



## Bivocational and Part-time Pastor Survey Results Mennonite Church USA, March 2006

**Please indicate which describes your present ministry employment best:**

**18 Part-time:** (salary from a congregation is less than 100 percent regardless of how much time you put in, and you have no second job that produces a salary)

**29 Bivocational:** (part of your salary comes from a congregation and part of your salary comes from a job outside the congregation regardless of how much time you put in)

**1 Non-stipendiary bivocational:** 100 percent of your salary comes from a job outside the congregation but you serve a congregation as pastor without remuneration

**22 Full-time:** salary from a congregation is 100 percent and you personally have no second job that produces a salary

70 Total returned

405 Total sent

17 percent Percentage returned\*

\*The first survey had return rate of 32 percent—administered to self-identified Part-time, (PT)

Bivocational (BT) and random full-time (FT)

The second survey generated by conference ministers naming their PT and BV ministers.

**Answer the following from the perspective of the category you used for yourself above, i.e., some of us have at one time served part-time, bivocationally and full-time. Please answer from the perspective of your present ministry.**

### Self-expectations

1. Did you have a choice about working part-time or bivocationally?

	Yes	No	NA
Part-time	12	4	
Bivocational	21	8	
Full-time	8	8	3

Interpretive Comments: 75 percent of PT and 75 percent of BV indicated they had a choice in whether or not to work full-time as compared to only 50 percent of FT indicating that they had a choice in the matter. It would be good to find out if the FT would like to

If you had the opportunity, would you pastor full-time?

	Yes	No	NA/unsure
Part-time	3	13	
Bivocational	12	15	2
Full-time	8		

Interpretive Comments: The majority of PT and BV would not work full-time even if they had the opportunity. PT seems to be a particularly attractive option, only 19 percent would switch to full-time. But it's closer with BV—41 percent would pastor FT if they had the opportunity (one BV answered “yes AND no”!)

2. Do you have a physical pastoral office?

	Yes	No	NA
Part-time	13	2	
Bivocational	21	5	
Full-time	18		

Interpretive Comments: I struggle feeling professional in my home office off the family kitchen, dressed in sweats and a t-shirt. I have often wondered if renting space away from home would help me “feel” more professional. As many PT and BV folks have home offices as church or rented offices. So it seems really a personal preference that varies from pastor to pastor.

If so, where is it? (in the church? at home?)

	Church	Home	other
Part-time	4	5	1
Bivocational	5	6	
Full-time	10	2	2

3. Besides Sunday morning, do you “dress like a pastor” (however you define that) sometimes during the week? (rationale: does our clothing/ physical trappings affect our pastoral identity.)

	Yes	No	some
Part-time	11	4	
Bivocational	14	15	2
Full-time	7	10	1

Interpretive Comments: More PT and BV “dressed like a pastor” (or professionally) than FT pastors, which might indicate that our dress does affect our professionalism or sense of pastoral identity. If our identity is weak or lacking, professional dress can help.

## Identity and sense of fulfillment

### Self Validation

4. How would you rate your pastoral identity?

	Clear	Clear most days	Murky most days	A struggle
Part-time	3	13	2	
Bivocational	13	15	1	1
Full-time	12	9		

Interpretive Comments: only 16 percent PT were clear about their pastoral identity. 43 percent BV were clear and 57 percent FT pastors. This may indicate we ourselves feel less like “real pastors” when we work less than full-time. I was surprised the BV was as high

### Congregational Validation

5. How would you rate the congregation’s validation of your pastoral ministry?

	High	Medium	Low	troubled
Part-time	10	5	3	
Bivocational	21	5	1	
Full-time	19	1		

Interpretive Comments: we’re harder on ourselves than our congregations. 55 percent of PT and 77 percent of BV felt their congregations placed a high value on their ministry. But FT did top that at 95 percent high validity. Perhaps congregations struggle more with the value of ministry if it’s less than

### Personal Validation

6. Validation is a tricky thing to get a hold of. Other words for validation might be: legitimized, valued, means something, important, needed, “they’d miss me if I weren’t here.” Some pastors measure validation by salary increases, praise, recognition, trust, affection, church growth.... How do you define whether or not your ministry is valid?

#### Part-time answers:

- The affirmation from the congregation as to how I handle my ministry and the tasks involved in that area.
- I am filling a needed role in the agency and am recognized for it.
- I know that the majority of my congregation trusts and respects me. They look to me to serve them as their pastor. I know I have made a positive difference in people’s lives and that some have deepened their relationship with God as a direct result of my ministry.
- valued and trusted;
- verbal affirmation, willingness to follow conference salary guidelines, willingness of church members to be involved in the work of the congregation;
- congregational vote;
- recognition, trust, affection;

- where youth in my conference are closer to God because I am in this job (conf. youth minister);
- the way what I have to contribute is received by others;
- relationships with people, positive feedback, church growth;
- affection, recognition;
- doing something worthwhile;
- when pastors and congregations enter into meaningful dialogue and learning to enhance the mission (overseer);
- filling needs, using some of my gifts;
- The congregation just completed a 3 year review for me. I felt affirmed in that process. Congregational members regularly give me encouragement and validation for my ministry work. Probably the most important group for me in the congregation in terms of support are the elders.
- by the thank yous I get and by the professional expenses they pay for.

