quoted by Leege and Gremillion (eds) 1985).

Thus doubts remain, and disputes arise, over the relative roles and authority of clergy and laity in local churches (Brake, 1987; Doohan, 1984; Hutton and Reed, 1975; Hornsby-Smith, 1989). Some of these may have their roots in differing theological interpretations, but there are also other factors. Churches of all denominations, and synagogues as well, are apparently subject to similar environmental influences which -

quite apart from theology - tend to make the lay/clergy, or lay/rabbi, relationship a sensitive one (Carroll, 1981; Dempsey, 1983; Jarvis, 1976; Sacks, 1992).

Universal education, for example, has reduced knowledge discrepancies between the two groups and thereby raised questions about the relative authority and status of clergy and rabbis (Goldner et al 1973; Lenn and Associates, 1972; Neusner, 1972; Sigel et al, 1980). Again, increasing emphasis on 'consumer' participation in the wider society has tended to make laypersons more assertive and less willing to accept without question the decisions and activities of clergy and rabbis (Hornsby-Smith, 1989; Sigel et al, 1980). Conflicts seem especially likely to arise between religious functionaries and lay leaders (Bishops Conference, 1986; Moberg, 1962; Neusner, 1972).

In addition to these theological and environmental points, there is another important factor in the relationship between religious functionaries and laity. As anticipated in the preceding section, they hold different expectations and perceptions of the role of clergy and rabbis (Dudley (ed) 1983; Elazar, 1984; Lauer, 1973). "The local church is an arena in which the ministerial and lay religious sub-cultures negotiate" (Jarvis, 1976, p74).

Whereas the self-perceptions of clergy and rabbis tend to be grounded in denominational, theological, and professional considerations (Dempsey, 1969; Harrison, 1960b; Jarvis, 1976; Sigel et al, 1980), the expectations of laypersons are often more pragmatic or self-centred in origin (Scherer, 1972). They are grounded in their personal needs for security (Carr, 1985; Hutton and Reed, 1975); in their desire to be part of a group (Carroll, 1981); in their preferences for particular personal attributes (Moberg, 1962; Sigel et al, 1980); in their wish for their church or synagogue to be well run (Glock and Roos, 1962); and in consumerist expectations that they are 'buying' a service and that they should have some control over its quality and form (Katz and Schoen, 1963).

Thus Dempsey (1983, p126) argues that Methodist ministers have to provide "comfort" to their congregants rather than the "challenge" for which they are trained; a process referred to by Jarvis (1976, p77) as "a stifling of the prophetic by the lay". And Lauer (1973, p196) suggests that congregations do not want a minister to act "as a man of God" but to confirm their own cultural values and be "a man of the congregation". Blizzard (1956, p509) summarises:

"On the one hand, the church has a traditional set of norms by which he [the Protestant minister] is expected to be guided. On the other hand, the parishioner has a set of functional expectations by which the minister's professional service is judged. This is the minister's dilemma. He faces basic ambiguities in performing the practitioner roles".

In lighter mood but with serious intent, Schwarz (1957, p110) similarly contrasts the traditional attributes of the Jewish rabbi - "a fine human being with knowledge and character that everybody can look up to" - with the expectations of modern American congregations:

"A Superman, that's what you want. He has to be everything, not only a hot marriage and funeral performer, but a fine preacher, grand teacher, colossal mixer, superb bridge player, liked by the Gentiles, hail fellow with the newspapers, a good heckler in the public schools, and a few more things I can't think of right away - except he ought to be handsome too".

Taken within the context of the broader discussion in earlier sections of this chapter about the range and depth of competing expectations on religious functionaries, the difficulties facing local religious functionaries in their relationship with lay congregants can be seen as a major contributor to the the sense of frustration they experience in implementing their roles.

PROBLEMS OF ROLE IMPLEMENTATION

The literature reviewed in this chapter suggests that religious functionaries are faced with a great volume and breadth of potential responsibilities and activities. Major dilemmas arise as they try to prioritise their work and implement their role. These derive on the one hand from the range of competing external demands, and on the other hand from the discrepancies between external expectations and their own perceptions of their role. The literature reflects these dilemmas with frequent use of terms such as "multiple roles" (Fichter, 1954, p125; Kim, 1980, p118); "role uncertainty" (Ranson et al, 1977, p6; Russell, 1980, p5); "role ambiguity" (Anderson and Jones, 1978, p9); and "role conflict" (Finney, 1989, p185; Fletcher, 1990, p43).

The problems in role implementation described here are not unique to clergy and rabbis. The literature indicates that similar difficulties can be experienced by people in other occupational roles, especially by professionals such as doctors and teachers (Banton, 1969). In the context of a study grounded in the social administration tradition, it is especially noteworthy that there is an extensive literature about problems surrounding the implementation of the social worker role. Indeed, some of the issues raised in the social work literature closely resemble those on the role of religious functionaries described in earlier sections. For example, society's ambivalent attitude to social work (Stevenson, 1974) and the lack of clarity about the purposes of social work (Davies, 1981; Goldberg and Warburton, 1979) are recurrent themes. There is also much discussion about the extent to which social work is a profession (Toren, 1972; BASW, 1977). And there are analyses of the reasons for social workers' "failure of confidence" in their occupation (Davies, 1981, p21; see also Bartlett, 1970). The opening sentences of the Barclay Report (1982, pvii) run parallel with the conclusions of many writers on the role of clergy and rabbis:

"Too much is generally expected of social workers. We load upon them unrealistic expectations and we then complain when they do not live up to them ... social

workers find it difficult to come to terms with the complex pressures which surround them. There is confusion about the direction in which they are going and unease about what they should be doing and the way in which they are organised and deployed."

Thus the difficulties in role implementation described in this chapter reflect themes in the social administration literature. They have implications not only for individual clergy and rabbis but also for laypersons. There are also implications for the organisational structures of churches and synagogues (Banton, 1969; Beckford, 1973; Dempsey, 1969; Hutton and Reed, 1975; Katz and Schoen, 1963; Lauer, 1973); a subject which will be discussed in the following Chapter Four.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER THREE

One of the starting points for the current study was the anecdotal evidence of unhappiness and discontent amongst religious functionaries in both Jewish and Christian denominations. The literature discussed in Part B of Chapter Two provided an initial explanation: that secularisation has raised uncertainties about the boundaries, purposes and nature of the role of clergy and rabbis. This chapter has focused on the literature specifically concerned with the role of clergy and rabbis and it has drawn out themes which throw more light on the work of religious functionaries at the local institutional level.

Eight functions which encompass the activities most commonly identified with rabbis and clergy in the literature, were identified. The chapter went on to look at the implications for the work of clergy and rabbis of the wide range of expectations placed on them. Finally, the relationship between religious functionaries and lay people in their congregations was discussed in more detail. The literature suggests

that it is in this relationship that the conflicting expectations placed on clergy and rabbis are most clearly manifested.

Following this review of literature on the work of key 'actors' within churches and synagogues, Chapter Four moves on to complete the literature review with an examination of the literature on other organisational aspects of churches and synagogues.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE ORGANISATIONAL DIMENSION OF CHURCHES AND SYNAGOGUES

The previous two chapters looked at background material for the study. Chapter Two presented the historical and societal context within which contemporary churches and synagogues operate and Chapter Three reviewed the social science literature on the work of religious functionaries. This chapter concludes the literature review and provides a basis for the empirical phase of this project, by describing and analysing material which throws light on specifically organisational features and problems of churches and synagogues.

After a brief discussion of the nature of the available literature in Part A, Part B outlines theoretical and conceptual approaches used by academic writers who have referred to the organisation of churches and synagogues. Then, in Part C, taking a cross-denominational and cross-religion approach, four key organisational themes which emerge from a synthesis of the literature are identified.

PART A: THE NATURE OF THE LITERATURE

DISPARATE SOURCES

The literature on organisational features of churches and synagogues differs from the material discussed in Chapters Two and Three in that it cannot be said to constitute a coherent 'body' of literature. Indeed, as explained in the Introduction, the lack of such a body of scholarly literature was one of the prime motivations for the present study. Apart from the literature on the role of religious functionaries which was discussed in Chapter Three, there have been very few studies of local religious institutions in the UK with any kind of organisational focus.

We can only speculate about the reasons for this. Organisational analysts and students of administration have tended, at least until recently, to be interested in commercial and governmental agencies, rather than the 'third sector' (Booth, 1991; Harris and Billis, 1986). And the marginalisation of religion in contemporary UK society, along with the apparent decline in institutional forms of religious expression (Beckford, 1985; Brierly, 1991), does not encourage academic enquiry about religious institutions or the application of organisational theory to churches and synagogues (Beckford, 1973; Scherer, 1972). In addition, social scientists may have been discouraged from the field by monopolistic claims of theologians and by a tendency amongst those associated with religious institutions to be sceptical about the relevance of 'management' and 'organisation' to their work (Laughlin, 1990; Martin, 1967; Wilson, 1986).

Although a few sociologists in the United States have had an interest in the broad concept of religious organisation (for example, Beckford, 1985; Demerath and Hammond, 1969; Scherer, 1980), no single social science discipline has 'claimed' the organisation of churches and synagogues. Those few social scientists who have addressed organisational aspects of local religious institutions, have been based in different disciplines and have used a variety of theoretical approaches (Hill, 1973). So one of the aims of this chapter is to start to draw together the organisational literature which is available, taking an interdisciplinary approach.

In view of the immaturity of the field, the review has not been confined to the few existing UK empirical organisational studies; three other sources have been used. First, attention has been given to empirical and theoretical accounts which, although focused elsewhere, incidentally contain material about the work and organisation of local religious institutions. Organisational material from North America and other English-speaking countries has also been used - with caution as explained in Chapter One (1). Third, the scholarly material has been supplemented with insights drawn from in-house documents and prescriptive handbooks.

DENOMINATIONAL FOCUS

In addition to the paucity and disparate nature of organisational material on churches and synagogues, another feature of the available organisational literature should be mentioned. With one exception (a study of religious functionaries by Ranson et al, 1977), empirical studies in the UK which have addressed organisational aspects of religious institutions, have been denominationally based. In fact, with a few notable exceptions (for example Dempsey, 1969 in Australia; and in the United States, Beckford, 1985; Nelson, 1993; Roozen et al, 1984; Scherer, 1980; and Schroeder et al 1974), scholars generally have not conceptualised local religious institutions collectively. They have tended to ignore the possibility that churches of different denominations, and institutions of different religions, might share organisational features and problems; that findings and insights might have applicability across cases, denominations and religions (Scherer, 1980; Stokes and Roozen, 1991; Thompson, 1975).

In this respect, the organisational study of local religious institutions shares a feature of the social scientific approach to religion generally. Hill (1973, p1), describing trends in the study of religion by sociologists, says:

" ... the 'boundaries' of religion, rather than being defined in terms of theoretical criteria, became increasingly identified with the boundaries of institutional Christianity. The result was the growth of denominational 'religious sociologies'".

Despite this traditional denominational focus of social scientists, there are a number of prima facie reasons why local religious institutions of different denominations and religions might be expected to have common organisational characteristics. In the first place, they have broadly similar purposes - what Berger (1967, p26) refers to as the "human enterprise" of establishing "a sacred cosmos". Their predominant orientation is towards "value fulfillment" (Takayama, 1975. p17) and their work is

characteristically centred on matters such as providing a framework for corporate acts of worship (Schroeder et al 1974) and perpetuating "expert" knowledge (Davies, 1982, p2). Following an institutional approach to organisational analysis, they might therefore be expected to adopt broadly similar organisational mechanisms for implementing those similar purposes (Scott, 1987; di Maggio and Powell, 1991).

A second reason for hypothesising that local religious institutions have common organisational features is that, as discussed in Chapter Two, they share a common, often uncertain, organisational environment (Benson and Dorsett, 1971; Scherer, 1980). Following a 'neo-institutional' approach, which emphasises the ways in which organisational environments shape structures and processes (di Maggio and Powell, 1983), churches and synagogues may be expected to be subject to isomorphic pressures (Beckford, 1985; Nelson, 1993; Warner, 1993).

This argument is supported by Takayama and Cannon (1979, p323) who suggest that, in the case of American Protestant churches, denominations have adopted similar organisational structures in order "to solve adaptative and integrative needs and problems". Similarly, Biddell (1992, p95), who studied the resources of American congregations, notes that:

" ... when it comes to matters of staffing, raising and handling money, or the day-to-day operations of the church, most congregations of similar size look surprisingly alike, regardless of denomination".

Luckman (1969, p147) extends the point across religions:

"There can be little doubtthat Catholicism, Protestantism and Judaism are jointly characterized by similar structural transformations - a bureaucratization along rational businesslike lines - and accommodation to the 'secular' way of life".

In the case of synagogues, they are subject not only to the isomorphic pressures of the surrounding secular society, but also to pressure to conform to Christian organisational norms which remain an influential feature of UK society. Newman (1977) for example, describes how the implementation of the role of 'Chief Rabbi' has been strongly influenced by the episcopalian structure of the Church of England. And Glinert (1985, p27) argues that Jewish forms of public worship have been "re-modeled" in contemporary Britain "to conform with Christian worship". Similar pressures on synagogues have been noted in the North American literature (Klausner, 1981; Liebman, 1983; Marcus and Peck (eds) 1985). Carlin and Mendlovitz (1958,p389) describe the way in which the modern orthodox rabbi in the United States

"has accepted the Protestantization of the rabbinic role by introducing preaching, pastoral, and where necessary priestly and community relations functions".

The remainder of this chapter attempts to respond to two key points discussed in this part. First, since the relevant literature is disparate, the chapter will start to draw it together; Part B will look at the disciplinary, theoretical and conceptual frameworks used to describe and analyse organisational aspects of churches and synagogues. Second, since the literature has also lacked a cross-denominational focus, Part C will start to identify cross-denominational themes emerging from writings about organisational aspects of churches and synagogues (2).

PART B: APPROACHES TO THE ANALYSIS OF ORGANISATIONAL ASPECTS OF LOCAL CHURCHES AND SYNAGOGUES

THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES (3)

It has been argued that, since religious institutions are constructed by God, it is not

appropriate to apply to them the analytical tools of social science (see Chapter One, Part A). In keeping with this approach, some writers have attempted to provide theologically based analyses of church organisation. Thus, Anderson (1986, pviii) has written a handbook which aims to provide

"a theological and biblical basis for understanding the unique characteristics of Christian organizations, as well as a discussion of what it means to manage such organizations in a Christian way".

Similarly, Carr (1985, pix) has attempted to apply theologically based definitions of "the church's task" to "contemporary issues of organization and training" in the Church of England.

Whilst not making such comprehensive claims for theology, other writers have argued the need to include a theological perspective. The organisation of churches, they suggest, has an extra, or distinctive, dimension; the need to reflect Christian teachings and imperatives and to provide a framework within which they can be implemented (Carroll et al (eds), 1986; Harrison, 1959; Hinings and Foster, 1973; Jeavons, 1992; Ranson et al, 1977; Whitehead and Whitehead, 1981). In some of the literature this point is made only in broad terms; more of a reminder about a factor to be taken in to account than a specific guide to organisational implementation. Thus, Jackson (1974, p202) refers to churches as "divine-human institutions" and Brake (1987, p22) argues that the administrative structures of Methodist churches should be such that they "further the fulfilment of the ministry of Christ". Dulles (1978, p15) urges that models of local Catholic churches should reflect

"the presence of God who calls the members to himself, sustains them by his grace, and works through them as they carry out the mission of the Church".

A different approach is taken by writers who attempt to apply specific theological insights to specific organisational issues. Barnett (1988), for example, argues that the role and functions of Methodist ministers are grounded in New Testament faith and practice; and Hill (1988) proposes that the role of local Catholic churches should be defined in terms of a "ministerial collegialist" theology of authority rather than the prevailing "magisterial papalist" one. Similar attempts to apply theological insights to organisational issues are made by Doohan (1984) and by Greenwood (1988), who debate the role of lay people in Catholic and Anglican churches respectively.

An interesting attempt to not only focus on organisational aspects of churches, but also to draw equally on theology and sociology, has been made recently by an Irish priest (McCann, 1993). Drawing on organisational theory and on his own theological interpretations of the local church's task, his book proposes a complex theoretical framework for categorisation of church organisational structures.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Insights drawn from psychology have also been applied to organisational issues in religious institutions, most usually to explain dilemmas and problems arising in the relationship between religious functionaries and their congregants (Coate, 1989). The concept of 'dependency', in particular, is frequently used in both the UK and the US literature. Brannon (1971, p30) for example, notes that the clergyman is "psychologically dependent on the support of his congregation". Clergymen are thus passive and insecure and this contributes to the "organizational vulnerability" of local churches. Publications by Reed and his colleagues at the Grubb Institute, on the other hand, analyze clergy/lay relations in the Church of England in terms of the "immature" dependency of laity (Reed, 1980, p14) and its implications for the organisation of church life and the roles of church leaders. The underlying hypothesis is explained by Hutton and Reed (1975, p20):

" ... using psychological terms, we can say the people 'project' their feelings on the church and its leaders, seeking to find someone whom they can depend on".

Anderson and Jones (1978, p86) combine a psychological approach with theology. They suggest that there is a "correlation between people's dependence on the leader [pastor] and their dependence on God"; in a process of projection, lay people come to see their pastor as "omnipotent and omniscient". Coate (1989, p151) also proposes a conceptualisation in which "minister and people alike may get stuck in an equivalent of material dependence". She outlines the resultant difficulties in the minister/lay relationship and the stultifying impact on efforts to make changes. Friedman (1985, p197), an American rabbi and family counsellor, applies "systemic family therapy theory" to interpersonal relationships in churches and synagogues, and comments on the similarity between families and religious congregations as regards manifestations of "emotional dependency".

Building on the concept of dependency, writers have sought to explain apparently irrational behaviour within local religious organisations (Carr, 1988; Palmer, 1990) as well as the difficulties faced by religious functionaries in implementing their roles. Freedman (1988) for example, sees the role of rabbis and synagogues in the US as being "to manage the dependency needs of the Jewish people" (p4). He cites as an example of "the culture of dependency" established in religious institutions, the fact that members of lay boards in synagogues "typically seem to have left behind the competence and the initiative that they are accustomed to exercise in the outside world" (p7). He goes on to suggest that rabbis should respond to problems of this kind by becoming "familiar with the psychodynamics of groups and organizational life" (p8).

The problems of role implementation experienced by religious functionaries have been subject to a different psychological interpretation by Lauer (1973, p189). In analysing Protestant churches in the United States, he argues that their structure is

such that they cannot "solve the problems of meeting member gratifications". But unrealistic expectations are maintained and congregants subject their ministers to "continuing punitive experiences".

SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Churches, Denominations and Sects

Much of the sociological writing about Christian institutions derives from, and builds on, the work of Niebuhr (1929), Troeltsch (1931), Yinger (1957) and others, who elaborated distinctions made originally by Weber (Beckford, 1973; Weber, 1964). In brief, these writers propose a typology which uses both organisational and social variables - basis for membership, role in society, relationship to the state, and degree of formal organisation - to distinguish between ideal types of religious organisations (Martin, 1967; Moberg, 1962). The number of types distinguished varies, but most writers indicate at least three: churches, denominations and sects (Hill, 1973) (4).

A 'church' is conceptualised in this typology as a large, formal, autonomous organisation with a paid hierarchy of officials and leaders. It is integrated in to the social and economic order of society, as for example was the Roman Catholic Church in medieval Europe (Chinoy, 1962). Its goal is to "cover the whole life of humanity" (Jackson, 1974, p50) and local institutions are organised to this end. According to Wilson (1968, p434), "churches" in this sense "are found only in Christianity".

'A denomination' is also a bureaucratic organisation but it is detached from the state and tolerates other religious organisations. It does not seek to dominate the society of which it is a part and, even where it has a hierarchical structure, it usually offers opportunities for lay involvement in governance. According to Wilson (1968, p434),

"Denominationalism is the typical form of religious organization in the pluralist industrial society".

'Sects', on the other hand, are small groups with egalitarian relationships and no formal hierarchy. Indeed, sects characteristically have little formal organisation at all (Chinoy, 1962). Often they have charismatic leaders. Membership is voluntary and tends to exclusiveness. In contrast with the universal goals of 'churches', sects

"aspire after personal inward perfection, and they aim at a direct personal fellowship between the members" (Jackson, 1974, p50).

Authors have used this typology, or a variation of it, for a range of purposes; for example, to explain how religious bodies respond to the personal needs of adherents; to discuss the ways in which religious groupings relate to their surrounding communities; or to examine the link between theological positions and organisational characteristics (Liebman, 1983; McGuire, 1987; Moberg, 1970). From the point of view of the current study however, the most noteworthy use is to describe growth and change in local congregations (Pinto and Crow, 1982). Accounts are given in the literature of the way in which religious groups have moved from one category to another (Thompson, 1975). For example, sects may evolve in to denominations (Isichei, 1967; Wilson, 1959b) or disaffected groups may break away from churches to form sects (Yinger, 1957). The typology has also been used to throw light on

"the way in which different religious orientations may interpenetrate so that within a single institution there may exist distinct and sometimes competing definitions of its structure" (Hill, 1973, p77).

Community and Association

Another framework used to describe growth and change in local religious institutions draws on, or resembles, the distinction articulated by Tonnies (1955) between 'Gemeinschaft' (community) and 'Gesellschaft' (association) ideal types of relationship and organisation. 'Community' in this framework corresponds roughly with traditional groupings based on personal and diffuse ties. 'Association' corresponds to rationally constructed organisations based on contractual relations (Lenski, 1961; Thompson, 1973; Tonnies, 1955).

As with the church/sect framework, more recent writers have developed and refined the basic theory and have also used different terminologies. For example, 'associations' are often equated with, and referred to, as 'bureaucracies', following Weber (1964). And a number of writers follow Turner (1969) and draw a distinction between 'communitas' (signifying spontaneous relationships and intimate bonds without regard to status, wealth or property) and 'structure' (signifying groups which are pragmatic, goal orientated and intentionally organised) (Williams, 1983) (5).

Some writers have applied the association/community model to historical accounts of organisational change. Thompson (1970) for example, conceptualises the development of the Church of England as a move from a communal form to one in which increasing scale and complexity of organisation demands an associational form.

Like the church/sect framework, the basic community/association distinction has also been used to throw light on the mixtures of relationships, purposes and pressures which can occur concurrently within local churches (Anderson and Jones, 1978; Thompson, 1975). Thus, Jackson (1974, p50) argues that "religious groups are communal as well as associated"; that in addition to the "limited number of highly specialised and relatively impersonal relations" of the association such as pupil/teacher and priest/parishioner,

"there are a vast number of very generalised, highly personal and very basic social relations ... which constitute an integral part of every religious group."

This accords with Greeley's view (cited by Thompson, 1973, p300) that modern man looks to the Church to provide the advantages of both 'Gemeinschaft' and 'Gesellschaft'. In a specific application of the theoretical framework to one congregation - a US Baptist Church - Williams (1983, p59) suggests that

"the basic cleavage in the congregation appears between the majority who are satisfied with the structural 'corporate' church and a minority who seek a more demanding 'spiritual' *communitas*".

This dichotomy has also been used to discuss or prescribe the requisite form of religious institutions. There has been, for example, a debate about the appropriate role of Anglican churches in relation to their surrounding populations, which has been conducted in terms of a choice between the "associational" approach on the one hand and the "parish" or "communal" approach on the other (Carr, 1985; Ecclestone (ed), 1988; Reed, 1980; Tiller, 1988). Anderson and Jones (1978, p81), use the *communitas*/structure distinction to argue that "bureaucratic management processes" are necessary in churches, but that "*communitas*" must also be incorporated into institutionalised structures.

Formal Organisation, Power and Authority

In an exploratory theoretical discussion about the organisational structure of churches, Hinings and Foster (1973) note the pervasiveness of analyses of formal organisations which depend on Weber's theories of authority and bureaucracy (Weber, 1964). They go on to argue that Weberian models are not totally applicable to churches as they are not essentially 'employer' organisations and they have relatively unspecific aims in which expression of values is of great importance. Despite this, Weberian

models of bureaucracy - and related concepts such as 'hierarchy', 'formal structure' and 'rational-legal authority'- remain popular analytic tools for studies of religious organisations (Beckford, 1973). They are used both for descriptive and prescriptive purposes.

Some authors have used a bureaucratic conceptual framework as a starting point for empirical analyses. Thus Harrison (1959), in his study of the American Baptist Convention, explicitly uses bureaucratic theories "in order to interpret the particular problems of the American Baptist Convention" (pxiii). And Hornsby Smith (1989), in a study of change in contemporary Catholic parish churches in the UK, draws on Weber to construct "ideal types" comprising different combinations of organisational features, "legitimizing ideologies" and external relationships.

Other writers have used bureaucratic concepts more as a means to describe their findings. After analysing the historical development of the Church of England and its authority, coordination and control mechanisms, for example, Thompson (1970, pxv) describes Anglican churches as "highly rationalised bureaucracies". And Dulles, in a discussion of Catholic churches in Ireland, draws attention to one of their key characteristics - "the hierarchical conception of authority" (1978, p35). Similarly, Ranson and his colleagues (1977) who studied three Christian denominations in England, conclude:

"Churches are, by definition, hierarchically organised, with full-time professionals, developed procedures, articulated belief systems ... Essentially a Church has formalised and routinised the administration of the means of grace ...".

The Weberian distinction between 'traditional', 'charismatic' and 'rational-legal' forms of authority has also been widely employed to analyze congregations. Harrison (1960a), for example, conducted his examination of the American Baptist Convention in terms of different kinds of authority and power manifested at different points

within the organisation. And in examining the "loss of authority" of modern rabbis in the United States, Carlin and Mendlovitz (1958, p377) conceptualise the process as one in which there has been an undermining of "traditional authority structures and the legitimations and value systems upon which they relied".

Other writers have cited and applied Weber more explicitly. Thus, Bartholomew (1981, p124) points out that authority is a key concept in theology as well as in sociology and considers the ways in which "theologically legitimated authority" and "institutionally legitimated authority" are used in differently structured religious organisations in America. Carroll (1981, p102) also builds explicitly on Weberian authority theories; in his case, to develop a "theory of clergy authority". He distinguishes two bases for clergy authority; "participation in the power of the sacred" and "expertise, including both knowledge and skills important for the life of the religious groups and its members". Falbo et al (1987) use Weber's conceptualisation of authority as a framework for an empirical examination of the way in which the perceptions clergy hold of their authority influences their strategies for dealing with congregants. Nelson (1993, p653) applies Weber's "three pure types of legitimate authority" to his organisational analysis of three multinational denominations in Brazil and the United States and suggests that each denomination "is controlled and legitimized by different types of authority" (p658).

'Legitimate authority' is a key idea in another conceptualisation of religious organisations; one grounded in the formal ideologies, or 'polities', of Christian churches. In brief, local churches can be regarded as being part of 'episcopal' (hierarchical), 'presbyterian' (collegial) or 'congregational' (autonomous) organisational structures (Moberg, 1962; Scherer, 1980; Wilson, 1968). The terms reflect different understandings of the actual and appropriate authority relationships between religious functionaries and lay people, and between an individual local church and its broader denominational organisation (Burkart, 1980; Hougland and Wood, 1979). Zald and McCarthy (1987, p81) regard the classification as " ...

essentially a measure of the centralization or dispersion of power and control in religious organizations ... ". However, Beckford (1973, p97) is critical of its use by social scientists since

".... it introduces theological and ethical complications into supposedly objective and ideally scientific studies of organizational structures and processes".

All the same, the episcopal/congregational authority framework has been used as a basis for description and analysis of religious institutions by a number of writers. Paul's discussion (1973) of the future of the Anglican Church for example, focuses on its historical development as an episcopal organisation. Smith (1953) conducts his analysis of the movement of clergymen between posts in terms of whether they are in episcopal or congregational churches. And Takayama and Cannon (1979) investigate the power enjoyed by local churches - as measured by their ability to hire and fire clergy - in different US Protestant denominational structures.

Although the Weberian and episcopal/congregational frameworks predominate in analyses of authority and power relations in local religious institutions, others have also been used. Dempsey (1969, p70), for example, developed the concept of "political substructures" to describe an Australian Methodist congregation. He distinguished the church's "formal structure" and the situation he found in practice; a network of "key leaders", "secondary leaders", "formers of opinion" and "the politically insignificant". Studies of relationships between local Protestant churches and their denominations in the US have used the centralization/ decentralization distinction (Makler, 1963); the concept of resource control (Cantrell et al, 1983); and the idea of control points within networks (Luidens, 1982). And in a study of innovation in Anglican churches in a Welsh diocese, Harris (1969) applied Etzioni's (1961) typology of compliance mechanisms ("normative", "utilitarian" and "coercive"). This led him to question the extent to which churches are really

normative organisations in which decisions are made by "an appeal to the consensus of values that the members share" (p170).

Open Systems

Some recent writers on congregations have favoured an 'open systems', or 'natural systems' framework. In brief, the open systems model views an organisation as:

" ... a bounded group of individuals harnessed together by incentives and commitments to a relatively small set of goals (some of which may be conflicting), yet open to new pressures from the environment as it both obtains and gives back resources to that environment and, simultaneously, attempts to affect its internal constituent parts and its environment" (Zald and McCarthy, 1987, p80).

Writers have argued that this approach has a number of features which make it particularly applicable to religious institutions. It emphasises the impact and importance of organisational environment (Beckford, 1973; Scherer, 1980), especially the local community with which churches and synagogues interact (Carr, 1985). It also recognises the way in which organisations face dilemmas of "conflict, strain, [and] imbalance" which require "adjustments in goals and strategies" (Scherer, 1980, p3). Finally, there is a "symbolically appropriate" (Thompson, 1973, p295) correspondence with Christian theology. Rudge (1968, p66), after reviewing a range of organisational theories, argues that the open systems perspective is the most appropriate for the study of "ecclesiastical administration" because it "has the greatest weight of biblical support and is nearest to the central stream of Christian thinking".

Beckford (1973) employed an open systems framework for the analysis and presentation of his review of the sociological literature on 'religious organization'. Other writers have applied the perspective more specifically; to the analysis of conflict and change in religious institutions. Benson and Dorsett (1971), for example,

conceptualise local churches as open systems "subject to a variety of pressures towards structural change" (p141) from their communities and their denominations, including "bureaucratization, professionalization, integration, [and] secularization" (p138). Drawing on their own studies and those of earlier sociologists of religion, Zald and McCarthy (1987, p81) look at "conflict rebellion and social control" in local congregations and distinguish key "structural dimensions", including "congregational versus episcopal polity structures", degree of autonomy, mix of incentives, and external relations. And Rudge (1968, p112) applies systemic analysis to "a number of problematic issues" in church administration including

" ... facing a changing world; the nature and extent of a minister's burdens; difficulties resulting from leadership changes or organizational shifts; and the complexity of coexistent power structures".

THE RANGE OF FRAMEWORKS

This part has looked at approaches used to describe and analyse organisational aspects of churches and synagogues (6). Writers have drawn on the disciplines of theology, psychology and sociology; and they have conceptualised religious institutions in a variety of ways. It is not always possible to distinguish clearly between different approaches, or to pin-point the theoretical basis being employed by a particular writer. The church/sect typology, for example, is heavily influenced by bureaucratic theory (Hinings and Foster, 1973) but also has conceptual links with community/association theories. Some writers have consciously tried to combine more than one of the approaches mentioned here (for example, Carroll, 1981; Rudge, 1968).

In sum, the interdisciplinary investigation of the literature in this part of Chapter Four has revealed that a range of disciplinary, theoretical and conceptual frameworks have been applied to the analysis of local religious institutions - singly or in combination with each other. No single theory or concept emerges as pre-eminent but two

comments may be made about the theoretical frameworks reviewed here. The first is that, with the exception of the church/sect theorists, scholars have generally not seen the analysis of congregation organisation as requiring the development of specialist theory. For the most part, they have taken a generic approach; theories developed initially for other kinds of organisations have been applied to congregations. The second notable point is that the scholars referred to here have not been much concerned with responding to, or explaining, the kinds of practical issues of congregational organisation outlined in the Introduction.

The following part of this chapter looks at the findings of the analyses referred to in this part; findings that describe and analyse the organisational features of congregations and the organisational issues they face. It continues to take an interdisciplinary approach as well as a cross-denominational and cross-religion focus, attempting to identify common themes.

PART C: ORGANISATIONAL FEATURES AND CHALLENGES IN CHURCHES AND SYNAGOGUES

In this part, hitherto disparate findings from empirical research studies are synthesised and reviewed as a first step towards building a more comprehensive picture of church and synagogue organisation; a task which will be pursued further in the empirical phase of this project. The material is analyzed under four broad headings which emerge from the literature as areas of major organisational concern in churches and synagogues: purposes and goals; roles and role relationships; organisational change; and denominational structures. Information is drawn out from the available literature about organisational features of churches and synagogues, and about the organisational problems they face.

PURPOSES AND GOALS (7)

As predicted by 'garbage can' theories of organisation (Cohen and March, 1974), the goals of churches and synagogues are often ambiguous and contested. Writers have drawn attention to the problems of clarifying the purposes of churches or synagogues, and to the negative organisational implications for those which fail in the task (Beckford, 1973; Demerath and Hammond, 1969; Handy, 1992). Religious institutions face special challenges in developing and implementing organisational goals; they have to reconcile the desire to reflect their religious values with the practicalities of running an organisation and ensuring its survival (Hinings and Foster, 1973; Jeavons, 1992; O'Dea, 1963; Rudge, 1968).

Difficulties of clarifying purposes in churches and synagogues are sometimes traceable to unresolved debates and disagreements about underlying religious principles (Conrad, 1988; Hutton and Reed, 1975; Ranson et al, 1977). Hornsby-Smith (1989) for example, describes the "struggles" within Catholic parishes trying to reflect post-Vatican II theology (see GLOSSARY) in their activities and internal structures. And Card (1988, p85 and 96), in a discussion of the future of Christian churches in the Western world, distinguishes "two diametrically opposed views of life and faith" which are in conflict and which have different implications for organisational structure and purposes. "Essentialist" values, he argues, go with churches which are "institutional" and part of a centralised, hierarchical framework; whereas the "existentialist" view would demand a diversity of local churches, loosely linked to their denominational framework and with a communal, local focus.

Other studies have suggested that there can also be serious debates within congregations about the relative importance of what Blau and Scott (1963, p43) have referred to as "mutual benefit" or "commonweal" aims; that is, whether to focus activities primarily on the needs of the immediate 'members', or whether to take a more outward-looking approach towards the needs of the community (Handy, 1992;

Roozen et al, 1984; Smith, 1991; Zald and McCarthy, 1987). In the Church of England, this dilemma has been conceptualised as reflecting a theological question: a "universal tension between two modes of engagement of Church and Society" (Ecclestone (ed) 1988, p6). Is it to be a "worship club" or a missionary movement (Taylor, 1988, p126)? Two models are distinguished: the "parish church" and the "associational church". The members of the parish church are orientated towards the needs of the "community at large" and see themselves as having "an accountability to human beings because they are in need"; whereas associational churches "will be barely conscious of their local community, neither will the community take much notice of the church" (Ecclestone (ed) 1988, p7).

The US literature suggests that an equivalent dilemma may arise in synagogues. Schwarz (1957) notes the resentment felt by subscribing members of synagogues when the facilities they sustain are treated as "communal" facilities and used by non-members. Elazar (1983, p242), however, concludes his study of decision-making processes in the American Jewish community with the argument that

"... it is absolutely vital that synagogues cease to be considered the private property of their members and be recognized for what they are - public institutions bearing significant communal responsibilities".

There can also be differences of opinion within churches and synagogues about what are appropriate goals in a religious organisational context. There may be perceptions of incompatibility between 'authentic' (that is religious) goals on the one hand, and 'inappropriate' goals concerning organisational maintenance and survival, on the other hand (Beckford, 1973). (A book written by a Catholic priest about parish structures (Winter, 1973) is in fact entitled 'Mission or Maintenance?'.) Suggested manifestations of such inappropriate concern with organisational survival include: an emphasis on efficiency and management techniques (Brake, 1987; Carroll, 1985; Jackson, 1974); a diminution of congregational autonomy in some Protestant

denominations (Ashbrook, 1966; Harrison, 1959; Luidens, 1982; Thompson, 1975); and a tendency to place the immediate needs of church members before the needs of the wider community (Anderson, 1983; Carr, 1985; Paul, 1973).

Even where religious value bases are not contentious, there may be practical difficulties in implementing them organisationally. Winter (1973, p21) for example, debates the structures needed to enable lay people to "fulfil their vocation as Christians" and argues that the "ideal size" for local churches is 20 to 30 people who should be based in homes rather than separate buildings; a recommendation likely to be found impractical by many lay people and clergy, however much they might agree with the underlying religious principle. The difficulties of matching theology with organisational realities is reflected in Martin's observation (1988, p49) that

" ... the liberalizing notions that got in to the Catholic Church after 1960, did a great deal of organizational damage ... You may say that they got closer to the theological truth and lost people".

Underlying debates about religious values emerge, then, as a major contributor to problems surrounding goal definition in synagogues and churches. But others are also suggested. Several writers have noted, for example, that modern churches and synagogues have acquired a wide range of different kinds of goals; not only theological and spiritual, but also psychological and sociological ones. Reconciling them and responding to all of them can present difficulties (Dempsey, 1969; Palmer, 1990; Scherer, 1972; Sklare, 1955).

In addition to their wide range, the sheer number of goals in existence in churches and synagogues can be confusing. In a study of "institutional" churches in the United States, Webb (1974, p669) generated a list of 28 goals

"from a variety of sources which included official presbytery goals, in-depth interviews with clergy and relevant literature."

In the case of synagogues, Neusner (1972) has suggested that the impact of trends in modern society has been to increase their tasks and functions to such a degree that their original function as centres for local Jewish communities has been obscured.

The combination of multiple goals with religious values about fellowship and neighbourly love can be particularly problematic (Jerrome, 1989). As Lauer (1973) points out, the "multi-purpose" nature of the modern church means that conflict is inevitable. At the same time, there is "little toleration and institutionalization of conflict" (p200) which can be regarded as inappropriate for a religious setting. In addition,

"since solidary incentives are so important in maintaining member commitment there is a temptation for ministers in local congregations to avoid conflict if they believe there is dissensus on an important issue" (Zald and McCarthy, 1987, p82).

Thus, not only do churches and synagogues experience difficulties in clarifying their organisational purposes, they may also lack the means to debate and resolve differences of opinion when they do surface. As Scherer points out (1980, p21), the difficulties of maintaining unity of "mission" makes religious organisations "structurally fragile".

ROLES AND ROLE RELATIONSHIPS (8)

The impact of unclear and multiple goals is felt especially by clergy and rabbis as they try to prioritise their work and implement their roles (Card, 1988; Dempsey, 1969; Lampard, 1975). The problems they experience were described in Chapter Three: meeting competing expectations, covering a wide range of different tasks, and

conflicts with lay people. This section looks more broadly at problems of role definition in churches and synagogues - not only those which relate to religious functionaries, but also those which concern lay people. The literature suggests that churches and synagogues have a number of organisational characteristics - in addition to the unclear purposes just discussed - which make it especially difficult for key 'actors' to clarify the work and behaviour expected of them.

One source of difficulties lies in the ambiguous employment situation of clergy and rabbis. They are generally paid a salary for the work they do (either by the congregation itself or by the denominational organisation). So they are, in a sense, 'employees' with all the usual legal and traditional responsibilities and accountabilities which attend that status (Sharot, 1975). Yet the situation is complicated by other organisational factors.

In the first place, the identity of the 'employer' can be unclear. Although the lay leaders of some churches and synagogues carry sole responsibility for hiring, firing and payment of their religious functionaries, these employer functions are frequently the responsibility of denominational organisations (Coate, 1989; Hougland and Wood, 1979; Kim, 1980; Scherer, 1972). Even where congregations are the legal employers, they often take guidance and support from their denominations on matters such as salary scales, contracts and discipline (RSGB, 1986b). Conversely, where the denominations are the legal employers, there may be official or unofficial mechanisms to try to ensure that the views of lay congregants are considered on matters such as clerical appointments and accountabilities (Paul, 1964). Thus, the existence of denominational structures means that the employer/employee status is rarely clear-cut (Sharot, 1975; Smith, 1953).

A second complicating factor in the employment of clergy and rabbis is that they carry within their congregations a degree of authority which is separate from, and independent of, their employee status; authority which is attached to their status as

trained and qualified religious functionaries and professionals. This authority may be experienced as incompatible with the employee status and its implications of the lay person's "right to instruct the minister in his duties and responsibilities" (Dempsey, 1969, p59). Describing the authority of Church of England clergy, for example, Paul (1973, p131) says:

" ... the status of its ministers can never be only that of the paid, professional, servants of a supreme body. They are who they are and where they are because they have been given authority over the Church ...".

Similarly, an American Reform rabbi (Glaser, 1986, p95) argues that congregational rabbis must be independent of their lay "bosses", paying heed only to "serving God and God's purposes". He advises rabbis to follow the Jewish sage:

"Be not like slaves who minister to the master for the sake of receiving a bounty, and let the fear of Heaven be upon you".

A third complicating factor in defining the role of clergy and rabbis concerns their self-image. Whereas their congregants may regard them as being in post to serve their needs, clergy and rabbis themselves may feel that they have responsibilities to a wider community as well. Anderson and Jones (1978, p9) say, for example, that pastors "cannot limit their concern to the 'insiders' who pay their salaries". Clergy and rabbis who regard themselves as professionals can also be impatient with the constraints imposed by a formal employment situation (Russell, 1980). And they tend to hold expectations "that laymen should relate to them as clients" (Dempsey, 1983, p129).

Thus, the problem of defining the clergy/rabbinic role does not stand alone. The relative authority of lay people and religious functionaries can also be unclear (Carr, 1985; Carroll, 1991). Hutton and Reed (1975, p21) refer to " ... the ambiguous

relationship between laity and clergy" in the Church of England, and Neusner (1972, p55) describes the "ambivalent attitude" of lay leaders towards the rabbi in US synagogues: "They recognised his importance and his authority, yet he was their hired hand." Since the formal statements about relative authority are basically contradictory, there are no real guidelines for the relationship. As Dempsey (1969, p71) says of the Australian Methodist churches he studied,

"Neither the position of the minister, nor the authority necessary for the adequate fulfilment of his role is well-defined".

In practice, the relative power of clergy and laity varies widely between congregations and over time; ranging from total dominance by clergy or rabbis to total dominance by lay people, with congregations between often professing to have 'partnership' relationships (Bishops Conference, 1986; Elazar, 1983; Lauer, 1973). As Hornsby-Smith (1989, p196) says in his summary of lay/clergy relationships in Catholic churches, "... there is always the potential for conflict".

There are other factors as well in churches and synagogues which can raise issues around role expectations and role relationships. Finney (1988, p8) for example, points to the way in which the mixture of paid and unpaid "staff" in churches can "set up tensions". Booth (1991) describes conflicts between local clergy in the Australian Uniting Church and other paid professional employees doing administrative and control jobs.

Issues can also arise around the filling of lay leadership roles. There may be reluctance amongst lay people to hold leadership offices in churches and synagogues (Elazar, 1983; Hougland and Wood, 1982) and questions are then raised about the extent to which those who do take office are committed to religious values or are representative of other lay people (Ashbrook, 1966; Demerath and Hammond, 1969; Heilman, 1976; Hoge et al, 1988). Paul (1973, p129), for example, argues that

"those who have the time for a surfeit of voluntary church activities are not those most representative of the population, or even of that laity which confesses a commitment to the Anglican Church".

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

The literature suggests that, in churches at least, religious values can be powerful both as inhibitors and supporters of organisational change (Beckford, 1973, Wilson, 1968). On the one hand, it seems that religious values can drive forward organisational change (Booth, 1991; Kim, 1980); for example, a developing theology of the laity has been an important factor in encouraging mechanisms for lay involvement in churches, even where lay people and clergy remain reluctant participants (Card, 1988; Hougland and Wood, 1982). Equally, religious values may inhibit changes which seem necessary judging by secular organisational criteria (Harris, 1969; Scherer, 1972). Thus, Isichei (1967, p201) has described how Quaker institutions were "biased against change" because they regarded their original organisational structures as "established in accordance with the divine will." And women and practising homosexual men continue to be barred from clerical posts in many churches and synagogues, often despite difficulties in filling posts with those traditionally qualified for them (Coate, 1989; Fletcher, 1990).