**Bivocational answers:**

- officially validated, and by the fact the congregation is responsive to my leadership;
- affirmative words, financial support, insistence on taking time to care for myself;
- People in my congregation look to me as a pastor and treat me as one. I am validated by their comments, their trust.
- whether my opinion is asked for and taken seriously and whether my office of pastor is respected;
- trust, openness, affirmation;
- My leadership is respected and valued; affirmation from people/God: valued as important part of church life.
- respect and validation of call;
- good salary, affection, church growth, trust;
- they turn to me when they are desperate or excited, who do they call when they need a pastor?
- People growing in Christ likeness ;
- It is valued and trusted. New people are being brought into the church.
- verbal support, affirmation, notes/gifts of appreciation;
- If people growing in Christ likeness were being honest, I would say the things you listed above. But my first response would be, a man cannot validate nor invalidate what God has established. It's a struggle sometimes to look for his "validation," over other peoples.
- Validation comes from being valued as a pastor —being taken seriously in word and deed, as a minister of the gospel.
- The congregation respects me and my views. They compliment and encourage me.
- I do get affirmation for what I do and who I am as a person. It felt like a positive move for the conference to license me
- By members asking me to lead in important times of life—baby dedications, baptism, weddings, funerals. Being called a pastor,—hearing people ask me to pastor—being told I am called as a pastor. Leading a community suicide recovery group.
- How strongly am I sensing that God put me here;
- I believe my ministry, especially in teaching is appreciated. There seems to be an excitement and interest in Bible study.
- My congregation values my ministry which is apparent in what they pay me, other benefits they provide, vacation time, study leave time, public affirmation.
- general affirmation;
- My validation comes from whether God is using me to reach people. If I worried about salary or people patting me on the back I think my motivation would be misplaced. Don't misunderstand me though salary can be a confirmation as well as people letting you know what

they see going on in the ministry, but I believe that those are second to what God is doing in the ministry.

#### Full-time answers:

- Support of ministry opportunities and direction.
- Am I doing something that gives life, encouragement, to others based on principles of God's Word in a way that is unique to this congregation and my spiritual gifts?
- My own sense of my place with Christ in the purposes of Christ and with a sense of being in the life stream of the universe. It is more internal than external.
- By the general support that I receive for the initiatives I put forward.
- lives being changed;
- Based on feedback from church and from colleagues. Increasing attendance and new ministries also help;
- Respected and esteemed; valued; trusted; fair compensation;
- Continual verbal affirmation... strong adherence to denominational guidelines for setting salary... trust and support.
- Affirmation from the congregation, evidence of life change in those who I minister with and fair compensation for my work.
- Words I would use are trust, affection; the way they care about me as a person
- The affirmation from the Elders and the respect from the congregation are significant.
- Love and support are expressed in both words and deeds. There is a steady request for my ministry in both the congregation and the surrounding area.
- I sense that God is using me to further God's work and the ministry of the church. I enjoy my work, I receive affirmation and support from the congregation.
- Empowering others in their faith walk;
- If the church increasingly becomes the vehicle by which people are coming into an increasingly meaningful relationship with Christ, then I feel I am leading in a valid way.
- affirmation for pastoral gifts, gratitude for my service in this congregation, trust;
- Spirit sense, sense of being internally settled /or drive, people growing, congregational openness, attitude toward each other, newcomers.

Interpretive Comments: All groups answered the question of validation from their congregations in similar ways: affirmation, trust, salary, changed lives, when people are growing more like Christ, church growth, and when congregation is responsive to pastor's leadership.

#### Conference Validation

Interpretive Comments: I expected the more involved a pastor was in conference, the more connected and validated they would feel. More felt validated than connected in all time groupings. There seemed to be little correlation between conference activity involvement and validation, however. Perhaps the local congregation offers the most important sense of validation. It could be that only those who felt validated by conference chose to answer the survey and those who don't feel validated didn't return a survey.

7. How would you rate your connectedness to your area conference?

	High	Medium	Low	Little to none
Part-time	10	7	2	1
Bivocational	16	11	4	
Full-time	13	4		1 (women issue)

8. How would you rate your area conference's validation of your pastoral ministry?

	High	Medium	Low	Troubled	percent rated high
Part-time	11	5	1		64 percent
Bivocational	17	8	1	1 (woman)	63 percent
Full-time	15	5			75 percent

9. What kind of involvement (positions, board members, committees, etc) have you had with your area conference since becoming a pastor?

**Part-time answers:**

- Currently I am serving on the Gifts Discernment Committee and I am involved with the monthly and bimonthly pastor's meetings.
- I serve as: editor for our conference paper, overseer, representative to Constituency Leaders Council. In addition, I have helped to plan and/or lead worship numerous times for our summer delegate sessions.
- Executive Committee;
- Chair of Peace and Social Concerns Committee, Executive Committee Member, Conference Delegate to National Convention;
- Program committee;
- ministerial leadership commission;
- Executive Committee member, Ministerial Committee, moderator, conference minister, overseer;
- conference school anniversary, turned down executive committee assignment;
- on the executive committee and other conference-related work;
- Pastoral Leadership Committee;
- president and president-elect;
- district rep on Mennonite school board;
- area pastor cluster (also leader for a year), annual meetings, sponsor for youth delegate at summer annual meeting, receive resources from conference youth minister.

**Bivocational answers**

- Conf. Youth Pastor, chair of a staff search committee, appointed to General Board, conf. moderator;
- committee, overseer, professional development;
- I've been on numerous committees – culture of call, committee looking at role of missions in Franconia conference, etc.
- missions commission, staff for special project (new conference formation);
- only attending delegate sessions;
- conference secretary, mission board staff; moderator, overseer of two congregations, chair of Leadership Commission;
- secretary of Mission Commission;
- committee work, executive council;
- Mission Commission, Executive Board;
- area ministers council, delegate;
- Cluster Convener; Executive Committee, Leadership Committee.;
- PJS committee, gifts discernment committee;
- member of leadership commission, prayer leadership;
- delegate to conference assembly;
- participate with conference and mission board about beginning a Korean church in our area;

- camp board, conference meeting, one-to-one meetings with conference minister;
- chair of Mission and Service Commission;
- secretary of one of the district councils;;
- I have served as the Peace and Justice Commission chair (three years); Pastoral Leadership Commission (eight years); annual conference, pastor cluster meetings;
- very little to none (seven)

Interpretive Comments: I was not surprised that the least involved in conference activities were bivocational pastors. Likely time is the issue here, but this reinforces my concern that conferences are not benefiting from the leadership, wisdom and ideas of bivocational pastors.

#### **Full-time answers**

- Nominating committee, president-elect, Resolution Committee, Listening Committee, Evangelism/Church Development Committee, Missional Committee;
- Youth Commission chair, Cluster Convener;
- IMC Leadership Commission, Missional Action Team;
- None. I attend delegate sessions.
- being a delegate;
- Moderator-elect;
- serving on some committee for most years;
- moderator;
- Conference Council; Nominating Committee Chair; Leadership Commission Chair; Administrative Board;
- I have served as chair of Peace, Service, and Justice Committee; been on the board, moved to president-elect and am in the process of completing my two year president's term. I also am a regular participant in our conference pastor-peer gatherings.
- Active in a small group of youth workers who meet every other month for fellowship and support. This group has provided a tremendously life-giving setting for growth, support and discernment.
- Ministerial Committee, have been vice president (early 1980s) Camp Friedenswald Committee;
- Program Committee of Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions, but nothing with the conference organization. In the 1980's I served on the Leadership Commission of the AR-MO District of South Central Conference.
- Peace and Justice with conference, and with Mennonite Church USA;
- gifts discernment, assistant moderator, moderator, conference council-at-large;
- conference moderator, assistant moderator, ministerial committee chair, missions commission;
- moderator for a faith and life forum, leadership commission chair, moderator, conference council and executive committee member;
- Peace and Justice commission chair, camp pastor, host for Menno pastors groups, Frontier Village Foundation Board;
- gifts discernment commission chair.

#### ***Denomination's Validation***

10. How would you rate your connectedness to Mennonite Church USA?

	High	Medium	Low	Little to none
Part-time	5	9	2	3
Bivocational	10	13	6	1
Full-time	10	7	3	

Interpretive Comments: Most surprising in these numbers were the PT pastors who did not feel highly connected or validated by the denomination (although one of those was a pastor who had left Mennonite Church USA). 74 percent PT and 67 percent BV felt less than highly connected

11. How would you rate Mennonite Church USA's validation of your pastoral ministry?

	High	Medium	Low	Troubled/ Unknown	percent rated high
Part-time	6	8	3	2	32 percent
Bivocational	13	11	6		43 percent
Full-time	8	8	4		40 percent

12. What kind of involvement (positions, board members, committees, etc) have you had with the denomination since becoming a pastor?

**Part-time answers:**

- I have served on Constituency Leaders Council as one of Allegheny Conference's three representatives. I write, occasionally, upon their invitation, for *The Mennonite*, page 2. I have served as a delegate at biennial assemblies.
- delegate to a number of national conferences;
- providing music at the national convention;
- youth ministry council;
- AMBS alumni association, had been on General Board before I became a part-time pastor;
- member of General Board in 1980s;
- none;
- continue to appreciate AMBS as a resource.

**Bivocational answers:**

- Served on General Board, worship leader of Philadelphia '93;;
- call ambassador;
- served on Constituency Leaders Council a few years, AMBS seminary board;
- involvement in Mennonite Church USA Interchurch Relations Conference and subcommittee, attendance at national conferences;
- Constituency Leaders Council, conference ministers meetings;
- Stewardship council;
- church planter supervisor, chair of missions commissions in two conferences;
- Secretary of one of the district councils; served as the Peace and Justice Commission Chair (three years); Pastoral Leadership Commission (eight years); annual conference, pastor cluster meetings;
- Assembly delegate (four years);
- none (12).

**Full-time answers:**

- delegate to national assemblies conventions;
- Commission on Home Ministries Board; General Conference General Board; Mennonite Health Services Board;
- program committee some years ago; nothing in recent years;
- Constituency Leaders Council;
- Only attendance at Assembly as a delegate;
- Because of my role as president of Central District Conference I have served on the Constituency Leaders Council for the past 2 1/2 years. I am a regular participant/delegate to denominational assemblies.
- I participated in a leadership development retreat in April of 2002.
- GC board of overseers, delegate to assembly, task force for youth ministry;
- Commission on Home Ministries, Constituency Leaders Council;
- Chair of Peace and Justice Network;

- Mennonite Mission Network board, delegate to assembly, ministerial committee of denomination, writing for SS curriculum and women's organization;
- none (5).

## Finances

13. Are the denominational salary/benefits guidelines used in determining your salary?

	Yes	No	NA	percent Yes
Part-time	13	4		76 percent
Bivocational	20	8	1	69 percent
Full-time	18	3		86 percent

Interpretive Comments: The denominational guidelines are used for FT pastors a higher percentage of the time than for PT or BV, and BV is the lowest percentage making use of them (#13). Perhaps this indicates that some revision is needed on guidelines for bivocational and part-time pastors. Yet PT and BV pastors *feel* fairly compensated (#14), even though they are likely making less salary/time percentage than FT. Comments would indicate that when PT/BV work for smaller congregations they hesitate to make more because of limited finances of smaller congregations.

14. Do you feel fairly compensated?

	Yes	No	NA	percent Yes
Part-time	16	2		88 percent
Bivocational	25	2	1	89 percent
Full-time	20	1		95 percent

15. Rate your ability to negotiate your compensation and contract with your congregation?

	Able/I do	Able but not easy	Very hard for me	I take what they give me
Part-time	7	3	2	3
Bivocational	9	7	2	10
Full-time	11	5	2	1

Interpretive Comments: Of those surveyed, full-time pastors were more likely to feel comfortable negotiating their compensation and contract: 58 percent FT, 47 percent PT, 32 percent BV. Bivocational pastors were most likely to take what congregations can pay without negotiation. It would be good to know if bivocational pastors could negotiate salary in their other occupation easier than the ministry one.

16. Do you carry a debt load from college or seminary?

	Yes	No	NA
Part-time	2	16	
Bivocational	8	22	
Full-time		21	

*Not any more. The congregation did help with college/ seminary loans for five years.*

17. Does debt load from ministerial training impact your decision about full-time vs. part-time ministry?

	Greatly	Somewhat	Not much	Not at all
Part-time		4		15
Bivocational	1	5	5	17
Full-time	3	1		11

Interpretive Comments: When asked what the biggest deterrents to working bivocationally were, respondents from all three groups indicated that financial debt from ministerial training requires full-time work. But in this sample, the vast majority indicated that training debt **did not at all** impact their decision about full-time vs. part-time. (#17) Perhaps the “debt” deterrent is more perception than reality. However, training debt aside, financial need of the family influenced greatly or somewhat influenced 86 percent of full-time pastors decision, while only 48 percent of bivocational pastors, and 35 percent of part-time (#18). From survey comments, it seems part-time ministry works best for those who are not the sole wage earners (one person said it’s a luxury to be able to work part-time), bivocational works best when children are already grown, and full-time is a necessity when raising a family, whether or not the spouse works.