Ideas about authority are especially likely to inhibit organisational change in churches. Since authority structures "are based (and/or justified) to a considerable extent on theological principles" (Cantrell et al, 1983, p277), they are difficult to change or ignore, even when they appear to be inappropriate or no longer requisite (Reed, 1980; Takayama, 1980). Thus Harrison (1959, p7), who studied the bureaucratization of the Baptist Church in the United States, says:

"In recent years some Baptists have called for recognition and acceptance of the power of the denominational leaders. But it is extremely difficult to make a formal change in the polity system without altering the doctrine of the church".

Religious values may also provide less specific barriers to change; a general atmosphere in which certain courses of action, responses to problems, organisational structures or styles of decision-making are implicitly viewed with disfavour as 'inappropriate' or 'inauthentic'. The values which inhibit change may be traditional and cultural rather than explicitly theological (Wind and Lewis, 1991). Yet, as Scherer (1972, p98) points out, they are no less powerful in their impact: the "infusion of historically conditioned forms with ultimate value can be a barrier to change...".

For example, bureaucratic organisational structures are widely seen as inappropriate for religious organisations such as churches (Hall, 1992, p132; Hinings and Foster, 1973; Jackson, 1974; Ranson et al, 1977). Thompson (1973, p295) finds a tendency for

"sweeping condemnation of the symbolic inappropriateness of the [bureaucratic] organisational form as judged by particular theological ideals about organisation".

He mentions especially the theological concept of the church as a divinely inspired 'body', which can lead to a "fascination" with organic organisational models. Bureaucratic structures are also opposed in those local churches "with strong theological dispositions to congregational polity and lay control" (Wilson, 1968, p436). Brake (1987, p19), for example, decries as a "half-baked system" attempts to combine hierarchical control of Methodist churches with their traditional "democratic procedures".

Opposition to 'bureaucratic' forms in churches can be linked with perceptions that there is an irreconcilable dichotomy between efficiency, effectiveness, rationality, planning and systematic procedures on the one hand, and religious or spiritual values on the other hand (Booth, 1991; Carroll, 1985; Crittenden et al, 1988). Thus, Anderson (1986, p113) notes in churches a "suspicion that management is unspiritual"; and Carr (1985, p38) also says that "the application of management to the church arouses instinctive opposition". A detailed example of the impact of this dichotomous approach to church organisation is provided by Laughlin (1990, p106) who argues that the establishment of efficient accountability mechanisms within the Church of England has been hindered by the "relegation" of financial accountability to the realm of the "secular". The Church, he says, would regard demanding more financial accountability from local churches as "unspiritual". It

"... has never come to terms with seeing the parish as anything other than a sacred unit and has never operationally created a separate organisational unit to handle these issues".

The implementation of organisational change in local churches and synagogues may be inhibited or encouraged not only by religious values, but also by wider denominational structures (Leege, 1991); a topic which is the subject of the following section.

DENOMINATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The last three sections focused on cross-denomination themes concerning the internal organisation of local churches and synagogues. This final section looks at the broader organisational framework of local congregations; and at the issues that arise in the relationship between local churches and synagogues on the one hand, and the denominational institutions to which they are affiliated on the other hand.

Both Jewish and Christian denominations vary widely as to the degree of autonomy officially granted to local affiliates by their 'formal polities' (Burkart, 1980; Scherer, 1972; Takayama and Canon, 1979; Zald and McCarthy, 1987). At one extreme is the structure of the Watch Tower movement described by Beckford (1975) in which there is no form of "regional or representative democracy" and in which the central organisation imposes "direct control over all congregations". Similarly, prior to Vatican II (see GLOSSARY), local Catholic churches were firmly controlled by bishops. Even today, the Roman Catholic Church remains "a hierarchically organized corporate entity" (Kim, 1980, p87). At the other extreme, is the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain, in which affiliated synagogues are officially autonomous and free to make their own decisions on all matters, including the hiring and firing of rabbis (RSGB, 1986b).

In practice, the literature suggests, the relationship between an individual church or synagogue and its denomination may differ substantially from official statements (Scherer, 1980; Warner, 1993). Nominally autonomous congregations may be subject to important controls by their denominations (Carlton, 1968; Dempsey, 1969; Harrison, 1959). Conversely, congregations in nominally centralised denominations maintain a considerable degree of informal independence (Brannon, 1971; Harris, 1969; Kim, 1980; Paul, 1973). In a study of Protestant denominations in the US, Ashbrook (1966, p398) notes

"a democratization of governing practises in the more authoritarian traditions and a centralization in the more congregational traditions".

He concludes that

"a theological examination of the church discloses little about the dynamics of its organizational life".

The very existence and recognition of such discrepancies between theory and practice can be a source of problems in the local/denomination relationship. For example, several US studies have indicated how tensions can arise when denominational structures become centralised and there is a clear disjunction between formal, theological statements supporting congregational autonomy, and the reality of strong denominational control (Luidens, 1982; Takayama, 1975). Harrison (1959) argues that where denominational bureaucratization is "unofficial", it is particularly difficult to question and denominational power is reinforced.

Irrespective of formal politics, the local/denomination relationship is inherently one of tension (Beckford, 1973; Takayama, 1980; Zald and McCarthy, 1987). Newman's historical account (1977) of the development of the 'United Synagogue' in England provides several examples of difficulties, and even open conflicts, between individual synagogue affiliates and the central office and governing body. Harris (1969, p178) found in a study of Welsh Anglican churches that they regarded the national organisation as "a parasitic superstructure"; and Enghdahl (1990) describes bitter conflicts between local congregations and the national headquarters of the American Lutheran Church over the way in which money raised by local congregations was spent.

Local churches and synagogues need independence and a degree of flexibility in order to fulfil spiritual, personal and community development goals. Yet, they also want the many advantages of resources and legitimacy that flow from being part of broader, formal structure (Warner, 1993). But the price paid for belonging is some loss of autonomy and some degree of formalisation (Benson and Dorsett, 1971; Booth, 1991; Hougland and Wood, 1979; Newman, 1977; Takayama, 1980). Coming to terms with this is a problem which cuts across denominations and religions. Harrison (1960a, p236) summarises the contradictions in the US Baptist convention which officially espouses congregational autonomy:

"On the one hand, they [local churches] require a bureaucracy to realize the mission of their organizations; on the other hand, their ideology is rooted in democratic traditions which are inimical to the tendency of technical bureaucracy to depersonalize the individual and to segregate roles on a functional and hierarchical basis."

Not only are there dilemmas about effectiveness, there are also problems around representation of opinions:

"..... only in a local community of individuals gathered for a common cause can the voice of the people be spoken. But it is only in wider associations of these local groups which have been gathered to mobilize the opinion of all the company, that the voice of the people will be heard." (Harrison, 1960a, p237)

In relation to the Church of England, the conflict between local church autonomy and the traditional power of the Anglican hierarchy has been attributed to two conflicting theologies of authority (Thompson, 1970); one emphasises the importance of the organisational totality, the other emphasises grassroots power:

"The monarchical and hierarchical theory of the Church supposes the flowing down of the divine charisma through the agency of religiously superior persons, ordered in rank, until, diminished and diluted, we may suppose it reaches the laity [in local churches]. On the other hand, the theology which argues for the Church as the Body of Christ cannot possibly support this medieval notion." (Paul, 1973, p145)

As with other organisational difficulties in local churches and synagogues, the impact of local/denomination tension is often felt most by rabbis and clergy. Their role places them in a boundary-spanning position between local and denominational levels and they find themselves caught between the conflicting demands of the two (Scherer, 1972), or absorbing the resentment their congregants feel for "ecclesiastical bureaucratization" (Dempsey 1969, p70). Poloma (1989, p96) describes:

"the pivotal role of Assemblies of God [US Pentecostal] pastors, who are situated between the proverbial 'rock and a hard place' - in this case, between denominational bureaucracy and their respective congregations".

As Wilson (1959a, p150) says, the minister "stands to bridge the gap between these two social systems of which he forms a part". Neusner (1972, p41) argues that the need to take account of central denominational synagogue bodies, is a major source of disappointment to US rabbis; the "traditional" rabbi enjoyed great personal power and this contrasts with the powerlessness experienced by modern rabbis employed in local synagogues.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FOUR

This chapter has focused on the organisational dimension of churches and synagogues and provided the framework for an empirical organisational study. Part A discussed the nature of the literature on organisational features of churches and synagogues. It noted the lack of specifically organisational studies in this country, as well as the denominational focus of those writers who have addressed the organisational dimension in some way.

Part B drew together the disparate literature which is available and described some of the main disciplinary and theoretical frameworks used to analyse organisational aspects of churches and synagogues. These included not only theological and psychological perspectives, but also a range of sociological theories and concepts.

Part C distinguished four organisational themes which emerge from the literature as areas of organisational concern in synagogues and churches. The 'themes' relate both to organisational features of churches and synagogues and to the issues they face in their work.

When drawn together in this way, the formerly disparate literature on organisational aspects of religious institutions provides initial support for the hypothesis set out at the beginning of this chapter; that there are organisational features and problems which are common to congregations of different theological persuasions and formal structures. There are also features and issues which appear to cut across denominational and religious boundaries and which provide a starting point for an empirical study focused specifically on the organisational dimension of churches and synagogues. A statement of research objectives and a description of the development of a research approach are provided in the following chapter.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. The North American literature used includes some examinations of individual congregations conducted by consultants and academics. The disciplinary base of these 'congregational studies' and the reasons for doing them vary. A review is provided by Hopewell (1987) and by Dudley and his colleagues (1991). Scherer (1980, p369) points out that congregational studies have been more interested in a congregation's relation to its "environing community" rather than in its organisational features. "Studies focusing upon the congregation as an organization have been few in number" (Benson and Dorsett, 1971, p138).

2. A collective conceptualisation of churches and synagogues opens up the possibility of transferring organisational insights and lessons from one denominational or religious setting to another. This is an important motivation for the present study. But it should be noted that the approach used here reflects a broader societal trend. Discussing Jewish-Christian dialogue, Solomon (1991, p66) says:

"The modern way of looking at things tends to place less emphasis on doctrinal matters, and to see rather that which religions have in common. Grounded in humanism, this attitude was powerfully expressed by religious spokesmen in Reformation times, numbering amongst its advocates no less a figure than Erasmus. ... It is this attitude which made possible the move to Christian ecumenism, whence it is a short step to an ecumenism of world faiths, Judaism included. People seek that which they have in common, rather than that which divides them."

3. This section is concerned with Christian theological perspectives on the organisation of churches. There is no comparable literature on synagogues because, unlike churches, synagogues are not construed in Judaism as inherently sacred or 'God-constructed'. They traditionally fulfil sociological functions as a place of prayer, study and meeting (Schroeder et al, 1974, p29).

4. It should be noted that the terminology here differs from both common usage and the usage adopted in this study; see, for example, 'church' in the Glossary. It should also be noted that the typology was developed for use in relation to Christian groupings and institutions (Hill, 1973). Liebman (1983, p323) explains that the typology cannot be applied to present day Judaism and synagogues since it "assumes a closed society in which the religious order is confronted only by the secular order and the individual needs of its members."

5. The translation of 'gesellschaft' as 'association', is potentially confusing to English-speaking readers. Although the intention of the original theory was to make a conceptual distinction between informal, affective forms on the one hand, and rational, structured organisational forms on the other hand, the word 'association' is usually linked in English with ideas about people coming together freely in to groups to do things for each other - as in the term 'voluntary associations'. Thus, every day usage of the term 'association' reflects ideas about informality (gemeinschaft) rather than formal structure. The terminological and conceptual confusion about 'association' is reflected in the literature. For example, the debate about the appropriate role of local Anglican churches in contemporary society distinguishes between the 'communal' or 'parish' church, which is concerned with the well-being of the whole community, and the 'associational' church, in which members focus on the success of their own institution and the meeting of their own needs (Carr, 1985; Ecclestone (ed), 1988; Reed, 1980; Tiller, 1988). Here the term 'association' seems to be used to refer both to formal structures and to voluntary membership groupings.

6. This Part does not provide an exhaustive overview of models and analytic approaches. Carroll et al (1983) for example, take an implicitly functionalist approach in their analysis of one American Baptist church. Herman's 1984 analysis of one small Anglican congregation in Canada uses a form of social network analysis. Role and task analysis is used by Sklare (1955) in his study of US synagogues and by Ranson and his colleagues (1977) in their study of the work of clergy in the UK.

7. The term 'organisational goal' is used here in a broad sense to refer to 'purposes' or 'ends' - both those provided by official statements and ideologies and those which motivate participants in churches and synagogues. The concept of an 'organisational goal' is discussed further in Etzioni (1961), Perrow (1970) and SSORU (1974); as well as in Chapters Six and Seven.

8. In this section the term 'role' is used as described in Chapter Three, according to the usage in SSORU, 1974.

CHAPTER FIVE: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF LOCAL CHURCHES AND SYNAGOGUES

Building on the preliminary study framework (Chapter One) and on the organisational themes identified in the literature (Chapter Four), a research approach for an empirical study of local churches and synagogues was developed. This is described in Part A of this chapter. In Part B an account is given of the fieldwork process in which organisational features and issues of congregations were explored.

In this and following chapters, there is a change in terminology; a move from referring precisely to 'churches and synagogues' and 'local religious institutions', to using the shorter, inclusive, term 'congregations'. This terminological change facilitates discussions in which churches and synagogues are conceptualised collectively and it reflects Hopewell's definition (1987, p5) of congregations as local institutions in which people "regularly gather for what they feel to be religious purposes". The use of the term 'congregation' is also intended to refer to institutionalised structures (Scott, 1987; Warner, 1988) and to exclude, for example, religious social movements and informal groupings (Zald and McCarthy, 1987) (1).

PART A: THE RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The empirical phase of this study had three related research objectives.

First, as discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, the broad research purpose was to begin to fill a knowledge gap: to generate descriptive and analytic material about the work and organisation of local churches and synagogues.

More specifically, the study also aimed to investigate the extent to which churches and synagogues have common organisational features and the extent to which they experience common organisational issues and problems. The four broad organisational themes identified in the literature provided an initial agenda for exploration. At the same time, the possibility of the empirical research revealing new, or additional, themes and issues was not precluded (Bryman, 1989; Pollit et al, 1990).

Third, it was hoped that the data analysis would provide some initial "insights to build theory" (Bryman, 1988, p26) through the elaboration of emergent patterns and themes (Bryman, 1989; Burgess, 1984; May, 1993; Turner, 1983). While the main aim of the study was to provide descriptive and analytic material, the lack of existing knowledge of the area suggested that an attempt should be made to generate tentative 'usable' or 'explanatory' theory which could be of practical use to those working in churches and synagogues, and could provide a basis for further research (Billis, 1984; Cohen, 1968; Fineman and Mangham, 1983).

RESEARCH APPROACH

The choice of research approach took account not only of the three research objectives outlined above, but also of other key features of the study which had implications for the choice of methodology. For reasons which were explained in earlier chapters, the empirical study was intended to:

- a. focus on organisational aspects of churches and synagogues;
- b. identify organisational similarities, or generic elements, across denominations and religions;
- c. be exploratory, in view of the lack of UK-based data on which to build; and

d. take into account the impact of religious values and religious concerns on the organisational perceptions of those who work or participate in religious institutions.

The chosen methodology needed to be "appropriate" in relation to these features (Silverman, 1985, p20; also see Clark and Causer, 1991). In addition, it had to take in to account practical constraints including the fact that:

- a. the study was to be carried out by a single researcher;
- b. financial considerations would limit the amount of travel possible and therefore the possible geographical locations within the UK;
- c. being Jewish, the researcher would be perceived as a religious outsider in Christian organisations (Davies, 1982, p3 refers to the "distinction necessarily made in organized religions" between co-religionists and others);
- d. social researchers experience particular difficulties in fundamentalist and evangelical religious contexts where they wish to understand and empathise with a religious group's activities without being 'coopted' into them (Warner, 1988); and
- e. being a woman and white, the researcher would expect special problems of access to some congregations or individuals (Rhodes, 1994).

In the light of these features, and taking in to account the three research objectives, it was decided that an appropriate research approach would be to conduct organisational case studies in churches and synagogues of different denominations in southern England, using a qualitative approach to data collection and analysis. The following sections will discuss in more detail the case study and qualitative approaches, before going on to consider the criteria for selection of congregation cases and interviewees (Burgess, 1984).

CASE STUDIES

The case study method was thought to be appropriate for the study since it had been widely used by scholars of institutions (for example, Blau and Scott, 1963; Perrow, 1970; Selznick, 1957), including those working in the social administration tradition (for example, Billis, 1984; Donnison et al 1975). The advantages perceived by previous scholars appeared to apply equally to the proposed study.

First, by conducting two or more case studies in different contexts, it is often possible to identify similarities and linkages between cases and variables which were not previously apparent (Burgess, 1984; Fudge and Barrett, 1981; Mangen et al 1985). It is true that there can be difficulties in generalizing from case studies; difficulties which have been widely discussed in the methodological literature and are summarised in Bryman (1989). However, the problems did not seem to be insuperable, especially as it was proposed to carry out more than one case study.

A second advantage of the chosen method was that case studies are a means of

"providing an understanding of areas of organizational functioning that are not well documented and which are not amenable to investigation through fleeting contact with organizations" (Bryman, 1989, p173).

Third, in circumstances where only limited research resources are available, case studies can be a resource-efficient method of generating rich data which has value in its own right, but which can also be added to and reviewed by subsequent researchers in the field (Fudge and Barrett, 1981; Powell and Friedkin, 1987; Yin, 1984).

Finally, the case study method has been demonstrated to be an effective means of building theoretical insights (Bryman, 1989), particularly if more than one case is

studied so that more than one dimension of a given 'universe' can be examined (Arnold, 1970).

A QUALITATIVE APPROACH

Following the precedent set by earlier scholars of organisations again, it was decided to combine the case study approach with an 'interpretative' or 'qualitative' methodology (Das, 1983; Dunsire, 1973; Silverman, 1985; Van Maanen, 1979).

A qualitative approach was regarded as especially well suited to a study with descriptive purposes (Burgess, 1984; Silverman, 1985). It was also thought appropriate because the religious values underpinning churches and synagogues, and their impact on the perceptions of key participants, demanded a methodology sensitive to "organisational culture" (Morgan, 1986); and one which would give weight to interviewees' own "construction of reality" ((Berger and Luckmann, 1967) and "assumptive worlds" (Young, 1977). In qualitative research, priority is given to

"the perspectives of those being studied rather than the prior concerns of the researcher, along with a related emphasis on the interpretation of observations in accordance with subjects' own understandings" (Bryman, 1989, p135).

Thus, the method would allow "the meaningful reality of the adherents to a particular set of religious beliefs" to be fully recognised (Hill, 1973, p17).

There were other perceived advantages of taking an interpretative approach. It would be likely to be acceptable to potential interviewees (Bryman, 1989; Fineman and Mangham, 1983). It would provide material and insights grounded directly in practical experience (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). And it would also allow new conceptions not anticipated by the researcher to emerge (Pollit et al, 1990). In sum,

the proposed study seemed to conform with the criteria for combining case studies with a qualitative approach, described by Powell and Friedkin (1987, p183):

"The methodology ... is typically used in research when the issues under investigation are complex, multi-faceted, nonrepetitive, and highly contextual, making more formal analysis impossible. ... The ideal case study offers plausible explanations and develops a detailed picture of the complexity of the issues that are involved in the case. The rich contextual material that is presented may also enable the reader to develop alternative explanations ... "

SELECTION OF CASES

In deciding on the number and location of cases for study, the prime consideration was the second research objective - to investigate the extent to which common issues arise in the work and organisation of churches and synagogues. Since the research was intended to look for generic organisational elements irrespective of religion and denomination, it was important to select cases which were diverse in these respects (Arnold, 1970; Bernstein, 1990) - albeit within the initial boundaries set for the project described in the Introduction.

The cross-religion perspective suggested that at least one synagogue and one church should be included; while the cross-denomination perspective suggested including religious institutions of different denominational structures. Matching these demands with the practical constraints outlined earlier, it was decided to do a total of four organisational case studies in the first place. A three stage process was then used to select the four cases.

At stage one, the balance between religions was set. In view of the relative sizes of the Christian and Jewish communities in the UK, it was decided to study one

synagogue and three churches. It was also decided that one of the churches should be Roman Catholic and two Protestant.

At stage two, a denominational selection was made. The Roman Catholic church would be representative of a centralised or episcopal formal denominational structure so it was decided to balance this by choosing a synagogue affiliated to the Reform denomination, which formally has an autonomous or congregational structure (Makler, 1963). Two Protestant churches between these two ends of the range of formal denominational structures, could then be chosen.

Having ensured a spread of religions and denominations in four cases, the third stage of the selection process consisted of ensuring a spread of cases on a range of other variables. A list of variables which have been found, or hypothesised, to be correlated with organisational behaviour or features of religious institutions was drawn up using relevant literature (Appendix A). The intention was to use that list as a guide in making final selections of the four cases so that, when taken together, the four cases would encompass different geographical locations, funding situations, staffing structures and so on. This was not an attempt to provide a systematic sample, or to distinguish correlations or causal relationships; an aim which would not have been consistent with the case study methodology (Silverman, 1985). Rather, the intention was to ensure that the four cases would differ as widely as possible *prima facie*. The more the cases differed in this way, the more interesting and significant would be generic organisational themes to emerge from the case studies (Rose, 1991).

This three-stage process produced a working framework for the selection of the four cases. It was recognised that, in practice, there would be other considerations at the final point of selection. For example, since it would only be possible to study institutions which were willing to provide access and to cooperate fully with the research process, factors such as the researcher's gender and religion, the degree of ecumenism of a particular institution, and local 'political' considerations, were all

likely to have an impact on the final outcome of the selection process. Indeed, as Bryman (1988, p15) points out, obtaining research access to organisations generally entails some degree of opportunism "in which contacts, friends and relatives" play a key role.

SELECTION OF INTERVIEWEES

The reasons for trying to select a range of organisational cases applied equally to the selection of interviewees within each case congregation. The aim was to obtain as wide a range of perceptions as possible so as "to avoid partial accounts of a social situation" (Burgess, 1984) and so as to take account "of the complexity of a situation by playing one interpretation against another" (Morgan, 1986, p331). Thus, within each congregation, people involved in different congregational activities would be targeted (Hornsby-Smith, 1989). The views of both religious functionaries and lay people were relevant and, amongst lay people, it was thought important not to confine investigations to office-holders, but to also include other kinds of 'actors' in the congregation (Moberg, 1962). As Young (1977, p13) points out, "Elite actors define the research situation differently from non-elites". And Dempsey (1969, p62), in his case study of an Australian Methodist congregation, found that:

" ... first, people varied in terms of their political significance, and second this variation did not neatly parallel the church's formal structure."

Thus, using diversity as a guideline, a list was developed of the minimum number and type of interviews to be conducted in each congregation (Appendix A). It was expected that a total of about 12 interviews in each of the case congregations would enable these conditions to be satisfied.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Following the usual approach in qualitative organisational research, it was decided that data should be collected through interviews, supplemented by participation and examination of documents (Bryman, 1989; Burgess, 1984). In order to "capture people's perspectives and interpretations" (Bryman, 1989, p25), interviews would be semi-structured:

" ... whereby the investigator uses a schedule but recognizes that departures will occur if interesting themes emerge from what respondents say and in order to get their version of things" (Bryman, 1989, p149).

The aim was to ensure that the topics and areas pre-identified from the literature (including factual information) were covered whilst, at the same time, the interviewees were given latitude over what they said and how they said it. The interview schedule is reproduced in Appendix B and follows the pattern recommended by Politt and his colleagues (1990, p184):

" ... the loosely-structured interviews follow a sequence which allows respondents plenty of room to develop their own perspectives and agendas at the beginning, even if the researcher later needs to inject a minimum number of 'standard' questions. This reduces the chances that the researchers will impose their own prior pattern on the evidence."

In order to ensure consistency of basic factual information about congregation characteristics and resources, structured questionnaires were prepared for administration to one person only in each congregation (Appendix B). In addition, a questionnaire was prepared for each interviewee to provide personal information. Two such questionnaires were designed to take account of the differences of

information required from voluntary lay people and those people - clergy and laity - who were paid for their work in the congregation (Appendix B).

Qualitative studies do not normally rely on a single data collection method; triangulation - "the employment of a variety of methods to approach the same data" - is usual (Young, 1977, p15). In this case, it was decided that the data generated from interviews would be supplemented and complemented by the researcher's participation in selected meetings and activities of case congregations. Bryman (1989, p143) refers to this approach as "indirect participant observation" in which "the researcher is constantly in and around an organization, but does not possess a work role in it." It was thought that such participation would permit "the observation of the actual interactions of participants in their social setting"; enable "the 'totality' of the setting to be taken into account"; and help the researcher to obtain "the confidence and cooperation" of the congregants (Dempsey, 1969, p61).

Finally, it was decided to follow other qualitative researchers and use documents available within congregations "to provide additional data and to check on the findings deriving from other sources of data" (Bryman, 1989, p151).

FROM RESEARCH FRAMEWORK TO RESEARCH PROCESS

This part of Chapter Five has described the way in which a framework was developed for the empirical phase of this study; a framework which was intended to respond to the three research objectives. Part B describes how the research process took place.

Pre-pilot, unstructured, interviews had been conducted at an early stage of the study with a range of key 'actors' in UK churches and synagogues, in order to sensitise the researcher to current organisational issues and problems in the field and to focus the research questions (Appendix C). Following the development of the research framework described here, the first draft of the interview schedule was piloted with

a range of people from a range of congregations - not the congregations to be used in the main study. The empirical phase of the study could then begin.

PART B: THE FIELDWORK

THE PILOT STUDY

Six pilot interviews were conducted in order to test the utility and appropriateness of the congregational questionnaire, the two personal questionnaires, and the schedule for the semi-structured interviews. Brief profiles of the pilot interviewees are given in Appendix C. Many of them had multiple roles within their congregations and, taken together, they represented all the criteria for selection of interviewees listed in Appendix A. They were also balanced as to gender (three men and three women) and reflected a range of ages. In sum, they represented a range of role holders, with a range of characteristics, in a range of congregations.

Following the pilot, some drafting changes were made to the congregational and personal questionnaires in order to clarify meanings and avoid overlapping answers. Experiments with placing the personal questionnaire at different stages in relation to the semi-structured interview, suggested that it took least time to administer when placed at the end of the semi-structured interview.

With respect to the schedule for the semi-structured interviews, a number of lessons were learned at the pilot stage. It was confirmed, for example, that the questions were such as to encourage respondents to talk about the organisational themes identified in Chapter Four. It was also clear from the pilot interviews that the semi-structured format left space for respondents to mention additional organisational points; seven other organisational issues were mentioned by two or more of the six interviewees.

An important lesson from the pilot interviewees was that people felt disloyal and guilty about talking about negative aspects of their congregation's work and organisation. So after the third pilot interview, it was decided to make a major change to the wording of the question which sought views about "key issues". Subsequent interviewees were asked, instead, to talk about their aspirations for the future activities and developments of their congregations. This raised much less concern whilst, at the same time, it provided required information about current organisational problems. It also helped to bring interviews to a close on a positive note.

The pilot work provided lessons about the selection of interviewees within congregations. It suggested, for example, that age and gender could be important factors in the development of viewpoints on religious organisation. It also indicated that the existence of different viewpoints within congregations was often common knowledge. Pilot interviewees all described 'factions', the existence of an 'establishment' and differences between traditionalists and others within their congregations. It was therefore decided to add to the list of criteria for selection of interviewees, the need to achieve a gender and age balance if possible. It was also decided to try to ensure that different, known, factions within a congregation were represented within the interviewees list.

IDENTIFYING FOUR CASE CONGREGATIONS

Details of how initial contacts were made with congregations and how access was negotiated are given in Appendix D. This section briefly outlines how the four case congregations were identified.

Having clarified the desired broad characteristics of the four case congregations, contacts made at the pre-pilot stage were built on to identify and initiate discussions with three Christian congregations:

- a large Roman Catholic church located in the inner city (Congregation A);
- a small, black-led Pentecostal church in an industrial county town (Congregation B); and
- an Anglican church on a housing estate at the edge of a market town (Congregation C).

In each case, a pre-pilot interviewee telephoned a relevant clergyman and outlined the proposed research. I was then able to follow up this introduction with a telephone call and a more detailed letter. This led in each congregation to a face to face meeting in which I answered further questions and explained my research purposes and approach. All the initial contacts in the congregations said that they wished to consult further with other people but official permission to study the congregation was given quickly thereafter in each case. The fact that all three congregations agreed to participate in the study was probably attributable in large part to the fact that I was introduced to them by a third party whom they knew and respected.

The selection of the synagogue and the access process was different. I anticipated that, as I am Jewish myself, access to a synagogue would not present any difficulties. I therefore left the selection of this case until last to enable me to select a synagogue which had organisational characteristics not represented by the other three congregations. During the period when the case studies of the three Christian congregations were being conducted, I was approached by the rabbi of a synagogue (Congregation D) who had heard about the study I was engaged in and who thought it would be interesting for his congregation if they were included. The congregation's location and size were sufficiently different from the other three already selected, to make it a suitable subject for the fourth case. I therefore wrote an official letter requesting access to the rabbi who passed my letter to the chairman of the

synagogue's lay council. Soon after, I received a letter of permission from him, on behalf of his council.

In each of the congregations, I requested one person - 'a key informant' - with whom to liaise throughout the course of the research. In Congregation A this was the senior priest with whom the initial contact was made. In Congregation B, it was the lay secretary and in Congregation C it was the vicar. In Congregation D, I was asked to maintain contact concurrently with the rabbi and the lay chairman, both of whom wanted to be kept informed throughout my time with the congregation.

SECURING THE INTERVIEWS

Although I tried to keep a consistency of approach to all four of the congregations, I had to some extent to be guided by the wishes and viewpoints of the key informants in securing interviews. In the event, there were noticeable differences between the four congregations with respect to various aspects of the research process, including what information the congregation was given about the research, how access was given to interviewees, and how interviewees and other members of the congregation responded to me.

In Congregation A, a note about the research was included in the weekly newsheet which is given out to people attending Sunday worship. In Congregation B, the pastor welcomed me from the pulpit at both the Sunday services I attended, explained to the congregation why I was there, and offered a prayer that my work would be put to good use. In Congregation C both written and informal methods were used to introduce me. I was invited to write a paragraph which was included in the monthly parish magazine and, in addition, when I attended a Sunday family service, I was invited to the front of the congregation and introduced to everybody present. Congregation D used neither of these methods; it relied on the news of my presence in the congregation being disseminated 'on the grapevine' after the question of

whether to invite me in had been debated publicly by the lay council. The method seemed to be effective because not only interviewees, but also a range of other people approached me when I attended meetings and asked about the research.

There was less variation between congregations as to how they gave initial access to interviewees. In Congregations A and C the 'key informant' approved my draft letter of approach to potential interviewees, worked with me on my list of criteria for selection of interviewees (Appendix A), and discussed the various possibilities under each criterion. The chairman of Congregation D did the same. Then, in Congregations C and D, I was supplied with names, addresses and telephone numbers and allowed to approach people as I wished. For Congregation A, I passed my letters to the senior priest who sent them out with a covering letter. In Congregation B, I was given a list (names and addresses but no telephone numbers) of 20 officers and key volunteers of the congregation, with an indication of what activities they were involved in. Again, I was given permission to approach people directly.

I asked for about nine suggestions for initial approach for interviews. This enabled me to assess the balance of viewpoints and characteristics achieved after I had done a few interviews and to then ensure that the remainder of the interviews were such as to secure a balance overall. I sent each potential interviewee a personalised letter outlining the purpose and likely length of the interview, assuring confidentiality and enclosing a reply form and stamped addressed envelope (Appendix E).

Appendix F gives details about those interviewed in each congregation, including their age, gender and employment status; and the length of time for which they had been congregation participants. In general, the interviews achieved in each congregation reflected a range of characteristics and roles. No 'elder' was interviewed in Congregation A but somebody who had been involved in the congregation for over twenty years was included. For Congregation B, it was possible to interview only two men and there were no under-30s in the interviewee list; but this reflected the

gender and age balance within the congregation itself. The interviews achieved in Congregations C and D seemed to represent not only a wide range of characteristics, but also a range of known viewpoints within the congregations.

In Congregations A, C and D, there were no substantial difficulties in securing interviews. In Congregation A, a total of fourteen people were approached and twelve interviews were achieved; there was one refusal from an elderly woman who felt it would be a strain on her to be interviewed and one non-response which I was not able to pursue because of the 'gatekeeping' role of the priest. In Congregation C, there was one non-response from a local headmaster who had contacts with the church, but he was replaced by another person from the local community suggested by the vicar; twelve interviews in all were achieved out of thirteen approached. In Congregation D, all thirteen people approached agreed to be interviewed.

Although twelve interviews were eventually achieved in Congregation B, I experienced a number of difficulties in gaining access to individuals within the congregation. This was despite the fact that the initial response from the secretary was to give me a full list of names and addresses of people to approach as I wished and despite the fact that I was very warmly received when I attended Sunday services. This experience reflects Lee's contention (1993, p133) that, even when "physical access" is readily granted to a researcher, subsequent "social access" can still be problematic.

I initially wrote to seventeen of the people listed by the secretary. I received three replies (one by telephone and two reply slips). Four further interviews were arranged when I attended services and was able to speak in person to individuals who had already received letters. Three further interviews were achieved through the good offices of the secretary who telephoned people and told them to expect a phone call from me. Finally, interviews with the secretary herself and with the pastor, brought the total to twelve.

There were also difficulties with the interviews themselves in Congregation B. These are noted here as they may have implications for the range and validity of the data obtained. Two of the twelve interviews yielded little usable information, except for information about the activities within the congregation with which the interviewee was involved. One of these two invited me in to a room in her house which she referred to as her 'prayer room', refused to answer any questions of any kind, but invited me to join her in prayer and bible study. Towards the end of the period, she talked voluntarily about her life in Congregation B and I was able to take some notes. The second interviewee of the two greeted me warmly but seemed to regard all questions about herself and Congregation B as intrusive and inappropriate.

The remaining ten interviewees talked with varying degrees of openness about Congregation B. Four took up much of the interview time with an account of their conversion experience but were then willing to talk about the congregation. Two seemed to have prepared beforehand the points they wanted to get over to me and were reluctant to discuss anything else. Two interviewees gave me evangelising literature. One prayed prior to the interview, one prayed and cried during the course of the interview and one gave me a blessing at the end of the interview.

In sum, the experience of securing interviews in Congregation B was marked by a number of difficulties, many of which are anticipated to some degree by the literature referred to in Part A of this Chapter. For example, the fact that I was not a 'born-again' Christian, was clearly a major obstacle to trust between me and the interviewees. For some, I seemed to represent a challenge to evangelisation (Warner, 1988). For others I was apparently seen as a threatening outsider (Davies, 1982), engaged in an activity (social research) which was at odds with their own world view which "devalue[s] worldly knowledge in favour of divine revelation" (Lee, 1993, p6). The fact that I was white must have also had some effect on the way in which interviewees responded to me (Rhodes, 1994).

There were two other factors which seemed to contribute to the difficulties. One, which only emerged during the course of the interviews themselves, is discussed again in subsequent chapters and is related to the authority structure of Congregation B. In brief, several interviewees seemed to be afraid of 'saying the wrong the thing' and responded to apparently straight-forward questions with replies such as,

"You must ask the leaders about that." or

"You should really ask the pastor."

Others implied that it would be inappropriate for them to talk about anything other than the details of their own work. For example, one interviewee said in response to several questions:

"I do my bit and then I come home."

It seemed that congregants felt that they themselves should not have views, or express opinions on the organisation of the congregation.

A second contributor to the difficulties seemed to be the fundamentalist beliefs espoused by the congregation. They regarded all aspects of congregational life as part of their "sacred ministry". They therefore tended to see my questions about organisational matters as questions about "sacred" matters; matters which they did not wish to share with an outsider (2).

In contrast with the difficulties of access within Congregation B, the access in the other three congregations was unproblematic. In Congregation A, all the interviewees seemed happy to have their views sought and they openly expressed opinions on a range of matters, including the organisational issues currently faced by the congregation. I was also given a warm welcome in Congregation C. In fact, I was

told by several interviewees that they felt flattered as a congregation to be studied and to have a researcher amongst them; they were used, as one person put it, to "*feeling like the poor relations*" within the parish and they were pleased to be the focus of attention. Several months after the completion of the study, I was invited back to participate in the 25th anniversary celebrations of the congregation.

Congregation D also provided open access and a warm welcome on each of the occasions when I visited. In contrast with the situation in Congregation B where I was an outsider both ethnically and religiously, and had difficulties in gaining access to interviewees because of that, I was told by several people in Congregation D that they had only agreed to be interviewed because I was "an insider"; somebody they knew would understand the culture of the congregation and to whom they could speak openly.

These contrasting experiences of access to the four congregations raise important issues for future researchers of congregational organisation. On the one hand, it is clear that the fullest access is probably to be gained by researchers with whom congregants can identify both religiously and ethnically (Jones, 1991). Yet, on the other hand, generic knowledge about congregational organisational can only be gained from studies which cross denominational, religious and ethnic divides. This may, then, be an area of study which should be tackled by teams of researchers rather than by individuals who, by definition, can only be 'insiders' in a limited number of cases.

THE INTERVIEWS

The main part of the interviews was semi-structured and was conducted according to the schedule set out in Appendix B. In addition, and in order to obtain background reference material, each interviewee was asked at the end of the semi-structured interview for some basic factual information about himself or herself. Different questionnaires were used for lay people and paid employees (including clergy and

rabbis). One interviewee in each case congregation was also asked for factual information about the church or synagogue (Appendix B).

Interviews were conducted at times and places chosen by respondents. Many invited me to their homes, although most of the interviews with clergy and key lay leaders took place in the synagogue or in the church buildings. Most interviews lasted about one and one half hours.

I began each interview by reiterating information contained in my earlier letter about myself and about the purposes and approach of the research (Appendix E). I also repeated the assurance about confidentiality and invited people to ask any questions they wished prior to the start of the interview proper.

During the interviews I took notes in a short-hand notebook; taking down short verbatim quotes as far as possible. Immediately after each interview I transcribed my notes to a word-processed file. The files from the interviews then formed the basis for the data presentation and analysis chapters which follow.

Following the interviews, a personal letter of thanks was sent to each interviewee. In addition to this, I also offered to do something for each congregation as a indication of my appreciation of their cooperation in the research. This offer was taken up by two of the congregations. In Congregation C, I was asked to use my interview data as a basis for providing comments on a draft strategy document which was under consultation in the parish at the time of my study. In Congregation D, I was invited to give an evening seminar on the main issues emerging from my interviews to an invited group comprising lay leaders and interviewees.

As explained in Part A of this chapter, in addition to obtaining data from interviews, I also attended a number of events in each congregation and examined available documents. Details for each congregation are provided in Appendix G.

MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY

Access to congregations and to individuals within them was secured against a undertaking of confidentiality and anonymity (Appendix E). This was a point to be borne in mind in preparing the data for publication. As Rees (1991, p149) points out:

"Impenetrable concealment, particularly of research locations or of persons in particular roles or positions, is probably virtually impossible to attain. Nevertheless, the effort to provide it should usually be made".

There were four particular difficulties. One was that, however much attempts were made to disguise congregations, each of the four cases would be identifiable to members of the same denomination who already knew something about the characteristics and problems of that congregation.

Second, since the identity of the interviewees quickly became common knowledge within each congregation, and since the total interviewed in each congregation was only 12 or 13 people, it was probable that an individual would be able to identify the source of many of the quotations from his or her own congregation, irrespective of attempts to disguise sources.

Third, there were limitations on the extent to which it was possible to disguise congregations and individuals without detracting to a major extent from the knowledge-building aim of the study. Since one of the aims of the qualitative methodology and the semi-structured interviews was to allow interviewees to express their own constructions and viewpoints, it would have been inappropriate not to allow the voice of interviewees to be heard direct as far as possible in the research report (Reinharz, 1983).

Fourth, the significance of a viewpoint often lay in the identity of the interviewee; for example, whether the viewpoint was expressed by clergy or laity, or by somebody in a lay leadership position. In such cases, it would have been inappropriate to disguise or omit an indication of the position of the interviewee.

In the light of these four difficulties, a balance was sought between maintaining strict confidentiality and carrying forward the knowledge-building process; this latter being an aim which was shared by interviewees in agreeing to talk to the researcher. At the beginning of each interview, the question of confidentiality and what it would mean in practice had been raised and interviewees were given the opportunity to discuss this point. Nobody expressed any concern. On the contrary, many interviewees stressed that they were pleased to contribute to a research study and hoped that what they said would be useful to other congregations. Several interviewees also said that they were not intending to say anything which they had not already said in public or would not want known. In fact, some people raised the hope that the research would help to make different viewpoints more widely known within their congregation and denomination.

All the same, the data obtained from many of the interviews seemed to require cautious handling. Many people revealed personal information about themselves, recounted illustrative anecdotes and made highly critical statements about individuals, that they might, in practice, have found embarrassing to see published in circumstances where they could be identified as the speaker. Moreover, people often expressed strong opinions about organisational issues which could have aggravated tensions in the congregation. As Homan (1992) has pointed out, questions of privacy, informed consent, control of data and impact of research on subjects, demand serious attention from ethical researchers.

"Facts are not inert: they can be put to a variety of purposes, malign as well as benign" (Rees, 1991, p150).

It was therefore decided to take a number of precautions in presenting the data from interviews. First, only minimal information is given in the following chapters about the characteristics of the four congregations and their locations. Second, a 'rule of thumb' was developed for identifying the source of quotations and viewpoints.

- All are attributed to the relevant congregation.
- An indication is given of the role or status of the interviewee where it is relevant for the significance of what was said and/or where factual and apparently non contentious matters were under discussion.
- Role or status is given as far as possible in general rather than specific terms; for example, "Lay Leader" is used to refer to senior lay officers, other senior volunteers and lay elders.
- Statements which contain major criticisms of individuals or congregations and/or which are readily identifiable, are not attributed to speakers.
- Small changes have been made occasionally to help disguise the source of quotations. These are referred to by Lee (1993, p178) as deliberate "imprecisions".
- Following a process of "self censorship" (Lee, 1993, p189) by the researcher, the most potentially controversial quotations, including personal criticisms, have been omitted altogether.

In order to check that these guidelines would in practice be acceptable to those interviewed and to the leaders of their congregations, several copies of a draft monograph - based on fieldwork findings and following the guidelines above - were sent for comment to each of the four congregations (Harris, 1994). Although a

number of responses to the draft were received, none of them related to questions of identity or confidentiality. It was therefore concluded that a reasonable balance between confidentiality and knowledge-building had been achieved.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FIVE

This chapter has provided a bridge between Chapters Two to Four which analysed the literature relevant to an organisational study of churches and synagogues, and Chapters Six to Ten which set out the findings from the empirical stage of this project.

Part A of this chapter described the development of a research framework. Three major research objectives were identified: filling a knowledge gap, investigating common organisational features of congregations, and building theory. It was argued that these objectives could be met by conducting organisational case studies in congregations using a qualitative approach to data collection and analysis. Criteria for selection of case congregations and interviewees were developed.

In the second part of the chapter, an account was given of the fieldwork stage of the study. Pre-pilot and pilot work was described as well as the process of securing research access to four case congregations. Finally, some research issues which arose in the course of the interviewing and preparing the data for publication, were discussed.