18. Does financial need (or those of your family) influence your decision about full-time vs. part-time ministry?

	Greatly	Somewhat	Not much	Not at all
Part-time	2	5	1	12
Bivocational	7	8	5	11
Full-time	9	9	1	2

**For bivocational pastors only (if part-time or full-time skip to question # 23)**

19. What is your occupation outside the congregation?

Professional	Business	Skilled Labor
consultant, graphic designer, temporary conference work, nonprofit program director, conference mission agency staff, hospice chaplain, chaplain, working with developmentally challenged adults in work setting, professor (2), administrator of camp and retreat center, teacher (3) secondary special ed teacher	sales/bookkeeping/management, cabinet-maker truck company manager/owner funeral director music instrument repair/teacher	self-employed housing rehabilitation, self-employed home improvement, farmer (2), school bus driver, maintenance, picture framer forester

How many years have you held this job? , **ranged from 1-36 years; 15 years average**  
 How many hours per week do you work at this job? **ranged from seasonal- 45; 21 hours average**  
 Are benefits included with this employment? **Yes 10; no 14; self-employed 6**  
 What is your level of satisfaction with this job?

	Very	Fair	Weak	A problem
Bivocational	22	7	1	

20. How would you rate your secular identity:

	Clear	Clear most days	Murky most days	A struggle	percent "clear"
secular	22	7	2		76 percent
pastorate	13	15	1	1	43 percent

Interpretive comments: This response (#20) is most interesting when comparing BV pastors' secular identity *with* their pastoral identity. More were clearer on secular than pastoral identity (#4). One didn't like the question and felt the work reinforces access to community and is a place to exercise ministry. Congregations don't seem to have a problem accepting their pastor's secular job, in fact, some pastors felt their secular work helped them relate to church members and even helped gain their respect as "willing to work" (See # 24).

21. How would you rate your congregation's acceptance of your secular identity:

	High	Medium	Not much	troubled
Bivocational	21	7		

22. What percentage of time are you employed at the church/secular job?  
 9 showed 50/50, 40/60, 20/80 or 80/20, some division of full-time  
 7 showed the total less than full-time with two jobs  
 5 totaled more than full-time with two jobs  
 2 were 50 percent ministry split with seasonal variation;

Interpretive comments: Mennonites are creative with time percentages in bivocational work. Most appreciated seems to be the flexibility in their time percentages, although a common note was that more time than was agreed upon is often spent on the pastorate. It's not surprising then, that BV pastors did not rate themselves as strong boundary keepers or time managers. So even if clearer negotiation guidelines were drawn up for bivocational pastors, it wouldn't be enough without time-management and boundary maintenance tools for the pastors themselves.

Comments about the split of your time:

- always a struggle—both jobs could use more time than the hours that I'm signed up for;
- based on job function and conference's ability to pay;
- Luckily, both jobs have flexible hours, allowing some room for movement during especially busy times for either work.
- totals more than 100 percent;
- appreciate the flexibility;
- even though I'm salaried at half its really full-time;
- Sometimes it's a bit hairy but generally things work out, i.e. people die at the proper time, meetings and emergencies coming at convenient times in the schedule. I guess God's in charge; this can be very difficult to balance.

- difficult to limit church work to half-time;
- Never enough time to do everything; I am paid at the church for 20 hours, but I work about 30-35. In an average week I work about 70 hours - total of both jobs. I am praying for full-time soon.
- Works great – teaching university is flexible work, and the congregation is very aware of my part-time status;
- my time is flexible at both;
- I put the church work first. This may mean that some days I need off from teaching. When we are really busy at the church I see that through and just don't get paid from my secular job.
- very tricky;
- I would like to be full-time at church.
- Housing costs are extremely high. My extra-job (“moonlighting”) as adjunct faculty helps with finances, but also is very important for giving me a sense of deep satisfaction in ministry; can vary greatly depending on need.
- I feel that God wants me where I am at, all of my jobs have been opportunities for ministry and my current situation is no different. I am very happy about the role God has given me to play in this current season of life.

23. Rate your ability to maintain boundaries between jobs and manage your time

	Strong	Somewhat	Weak	A real problem for me
Bivocational	9	11	5	3 (women)

*It's tough-my wife thinks she and the house get cheated*

### **Job Fulfillment and contributors to “success”**

24. What are the advantages of your ministry? (full-time, part-time, bivocational)

#### **Part-time answers**

- I can sit with people and am invited into their lives, people have wonderful stories and it's a privilege to be a part of their story.
- I am doing what God has called me to and this is a great advantage to me.
- I am free to divide the job responsibilities with my husband, co-pastor, as we see fit. There is flexibility in my schedule. If I need to be elsewhere when I would normally be in the office, I have been given the freedom to make those kinds of decisions.
- Gives me time for family (aging mother), keeping house and garden, etc.
- A shared ministry with my spouse in which we share a full-time position has allowed us more time with our family. This was especially true when our children were pre-school age;
- allows me to pursue outside interests, and to be involved with my young children.
- freer to pursue wider church involvement;
- flexible, varied, personal contact with people;
- greater flexibility in putting together my schedule each week;
- sharing pastoral ministry with my husband as a team—our gifts complement each other;
- have time to do other things in retirement;
- as a part-time interim pastor, I am my own boss;
- As a part-time who spends the other half at home with sons I am more connected to the world of body and physical labor, the home, the neighborhood and school. It keeps me grounded
- I can engage in ministry and have time to do other things too, though I work more than the 40 percent salary. I agreed to this and have no complaint.
- I retired from the staff of my home congregation and appreciate the set number of hours of this position (part-time retirement home chaplain).
- time with our children, sharing household duties;

- I share ministry with two other pastors so I can focus on the areas of ministry I am gifted at. I have two colleagues to share the burdens and joys of ministry with and with whom I do some interpreting of church culture.