In the following chapter, the presentation of data begins.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

1. Following Scott (1987) and Selznick (1957) institutionalisation is conceptualised here as a process of "instilling value", developing professional norms, and legitimating procedures. The outcome of such a process is an organisation with a relatively stable set of role and status expectations (O'Dea, 1963).

2. McGuire (1987, p9) says that "The realm of the sacred refers to that which a group of believers sets apart as holy and protects from the 'profane'..." (emphasis added).

CHAPTER SIX: THE FOUR CONGREGATIONS: ORGANISATIONAL FEATURES

The purpose of this chapter is to provide descriptions of organisational features of the four congregations, before moving on in subsequent chapters to discuss the organisational issues and problems they experience. This dual presentation of empirical material - describing both features and issues - reflects the approach of that "intermediary group" of organisation scholars (Scott, 1987, p11-12) who attempt to encompass two approaches to the study of organisations: the approach which is aimed at "describing existing features and relations of organizations in order ... to better understand their nature and operation"; as well as the approach which is focused on organisational problems and the search for their solution.

In Part A of this chapter, case by case descriptions are provided of background features of each of the four congregations. Then, since one of the purposes of this study is to provide an organisational perspective which looks across individual congregations, the remainder of the study findings are presented synthetically rather than case by case. In Part B, material on individual congregations is brought together to describe four key organisational elements: structure, goals, technology and participants. Part C describes the organisational environment of the congregations. Finally, following the organisational 'deconstruction' in the first three parts of the chapter, Part D contains some reflections on the inter-relations between the organisational elements of congregations, and between the organisations and their environments.

Following the 'institutional' approach to organisational analysis, which recognises the importance of "the myriad subterranean processes of informal groups" within organisations (Perrow, 1986, p159), this and subsequent chapters examine not only the 'formal' aspects of congregation organisation, but also the 'informal' ones. 'Formal' statements (also called 'normative' or 'manifest' statements in organisational

literature) are concerned with what is officially the case. But there can be gaps in organisations between what is 'supposed' to happen and what happens in practice (Lasswell and Kaplan, 1950; Perrow, 1986, Scott, 1987); a point which will be taken into account in presenting the data.

PART A: THE CONGREGATIONS IN CONTEXT

In this part, case by case descriptions are provided of 'background' features of the four congregations studied. The selection and presentation of material in this part is guided by the work of Pugh and his colleagues (1969) who identified "primary" aspects of "organisational context" including history, size, and location.

CONGREGATION A

Congregation A is a Roman Catholic parish church in an inner city area. The area is racially and ethnically mixed and this is reflected in the attendance and activities of the church. Up to about 25 years ago, the church was predominantly attended by Irish people. Today, the church still caters to a range of first generation immigrants and refugees, many of whom are only resident in the area for a short time.

The church was established at the end of the nineteenth century by a religious order which funded the building of the church and an associated school. In addition to the church, the congregation uses a presbytery for meetings and hires rooms as necessary in the school. At the time of the study, three members of the order were working in a priestly role in the parish and the congregation paid a modest sum to the order in recognition of this. In addition to the priests, the congregation had a full-time lay pastoral assistant, a half-time social welfare worker and three people employed for a few hours each week (on music, secretarial and cleaning duties).

The average total attendance for Sunday services was 1,600. Elderly people and families with children were the most highly represented groups at services. People in the 16-25 age range were less well represented. About two thirds of regular attenders were men. The church had a list of 4,000 people who lived in the area and associated themselves in some way with the parish. A priest estimated that there were a total of 7,000 baptised Catholics living in the parish, *"people who might turn up"*.

Day to day operating costs were met from weekly collections (about £1,500 per week) and from rental income. The religious order gave extra financial help in the form of subsidies and occasional special grants. Thirty per cent of income was paid to the diocese.

CONGREGATION B

Congregation B is a Pentecostal church. It is not subject to any denominational organisational structure; in fact, the congregation is itself looked to as a "headquarters" by five "branch" congregations. It is physically located in the centre of a medium-sized industrial county town, but it draws its membership from a wide area, including other towns in the county and beyond.

The church was started in the early '60s

"because of the rejection of West Indian immigrants by established Christian churches in the town."

Today it remains the case that, with one or two exceptions, the members are Afro-Caribbean people.

For many years the congregation did not have its own premises. It met in houses and huts and was dependent on the goodwill of short-term landlords. Eventually it was able to acquire a site in the town centre from the local authority and the first

permanent building was completed in 1979. Since then, a large extension has been added. In total it now has three halls (holding 300, 200 and 100 people) and numerous small rooms used for offices, prayer and committee meetings. The congregation also owns three local houses, one of which is used for visitors, and the other two as temporary accommodation for homeless people.

There were no paid staff employed in Congregation B. However, the pastor worked full-time on church business and was financially supported by voluntary donations.

The official membership was 105, excluding children, and the average attendance at the main Sunday service was 80. At services, there are usually several visitors, often from abroad or from other black-led Pentecostal churches. Attendance at services ranges across the age groups but the middle-aged and elderly predominate, as do women. Numbers attending services and in membership have remained steady for several years. Members are lost through people returning to the Caribbean.

The activities of the church are wholly financed by donations and fund-raising by members themselves. Members meet all their own out of pocket expenses in connection with work they do for the church, including travel, training, educational materials and provision of flowers.

CONGREGATION C

Congregation C is an Anglican church and is one of three churches in an ancient parish whose boundaries are roughly coterminous with a market town. The church was started in 1968; a "daughter" to the parish church in the town centre and one intended to serve the needs of a post-war local authority housing estate at the edge of the town. Congregation C remains the only church within its catchment area.

As the congregation grew, three extensions were made to the building. In addition to the main church which holds 120 people, there is now a church hall, one office and one committee room.

"In spite of the eight pillars and three floor levels which do cause some headaches, the church itself has retained an informal and homely character which many continue to value very highly." (1)

At the time of the study, Congregation C had its own vicar but he worked as one of a parish team of clergy. There were no other paid staff except a part-time cleaner. A member of the congregation was paid on an occasional basis to keep the church gardens tidy. The work of secretary, sacristan and organist was done by congregants working on a part-time voluntary basis. The congregation also benefitted from paid secretarial and administrative work provided for the parish as a whole, for example, the production of a monthly parish magazine.

There were about 130 people on the electoral roll (ie official members). The average attendance at the main Sunday service was 65, excluding children. It was thought that the number attending services was starting to increase after having fallen for a few years. Most of those who attended the church lived within easy walking distance. There were two distinct age groupings amongst members and adherents: those over 55 years old (predominantly women) and young mothers with their children. The vicar estimated that about 10% of service attenders were men. Some of the congregation's social activities attracted high proportions of people who were not members and who did not attend religious services.

The majority of normal church expenditure is covered by weekly giving by church adherents (about £250 per week) supplemented with a few fundraising events each year. Help is available from the parish and the diocese to cover exceptional needs. In general the congregation finds it difficult to keep within its budget. A percentage

of congregational income, calculated according to a standard formula, is paid to the diocese.

CONGREGATION D

Congregation D is a Reform synagogue located in a suburb with a substantial proportion of Jewish residents. It is affiliated to the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain (RSGB) but this leaves it autonomous with respect to major matters including funding and finance, and employment of rabbinic and lay staff.

It was established in the early 1960s. The present main synagogue building dates from the early '70s and seats 400. There is also a smaller hall which holds 100 people and some offices. The Sunday School cannot be accommodated on the premises and the congregation hires a local school. The building is now considered inadequate but plans for building development have been delayed because of the impact of the recession on members' ability to provide necessary funds.

At the time of the study, there was one full-time rabbi and two assistant rabbis who were employed for a few hours each week. A lay administrator, a youth leader and a caretaker were employed full-time and there were several part-time lay employees including two secretaries, Sunday School teachers and head teachers, and kindergarten teachers. Some regular teaching and administration was done by congregants on a voluntary basis.

The congregation had just under 1,000 adult members and was growing steadily. Average attendance at a Sabbath service was 100 adults plus children. The full age range is represented and there are roughly equal numbers of males and females at most services. Many of the synagogue's members do not live in the immediate vicinity of the synagogue and travel from other adjoining suburbs; several of which have Reform synagogues located in them which they choose not to join.

Except for kindergarten fees, all expenditure is covered by member subscriptions, tax recovered from covenants, donations and income from fundraising events. At the time of the study, the congregation was experiencing financial difficulties; as a result of the recession and employment difficulties amongst members, an increasing proportion of members were paying reduced subscriptions. The congregation paid 20% of its income as an affiliation fee to the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain.

PART B: ORGANISATIONAL ELEMENTS

In this part, descriptive data on individual congregations is brought together and a framework suggested by Scott (1987, following Leavitt, 1965) is used to describe four key organisational "elements": structure, goals, technology (activities) and participants.

STRUCTURE

With regard to their "formal polities" (Scherer, 1980) - the official link with their denominational structures - the four congregations spanned a range of degrees of centralisation; with Congregation A (Roman Catholic) being the most centralised, followed by Congregation C (Anglican), and then D (Reform Jewish). Congregation B (Pentecostal) is at the other end of the spectrum, being unaffiliated to any denominational structure.

In practice, the case studies suggested that Congregation C was more subject to denominational control than Congregation A. In the latter case, the religious order was apparently a key factor in mitigating the influence which would normally be exerted on the congregation by the diocese and the wider Roman Catholic structure. The order contributed crucial human, financial and physical resources to the congregation and had been doing so for the preceding 100 years. The congregation

was thus able to act relatively independently and it took 'liberal' stances on matters such as participation by women in liturgy and involvement of divorcees.

In contrast, Congregation C, appeared in practice to be more subject to denominational control than might be expected from formal statements of Anglican polity. This was largely attributable to the fact that the congregation was part of a parish team structure. Its vicar was placed in a junior position relative to the parish Team Rector, part of whose role was to ensure the implementation of diocesan policies. Thus, the congregation had been obliged to change the format of some services because the Rector felt they did not conform with Anglican guidelines. And the congregation was under pressure to develop its 'outreach' to the local community and to Anglican communities abroad; despite a feeling within the congregation itself that this was beyond their current capacity.

With respect to their internal organisational structures, the case studies suggested that the four congregations varied as to the relative authority officially attributed to clergy and laity and to the power they enjoyed in practice. Congregation A, reflecting the theology of the Roman Catholic church structure, gave the least official authority to lay people. It had a group referred to as the "Parish Council" but,

"It is consultative ... it doesn't strictly have any power ... It is meant to look over things and make suggestions [to the parish team of clergy and lay employees]. Each parish organisation can send a representative but it's fairly casual ..." (Priest, Congregation A)

Interviews in Congregation A confirmed this view of the Parish Council and that key decisions on both policies and activities were taken at the weekly meetings of the "Parish Team". In so far as the power of priests and their rights to make decisions were questioned at all, this mainly happened through informal lobbying of individual members of the Team. The role of the full-time lay pastoral assistant was especially

important in this respect. As a theologically well educated lay person, she straddled the boundary between the ordained priests and the congregants.

"People treat me as one of the religious ... they associate me with holiness."
(Pastoral Assistant, Congregation A)

Because of this, she had been able to act as a channel of communication between the two groups and encourage the Team to take account of parishioner views expressed to her informally.

Congregation C officially allocated marginally more relative authority to lay people. In line with Church of England practice, it had its own Church Council to which lay people were elected annually and it was also part of a complicated web of elected councils which brought together the three congregations within the parish. In interviews, historical accounts of clashes with previous vicars indicated that lay people, if they so wished, could use the Church Council as a forum for challenging the wishes of their vicar. However, the normal expectation was, as in Congregation A, that there would be a striving for consensus at council meetings and that, in case of conflict, the clerical view would prevail; an expectation reflected in the fact that the vicar chaired meetings and set the agenda.

"The [Church Council] has less power than appears on paper." (Lay Council Member, Congregation C)

According to official statements, Congregations B and D had structures which gave authority to lay people. Both had annual meetings of members at which a governing council of lay people was elected and both had clergy who were totally financially dependent on their congregants. This official situation appeared to be largely reflected in the day to day structure of Congregation D. The chairperson of the elected lay council was potentially extremely powerful and a number of historical

examples were recounted in interviews of clashes between the rabbi and the lay chair in which the rabbi's views on important issues had not prevailed. The power actually enjoyed by rabbis was contingent on the relationship with lay leaders; and as the maximum term of service for a lay chairperson was three years, the relative power of rabbis and lay leaders was constantly being renegotiated.

The situation in Congregation B was different. Despite a manifestly democratic organisational structure, the lay members of the congregation appeared to have voluntarily ceded total authority to their pastor and a group of deacons and deaconesses (2). There were various fora, including the group of charity trustees, in which decisions were made about key policy and developmental matters. But interviews suggested that in practice these functioned very much as in Congregation A; that is, it was understood that the basic function of the lay people was to act as consultants and to affirm and implement the decisions of clergy. This was reflected in the fact that, in practice, most people described themselves as having been appointed to posts of responsibility by the pastor. Those 'elected' had been approached and approved by him and saw themselves as responsible to him and the deacons.

GOALS

In this section, material from documents and interviews is used to describe broad "conceptions of desired ends" (Scott, 1987, p19) in the four congregations (3). A more detailed analysis of the issues facing the congregations in relation to their goals is given in the next chapter (4). Five goals which emerged as important for the four congregations are considered: liturgical expression of religious commitment; education; welfare provision; organisational continuity; and social integration.

Liturgical Religious Expression

Although publicity material and interviewees in all four congregations emphasised the variety of ways in which religious commitment may be expressed, it appeared that for all the congregations liturgical expressions of religion (primarily worship on congregation premises but also including religious events and ceremonies in the community) were their prime operating, or 'output', goal (Perrow, 1970). Not only was this officially the case, it was also reflected in the way in which human and financial resources were allocated in practice. The only dissent from the view about priority of liturgical expression was found in Congregation D where interviewees suggested that there were a substantial proportion of members for whom attending services was not a personal priority; their priority was to give expression to their Judaism in other ways such as social and community service and learning about their religion. All the same, there was no dissent from the view that the synagogue as an organisation should give priority to liturgy.

Religious Education

The second priority in all four congregations appeared to be the provision of religious education. The main emphasis was on teaching children and converts in all the congregations but in Congregations A, B and D there was also some provision for educating existing adult members.

There was a link between the liturgy goal and the education goal since much of the education in the congregations was aimed at enabling people to participate in religious worship. However, in Congregations A, B and D, education was also intended to provide a broader perspective on religious practice and to enable members to live a 'religious life' beyond attendance at services and other congregational activities. For example, Congregation A ran courses for personal spiritual development, and Congregation B ran a weekly bible study group, whilst adult education in

Congregation D included instruction on Jewish approaches to various aspects of every day life.

Welfare

A third goal which was agreed upon and a source of pride in all four congregations concerned social care or "ministry". As described in detail elsewhere (Harris, 1994), this welfare goal was implemented in a range of ways: not only through pastoral visiting, and informal help between members; but also through more formal mutual aid groups (for example, a group for divorcees in Congregation A and a faith healing group in Congregation C); and through welfare projects delivering services outside the congregation on a regular basis (for example, a prison visiting scheme and a day centre for the elderly run by Congregation B, lunches for the homeless provided on synagogue premises by Congregation D, and a benefits and housing advice service in Congregation A). In short, the range of welfare provision found in the four congregations, reflected the suggestion made earlier (in Chapter One) that churches and synagogues are an integral part of the current social welfare system.

Interviewees generally cited religious values as the underpinning for the caring activities of their congregation. For example,

"You have to look outward to take up responsibility for injustice in society - everybody needs to establish the kingdom on earth. This is the church's mission." (Pastoral Assistant, Congregation A)

"There is a Jewish responsibility to work for 'tikkun olam' [Hebrew - repair of the world]. This is not because I will be rewarded in heaven, but because it is the right thing to do." (Lay Member, Congregation D)

At the same time, however, the fulfilment of the welfare goal was also a source of personal satisfaction for individuals:

"For me personally it is a great satisfaction knowing that you've helped someone. I get a lot from helping people. Most people come back and say thank you." (Welfare Worker, Congregation A)

"People come back and tell us how much they have been helped through being on the list [of those named in healing prayers]." (Lay Member, Congregation C)

Organisational Continuity

All four of the congregations were also giving explicit and priority attention to securing their own organisational continuity. However, the way in which this was expressed varied between the congregations and appeared to be related to a number of factors including their stage of organisational growth, their theology, and their cultural environment.

Thus Congregation A was situated in the midst of a large Catholic population and knew that it was already in touch with a high proportion of them. It was also not totally dependent on its congregants for financial viability. It was, therefore, less concerned about congregational survival, than about meeting the religious and social needs of existing adherents and about coming into closer contact with those at the margins; for example, parents of children at the school who did not attend services, or 'lapsed' but identifying Catholics. A similar situation existed in Congregation D which had grown rapidly in recent years and was having difficulty meeting the religious and educational needs of existing members within available resources. Maintaining the quality and range of their response to needs was their main concern.

This was seen as a route to retaining members and to attracting new ones in the future.

Although Congregations B and C were of similar age to Congregation D, their future survival was not taken for granted in the same way, and the congregational continuity goal was more explicitly concerned with ensuring survival. In both these congregations, their "myths, sagas, and legitimating accounts" (Meyer, 1984, p187) seemed especially important. The story of their founding and early years was repeatedly recounted in their publications and in interviews; a reflection, perhaps, of anxieties about the future of the congregations and feelings of not yet being firmly rooted. Thus, thirty years after the founding of the church, a respected 'elder' of Congregation B wrote:

"I was there when the rain was falling and the water would come through the roof of the old building. I was there when both male and female had to queue outside in all sorts of weather to use the old run-down WC. I was there that Saturday night when the Lord spoke to [the Pastor] to tell the people that they must march around the church and claim the land by faith." (5)

And a founding member of Congregation C said in interview:

"There really is something there ... People there have actually built it ... Everybody laughed at the building originally and called it a hen house and a cattle shed. But the smallness and the newness threw us together in that small space."

As a evangelical congregation, Congregation B was explicit about its goal of "bringing new people to Jesus", as one interviewee put it. The congregation had a number of activities geared to implementation of the conversion goal, such as open air preaching and prison visiting. But underlying the official, biblically-based

justifications for evangelical activity, were more practical concerns; that the first generation children of Afro-Caribbean immigrants were not as motivated to join and devote themselves to a religious congregation as their parents had been. There was thus a danger of the congregation dying as the founder generation died.

"I would like to see the young people take more initiative. ... We started the church when we were middle aged." (Founder Member, Congregation B)

Congregation C, in keeping with its Anglican theology, was less explicit about wanting to convert people. However, interviewees were similarly concerned about the impact on the congregation of long term demographic change; the generation which had set up the church originally was ageing and the younger generation seemed less able to take on major responsibilities.

"There is a group of older people who have been doing things for the church for a long time. Many of them are now in their 70s. They have nobody to hand over to. Young mums go back to work much sooner than they did even ten years ago. There is more financial pressure on them now. So there are few people ... to take over the leadership from the older age group. There is a leadership gap." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

The vicar and senior lay people were seeking to increase the number of congregational adherents in a low key manner by, for example, encouraging local residents to attend social and other non-religious activities on church premises and by conducting services for groups outside the church.

"The more people we get over the threshold the happier I feel. ... Once we get people in, we speak for ourselves. People will see God and our mission." (Vicar, Congregation C)

Social Integration

A fifth goal, again one shared and given priority by all four congregations, related to social integration. This was most explicitly expressed in Congregation D where, in interviews and in the congregational publications, the function of a synagogue in providing a meeting place for Jews appeared to have the status of a "taken for granted expectation" (di Maggio and Powell, 1991, p10). For the three Christian congregations, the social integration function was less a 'manifest' than a 'latent' goal (Merton, 1949). Yet its importance in practice emerged clearly from interviews. People spoke about "*caring*" and "*fellowship*" and emphasised the importance of bringing people together. In Congregation B, it was Afro-Caribbean people who were brought together; Congregation A brought together people of disparate nationality and race who were often transient residents of the inner city; and Congregation C drew together the residents of a housing estate geographically separated from the main town.

"We have people from different countries and they can all feel a bond for the church ... Everyone has prejudices but they all unite under this common banner, a belief in Jesus Christ ... " (Social Welfare Worker, Congregation A)

"We all live in the same area and we see each other in and out of the church ... there is a feeling of neighbourliness ... People started saying hello to me in the street within a few weeks of starting going to church ... Because of the church, I feel I belong." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

Sometimes the social integration goal was implemented in the congregations through explicit befriending of people regarded as lonely or in need of care, or through drawing them in to practical and social activities within the congregation. More broadly, the goal was implemented through overtly social activities organised under

congregational auspices (such as barbecues, dances, outings and classes in secular skills); through fostering of common interest groups such as evening classes, brownies, choirs and senior citizen circles; and through the informal socialising surrounding meetings for worship. In all four of the congregations, this socialising had been institutionalised through the practice of providing light refreshments following some services.

TECHNOLOGY

Following the description of the organisational structures and goals of the four congregations, this section describes the way in which the congregations carried out their 'work' and 'activities', concentrating, as in previous sections, on the commonalities between them.

In Congregations B and D, the main means of carrying out the work of the congregation was through a network of committees of lay people with interlocking memberships. In Congregation B, the committees and their respective chairs (known as "officers") were appointed in practice by the pastor and a board of elders. In Congregation D, they were nominally sub-committees of the elected lay council but in practice several of them appeared to be only "loosely coupled" (Meyer and Rowan, 1977) to the council. In some cases they could be more accurately described as 'fiefdoms' of individual lay leaders, who often remained in post for several years and carried the major responsibility for the relevant area of work.

"Some of these committees are headed by very powerful people ... Theoretically, each of the groups are sub-committees of the Council. In practice they tend to act autonomously." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

In both congregations B and D there were also ad_hoc working groups, often convened by clergy, whose status and accountability most interviewees were unclear

about. Methods of working in Congregation D appeared to be heavily influenced by the rabbi's personal interest in group work; whereas in Congregation B, the major influences seemed to be cultural (Afro-Caribbean) and religious (pentecostal).

The committees were generally effective means of getting work done. Congregation D had committees to direct and manage, for example, the work of child education, youth activities, the kindergarten, charitable fundraising and social events. Congregation B had committees, headed by active "officers", who ensured the running of social welfare activities, the Sunday School, evangelical activities, music, missionary work, and the prison visiting programme. They worked to guidelines laid down by the pastor, but had some autonomy. This kind of bounded autonomy was described by one interviewee as follows:

"I take responsibility for finding music and teaching new songs to the choir. I buy music ... and decide what is nice and what is suitable to use in the church ... you do what you know is the expected job ... [Pastor] will tell you if there are to be any changes." (Congregation B)

The other two congregations - A and C - had different technologies. Congregation C's work was mainly carried out through rotas of lay individuals. There was a general reluctance amongst lay people to take responsibility for particular areas of activity. On the other hand, large numbers of people were happy to take their turn on a rota if they did not feel they had a long term commitment or were carrying final responsibility. Even the teaching at the Sunday School was carried out on a rota basis to ensure that no voluntary teacher had to teach every week. And the job of verger was shared between six people in rotation. In this way, definable, bounded, tasks were generally carried out conscientiously in the congregation. However, it was left to the vicar and a handful of lay leaders, to monitor work and make suggestions for new approaches and activities.

The work of Congregation A, was carried out mainly through a group of paid staff (three priests, and two lay people). They met weekly to take key decisions, to monitor the work of the congregation and to plan congregational activities.

"The Team is the dynamo of the parish" (Priest, Congregation A)

Most congregational activities involved oversight or support from one of the Parish Team. The only recognisable committee was a Finance Committee which was said by one of the priests to be *"required by Canon Law"*. Its main job was to prepare budgets. However, a priest retained responsibility for financial management and for making decisions about large items of expenditure, consulting as he thought necessary with the committee. According to one lay interviewee, he also *"hand picked"* the members of the committee.

Lay involvement in services of worship in Congregation A (by altar servers, readers, choristers and eucharist ministers) were all under the direct supervision of one of the priests. Three other essential jobs - organisation of sacred music, church cleaning and office work - were done by people who received

"a small payment which recognises that although they work as volunteers, the work has to be done". (Priest, Congregation A)

They too were supervised by a priest. Beyond this, smaller tasks were done on an informal basis.

"There are little groups that do things ... Everything is very informal. There are no leaders ..." (Lay Member, Congregation A)

In all four congregations, the key role of clergy in a range of congregational activities, not just those which were specifically 'religious', was apparent. This seemed to be a consequence not only of the special authority they carry by reason of their role but also for the practical reason that they move between different activities and aspects of the congregation.

"I have an overview because I'm constantly moving around the synagogue."
(Rabbi, Congregation D).

Clergy are also frequently on the spot when emergencies occur; anything from news of the sudden death of a congregational member or the arrival of a congregant in spiritual or mental distress, to the leaking of the roof or the discovery of lost property after a service. They therefore tend to get drawn in to a wide range of activities.

All of the clergy interviewed expressed exasperation about the way in which they were involved in what they considered to be inappropriate or trivial tasks. They all described the techniques which they used to draw lay people in to do more for their congregations. However, in general, they used these techniques to set up consultation mechanisms and to share the burden of their own main line responsibilities (for example, pastoral visiting, teaching, preaching and public relations work), rather than to divest themselves altogether of routine tasks.

Clergy in Congregations A and D did regularly delegate tasks to the lay people who were paid employees of the congregation. And the pastor of Congregation B was also able to divest himself of some routine tasks; but in his case, this was more a reflection of the culture of the congregation in which it was considered to be an honour to provide support for the pastor and to contribute to the congregation in any way possible. Congregants were positively looking for ways of being helpful and volunteered to take on tasks. One interviewee in Congregation B explained that there was an expectation that the newest comers to the congregation would volunteer for

the most menial tasks such as cleaning or tidying books. If these were performed well, the member could hope for promotion to more responsible tasks, often on the recommendation, or at the request, of the pastor:

"You start with the cleaning and you work your way up." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

In fact, in all four of the congregations, there was an identifiable cadre of highly committed lay people whose work on a voluntary basis was crucial to the work output of the organisation.

With regard to decision making within congregations, interviewees in Congregations A and B emphasised the role of religious principles.

"... we listen to each other and solutions emerge ... [the root is] listening with respect to the views of others, grounded in prayer ... you do not seek ego trips in team meetings. We are here to serve the people." (Team Member, Congregation A)

In Congregation B, it was explained that when difficult decisions had to be made,

"we seek an answer through prayer ... we give God a chance to speak ... Everyone is always in agreement because everything we decide and suggest is for spiritual development, not for ourselves ... we don't leave until everybody is satisfied." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

On major issues, God's voice was, in practice, most usually heard via the pastor, often following a period of fasting with congregational leaders:

"God reveals his will to [the pastor], like when God kept telling him to 'put on a bigger coat'. For a long time, he did not understand what God was telling him. Then he realised that God was saying we should build an extension to the church. So we did." (Lay leader, Congregation B)

Lay Leaders in Congregation B also described their own inspirational decision-making:

"We believe in the Holy Ghost so we get inspiration through prayer and fasting. The spirit suggests things to you ... The Lord leads me spiritually in who to choose to do things and which topics to address. The nitty gritty, I discuss with the [other leaders] and it's a down to earth discussion." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

In Congregations C and D, explicit integration of religious principles in to decision making was less apparent. In both, committee meetings began with a prayer or scriptural reading, but further explicit reference to religious guidance was not usual. Indeed, in the case of Congregation D, several interviewees recounted with disapproval the way in which the rabbi had justified a proposal he was making by suggesting that he regarded it as God's will. A typical comment was:

"He [the rabbi] said the situation was 'a God-given opportunity to do something new'. Most people saw this as manipulation. They were stunned. They are not used to this." (Congregation D)

A lay interviewee in Congregation C spoke in similarly cynical terms about appeals to God:

"[A previous vicar] used to pray for things that he wanted for the church. He prayed for an answering machine and got one from somewhere. He also prayed for a bigger organ and somebody coughed up £3,500 ..."
(Congregation C)

PARTICIPANTS

Many of the characteristics of the participants in the congregations have now been mentioned. This section focuses on characteristics common to the participants in all four congregations.

In all the congregations, the importance for members of the social integration functions performed by their congregations was apparent. People were drawn to congregational participation because it could respond not only to their spiritual needs but also to their social ones. Interviewees valued highly the capacity of congregations to care for people who were lonely, experiencing a life crisis, or otherwise searching for comfort through human interaction. The help offered could be practical (doing shopping for somebody who was sick or babysitting for a single parent); or more intangible (befriending or just gradually drawing somebody in to the mainstream religious and social activities of the congregation through repeated invitations and welcomings). For example, a single mother in Congregation A - which is situated in an inner city area described by one interviewee as having *"no natural sense of community"* - explained how priests and lay members of the church *"rallied round"* when she was left alone with two young children. She found she started to be invited to join in social and religious activities and to take on voluntary work for the congregation. As a result, all her leisure hours were filled and she had a large group of friends:

"The church has turned my life around". (Congregation A)

Similarly, a person in Congregation C who had become involved with the church following a bereavement said:

"I found a great deal of comfort from the clergy and the lay people through being associated with the church." (Congregation C)

In Congregations A, B and D, members were additionally drawn in by the opportunities provided to mix with people of similar background; not only religious but also ethnic, cultural or national.

"The key thing is getting people together but at the same time you encourage them to keep their culture ... the church keeps going because of the groups ... Masses are not enough." (Lay Member from an ethnic minority, Congregation A)

Even in Congregation B, where membership was said to be contingent upon *"accepting the Lord as your personal saviour"* and where visible signs of a conversion experience were expected (Hollenweger, 1976; Poloma, 1989), the motivation of congregation members appeared not to be solely religious. Interviewees emphasised the importance of being accepted within a community of their own and of being swept up into a range of activities which became a way of life:

"Every night there is some way of worship organised. There is always something happening. There is no time for the devil to get in and we keep people on their toes." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

Many interviewees in Congregation B described the feelings of isolation and despair they had experienced prior to their conversion when they felt marooned within a largely white, alien society. The following is typical:

"[When I came to the Town] I started going to the Methodist church. I went there for 7 years but I have never felt so lonely in my life. I don't think a single person there knew my name. Nobody would sit in the same pew as me ... I felt empty and alone ... I visited [Congregation B] a few times ... I was well accepted ... Since then, there has been a dramatic change in my life."
(Lay Leader, Congregation B)

Interviews suggested that members of all the congregations valued not only the care and support that they received from their congregation, but also the opportunities provided for self-development and self expression.

"I enjoy it [evangelising outside the congregation] immensely. ... I feel I am doing something when I go outside." (Lay Member, Congregation B)

"I was overwhelmed when I was first asked to do it [offer the chalice during communion]. It is such a privilege and I thought I was not good enough. ... My first reaction was 'Am I worthy?' ... I got used to doing it. I loved to see the children from this side of the altar. ... It was a great honour." (Lay Member, Congregation C)

"I enjoy being recognised for being me in the community ... My husband keeps saying, 'everyone knows you and I'm just known as your husband'." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

Participants also valued the opportunity to be part of a 'worthwhile' collective enterprise:

"It's a very friendly church ... People talk to each other and to strangers ... not like [the neighbouring church] which is very cold ... It's a caring church."
(Lay member, Congregation C)

"We are caring. When people have problems, we look after them - if they want to be looked after." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

PART C: THE ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Contemporary organisational theorists recognise that, "No organization is self-sufficient; all depend for survival on the types of relations they establish with the large systems of which they are a part." (Scott, 1987, p19). Thus, in this part, the organisational environment of the congregations is described.

Since they were all studied at roughly the same time and were all located in southern England, the four congregations shared a common environment at the broad level. They were all subject to the similar economic and social trends including the recession and major changes in public policy, as well as the long term secularizing tendencies discussed in Chapter Two. Interviews in all the congregations indicated awareness and concerns about these trends, but it was 'consumerism' and the recession which were most frequently and most directly mentioned.

In addition to these broad societal aspects of their environment, congregations were also affected by, and tried to respond to, their particular location and cultural environment. For example, Congregation A ran an advice service for refugees, Congregation C had several activities specifically geared to the needs of young mothers and children, and Congregation B ran a day centre for elderly Afro-Caribbean people.

This part of the chapter describes organisational aspects of the environments of the four congregations, including denominational institutions, other religious organisations, voluntary agencies, and statutory organisations (6). The emphasis is on the environment of the congregations considered as organisational entities, as distinct from the environment experienced by individual members, employees, or clergy.

DENOMINATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

As explained in Part B, the four case congregations varied as to their formal polities; that is, as to their official position in relation to a broader denomination. Yet, for all of them, other organisations within the same religious tradition were key features of their environment.

In the case of Congregation A, neither other Catholic congregations, nor the diocesan structure were of major organisational significance to them in practice. This seemed to be a reflection of their own large size and relative financial independence, combined with a feeling that the diocese did not have much to offer the congregation:

"... parish work depends on being there on the ground ... an office person [in the diocese] becomes remote ... this kind of support is not working well ..."
(Priest, Congregation A)

They did send lay and clerical representatives to diocesan and national events and they occasionally used members of diocesan staff in a consultancy capacity (for example in developing educational programmes or gaining musical expertise). But the more important factors in their denominational environment were a Catholic college which was described as giving *"support and guidance"* to the parish on difficult pastoral issues; Catholic special interest groups and societies; and the local Catholic schools.

Of these latter, a primary school which was located next to the church and shared its name, was especially important. Many adults and children were brought in to active participation in the congregation because of their involvement in the school. The school, in its turn, welcomed the use of church resources including the participation of its priests and the advice of its pastoral assistant.

The particular circumstances of Congregation C also made it relatively distant from its diocesan structure and other Anglican congregations outside its parish. In this case, this seemed to be largely attributable to two factors. First, the Parish Team and related committees acted as a buffer between the congregation and the extra-parish denominational structure, filtering information in both directions. Second, congregants tended to be most interested in dealing with their own immediate needs and those of the immediate local community. They were generally not much interested in the possibilities offered and encouraged by the diocese for broadening the scope of their activities or vision.

"The Team feeds in wider expertise and you just don't need to go any further."
(Vicar, Congregation C)

So, as in Congregation A, it was the element in the denominational structure which was organisationally closest to the congregation, which was the key feature in the denominational environment of Congregation C; in this case the Parish Team of clergy and congregations.

Congregation D, offered an example of a congregation for which the denominational 'headquarters' was a significant environmental factor. The congregation is geographically located sufficiently near to the headquarters to be able to participate with relative ease in denominational committees and governance and to take full advantage of the social activities, support and consultancy services available there. All the same, several interviewees expressed strong reservations about the usefulness

of the denominational structure for the congregation and queried whether the congregation was getting value for money in paying its denominational dues. As in Congregation A, there was a noticeable thread of opinion that the congregation was able to be largely self sufficient and that the denominational structure was, on balance, a drain on resources.

"We do use the facilities offered by [denomination] ... But they get a lot from us too. For example, they are now using our bar/bat mitzvah programme. ... When I think of [denomination], I think of ... the amount we have to pay them each year and I think of what the synagogue could do with all that money."
(Lay Leader, Congregation D)

Congregation B, itself a 'headquarters', was in a different formal position from the other three congregations. This may be an explanation for the fact that it was the only one of the four congregations studied in which close and frequent contact with other congregations of the same denomination was described. Congregation C was linked with the other two churches of the parish through the parish team structure; the three congregations occasionally 'visited' each other and shared major projects. And Congregations A and D were both officially members of networks of neighbouring congregations of their respective denominations. But only Congregation B interviewees can be said to have expressed any enthusiasm for their contacts with other congregations within their denomination.

"They [branches] look to us for financial and spiritual help. They come to us once a month for a service and we go to their prayer meetings. We helped them when they were buying their own churches." (Founder Member, Congregation B)

OTHER RELIGIOUS ORGANISATIONS

Although all four of the case congregations reported links with other religious-based organisations - organisations not within their own denomination - of varying degrees of formality and cordiality, it was, again, interviewees in Congregation B who attached most importance to such links. That congregation regularly held joint services with other local Christian congregations, sent choirs to participate in services and meetings, and invited representatives of other religions (Christian and non-Christian) to their premises. They also participated in an annual national meeting of Afro-Caribbean churches and maintained loose links with a black-led Pentecostal denomination in the United States whose educational and evangelical material they displayed and used.

The three Christian churches studied all reported being "*linked*" with local church groupings but none of the interviewees were enthusiastic about the links or felt them to be a significant contributor to their own congregation's work. The vicar of Congregation C, for example, described the local "Churches Together" group as "*struggling*" and as riven by conflict between "*established churches and house churches over evangelism.*" And a priest in Congregation A described local ecumenical relationships as "*polite rather than warm*".

Congregation D had a one-to-one link with a local Catholic seminary which facilitated visits to the synagogue and Jewish homes by seminarians. They were also represented on the local Council of Christians and Jews and the Board of Deputies of British Jews. But, as in the Christian congregations, most interviewees in Congregation D seemed to regard their congregational links with other religious organisations as a necessary, but rather tiresome, chore. The benefits of the links for the congregations were largely seen as being public relations ones; participation was recognised as an important contributor to the legitimacy of the congregation in the local community.

Although physical meetings between congregational representatives were generally not talked of with enthusiasm, all of the congregations in practice seemed to keep in touch with activities of neighbouring religious organisations and to be stimulated by them. Thus, the lunches for the homeless project in Congregation D was modelled on a scheme running in a local Methodist church; the warden of Congregation C had adopted a number of ideas from other local churches for the internal lay-out of the church; and Congregation A's work in the housing field was initiated by somebody who admired the work being done by another local church.

VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

In all the congregations, the obligation to support charitable activity seemed to be another "taken for granted expectation" (di Maggio and Powell, 1991, p10). All of the congregations gave financial contributions as a matter of course to both local and national charities; only some of which were religious-based. In addition, Congregation A permitted local groups (for example, Marriage Guidance/Relate and Alcoholics Anonymous) the use of its premises, and the other three congregations (B, C, and D) actively encouraged members to give volunteer time to local charities; as members of management committees, or as direct providers of services. Thus, several members of Congregation B volunteered to work with the local Victims Support scheme and the local voluntary care council and this was encouraged both formally (through preaching) and informally (by involved congregants talking about their work). The vicar of Congregation C was actively involved in the management committee of the local Mental Health Forum and described the "*informal links through cross memberships*" between his congregation and the local Cancer Research Campaign and the British Legion.

In some cases, individual congregants were regarded as official representatives of their congregations (for example, on a management committee or working party, or

when participating in a rota to serve in a charity shop). But, for the most part, the question of the status of a congregational volunteer was not regarded as important by congregational interviewees; what was important was the idea that the congregation was contributing in some way to its local community.

Congregations also had links with local voluntary organisations for more instrumental reasons. Thus, the welfare officer of Congregation A maintained links with local voluntary welfare agencies which could provide information and other resources. Congregations B and D both participated in their local race equality councils.

Congregation C's playgroup was affiliated to the Pre-School Playgroups Association and benefitted from the expertise the organisation provided.

STATUTORY AGENCIES

Links between congregations and statutory sector organisations were not sought after specifically but, as occupiers of buildings, all the congregations had the usual range of citizen links with public services. Difficulties about planning permission at various stages of growth were cited by three of the congregations (A, B and D). In the case of congregations A and D, these were long term and a cause of some bitterness as they had not been resolved after many years. In the case of Congregation B, the local authority had been its landlord when it was in temporary accommodation, and the difficulties it had had in getting a long-term lease and then in obtaining permission to erect a permanent building, had become part of the frequently re-told history of the congregation's struggle to establish itself.

In addition to citizen links, congregations had contacts with statutory organisations primarily in the course of their welfare work. Thus, Congregation B was an active participant in the chaplaincy for three prisons and Congregation C provided visitors for local schools and residential homes. At the time of the study, members of

congregations B and D were involved in discussions with their respective Social Services Departments who were taking over responsibility for welfare projects (the day centre for the elderly run by Congregation B and the lunches for the homeless run by Congregation D). Congregation D was also in receipt of a two year local authority grant which subsidised its employment of a youth worker.

PART D: THE CONGREGATIONS IN THEIR ENVIRONMENTS

Scott (1987, p20) says of the four "elements" of organisation, that ".. no one element is so dominant as to be safely considered in isolation from the others ... [and] no organization can be understood in isolation from the larger environment." Thus, this final part of the chapter reflects on the inter-relation between different organisational elements within congregations, and between the congregations and their environments (7). This follows the broad approach of 'institutional analysis' which is concerned with the "nesting" of processes and elements within organisations (Perrow, 1986, p58) as well as with the "relationship between organizations and their environments" (di Maggio and Powell, 1991, p12).

LINKS BETWEEN ORGANISATIONAL ELEMENTS

Taking together the descriptions about the four organisational elements in Part B above, it is notable that, although the four congregations had similar goals, their ways of approaching their congregational work (their technologies) were markedly different. This was the case, even where there were additional similarities between congregations with respect to other organisational features; for example, Congregations A and D both had several paid staff in addition to their clergy, yet they had not adopted similar technologies. Choice of technologies within congregations appeared to be less influenced by considerations about desired ends or outputs, than by denominational organisational traditions (structure element), by the preferences of

powerful individuals, especially clergy, and by the culture and needs of members (participants element).

In each congregation, interviewees explained how their particular ways of working were suited to the needs and characteristics of the congregation's adherents. For example, the rotas in Congregation C were regarded as suitable for a membership which was reluctant to take on major individual responsibilities; and the clergy-controlled committees in Congregation B were taken for granted by a predominantly female congregation which traditionally gave high respect to male leaders. The fact that mechanisms for lay participation were being only slowly introduced into Congregation A, was seen as an acceptable approach where congregants had been brought up within a paternalistic and authoritarian religious tradition. Again, the committee structures in Congregations B and D, and the proliferation of social groups in Congregation A had the function not only of carrying out tasks, but also of providing frameworks for social interaction between people who, outside of their congregations, were generally in an ethnic or racial minority (8).

The influence of clerical views on ways of working were evident, for example, in Congregation D. The rabbi had expertise in psychology and difficult decisions and debates were generally dealt with in small *ad hoc* informal groups in which 'brain storming' and other group work methods were employed.

"A lot of thinking goes on about what they do ... there is self-consciousness about organisation and tasks. ... [Congregation D] has a distinct character and a lot of it is the rabbi." (Congregation D)

In Congregation A, the influence of the priests' training was differently reflected in the technology. The priests' order emphasised consensus in decision-making and this was reflected in the manner of discussion in both the weekly Team meetings and the Parish Council meetings.

These points about the relationship between technologies and other organisational elements reflect the view of institutional theorists that "many of the most fateful forces [in organisations] are the result not of rational pressures for more effective performance but of social and cultural pressures" (Scott, 1987, p115).

THE CONGREGATIONS AND THEIR ENVIRONMENTS

In looking at the interpenetration between congregations and their environments, the important role played by organisational 'boundary spanners' emerges clearly. Clergy were significant in this respect but all the congregations had other participants who brought in ideas from outside and represented the congregation's interests to outsiders.

In Congregation A, for example, the Music Director, who was paid an honorarium for working a few hours a week, was also a music teacher in a school and played and ran courses for several other churches. He described how he brought to the congregation new ideas about liturgy which he learned from being present in other congregations and at courses run in the diocese and in Europe. Similarly, the youth worker in Congregation D, who had been sponsored by the congregation to undertake a part-time postgraduate course in youth and community work, had brought back to the congregation not only ideas about development of activities for children and young people, but also management skills and a sense of himself as a 'professional'. This changed his approach to his work and also influenced the behaviour and approach of other paid staff of the congregation.

The interaction between congregations and their environments was also apparent in relation to congregational goals. In addition to religious expression and education goals, all four of the congregations had welfare, continuity and social integration goals which were, to some extent at least, a response to their specific social and cultural environments. Using a 'population ecology' perspective (Hannan and

Freeman, 1977), this responsiveness of congregations to their environments can be seen as a "niche building" exercise; by meeting needs unmet by other local organisations, congregations were creating a special, even unique, place for themselves within their surrounding communities and catchment areas. In so doing, they were ensuring their own organisational survival.

Yet it would be simplistic to regard this niche building as a cynical act of goal displacement (Merton, 1949) by congregations; for the drives towards organisational survival could not be said to have displaced religious and educational goals. On the contrary, interviewees generally regarded the implementation of welfare, continuity and social integration goals as implicit in the religious principles officially adhered to in their congregations. Indeed, many interviewees referred to the implementation of these goals in overtly religious language; for example, "*saving souls for Jesus*" (Congregation B), "*being Christ-like*" (Congregation A) or "*repair of the world*" (Congregation D). Thus, although the congregations were indeed responding to their environments, they were attempting to do so in an 'authentic' fashion, in keeping with their underlying values.

Although their environments had important impacts on their goals, the congregations were not helpless victims of their environments. In fact, as theories of 'resource dependency' would suggest (for example, Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978), all four of them attempted in various ways to manipulate their environments in order to ensure implementation of their goals. Thus, congregations accepted that they were obliged to maintain formal links with a range of other organisations but, beyond that, each congregation forged its closest links with organisations which had the most resources to offer them. Thus, Congregation B maintained close links with local Christian churches which were historically a source of moral and financial support and which were also potential sources of new members. Congregation C's main organisational environment comprised the congregations and groupings in its parish through which it was able to plug gaps in its own provision (for example, adult study and clergy to

cover for absences) and on whom it could rely for a financial cushion.

"[Because of the existence of the parish team] they don't have to cover it all themselves ... for clergy and lay leaders, the burdens are lifted."
(Congregation C)

Congregation A maintained close involvement in the selection of pupils for the local Catholic schools and had given one of the priests special responsibility for liaison with the nearest school because:

"Parents come along to church because they want to get their children into [the schools] ... If the schools did not exist, attendance and commitment would be much lower." (Priest, Congregation A)

Contrary to neo-institutional theory (di Maggio and Powell (eds), 1991) which emphasises non-rational behaviour of organisations, congregations in this respect appeared to be behaving with a view to maximising organisational benefits to themselves. This was so even when rational behaviour involved turning away from, or giving minimal attention to, organisations with which they were officially expected to maintain close links; neighbouring congregations of the same denomination or the denominational hierarchy, for example.

Despite this evidence of the ability of congregations to manipulate and make an impact on their environments, there were also many examples of intractable problems in congregations which reflected environmental features over which they had little control. For example, Congregation B faced a steadily rising average age of membership because of social changes in the Afro-Caribbean population; younger people born in Britain were less interested in pentecostal religious expression than their immigrant parents. Again, Congregation A faced problems because it happened to be situated in an area of rapid population turnover. This not only gave rise to

administrative problems in keeping track of local Catholic residents, but also placed limits on the extent to which lay people could be relied on to carry long term commitments. Congregation D was experiencing major problems in relation to its funding and leadership, both of which were regarded as a direct consequence of the recession. Those who had lost their jobs were less able to contribute to the congregation financially and were often turning to the congregation for psychological support. At the same time, those still in work were having to give it their full attention, at the expense of their voluntary commitments of time to the synagogue.

"In a period of recession, turmoil and uncertainties, the Synagogue, both as a religious centre and a community, suffers in two ways. Firstly, we are subject to all the societal pressures; secondly, what we offer is especially needed and wanted." (9)

DISCUSSION OF CHAPTER SIX

This chapter has provided descriptions of organisational features of four congregations which were investigated using a case study approach. In Part A, case by case descriptions were provided of contextual features of each of the four congregations including their history, size and location. Then, in Part B, material on individual congregations was brought together to describe four key organisational "elements": structure, goals, technology and participants.

Part C focused on the environment of the four congregations; especially their organisational environment. Organisations with which congregations were linked were identified under four main headings: denominational organisations, other religious organisations, voluntary organisations and statutory organisations. Finally, in Part D, the inter-relationships between different organisational elements were

discussed, along with the interpenetration between congregations and their environments.

Considering the descriptive material presented in this chapter in the light of the aims of this study, two points are notable. First, when the characteristics of the four congregations are examined in detail and compared with the list of variables identified beforehand from the literature (Appendix A), it is confirmed that the selection of cases was such that they together represent a range of characteristics including: religion; denomination; location; staffing; membership size, age, class and ethnicity; history; funding; and the range and nature of their activities.

In fact, the congregations also varied with respect to other characteristics which were not specifically targeted in the case selection process. For example, they differed as to the proportion of members (10) regularly attending sabbath services; the extent to which members lived in the immediate vicinity; the nature and extent of work done by lay volunteers; the internal structures for carrying out work; the extent to which religious principles were explicit guides to organisational behaviour; the nature and extent of their links with other organisations in their environment; and the relative authority officially, and in practice, attributed to clergy and laity.

Despite these wide variations between the congregations, a number of organisational similarities between the congregations also emerge from the descriptions provided in this chapter. This is the second noteworthy point: that this chapter provides confirmation of the hypothesis that congregations have organisational features in common.

All four of the congregations, for example, had similar broad purposes and they were also using similar means to implement their goals. As was expected, clergy played a key role in all the congregations; in participating in activities, in providing leadership, and in influencing operating styles. What was less expected was the fact

that clergy played a key role in such a wide range of activities, including those which were not specifically 'religious'. There were also similarities between congregations in members' motivations for participation; people were drawn to congregations by the opportunities they offered for social integration, for personal self-expression and for the opportunity to be part of something worthwhile.

Congregations also shared a similar approach to their environments. In general they were highly responsive to their geographical, cultural and organisational environments; adapting activities and setting priorities in order to maximise the human and other resources brought to the congregation. Finally, all four of the congregations appeared to share with other organisations a tendency for there to be a gap between day to day practice and 'official' or 'manifest' statements. Thus, official statements about 'formal polities' did not necessarily reflect the day to day relationship between congregations and their respective denominational institutions. Nor did formal statements about the relative power of laity and clergy reflect common practice.

This chapter has described organisational features, such as organisational 'elements' and organisational 'environments' of congregations. In the following chapter, the presentation of data continues but the focus shifts to analysis of organisational issues and problems.

NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

1. Extract from the service sheet for the 25th Anniversary Celebration Eucharist of Congregation C, May 1993.

2. The deacons and deaconesses were people who were ordained for special service by the congregation but who worked in secular employment. The pastor explained in interview that the organisational structure of the congregation is biblically inspired. He referred to (New Testament) Acts, Chapter 6 which describes "deacons" who care for the material side of ministry. The 12 apostles of Jesus appointed "seven men of good reputation filled with the Spirit and with wisdom" to distribute food, so that they could devote themselves to the preaching.

3. Pilot and pre-pilot interviews indicated that it would not be appropriate to ask direct questions in interviews about goals or purposes of congregations since they could be mis-construed as a questioning of the individual's religious commitment or the congregation's legitimacy; thereby jeopardising the building of trust between researcher and interviewee. Thus, the material in this section draws on congregational publicity material; answers to questions about the aims of specific congregational activities; and interviewees' hopes for the future of their congregations.

4. The difficulties of defining and describing organisational goals have been widely noted in the general organisational literature. Scott (1987, p19) suggests that the "concept of organizational goals is among the most important - and the most controversial - concepts to be confronted in the study of organizations." And Perrow (1970) draws attention to the multiplicity of types of goals which coexist within organisations and can conflict with each other: societal goals, output goals, system goals, product characteristic goals and derived goals. The especial difficulties

surrounding the definition of goals in religious organisations were discussed in Chapter Four.

5. Extract from 30th Anniversary Service Booklet of Congregation B

6. This relatively simplistic categorisation of environmental elements by functional area and sector is preferred for the purposes of this study over more sophisticated organisational concepts such as 'field', 'networks' and 'constituencies' which conceptualise organisations as parts of 'sets' of organisations (di Maggio and Powell, 1991). The existence and nature of fields, networks and other sets of organisations can only be uncovered by focused empirical enquiry. This was not the purpose of the current exploratory study. However, the evidence of linkages provided in this part of the chapter suggests that a study of congregational fields and networks would merit further empirical investigation.

7. More detailed analyses of these inter-relations is contained in the following chapters in which organisational issues arising in congregations are analysed and explained.

8. The fact that the work of committees reflects the needs of congregants for opportunities for social interaction, is seen here as an example of how technologies and participants are interlinked organisational elements. It could also be seen as an example of how technologies do reflect goals, since one latent goal of congregations, as explained in Part B, is social integration.

9. Extract from the Annual Report of Congregation D, 1993.

10. Members of congregations are defined here by social identification rather than by official statements, as those people who regard themselves as regular participants in the activities of a congregation and are regarded by others as such (McCann,

1993). Roman Catholic churches like Congregation A do not have an official membership. A member of Congregation B and D, on the other hand, is, strictly, somebody who has paid the current year's subscription. The electoral roll was the official membership list of Congregation C but, as in most Anglican churches, it did not reflect the (higher) number of people regularly participating in the congregation's activities.

CHAPTER SEVEN: ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES IN THE CASE CONGREGATIONS - PURPOSES AND GOALS

Organisational features of the four case congregations were described in Chapter Six. In this and the following three chapters, the perceptions of interviewees about the organisational issues and problems that arise in their congregations are described and analysed (1). Since interviews were semi-structured, interviewees were able to raise issues that they considered important, rather than respond only to questions about issues selected by the researcher. Thus, the amount of data and the degree of detail on particular issues varies; it reflects the interests and concerns of interviewees.

This chapter presents the perceived issues in congregations around purposes and goals - the first of the organisational themes identified in Chapter Four. As previously, the term 'goals' is used in a broad sense to refer to purposes or ends; both those provided by official statements and ideologies and those which motivate congregational participants (2). Part A looks at issues that arise around making choices and setting goals in the congregations. Part B goes on to look at issues surrounding the implementation of goals.

The context of this chapter is provided by the description of the goals of the case congregations presented in the previous chapter, as well as by the literature on organisational goals reviewed in previous chapters. That literature drew attention to the challenges of reconciling religious values with organisational practicalities and to the way in which unresolved debates about underlying religious principles could make it difficult for congregations to clarify their goals. Tensions between mutual benefit and 'commonweal' goals (3), and between 'authenticity' and 'accommodation', were cited. The wide range and the multiplicity of goals were also found to be problematic, especially when combined with strong conflict-avoidance norms. The number and range of congregational goals could be the cause of difficulties in setting priorities.

PART A: SETTING GOALS

Broad purposes were rarely the subject of major debate in case congregations. Generally there was an assumption that those who retained their membership understood and accepted the congregation's broad purposes and goals - including not only basic religious values but also congregational customs and practices. Those who disagreed, it was assumed, either never really became involved in the congregation, or chose to leave it. This assumption about the implications of the essentially voluntary nature of congregational affiliation, was based on experience.

"When people disagree ... they just leave as they have no way of arguing."
(Lay Leader, Congregation A)

The priestly team in Congregation A had made a decision some years prior to the study to be open to all ethnic groups in the area:

"When the parish first moved in that direction, a lot of people resented what they saw as the threat to community and left for other parishes." (Priest, Congregation A)

Similarly, the character and evangelical approach of the previous vicar of Congregation C had caused people to leave the church.

"Some people did not like [previous vicar] and left the church because of it."
(Lay Member, Congregation C)

The way in which it was assumed within congregations that everybody shared an understanding of, and commitment to, broad purposes and practices was reflected by a lay leader in Congregation B:

"We believe in worshipping every day. This comes from way back. We all know this and this is how the church is organised." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

Moreover, it seemed that a latent function of the education activities in congregations was to maintain and reinforce shared purposes.

"The sacramental programmes are ... not just a talk from the priest. It makes you think seriously and gives better relationships and better understanding ... they give you the theory and the practice ... you get a real understanding of why you do things." (Lay Member, Congregation A)

"[Pastor] explains things to those who wish to come [to bible study] ... There are so many different doctrines, you need to know the truth for yourself ... You have to know what you are doing." (Lay Member, Congregation B)

The improbability of dissenters from major purposes remaining within a congregation is probably reinforced, in churches at least, by theologically-justified cultural norms which discourage radical debate or protest (4).

"Being confrontational is very difficult in a Christian context. If you challenge people in any way, they accuse you of not being Christian." (Priest, Congregation A)

"There is nowhere to talk about the things that bother me. All you can do is speak to the priest individually but if you broached it [disagreement about service format] they would give you the impression of being hurt." (Lay Member, Congregation A)

"A Christian should be able to sort things out and leave without animosity because the Holy Spirit brings us together." (Lay Member, Congregation B)

The fundamentalist approach adhered to by Congregation B emphasised unquestioning acceptance.

"... not changing what the scripture says ... Christianity should not be something you change every minute." (Lay Member, Congregation B)

"You have to accept the whole bible as it is, as the truth." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

All the same, interviews indicated that, at least in Congregations A and D, there were individuals - including some in leadership positions - who had doubts about key manifest purposes of the congregation. For example, three interviewees in Congregation A were critical of recent papal pronouncements on birth control, abortion and divorce and described how they sought the most liberal interpretations of them possible. And in Congregation D a lay leader said that she had only social motivations for synagogue involvement and was disinterested in religion. Yet these people had never made these views explicit within their congregations and did not intend to do so. The appearance of consensus was maintained.

Within this general consensus about broad congregational purposes, issues arose as choices had to be made about 'operational' goals; the means through which broad purposes were to be achieved. Some of these issues were essentially about roles and role relationships - the relative authority of clergy and lay leaders, for example - and they are described in later chapters. But many of the issues were about the nature of the goals themselves and about congregants' motivations. These issues are examined in this part of this chapter.

MUTUAL BENEFIT OR COMMONWEAL AIMS (3)

In broad terms, it can be said that all four of the case congregations were putting more resources into achieving internal (mutual benefit) goals, than into achieving external (commonweal) ones. However, perceived failures to meet external needs were of concern to interviewees.

"We should improve our ecumenical links." (Priest, Congregation A)

"Our relationships with the community round about are not very well developed." (Priest, Congregation A)

"We need to respond to elderly West Indian people in [town]." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

"We should have something for young mothers on the estate." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"I'm keen that the hall should be used more by the community." (Vicar, Congregation C)

"There are several residential homes on the estate for the elderly and the mentally handicapped. We need to build up our contacts with them." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"We are weak ... as regards Israel and Soviet Jewry ... We cannot seem to sustain our efforts." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

In some cases, as anticipated by the literature, interviewees perceived a conflict between meeting mutual benefit aims and being orientated to 'the commonweal'. In Congregation A, for example, there were disagreements about who should be given priority in allocation of places in the adjoining Catholic primary school which was heavily over-subscribed. A decision to allow applications from local children who were not regular church attenders was resented:

"A lot of people feel very bitter that they are genuine Catholics and they cannot get their kids in ... People are far more upset about this than the priests realise ... it's a very bitter point." (Lay Member, Congregation A)

One of the Officers of Congregation B perceived the lack of money for space and transport for her department as attributable to the efforts that had been put into fundraising for a new branch of their church:

"At the moment there are other priorities ... we have been putting money recently into helping the church in [another town]." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

And an interviewee in Congregation D explained the concerns he had had when he was in office:

"The Community Services group was serving both the needs of synagogue members and those of the surrounding community. I thought the broader community focus went too far ... I thought we had a growing number of elderly people, for example, and that we should think about their needs." (Lay Member, Congregation D)

Some interviewees, while not denying the importance in principle of a commonwealth focus, suggested that their congregations had a finite store of energy and that doing a good job within the congregation precluded or inhibited work further afield.

"We haven't developed strong relationships with local institutions ... Perhaps because we have our own institutions such as schools, and old peoples homes ... our energies go in to Catholic activities." (Priest, Congregation A)

"The parish is so enormous that it takes all your energy to keep your own plant going." (Pastoral Assistant, Congregation A)

"I had a vision to go back to Jamaica and make a Christian Centre ... the Church Board is supporting this but we have just finished raising money for the extension to the church ..." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

"There is a lot of unobtrusive caring and support and keeping the building going ... There is no energy for less parochial activities." (Vicar, Congregation C)

There were also suggestions that there were practical limitations to what congregations could do by way of wider outreach:

"We should be doing more things for social justice. But there is a problem of knowing how to gain access to ways of influencing the wider society." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"At the beginning [of the project with homeless people], we did more campaigning with the statutory sector. But we don't bother now - it's hopeless. There is a dilemma. We know we should campaign to get things

changed. But the day to day reality meanwhile is individuals who would be dead without our direct and immediate help. When you know the potential casualties, it's harder to turn your back and just do campaign work." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

For the most part, however, interviewees did not perceive mutual benefit and commonweal aims as being in conflict. Comments tended to assume that it was incumbent upon congregations to face outwards as well as inwards; that the two goals were of equal importance. When interviewees expressed their hopes for the future of their congregations, their lists mostly comprised commonweal goals; but the assumption was that these would be additional to, rather than substitutes for, internal efforts.

"We need to work on letting in the marginalised; for example, travellers, homeless people, single-parents and those who have had abortions." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"I would like to see us persuading the Council to do more things for ethnic minorities in the area." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

"We should speak out more on political things ... we could be saying things to the local authority about what they could be doing to help the unemployed." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

Only two interviewees raised the possibility that a congregation's outward-facing obligations were more important than its own needs:

"A greater effort is needed not to think of the church as a place for a holy huddle ... the average person does not realise that they are not called to look inward." (Pastoral Assistant, Congregation A)

"To me, evangelising outside the church is more important than the work inside the church ... I feel I am doing something when I'm outside." (Lay Member, Congregation B)

Some interviewees suggested that the distinction between meeting needs of members and those of non-members should not be emphasised.

"People stretch their hands out to others ... not just to church members ... If people come to us, we always try to help." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

"There is no way that I could draw a distinction between who has need - members of the synagogue, Jews, non-Jews, homeless etc. ... We are not interested in Jews/non-Jews; need/not in need. This is just not an issue." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

IMMEDIATE DEMANDS AND OVERALL PERSPECTIVES

At the time of the study, Congregations A, C and D had recently made attempts to assess their overall balance of activities and to make strategic plans. The Parish Council of Congregation A was discussing a strategic planning document initiated by one of the priests. Congregation C was involved in a parish consultation exercise which had pinpointed areas for special attention by the three parish congregations.

"It gives the church a bench mark and calls our attention to key issues ... otherwise you get bogged down in things like the building ... it reminds you of what it's really all about." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

In Congregation D, a working party had recently completed four years of deliberations and had presented to the Annual General Meeting proposals for a refurbishment and development of the congregation's buildings, predicated on

assumptions about future growth. There had also been a special half-day meeting of the Council to debate the implications of membership growth.

Despite these conscious attempts at rational decision-making and goal-setting (Perrow, 1986; Scott, 1987), interviewees suggested that there were major problems in maintaining long-term visions and overall perspectives in the face not only of individual enthusiasms (discussed in the following section), but also a range of other factors.

First, the immediate pressing needs of members and local communities could drive out considered attempts to allocate scarce resources. Congregation B, for example, had found themselves using as temporary accommodation for homeless people, two neighbouring houses they had originally purchased for congregational use .

"Sometimes people take advantage of us. They say they are destitute but really they just want somewhere to stay and eat for a couple of nights ... What can you do? You have to do your best for your fellow man." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

A priest in Congregation A explained the dilemmas posed by immediate pressures:

"You should distinguish between things you should do and things you have to do. There are two kinds of things you have to do. First there are the immediate pressures to respond to individual problems ... Second, there are things which are regular commitments and they just have to be done ... It means that you often have to leave the longer term things." (Priest, Congregation A)

Another obstacle to long-range vision could be the tendency of individuals to fight their own cause rather than think about congregational needs as a whole.

"One of the problems with the Parish Council is that it comprises representatives [of groups and activities] ... We need people on the PCC who are there in their own right to comment generally on the issues affecting the church." (Priest, Congregation A)

"Nobody looks at things as a whole ... it's hard to get people to do things together in this area. People are very individualistic ... People want to get brownie points where they're blowing the trumpets and flapping the wings." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

The difficulty of maintaining long-term plans and resisting appeals from individuals and groups with special interests was intensified in cases where appellants had scarce expertise. Thus, Congregation C had had to give priority to buying a new organ when the only available organist refused to play the existing one any longer.

"[We had] a small electric organ. The organist was not happy. One morning during the service, he was playing and then a voice was heard, 'I've run out of keys!' After that, he put in an ultimatum for a new organ. At that time, we were trying to raise £50,000 for a church hall. But he said, 'Unless you agree that an organ is the next priority, I will not play.'" (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

And the Social Welfare Worker in Congregation A explained the necessity of paying specialist lay people like himself to do congregational work:

"There will have to be more paid laity ... In the area of responding to social need, the priests are out of their depth. ... They were aware that a little more than a prayer was needed." (Social Welfare Worker, Congregation A)

NURTURING ENTHUSIASMS WHILE WORKING TO GOALS

As discussed in the previous chapter, congregations provide arenas in which individuals can achieve personal self-development and fulfilment through learning, educating others, caring for others, being cared for, leadership, trying new activities and so on. Congregations could, then, experience difficulties around curtailing activities driven by individual commitment and enthusiasm, and around considering them dispassionately within the framework of their overall goals and activities. This was especially the case when individual enthusiasts offered religious explanations of their motivations.

Indeed, it mostly seemed that the balance of activities in the case congregations was a function of the preferences and aptitudes of their clergy and members. Within the framework of broad purposes, and provided that certain minimum liturgical needs were met, the rest of a congregation's activities were largely ones developed on an ad hoc basis by individuals with particular preferences. For example:

"I started to look at what was needed in the area in the way of accommodation. ... The work slowly built up ... I explained the problem to the priest who ... went to a special fund and got three years' funding for me to do 20 hours a week ... This way I'm doing what I love doing." (Social Welfare Worker, Congregation A)

"In June 1968, the Lord revealed to me to start a meeting for prayer every Tuesday night ... I try to always be there on a Tuesday and I lead the group ... There has been a meeting every Tuesday since I started it." (Prayer Band Leader, Congregation B)

"I started the Prayer Link ... It grew out of my other caring activities for the church ... It's a major commitment." (Prayer Link Coordinator, Congregation C)

"On Tuesday nights, I run a forum to explore new age ideas ... I love new ideas ... It's supposed to be under the wing of the synagogue but they leave me alone. It's my little thing." (Forum Coordinator, Congregation D)

Small groups of congregants, as well as individuals, often took initiatives and drove forward mutual aid or service-providing projects.

"There is a group which meets ... every week and they are older people, but they themselves go out and visit housebound people - like ministers to like. They are aware of when people go into hospital and they make visits." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"The Sick and Social Committee had been going for years and they developed the idea gradually [of running a day centre for the elderly]. They suggested it to [Pastor] and he accepted it and then we prayed for it ... We started it by faith." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

"The healing services are really good ... It's very moving and satisfying. It serves the need and fills a gap. We started with about 7 and now we have more than 12 ..." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

While this kind of ad hoc development of activities was functional in meeting individual self-development needs, and in ensuring a wide range of activities in congregations, it also left major areas unattended to in all four of the congregations; areas which were agreed to be important but which were left undone for lack of

people to push them forward. For example, interviewees in Congregation A were concerned that they had no youth activities and emphasised the need for them; but the congregation had been unable to find anybody who was willing to take the initiative:

"The big hole is the youth ... we have not had anybody who has said they would take it on." (Priest, Congregation A)

Congregation C had no choir for similar reasons:

"It would be lovely to have a choir but we've got ... nobody to train them."
(Lay Leader, Congregation C)

Again, Congregation D had virtually no activities to support Eastern European Jews or Israel. Several interviewees emphasised that this was an important aspect of synagogue endeavour. All the same, nobody had been found who was willing to take a leadership role in that area.

"The Israel Group died because the Group did not feel that it got support ... The leadership of the group was poor." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

Here the essentially voluntary nature of congregation organisation was again apparent. People could not be forced to work to set goals; rather they were given permission to do things they wanted to do, provided that they were within the boundaries of broad congregational purposes. Once activities were established, they became an accepted part of the congregation's repertoire of activities.

"People arrange things themselves and then ask [priest] if it's alright ... the initiatives tend to come from the people and then the Team provides support."
(Pastoral Assistant, Congregation A)

"This is a very creative place ... the community is not rigid. You can start things if you want to." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

As discussed in the previous section, rational approaches to goal definition and achievement were of limited applicability in these circumstances. Goals could be specified, but their implementation (as will be discussed in Part B of this chapter) was dependent primarily on voluntary cooperation and personal preferences.

"When you get people together, you have to let them do it their way ... you must not always be interfering." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

DIFFICULTIES IN SETTING PRIORITIES

Many interviewees were concerned about goal priorities: whether it was feasible to set any and the consequences of doing so - or not doing so.

Some interviewees drew attention to the way in which meeting one pressing need within a congregation could lead to other equally pressing needs being neglected; either because of competition for resources or because fulfilling one goal could preclude simultaneously fulfilling another.

"The sick and elderly can dominate the time of a parish team if you let it."
(Priest, Congregation A)

"The emphasis on families marginalises those who are single or who do not want to be married or whose marriages have failed. We are not doing enough for them." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

The conflicting demands and needs of different generations in relation to worship emerged as a major issue in all four of the case congregations. Congregation B had

attempted to resolve the dilemma by making clear its expectations that children would learn to accept adult norms of behaviour in relation to their church participation; that is, they had in practice given priority to the needs and wishes of older members.

"The whole purpose of the youth activities is to integrate the young people in to the mainstream of the church." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

Congregations A, C and D, on the other hand, had all been giving high priority to the needs of young children and young families in worship. In all of them this had become a matter for continuous complaint and resentment from older members.

"The idea of a children's Mass is wonderful ... it shows real commitment to the next generation ... But the old guard don't like the informality and lack of discipline." (Congregation A)

"The problems I experience are to do with my age and my upbringing. I don't like the way the children are allowed to talk and walk around at Mass. They should be more disciplined." (Congregation A)

"There is a feeling of the younger element versus the older element." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"[Vicar] has changed things so that now the young children are inside the church during the service. People are upset because the children make a noise and run about. There was a big row recently. One long-time member of the church ... suddenly shouted out during the service to one of the mothers, 'Will you stop that child from running about'. The mother started crying. Now that couple [the older ones] have left the church." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"We have not found a way of handling the children on the High Holydays. It was just a shambles ... They couldn't cope. It was all geared to the younger children. The children were running around. We got nothing out of the service." (Lay Member, Congregation D)

At the time of the study, Congregations A, C and D were considering ways in which they could give higher priority again to the wishes and needs of older congregants. This example demonstrates the difficulties of reconciling goals within congregations; in this case the goal of integrating children and young families and the goal of making meetings and services *"prayerful"* (5). Yet reluctance to set priorities explicitly, and thereby appear to favour one group over another, could result in constant disharmony and internal lobbying.

All the same, many interviewees emphasised the inappropriateness of explicitly weighting activities or interests, feeling that there were myriad paths to fulfilling religious purposes.

"Grace builds on nature ... From the natural feeling of enjoying the company of people comes a sense of goodness and serving God ... This can come from a range of activities." (Priest, Congregation A)

"Everything is part of the worship." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

"Everything is religious to a certain extent." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

Some interviewees attributed the failure to make unequivocal choices about priorities, to amateurishness and incompetence.

"Too many different opinions can lead to delays in getting things done." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"It's a ship with an admiral and a lot of skippers on the bridge. And sometimes the boat just goes round and round." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"Sometimes people just vote the opposite of somebody else for the sake of it." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"There's an inability to make decisions on major issues like the new building ... There are problems about the division of authority ... who has authority to over-ride who?" (Lay Member, Congregation D)

"The Council gets bogged down with administration. It makes big decisions on subscriptions on the nod. There is a lack of vision." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

Against this concern about competent decision-making, other interviewees emphasised the importance of building consensus behind key decisions, rather than being businesslike:

"In this type of area ... you have to build people up." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"You have to try to get a good team. You've not to be too powered. You can destroy a team like that. You must not be abrasive." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

"You can soon clear your congregation if you try to change things too quickly." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"A lot of people in the synagogue run their own businesses. They are not used to consultation, long time periods for reaching decisions, and their ... ideas being challenged and changed." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

The conjunction of reluctance to be explicit about priorities, with the limitations on resources such as clergy time, room space, voluntary support or a subsidy, tended to result in scarce resources being allocated mainly according to historical accident, rather than according to consciously set priorities. Once a group or activity had established its claim to resources, these were rarely openly questioned or withdrawn. Problems about claims to room space, for example, figured in all four of the case congregations and were depicted as running sores, causing ill-feel between lay congregants.

"... a group felt they had been ousted from rooms that they had been using in the presbytery." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"We do not use the new extension for teaching - it's kept for prayer and meetings. If we had more space [for use by the Sunday School], we could split up the existing classes into smaller groups which would be much more satisfactory." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

"There have been lots of problems ... over the use of the hall, especially with the Ladies Group ... There was a tremendous amount of friction [with the under-5s Group leaders] ... The issues were petty but it created a very bad atmosphere." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"The building is over-crowded and so there are always problems about which activities are to have the use of them. There cannot be all the activities that people want ... There are conflicts over bookings." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

In the case of Congregation D, the issue of competition for meeting space had caused so much ill feeling that, at the time of the study, they had a working group which was trying to resolve the problem by suggesting priorities.

"Because of the size of the building ... if we have x then we can't have y ... The question of the competing demands is being looked at at the moment by a small group to see if we can get a policy on priorities so that we don't have to take ad hoc decisions." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

A priest in Congregation A summarised the issues surrounding priority setting in congregations:

"The only way you can ever do something fresh is by stopping doing something you are already doing - something that serves the already committed and that has been done before." (Priest, Congregation A)

MAKING CHOICES

This part of the chapter has focused on interviewees' perceptions of the issues that arise in congregations as they face choices between competing demands and interests. The second part moves the focus from issues of goal setting to issues of goal implementation.

PART B: IMPLEMENTATION OF GOALS

The case study interviews indicated that, irrespective of the degree of clarity of goals and the degree of consensus in congregations, numerous problems and issues arose as congregations attempted to implement them. Interviewees' perceptions of these problems are discussed in this second part of this chapter.

THE LIMITS OF VOLUNTARISM

The implementation of most congregational goals was dependent on the cooperation and commitment of lay members working on a voluntary basis; a fact which placed limitations on the extent to which congregational goals could be fully implemented.(6)

As will be discussed in Chapter Nine, the recruitment and retention of volunteers in congregations is a matter of major concern. Interviewees in Congregations A, C and D raised the question of how far it is appropriate to 'persuade' people to take on responsibilities in order to achieve larger congregational goals. How, in short, do you balance congregational goals against personal needs?

"There are a number of people who put all their waking hours in to the church ... Often this goes beyond what I think is right. People neglect their families ... out of loyalty to the church." (Lay Member, Congregation A)

"In [former vicar]'s time, many marriages were threatened by people's commitments to the church ... He was ruthless in making demands on time ... He expected people to give their all to the church." (Lay Member, Congregation C)

"There is a relatively small number of committed people doing everything - even to the point of making themselves ill ... the committed people get

exploited ... You sometimes have to make a choice between caring for the community and caring for yourself as an individual." (Lay Member, Congregation D)

This kind of commitment to the good of the congregation was not raised as an issue by Congregation B interviewees; perhaps because, as one lay officer explained, its religious values prescribed *"obedience to God's will"* and, by extension, to its spiritual leaders. When individuals were asked to take on a responsibility they looked on the request *"as a recognition of what God wants"* and they would *"encourage one another to be involved"*. As a result, it seemed, people could be recruited to take on responsibilities which they initially regarded themselves as unable to do.

"In 1982, I was asked to be the Church Treasurer ... I thought I was not able to do it, but they said, 'yes, you can'. It was not any educational qualification they were looking for; it was my honesty. I had never even used a bank paying-in book." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

"I don't like speaking out in public [preaching] but you have to do it because it's a commitment." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

Even where congregants were not reluctant volunteers, the fact that they were working on a voluntary basis meant that there were limitations on the degree to which some goals were, or could be, implemented. There were always dangers of volunteers being overloaded and overwhelmed, or faced with tasks that were beyond their competence; a matter which will be discussed again in Chapter Nine. In Congregation C, for example, the Sunday School was near to breaking down because of the demands on voluntary teachers; the vicar had had to devise a rota system at short notice.

"It was getting to the stage where the existing teachers felt they could not ask for a Sunday off because it would not be possible to find replacements ... Many of us had had enough. It was going to blow up." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

Monitoring and control of goal implementation could also be problematic in Congregations A, C and D because of the dependence on volunteers. Where work was not carried out, or was not carried out as expected, lay and religious leaders found it difficult to apply sanctions. In Congregation B, the highly developed system of 'apprenticeship' and training, coupled with a congregation culture which enabled the pastor to nominate key officers, enabled these problems to be avoided. People were given responsibilities only when their ability to do them well had been tested and established and when they could be trusted to work in accordance with congregational norms. The Pastor explained his viewpoint:

"Every person who is a Head of Department should know the Word enough to be able to know what to do ... People are responsible to God, not to me ... if they don't do it properly, they have to answer to God." (Pastor, Congregation B)

In the other three congregations, the culture did not allow for this degree of direction and problems of 'under performance' or disagreements about how to implement goals were frequently cited by interviewees. An employee of Congregation D, summarised the difficulties of ensuring goals are implemented:

"It's very arbitrary as to how things get done. It depends on who happens to chair a group as to whether items for action are in fact followed up and acted on ... Some of the committee chairmen are just not up to leadership roles." (Congregation D)

The continuity of volunteer-dependent activities was often fragile; another limitation on effective goal limitation.

"If I walked away, it might collapse. I've put the momentum behind it and I keep it going." (Soup Run Organiser, Congregation A)

"[Name] and I are crucial to the running of the project [lunches for homeless people]. If I were going to leave, I would work at training and empowering people to take over. I've learned how crucial this is because of the demise of [another] group." (Lunches for the Homeless Coordinator, Congregation D)

A lay leader of Congregation D described how his own awareness of the problems of continuity in volunteer-run projects had led him to veto an ambitious project to run a hostel for discharged patients from the local mental hospital:

"I said 'no way unless you find the money and enough people who will undertake to run it' ... There were a lot of people with ideas but there was a history of leaving things in the lurch." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

An interviewee in Congregation C pointed out how, when voluntary resources are limited, there is a tendency to neglect major goals in favour of day to day organisational survival.

"We need more people ... we are using the same people all the time ... so the people who can do things are overburdened with the routine running of the church ... so we don't have time for the things that the church should be all about such as organising clubs and groups; visiting people; studying and discussing." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

PRACTICAL CONSTRAINTS

Lay and clerical leaders in all four of the congregations described how the exigencies of modern, secular society placed constraints on the extent to which congregational goals could be wholeheartedly implemented.

A priest in Congregation A, explained how he had spent some time *"finding a written authority"* which would enable him to take a *"moderate stance"* when doing family planning counselling. In Congregation B, which is a manifestly evangelising congregation always hoping for new converts, an interviewee explained how cautious they were, in practice, when dealing with potential members who were not Afro-Caribbean.

"We witness to everybody [tell people about Christianity and pentecostal religion] but we are careful if they are not black ... there are two Italian women who were brought up as Catholics and they have been coming to the church and they have been born again. But their husbands are against what they are doing and we would not encourage the splitting of a family. We told the women to pray and witness away from the church." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

At the time of the study, Congregation C was also making a pragmatic adaptation of goals to meet 'realities'. It was having to modify its plans to expand its social activities in the face of growing resentment from the neighbouring community centre. The vicar and Church Council of Congregation C were aiming to increase the membership of the church by getting more people *"over the threshold"* because:

"... you can get people to come to services by making other activities welcoming." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

However, the congregation's social activities were seen as a competition by the neighbouring community centre and there was growing ill feeling. Thus, Congregation C leaders were facing the possibility of curtailing their own evangelising efforts in order to retain an amicable relationship with the community centre. This mirrored the experience of Congregation A when it proposed to provide meals for homeless people on its own premises; it was obliged to institute a soup run instead:

"It [feeding the homeless] was difficult to get it off the ground ... it was not very welcome here ... The residents would be worried about the effect on their property values of having down and outs and drug addicts around."
(Congregation C)

Some lay interviewees were frustrated by this pressure to take a pragmatic approach to the implementation of congregational goals.

"[There] should be more attempt to explain things, even if it means upsetting people ... People lack basic religious knowledge." (Congregation A)

Also, to the extent that they saw 'imperfect' behaviour apparently condoned, individual congregants were discontent.

"We are too liberal in services ... people are roaming around in services and nobody will say anything ... " (Congregation A)

"You used to have to come to church to have your child baptised. Now ... things have become very lax." (Congregation C)

"Quite a few get converted just for the marriage ... This upsets me ... I think people should be vetted more appropriately. I'd make the selection tougher ... They make it too easy." (Congregation D)

"... religious ignorance ... The lay leadership compound the difficulties because they themselves do not go to synagogue and they only pay lip service to education ... They are not giving religious leadership." (Congregation D)

RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS

Although goal implementation in the four congregations was limited by resource availability, the main issues around resources as seen by interviewees were more complex than just lack of resources.

At the time of the study, Congregation D was engaged in a major internal debate - amongst lay leaders, between lay leaders and the rabbi, and between lay leaders and ordinary members - about how to make plans in the light of the adverse effect of the recession on members and, therefore, on their ability to maintain their subscription payments on which the synagogue was totally dependent. The membership was growing at the same time as an increasing proportion of members were asking to pay reduced subscriptions. This raised questions not only about the feasibility of redeveloping the building, but also about the ability of the congregation to maintain its existing level of activities and staffing.

In Congregations A and C one of the key issues perceived by lay leaders was about raising awareness of the cost of running a congregation.

"You cannot get through to parishioners that they should pay for the use of rooms in the presbytery ... We ask for donations but they only ever get small amounts on a one-off basis." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"They think they can just put 10p in the plate each week ... They think the Church of England has money. In fact, it has land but no money ... People have to learn to make realistic contributions ... People don't stop to think

about money and the work that goes in to running the church." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

Raising awareness about costs of supporting a congregation was less of an issue in Congregation B, which, although it was a very small congregation serving people of modest income, had secured, and continued to secure, large contributions from its members.

"We started the building of the church in faith ... [Pastor] told people that they should lend their savings to the church. ... All the buildings were bought without mortgages through the gifts and loans of members ... Everything collected is used for running costs or outside work ... some people tithe one tenth of their income. But nobody puts pressure ... Everyone knows what is required." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

Members of Congregation B covered their own costs for participation in church activities; those who arranged flowers bought the flowers themselves, the Music Director bought her own music, and a Sunday School Teacher said that she paid to attend training courses. Even missionary trips abroad to found new congregations were generally self-funded; in exceptional circumstances, a special church collection would be made to help.

"You pay for yourself [to go on missionary trips] if you can ... I don't see the church like that ... It's not the church's responsibility ... If it's your will to preach, you should do what you can for the Lord." (Lay Member, Congregation B)

Even in Congregation B, however, there were concerns that some members - young adults in particular - were not sufficiently aware of the real costs of sustaining the activities which they enjoyed participating in.

"The younger people have everything on a plate ... They are saved but they will not put the Lord's work first ... They have the spiritual experience but they are more materialistic ... They will not limit their spending to give money to the church ... They come when they feel like it ... They love the church and they expect its support and its prayer." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

DISSENTERS

As discussed in Part A, dissenters from broad congregational purposes do not usually remain within a congregation. On the other hand, it is not uncommon for both lay and clerical members of congregations to have reservations about lower-level, 'operational' goals and, especially where they occupy key positions in a congregation, such people may constitute obstacles to goal implementation. Dissenters often do not make their opposition explicit. Instead they impede implementation by merely failing to cooperate, to support colleagues, or to give necessary time and attention. Thus, a priest in Congregation A explained the difficulty of getting cooperation in some activities from other priests:

"We are used to one person reaching the decision and the rest have a bargain to absolute obedience. But they moan about the decision and won't take responsibility for it." (Priest, Congregation A)

Opting out of this kind by a figure crucial to goal implementation was also described by lay people in Congregation D:

"[The Rabbi] cannot fight everything. He walks away from things."
(Lay Member, Congregation D)

"[The Rabbi] ... always avoids taking responsibility for any decision."
(Lay Member, Congregation D)

Lay people can also impede implementation of goals with which they disagree. Thus, interviewees in Congregation C, described how older members of the congregation were indicating their disapproval of some activities sponsored by younger people, by quietly withdrawing from activities and voluntary commitments which they had hitherto undertaken willingly, such as tending the church gardens and cleaning the church hall. The younger people were then forced to take on these duties themselves - at the expense of fulfilling their own priority goals.

And in both Congregations A and D, the goal of involving parents in their children's religious education was being sabotaged by parents themselves:

"People find it hard to accept that gone are the days when the nuns and the priests taught the children ... now you have to pass the faith on yourself ... it's difficult for parents to accept this ... they feel it cuts back on their Sunday ... they try to fool her [the Head Teacher] by not coming and having excuses."
(Lay Member, Congregation A)

"Parents give priority to other things. They say 'I didn't contract to send my child to synagogue on Saturday when I joined' ... Parents seem to think they have to give their children religion in the same way as they used to give cod liver oil. They think it's good for the kids but it's not for them." (Lay Employee, Congregation D)

COPING WITH FAILURE

Interviewees in all four of the case congregations referred to the distress they experienced in recognising areas in which cherished goals had not been achieved, or only partially achieved. It seems that the nature of a religious congregation is that there are a number of broad purposes that are 'givens'; it is not open to a group of leaders to change key goals, even when they do not have the means to achieve them.

For example, if a congregation declares itself to be 'pentecostal', it is committed to evangelisation and, in so far as it does not achieve converts, it is 'failing'. Similarly, since great emphasis is placed in both Christianity and Judaism on the goal of passing on religious knowledge and tradition to the next generation, churches and synagogues experience as 'a failure', youth or education activities which are not successful.

"... you always feel guilty in a church when you have to drop some activity. We used to have a 'Fish Club' for the older children and they kept trying to keep it going but they couldn't. But it kept on coming up on the Council agenda. You feel you've failed." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

Several further examples of feelings of anxiety or demoralisation surrounding the non-implementation of goals were cited by interviewees.

"We should be more concerned about our youth. But whenever anything is organised for them, they don't turn up." (Priest, Congregation A)

"We don't actively welcome people; there should be a positive affirmation that we want them ... it's difficult to rationalise the gospel message if you don't do that." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"We have to get more souls in. The most important thing is to get people to repent before the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand because if they are not saved they will go to hell." (Lay Member, Congregation B)

"I hope for growth through youth and adults coming to know Jesus ... but I am not hopeful ... people love pleasure more than God." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

" ... the young teenagers drop out and we can't get them back ... We should spend time thinking about this ... We've got nothing for them ... the young people are the future." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"We are always struggling to raise people's horizons of the wider church ... But the work ... feels remote ... It's an indicator of the health of a church if it has a horizon on the wider church. It's an area of omission here." (Vicar, Congregation C)

"I've become closer to my own religious roots and I feel strongly about the fact that we are not a learning community ... we don't do enough about adult education ... it's a criticism of Anglo-Jewry that we are not integrating the religious side of our life." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

"In Council, we get so bogged down with day to day running that we lose sight of this as a place of spirituality ... we need to bring this back consciously." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

More optimistically, an interviewee in Congregation D thought that disappointment was a necessary part of running a vibrant congregation which takes risks and tries new activities:

"We gaze at our navels a great deal ... We are always seeking to push out our horizons and blaming ourselves for our failures." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

In fact, as the vicar of Congregation C pointed out, the very nature of some congregational goals is that although you are obliged to strive to achieve them, they are in practice unobtainable:

"This is one of the paradoxes of ministry - you know the goals are unobtainable but you are obliged to strive towards them. ... a favourite occupation for people who leave the ministry is the building trade - people are so desperate to see the fruit of their labours, which you can never do when you are a vicar." (Vicar, Congregation C)

DISCUSSION OF CHAPTER SEVEN

This chapter has described and analysed the perceptions of interviewees about the issues that arise in their congregations around the formulation and implementation of purposes and goals.