#### **Bivocational answers:**

- Bivocational lets me pursue the range of interests and calling for this stage of my life with integrity.
- ability to counsel in times of trouble; Bible study;
- flexible schedule;
- Personal boundaries are easier for me to maintain in a bivocational setting; i.e., the church can't believe that they own all of my time. Also, my bivocational identity keeps me from being isolated as a clergy person... I'm more engaged in the 'real' world of most of my congregants.
- broader exposure to a variety of settings; I have a very flexible life;
- (See Elaine's journal entry... work life leaks into sermons, business is relief to me from ambiguity of ministry);
- not obligated to spend every hour of the day on ministry;
- being part-time allows me to pursue other interests without being stressed;
- I strongly believe that I need to work manually for understanding how those persons live. In our area there is a credibility to be had that goes along with one who is "willing to work."
- It encourages congregational persons to give their time and frees up money for "more" needy endeavors.
- both positions are ministry so work well together;
- I like to work with my hands, and the rhythm of doing both kinds of work is good for me.
- gives me some flexibility; some diversion from the sometimes intensity of pastoral work;
- can relate to "my people," makes me "one of them," gives me a "break" from ministry, i.e. variety, Can see what I've accomplished,
- I run a ministry that can be turned into a full-time ministry. I love it, and I know this is what God has called me to do. What's so stressful is not being able to do it completely.
- clear sense of secular identity – less wrapped up in "being a pastor;"
- Multiple places to get positive reinforcement;
- variety, flexibility, opportunity to see many changed lives;
- I learn a great deal from it. I have learned to communicate better with other individuals and am drawn closer to God.
- I like meeting the people in the schools where I teach. People in the community tell me I am easy to share with and they share personal stuff with me very quickly.
- It is challenging, fulfilling, exciting and fun.
- I am semi-retired. This gives me a great opportunity to make contact with, to work with and minister to many people in the local community.
- flexibility, being able to do two things I enjoy;
- Bivocational – the congregation cannot afford two full-time pastors and I am happy to continue some connection to funeral work. My independent contractor status at the funeral home allows me to be very flexible in my congregational ministry time.
- My pastoral ministry gives me solid credibility when teaching seminary classes. My seminary teaching nurtures my academic interests.
- ability to minister in a small town, be involved in the community at different levels;
- I am able to be a witness outside of the Christian fortress some people put themselves in- my jobs have me quite literally out in the world.

#### **Full-time answers**

- steady income, no concern about juggling time when needs arise;
- ability to focus on one occupation, adequate financial compensation, more time to relax.

- I am able to keep a focus on the various aspects of ministry. Since I am full-time, I do not have other job stresses.
- I have all of my time to concentrate on the needs of the congregation and the community. It affords me the opportunity to be as involved in our church community as I need to be.
- I do just one thing.
- I have been a bivocational pastor for many years and I guess I would say that it is easier to be a full-time pastor. As I am getting older, I don't have as much energy to do it anymore. The main advantage is that I can devote all of my work time to the church and its ministries.
- Always available; time to prepare for responsibilities;
- When I was part-time it felt like I have divided loyalties and it's easier to stay focused.
- Freedom to focus fully on ministry and congregational life. I assume scheduling and time management is also made more simple.
- As a full-time pastor I am free to concentrate solely on my ministry and I have total flexibility (barring emergencies) to set my own schedule. This is a plus that I feel is hard to quantify but carries real significance in the pastoral role.
- I am able to focus all of my vocational energies in one direction.
- I like the freedom I have with my schedule and the ability to give the congregation all of my attention. It allows me to get involved in the community as well.
- Single focus on ministry and meeting spiritual, counseling needs; I can be available 24/7 for emergencies and ministry needs as they arise. With the growth and development of our congregation, I have time to develop structure and vision plans.
- helping to shape spiritual direction of congregation, being part of member's lives in sensitive circumstances, living out God's call on my life;
- meaningful work, good benefits and salary, flexibility in time and schedule even though work is demanding, contacts with congregation and wider church community;
- pay ability to work with conference and denomination;
- I am able to put my energy toward focused ministry and vision with the congregation
- I have done bivocational before and greatly appreciate full-time ministry. Allows me to really focus my talents in the church; gives freedom of schedule to both spend extended hours when needed and to achieve distance from the church when needed. All this is sacrificed with bivocational ministry- having two jobs felt like having two wives (check out Jacob's life with Leah and Rachel for a insight).
- It is tied to my call, this is how I am "wired" by God—where I fit, I can't think of anything more packed with meaning.
- My life has meaning, things can just "go along" but then one encounters "holy moments"
- can give all of myself to one focus;
- certain amount of independence, focus of full-time.

25. What are the disadvantages of your ministry? (full-time, part-time, bivocational)

**Part-time answers:**

- Not enough hours in the day to do the things I want to do. I bring my work home both physically and mentally and my family is usually the ones that are neglected because of this.
- I am a pastor in an agency which serves persons with disabilities and sometimes I get the feeling from others that this is not as valid a ministry as a pastor within a church.
- There is always more work to do than I have time to do it, which leaves me feeling like I have never quite completed anything. The number of things that are left undone tempt me to think that I am failing at my pastoral tasks. I am also tempted to put in far more time than I am compensated for. It has been necessary to accept other assignments, like editing and writing mentioned above. These are tasks for which I receive some remuneration, but it is certainly not a salary. If I judged my self-worth through what I earn, I would think I am not worth much. We are doing OK financially, but it is a struggle, and we wonder what we will have to retire on.

We are not able to assist our children with college expenses, even though the college thinks we are!

- Keeping boundaries on work; pastoral work, like women's work, is never done.
- Less income than full-time. Although we share a single position, the time we spend working for the church probably adds up to more than one full-time equivalent.
- I don't always feel 100 percent invested in the ministry of my church—I sometimes feel distracted by my outside interests.
- none now, it took some time to process going from 20 years full-time to part-time;
- it is a full-time responsibility with part-time salary but I don't see this as a problem.
- I tend to work more than half-time.
- Distance—45 minutes away;
- small congregation with limited resources, very little outreach is being done;
- Frankly I'm frustrated with the estrangement of church work from "worldly work."
- I'm sure I could generate something if I really wanted to.
- difficult to limit "church hours" and church/family boundary;
- There are times when I would like to test new areas of ministry that are not specifically my "job description." As a young pastor, I could benefit from gaining experience in areas like pastoral counseling. There is also a great need for communication with my colleagues and care taken to continue to define and clarify roles in relationship to each other and the congregation.
- I am still on call 24 hours a day and expected to function and offer my services as though I were full-time.