In Part A, it was pointed out that explicit dissent from broad congregational purposes was rare, but that numerous issues arose in congregations around choosing 'operational' goals; including the pull between mutual benefit goals and more outward facing ones; the need to weigh immediate demands against long term visions; and the need to nurture the enthusiasms of individuals and groups without losing track of overall congregational goals. In the face of numerous competing demands and needs, as well as congregational traditions and precedents, explicit setting of priorities was seen by interviewees as problematic. The conflicting interests of different generations within a congregation and competition for physical space were examples of specific difficulties cited by numerous interviewees.

In Part B, issues arising in congregations around the implementation of goals were described. The implications of the heavy dependence of congregations on volunteers was discussed, as well as a range of other perceived constraints including: 'real world' practicalities; resource limitations; and the lack of cooperation of dissenters. The part closed with a discussion of the way in which demoralisation can be

engendered by failure to implement goals; even when the goals are in practice unachievable.

The findings confirm, then, that difficulties arise as congregations attempt to set and implement goals and that the range and number of goals open to congregations can be problematic. Also as anticipated by the literature, religious norms - at least in Christian congregations - can militate against open discussion and conflict resolution.

In addition to confirming the earlier literature on goals in broad terms, the findings also amplify and elucidate it in a number of respects. Thus, they indicate that it is the operational goals of congregations, rather than the broad 'banner' or 'mission' goals which are most likely to raise issues. Again, the roots of difficulties in goal setting and implementation often lie not so much in debates about religious principles, as in practical considerations; such as the wish to keep in sight long term plans in the face of day to day pressures, the necessity of encouraging the enthusiasms of individuals and groups including key volunteers, the need to avoid alienating internal and external interest groups, and the importance of managing institutional boundaries. There is, for example, concern about meeting 'mutual benefit' and 'commonweal' aims, but this is not posed as a conflict or as a religious debate; rather the concern is how to achieve both goals in the face of limited resources.

At the same time, religious principles do play an important part in the issues surrounding congregational goals. Mostly, however, they appear to constitute a factor which can exacerbate a practical problem and makes its solution more intractable, rather than a factor which is an underlying cause. Thus, religious injunctions about caring and neighbourly behaviour aggravate the difficulties of choosing between competing priorities, since choice inevitably involves upsetting an individual or a group. Resisting pressures to respond to short term and immediate demands is harder if the demands are backed up by a religious argument; and not supporting an individual enthusiasm is more difficult if the proposer cites personal religious

motivations. Failures to meet goals - however unachievable they may be in practice - can be especially hard to bear if there are religious principles prescribing those goals.

The material presented in this chapter also provides further confirmation of the hypothesis that congregations experience organisational issues which cut across denominational and religious divides. For example, all four of the congregations served as routes to individual self development for members and all four of them were trying to reconcile this function with the practicalities of congregational goal setting and goal implementation. All four faced issues arising from their dependence on volunteers for goal implementation and their need to make pragmatic adaptations to their environments. All four of the congregations were also obliged, in practice, to give organisational maintenance goals priority over longer term goals. Finally, the problem of inherently unachievable religiously-based purposes was a matter of concern in all the congregations.

At the same time, the findings provide some pointers to organisational differences between congregations. For example, the fundamentalist religious values espoused by Congregation B, and the related authoritarian culture, apparently enabled it to largely avoid some of the issues confronted by the other three congregations; including competition between internal interest groups, issues surrounding volunteer recruitment, difficulties in securing financial resources and problems of monitoring. Interviewees in Congregation B stressed congregants' shared understandings of both ends and means.

In the following three chapters, the description of perceived organisational issues in the case congregations continues.

NOTES TO CHAPTER SEVEN

1. In their examination of religious organizations, Demerath and Hammond (1969, p167) focused on "tensions, dilemmas, pathologies, and points of strain"; an approach which followed

"from a conviction that organizations cannot be realistically understood merely in times of harmony and in terms of their public face. Instead they are best revealed at moments of crisis and conflict."

2. The concept of an organisational goal is discussed further in Etzioni (1961), Perrow (1970) and SSORU (1974). The difficulties of defining and describing organisational goals have been widely noted in the general organisational literature. Scott (1987, p19) suggests that the

"concept of organizational goals is among the most important - and the most controversial - concepts to be confronted in the study of organizations."

And Perrow (1970) draws attention to the multiplicity of types of goals which coexist within organisations and can conflict with each other: societal goals, output goals, system goals, product characteristic goals and derived goals. The especial difficulties surrounding the definition of goals in religious organisations were discussed in Chapter Four.

3. See Chapter Four, Part C. Following Blau and Scott (1963), the distinction here is between focusing on the needs of congregation members and adherents, and taking a more outward-looking approach towards the needs of the local and wider community.

4. There was no evidence in either the literature or from the case study of Congregation D that this point applies to non-Christian congregations. In fact, interviewees in Congregation D recounted examples of major debates, and even open disputes about organisational issues amongst lay leaders and between lay leaders and the rabbi. For example:

"There were terrible rows at Honorary Officers meetings. I used to get very emotionally involved." (Congregation D)

This point is discussed further in Chapter Eight.

5. The goal of making the church a "prayerful place", was included in the draft planning document produced by the parish and under consultation in Congregation C at the time of the case study.

6. This section presents material about the implications of voluntarism for goal implementation. Many other issues arise around the roles of lay volunteers in congregations, including how to recruit, retain and support them. These issues are discussed in Chapter Nine.

CHAPTER EIGHT: ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES IN THE CASE CONGREGATIONS - CLERGY ROLES AND ROLE RELATIONSHIPS

In this and the following chapter, the focus is on a second organisational theme identified in the literature: roles and role relationships. Interviewees' perceptions of issues arising around definition and implementation of clergy roles are analysed here. As in previous chapters, the term 'role' is used to refer to "a set of expectations of behaviour in a given social situation" (SSORU, 1974, p266).

Two points should be noted about the material presented in this chapter. The first is about the selection of data. Whilst every effort has been made to restrict the presentation here to matters directly concerned with roles of religious functionaries, many issues raised by interviewees did not fall neatly in to that category; often they also related to other organisational factors and issues, including growth and change and organisational structure. These are topics which will be discussed again in Chapter Ten.

The second point is about the balance of data presented. The chapter relies heavily on interviews conducted in Congregations A, C and D. Interviewees in Congregation B did describe the role of the pastor and his relationship with other roles but, for the most part, they did not refer to issues or difficulties.

One possible explanation for this, referred to in Chapter Five, is that the researcher was perceived as so much of an 'outsider' in Congregation B, that interviewees were only willing to provide 'factual' descriptions and to talk about the most positive features of their congregation. However, this explanation does not fit well with the fact that Congregation B interviewees were happy to discuss other issues such as those surrounding goal implementation (see Chapter Seven). A more plausible explanation, then, is that the role of the pastor was so well understood in Congregation B and that respect for the decisions of the pastor was so great, that it was indeed rare for people

to perceive the definition and implementation of the pastor's role as problematic. This second explanation is congruent with the observed authoritarian culture of the congregation discussed in Chapter Six.

The context of the chapter is provided by the literature on the role of religious functionaries reviewed in earlier chapters which suggests that they experience difficulties in balancing the numerous, wide ranging and competing expectations placed on them by congregants, their denominational institutions and their surrounding communities. They also experience conflicts between the demands of their congregational work on the one hand, and their professional self image and their personal preferences on the other hand. Conflicts between clergy and laity are common, many of them essentially concerned with relative authorities and competition for power. Difficulties are often traceable to the ambiguous employment situation of clergy within congregations and to the fact that they have a special religious status which is separate from their employee status. The outcome of these various pressures on clergy, the literature suggests, is that many of them feel demoralised and discontented.

Issues surrounding the role of clergy are discussed in this chapter under four broad headings: defining clergy roles; controlling or empowering laity; clergy work styles; and struggles for power. A distinction is made as far as possible between perceptions of laity and perceptions of clergy. To facilitate discussion, the term 'clergy' is used to refer to the religious functionaries of the four congregations.

THE ROLE OF CLERGY

DEFINING CLERGY ROLES

Numerous issues were raised about the definition of clergy roles; both by clergy themselves and by lay interviewees. Many of the concerns were about the range and scope of roles.

Clergy interviewed felt that they just did not have sufficient time to encompass all the possible functions that were expected of them and which they wanted to perform. This perspective was shared by the pastor of Congregation B who spoke about sometimes working a 24 hour day *"in ministry"*.

The perception of clergy that they were overloaded was accounted for not only by competing external demands, as discussed below, but also by their own awareness of needs amongst congregants. They had to accommodate to the possibility that some of the goals to which they were committed were unobtainable:

"You know the goals are unobtainable but you are obliged to strive towards them." (Vicar, Congregation C)

"At first [when I worked in the inner city] I hit the ground running ... They said I was too activist. ... I had to wake up to the fact that there was no hope of improvement and that survival was the greatest achievement." (Priest, Congregation A)

Clergy found it difficult, sometimes impossible, to cope with the multiple and competing expectations on them.

"Many people see themselves as the only pebble on the beach - they have no idea of the workload being carried." (Priest, Congregation A)

"Priests are terribly overworked. There are always a number of balls in the air at once. In addition to the parish basics ... there are too many 'good causes' that can overwhelm you. You end up not being able to find any space in your life ... At times I ... feel that I cannot take another external demand." (Priest, Congregation A)

"All the church groups ... would like me to pop in more ... it affirms their value." (Vicar, Congregation C)

"People expect immediate responses to their personal problems from the rabbi." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

In the pressure to meet differing expectations, their own priorities could be squeezed out:

"I find it difficult to reconcile my negotiating role [between different groups within the congregation] with being true to my conscience ... the decisions I make must be true to my own vision." (Priest, Congregation A)

"The pressure is to respond to those who are already heavily involved and who want to take you over and reinforce their own interests ... there are very high expectations, especially from the pious." (Priest, Congregation A)

"The Rabbi ... does not want the organisational burdens. He feels the weight of people's spiritual needs. He needs a full-time executive. Then he would have more time for religious things." (Lay member, Congregation D)

Some lay people interviewed were sympathetic to the problems faced by clergy in implementing their roles. For example, a lay person in Congregation A described her distress when, by chance, she found that the senior priest had had to miss an important diocesan meeting because nobody else could be found on a Saturday afternoon to cook meals for a church event. She said,

"We need more priests so that the ones we have don't have to work so hard and can have a more relaxed life." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

Similarly, an interviewee in Congregation D said that they needed *"more rabbis doing more hours"* because

"[Rabbi] does not do enough. It is not because he is lazy or disinterested. He just does not have enough time." (Employee, Congregation D)

All the same, many lay people were discontented with the balance of functions performed by their religious functionaries. The Head Teacher of the primary school adjoining Congregation A regretted that the priests did not *"do anything especially for the children"* and an interviewee in Congregation D said that:

"[Rabbi] ... avoids teaching the children. I think teaching is an important rabbinical function. He's more interested in therapy so he emphasises his pastoral role." (Lay Member, Congregation D)

In coping with these competing expectations, clergy noted the importance of collegiate support in minimising the difficulties and helping to set boundaries.

"I have [members of the order] and a spiritual director who I turn to if I feel I am moving to burn-out". (Priest, Congregation A)

"Having colleagues [in the parish team] is very comforting ... the team brings in wider expertise." (Vicar, Congregation C)

CONTROLLING OR EMPOWERING LAITY

Interviews indicated that, within the same congregation, lay people could hold widely differing views of the authority of clergy in relation to lay people.

Clergy as Bosses

Irrespective of changing theologies of laity in churches and the fact that rabbis officially carry no 'priestly' authority in synagogues, many lay people retain the view - one universally held by Congregation B interviewees - that their religious functionary should be 'the boss'.

"We are ... moving ... to a lay-dominated church. But we still have to get people to take responsibility. At the moment there is no concept of the laity taking things on themselves or of moderating their demands." (Priest, Congregation A)

"The laity are used to the paternalistic structure so people want the priest to be there patting them on the back and making it respectable they feel insecure they are not used to taking responsibility even though they say that they will do things themselves." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"I'm not used to the modern methods of vicars. Vicars used to be the king pin in a church. ... now the Vicar participates in meetings and events as an equal." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"People look to the vicar as the decision-maker ... People don't want to take responsibility. The older generation have known only that way of relating to an authority figure and they could not take the power." (Vicar, Congregation C)

"He [the Rabbi] has the power and the respect. It's important for the synagogue that he's ... a key mover." (Employee, Congregation D)

In some cases these views about the final and superior authority of clergy appeared to derive from personal interpretations of religious principles. An interviewee in Congregation D suggested that congregants tend to see the rabbi as their *"surrogate Jew"*; somebody with special authority and able to carry out religious obligations on their behalf. Similarly, an interviewee in Congregation A referred to the view of some lay people that priests have *"special zapping powers"*. A priest in Congregation A talked in similar terms:

"... the priest as Superman ... This is partly a theological problem of people seeing priests as their substitute in all religious matters ... often people want the priest to do things even when they are things they could do themselves - everything from saying prayers to changing a light bulb ..." (Priest, Congregation A)

For some interviewees, the idea of clergy as 'bosses' seemed to derive from considerations about organisational practicalities; the need for a clear final point of

decision-making and responsibility within the congregation, or the desirability of having consensus on key decisions.

"Often I was pushed between [lay employee] and the priests. ... As I see it, the priest should say how things are to be done." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"We are very dependent on having [Rabbi]'s seal of approval on all we do ... We have to feel we are all going together ... We have to have his blessing on major decisions and his commitment." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

Empowered Laity

In contrast with those who wanted the clergy to be unequivocally in charge, there were also lay people who were concerned to empower lay people relative to clergy. This drive was underpinned by both theological arguments and more secular, egalitarian, arguments.

"We should use the energy of the laity ... The idea that Christ is in you through baptism is my particular central thing ... That's why it shouldn't be left to the priests; they do not have a monopoly." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"It is important for the priest to consult key people in the congregation when decisions are being taken involving financial expenditure or worship or the organisation of the church ... The priest must see himself as part of it, rather than the boss ... It is not a matter of the priest administering to the people ... the church is the people." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"People think that because [Rabbi] says x, then x is right. We have to learn that he is not always right." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

The Chair of the Parish Council in Congregation A emphasised the importance of providing organisational structures which facilitate lay empowerment. For example, having priests chair meetings inhibits laity:

"If a priest is in the chair, people will just accept everything he says and decides. When you have a lay person, you get far more arguments to the chair." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

In the case of the synagogue, which had an elected lay council which employed the rabbi, the ambivalence of lay people about the relative authority of the rabbi, was a constant theme in interviews. On the one hand, there was respect for the rabbinical role. At the same time, lay people were aware of the rabbi's position as their employee.

"I don't know who the Rabbi reports to. Nobody assesses him. He probably does not have a job description ... My fees pay his salary ... There should be an appraisal scheme for him." (Lay Member, Congregation D)

The clergy of Congregations A, C and D themselves mostly espoused democratic ideals and liberal theologies of the laity.

"We have to learn to empower people ... This is an important theological point ... The more active the laity the better". (Priest, Congregation A)

"The Rabbi interprets his role such that there is more sharing of tasks than would be considered rabbinic elsewhere ... He sees the rabbi as a facilitator and empowerer." (Employee, Congregation D)

And there was also a recognition of the more practical reasons for involving the laity; to share the burden of clergy roles.

"Laity are demanding more participation and are doing more. At the same time, the number of priests is dwindling. So they are forced to let the laity do more." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

Clergy Confusion

Despite these religious, ideological and practical reasons for clergy to encourage lay activity, it seemed that many clergy were in practice confused about their authority relative to lay people; they found it difficult to work out the practical implications of their theoretical commitment. Thus, a Lay Leader in Congregation A pointed out that the priests consistently made decisions about matters such as the physical fabric of the church and long-term planning without consulting the Parish Council. He concluded that:

"The priests have to learn that sanction and discussion are necessary ... Priests come and go ... the PC provides continuity ... changes must meet parishioners' needs." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

This can be contrasted with the viewpoint of a priest in Congregation A who, after emphasising the importance of lay empowerment, regretted that lay people *"make themselves dependent"*. He felt that his attempts to empower lay people were limited

by lay passivity and that this was a matter of class and education; that the less educated people were, the more likely they were to hold priests in awe:

"People around here do not think of themselves as having abilities; they discount their own competence." (Priest, Congregation A)

Similarly, an observer of Congregation C, who was also committed to ideals of lay involvement, argued that Congregation C needed a *"strong, pro-active clergyman"* because it did not have *"many people who can take initiatives on their own"*. He recognised this as a dilemma in the context of a drive to lay empowerment and described it as follows:

"How do you sustain an organisation in a way which enables people to do things themselves? ... The Church has not been good at this outside of the middle classes ... You must not be patronising." (Congregation C)

In Congregation C, the new vicar had, in fact, taken back from the laity a task which they had done themselves up to then: visiting families who wanted their children baptised. At a Church Council meeting, a lay member of the council suggested that he might like some lay help with the visiting. The vicar declined the offer saying, *"It's something I enjoy."*

In Congregation D, the rabbi also said he favoured a relationship of equality between laity and rabbis. Yet, as will be discussed in a later section, he too was ambivalent about the power of laity in practice; especially where the laity took decisions or adopted working styles which he did not approve of.

A Time of Transition?

Although this pull between empowerment and control of laity was framed as a class issue in Congregations A and C, the finding of a similar tension in Congregation D, which had a predominantly middle class membership, suggests that there are factors intrinsic to modern congregations which make it especially difficult to resolve the dilemma. We may be in a transitional period in which old certainties about congregational organisation and the authority of clergy have been eroded by

democratic ideologies, new theological interpretations, and the secularisation trends noted in Chapter Two.

At the same time, neither clergy nor laity have yet been able to wholeheartedly embrace the full practical implications of the changes. At the point of implementation, it seems, clergy may have reservations about sharing power with lay people. As an interviewee in Congregation D pointed out, control is an easier option for clergy, at least in the short term:

"It's easy for a rabbi to draw firm task boundaries. This gives him control and something to show for the salary he's paid." (Employee, Congregation D)

And, as one of the priests in Congregation A admitted, not everybody is easy with the practice of democracy:

"... most people who go in to the religious life are introverted ... they may think democracy is a good idea but they find it difficult in practice. Their instincts tell them to go it alone, to be a prophet." (Priest, Congregation A)

Equally, many lay people are ambivalent about acquiring responsibilities and power from clergy:

"Attitudes to the priesthood are complicated. Most people are friendly and respectful, but there can be tensions. There are people who like the priest to be on a pedestal - provided that they can kick the pedestal." (Priest, Congregation A)

This ambivalence of lay people could make clergy even more uncertain about the nature and boundaries of their own roles. The vicar of Congregation C felt that in parish ministry:

"... you are always eking out a role for yourself and pushing yourself into situations where people are uncertain as to whether they really want you there or not ... You know you have the right to be there and you are seen as 'the vicar' but there is also concern about your role and your identity." (Vicar, Congregation C)

CLERGY WORK STYLES

Problems about the relative authority of clergy and laity were also reflected in debates about working styles. Interviews suggested that a cooperative, non-contentious atmosphere within congregations was maintained only in so far as lay employees and key lay volunteers were able to adapt to the working style of their clergy.

"Nothing is ever planned very far ahead unless I raise it ... Often the priest will tell me 15 minutes before the service that there are going to be baptisms ... I don't mind. I can cope but other people might not be able to work in this casual fashion." (Music Director, Congregation A)

"We've had to adapt ... [Present Vicar] is a business person; he likes it all done well. [Previous Vicar] got things done after he dealt with other priorities. Things can still be done well even if they are done differently ..."

You have to work at it [the relation between priest and congregation]. It's easier when there's a pleasant working relationship." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"The main difference between me and the rabbi is that he's process-driven whereas I am task-driven. I think I've moved towards his approach ... but he has not moved towards me." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

The need for congregants to adapt to clergy working style, is symbolised in the following observation:

"He [the Vicar] has some bad habits, like walking away from people while he is talking to them so that they have to follow him around." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

Whilst the maintenance of a pleasant atmosphere within congregations demanded lay adaptation to the work style of clergy, it was also the case that clergy were expected to maintain a warm manner to their congregants.

"The children know the priests well through the schools and parents get the opportunity to talk to priests at school ... there's not the fear any more ..."
(Lay Member, Congregation A)

"He [the Vicar] gets on well with people ... If you get a good vicar and he is liked, you're almost there ..." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

Clergy who were not friendly and open in a variety of settings, were seen as problematic by interviewees.

"People do or do not want to go to church because of the personality of the priest ... [Under a previous vicar] we were averaging 100 communicants on a Sunday - purely because you could talk to him ... Then we had [Vicar] and the church population drifted down until we were under half the numbers ...

Now we have ... the new young man. There is an older, female, element in the church who are alienated ..." (Congregation C)

"[Rabbi] is not a communal rabbi. He is superb on a one to one basis but he is out of touch with the community as a whole." (Congregation D)

STRUGGLES FOR POWER

As discussed in Chapter Seven, Christian congregations may have theologically-based norms which emphasise the importance of consensus and discourage 'noisy' protest (1). Thus, despite the existence in Congregations A and C of concerns and debates about the nature of the clerical role and the relative authority of clergy and laity (as discussed above), these were not generally reported as having been expressed in overt struggles or public arguments.

All the same, interviews did indicate that significant struggles had taken place between clergy and laity and that those struggles were ongoing and concerned a range of issues including liturgical and other directly religious matters. An interviewee in Congregation C, contrasted the power balance under the current vicar, with the situation when the church was led by a curate:

"Twenty years ago they thought they could dominate the curates - they would suggest how things should be done." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

Another interviewee in the same congregation confirmed that the balance of power was now on the side of the vicar. She recalled recent 'discussions' about the organisation of the Sunday School:

"He [the Vicar] chose the new syllabus. He presented it diplomatically, but we knew we would have to do it ... Vicars always get their own way ... If there is an argument, the clergy view usually dominates." (Congregation C)

There had also been differences of opinion between clergy and laity in Congregation C over the form of healing services. Again, the Vicar's wishes had prevailed but several lay interviewees talked nostalgically about how *"beautiful"* the healing services had been when they were informal and under lay direction.

A member of the Parish Council in Congregation A described himself as engaged in a long-standing, albeit quiet, battle with the priests over lay power:

"They [priests] don't realise that laity want to participate. ... I have chiselled away at them to get them to give more power to lay people." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

This same interviewee also described being *"incensed"* when the Parish Council were faced with a fait accompli on an important issue:

"I thought it smacked of paternalism and I told [Priest] so." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

In Congregation D, the struggle for power between clergy and laity was more openly and extensively discussed by a number of interviewees. There are a number of possible reasons for this. Perhaps it was due to the culture of the synagogue which

was not tied into the Christian theological norms which discourage open dissent. Or perhaps, as discussed in Chapter Five, it was because the researcher was less of an 'outsider' there than in the other three case congregations. Another possibility, which emerged from the interviews, is that the issue - by chance - was so much alive in the congregation at the time of the study that interviewees felt unable to consider organisational aspects of the congregation without referring to the power struggles taking place.

It seemed that the manifest organisational structure of Congregation D was such that struggles between lay and clerical leadership were, prima facie, more likely to arise there than in Congregations A and C. In the latter two cases, the official structure gave unequivocal final authority to clergy; a point of reference in cases of major dispute. In the case of Congregation D, this was not the case. Control of all resources rested with the elected lay leaders and they also had responsibility for the hiring and firing of staff, including the rabbi. Juxtaposed with this 'rational legal' authority of the lay leaders was the 'traditional' and 'charismatic' authority of the rabbi (2). Both parties were potentially powerful and there was no official single point of final decision-making. A interviewee summarised a long-standing confusion:

"There is a big question about who is the leader - the rabbi or the chairman ... I've never worked out what are the respective roles of the rabbi and the chairman ... if I had been chairman, I would have disagreed a lot with [Rabbi] but I would have been unsure about whether I had the right to assert my view." (Congregation D)

The working assumption seemed to be that key decisions would be made by consensus and negotiation. But interviewees suggested that, historically, the degree to which this had been the case had varied according to the personality and work style of the lay leadership. One interviewee described how a period of the rabbi and the chair being in accord and *"doing whatever they liked"*, was followed by a period in which

a new chair had *"continuous rows"* with the rabbi. The new chair used his power of veto over resources to control the rabbi during his period of office, although he refrained from public dispute with him:

"... The rows mostly took place in private - you cannot defeat or control the rabbi in public ... He has a special status." (Congregation D)

As to the power struggle taking place in Congregation D at the time of the study, interviewees offered several explanations. One interviewee gave an analysis which was a reverse image of the situation described by Congregation A and C interviewees, suggesting that the struggles in Congregation D were due to the *"autocratic"* work style of the lay leadership; a style which did not fit with the *"demand for openness and sharing"* coming from the rabbi. Like several others, this interviewee thought that the autocratic style was borrowed from the world of small professional businesses from which most of the lay leaders were drawn.

"There are a lot of solicitors and accountants and they have not been employees or managed staff. If they do manage staff they tend to be very autocratic ... They don't understand about motivating people and thanking them." (Congregation D)

In interview, the rabbi explained in more detail the reason why *"autocratic"* lay leadership was a problem; he referred to the interdependent nature of the rabbi's and chair's roles which, in his view, necessitated *"team work"* and *"a shared sense of responsibility"* between lay leaders and rabbi:

"The metaphor of the relationship between a rabbi and his community as a marriage is a strong one ... I don't have strong boundaries as a rabbi. At the same time, I need to be responsive to the community and so I need to build a

partnership with the Chairman and the Council. They represent the needs of the community." (Rabbi, Congregation D)

The rabbi saw the prime goal of the synagogue, as well as the core of his own role, as ultimately about the implementation of Judaism. As he was the expert on that key subject, he felt that he should, by implication, have the final say on all matters in the synagogue. He had, he said, "*a closed conception*" about "*the centre*" of his role.

"What it's really about is the rabbi and what is Judaism." (Rabbi, Congregation D)

Since many of the current lay leadership were not very 'religious', they frequently differed from him in their interpretation of synagogue aims and, since they held key resources, they could override the rabbi as they wished. This was not something he could accept without protest. In short, the rabbi's explanation reflected the debate about 'authenticity' which was referred to in Chapters Two and Four. His view that there was a link between the core of the religious functionary's role and the prime aims of the congregation, was one that was not contentious in the other three congregations studied. Indeed, the idea of the clergyman's role as the authentic expression of congregational goals, was explicitly voiced by interviewees in Congregation B. In the other two congregations, A and C, the idea was rarely expressed in this way, but the tenor of interviewees' comments implied that this was taken for granted; even amongst those who were chafing against clerical control over laity.

DISCUSSION OF CHAPTER EIGHT

This chapter has described and analysed the perceptions of interviewees about the issues that arise in their congregations around the implementation of the roles of

religious functionaries. As anticipated by the literature, issues of role definition were mentioned by numerous interviewees. The range and scope of tasks and expectations were widely seen as problematic by both clergy and laity. As in earlier studies, clergy were found to be stressed and overloaded; pulled between competing demands and expectations and frustrated by not being able to meet their own personal priorities.

The data also confirmed earlier findings that difficulties are common in the lay/clergy relationship; and that the ambiguous employment situation of clergy and debates about the 'authentic' core of the clergy role can be contributors to these difficulties. But in addition to confirming earlier studies, the data also throw new light on the problems of implementing clergy roles.

First, because they include the views of laity as well as clergy, and because they set the problems of clergy within a congregational context, the findings reported here provide a more rounded perspective of the problems surrounding the implementation of the clerical role. Whereas the earlier literature generally painted a picture of misunderstood and isolated clergy, the data here indicate that lay people in congregations often have a fairly clear understanding of the problems faced by clergy and empathise with them. At the same time, they see that congregational organisational needs are not easily reconciled with the personal and professional needs of clergy.

The new data also point to a link between congregational goals and the role of clergy. Embodying and representing the prime purposes of the congregation may be seen by laity, and by clergy themselves, as a key function of the clerical role. One consequence of this is that clergy may feel tied to goals which are inherently unachievable but which they are powerless to change or abandon. Another is that debates and conflicts between clergy and laity can be seen as struggles over the right

to direct, or interpret the 'mission' of the congregation. Experiences of both failure and tension are in this way built into the role of clergy.

A third contribution of the case study data is to explicate the causes, nature and dynamics of those struggles for power between clergy and laity which have been noted in the earlier literature. The data demonstrate, for example, the wide range of views about the relative authority of clergy and laity which can exist within the same congregation; views which may be rooted not only in religious perspectives but also in opinions about organisational appropriateness or in fear of change. The findings also suggest that both clergy and laity may experience difficulties and confusion about implementing approaches to lay empowerment to which they have committed themselves in principle. We appear to be passing through a period of transition in which traditional models of the clergy/lay relationship have been eroded but in which implementation of new approaches is proving problematic in practice.

A related finding from the case studies is that lay leaders are generally keen to reach consensus with clergy on important issues; and, equally, clergy need the support and approval of lay leaders and other congregants to implement their roles effectively. Many of the issues raised by interviewees were about the negotiation of what appeared, in practice, to be an essentially interdependent relationship.

To what extent, then, does the material presented in this chapter confirm the hypothesis about organisational commonality between congregations? An immediate response is to note that, in general, the issues perceived as surrounding the implementation of the clergy role were similar in Congregations A, C and D. However, it needs to be borne in mind that the data used here was largely drawn from only three of the four case congregations since, for the most part, interviewees in Congregation B did not refer to issues or difficulties with respect to the implementation of clergy roles. This is not merely a methodological note. It is, in

itself, an important finding. For it casts doubt on the idea that congregations experience common organisational issues and problems.

On the assumption that it was indeed the case that Congregation B interviewees did not perceive the role of their pastor as problematic, the question arises as to why the congregation differed in this respect from the other three studied. One possibility which emerges from the study data, is that the underlying theological stance of a congregation has an important impact on role definition and implementation in congregations. It may be that a congregation committed to a 'strict' or 'fundamentalist' religious approach is able to avoid some of the issues that arise in more religiously liberal congregations since, as was also suggested in Chapter Seven, individuals who have embraced this approach are less inclined to question organisational decisions, instructions and procedures. These latter tend to be seen as expressions of God's will and, therefore, not open to criticism, debate or discussion.

The idea that underlying religious values impact on the way in which roles and role relationships are perceived in congregations is given further support by the differences which emerged in this chapter between Congregation D, on the one hand, and Congregations A and C, on the other hand. These were mostly differences of degree rather than substance, but they were noticeable all the same. Thus it appeared that Congregations A and C, in which the official, theologically-based, stance was that clergy were the final point of authority, were able to avoid some of the more acrimonious disputes about the clergy/laity relationship which arose in Congregation D. In the latter case, manifest statements, grounded in traditional religious ideas of the rabbi as a teacher rather than a priest, were equivocal about the relative authority of laity and clergy and could not, therefore, provide a basis for conflict resolution or consensus building.

In sum, the findings presented in this chapter have gone beyond confirmation of the earlier literature on clergy roles and added new perspectives and explanations. The

findings have also provided further evidence that congregations of different religions and denominations can experience very similar organisational problems. At the same time, they also indicate that differences in underlying religious principles can be reflected in differences in organisational experiences between congregations.

In the following chapter, the focus moves from roles of clergy to roles of laity; lay volunteers and lay employees.

NOTES TO CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Middleton (1987, p 149), in a review of the literature on the behaviour of nonprofit boards, draws a distinction between "conflict averse" boards and "noisy" boards; these latter "frequently disagree over goals and organizational policies; the result is a bargaining style of decision-making."

2. These distinctions are derived from the work of Weber (1964). Their application to the organisational analysis of congregations was described in Chapter Four, Part B.

CHAPTER NINE: ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES IN THE CASE CONGREGATIONS - LAY ROLES AND ROLE RELATIONSHIPS

This chapter continues the description of issues surrounding roles and role relationships in the case congregations. Here the focus is on the role of lay people; a topic on which little has been written by earlier researchers. That literature which exists suggests that the presence of lay employees within congregations can give rise to tensions. Problems may also arise around the recruitment of (volunteer) lay leaders and questions may be raised about their representativeness.

In Part A, issues surrounding the role of lay members of congregations are presented under three main headings: the roles of lay leaders and senior volunteers; the roles of other volunteers; and the roles of lay people generally, including those who do little or no 'work' in or for their congregations. As with the material presented in the previous chapter, this part relies heavily on material gathered in Congregations A, C and D; interviewees in Congregation B generally did not see the implementation of lay roles as problematic. Comments from lay people themselves in Congregation B indicated that roles and role relationships were strictly defined and that the authority of the pastor and senior leaders was largely unquestioned:

"Everybody knows their job ... It's a strict mental thing."

"The leaders tell us what to do. We can't do anything on our own."

"Generally, we all work together - like people do when they are part of the same household."

"God has given us a vision of progress for all mankind. We have to cooperate with him with a willing spirit to get order, harmony and right."

"We wait for [Pastor] to tell us what is God's will."

Part B describes issues surrounding the roles of those lay people who receive payment for the work they do in congregations, under three headings: paying for work; member employees; and organisational integration. All people who receive payment for congregational work are, strictly, 'employees'. But the extent to which they are regarded and treated as employees, and the extent to which they feel that they are employees, itself emerged as an underlying issue.

The employment situation in each of the four congregations was described in Chapter Six. At the time of the study, Congregation B had no paid lay employees although the pastor was hoping that it would be possible to make an appointment in the near future to relieve his "*burdens*". In Congregation C, the only widely recognised employee was a part-time cleaner. However, a member of the congregation was also being paid, on an occasional, hourly basis, to do gardening and odd jobs. Interviewees were mostly not aware that he was not a volunteer. Conversely, several interviewees were under the impression that the part-time Secretary - who in fact received no payment at all - was an employee.

In addition to having several lay people who were 'semi-volunteers' or 'semi-employees' in this same way, Congregations A and D both had several full-time and part-time employees. Consequently, Part B draws primarily on interview material gathered in those two congregations.

For both Congregations A and D, having employees other than part-timers doing unskilled work, was a relatively new experience (within the previous five years); laity and clergy were still in the process of adapting to the presence of paid lay staff. Thus, the issues described in Part B may be seen not only as issues about the roles of lay employees, but also as ones about organisational change in congregations; a topic which will be addressed separately in Chapter Ten. Again, some of the issues

raised by interviewees in relation to lay employee roles appeared to be more a function of the characteristics of individual role holders than of the roles themselves. As far as possible, then, Part B focuses on issues common to both of the employer congregations and on issues which appeared to be significant irrespective of individual personalities and the stage of congregational growth.

PART A: THE ROLES OF LAY PEOPLE

THE ROLES OF LAY LEADERS AND SENIOR VOLUNTEERS

Interviewees distinguished between that group of lay people who took on major responsibilities and did the majority of time-consuming work, and other lay people.

"The people who volunteer are the key factor in how the parish works; they are the intermediary between the priests and the less involved laity." (Priest, Congregation A)

"There is an inner group of willing people ... the burdens fall on a small group of people." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"A lot of people do a huge amount behind the scenes in their committee roles ... the synagogue's lucky to have them." (Lay Member, Congregation D)

These people were referred to as *"lay leaders"* or *"senior volunteers"* in several interviews. Some of them were essentially in governance roles, for example as senior members of a lay board; whilst others were primarily concerned with operational work, such as providing welfare services (discussed further in Harris, 1994), teaching, or dealing with the practicalities of running public worship.

Issues surrounding the roles of such people are the focus of this section. As with clergy, issues arose around the boundaries and definition of the roles of lay leaders. But the problems were perceived not so much as about competing expectations, as about competing loyalties and about the constant threat of 'burn out'.

Competing Loyalties

Once having occupied a senior lay position, a congregant tended to get drawn into an increasing range and depth of congregational activity. As described in Chapter Seven, people could be torn between their congregational commitment on the one hand, and loyalty to their families, friends and paid work, on the other hand.

"My work for the church takes up the whole of Sunday and some evenings. Sunday is difficult. Saturday is a big night out and I stay up to 8.00 am and then I'm at [Congregation A] all day. Monday is bad." (Young, single Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"When I was chairman, there was nothing in my life except [Congregation D] and work ... my [now adult] children still resent the time my wife and I put in to the synagogue when they were young." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

Even in Congregation B, where religious and congregational commitment was an accepted life-style, individuals could experience stress as a result of their congregational commitments:

"If I was not single, I could not do this. My whole life is work and church ... I talked to the Lord about it about 10 years ago because I was trying to do so much and the Lord opened a door for me ... now I do temporal work only on 3 days a week. This gives me enough to live on but I have time for the church." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

Responsibilities

In addition to dealing with competing loyalties, senior volunteers could find themselves carrying major responsibilities, alone or with little support; for example, they might have responsibility for the continuity of a welfare project (Harris, 1994), for the supervision of building work, for meeting legal requirements, or for the care of large numbers of children. They could also be placed in the position of having to stand in for other volunteers at short notice.

The Treasurer of Congregation B described the *"headache"* of getting people to sign and return covenant forms which were required by the Inland Revenue. And the Social Welfare Worker in Congregation A recalled the beginning of what later became a paid job:

"I left my home number in the Newsletter and I got phone calls at all hours of the day and night - 4 or 5 a week - from people who were destitute or who needed general advice about benefits." (Social Welfare Worker, Congregation A)

A project in Congregation D to provide weekly lunches and other services for homeless people had thrown up a range of practical problems and heavy responsibilities for the two voluntary coordinators, such as doing large weekly shopping trips, and dealing with petty theft and occasional violence. The coordinators had also had to cope with the ongoing anxieties of other lay leaders about the implications of having homeless people on synagogue premises.

In Congregations C and D, interviewees expressed resentment at the way in which they and others had been *"lumbered"*, *"manipulated"* or *"sucked in"* to a major voluntary role with no way of leaving without letting down the congregation.

"I got pushed on to the Council and then I got shanghaied in to becoming a Warden because [previous Warden] was leaving ... It's the hardest job in the world to find somebody to be Warden." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"... At that time, we were losing children from the Sunday School at about 11 years old. I agreed to help somebody else in setting up something for that age group. Then she left to join a local charismatic church and I was left with it." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"I don't think I can take on anything more ... I would like to find a place for myself where I can do something without being sucked into the vortex of overload." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

"One of the reasons why lay people won't come forward is that they get manipulated into doing more than they intend and then they get burnt out."
(Employee, Congregation D)

Recruitment

In this context, it is not perhaps surprising that there were also difficulties about recruiting people to senior voluntary positions. At the time of the study, Congregations C and D were experiencing major problems over securing lay leaders.

In Congregation C, the difficulties were seen as a reflection of the characteristics of congregants:

"There are a lot of deep anxieties there and people are already carrying too much. So they have chronic problems in filling leadership positions."
(Congregation C)

"It's hard to get people to do things together in this area. Most people are newcomers who are striving to get their niche in life." (Congregation C)

In Congregation D the difficulties were attributed to the environment and to organisational factors; to the impact of the recession and to the fact that, in a growing congregation with a wide range of goals, individual lay leaders could be overloaded.

"Because we are successful, nobody wants to take on the leadership roles because they are too onerous." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

"May be people are put off by seeing what others have done. ... The recession has a lot to do with it. People have to pay more attention to making a living or keeping their heads down to keep their jobs." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

Another interviewee, on the other hand, saw the recruitment problems as a reflection of lack of lay "commitment":

"If you take on a voluntary job, you should do it in the same way as you would do a job for a living ... That spirit seems to be missing in 50% of the people who do voluntary jobs in [Congregation D] ... Everything stems from the will to do your best." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

Others interviewed in Congregation D suggested that it was unrealistic to expect volunteers to carry complex leadership roles; that as roles expand in size and complexity, paid staff become essential:

"The reality is that the amount of time that people can give is limited, especially in time of recession. Synagogues can't work like that any more. There is also the increasing size. The reality is you need paid staff to do the jobs." (Employee, Congregation D)

Management, Control and Monitoring

A number of difficulties can arise around the control of lay leaders and senior volunteers. To what extent can their voluntary work for the congregation be 'managed'? This is a sensitive issue as frequently lay leaders are motivated to take on key voluntary positions because of the opportunities they offer for autonomy and self-fulfilment; they do not expect to be 'managed', 'controlled' or 'monitored'. An interviewee in Congregation D who was employed as a manager outside the synagogue, pinpointed the difficulties surrounding the need to "assess" lay leaders to ensure that they addressed key elements of their role:

"For example, if the Chairman's role were assessed, he would be criticised for not moving on the new building and not finding his own successor. But then ... volunteers do things in their own time and they would refuse to be assessed." (Lay Member, Congregation D)

Yet not every volunteer met role expectations and the consequences for congregation organisation could not be ignored.

"The priests sometimes get annoyed if things don't get done." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"The people who work on committees are the very life of the synagogue - the creative side ... Sometimes the leadership is questionable - not prepared for what's involved." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

Often effective performance was crucial to the continuity and survival of congregations.

"If you are the Treasurer and you do not have enough commitment to make sure the subscriptions come in on time, you [the congregation] get into a bigger and bigger overdraft." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

So could clergy and paid lay staff monitor, or give instructions to, senior volunteers? A lay leader in Congregation A criticised what he saw as the *"autocratic"* behaviour of lay staff towards senior volunteers; he suggested that volunteers had left the church after arguments with paid staff. Similarly, a lay leader in Congregation D said:

"There is a lot of tension about ... the boundary between the role of [employee] and the jobs of the volunteers." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

Lay leaders interviewed were also resentful about having received conflicting instructions from clergy and paid staff; or finding junior volunteers being instructed by clergy who, they felt, were *"bypassing"* their authority.

"I have to be careful to ensure that I am in charge of the people on my rota. I don't want the Vicar to give instructions to them about changing things."
(Lay Leader, Congregation C)

To the extent, then, that they see themselves as being directed, controlled, or overridden, the loyalty of voluntary leaders to their role can be jeopardised.

Indeed, the issue was not just one of how to manage the work of senior volunteers and who has the right to do so. Many expected positive reinforcement and thanks for their efforts. Some interviewees were angry that there was insufficient recognition of the work done by senior volunteers:

"Everybody just assumes that the service sheets will be there when they come to church ... nobody ever inquires about how it gets done." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"Opportunities to show care and appreciation for voluntary commitment are often lost ... When they decided to employ a rabbi to take the High Holyday over-flow service, nobody bothered to tell [Name] or write to thank him for services over the years." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

However much their contribution is recognised, volunteers can suddenly drop out - for personal reasons or because they have taken offence - leaving congregations with key roles unfilled:

"The person who took on Editor of the Newsletter just suddenly dropped it." (Lay leader, Congregation D)

"The original [leadership post] left the church in a huff. He was asked to play Judas Iscariot in a dramatised version of the Passion for the Easter Service and was very insulted." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

Volunteers who not only fill key positions but also have scarce expertise may have to be handled with especial caution and sensitivity. The example has already been given in Chapter Seven of the organist in Congregation C who refused to play unless the organ was replaced as a matter of priority. Another example was given in Congregation D where a crucial Council discussion about organisational structure was

abruptly curtailed when the Secretary-elect said he would not feel able to take up the post unless the debate was resolved in a particular way. As nobody else was available for the post:

"That did it. There was no way out. We had to do what he wanted."
(Congregation D)

Training

It was not only the control and management of senior volunteers which was an issue; their preparation and training was also a matter of concern.

In Congregation B, there was an established process of 'apprenticeship' for leadership roles; a process through which people were understood to "*grow in the Spirit*" and to be "*moved over by the Lord*" from junior to more responsible roles. This process entailed clergy and other congregational leaders "*discerning*" individual abilities and providing suitable training:

"The church begins to fit you in because they discern your calling." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

"Each person has to learn to play his own part." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

As in the Pentecostal congregations studied by Nelson (1993, p662), social control in Congregation B appeared to be "accomplished through pressure from peers and elder members who have absorbed and mastered acceptable behaviors through long, generic experience in the church."