#### **Bivocational answers**

- Interim work means I work myself out of a job every 18-24 months and need to grieve leaving the people I've come to love and respect.
- messy boundaries, being half-time with spouse;
- Always more to do than can be accomplished and prioritizing tasks from two jobs instead of one; congregational members not understanding pressures or tasks of other job;
- There is never enough time to devote all I'd like to either job. Taking time off is especially tricky to negotiate (i.e., I have to take personal vacation time from my 'other' job to attend church functions).
- It is hard to keep the total to a reasonable amount of time; at times the flexibility leads to stress.
- Always have too much to do- being self-employed offers flexibility but also means in all areas I am never "done" or "off-duty";
- boundaries and balance—classified and paid as part-time but emotional/mental engagement tends to be full-time;
- hard to keep it part-time;
- I'm "harassed" periodically with our "need" for more pastoral time. There are some things not getting done and obviously with more pastoral time it would; would be beneficial to be able to dedicate all time to the ministry, hard at times to get all that I would like to done during the week.
- I sometimes feel I am neglecting one or the other job—not enough time or energy.
- Never enough time to do the ministry that needs to be done;
- Keeping boundaries for the church work – pastoral work, is never done and people seem to expect me to always be available.
- Can never get everything done, extra stress at certain times of year, i.e. planting/harvest.
- don't get to read as much as I would like;
- not being able to do it full-time;
- Not being paid creates a sense of debt—some people in the church think the church "owes" me, so less likely to be honest about my shortcomings. I'll never get rich this way.
- busy-ness;

- It makes my schedule full and adds an element of stress to my life and my wife's life.
- Managing my time. I could easily find enough things to work overtime at the church and the same holds true in the schools.
- It can be overwhelming, frustrating, lonely and tiring.
- I don't have much time for personal interests or to finish off work on my house!
- no or little time off, no clear weekend;
- I could easily give 50 percent of my time to the church but since I'm paid a 25 percent salary, I need to set some limitations on church activities so I have time for the additional needed income;
- I would like to be a full-time pastor.
- For the last 14 years I have taught classes every other Saturday afternoon; coupled with my Sunday pastoral work means I get very few weekends free. I do miss too many of my sons soccer games.
- I would like to have more time to devote to ministerial calling.
- I have to divide my time, if I was only focused on one thing I'm sure things would be a bit more easy. Much less commute time as well.

### **Full-time answers**

- Loss/end of job means moving away, "Getting the job done" cannot always be seen.
- As full-time, my work relationships in other setting are few.
- I definitely feel more like I am at the mercy of my congregation. They have total control over me as a full-time pastor. Fortunately for me, things are going well.
- I don't get to mix with non-church persons much.
- None of any significance;
- More difficult to stay in touch with community (non-church);
- Sometimes thought of as spiritually concerned because "that's my job," sometimes expected to be always available.
- Though I am satisfied with my compensation, if there were a deep need for me to somehow earn a greater wage there would be no way to do that. A part-time pastor can take another, maybe even more than one extra job to earn more but a full-time pastor would be frowned upon if a second job were taken so is limited to what the church negotiates for pay.
- At times it is difficult to measure progress in ministry. If I had another job (say building houses), it could provide a place where the progress of my labor is self-evident, in turn adding to ministry longevity.
- My identity is completely tied into the congregation. No matter where I am, I am always seen as the pastor. I don't really have much to say, I love my work.
- Some people see full-time ministry as out of touch with "normal" people in the community, but I don't think it is a problem.
- church/job/friendships are all interdependent on each other in many ways;
- heavy schedule and time demands, heavy responsibilities and expectations, feeling pulled in many directions at once;
- small congregations have limits on programs and ministry;
- Sometimes it is easy to lose touch with the everyday pressures of life in the workplace/marketplace.
- Isolation and loneliness is more possible in solo full-time ministry. Also I think the full-time pastor must be careful to not let the church force duties onto the position for which one is not gifted. This can happen from the church's end simply because "you are the pastor" or can happen from the pastor's end to justify one's existence. It is possible for the full-time pastor to try to be the church instead of enabling the church to be the church.
- The ministry is "never finished," frustration with "pettiness;"
- To what extent do I know the "real world?"
- can be oblivious to others at times

- A kind of loneliness in visioning/leading, feels like no one with me is taking the church forward.
26. What factors contribute to your sense of accomplishment, fulfillment, and “success” in this role?

#### **Part-time answers**

- affirmation from the congregational members and staff;
- knowing I am remaining faithful to God’s call upon my life and knowing my congregation appreciates the job I am doing; receiving positive feedback from others who read what I write or observe my work from afar also helps;
- positive relationships with the persons we serve and with the staff. Encouragement and recognition from the staff;
- seeing people come to faith and growing in their relationship to Christ, welcoming new people, observing people make changes in response to teaching and preaching;
- overall health of the congregation, affirmation from congregational members, participation in community/conference/denominational groups;
- co-pastoring with my wife, who has complementary gifts and energies; pastoring at a church which is a good fit for me theologically and personally;
- I am able to be more of a support to two of my sons who are pastors.
- response from kids, youth leaders, pastors;
- doing what I believe God wants me to do;
- connectedness to persons and to a congregation, using my gifts effectively;
- I feel I am appreciated by the “seniors” in the congregation.
- helping people when in need;
- I feel like my preaching has improved in that it is more grounded in daily life.
- I enjoy hanging out with pastors and helping them accomplish their ministry/mission
- meeting needs, affirmation by others;
- Seeing people in our congregation becoming active in ministry and growing in their walk with God also recognizing when something I do in ministry leads others to increased enthusiasm, clarity and call in their walk with God.