The less authoritarian culture of the other three congregations did not allow for this degree of control over leadership preparation. Perhaps as a consequence, leadership continuity and succession posed problems. On the one hand, people needed time to learn to be leaders, yet, on the other hand, offering training of any kind could only be done gently and diplomatically.

"You can't get leaders overnight. You have to build people up. What we need are people who are trained to have confidence to do that sort of thing."
(Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"At work, people get sent on courses if they can't run meetings. But it would be difficult to do that in the synagogue because people are giving their own time and doing their best." (Lay Member, Congregation D)

An interviewee in Congregation D suggested that even people who appear to already possess necessary skills and experience for lay leadership, can disappoint:

"People don't bring in their expertise to the synagogue. They just leave it outside - managing staff for example." (Congregation D)

THE ROLES OF LAY VOLUNTEERS

In all of the congregations studied there were large numbers of congregants who, although they did not take leadership roles or major responsibilities, were committed to regular voluntary work of some kind.

"There are little groups that do things like cleaning, flowers and collections. Everything is very informal." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"I do my bit and then I come home." (Lay Member, Congregation B)

"There are separate rotas for cleaning, flowers and doing the coffee after the service and a rota of people who unlock the church and set up the altar ... everything runs on rotas here." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"The total number of people involved is high. A lot of people do little jobs ... " (Employee, Congregation D)

Perhaps because they were not so crucial to the survival and continuity of congregations as senior volunteers, interviewees did not perceive as many issues surrounding these roles. All the same, a number of difficulties were mentioned, many of which were essentially concerned with motivation.

The need for continuous support and encouragement for lay volunteers was emphasised, both to recruit them in the first place and then to retain them:

"... those who are not bold get lost ... people need a specific invitation to be involved in something." (Lay Member, Congregation A)

"Lots of things cannot happen at [Congregation C] without nurturing ... But if you do that, many people there can do wonderfully well." (Congregation C)

"People don't come forward. They have to be identified and encouraged." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

"People who volunteer should be encouraged but should not be allowed to get overloaded so that they fizzle out and burn out." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

This required a great deal of tact and sensitivity. One mis-communication could result in the loss of a volunteer altogether:

"I was asked about being a church warden ... I hesitated because I did not know whether I had enough experience. They did not follow it up although I was interested." (Lay Member, Congregation C)

As indicated in Chapter Seven, many interviewees were concerned about persuading people when they were reluctant or already carrying personal or congregational burdens, or when they had been in the same role for several years. Experienced lay leaders and clergy described the skill of discovering potential and fitting people to appropriate tasks and roles:

"... drawing people in is an important part of the priest's role ... shy people want a specific task rather than to be invited to join in a group ... I look for black people and young people who need a specific approach ... for religious tasks I look for people with a long term commitment and who are acceptable to the congregation." (Priest, Congregation A)

"We can always find someone [to lead prayer groups] - somebody who can manage ... someone blessed by the Lord to be used like that - not everybody is blessed to be able to manage it. Everybody has different gifts." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

"[Vicar] encourages people to do things ... He brings people in to the service; he identifies their gifts and what they can contribute ... Each person has their own gift and role. There are many forms of ministry." (Lay Member, Congregation C)

"Everybody has a unique talent; we have to help people make a splash ... We have to recognise different motivations. Some people are looking for individual rewards and others want to be a cog in a wheel." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

The rotas established in Congregation C for the performance of a range of tasks were a response to these issues surrounding the involvement of lay volunteers. The congregational leaders had found that people who would otherwise refuse to do any voluntary work, were willing to take on small parts of a role, or to take their turn in the performance of that role. The use of rotas extended even to the performance of more senior roles such as Sunday School teaching and the role of verger.

The fact that the approach to a potential volunteer was for a religious purpose was often helpful in encouraging people:

"I look for teachers who the children will benefit from being with. I approach them and ask them to share their love of God and Jesus. I put them with another teacher at first and then gradually encourage them to take small groups aside." (Congregation A)

"The church can get people to do things which they would not do for themselves ... You get a spiritual reward when you do things for the church ... and it's a focus for the community". (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

And often volunteers could be recruited at points in their life when they were particularly appreciative of their congregations:

"Some people actively want to put something back into the community because they are grateful for help they've received." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"When something happens in peoples' lives - say a death or a barmitzvah - the synagogue touches them and they want to put something back." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

ROLES OF LAY PEOPLE IN GENERAL

Many interviewees raised issues which were generally about the participation, work and roles of lay people in congregations, without differentiating between those who were more senior or who did more work than others. One such issue, the relationship between lay people and clergy, was discussed in the preceding chapter. In this section, other issues surrounding the role of lay people in congregations are described.

An issue raised by several interviewees was how to ensure that the voice of *"ordinary people"* was heard in congregational decision-making. The question of how to balance their voice against the voices of other key groups in the congregation was particularly difficult.

"An issue for me is how the people get their say in the parish, especially in the face of such an effective and active Team." (Congregation A)

"You can be dominated by up-front people who will not necessarily do the work." (Congregation A)

"I am not happy about the lack of mechanisms for ordinary people to make their voices heard ... If you want to get your voice heard, you have to rely on representatives who may, or may not, reflect your wishes."

(Congregation C)

"I am aware of a split between the vision of the active lay leaders and the rest of the community. The active people do not necessarily reflect the wishes of the less active people." (Congregation D)

There were also concerns about those who did not, or could not, make any kind of time contribution to their congregation.

"Many people in the parish do not realise how much has to be done ... for many people the parish is a railway station - they come and they go and they don't ask to help ... they don't see it as 'my church and I must keep it going'". (Priest, Congregation A)

"There are a lot of people who are content to sit back and let others do things. They say 'Why don't they do this or that?'" (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

Those who had much needed skills which they failed to use for congregational benefit were criticised:

"We have nurses, secretaries, financial consultants and book keepers amongst our young people who have the talent which could be put to the use of the church. But many are not converted. They come when they feel like it." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

In Congregation C, it was felt that there were just insufficient people willing or able to make any contribution. Involving men was a particular problem:

"I don't know why it has become an Anglican tradition to have women mostly active ... The men are unwilling to get drawn in. It's a vicious circle. As soon as an able bodied man appears, he is pounced on to do everything ... they feel threatened." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

PART B: THE ROLES OF LAY EMPLOYEES

PAYING FOR WORK

The appropriateness of paying lay people to do work was a debated issue in Congregations A and D. There was particular concern about the impact of paid staff on the commitment of lay volunteers:

"Volunteers chuck things at the office ... Now that there are staff, the volunteers think that they don't have to do things." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

An interviewee in Congregation A suggested that employing paid staff had the effect of disempowering lay people and discouraging them from trying to tackle needs and problems on a voluntary basis. He described the impact of the appointment of the Social Welfare Worker:

"The Housing Advice was a group of volunteers but now he's taken it over and it's all dependent on him ... He should be training volunteers to do the work. But he thinks he's the only one who can do it." (Congregation A)

The retreat of volunteers was thought to apply not only to specific tasks but also to policy decisions:

"There are conflicts over room bookings. There is no strategic overview of how the building is used. [Administrator] is left to sort it out." (Lay Member, Congregation D)

Confusion could arise about where the boundary lay between paid and volunteer roles:

"... the Administrator feels that she is often asked to do things which should be done by volunteers." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

In contrast with these views about the negative implications of paying lay people to work, some interviewees saw paying people as an important means of raising the quality of work done and of ensuring that responsibilities were accepted. Discussions about paying people to do skilled or semi-skilled work on a part-time basis had taken place within the Team in Congregation A and several such appointments had been made including a sacristan, a secretary and an organist (1). The Senior Priest explained that he saw the transfer of money as a signal that somebody was regarded as responsible for carrying out a particular function and that a high quality of performance was expected:

"It says in effect that we are trusting you to get things done in your own way and in your own time ... It makes it clear that the person is officially that ... You can't say to a volunteer 'You're in charge' because all volunteers are equal." (Priest, Congregation A)

He thought that the results of giving payments for work in this way were excellent:

"[The Sacristan) has done well. In eight months she has transformed the church from a dirty and uncared for place ... This is the first time that things have been done properly." (Priest, Congregation A)

A lay interviewee in Congregation D made similar points about the symbolic significance of payment for work and he also thought that the congregation's experience in recent years substantiated his viewpoint. Thus, by paying Religion School Teachers, the congregation had secured conformity with its rules and expectations; whereas refusal to pay members of the choir had resulted in a failure to achieve an acceptable standard of music.

"I have always felt it important to value voluntary contributions [but] ... I recognise that there are some things you can only expect if people are paid ... People complain about the quality and attendance of the choir. I say you can only expect reliable attendance and high quality if people are paid to do the job ... It's not money so much. It's the whole issue of dedication and commitment." (Congregation D)

Whereas both Congregations A and D had employees who were paid 'the rate for the job', they also had a number of employees who were, in effect, receiving an honorarium. As indicated above, several interviewees thought that it was the payment itself, rather than whether it was the rate for the job, which was the key factor in signalling the nature of the expectations to the role holder. Some of the full-time employees in Congregation D, however, were unhappy about what they saw as the blurring of the boundaries between volunteers and employees:

"The synagogue is unprofessional in its ethos. People who are paid should be paid the right rate and volunteers should be recognised. The synagogue tends to merge things ... there are two cultures in the same organisation." (Employee, Congregation D)

Another interviewee in Congregation D was very concerned about the cumulative impact of paid staff on the *"voluntary ethos"* of the congregation. He talked with disapproval of other synagogues which had created *"bureaucracies"* over which lay leaders had little control and he voiced the opinion that, as the congregation spent more and more on paid staff, less and less work was actually done.

At the time of the study, issues about payment and volunteers were under discussion in Congregation D. At a special Council meeting attended by the researcher, questions for debate included: are some jobs suitable only for volunteers or paid workers; what is the impact on volunteers of having paid staff; and what is the impact when you pay people who formerly did things for nothing?

MEMBER EMPLOYEES

In both Congregations A and D, employees and other interviewees saw major advantages in having paid employees who were also active members of their employing congregation. One advantage was cost effectiveness.

"I don't mind putting in more hours than I am paid for ... this is my calling - just like a priest." (Employee, Congregation A)

"I am paid at a very low rate and they're getting much more ... I do not see myself as an employee ... it's an honorarium." (Employee, Congregation A)

"I worked 80 hours a week in the first few months ..." (Employee, Congregation D)

"Nearly all our paid staff are also members of the community. I see this as

a strength as people will do a great deal more than they are paid for out of a feeling for the community.” (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

“I don’t really work it [hours] out as I would if it wasn’t my own community.” (Employee, Congregation D)

There were other advantages for congregations in employing their own members. The Sunday School Head Teacher of Congregation D explained how she used the knowledge she gained in the course of her work:

“I know almost everybody because nearly everybody has kids who go through the school. I use the knowledge to keep the synagogue informed of what is going on. I hear things and I can create links between people.” (Sunday School Head Teacher, Congregation D)

Similarly, the Social Welfare Worker in Congregation A described how he was able to provide a tailored, accessible advice service to congregants because he knew them personally; he could approach people in church and ask them how they were getting on and people could approach him after services:

“I stand out on the pavement behind the priests so that people can find me.” (Social Welfare Worker, Congregation A)

He also suggested that because he was himself a long-standing member of the congregation, he would provide a point of continuity as priests came and went:

“I represent continuity and permanence ... I feel a connection to the church. I’m going to stay here. I’ll always be in contact ... I feel that this is part of me whereas they are serving a period here ... I’ve been here longer than any of them.” (Social Welfare Worker, Congregation A)

Despite these perceived advantages, difficulties were thought to surround the dual role of member and employee. It was difficult, for example, to issue instructions to such role holders or to control their work in any way. This was especially the case where employees had been members of their congregations prior to becoming employees and were widely known within their congregation.

"I see the lay employees as less accountable than the priests. We've chiselled away at the priests, but paradoxically we cannot get at [lay employees]."
(Congregation A)

In the case of Congregation D, there were numerous cross-ties of family and friendship between individual employees and both lay leaders and clergy. The resultant difficulties of management and control led some interviewees to suggest that the member-employee role was unacceptable and that efforts should be made to have clear lines of authority and accountability for lay staff:

"There are a number of very difficult relationships, partly because most of the employees are also members ... I do not rule out firing member employees."
(Congregation D)

Member-employees themselves could find their position problematic. They were in an ambiguous position relative to other lay members who were, in a sense, their employers:

"[Employee] has especial problems because he is also a member of the synagogue ... He has to constantly keep in mind the different views of the synagogue held by the different people." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

An employee of Congregation D listed a range of difficulties consequent upon being a congregational employee including: not feeling able to attend services of worship

or social activities because people used the opportunity to raise work matters; a reluctance amongst lay leaders to manage the post; and feeling unable to ignore tasks that needed doing.

"My personal life and my work cannot be separated ... I can't just say 'to hell with it'." (Employee, Congregation D)

ORGANISATIONAL INTEGRATION

A number of interviewees suggested that the roles of lay employees were not fully integrated into the organisational structures of their congregations; that there was a lack of clarity about where the roles 'fitted' in relation to other congregational roles; where the boundaries of the roles were; and what the role expectations were:

"There is no clarification of who is my line manager ... I don't feel I have authority ... People [lay members] just do what they want to do and say what they want to say." (Employee, Congregation D)

Lay people in Congregation A were thought to have difficulty in 'positioning' employees who took on tasks which were formerly performed by priests (eg catechetics and social care) . Were they one of the priests or one of the laity? Some parishioners saw such employees as poised between the two groups. Thus they felt able to make complaints or to argue with the lay Pastoral Assistant in a way which they could not do with the priests, yet they were expecting that she would convey their views to the priests:

"[Pastoral Assistant] is in the firing line of challenge." (Priest, Congregation A)

"[Pastoral Assistant] is a stepping stone to the priests." (Lay Member, Congregation A)

The Pastoral Assistant suggested that congregants generally thought in terms of two categories - priests and laity - and that, after initial confusion at the time of her appointment, parishioners saw her as part of the priestly world; even though this was not how she saw herself and it was not the intention of the priests and religious who appointed her.

"There is a sort of line where parishioners are in the world and not just thinking about the church and their religion; and then there's a group of people who are living away from the world [priests] ... I was appointed to be in the world and of the world but people treat me as though I am one of the religious - they put me across the line." (Pastoral Assistant, Congregation A)

Some lay employees in both Congregations A and D were resentful about assumptions that they would demonstrate a higher commitment to the implementation of their roles than would be expected in a non-congregational context:

"There is only so much I can do ..." (Congregation A)

"I don't get much social life ... I've given my life to it It was taken for granted that I would be available when people need me - evenings and weekends." (Congregation A)

"There's an expectation to do more and more." (Congregation D)

In Congregation D, some staff felt that they were not being treated "as a professional". This was reflected in a desire for more "clarity" about matters such

as reporting lines, job descriptions, and role boundaries. It was thought that opportunities for supervision, assessment and career progression were also missed.

"Paid jobs have to be clearly delineated and handled in a professional manner. There has to be proper assessment of work done and appropriate behaviour on both sides." (Employee, Congregation D)

"I'm respected but I've earned the respect ... They are blind to my mistakes." (Employee, Congregation D)

"I and the other professional staff are not treated as employees are, or should be, in the big wide world. I feel strongly about this ... there is no evaluation of the way I do my job." (Employee, Congregation D)

It is possible that some of these difficulties surrounding the integration of lay employee roles were just 'teething problems' as both congregations were fairly new to the role of employer of paid staff. Employees in both Congregations A and D referred to paid roles as having *"evolved"*.

DISCUSSION OF CHAPTER NINE

This chapter has presented perceptions of issues surrounding the implementation of lay roles; lay volunteers and lay employees. Lay leaders, or senior volunteers, faced competing loyalties and were burdened by responsibilities. Problems arose around their recruitment, management and training. With respect to other volunteers, interviewees emphasised the need for continual support and encouragement as well as sensitivity in discerning what individuals have to contribute. Interviewees were concerned about non-participants and about means to encourage 'ordinary people' to express their viewpoints. With regard to lay paid staff, interviewees raised questions

about whether lay people should be paid to do congregational work, about the special position of employees who are also congregation members, and about the integration of lay employees into an organisational structure which basically comprises lay volunteers and clergy.

In contrast with the large body of literature on clergy roles, the role of lay people in congregations has received little attention from earlier researchers. Limited previous findings - about problems surrounding the recruitment of lay leaders and tensions involving paid lay staff - are confirmed by the case studies. But the studies also add substantially to knowledge about the roles of lay people in congregations.

For example, the findings provide some initial explanations about why problems arise in recruiting lay leaders; including key features of the demographic profile of congregations and the perception of onerous responsibilities. They also suggest that it is appropriate to distinguish between different kinds and degrees of volunteer involvement in congregations.

With respect to less involved volunteers, the study suggests that the main issues surrounding their recruitment are motivational; for example, how to identify their potential, how to draw them in, and how to support and encourage them. Issues surrounding the roles of the senior volunteers, on the other hand, resemble issues that surround the roles of senior paid staff in other small and medium sized organisations; for example tensions between work and outside commitments; the problem of role overload; and difficulties of management and training. With these senior volunteers, their motivation was not at issue; it was generally assumed that they were totally committed to the continuity and survival of their congregations.

The greatest contribution to new knowledge about congregational roles and role relationships is probably contained in the second part of this chapter which looks at issues surrounding the role of lay paid staff in congregations. Since only two of the

four case congregations were substantial employers, caution must be exercised in drawing anything other than the most tentative conclusions from the findings. All the same, they are probably of significant interest to other congregations poised, like Congregations B and C, at the door of the employer role.

A strong theme emerging from the findings on lay employees is the difficulty of 'positioning' lay employees in the congregational organisational context. As Chapter Eight and Part A of this chapter demonstrate, the implementation of clergy and lay volunteer roles - individually and in interaction - can be fraught with difficulties. The introduction of a third category of organisational actor, it seems, only intensifies the problems. There seem to be powerful drives to treat lay employees as 'honorary clergy' or 'honorary volunteers', rather than to conceptualise them as a third, distinct, kind of actor.

Because Part A was largely based on data from only three congregations, and Part B was based on data from two congregations, this chapter can make only a limited contribution to the debate about organisational commonality between congregations. All the same, there are striking similarities between congregations presented here; for example, in the stress and conflicts suffered by senior volunteers; in the problems of controlling lay leaders; and in nurturing and supporting volunteers. In the case of the two employer congregations the similarities are even more apparent; concerns about the impact of paid staff on volunteers, the ambiguous role of the member-employee, and the difficulty of integrating lay employees into organisational structures emerging in both congregations as key issues.

In this chapter, then, earlier limited research into the role of lay people within congregations has been confirmed and built upon. In the following chapter, the two remaining themes which emerged from the literature review - organisational change and denominational structures - will be addressed.

NOTE TO CHAPTER NINE

1. Interviews in Congregation C suggested that they had had a similar debate and had reached a similar conclusion before they had appointed a paid cleaner and before they decided to pay a member to keep the garden tidy. Not only had volunteers proved increasingly unreliable for such essential tasks, but also the volunteers had become increasingly resentful about the work they were doing. This had led to acrimony within the congregation.

CHAPTER TEN: ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES IN THE CASE CONGREGATIONS - ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE, DENOMINATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, AND ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

In this chapter, the two remaining themes identified in the literature are discussed in Parts A and B. In Part A data is presented on interviewees' perceptions of issues surrounding organisational change. The literature suggested that religious values can both inhibit and encourage change in congregations. Congregational history and tradition can also inhibit change. Certain courses of action, responses to problems, organisational structures, or working styles may be viewed as 'authentic' or 'inauthentic'. Here data on organisational change issues are presented under headings including changes in personnel, changes in membership, changes in congregational activities, and the implementation of change.

Part B focuses on interviewees' perceptions of the issues arising in congregations around their links with denominational institutions. The literature suggested that the relationship between a congregation and its denomination may differ substantially from official statements and that these very discrepancies may be a source of problems. Irrespective of formal politics, the relationship between a local congregation and its denomination is inherently one of tension. The extent to which a congregation is able to be independent of its denomination may be a function of its financial resources. Issues arising in the case congregations are discussed here under three headings: participation in denominational activities; resource distribution between congregations and denominations; and the role of denominations in congregational change.

In Part C a fifth theme, organisational structure (1), is addressed. This was not a theme which emerged from the literature review but it emerged from the case studies. Interviews in the four case congregations were semi-structured and interviewees were given the opportunity to describe organisational features and problems which were of

concern to them, rather than respond only to questions on topics prescribed by the researcher. Issues broadly concerned with organisational structure were mentioned by so many interviewees that it seemed appropriate to present data on that topic separately from, and in addition to, data on the four pre-identified organisational themes.

PART A: ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

CHANGES IN PERSONNEL

As indicated in the previous two chapters, changes in clerical and lay leadership could be associated with organisational difficulties in congregations.

In accordance with the customs and rules of their respective denominations, Congregations A and C had frequent changes of clergy. In Congregation A, priests are moved regularly by the religious order; a policy intended to prevent the accumulation of personal power. A senior priest had in fact been moved about a year before the case study and there was another change of clerical personnel during the interviewing period. When study access was obtained to Congregation C, a new vicar had been in post for about 6 months. The previous vicar had been moved to another parish and the congregation had been without its own vicar for 18 months. Thus, in both Congregations A and C, issues surrounding change of clergy were at the forefront in many interviews.

Some were concerned about the way in which activities or practices established on the initiative, or with the support of one priest, could be abandoned or radically changed with the arrival of a new incumbent.

"[Employee] ... worked very closely with the previous priest ... [Employee] dislikes anything that moves away from the way [previous Priest] did things."
(Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"Sick visiting ... doesn't really happen now ... that faded out in [previous Vicar]'s time." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

A priest pointed out the fragility of imposed change in circumstances where priests are continually being moved between congregations:

"Prophets don't carry people with them ... the decisions are not internalised ... then there is a problem when you leave about continuity." (Priest, Congregation A)

Others pointed out how internal groups could take the opportunity occasioned by a change of incumbent, to demand reconsideration of past decisions with which they disagreed, often opening old wounds.

"The parish is going through a transition at the moment ... the old guard re-establishing themselves." (Congregation A)

In both Congregations A and C, changes introduced by new clergy were seen as problematic. Whilst one group within the congregation might be pleased by new ideas and new ways of doing things, others could be alienated. In Congregation C, for example, those who favoured a businesslike approach to meetings were delighted by changes introduced by the new vicar:

"[Church meetings] go on and on with no decisions being reached ... Things are better now that we have [new Vicar]. He chairs meetings firmly." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

But those who enjoyed the old informality in Congregation C were intending to withdraw from the Church Council at the following election, and were withdrawing from participation in social activities and voluntary work too. Some thought that change was being introduced for its own sake:

"The changes introduced by the new vicar are excessive ... He is just trying to stamp his own authority on things." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

Changes of lay leaders or key lay employees could also be problematic. Resignations could threaten the survival of projects and activities, especially if, until then, they had been driven by just one or two people's enthusiasm.

"The main problem with the soup run is getting drivers ... If I walked away, it might collapse. I've put the momentum behind it and I keep it going." (Congregation A)

"More and more mothers are working and they cannot make a regular commitment ... I've been scraping round this week to try to find somebody to run the Mother and Toddlers group [as my successor]." (Congregation C)

"Many activities feel flimsy. They depend on one or two people and the Council is not behind them." (Congregation D)

A Social Issues group in Congregation D had collapsed when the Coordinator decided that she could no longer do that as well as organise lunches for homeless people. In interview she reflected that she should have put more effort in to grooming a successor.

This point about preparing a successor was taken for granted in Congregation B. It seemed that, in this way, Congregation B was able largely to avoid problems of

discontinuity experienced in the other three congregations. At the same time, it may have lost some of the benefits which derive from new personnel bringing in new ideas; the emphasis was on doing things in the same way, irrespective of who was in post.

"[In planning activities] I draw on my own experience in the youth section because I grew up with it." (Youth Leader, Congregation B)

"I learned how to do it from being taught myself." (Sunday School Teacher, Congregation B)

Change in personnel could be seen as threatening by both lay people and clergy; either because it challenged their perception of the way things ought to be run in their congregation, or because it questioned what they saw as their prerogatives:

"[When I was appointed, the priests] felt completely threatened ... There was also lay fear. They would have felt safer if I was a nun or a man. They had been trained against accepting lay workers and women." (Pastoral Assistant, Congregation A)

"The healing started with [previous Vicar]. There was no definite form but we all loved it because it was natural and we all said what we thought. [Previous Vicar] went around and laid hands on people. [New Vicar] did not like the service so now we have a different service [which is more formal]." (Lay Member, Congregation C)

"[The first time the chairman changed] I had a tremendous shock. I discovered my work was affected by who the chairman was. Just how

enormous this was had never been explained to me when I was in training. The change of chair changes the work of the rabbi. " (Rabbi, Congregation D)

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

For Congregations B, C, and D, change in the characteristics of their membership was a major concern. Founder generations were ageing or dropping out of active participation and leadership succession was a problem.

"I would like to see the young people [15-30 years] take more initiative ... We started the church when we were middle aged." (Congregation B)

"We have lost many of the mature people who were doing work in the church - through moving away or emigration ... Many of our former officers have gone to the US and Jamaica. They are still active in ministry. But now we have young and newer [newly converted] people who are in training. This puts a burden on us." (Congregation B)

"We need to do more work with the younger generation of families - the 20-40 age group - so that some will come in to leadership such as wardening ... The older generation is starting to stand aside but the new blood has not yet emerged." (Congregation C)

"There's a missing generation of people setting up their careers and their families. Our age group [the missing generation] is alienated from community life. They never go to services and certainly don't go on to the committees."

The older people don't know them so they don't approach them and they do not get drawn in. " (Congregation D)

Demographic change in a congregation's catchment area or catchment group, whilst beyond control, could create organisational difficulties. Congregation A had adapted to the waves of immigrants in to its area by making a decision to be positively welcoming to all ethnic and racial groups:

"We've accommodated to the changing social scene. Twelve years ago, the parish was dominated by the Irish who were a third of parishioners. Then [various immigrant groups] came in and they have been brought in and encouraged to participate and to involve themselves in their own and other groups." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

This decision to encourage multi-cultural and multi-ethnic participation in Congregation A caused many congregants to leave and necessitated a range of liturgical and organisational adaptations.

Congregation C had not been able to adapt to local demographic change:

"[Congregation C's] make up is a classic trap. There are very few whole families. There are a lot of very old people and a lot of young families. Some drop off their children on Sunday but don't involve themselves. We are missing middle aged people with older children ... We need a sense of recovery of family wholeness ... This is urgent but I don't know how to tackle it." (Congregation C)

Congregation D was also having difficulties:

"We have a growing number of single parents. Access to the absent parent is usually at weekends and this affects synagogue and religion school attendance ... We have not yet recognised the diversity of the family group."
(Congregation D)

In Congregations C and D, the stage had been reached in which the desirability of membership growth was beginning to be questioned:

"Growth [in membership] could pose a physical problem. The church is already filled to capacity on a normal Sunday ... Major capital expenditure on the building will pose a problem." (Congregation C)

"The financial difficulties are linked with numbers of members. But we could not cope with a great influx of people either." (Congregation C)

"We lack money so we look to increase the membership to increase the income. But more members just lead to further pressures on the facilities."
(Congregation D)

At the time of the study, Congregation D had organised a series of workshops to discuss the implications of increases in membership and to consider whether, in fact, they could curtail growth; by referring applicants to other synagogues, by developing area sub-groups, or by being instrumental in starting a new congregation. Problems identified by interviewees as arising from membership growth included: difficulties in *"maintaining spirituality"* in services; *"relentless pressure"* on the rabbi; difficulties in recruiting lay leaders because of the responsibilities entailed; lack of physical space; difficulties in managing paid staff; and maintaining standards of child education. They feared further growth and yet could see no alternative.

"There is a fear we will get too big and impersonal. But if we limit our size we will stagnate." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

"Can we crack having a large organisation which is not bureaucratic?" (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

"Can you control the size of a religious organisation?" (Lay Member, Congregation D)

Interviewees suggested that the synagogue had reached a stage where continued growth would necessitate a qualitative change in organisation; for example, they would need more rabbis and lay employees; and they would need to think of new ways of allocating lay leadership responsibilities. They would also have to accept the implications of growth and invest in a new and bigger building.

"The foundations of the synagogue are crumbling, physically and metaphorically." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

"Shall we split or shall we build? If we don't split, we must build. But we can't make a decision." (Lay Member, Congregation D)

CHANGES IN PROJECTS, ACTIVITIES AND BUILDINGS

Paradoxically, successful congregational activities could be problematic for congregations. In addition to the pressures they placed on volunteers, accommodation, funding and other resources, which have been discussed in the two previous chapters, successful projects could alienate those who valued the project or activity as it was.

Thus, an informal group in Congregation A had formed a small housing association with a view to providing temporary accommodation for local homeless people. Eventually they went into partnership with a large housing association which enabled them to apply for a Housing Corporation grant. They then found they had to change their original plans to provide temporary accommodation as money was only available for permanent accommodation. They felt they had been pushed in to a very different arena from their original, modest, vision.

Similarly, one of the employees in Congregation D was concerned about pressures towards professionalisation of youth work; pressures which seemed to be irresistible:

"Pressures from society are pushing the synagogue in a professional direction ... Half the people feel it's making the synagogue lose its beauty ... The conflict [between informality and professionalism] makes me angry but I think it's to do with pressures in society and not the organisation ... The synagogue and I are falling into these trends." (Employee, Congregation D)

The ultimate success of having a project adopted by an agency in the statutory or voluntary sector, was often regarded as a mixed blessing too. Whilst leaders were glad to be relieved of anxiety about finding financial and human resources, they also resented their loss of control and were anxious about being pulled in to more formalised situations. Thus, the day centre for the elderly run by Congregation B had just been taken over by the local Social Services Department at the time of the study. Concern was expressed that the church would no longer be free to choose who attended:

"When we were running the Day Centre in the church we could let anybody in. Now it is much more formal ... I'm not sure if the Centre is still ours ..."

We are not happy at the idea that somebody should take over as the big boss ... [but] we are delighted that a big burden has been lifted from us. " (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

Similarly, the local authority in the area of Congregation D had recently agreed to provide a building in which activities for the homeless, including lunches, could be carried out. The volunteer coordinator said,

"I will be less involved in running the Day Centre. I don't want to get involved in a formal committee - even if it's not bureaucratic."
(Congregation D)

Congregation C's Play Group was battling with the implications of its recent affiliation to the Pre-School Play Groups Association. The affiliation brought essential contacts and expertise in to the group but also created pressures to professionalisation and formality. Additionally, and as with the Day Centre in Congregation B, questions were raised about the extent to which the Play Group was still a congregational project.

"We'll be getting into a different ball game ... Because we are a church organisation, we pay more for the Hall and we pay less to the play leaders. This is out of loyalty to the church. And we pay all the staff the same ... PPA wants us to give staff contracts of employment and to deduct tax. We don't want to do this as people won't want to do the job. It is already low paid anyway." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

Issues arose in the congregations not only about changes to projects and activities, but also about changes in physical fabric. In Congregation A, changes to the internal lay out of the church had been delayed, in large part to avoid antagonising congregants:

"The church is out of date with theology. The font and the altar are now places of public ritual and should be positioned accordingly. But the problem has not been tackled for physical and theological reasons. You need a consensus before you do things." (Priest, Congregation A)

Those physical changes to Congregation A's building which had been made recently - to lighting and to the entrance doors - had been a cause of disputes between priests, who initiated the changes, and lay people who wanted the church to retain its familiar appearance. The disputes were partly reflections of the struggle for power between priests and laity which were referred to in Chapter Eight. However, they seemed also to stem from differing attitudes to the implementation of change; a matter which is discussed further in the following section.

"There has been a lot of controversy about the [new, specially commissioned] lights ... [Priest] never explained the imagery or the historical links with the parish and the church ... The people were not involved in the decision ... physical aspects of the church are very important to them." (Congregation A)

Issues about changes to physical fabric were also live in Congregation C. At the time of the study, a major source of hurt and anger in Congregation C was a decision by the (new) vicar and the warden to change the lay-out of chairs within the church. Whereas they saw this as a means to facilitate movement and enhance dignity in services, regular church attenders were distressed that the church looked different when they came to worship. Moreover, the new lay out had involved moving some chairs out of the church altogether; chairs which had been donated in memory of loved ones. What appeared to be a small practical change re-opened splits within the congregation between the older and younger members, and between those who welcomed the new vicar and those who still missed his predecessor:

" ... instead of constructive suggestions and criticism, it becomes moans and groans and requests to put things back as they were ... They don't like change, especially the old people." (Congregation C)

IMPLEMENTING CHANGE

Several interviewees were concerned about the broad question of how best to promote and support change in their congregations:

"[Congregation A] is waiting to be filled with ideas ... Poorer people are always searching for something ... This accounts for the energy amongst the people and it is up to the church to respond and serve it." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"They [previous leaders of the Social Committee] were stuck in a pattern of events that were old-fashioned and which worked well when they first started them - Strawberry Teas and Harvest Suppers ... We should show people that the church is not old fashioned and that it's something nice to come along to." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"It's important for people to work with others who come from different backgrounds so that things in the synagogue don't become stale." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

At the same time, the forces opposed to change posed dilemmas. There were traditionalists within congregations who were generally opposed to changes of any kind; they could cause dissension in their efforts to argue their viewpoint. Some opposition was grounded in concern about theological interpretation and religious practice:

"Many of the older people have not come to terms with lay people doing so much more [in services]." (Lay Member, Congregation A)

"I don't like lay people giving out communion. I wouldn't think I was good enough to do it and I don't understand the mentality of those who do it." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"... new people changed things in ways I didn't like ... The people with whom I have most sympathy are those who have had a traditional background; a consciously Jewish background. Those who have not experienced Judaism as youngsters and who have discovered it, or rediscovered it, I find their views unsympathetic. But these are the people who dominate because they are the ones with the missionary zeal." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

Some opposition appeared to be grounded in nostalgia for more informal times; a protest against growth and its implications:

"We used to have a system of street wardens that worked very well for a while in keeping people in touch ... [Then] it became formal and people were asked to fill in forms ... it was good when we knew what was going on." (Lay Member, Congregation C)

Several interviewees in Congregation C suggested that most of their difficulties about implementing change were due to the lobbying power of the older generation; because they were also the founder members it was difficult to go against their wishes:

"There are a group of people in the church who were there at the founding 25 years ago. They are the elder statesmen ... [Vicar] has difficulty getting things updated because of them." (Congregation C)

In Congregations A and C, where opposition to change was a major issue, priests and lay leaders were generally sympathetic to the traditionalist viewpoint. They thought that it is one of the functions of a religious congregation to provide a refuge from the difficulties of every-day life; it was understandable that some people were reluctant to be challenged by changes in the congregational setting:

"[Congregation A] is a refuge from the harshness of [inner city area]... People need a haven first. Then they can go out and change things." (Priest, Congregation A)

"The big attraction of the Church of England is that there is total format continuity ... People don't want their routines disturbed." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

In fact, clergy and lay leaders in all four of the congregations generally favoured a gradual approach to change. Some had learned lessons from previous attempts to impose change quickly.

"I want to take things gradually ... I have to find out what makes [area] tick ... I want to integrate in to the community and build on what is there." (Priest, Congregation A)

"You can soon clear your congregation if you try to change things too quickly ... He [new vicar] knows not to rock the boat ... he's only making changes slowly." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

Thus interviewees argued for change through incrementalism and consensus-building; to allow people to adjust and internalise new ideas and to avoid alienating important groupings within the congregation:

"The Team is making changes too quickly. People do not have time to get their feelings behind the decisions." (Priest, Congregation A)

"Change happens at [Congregation C] by introducing things as an experiment ... [Congregation C] is very good at experiments which become permanent." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"You have to take people with you. You can't run things like an autocratic business." (Congregation D)

The way in which major decisions were made in Congregation B, described in religious terms in interviews, can also be seen as a means of building consensus for change:

"If [Pastor] sees a need, he asks the church officers to go down to the church for 2 or 3 days and nights of fasting to hear the spirit of God ... No food or drink is taken ... There is a prayer room with a shower attached, so nobody needs to leave the place ... After the period of fasting, we pray and reach a consensus about what should be done." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

In circumstances where there was an ambivalent or hostile attitude to change within congregations, the significant role of clergy and lay employees as change agents was highlighted. They not only generated new ideas, but encouraged others to try new methods and created a climate in which change could be seen as exciting rather than threatening:

"The younger priests have a wider education ... they bring in social work ideas." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"The priests here are pushing out new frontiers ... they encourage new ideas."
(Employee, Congregation A)

"We do not make plans. We wait for [Pastor] to tell us what is God's will."
(Lay Leader, Congregation B)

"[New Vicar] has a lot of good ideas ... He's turned the church round both on services and on physical amenities. He's always willing to try things."
(Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"I wrote a paper ... about what I felt about youth work and education at [Congregation D] ... there was initial anger and then there were discussions ... Things changed. The report made a huge difference." (Youth Worker, Congregation D)

"The Rabbi has a lot of good ideas. He starts a lot of things ... He's a great one for starting small groups to work on things." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

PART B: DENOMINATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

PARTICIPATION

Interviewees had a number of concerns about congregational participation in denominational activities. Several raised questions about those who attend denominational meetings; how representative they are, for example, and what they contribute to the denominations and the congregations through their attendance.

Some Congregation A interviewees were resentful that key diocesan meetings were for priests only and that lay employees were excluded. They felt that important

opportunities were missed to broaden diocesan perspectives; and that, conversely, key actors in their own congregation were denied direct access to important diocesan discussions and decision-making.

Access to denominational meetings by lay people was an issue too in Congregation C:

"I am not happy about the lack of mechanisms for ordinary people to make their voices heard. The [Church Council] and the other parish and deanery committees are not open and the minutes are not public. The laity gets a report once a year on what has happened at the Deanery Synod. If you want to get your voice heard, you have to rely on representatives who may, or may not, reflect your wishes." (Lay Member, Congregation C)

Similar views were expressed in Congregation D:

"I have never been to the Annual Conference [of the denomination]. The clique go." (Lay Member, Congregation D)

At the same time as there was concern about lay access to denominational structures, there was also concern - amongst clergy and some lay leaders - about the general reluctance amongst lay people to participate in denominational meetings; whether decision-making, worship or social ones.

"We don't meet as a parish as often as [Vicar] would like. But people's time is limited." (Lay Member, Congregation C)

"There has been a lack of interest in [denomination] ... The community takes [denomination] for granted. They don't see how important it is." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

An interviewee in Congregation D thought that the congregation itself was losing valuable learning opportunities by not sending representatives to meetings of denominational congregations:

"We should do more on networking between synagogues ... Nobody goes to the meetings. At the last meeting I was the only one from [Congregation D]. It's about making the community of congregations useful to each other ... if one congregation runs a successful event, they can share the formula with another one." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

One possible explanation for this reluctance to participate in denominational activities was given in Chapter Seven; in some congregations, it seems, members' own needs absorb so much attention and resources, that broader perspectives are eclipsed. Certainly, interviews indicated that active congregational participants find it difficult to also serve their denominations. Those interviewees who had been, or were, involved in denominational institutions as well as their congregations described the stress they experienced:

" ... for the last two years I have been [senior lay post in congregation]. I also provide support for the [branch congregation in another town]. I spend all day Sunday there and occasional weekday evenings ... On Sundays there are also visits to old peoples homes, hospital visits and prayer meetings. I do most of the secretarial work [for the branch church] at home during the week." (Lay Leader, Congregation B)

"I was Deanery Synod Representative and Parish Warden. [As a consequence] ... I was on every major committee. I was at meetings every night and I also had to have regular meetings with the Rector." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"At the same time as I was [senior lay post in congregation], I was on the [denomination] Education Committee. I hardly ever saw my family." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

The pressure on the time of volunteers was not the only difficulty. Many lay people did not think that denominational institutions were important for their congregation. In so far as denominations were thought to provide benefits and resources for congregations, it was clergy and some lay leaders who recognised their value to the congregation:

"The Diocese was very useful over the lease of the hall. They gave good administrative back-up and their legal department dealt with things." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"As somebody new to the job, having colleagues ... is very comforting ... the Team brings in wider expertise." (Vicar, Congregation C)

"I've become more aware of the work of [denomination] since I've been [lay leader post] ... We need to work on overcoming the feeling of 'them and us'. It should all be 'we'." (Congregation D)

Denominational meetings could be intimidating. A lay interviewee in Congregation C described a sense of alienation from the denominational structure beyond his own congregation:

"I was once on the PCC [Parish Council covering three churches]. It was far above me. I feel OK on the [Church Council] but I thought the PCC were too

intelligent. I felt out of it. They were talking about the same things as the [Church Council] but I didn't feel comfortable. Everybody seemed to know so much more than me." (Lay Member, Congregation C)

A lay member of Congregation D described a similar sense of not belonging when she went as a representative to a denominational meeting:

"I went to a [denomination] Council meeting. It felt quite political between different synagogues ... I felt people had narrow views and were not open to change ... There was no welcome for a new face." (Lay Member, Congregation D)

RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION

Interview data indicated that denominational links give congregations access to a range of important resources; not only financial support but also expertise, administrative support, moral support and new ideas disseminated through courses and advisers.

"I bring in new ideas that I learn from playing in other churches and from courses in the Diocese ... ideas about liturgy, not just music". (Music Director, Congregation A)

"We widen our experience ... you've always got help to fall back on." (Warden, Congregation C)

"I know the teachers find it [denomination education department] an incredible resource and get a lot from it." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

Whilst being appreciative of the benefits accruing from their denominational links, interviewees were very conscious of competition for resources between their own congregation and other congregations and institutions within the same denomination. Thus, interviewees in Congregation A expressed concern about the levy they paid to the diocese; the fact that it was related to numbers attending rather than to ability of congregants to pay was resented because the parish was so poor. Similarly, in Congregation C, interviewees suggested that the congregation was disadvantaged in relation to the other two churches in the parish grouping.

"There has been competition and rivalry between the three churches over resources ... it feels as though [Congregation C] is the poor man of the parish. Practical resourcing seems to indicate that this is so."

(Congregation C)

They were also sceptical about the amount of work generated by the parish and its utility:

"There are far too many committees ... It's terribly bureaucratic ... they all churn out papers and minutes and they all have to go to everybody else in the parish ... It's not worth all the paperwork ... We couldn't manage without the parish but it could be pruned'." (Congregation C)

Being itself a denominational headquarters, Congregation B was in a different position from the other three congregations studied. Yet it too experienced difficulties around competition for resources. Interviewees were proud of the way that the "miracle" of their own development inspired other people to set up branch churches. Yet the ongoing needs of the branches for financial and spiritual support and encouragement, placed strains on their own volunteer and financial resources. Examples were given of congregational activities and projects that had withered because available resources had had to be directed towards the development of new branches.

In general, there was a high level of concern amongst interviewees about maintaining a fair balance of resource distribution between their congregations and their denominations. The link was seen as one which, ideally, should be reciprocal:

"It is important to be aware that there are resources beyond these four walls and we all belong to each other ... there is a two-way responsibility." (Vicar, Congregation C)

"[Denomination Education Department] is basically an opportunity to exchange ideas and resources between congregations. I draw out from it and contribute to it." (Sunday School Head Teacher, Congregation D)

But some interviewees thought that the balance was tipped away from their congregations; that their congregations did not get a fair exchange for the money and personnel time they contributed to their denominations.