#### **Bivocational answers**

- seeing God at work through my efforts;
- changed lives/attitudes;
- successful completion of tasks;. seeing positive responses to intended efforts and actions.
- personal affirmation, encouragement is most important;
- when I am able to engage in and reasonably fulfill pastoral tasks and activities (e.g. relational tasks);
- I enjoy seeing people’s needs being filled and enjoy seeing them grow spiritually.
- knowing I am called- the joy of using my gifts and creative energy for the church; seeing God changing people’s lives;
- achieving goals for myself and ministry- helping “solve” problems and find healthy solutions; good team relationship, people’s involvement in helping lead the church, people’s growth spiritually/emotionally;
- touching lives, seeing hurting people experience freedom and healing, getting involved with people who have little church connection and touching them and learning from them;
- left blank;
- that I have balanced the two positions as well as possible-both are fulfilling and of service to God and community;
- In my secular role, I can see the tangible results of my labor.

- seeing people come to faith and growing in their relationship to Christ, welcoming new people, observing people growing in their spiritual and emotional lives.;
- longevity (25 yrs); relationships with persons; affirmations;
- Again, not being able to pour 100 percent into the ministry.
- strong support from my congregation and family; affirmation from community ( I occasionally write for the local paper);
- can see “fruit” of service ministry, growth;
- Having to work through responsibilities forces me to learn and seek greater wisdom.
- Having the opportunity to walk closely with someone on their journey of faith in as honor. I feel success when it becomes evident that transformation is taking place in their lives.
- support from my family and congregation; being available for the kingdom;
- I feel that the local church would have closed if I were not able to pastor it. I have satisfaction from ministry in the church and in our small conference.
- getting thank you's and positive feedback, both sides of family are very supportive;
- I'm blessed with the relationship building that occurs, the trust that has developed, and the opportunity to serve in ways that are somewhat reserved for pastors. I am challenged by the responsibility and accountability of shepherding.
- There is great fulfillment in teaching others and learning from others also.
- I love people. I believe because I am the founding pastor of our congregation, I have quite a bit of freedom to do almost anything. The congregation has been very supportive of my pastoral ministry (in the congregation) and my teaching ministry (beyond the congregation).
- the opportunity to see individuals. growth in their walk with Christ;
- People have been opening up to me and more importantly have shown a hunger for God. That is where it is at, and that goes for all my jobs.
- I work full-time in a local hospital and night shift seems to allow flexibility that I need for the ministry. I work among people in the community. They view me, not as a “sponge” that lives off of the contributions of others but as an equal wage-earner. They see that a “preacher” is willing to get his hands dirty and to work shoulder to shoulder with them, and then to do my “other job” besides. Bivocational ministry affords contacts in the community that would not otherwise be possible. It also allows me to keep a finger on the pulse of the community. It affords me cross-cultural contact that would otherwise be difficult if not impossible to bridge. I do speak Spanish, thanks to a voluntary service term in Puerto Rico, and this allows an additional positive contact with our growing Hispanic community.

#### **Full-time answers**

- Minimal amount of complaining, words of support, members willing to volunteer and be involved in ministry; people applying the Word of God to their lives; people asking for counsel on decisions or crisis; affirmation from others teachable moments that are Holy Spirit directed and God ordained;
- That I have responded to a sense of call. I continue to grow in many ways. Persons in the congregation continue to grow. The congregation supports me strongly in my educational and vocational growth. We, as a congregation, celebrate journeying with Christ together.
- broad support for my initiatives; excitement for the vision; active participation by the congregants in the ministries of the congregation; helping persons grow into mature disciples of Jesus.
- Seeing lives changed;
- When people notice that the ministry is going well, it is an encouragement. Churches where I have been pastor were chosen to be the “City on a Hill” two times, for example. When people in the church appreciate what we have accomplished, it is also an encouragement.
- Committee feedback; words of thanks;
- seeing persons grow in walk with Christ i.e., involvement in church activities, personal sharing, involvement in community, asking tougher faith questions relating to personal growth;

- sense of significant involvement in persons lives; Opportunity to contribute to the spiritual growth of others; Experiencing the church as healthy and growing while in leadership; Affirmation from those being served;
- congregational satisfaction/affirmation, people wrestling with their faith and having that struggle bring about change or action in their lives;
- I've been in my current position for over five years, and I am beginning to struggle with burnout. Also, and probably more importantly, struggling with areas in my personal life that are not whole.
- The feeling of being called by God and having that validated by the congregation. It's a tremendous feeling when someone gets "turned on" to God and faith.
- I feel "successful and fulfilled" when I see positive change and growth in the lives of those who receive ministry. I also feel satisfaction when I see others taking responsibilities and teaching or leading in the ministry areas for which I carry responsibility. But I also recognize a "job well done" when the desired changes do not occur, as I experience God's approval of my efforts.
- I feel called to this work and believe it is God's will for me. My family is supportive of me; I can use my gifts and skills and continue to grow.
- ability and freedom to work with other Christian and non-Christian organizations and projects;
- empowering the changed lives in others;
- I feel accomplishment when people enter into faith or make strides in their faith.
- observing lives that are changed and being transformed as disciples, community is being built, growth- new persons finding Christ and the "light turns on," congregation owning a vision that is missional;
- sensing people excited, passionate about life, Christian living;
- being in God's will, working with and leading our ministry team, relating to all members of church family;
- Seeing people "get it," aha moments, affirmation of worship- content, plan, décor, sermons. affirmation of special services—weddings, funerals, etc.