"The diocese ... feels remote. They deal with the formalities well [eg marriage registrations, contracts for building work, arranging leases] ... [but] they are just bureaucrats; they don't give us anything." (Congregation A)

"The building is unsatisfactory - mostly because it was built too cheaply ... If the diocese had been more far-sighted at the beginning, we would have a proper church." (Congregation C)

"I can't see much return for the money we give ... I would like to feel a sense of gain from belonging to [denomination]." (Congregation D)

"Maybe the rabbi gives more time [on work for the denomination] than is good for the synagogue." (Congregation D)

The early history of Congregation B illustrates how important the sense of fairness in resource distribution can be for congregations. When Congregation B started, it was linked with a pentecostal church in London. But they soon decided to operate independently:

"We heard that they were saying that we were one of their branches and that we were under their control ... They were oppressive and were asking for money and trying to penalise us and we did not find it helpful to be with them ... so we broke away." (Congregation B)

PROMOTION AND PREVENTION OF CHANGE

The fact that congregations were a part of a wider denominational framework could both encourage change and act as a brake on change. In Congregations A and C, both of which were part of centralised, episcopal denominational structures, examples were given of the way in which the implementation of congregational goals could be impeded by denominational officials. Congregation C had had to change the way in which it conducted informal 'healing' services to bring them in to line with approved Anglican practice. And Congregation A was engaged in a long-standing dispute with its diocese because it was flouting diocesan guidelines and recruiting girls to be altar servers (2). In both congregations a great deal of resentment was expressed about the constraints placed on the congregation by the denominations in respect of policies which the congregation felt were right. A priest in Congregation A described how his conscience told him that recruitment of girl altar servers was not wrong and that, indeed,

"... somebody has to take a stand before change can take place." (Priest, Congregation A)

On the other hand, he was aware of the repercussions of the congregation's policy; it was excluded from participating in various Catholic events and was risking annoying the Curia in Rome in the long term.

As well as putting brakes on change, denominations could also drive forward change in congregations. This too could be a source of problems if there was pressure to change quickly. As indicated in the previous part of this chapter, interviewees generally thought that change was best implemented in congregations by moving gradually and building consensus. Sometimes, denominations could be impatient.

"Fresh reforms in the liturgy, including non-gendered language, are on the way ... I hope the changes will be brought in gradually [unlike after Vatican II] and that the changes will be softened by being anticipated. This would be in line with the English tradition of moderation." (Priest, Congregation A)

PART C: ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

A FIFTH THEME

In this and the preceding three chapters, the majority of the organisational issues raised by interviewees have been presented, using as a framework the four themes identified by earlier researchers: purposes and goals; roles and role relationships; organisational change; and denominational structures.

Interviewees also raised organisational issues which could not be readily categorised under one of the four pre-identified themes. Some such issues were of concern only to one or two individuals or to one congregation; for example, integration of new converts was an issue for some Congregation A interviewees and the role of the choir was referred to as *"a running sore"* by interviewees in Congregation D. But one

issue, organisational structure (1), was raised in broad terms by so many interviewees, that it is appropriate to examine it separately from, and in addition to, data on the other four themes.

Some of the issues which were perceived as arising in congregations around organisational structure have already been referred to in previous parts and chapters, including role relationships between clergy and lay leaders; role relationships between lay people and lay employees; the authority of lay employees relative to clergy and laity; congregational links to denominational institutions; and adapting structures in response to internal and external changes. This part of Chapter Ten focuses on issues of organisational structure not so far addressed; those surrounding the work of councils, committees and other working groups, and those surrounding the interactions between those groups. Like Chapters Eight and Nine, this part relies heavily on interviews conducted in Congregations A, C and D; Congregation B interviewees generally did not perceive organisational structure as problematic.

COUNCILS, COMMITTEES AND OTHER WORKING GROUPS

The purpose and function of working groups within congregations was thought to be unclear by some interviewees.

"The Parish Council should provide a forum for the people but it does not work well. It seems to have an endless brief with people raising everything there." (Congregation A)

"Most of the people do not understand how the church works. You have to be on the [Church Council] to begin to understand." (Congregation C)

"When I was [an employee of the congregation] I never knew where decisions were being taken or who to go to when a decision was needed."

(Congregation D)

"The Education and Youth Forum works in a frustrating way ... different people have different perceptions of what it should be doing."

(Congregation D)

In circumstances where the functions of working groups were not widely understood, questions were also raised about the locus of congregational decision-making. The involvement of informal, unofficial groupings in the making of key decisions in congregations was noted with varying degrees of concern:

"I am not clear where the larger decisions are actually made and how they are made - especially those on wider, people problems ... I think the more important decisions are taken elsewhere." (Lay Member of the Parish Council, Congregation A)

"I tended to feel left out when they planned things and then just told me ... I was the last to be told." (Lay Leader, Congregation A)

"A lot has been decided before it comes to the Council. The Council gives the final yes or no ... It feels very similar to other voluntary organisations." (Member of Church Council, Congregation C)

"The Council has less power than appears on paper ... Most people agree with the wardens and the vicar ... Most people don't know enough about it to

question things ... The Vicar is there all the time and there are some other people who have the time to be around the church a lot." (Member of Church Council, Congregation C)

"Sometimes the Council just rubber-stamps decisions taken elsewhere. And these are not just decisions taken by formal sub-committees. Often the decisions are a long way along by the time they reach Council. [The Chairman] will say, 'I've had a chat with x and y and we think that ... ' and as a Council member you feel you can't say anything against it." (Council Member, Congregation D)

Questions were also raised about the efficiency and effectiveness of working groups:

"One of the problems with the Parish Council is that it comprises representatives and people only come when they have something to say ... We need people on the PC who are there in their own right to comment generally on the issues affecting the church." (Priest, Congregation A)

"Too many different opinions [in the Parish Council] can lead to delays in implementing things." (Member of the Parish Council, Congregation A)

"People [on the Church Council] dither about making decisions. ... They cannot distinguish between chat and decisions." (Congregation C)

"The Education committee is not qualified to look at the quality of education and they are intimidated by the paid staff." (Congregation D)

"Committees are not efficient and business-like ... Meetings are often time wasting. They don't start on time and things go on to very late - after

11.00pm. People won't make decisions quickly. (Lay Member, Congregation D)

Some interviewees suggested how existing working groupings could be modified or developed to respond to perceived difficulties. The desirability of increased formality was a frequent theme:

"The Parish Council should go back to the people and there should be a two way process of discussion [between priests and laity] ... The Parish Council structure should be more formalised and more open." (Congregation A)

"I feel I am being forced to make an intimate relationship with [other members of the committee] ... but I want to keep a distance." (Lay Member, Congregation D)

Other interviewees saw the need for new groupings to fill gaps and to facilitate more effective, or appropriate, running of their congregations. For example, in Congregations A and C, it was suggested that a forum should be provided in which lay people could be drawn in to discussions about liturgy:

"I suggested the establishment of a Liturgy Committee. ... It would be an education forum and an action group - people who could implement new liturgy ideas." (Music Director, Congregation A)

"We don't have anything like a Worship Committee where services can be discussed ... In the medium term I would like to do that." (Vicar, Congregation C)

The composition of working groups and the way in which individuals interacted within them also emerged as an important issue from interviews. In Congregation A, which had a managing Team comprising priests and lay employees, the need for priests and laity to cooperate closely raised issues about relative authorities and decision-making. Priests were uneasy:

"The Team meeting represents a number of ambiguities. One of these is the mixture of lay workers and ordained priests. The pyramid is being watered down by allowing non-priests in." (Priest, Congregation A)

Some lay employees who were officially part of the Team had apparently responded by not attending or by not participating in meetings:

"They [other members of the Team] each have their own roles and I have mine ... I don't know much about the others' roles. ... I don't have their knowledge about the fineries of religion. I just keep quiet in meetings." (Employee, Congregation A)

"They say they have a 'team ministry' but I'm not sure it is. I wonder what they do in meetings ... I don't go to Team meetings ... I don't feel part of them." (Employee, Congregation A)

In Congregations C and D there were suggestions that groupings were "incestuous"; that the same people were continually "recycled" and that personal ties between individuals were barriers to efficient working.

"I would like there to be less in-fighting ... There are historical animosities. Sometimes this inhibits decision-making." (Congregation C)

"We need more people ... we are using the same people all the time ... Council elections are like a Cabinet reshuffle." (Congregation C)

"... the elderly women ... dominate the committees. Discussions ... degenerate in to gossip about individuals." (Congregation C)

"A number of the old guard are still on Council and have been off and on since the beginning." (Congregation D)

"Everything is incestuous. There are a lot of family inter-relationships ... there are other significant close friendships." (Congregation D)

"There are covert personality differences going right up to the top. Underneath, there are people who hate each other but who are linked socially and continue to work together without any of this being made explicit." (Congregation D)

LINKS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Just as there were numerous problems about the relative authority of individual roles in congregations, there were also difficulties about the relative authority of working groups and about the links between groups and roles.

In Congregation A, difficulties reflected debates referred to in Chapter Eight about the relative authority of clergy and lay people. The nature of the relationship between the Team, which comprised paid staff and priests, and the Parish Council was seen as problematic. On the one hand, as a priest explained, it was difficult for the lay people to provide input into decisions in the face of *"such an effective and active*

Team.” Yet, if the Parish Council were to provide more opportunities for lay involvement, the authority of the Team, including the priests, would be threatened.

The question of appropriate relationships between a ‘governing’ group and other groups was also raised in Congregations C and D. In Congregation C, there were a number of activity groups and committees which met on church premises but whose link with the church was unclear; for example, an Art Group met regularly in the Church Hall and paid a nominal fee to the church, but most of those attending were not otherwise associated with the church. Under most circumstances, this kind of informality was not problematic, but from time to time there had been difficulties over accountability for the activities of such groups.

“There was a problem with the Play Group. It was being led by people who were not members of the church and there were complaints about the quality of care. PPA [The Pre-School Play Groups Association] and the vicar got involved. Eventually the leader left and took most of the staff with her. After that we drew up a proper constitution ... which specifies that the officers [of the Play Group] have to be approved by the [Church Council].” (Play Group Leader, Congregation C)

In Congregation D, questions were raised about the link between the Council and the various congregational committees. In practice, the committees were seen not to be accountable to the Council:

“Sometimes, the Council does not have full awareness of what decisions are being taken. The relationship between committees and Council can be loose.” (Congregation D)

“A lot of things happen here despite the Council.” (Congregation D)

"... individual committees and groups seem to be able to do things without consulting Council ... The link is lost ... there is a danger of things going off on a new policy if not caught quickly enough." (Congregation D)

There was also concern about the loose nature of the links between the Council and lay employees:

"I feel remote from the Council ... they don't know what goes on ... The only time they show an interest is if there is a crisis or a lot of complaints." (Employee, Congregation D)

"[The caretaker] thinks he runs the place ... If you say anything, he punishes you by not setting your room up right. He does not have proper directing ... Nobody takes care of the building." (Congregation D)

The problem of getting cooperation between different interest groups within congregations was mentioned by a number of interviewees.

"I hope that [Vicar] will get round to pulling things together in a more coordinated way ... I think a successful team can do far more than individuals, however hard working and committed ... If a team is well organised and has a central pivot, the wheel runs smoothly. The vicar or the warden has to act as a pivot." (Lay Leader, Congregation C)

"A lot of the issues are to do with personality and different interests." (Lay Member, Congregation D)

Part of the problem in not achieving cooperation was that resources were wasted in competition and squabbling:

"Each group in the church [which uses the hall for meetings] pays for their own facilities and has space in the kitchen ... This is another example of something which should be centrally organised but each section has its own cupboard of loot ... It's symptomatic that nobody sees anything globally."
(Congregation C)

"There is tremendous wastage - of finances and personnel. ... there is no ultimate responsibility ... There's too many bosses so lots of people duplicate things and nobody is finally responsible." (Congregation D)

More seriously from the point of view of congregational organisation, the reluctance of groups to communicate and cooperate could lead to fragmented views and a failure to consider issues in a broader context:

"The Parish Council is problematic ... It comprises representatives of the various groups within the parish ... most people only come if 'their' project is on the agenda ... there is a lack of over-view and no opportunities for participation by people who have a general commitment to the church."
(Priest, Congregation A)

Although they differed in size, all four of the case congregations relied heavily on informal face to face meetings and telephone calls between individuals for coordination and information sharing. In Congregations A, B and C there was an assumption that key people would physically be in the church building at some stage each week; they could therefore pick up mail and news-sheets and conduct informal business. In Congregation D, where regular attendance for public worship by lay people was not taken for granted, telephone calls and social meetings were a substitute for casual face to face meetings. Whilst these essentially informal methods were functional in maintaining a 'community spirit' in the congregations, it could also give rise to problems.

People could inadvertently be excluded from sharing important pieces of information. In Congregation C, a unilateral decision by the vicar to change the time of the Sunday morning Family Service had resulted in curtailing the time available for coffee afterwards. A lay member explained that this in effect hindered the informal network of care in the congregation which relied on hearing about sickness and other problems in this forum. In Congregation A, a member of the Parish Council who did not always worship on Sundays at the congregation's church, missed out on information about meeting arrangements:

"Meetings [of the Parish Council] take place on an ad hoc basis and are often changed or cancelled at the last minute. I have turned up twice for meetings and then I found they had been changed." (Member of the Parish Council, Congregation A)

Some interviewees suggested that a degree of informality and muddle was an intrinsic feature of congregational work. The challenge was to learn to work with it:

"[Congregation C] needs a strong, pro-active clergyman ... the incumbent has to be sensitive, steady and tolerant of muddle." (Congregation C)

"There has to be an element of good will and chaos ... There are no clear lines. Everything is all over the place ... I'm not comfortable working with so much chaos. I would prefer 10 to 20% chaos rather than 80 to 90% chaos." (Lay Leader, Congregation D)

DISCUSSION OF CHAPTER TEN

In this chapter, the two remaining themes identified in the earlier literature, have been discussed in Parts A and B. Part A presented interviewees' perceptions of issues

surrounding change in their congregations; changes in personnel, changes in membership and changes in activities. It also looked at interviewees' views on the broader question of implementation of change.

As anticipated by the earlier literature, interviewees were generally concerned about the multiplicity of barriers to change in congregations. Again, as anticipated by the literature, some of these barriers were grounded in religious principles. However, many of the explanations suggested by interviewees were more to do with congregants' personal needs to have stability in their congregational lives and to a related fear of formalisation. In opposing change, it seemed, people were motivated not so much by religious arguments as by their understanding of their congregation as a place of continuity and informal relationships.

The study adds substantially to existing knowledge about organisational change in congregations. For example, it identifies the kinds of changes which can be problematic in congregations, including changes in lay and clerical personnel, changes in membership, growth of projects, and changes in physical fabric. Many of these changes are beyond the control of congregations and they have to respond as best they can. But whatever adaptations are made, they risk alienating key individuals and groups within the congregation.

The material also highlights that growth - in projects and membership - can be an organisational mixed blessing; not only because of the impact on resources, but also because of the negative effect it can have on motivation and commitment. Numerous 'traditionalist' pressures against change were recognised to exist in congregations. Interviewees suggested that, for this reason, incrementalism was preferable to attempts to impose change rapidly.

Part B of this chapter examined the issues surrounding the links between congregations and denominational institutions. Problems about participation in

denominational meetings and activities were raised, as well as concerns about maintaining a fair balance of resource allocation between congregations and denominational institutions. The ways in which denominations can both promote and prevent change in congregations were discussed.

As anticipated by the literature, interviewees perceived a number of tensions in the congregation/denomination relationship. Individuals within congregations often felt ambivalent, or even disillusioned, about the links with other institutions within their denomination and with denominational structures themselves. However, only in Congregation A was there any evidence of the tendency noted in the literature for clergy to be pulled between loyalty to their congregation and loyalty to their denomination.

There was also no explicit reference in interviews to possible loss of congregational autonomy. However, using a 'resource dependency' perspective, the concern in congregations to maintain a reciprocal, balanced, relationship with denominations, may be seen as a reflection of a power struggle in which congregations were seeking to minimise their dependency. In so far as members of congregations felt that the balance of resources exchanged was tilted away from the congregation at any point, they were concerned and, often, resentful. This reflects Scott's (1987, p181) summary of the 'resource dependence' approach to organisational analysis:

"Since no organization generates all the resources necessary for its goal attainment or survival, organizations are forced to enter into exchanges, becoming interdependent with other environmental groups ... Unequal exchange relations can generate power and dependency differences among organizations, which are therefore expected to enter into exchange relations cautiously and to pursue strategies that will enhance their own bargaining position."

In Part C, a fifth organisational theme, one which did not emerge from the earlier literature review, was addressed: organisational structure. Issues surrounding the working of councils, committees and other internal working groups were described, including questions about their purposes, their efficiency and their composition. Issues also arose around the links between these working groups, and around the authority of groups in relation to individual role holders.

Taking together interviewees' perceptions of the issues in their congregations broadly in the area of organisational structure, and comparing them with the earlier literature review chapters, it is apparent that there has been very little research up to now on some of the issues which are of greatest concern to those engaged in the day to day running of congregations. As indicated in Chapters Three and Four, the lay/clergy relationship has been addressed as part of investigations focused on the problems of the clerical role. And there has been some interest, mostly amongst United States researchers, in denominational institutions; although the focus has been not so much on congregations as on the denominational structures themselves. But for the most part, researchers have not been much concerned with congregations as organisational structures.

Yet the case studies suggest that not only role relationships and denominational links, but also the work of governing bodies, representative bodies, committees and working groups can raise important issues for congregations; as can role relationships and links with denominations. In addition, the tendency to combine formal structures with informal methods of communication and informal social relationships, can give rise to organisational anomalies and misunderstandings and can also waste resources.

It may be that, as indicated by Congregation B, those running 'strict' or 'fundamentalist' congregations face fewer issues around organisational structure. But congregations which run according to more liberal religious principles, like case

Congregations A, C and D, might welcome more research on the structural features of congregations.

This chapter confirms, again, that congregations may experience a range of common organisational issues and problems. Thus, leadership succession, building consensus behind change, coping with growth and success, and implementing change without alienating key groups and individuals, were frequently cited difficulties in all the congregations. The data indicated that where congregations experienced similar internal or environmental changes, they also tended to experience similar difficulties in making organisational responses to those changes. The three 'liberal' congregations in the study also experienced similar problems around the role of internal groups.

Generally there were fewer common issues around denominational affiliation than around other themes identified in the earlier literature. This may be attributed to the fact that there were major differences between the four congregations with respect to their formal polities and to the way in which they interacted with their organisational environments. Yet, all the congregations experienced tensions in the relationship with their denominational institutions and all were battling in their own ways with maintaining a balance of resources.

This chapter concludes the presentation of findings from the four case studies which began in Chapter Six with organisational descriptions of the congregations. The following chapter reflects on the study findings in the light of the starting research questions.

NOTE TO CHAPTER TEN

1. The term "organisational structure" refers here to groupings of "organisational roles". This follows Billis (1984, p11) who describes organisational roles as "the building blocks" of organisational structures; and Scott (1987, p15) who defines "social structures" as "the patterned or regularized aspects of the relationships existing among participants in an organization."

2. Since the time of the study, the Vatican has ruled that women and girls may be altar servers, although no bishop is obliged to permit it within his own diocese (The Tablet, 1994).

CHAPTER ELEVEN: THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS RECONSIDERED

The prime purpose of this project, as described in Chapters One and Five, was to begin to fill a knowledge gap by generating descriptive and analytic material about the work and organisation of local churches and synagogues. There were also two secondary objectives. First, it was hoped to generate initial explanatory insights which would be of use to those working in congregations. Second, since the main research objective contained an implied hypothesis that churches and synagogues have common organisational features, it was expected that the empirical stage of the study would constitute an initial test of that hypothesis.

This chapter returns to these three research questions and considers them in the light of accumulated findings from the literature review and the empirical studies. Part A discusses the extent to which the empirical findings confirm, amplify, elucidate and add to the earlier literature. Knowledge about the work and organisation of churches and synagogues which has been generated by the current project is drawn together and an indication is given of explanatory insights which have emerged. Part A also discusses the extent to which, in the light of the study findings, it is appropriate to conceptualise congregations collectively. Part B explores how, in the light of the findings of the current study, research into the work and organisation of congregations might be developed in the future.

PART A: THE CASE STUDY FINDINGS AND THE EARLIER LITERATURE

CONFIRMATION OF THE LITERATURE

As explained at the beginning of Chapter Four, there was no existing 'body' of literature on organisational features of churches and synagogues which could serve as

a basis for the empirical phase of this project. Prior to the current study, there had been very few studies of local religious institutions in England with any kind of organisational focus.

The literature on the organisational dimension of congregations which was synthesised and presented thematically in Chapter Four, constituted, in effect, an attempt to create such a body of literature by drawing on a range of writing primarily focused on other aspects of congregations or religion. Thus, the comparison which follows between that collected published material and the findings of the empirical studies, serves a dual purpose. It not only constitutes a test of the validity of the empirical findings, it is also a test of the validity of the literature review itself.

In this connection, it is noteworthy that the case studies did not suggest any major contradictions or criticisms of the earlier literature. Indeed, a number of the key themes in the literature were confirmed by the studies. For example, the case studies confirmed the importance for congregations of their organisational environment. Congregations studied were not only responsive to a range of institutions and pressures in their environments, but were also important actors within, and affecting, those environments. It was clear that any organisational analysis of congregations should take into account this interactive relationship.

The findings also suggest that major difficulties do arise as congregations attempt to set and implement goals and that the range and number of goals open to congregations can be linked to difficulties in setting priorities. The quest to maintain 'tradition' and 'authenticity' is confirmed as an important factor in impeding both priority setting and organisational change. Again, the studies show that the relationship between congregations and their denominational institutions is often a source of tension.

The range and scope of clergy roles were also widely seen as problematic by participants in the research. As in earlier studies, several clergy were found to be

stressed and overloaded; pulled between competing demands and expectations and frustrated by not being able to meet their own personal priorities. More specifically, the data confirmed the crucial importance, in the congregational organisational context, of the lay/clergy relationship. Questions about the relative authority of each can be a source of ongoing difficulties.

In general, then, the case studies confirm the tentative findings about the organisation of churches and synagogues which were drawn out from earlier studies in Chapters Two, Three and Four. They also indicate that the four major themes identified in Chapter Four as possible areas of organisational concern - purposes and goals; roles and role relationships; organisational change; and denominational institutions - are, in practice, viewed as important within a range of different kinds of contemporary congregations.

AMPLIFICATION AND ELUCIDATION OF THE LITERATURE

The findings do much more than just confirm earlier literature. They allow the earlier literature to be amplified and the nature of organisational problems in congregations to be elucidated.

The findings cast light, for example, on the relative importance, in practice, of key organisational issues. They suggest that, on a day to day basis, it is matters such as setting priorities, implementing roles and developing internal organisational structures, which preoccupy congregations. Organisational change and the links with denominational institutions, although they have intrigued earlier academic commentators, are generally matters of less immediate practical concern to those who work in congregations.

Not only do the findings provide a sense of the practical applicability of earlier literature, they also amplify the broad themes identified. And they offer explanations

of why congregations exhibit features and experience the difficulties noted by previous observers.

In relation to links with denominational institutions, for example, the findings indicate how tensions surface especially when members of congregations participate in denominational meetings and activities. They also suggest that much of the tension which arises between congregations and denominational institutions is a reflection of competition, rarely made explicit, over resource allocation.

Similarly, the findings provide instances of the kinds of organisational changes which are experienced as problematic in the congregational context, including changes in lay and clerical personnel, changes in membership, growth of projects, and changes in physical fabric. They demonstrate that resistance to organisational change in congregations is often driven not so much by adherence to religious principles, as by congregants' wishes for stability in their congregational lives. Indeed, it seems that many people are drawn to participate in congregations by their perception of their congregation as a place of continuity and informal relationships. That is, it is the very absence of change, in an otherwise turbulent world, which is a key attraction to congregational membership. This sociological function performed by congregations may, perhaps, make them more resistant to change than other kinds of organisation.

This predisposition to resist change may be reinforced by a another feature of congregations which emerged from the findings; the fact that they comprise multiple interests - arising from differences in gender, age, family stage, length of membership, theological stance, place of residence, and so on. Thus, any attempt to implement change can bring to the surface competing concerns and needs. In the face of religious and social conflict-avoidance norms, and the desire to maintain social solidarity within the congregation, little change, or gradual change, tends to be preferred over radical change.

With respect to congregational goals, the findings show that, in practice, it is matters of implementation rather than philosophy which most engage congregations. There are debates in congregations about appropriate goals, but these are more about 'operational' than 'banner' goals. And there are debates about priorities, but these are grounded less in underpinning religious values than in concern about the allocation of limited human, financial and physical resources; about the balancing of competing internal interests; and about the need to develop and maintain lay enthusiasms and commitment. In relation to the 'mutual benefit' versus 'commonweal' debate, it seems that congregations in practice perceive these as equally important goals, rather than as alternatives. To use Lohmann's (1992, p57) terms, they are "Mixed Benefactories [which] engage in both intrinsic and extrinsic benefactions."

At the same time, religious principles do play an important part in debates about congregational goals. Failure to achieve lofty purposes derived from religious principles can be a cause of demoralisation for both clergy and lay people. Moreover, concern about religious values may exacerbate practical problems and make their solution intractable. For example, religious injunctions about caring and neighbourly love aggravate the difficulties of choosing between competing welfare priorities. Resisting pressures to respond to immediate demands is harder if the demands are backed up by a religious argument.

The findings also provide an additional viewpoint on the problems of role implementation experienced by the religious functionaries of congregations. They suggest, for example, that these problems are more about overload - sheer quantity of expectations and tasks - than about competing and multiple demands. They also point to an important link between issues surrounding the implementation of clerical roles and issues surrounding the goals of congregations. Since embodying the prime purposes of the congregation is frequently seen as a key function of clergy and rabbis, debates about congregational goals and priorities can become inextricably linked with

concerns about the effectiveness of clergy and rabbis, and about who has the authority to direct and interpret the congregation's 'mission'.

The empirical study also demonstrates the contingent nature of the role of congregational clergy and rabbis; in practice their roles tend to be interdependent with lay roles. Thus the extent to which 'administration' is a burden for clergy, appears to be a function of the extent to which lay volunteers and employees in congregations are available to perform secretarial, administrative and coordinative functions. Conversely, there are limitations on the extent to which clergy and rabbis can delegate tasks to lay people; some functions, such as education, can be seen within congregations as central to the clerical and rabbinical role.

At the same time as their roles are interdependent, struggles for power between religious functionaries and laity are endemic. Within any one congregation, a wide range of views may coexist about relative authorities. We may be passing through a period of transition in which traditional models of the clergy/lay (or rabbinical/lay) relationship have been eroded, but in which implementation of new approaches is proving problematic. In general, however, lay leaders in the studies appeared keen to reach consensus on important issues; and, equally, clergy needed the support and approval of lay leaders and other congregants to implement their roles effectively.

The case studies additionally suggest that role implementation problems are not confined to religious functionaries. Numerous examples were given of problems surrounding the roles of lay employees and senior volunteers. These problems, in turn, have implications for congregations' ability to implement goals and enact change. Matters of this kind are barely alluded to in earlier literature.

ADDITIONAL PERSPECTIVES

In addition to confirming, amplifying and explaining the findings of earlier writers, the empirical case studies provide new perspectives and new contributions to knowledge about the work and organisation of contemporary religious congregations.

Several of these new perspectives are attributable to the decision to seek the views of a range of lay participants in congregations in the empirical phase of the project. Data obtained from lay people suggest that some of the issues that have preoccupied earlier academic observers - for example, the quest for 'authenticity'; the impact of secularisation; and the control exercised over congregations by denominational institutions - may be of only marginal significance for lay people for day to day purposes. More important may be issues such as negotiations over the relative power of clergy and laity; the work of internal groups and committees; motivating volunteers; establishing priorities in the face of limited resources; and preserving and developing the mutual benefit and social integration functions of the congregation.

Thus one theme which was barely addressed in earlier research, but which emerges from the current study, is difficulties surrounding councils, committees and other internal governing and working groups. Interviewees raised questions about their authority, purposes, efficiency and composition. Issues also arise in congregations around the links between these working groups, and around the authority of groups in relation to individual role holders. In addition, the tendency to combine formal structures with informal methods of communication and informal social relationships, can give rise to organisational anomalies and misunderstandings.

Another theme which has been generally overlooked by previous observers, is the broader societal function performed by religious congregations in providing care and welfare services, not only for their own members but also for the wider community. It emerges with clarity from interviews with lay members of the four case

congregations. A detailed discussion of the welfare role of congregations is provided elsewhere (Harris, 1994) but two comments on this function should be made here.

First, the failure of earlier writers to explore the welfare function of congregations may be attributable to a distinctive feature of congregations themselves; strong religious norms which encourage humility and discourage people from talking about their 'charitable' activities (Wuthnow, 1990). A second point is that the findings about the caring work of congregations supports the decision, discussed in Chapter One, to locate the current project within the academic field of social policy; a field which has traditionally been concerned with "the development of collective action for the advancement of social welfare" (Donnison, 1973, p35).

The four case studies also demonstrate another important function performed by contemporary congregations; as places of social integration, mutual support, and comfort in a turbulent society. Like the Methodist congregation studied by Jerrome (1989, p768), the four congregations offered their members "a sense of belonging, a meaning for existence and a framework in which to interpret experience". As indicated in the previous section, this perspective on the motivations of lay people helps to explain why organisational change can be so problematic in congregations. Change is the antithesis of what many see as the 'essence' of their congregational life.

New knowledge has also been gained from interviews with laity about the roles performed in congregations by lay people themselves. In contrast with the large body of literature on clerical and rabbinic roles, the role of lay people in congregations has received little attention from earlier researchers. Yet the empirical findings indicate the key role played by lay volunteers and employees in initiating and sustaining a range of congregational activities. They also provide some initial explanations, for example, about why problems arise in recruiting lay leaders. And they balance the literature on the problems experienced by rabbis and clergy. For they indicate that lay people, too, can feel stressed and distressed by their congregational

responsibilities. Indeed, clergy can themselves contribute to that distress by 'sharing' with congregants and lay employees their own overload.

In effect, the empirical studies have provided a foundation for a new body of organisational research on lay roles in congregations. Building on the findings from the current project, a future research agenda might begin by distinguishing between different kinds of lay roles in congregations; including, for example, those of paid employees; member-employees; senior volunteers and lay leaders; active participants and volunteers; and 'ordinary' members. It might also address the major problems surrounding the time commitment, motivation and management of senior volunteers and lay leaders who are often both 'member participants' and 'service-deliverers' in their congregations. The agenda could include, too, deeper explorations of the ambiguous roles occupied by lay employees. From the findings reported here, there appear to be powerful drives within congregations to treat them as 'honorary clergy' and/or 'honorary volunteers', rather than as a third, distinct, kind of organisational actor.

A COLLECTIVE CONCEPTUALISATION OF CONGREGATIONS

As discussed in Chapter Four, few previous writers on congregations have conceptualised congregations collectively. Yet, taking together the literature review and the empirical findings of this project, it is clear that there is much to be gained from a collective conceptualisation in studying organisational features and issues.

The review of the organisational literature on congregations provided initial support for the hypothesis that congregations of different denominations, and even different religions, have common organisational features and are also subject to similar organisational difficulties. Further support was provided by the empirical studies. The four cases were deliberately chosen such that they were varied with respect to key characteristics including: denominational structure, size, location, stage of

growth, membership profile, paid staff, financial position and activities. All the same, the congregations were found to have a number of organisational features in common.

All four of the congregations, for example, had similar broad purposes and they were also using similar means to implement their goals. Clergy played a key role in all the congregations, not only in providing leadership, but also through participation in a wide range of activities, including those which were not specifically 'religious'. There were also similarities between congregations in members' motivations for participation; people were drawn to congregations by the opportunities they offered for social involvement, for self-expression, and for the opportunity to be part of something worthwhile. Again, the case congregations were found to have a similar approach to their environments. In general they were highly responsive to their geographical, cultural and organisational environments; adapting activities and setting priorities in order to maximise the human and other resources brought to the congregation.

The findings also confirmed that common organisational difficulties arise in congregations. Examples were provided as well as explanations of why these commonalities occur. Thus, with respect to organisational goals, all four of the case congregations served as routes to individual self development for members and all four of them were trying to reconcile this function with the practicalities of congregational goal setting and goal implementation. All four faced issues arising from their dependence on volunteers and their need to make pragmatic adaptations to their environments. All four of the congregations were also obliged, in practice, to give organisational maintenance goals priority over longer term goals.

Again, with respect to organisational change, similar difficulties were cited in all the congregations including: leadership succession, building consensus behind change, coping with growth and success, and implementing change without alienating key

groups and individuals. Where congregations experienced similar internal or environmental changes, they also tended to experience similar difficulties in making organisational responses to those changes; a finding which is in keeping with the institutional theories of organisation outlined at the beginning of Chapter Four.

Other key issues which were mentioned in at least two or three of the congregations studied included: maintaining a balance of resources between the congregation and its denominational institutions; stress and conflicts suffered by lay leaders; nurturing and supporting volunteers; controlling lay leaders; negotiating an appropriate relationship between clergy and laity; and difficulties surrounding the roles of lay employees.

While the findings show organisational similarities between congregations, they also provide pointers to those areas in which congregations differ from each other. Thus, Congregation B was found to differ from the other three congregations studied in a number of respects. Matters which were problematic in Congregations A, C and D - including priority setting, balancing competing interests, organisational change, volunteer recruitment, monitoring task performance, securing financial resources and authority relationships - were generally not perceived as issues in Congregation B.

One possible explanation for this difference is that the strict fundamentalist theology espoused by congregants and reinforced through training and peer pressure, discouraged them from questioning expectations placed on them. Requests to perform tasks, provide resources, or conform with decisions reached by the pastor or deacons, were generally considered to be expressions of God's will and therefore not open to debate. Another possible explanation arises from the observed demographic characteristics of Congregation B. Most of the congregants were middle-aged or elderly women who were first-generation immigrants from the Caribbean. This could have affected, for example, the way in which the male pastor's authority was perceived; expectations about appropriate performance of congregational work; and willingness to commit time and money to the congregation. However, as this second

explanation was not one which arose directly from interviews, it must be regarded as speculation only at this stage.

On the other hand, the first explanation - the idea that underlying religious values affect the way in which organisational issues are perceived and responded to in congregations - is given further support by the observed differences in the study between Congregation D, on the one hand, and Congregations A and C, on the other hand. It seemed, for example, that Congregations A and C, in which the official, theologically-based, stance was that clergy were the final point of authority, were able to avoid some of the more acrimonious disputes about the clergy/laity relationship which arose in Congregation D. In the latter case, manifest statements, grounded in traditional religious ideas of the rabbi as a teacher rather than a priest, were equivocal about the relative authority of laity and clergy. They could not, therefore, provide a basis for conflict resolution or consensus building.

In sum, it can be said that a collective conceptualisation is not only justified when studying organisational aspects of congregations, but also that it points to new directions for research. Further, it opens up the possibility that those who run congregations may learn from each other's organisational experiences, even across denominations and religions. Thus, to take a few examples from the case studies, congregations might benefit from learning about others' experiences of the advantages and disadvantages of organisational growth; of the implications of not undertaking long-term planning; of the organisational impact of 'strict' theological underpinnings; and of the implications of having 'loosely coupled' internal working groups.

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The overview on the earlier literature and the empirical findings in this part of the chapter, reflects the contribution of this project to description and analysis of congregations viewed as organisations. In addition to meeting this, its prime

objective, the project has also responded to the secondary objectives. Initial explanations of practical issues have been drawn out and initial conclusions have been reached about the extent to which it is appropriate to conceptualise congregations collectively.

It can be said that this project, which was intentionally exploratory, indicates that the further study of congregations as organisations is likely to be rewarding for both academics and 'practitioners' - those who run, or participate in running, congregations. Thus Part B discusses the development of a framework for future research.

PART B: A FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE ORGANISATIONAL STUDIES OF CONGREGATIONS

THE NEED FOR A FRAMEWORK

In Chapter Four, it was suggested that scholars have not been much concerned with responding to, or explaining, practical issues of congregational organisation. To use Carroll's distinction (1985, p317), they have tended to conduct "discipline research" rather than "policy research" which can "help people extend their control over the institutions and situations in which they participate."

Chapter Four also described the wide range of disciplinary, theoretical and conceptual frameworks that have been applied to the analysis of local religious institutions. It was pointed out that, with the exception of church/sect theorists, scholars have generally not seen the analysis of congregation organisation as requiring the development of specialist theory. They have taken a generic approach; theories developed initially for other kinds of organisations have been applied to congregations (1).

If the subject of congregation organisation is to develop as a field of study, these two points require fresh thought. That is, there is a need to consider:

- how to generate explanatory theory which can be of practical use to those working in congregations; and
- the extent to which there are distinctive features of congregational organisation which require the development of distinctive theoretical responses.

In this part of the concluding chapter of this thesis, it is argued that progress might be made in these two respects by conceptualising congregations as part of the voluntary sector, and by building on the growing body of specialist knowledge about the organisation and management challenges of that sector.

CONGREGATIONS AS VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

Up to now, scholars of the voluntary sector have paid little attention to religious institutions generally, or to congregations in particular. As Smith (1983) pointed out in an article entitled "Churches are Generally Ignored in Contemporary Voluntary Action Research", it is students of religion who have generally conducted studies of congregations. Yet there is a prima facie case that congregations are appropriately conceptualised for purposes of organisational analysis as part of the broad voluntary sector. This claim rests on three main arguments.

First, a sectoral view of societal activity puts congregations unequivocally in the voluntary sector. The common residual definition of the sector as neither governmental, for-profit nor informal, places congregations in the voluntary sector (2). The view that congregations in contemporary society are generally voluntary associations which people are free to join and leave as they wish (Currie et al, 1977;

Hornsby-Smith, 1989; Warner, 1993), also implies that they are part of the voluntary sector (Knoke and Prensky, 1984; Smith, 1991).

Second, religious institutions, including congregations, have been historically, and remain today, at the heart of a range of voluntary sector activities. Many of the major national welfare charities founded in the nineteenth century had a religious base and drew heavily on the support of congregations (Brenton, 1985; Butler and Wilson, 1990). Also, as described in Chapter One and as demonstrated by the case studies, contemporary congregations provide care services themselves and contribute to local voluntary welfare endeavours.

Taken together, these two arguments provide sufficient justification for conceptualising congregations as voluntary organisations. But there is a third persuasive argument; one that is especially relevant here since it relates specifically to organisational matters. Congregations and voluntary agencies exhibit common organisational features and problems.

ORGANISATIONAL FEATURES AND PROBLEMS OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

In recent years, much scholarly effort has been directed into organisational analysis of the voluntary, or nonprofit sector, in Europe and North America. As knowledge and experience have accumulated, it has become clear that organisations in the sector (however defined) tend to exhibit features and to experience organisational problems which are distinctive (Harris and Billis, 1986; Mason, 1984). They are not necessarily unique to the sector, but they are noticeably more likely to occur there (Harris, 1990; Knoke and Prensky, 1984). Despite the difficulties of defining the sector, despite the blurred boundaries of the sector and despite the heterogeneity that exists within the sector (2), a growing band of scholars have reached the same conclusion (O'Neill and Young, 1988).

As regards distinctive features of voluntary organisations, their value base has been widely noted (Jeavons, 1993; Paton, 1991). Other suggested key features include: use of volunteers; independent voluntary governing boards; multiple constituencies; and multiple goals and purposes (Harris, 1990; Mason, 1984).

Turning to characteristic organisational problems of the voluntary sector, Billis (1993b), summarising the research literature, distinguishes difficulties around: the relationship between governing boards and staff; accountability; the relationship between headquarters and local groups; participation by clients and users; management of volunteers; and organisational change. Recent work with overseas aid agencies (Billis and MacKeith, 1993) points to additional tensions: between hierarchical and democratic approaches to decision-making; and between raising money and raising awareness of social change issues.

Juxtaposing this list of voluntary sector organisational features and issues with the literature review and empirical findings on congregations reported in preceding chapters, the similarities are apparent. Both congregations and voluntary organisations have multiple constituencies and multiple goals. In both types of organisation difficulties arise around the relationship between staff and 'lay' people; competition between constituencies; organisational change; and the 'headquarters/local' (or denomination/congregation) relationship. Research on both congregations and voluntary organisations emphasises the importance of their strong underpinning value commitment.

In other respects the similarities are not so closely matched, but they are nevertheless supportive of the general argument. For example, lay volunteers are intrinsic to the work of congregations, although they are not necessarily seen as 'volunteers' in the way that they would be in, say, a service-providing secular voluntary welfare agency. Nor are the motivations of congregational volunteers necessarily the same as those who volunteer in secular voluntary agencies (Cnaan et al, 1993). The problems

experienced in voluntary agencies around appropriate forms of decision-making and the conflict between raising money and raising social awareness, reflect debates in congregations about 'appropriate' and 'authentic' activities and goals, and around the need to combine religious goals with a realistic assessment of organisational survival mechanisms. The issues which arise in congregations around the relative authority of lay people may be seen as mirroring the debate in the voluntary sector about 'user' involvement.

In sum, congregations share organisational features and problems with voluntary organisations. For this, and for the other two reasons given earlier, it is argued here that congregations are appropriately conceptualised as part of the voluntary sector for purposes of further study.

APPLYING KNOWLEDGE OF VOLUNTARY SECTOR ORGANISATION

If, then, congregations can be seen as voluntary organisations, there is scope for building on specialist research and theories of voluntary organisation to explain problems and issues in congregations.

Thus, problems surrounding the relationship between clergy and laity might be informed by research on the relationship between professional staff and voluntary governing boards, which suggests that the relationship is appropriately understood as contingent, interdependent and negotiable (Harris, 1993; Herman, 1989; Kramer, 1985). Specialist literature on the motivation and management of volunteers (Clary et al, 1992; Thomas and Finch, 1990; Volunteer Centre UK, 1990) could also provide useful insights for religious functionaries and lay employees who are in constant interaction with volunteer members working in congregations. These studies demonstrate that instrumentalism, as well as altruism, are important factors in volunteering. The commitment of volunteers is sustained most effectively by

acknowledging, and responding to, their personal needs for work experience, self-development, positions of power, and so on.

Similarly, light might be shed on the difficulties which arise in the relationship between congregations and their denominational institutions, by drawing on studies of local groups and headquarters organisations in secular voluntary agencies; studies which demonstrate pulls between centralization and decentralization and the ways in which local units trade autonomy for resources (Bailey, 1992; Young, 1989; Zald, 1970).

Again, the resistance to formalisation and organisational change in congregations might be understood in the light of theories developed by Billis (1989) and by Smith (1991), who argue that there are important organisational differences between membership associations and service-providing agencies. Membership associations are generally informal and focused on social interaction, personal development, and mutual benefit activities. If staff are employed, they are generally expected to support members who themselves do the main operational work. Service-providing agencies, on the other hand, tend to require more formal structures and role relationships if their continuity is to be assured. Where paid staff are employed, they do main-stream operational work (Billis, 1993a).

We may juxtapose these insights from voluntary sector organisation literature with the findings of the current study which suggest that congregations generally are both membership associations meeting members' needs and service-providers for the wider community. The practical implications may be not only that the organisation of congregations is thereby rendered especially complex (Billis, 1989; Smith, 1993), but also that members themselves feel ambivalent about perceived trends to move 'their' congregation away from an essentially membership model of work.

In sum, the development of explanatory theory for congregation organisation, could be facilitated by drawing on the growing body of specialist material on voluntary sector organisation and applying it to the findings reported in earlier chapters on organisational issues faced by congregations.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF CONGREGATIONS

At the same time, uncritical transposition of voluntary sector organisation theory to congregations is not being advocated. For just as there are powerful arguments that voluntary organisations have features which distinguish them from organisations in other sectors, there are also clear indications that congregations have organisational features which distinguish them from other kinds of voluntary agencies. This is not to deny the earlier argument that there are lessons to be learned from the voluntary sector organisational literature, but merely to assert that sensitivity to the special features of congregations must be maintained as the search for salient explanatory theory proceeds.

The need for sensitivity is highlighted by the fact that congregations have organisational features, and experience problems, which appear at first sight to be similar to those found in other voluntary organisations, but which also differ in some crucial respects. For example, the difficulties which arise in the relationship between lay leaders and clergy in congregations mirror the problems experienced in the relationship between governing boards and staff in the voluntary sector; so theories about the relationship between boards and senior paid staff may help to throw light on congregational difficulties. On the other hand, and as the case studies indicate, the extent to which lay boards in congregations are as independent as they are in the rest of the voluntary sector, varies according to denominational polity. Moreover, it is not clear from research to date how far it is appropriate to see the position of a religious functionary in a congregation as analogous to the position of a senior paid

officer in a secular voluntary organisation; a matter which is discussed further in the following section.

Another example of a feature which is both similar and different as between congregations and other voluntary agencies, is 'multiple constituencies'. It is clear from the literature and the empirical findings set out in earlier chapters, that congregations share with other voluntary agencies the challenge of having to respond to, and balance, numerous competing constituencies or stakeholders. Indeed, many of the organisational issues described in earlier chapters on the case studies were traceable to the interplay within congregations of competing interests. At the same time, the initial indications are that in congregations, most of the stakeholders are internal to the congregation and/or to the denominational organisation; whereas, in the voluntary sector generally, external stakeholders are at least as important as internal ones (Kanter and Summers, 1987; Leat, 1988).

A similar point applies to the 'value basis' characteristic which congregations hold in common with other voluntary organisations. It can be questioned whether there is an equivalence, from the point of view of organisational impact, between basic values which are thought to have a divine origin or are grounded in religious tradition, and values which derive from secular ideologies and principles. Findings reported in earlier chapters suggested that points of view which claimed to be divinely inspired or rooted in religious tradition, tended to be treated in congregations with special respect; with consequent implications for decision-making processes and the potential for enacting change.

The need to exercise caution about applying to congregations theories developed for other kinds of voluntary organisations, derives not only from this observation about features which are simultaneously similar and different. It also derives from the fact that congregations appear to have at least two organisational features which cannot be readily compared at all with other kinds of voluntary organisations: the role of

religious functionaries, and the position of members. These two features are discussed in the following two sections.

THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS FUNCTIONARIES

As the case studies demonstrate, religious functionaries are generally regarded within congregations as having an authority which is different in quality and derivation from the authority implied in a secular organisational role. Using Weberian terminology (1964), clergy carry 'charismatic' or 'traditional' authority, or some combination of the two. Using Christian theological language, the authority they have is rooted in divine inspiration. Although, in theory, the role of the Jewish rabbi "entails rational legal authority" (Israel, 1966, p388), contemporary congregational rabbis are also, in practice, expected to possess some measure of 'charismatic' or 'traditional' authority.

In this respect, organisational analogies with the rest of the voluntary sector are not useful. Although it is not unknown for the paid directors (chief executives, general secretaries and so on) of secular voluntary agencies to carry charismatic or traditional authority to some degree, this is not the norm. The expectation is that they will exercise 'rational legal' authority and that others (such as their staff, outside funders, and members of the governing body) will respond to them on this basis. It will be generally, assumed, for example, that decisions made by voluntary sector chief executives are open to challenge and rational debate - both before they are made and, often, after they are made. Indeed, senior staff in the secular voluntary sector who possess or acquire charismatic or traditional authority, can be seen as constituting a major problem, even a threat to the long term survival of their agencies (Bryman, 1992).

Thus this organisational feature of religious congregations - the presence of one or more key figures who are expected to exercise traditional and/or charismatic authority

- demands the development of specialist theory. Here a starting point is provided by a recent examination of the organisational structures of Protestant denominations in the United States. It conceptualises them as:

" ... dual structures ... constituted by two parallel organisational structures: a religious authority structure and an agency structure." (Chaves, 1993, p8)

This conceptual framework resonates with the case study findings in a number of respects and provides useful pointers for future research and theoretical development.

For example, the idea that there may be, in practice, two different forms of authority in operation in congregations, reflects findings about the difficulties of 'positioning' the paid lay staff in Congregations A and D. Using Chaves' framework, it could be said that both the lay staff themselves and others within their congregations were confused about whether they were part of the 'religious' authority structure or whether they were just like paid staff in a secular voluntary agency - carrying all the expectations and obligations implied in a 'bureaucratic' role.

Again, the dual authority concept throws light on the problems experienced in the relationships between senior lay volunteers and clergy in Congregations A, C and D. Volunteers see themselves, perhaps, as essentially a part of a 'rational legal' authority structure within their congregations; whereas clergy, because of their training and vocation, perceive themselves as part of a very different kind of authority structure - one in which they are closely linked to their clerical peers and superiors and one in which the appropriate role of laity is inherently inferior, or at least different and ambiguous. The two groups are not, then, sharing a common organisational model; misunderstanding and even conflict between the two groups is to be expected.

A further insight provided by Chaves, that the two authority structures may operate in parallel, is especially useful. If they are parallel, ongoing problems between clergy

and laity about who has authority over whom are to be expected. At the same time, these problems are not open to simple resolution. The two authority structures do not, by reason of their parallel nature, have a meeting or 'cross over' point; a point of final accountability and conflict resolution such as appears in conventional diagrams of hierarchical organisations - either in the form of a single senior role, or in the form of a governing board to which two or more senior roles report. If there are two parallel authority structures within congregations, constant negotiation and debate about who has authority over whom is unavoidable.

In sum, the role of religious functionaries deserves to be seen as a distinctive organisational feature of congregational organisation; one which is not readily understood by analogy with secular voluntary agencies and one which seems to demand the development of specialist explanatory theory. A second distinctive feature is suggested in the following section.

THE POSITION OF CONGREGATION MEMBERS

The empirical studies reported in previous chapters demonstrated the way in which the donated time and money of members (see GLOSSARY) is a key resource in congregations of all kinds. In this respect, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, congregations are 'membership associations'. However, this characteristic, high dependence on the resources of members, coexists in congregations with another organisational feature: limited control over organisational purposes and goals. The combination of these characteristics may be said to constitute a second distinctive feature of congregational organisation.

The usual expectation in a membership association is one of exchange; individuals voluntarily donate their time and money to sustain an organisation and, in recognition of this, they have substantial influence over the purposes and goals of the organisation (Knoke and Prenskey, 1984; O'Neill, 1994). In religious based organisations,

however, the extent to which members can exercise such influence is limited by the fact that religious principles, by their very nature, are relatively fixed. Indeed, there is frequently an assumption underpinning religious organisations that membership, and commitment to fixed goals, is in some way a matter of obligation rather than choice (Thompson, 1970) (3).

In considering this 'fixed' nature of congregational goals, it is useful to follow Scott (1987, p47) and to conceptualise the goals of organisations in a hierarchy. At the peak, are "ultimate goals". Any challenge to them "is likely to be met with strong resistance" as it "calls into question the premises around which the entire enterprise is structured." Essentially, ultimate organisational goals are not open to debate or negotiation.

Using this conceptualisation of goals and applying it to the case studies, it can be argued that the number and range of goals which are perceived as ultimate in religious congregations, are far greater than in secular associations. There may be variations between congregations in the extent to which lower level means and ends (such as role definitions and operating priorities) can be debated, but the ceiling at which goals are classified as ultimate and beyond challenge is quickly reached.

This can be illustrated by data from Congregation D. That congregation was probably the most theologically liberal and democratically structured of the four congregations studied. It could therefore be expected to be most open to debate about broad purposes and goals. But in practice, although that congregation was able to tolerate a range of fundamental discussions, the study showed that congregants whose motivations for membership were social rather than spiritual, did not feel able to express their views publicly. They had hit the boundary of ultimate goals; the idea that a prime function of a synagogue is to express religious commitment was beyond discussion. They could not seek to transform that goal of the organisation, even though, as subscribing members, the organisation was 'theirs'. They felt that they

had to keep their views to themselves or leave the congregation. This finding reflects data on the other case congregations which provided further examples of the way in which dissenters in congregations tend to leave rather than to stay and seek goal changes.

This paradoxical organisational feature of congregations, expected high membership commitment combined with limited control over goals, suggests possible explanations for a number of other findings from the case studies including the frustration and guilt surrounding unmet goals; the difficulties of drawing boundaries around work and voluntary commitments; and the preoccupation with setting priorities rather than discussing 'banner' goals. Since they could not debate, change or circumscribe broad congregational goals, and since such a high proportion of the congregation's goals were perceived as ultimate, members felt constrained to achieve more and more.

This 'high commitment/low goal control' characteristic may not be unique to religious congregations, but, like the position of religious functionaries discussed in the previous section, it is certainly distinctive. It merits special attention from future researchers of congregational organisation.

THE WAY AHEAD

Where, then, is the way ahead for researchers seeking to develop knowledge and theory about congregational organisation? The second part of this final chapter has built on the findings from the case studies to suggest initial answers to this question. In doing so, it has also attempted to respond to two limiting features of earlier approaches to the study of congregational organisation: lack of attention to practical issues, and the tendency to take a generic approach to organisational analysis.

It has been argued that progress could be made in developing usable, explanatory theory, ideas which could be used by those who run congregations, by treating

congregations as special cases within a specialist organisational field - the voluntary sector. There is scope for building on existing understanding of congregational organisation, by applying to congregations the theories developed to explain issues in other voluntary organisations.

Yet congregations are not like other voluntary organisations in every respect. So future researchers face a further challenging task: to develop new theories which respond to distinctive organisational features and problems of congregations. In the closing paragraphs of this chapter some signposts to this new intellectual territory have been provided.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. This approach has been continued in the current study where theories and concepts drawn from general organisational theory have been referred to throughout the presentation of findings. Thus, reference has been made to institutional theory; resource dependency theory; garbage can theory; and open systems theory. And concepts such as power; authority; isomorphism; and loose coupling have been employed.

2. The difficulty of defining the voluntary (or nonprofit) sector, the heterogeneity of the organisations it encompasses, and its blurred boundaries, are topics which have received a great deal of scholarly attention (see, for example, Billis, 1993b; di Maggio and Anheier, 1990; Van Til, 1988). Following Salamon and Anheier (1992b, p11) the voluntary sector may be seen as comprising those organisations which are formal ("institutionalized to some extent"); private (institutionally separate from government); non-profit distributing; self-governing; and voluntary ("involving some meaningful degree of voluntary participation"). The terms 'independent sector', 'third sector', 'social economy' and 'non governmental organisations' (or NGOs) may also be used to refer to these organisations. For ease of reference, the terms 'voluntary sector' and 'nonprofit sector' are used interchangeably in this chapter to refer to those organisations which are in neither the for-profit, governmental, nor informal spheres of activity.

3. This is despite the fact that, in practice, membership in today's synagogues and churches is voluntary and "... persuasion rather than compulsion ... are the only tools available for making and executing policies" (Elazar, 1984, p262).

APPENDIX A - SELECTION CRITERIA FOR CASES AND INTERVIEWEES

The approach to selecting case congregations and interviewees was described in Chapter Five.

Variables for Stage Three of Case Selection Process

Having ensured a spread of religions and denominations in four cases, the third stage of the selection process consisted of ensuring a spread of cases on a range of other variables.

A guide list of variables which had been found, or had been hypothesised, to be correlated with organisational behaviour or features of religious institutions was drawn up using relevant literature. The list is set out below along with citations, where relevant, of methodology literature or religious research literature which used or suggested each variable.

Location - inner city, inner suburb, outer suburb, new town, small town, rural [Clark, 1989; Wilken, 1971; Wineburg, 1993]

Paid staff - number and type - clergy/rabbi, administration staff, welfare staff, other staff [Katz and Schoen, 1963; Wilken, 1971]

Membership size - [Pinto and Crow, 1982; Scherer, 1972; Wilken, 1971]; increasing or declining [Brierly, 1991]

Membership characteristics - socio-economic status [Wineburg, 1993]; ethnicity [Currie et al, 1970; Wineburg, 1993]; age [Wilken, 1971]

History - age, development process, building acquisitions [Wilken, 1971; Wineburg, 1993]

Financial and funding position

Activities - number and type - liturgical; social; ecumenical; community service; separatist; evangelical [Currie et al, 1970; Warner, 1988; Wineburg, 1993]

Guidelines for the selection of interviewees

The aim in selecting interviewees within each case congregation was to obtain as wide a range of perceptions as possible. Within each congregation, people involved in different congregational activities were targeted. The views of both religious functionaries and lay people were relevant and, amongst lay people, it was thought important not to confine investigations to office-holders, but to also include other kinds of 'actors' in the congregation.

Thus, using diversity as a guideline, the list below of the minimum number and type of interviews to be conducted in each congregation, was developed. It was expected that a total of about 12 interviews in each of the case congregations would enable these conditions to be satisfied.

In each congregation, one or more of each of the following was sought:

1. Clergy/rabbi, plus subsidiaries/visitors/associates (including stipendiaries)
2. Other paid staff - administrative, financial control, welfare- providing
3. Teaching staff - head teacher, teachers

4. Lay celebrants/readers and 'wardens'
5. Lay leaders eg chair, treasurer, secretary of local governing body/consultative body plus chairpersons of sub-committees
6. Senior voluntary workers eg volunteer organiser, lay visitors, volunteers for building maintenance, clerical work, p.r., social activities organisation
7. Lay elders no longer actively involved on day to day basis, or influential but not holding official posts.
8. People concerned with 'boundary spanning' between local congregation and the environment eg representatives on ecumenical, communal, or denominational bodies
9. Other key active lay participants
10. Member of the denominational structure or the local community, external to the congregation but familiar with its work and organisation

In addition, the interviewee group for each congregation was varied with respect to age and gender and known loyalty to congregational factions.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULES AND QUESTIONNAIRES

The main part of all the interviews were semi-structured and were conducted according to the schedule set out below.

In addition, and in order to obtain background reference material, each interviewee was asked, at the end of the semi-structured interview, for some basic factual information about himself or herself. Different questionnaires were used for lay people and paid employees (including clergy and rabbis). The two personal questionnaires follow the schedule below.

Finally, one interviewee in each case was asked for factual information about the church or synagogue. The questionnaire used is also given below. In drafting the person and congregation questionnaires, some of the ideas and formats given in the appendices to Clark (1989) were utilised.

SCHEDULE FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

[Researcher -

Check that interviewee understands nature and purpose of interview and of project as a whole.

Emphasise confidentiality and personal perspectives.

Invite questions before starting.]

1. First, could we just spend five minutes talking briefly about you and your involvement with this church (syn) - how you come to be sitting here now?

Prompts for lay people:

What activities have you been involved with in the past?

What activities are you currently involved in and in what capacity?

What is it that attracts you to being involved with the church?

Describe what you do for or in the church in a typical week

Do you have, or are you taking, any training or courses relevant to your church involvement?

Prompts for employees including clergy and rabbis:

Brief history of career in this church

Brief history of career in other churches/religious organisations

Describe the main tasks/aspects of your job in a typical week

2. Now I'd like to ask you about how this church (syn) is run - how it works on a day to day basis and who does what. Tell me about what you see as the most important tasks.

Prompts:

Who does what?

- admin**
- admin of worship**
- building maintenance**
- fundraising**
- evaluation**
- planning**
- policy**

What gets left undone?

Are there any opportunities for training and, if so, are they taken up?

Prompt for clergy only:

Who stands in for you when you are away from the church (syn)?

3. Tell me about the [researcher - insert here name of relevant denominational structure]. Are you or others involved in [insert denom name] in any way.

Prompt:

How helpful or useful would you say [the denom structure] is to this church (syn)?

4. Perhaps we could talk a little more now about the people in your church (syn) - how you see them and how you see the relationships between them? I'm particularly interested in the people who do the tasks you were telling me about before.

Prompts:

Relationships - clergy/other paid staff
 clergy/lay leaders
 clergy/governing body
 lay leaders/lay people

What drives the commitment of lay leaders?

What drives the commitment of regular volunteers?

Are motivations different for involvement in religious and non-religious activities?

Why do people attend acts of worship?

Why do people attend social activities?

Why do people participate in church(syn)?

Are there gender differences in participation in activities?

Prompt for lay people only:

How do you get on with [insert name of religious functionary/functionaries]?

5. In your position, you know a great deal about the church's (syn's) activities and how it's run. What do you see as the most successful aspects of its work at the moment?

Prompts:

Specific examples

[Researcher - tease out implicit criteria for success]

6. What are your main ambitions for the church (syn) in the future? Where would you like to see things being developed or changed in the next months and years - ideally?

Prompts:

Specific examples

[Researcher - Tease out reasons and criteria]

7. I'm coming to the end of my questions now. You have provided me with a lot of very interesting insights about the impressive work of this church (syn) and, indeed, about the work that you yourself are doing. Is there anything else at all that you would like to tell me from your experience; things you think I should know about how the church (syn) works?

8. Finally, I just need to ask you for some basic information about yourself. All the information you give me, as I said, will be treated in strictest confidence. Here I do have a fairly formal quick questionnaire that we can just go through together.
[Researcher - administer personal questionnaire]

9. [Researcher - Explain next steps and outcomes]

thank you

ORGANISATION OF CHURCHES AND SYNAGOGUES PROJECT

LAY INTERVIEWEE QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME

ADDRESS

.....

TEL (work) **(home)**

CHURCH (SYN)

Some Questions about your life in your church (syn)

1. How long have you been coming to this church (syn)?

2. Have you ever worshipped regularly in any other church (syn) (of the same denomination or other denomination/religion)?

YES/NO

IF YES

Please give details

3. Do you participate in any church (syn) activity or project other than sabbath worship?

YES/NO

IF YES

Please give the name of the activity/activities. If you have a specific 'job' please say so

Some Questions about your life outside the church (syn)

4. Are you in paid employment at present?

No - retired

No - not seeking paid work

No - seeking paid work/unemployed

Student

Yes - part-time

Yes - full-time

5. Please give the title of your present or last paid job

6. Do you belong to any groups or organisations outside the church (syn)?

YES/NO

IF YES

Please give the name/names. If you have a specific 'job' please say so

Some Questions about you

7. Are any members of your present household involved in any way in the church (syn)?

YES/NO

IF YES

Please say who and how they are involved

9. Which of these age groups are you in?

18 - 29 years

30 - 44 years

45 - 59 years

60 - 74 years

75 or over

THANK YOU

ORGANISATION OF CHURCHES AND SYNAOGUES PROJECT
EMPLOYEE INTERVIEWEE QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME

ADDRESS

.....

TEL (work)(home)

JOB TITLE/POSITION

.....

CHURCH (SYN)

Some Questions about your life in your church (syn)

1. How long have you been in this post in this church (syn)?

2. Is the job full-time or part-time?

F/T P/T

IF PART-TIME

How many hours a week are you paid for?

3. What was your job immediately before this one?

4. (For lay employees only) Are you involved in any activities of the church (syn) outside of your paid work here?

YES/NO

IF YES

Please give the name of the activity/activities. If you have a specific 'job' please say so

5. (For clergy and rabbis only) Please give brief details of your clerical/rabbinical training and career.

Some Questions about your life outside the church (syn)

6. Do you belong to any groups or organisations outside the church (syn)?

YES/NO

IF YES

Please give the name/names. If you have a specific 'job' please say so

Some Questions about you

7. Are any members of your household involved in any way in the church (syn)?

YES/NO

IF YES

Please say who and how they are involved

8. Which of these age groups are you in?

18 - 29 years

30 - 44 years

44 - 59 years

60 - 74 years

75 or over

THANK YOU

ORGANISATION OF CHURCHES AND SYNAGOGUES PROJECT
CONGREGATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND RESOURCES

NAME OF CHURCH/SYNAGOGUE

NAME AND POSITION OF INFORMANT

.....

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. What geographical area, if any, does this church (syn) serve?
2. When was your church (syn) first established?
3. What buildings do you have available for your activities?

YOUR MEMBERS

4. How many "members" do you have?
5. How do you define a "member"?
6. How many other "adherents" do you have, if any - people who regularly attend worship or other activities but are not "members" by your definition?

7. What would you estimate the average age of members to be?

8. Thinking about your main, or most popular, regular sabbath service:
 - a. What would you estimate the average numbers attending to be?

 - b. What would you estimate the average age of worshippers to be?

 - c. What proportion of attenders are men?

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CHURCH (SYN)

9. What is the formal or constitutional structure for running the church (syn)?

10. In addition to meetings for worship, what are the main activities, events and projects which take place under the auspices of your church (syn)?

11. What links, if any, does the church(syn) have with other religious organisations (including those of your own denomination and those of different denominations or religions)?

12. What links, if any, does the church (syn) have with secular organisations?

13. Please give details of everybody "employed" in your church (syn) - paid staff including religious leaders. Please give name, job title, year of appointment and whether full or part-time

NAME	JOB TITLE	YEAR/APPT	F/T P/T
------	-----------	-----------	---------

14. In addition to those who are paid to do work for the church (syn), are there others who regularly do "jobs" on a voluntary or unpaid basis (apart from lay office holders)? Please give name, job title if any, and briefly describe their work

NAME	JOB TITLE	WORK DONE
------	-----------	-----------

15. Please describe briefly the main sources of income of your church (syn) and the major items of annual expenditure

16. Are there any other matters of information about your church (syn) that you would like to tell me about?

Thank you

APPENDIX C: PRE-PILOT AND PILOT WORK

PRE-PILOT WORK

1. During the period November 1987 to September 1988, unstructured interviews were conducted with the people listed below, in order to sensitise the researcher to current issues and problems in the work of UK churches and synagogues.

- Dr David Barker - an involved Catholic layman
- Rabbi Tony Bayfield - Director, The Sternberg Centre for Judaism, London
- Father Brendon Callaghan - Principal, Heythrop College, University of London
- Professor Percy Cohen, Department of Sociology, London School of Economics, University of London
- Mr Morton Creeger - involved layman in Federation of Synagogues
- Canon Len Dryden - Director, CORAT (Christian Organisations Research and Training)
- Reverend Doctor Bill Elliott - Rector of St Nicholas (CE) parish church, Elstree, Herts
- Reverend Barry Hefford - Superintendent Minister, the Methodist Church Amersham Circuit, Bucks
- Mr Michael Johnson - an involved Anglican layman and Chairman of Radlett Council of Christian and Jews, Herts

- Reverend John Lampard - Secretary, Local Preachers' Office, the Methodist Church Division of Ministries
- Professor Jack Mahoney - Department of Theology, Kings College, University of London
- Mgr Vincent Nichols - Secretary, Catholic Bishops Conference, England
- Mrs Marlana Schmool - Director, Community Research Unit, The Board of Deputies of British Jews
- Mr Peter Tunnard - Treasurer of the Parochial Church Council (CE), Elstree, Herts

2. During the period August 1987 to November 1988 written and telephone comments on the proposed research were provided by the people listed below.

- Dr A. Berry - Senior Lecturer in Management Control at Manchester Business School and consultant on church organisation
- Professor Ram Cnaan - School of Social Work, University of Pennsylvania, USA
- Dr Kenneth Dempsey - Department of Sociology, La Trobe University, Australia
- Professor Barry Kosmin - Director, North American Jewish Data Bank and former Director, Board of Deputies of British Jews Research Unit
- Reverend George Lovell - Director of AVEC (A Service Agency for Church and Community Work) London

- Mr Barry Palmer - Independent consultant to religious organisations including churches and synagogues
- Rabbi Jacqueline Tabick - West London Reform Synagogue
- Professor Bob Wineburg - Department of Social Work, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, USA

3. Beginning in 1988, the researcher was able to share and test emerging ideas and findings in two fora.

- The "Partners in Leadership" programme of the Leo Baeck College, London - a series of seminars on organisation, management and leadership in synagogues attended by rabbis and lay leaders in the Reform and Liberal Synagogue movements .

- A series of informal seminars convened by the researcher and also including Barry Palmer (independent consultant to religious organisations); Lena Fajerman (independent consult to religious organisations, and Chairwoman of Barkingside Progressive Synagogue); and Helen Cameron, postgraduate student studying the welfare role of churches and member of the Salvation Army.

4. Beginning in June 1991, the researcher was able to share and test emerging ideas and findings through participation in the Project on Religious Institutions, sponsored by the Program on Non-Profit Organizations at Yale University. The Project on Religious Institutions was supported by the Lilly Endowment. It comprised a series of two-day seminars and ran until September 1993.

THE PILOT STUDY

Six pilot interviews were conducted during January and February 1992 with people as listed below.

1. An Anglican non-stipendiary minister: Male; retired from professional employment; active in inter-faith work, his diocese and his parish. Own congregation semi-rural.
2. A former Chairwoman of a Reform Jewish congregation: Female; middle-aged mother in full-time employment; active in own congregation as lay celebrant and chair of two sub-committees. Own congregation suburban.
3. A member of the Salvation Army: Female; young civil servant; active in own congregation as Sunday School Teacher and Band member. Own congregation inner city.
4. A convert to Catholicism from Methodism: Female; young postgraduate student; responsible for music in her parish church. Own congregation outer metropolitan.
5. A Catholic priest: Male; late middle-aged; priest of a parish covering a 'professional' London suburb.
6. An Anglican Arch-Deacon: Male; middle-aged. Diocese in south/central England.

APPENDIX D: ACCESS AND RESEARCH PROCESS NOTES

This appendix provides notes which supplement the information given in Chapter Five about the identification of the four case congregations. It covers how initial contacts were made with each congregation and how access was negotiated.

INITIAL CONTACTS

Congregation A

Pre-pilot interviewee approached to help find a Catholic congregation. He made an initial telephone call to the senior Priest at Congregation A; he knew the congregation but not the priest personally. He explained the study purpose and gave a verbal reference for the researcher. The researcher followed up this initial contact by telephoning the senior Priest.

Congregation B

Pre-pilot interviewee had had a number of professional contacts with the congregation and offered to make an initial approach. He telephoned the pastor and the researcher followed up with a letter to the pastor requesting an initial meeting. This was agreed and the meeting with the pastor took place at the church where the researcher also participated in a visit by local police cadets.

Congregation C

Same pre-pilot interviewee as used for Congregation B suggested the congregation and facilitated access. He thought that the congregation would be interesting for a researcher as it was part of a parish team structure. He made an initial approach to the Parish Team Rector whom the researcher then telephoned. Rector invited

researcher to attend a meeting of the Parish Team and to make a presentation to them about the study purpose. Researcher sent some background material about herself and the study purpose beforehand and the Rector sent material about the parish.

Congregation D

Rabbi had heard about the study and thought it would be a good experience for his congregation to be involved. After initial discussions with the rabbi face to face, the researcher wrote a formal letter of request for access which was passed to the Chairman of the congregation. He took the request to the next meeting of the Council and then wrote confirming agreement.

ACCESS NEGOTIATION

Congregation A

Phone call to senior priest followed by a letter from researcher outlining the project. This followed by face to face meeting by appointment with the senior priest who then took the matter to a meeting of the Parish Team. Telephone information that the project had been accepted. This followed by a second meeting with the priest to discuss mechanics of interviews, who to interview and to get basic background information by questionnaire about the congregation (Appendix B). Interviews took place between April and June 1992, with a supplementary interview in November 1992.

Congregation B

At the initial meeting, the pastor said he needed to discuss the proposal with other people; that the researcher should write to Secretary outlining the proposal. Secretary replied agreeing, on behalf of the church, to cooperate and saying she had spoken to

the "leaders of various departments" who had no objection to being interviewed. Names and addresses of 20 people enclosed with permission letter. Further information about the characteristics of the people listed obtained by phone from the secretary. Secretary said researcher could approach whom she wished. Response to request to secretary for basic information about the church, was suggestion that researcher should attend a Sunday service and meet her beforehand to get information. Interviews took place between August and October 1992.

Congregation C

Following presentation by researcher to the Parish Team, informed by the Rector that the Team had agreed to study of Congregation C. Researcher wrote separately to the vicar to arrange a first meeting. At that meeting, the congregational questionnaire was completed and the vicar discussed which of his congregants might meet selection criteria (Appendix A). He gave names, addresses and phone numbers for two possibilities in each category, gave brief details about each person, and said the researcher could choose whom to approach. He also suggested which events and services the researcher might attend (Appendix G). Interviews took place between August and October 1992.

Congregation D

Immediately following receipt of agreement to the research in principle, researcher was invited to attend as an observer a special meeting of the council in which they were having workshop sessions on aspects of the future of the synagogue. Researcher then met the Chairman to discuss the interview process and to complete the congregational questionnaire. Following the meeting, the Chairman sent names, addresses and phone numbers of an initial ten people who would meet the selection criteria for interviewees (Appendix A). He gave permission to approach them directly. Researcher was given details of services, Council meetings and the AGM

and told that she would be welcome at whatever she wished to attend. Later, once the interview stage had started, researcher was approached by the Rabbi who asked to see list given by the Chairman. He made suggestions for three additional people who he thought might have less "establishment" views about the way the congregation was organised. Interviews took place between January and April 1993.

APPENDIX E: EXAMPLE OF INTERVIEW REQUEST LETTER

Each potential interviewee was sent a personalised letter, as set out below, outlining the purpose and likely length of the interview, assuring confidentiality and enclosing a reply form and stamped addressed envelope.

Dear ****,

STUDY ON THE ORGANISATION OF CHURCHES

[Name of congregation key informant] has given me your name as somebody who might be willing to help in a project I am conducting.

As you will see from the attached leaflet, I am the Assistant Director of the Centre for Voluntary Organisation, which is part of the London School of Economics. The Centre focuses on the organisation of voluntary agencies and my own work at the moment is looking at how local religious institutions - like churches and synagogues - are run.

For example, how do they keep things going on a day to day basis? Who does what? What goes well? Where are the main problems or difficulties? Can churches of different denominations and religions learn lessons from each other about how to organise themselves? I hope that my study will be able to provide answers to some of these questions; to provide practical guidance for those who are actively carrying out their religion in local parishes.

One of the churches chosen for the study is [name of congregation] and [names of leaders or leadership group] have very kindly been cooperating with me in this work. They have given me your name and so I am writing to you now to ask if I might come and see you to hear your view points about the work and organisation of [name of congregation]. Everything you tell me will be completely confidential - I will not tell anybody else what you have said. And in my written reports, neither you nor [name of congregation] will be identifiable. What you tell me will be collected together with the views of other people I interview in order to get a general overview.

Interviews of this kind usually take about one and a half hours and I will be happy to meet you at a time and place of your choosing. I attach a stamped-addressed envelope and a tear-off slip for you to complete and return to me if you are willing to meet me.

If there are questions you would like to ask me, please phone me on ***. If I am not there, please leave a message and I will call you back.

I look forward very much to hearing from you and to meeting you in due course.

Yours sincerely

STUDY ON THE ORGANISATION OF CHURCHES

Please complete and return this slip to Margaret Harris in the envelope provided.

1. I am willing to meet you YES/NO
2. To arrange a suitable time and place for our interview, you can phone me on
.....(daytime number)
- or(evening number)

Name

Signature

Date

APPENDIX F: CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERVIEWEES

TABLE 1 - POSITION IN CONGREGATION

Characteristics	Interviewed in Congregation				
	A	B	C	D	Total
A Clergy	3	3	2	1	9
B Lay paid staff (full or part-time)	3	NA	NA	4	7
C Congregation Teacher	3	3	3	4	13
D Lay Celebrant/religiously specialist layperson	3	3	2	3	11
E Lay leader\officer *	2	6	2	3	13
F Other senior volunteer *	4	1	6	3	14
G Lay elder (no longer actively involved)	-	1	2	2	5
H Boundary spanner (between congregation and environment)	2	2	1	2	7
I Outsider familiar with congregation	2	1	2	1	8
Total interviewed <>	12	12	12	13	49

* mutually exclusive for categorisation purposes

<> The totals of those interviewed are not the sum of the columns as many interviewees in categories C - H fell into more than one characteristic category

TABLE 2 - INTERVIEWEES' LENGTH OF CONGREGATION PARTICIPATION

Congregation A

Length of participation in years	Clergy and paid employees*	Other participants	Total <> interviewed
Less than 5	5	1	6
5 - 10	1	2	3
11 - 20		2	2
21 - 30		1	1
more than 30			
TOTAL	6	6	12

Congregation B

Length of participation in years	Clergy and paid employees*	Other participants	Total <> interviewed
Less than 5			
5 - 10			
11 - 20		3	3
21 - 30		5	5
more than 30	1	3	4
TOTAL	1	11	12

... continued

(Table 2 continued)

Congregation C

Length of participation in years	Clergy and paid employees*	Other participants	Total <> interviewed
Less than 5	1	1	2
5 - 10	1	1	2
11 - 20		4	4
21 - 30		4	4
more than 30			
TOTAL	2	10	12

Congregation D

Length of participation in years	Clergy and paid employees*	Other participants	Total <> interviewed
Less than 5	2		2
5 - 10	1	3	4
11 - 20	2	1	3
21 - 30		3	3
more than 30		1	1
TOTAL	5	8	13

* some in this category were formerly lay participants in the congregation. The length of time shown here relates only to the time during which they have been employees of the congregation.

<> tables include all interviewees. 'Outsiders' are classified here according to the length of time they have been in contact with the congregation.

TABLE 3 - INTERVIEWEES BY AGE, GENDER AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Congregation A

Age in years	GENDER		TOTAL	EMPLOYMENT STATUS <>				
	M	F		F/t	P/t	Usw	Unsw	Ret
18-29	1		1	1				
30-44	4		4	4				
45-59	2	5	7	6	1			
60-74								
75 and over								
Total	7	5	12	11	1			

Congregation B

Age in years	GENDER		TOTAL	EMPLOYMENT STATUS <>				
	M	F		F/t	P/t	Usw	Unsw	Ret
18-29								
30-44	1	3	4	2	1	1		
45-59	1	4	5	5*				
60-74		2	2				1	1
75 and over		1	1					1
Total	2	10	12	7	1	1	1	2

* Category includes the pastor who is not an employee but works full-time for the congregation supported by donations

...continued

(Table 3 continued)

Congregation C

Age in years	GENDER		TOTAL	EMPLOYMENT STATUS <>				
	M	F		F/t	P/t	Usw	Unsw	Ret
18-29								
30-44	2	1	3	2			1	
45-59	2	1	3	2				1
60-74	2	4	6	1	2			3
75 and over								
Total	6	6	12	5	2		1	4

Congregation D

Age in years	GENDER		TOTAL	EMPLOYMENT STATUS <>				
	M	F		F/t	P/t	Usw	Unsw	Ret
18-29	1		1	1				
30-44	1	5	6	4	2			
45-59	3	1	4	3	1			
60-74	2		2	1				1
75 and over								
Total	7	6	13	9	3			1

<> F/t: In full time employment
P/t: In part time employment
Usw: Unemployed seeking work
Unsw: Unemployed not seeing work
Ret: Retired

APPENDIX G: CONGREGATIONAL DOCUMENTS AND EVENTS

In addition to obtaining data from interviews, the researcher also attended a number of events in each congregation and examined available documents. Details for each congregation are set out below.

EVENTS ATTENDED

Congregation A

Finance Committee Meeting

11.30 am Sunday Mass

10.00 am Sunday Mass (Family Mass)

Congregation B

Community visit to the congregation by police cadets

12 noon Sunday service

5.30 pm Sunday service

Congregation C

9.15 am Sunday service

10.30 am Sunday service (Family Eucharist)

Barbeque

Church Council meeting

25th Anniversary service and celebrations

continued

Congregation D

Special council meeting on future of the synagogue

Sabbath morning service

Synagogue Council meeting

Annual General Meeting

DOCUMENTS EXAMINED

Congregation A

File of previous year's weekly newsheets

Documents for Finance Committee Meeting

Booklet about the history of the church and the parish

Parish Guide

Congregation B

Service booklet for 30th Anniversary celebration of the congregation

Leaflets available to congregants and published by a US Pentecostal church grouping

First three years' minutes books and financial accounts

continued

Congregation C

5 recent Parish monthly magazines

Parish constitution

Job descriptions for two recently appointed parish staff

Diagrams of parish organisational structure

Parish consultative document on strategy

Congregation D

Annual Reports, 1991, 1992 and 1993

3 recent synagogue magazines

Papers for Council Meeting

Papers for Annual General Meeting

Draft job description for the Administrator

GLOSSARY

CHURCH:

In this study I use the term 'church' to refer to an organisation; a coming together, or bringing together at the local level of Christians for worship, instruction and other religious activities (Ecclestone, 1988; Moberg, 1962). **CLERGY** may be appointed by or to the organisation and there may, or may not, be other paid staff. A local church may, or may not, be based within a building.

This definition is derived from common usage and does not attempt to reflect the complexity of sociological and theological discussions about institutional religion (Chinoy, 1962; Jackson, 1974; Wilson, 1968). For example, sociologists of religion sometimes use the term 'church' to refer to one 'ideal type' of religious organisation (Lampard, 1975; also see **DENOMINATION** and Chapter Four, Part B). And Christian theologians distinguish between local churches and the much broader "Church" or "ekklesia" or "assembly of God" (Newbigin, 1988) which is the whole community of Christian believers.

CLERGY:

Unless indicated otherwise, I use the term 'clergy' in this study to refer broadly to Christian local religious leaders including 'priests', 'vicars', 'curates', 'ministers', 'presbyters', 'rectors', 'preachers', 'pastors' and so on. The different terms reflect differing theological interpretations, within and between denominations, of religious leadership and authority (Barnett, 1988; Carroll, 1981; Hill, 1988; Moberg, 1962; Ranson et al, 1977). Not all Christian denominations and groups have separate clergy roles; for example, the Society of Friends and house churches. Of those denominations that do have separate clergy roles, many do not invest the clergy with

special priestly or sacramental privileges; for example, the Salvation Army. It is in those denominations where clergy carry priestly functions that the appointment of women is most controversial. (See also **PRIEST** and **RELIGIOUS FUNCTIONARY**).

CONGREGATION:

This study follows Hopewell's definition (1987, p5) of congregations as local organisations in which people "regularly gather for what they feel to be religious purposes". As used here, the term refers to "institutionalized" structures (Scott, 1987; Warner, 1988) which have a relatively stable set of role and status expectations (O'Dea, 1963). The term is intended to exclude, for example, religious social movements and informal groupings (Zald and McCarthy, 1987).

DENOMINATION:

I use the term 'denomination' according to common usage; to refer to a grouping within a particular religion; for example, 'Methodism', 'Congregationalism', 'Reform Judaism'. As with the term **CHURCH**, sociologists have used the term 'denomination' to refer to a specific ideal type of religious institution. (See also Chapter Four, Part B.)

EMANCIPATION:

During the period 1770-1870, largely as a result of the impact of the French Revolution and the 'Enlightenment',

"Jewish communities [in Europe] underwent a transformation that changed their legal status, their occupational distribution, their cultural habits, as well as their religious outlook and behavior ... In all these respects, Jews moved from their former distinct

Jewish pattern toward the standard common in their non-Jewish surroundings." (Katz, 1978, p1)

The physical and metaphorical breaking down of the ghetto walls resulted in Jews combining secular learning with Jewish religious learning as they moved in to the wider society. This, in turn, affected the expectations placed on synagogues (Leigh, 1973).

ESTABLISHED CHURCH:

The Church of England, as the 'established church' in England has a distinctive status and special responsibilities. Its status as the official ecclesiastical authority in the country is enshrined in law. Parishes and deaneries cover the whole country so that every individual has, in principle, a link to an Anglican parish church with responsibility for his spiritual welfare.

MEMBERS:

Members of congregations are defined in this thesis by social identification rather than by official statements, as those people who regard themselves as regular participants in the activities of a congregation and are regarded by others as such (McCann, 1993). Roman Catholic churches do not have an official membership. In Anglican churches, the electoral roll is the official membership list but it does not necessarily reflect participation. In congregational structures where churches and synagogues are totally self-supporting, a 'member' is usually strictly somebody who has paid the current year's subscription.

PARISH:

Jackson (1974, p152) defines a parish as "the basic unit whereby a church with universal claims makes provision for spiritual ministry to a population". In England, the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches are both organised on a parish basis.

PRIEST:

Religious leaders with special authority in matters of religious ritual; "an individual set aside for cultic functions especially prayer and sacrifice" (Dulles, 1978, p151); and a "professional guardian of the sacred" (Martin, 1978b, p291). Priestly duties involve acting "on behalf of others" (Carr, 1985, p55) and being "a mediator ... between God and the people" (Fichter, 1954, p125) in the performance of sacred rituals (Hoult, 1958).

Although rabbis may carry out ceremonial and ritualistic tasks during acts of worship in synagogues, there is no longer a Jewish priesthood.

"The authority of the [Jewish] priest was based on the claim that he was given, at the time of revelation, a divinely ordained hereditary office which empowered him to administer the sacrifices at the altar, to bless the congregation in the name of the ineffable God, and to bear the ark which contained the Law. In all three functions he was the intermediary between God and Israel, the administrator of the sacrificial cult." (Carlin and Mendlovitz, 1958, p378)

By the first century BC, the Pharisee scholars presented a powerful alternative leadership in Judaism - the 'rabbis'. With the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in 70 AD and the dispersal of the Jewish people, the functions of the priestly caste became redundant (Hardon, 1971). The descendants of the priestly caste remain a distinctive group within Judaism with some special

obligations and privileges but without the right to leadership. (See also **CLERGY** and **RABBI**.)

RABBI:

Jewish religious leader. He (rarely she) is not a priest in the sense of having special authority in matters of religious ritual (see **PRIEST**). The rabbi's authority was, and is, based

" ... on an intimate knowledge of the written and oral law. ... The rabbi, as the distinctive and unchallenged religious specialist of the Jewish community, emerged from the Soferic-Pharasaic tradition by the end of the first century" ((Carlin and Mendlovitz, 1958, p378).

Most rabbis are not, and were not, descendants of the priestly caste.

"The effective exercise of the rabbinic role rests essentially on the incumbent's superior knowledge and superior interpretive skill, not on his descent or personal magnetism" (Israel, 1966, p389).

In this respect they are "laymen" and "the rites and ceremonies they perform are ... permissible to any knowledgeable Israelite" (Gottschalk, 1967, p16). Nevertheless, it is now common to use the term 'laymen' to refer to those who are not rabbis or ministers of religion within the Jewish community, a usage followed in this study. Only those who have taken a recognised course of study and preparation with existing rabbis are considered 'rabbis'. Other Jewish religious functionaries are referred to as 'ministers' (Goulston, 1968).

RELIGIOUS FUNCTIONARY:

I use the term 'religious functionary' following Ranson et al (1977) to refer to religious leaders of all denominations and religions, including not only Christian **CLERGY** but also, for example, **RABBIS**. (See also **PRIEST**.)

SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL:

See **VATICAN II**

SYNAGOGUE:

As with the term **CHURCH**, I use the term in this study to refer to an organisation; specifically, a coming together, or bringing together at the local level of Jews for worship, education and other communal activities. One or more **RELIGIOUS FUNCTIONARIES** may be appointed by or to the organisation and there may, or may not, be other paid staff. A local synagogue may, or may not, be based within a building.

VATICAN II:

The second Vatican Council took place between 1962 and 1965 and was "a historical watershed in the modern history of Roman Catholicism" (Kim, 1980, p84). It was

" ... intended to renew the life of the Church and to bring up to date its teaching, discipline and organization, with the unity of all Christians as the ultimate goal ... the Council gave an enormous impetus to changes of attitude in the RC Church towards other bodies, both Christian and non-Christian, and to the world in general, and even more spectacularly to changes in its own life. These included the use of the

vernacular in worship, a new liturgy, and a less authoritarian attitude, with the attendant tensions inherent in rapid change." (Livingstone (ed) 1977, p534).

The dialectic between increased lay participation in the church and clerical domination was posed by Vatican II (Goldner et al, 1973) and this paved the way for a deeper appreciation of the role of laity in the life and mission of the Church (Doohan, 1984). Kim (1980, p105) notes that "the most critical change introduced by the Council has been on the level of meaning rather than structure."

VOLUNTARY SECTOR:

I use the term 'voluntary sector' according to common usage in the UK, to refer to organisations which are in neither the governmental nor the for-profit sectors of activity. Other terms used include 'third sector', 'not for profit sector', 'nonprofit sector', and 'independent sector'. There is currently debate amongst academics in North America and Europe about the distinctive features of the sector; its boundaries; the different types of organisations within it (for example, private associations, self-help groups, service-delivering agencies; interest groups); and the most appropriate terminology (Billis, 1989; Smith, 1991; Van Til, 1988). So long as the voluntary sector is defined in residual terms - in relation to two other 'sectors' of organisations - religious institutions must be regarded as falling within it.

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