27. What factors detract from your sense of accomplishment, fulfillment, and "success"?

#### **Part-time answers**

- badly run job evaluations;
- my own sense of failure; not performing the tasks the way I feel they should be carried out;
- My situation is perhaps unique and not particularly helpful to your study, but my answer would be that watching my congregation struggle and even decline through the Mennonite Publishing Network "transformation" makes me feel unsuccessful. The wounds in this community run deep and still need much healing. As the new congregation we now pastor struggles to find its way through the merger process, we leaders often feel like we are floundering as well. We know that the number of people who no longer attend is not directly because of our leadership; still it is difficult to not take some ownership in their dropping out of church involvement. As people continue to nurse wounds and live with anger and hurt, I wonder what I am failing to do in order to help them move along the path toward healing. I do see some healing taking place and look forward to the day when we can say that this congregation is stable and moving forward in God's plan and purpose for us.
- the variety of expectations of pastor's time, arguments over salary package/time off, sabbatical, etc;
- declining attendance, lack of recognition from people outside the congregation;
- I am not always sure that this is my "call."
- when I don't have a clear sense of what I should be doing;
- time pressures- both my own and other people's;
- distance from church;
- office work;

- I have trouble getting things done that I want to do. Having moved from a larger to smaller congregation, I also feel that saying the membership of my church is almost like saying my salary. My worth is measured by how large my congregation is. I also feel sometimes that the split between church work and worldly work is so great that it will split me in two.
- frustration over lack of involvement of some;
- Seeing new people not connecting or finding a community that nurtures/meets them where they are; sensing the inertia and resistance to necessary change in the congregation on a number of issues; some of what I feel I think is my own self-imposed standards of perfection with certain tasks in ministry...and recognizing that there are some things that I will never be particularly good at even if I try very hard.

### **Bivocational answers**

- My ongoing wrestling with the Biblical call to be involved in the lives of the poor and the reality that my life is heavily invested elsewhere;
- bickering;
- Busy-work, no personal time or at least insufficient;
- Feeling isolated despite all the ‘people-work,’ no one else can understand the stresses of pastoral ministry, let alone bivocational ministry, when I am too involved in “non-pastoral” activities (e.g. administrative tasks), too much to do;
- being overwhelmed on every side;
- not successfully drawing boundaries and maintaining them;
- need affirmation more than I should; criticism, me-centeredness and my needs (both me and parishioners), our desire to be missional without being personally involved;
- time limitations; there are additional projects related to both ministries that I would attempt if time permitted (programs, workshops);
- I think my lack of training and part-time status hinder me from feeling much professional fulfillment in the ministry.
- the variety of expectations of pastor’s time, annual arguments over salary package, insurance coverage, time off, sabbatical, etc; the organizational structure of the current congregation where the pastor is sometimes treated as less than another member of the church when decisions are made; divisions in the congregation; unwillingness to disagree in love; not being fully part of any career track—I’m not fully a professor, not fully a pastor so I don’t fit in either group.
- realizing my inadequacies;
- negative comments about women in leadership;
- feeling I have to have all the answers, feeling the success (existence) of our congregation is on my shoulders, feeling like I’m not a “real” pastor with a degree;
- while not under the pressure of deadlines that I once was (semi-retired) time allocation is always a factor with competing priorities;
- lack of change in people in response to my ministry;
- time limitations;
- When I am so busy, it gives me less patience to deal with those parts of the pastoral ministry that I don’t enjoy doing.
- would like to see more growth in the size of the congregation;
- Long commutes and lack of focus on my part;
- I work as many hours as any wage-earner in the congregation, though over half of our small congregation is retired. I also work “half-time” in the various aspects of the ministry, which usually ends up being more like full-time. Most in the congregation are cognizant of this, and are very understanding. But I am expected to be alert for all meetings (four that I am responsible for) to carry on an active visitation program, be up-to-date on the latest current events, have a working knowledge of technology available, and to be available for counseling when needed. All of this adds up to a time crunch, and the great temptation is to take family

time to do the needed work, or to sacrifice on rest. In my case both have happened, and I have suffered the consequences.

- none (two).

#### **Full-time answers**

- Declining attendance praise from others, overloaded schedule, being busy;
- placing too high of expectations on myself;
- When other persons do not live in healthy ways;
- if I begin to think of potential finances in a previous occupation;
- non-involvement in ministries; Lack of interest in outreach; bickering over small things while being ambivalent to important issues;
- never getting done;
- When there is a difficult person who blocks the ministries of the church or who is negative about what is happening, it makes it much harder to continue working.
- sometimes a sense of loneliness, exclusion; ;
- unwillingness to let go of the past. Revert to past destructive behaviors ( which divided the church);
- seeing so much not yet accomplished; sometimes apathy in the congregation;
- periods of spiritual dryness and stagnation for both myself and those in attendance at the church; when I'm physically, emotionally and spiritually tired;
- That old drivenness that says that I could have or should have done more or better work!
- too many things to do, distractions and competing demands on the job;
- distance from conference and ability to make ministry connections;
- busy work, administration, certain persons who take daily advantage of my availability;
- church in-fights;
- difficulty in finding enough leaders in the congregation, apathy of some members, I think my gifts might be best used as a lead pastor in a congregation with the size of 300-500 members, multi-staff, interested in growing, start another church after growing, etc. but I fit in a city/metro area, and there are virtually no Mennonite congregations in this category;
- sameness not many measurables, great deal of investment in church life- no numerical growth, living with uncertainty (job insecurity) with church finances on edge year to year.

#### **(For bivocational pastors only, full- and part-time skip to # 28.)**

28. A study was done of worker-priests who named the following as determinative factors in their ability to carry on bivocational ministry. For the purpose of comparing Mennonite bivocational pastors with other denominations, please rate the following factors in your ability to minister, rate from most (1) to least (9) influential (these can be positive or negative influences) but rate them as areas that impact your ministry most:

- 4.1 self-expectations (freedom of choice about job, ability to impose structure on ministry, ability to delegate and feel accomplishment)
- 4.6 job fulfillment (satisfaction of both jobs)
- 5.0 support (collegiality, friendships, sense of community)
- 5.1 geography (where you're located)
- 5.2 training (enough, aimed at the right issues)
- 5.4 family (support of, conflict with, needs of)
- 5.5 group expectations (of congregation)
- 5.7 time (enough of it, ability to manage it)
- 5.8 credentials (does it matter if you have or don't have them?)

Interpretive Comment: These numbers are not valid for comparing to Reko survey as respondents inverted the instructions or disregarded them and didn't rank. Most helpful were the list of factors that enabled bivocational ministry generated by respondents below.

Additional comments on the above:

- I really struggled with ordering these! They ended up pretty random. It'd be easier to say which are important and which are less important, without needing to put them against each other.
- More inner directed than outer directed; appreciation of others is important, but satisfaction ultimately rests my satisfaction about whether others grow, are challenged, changed, etc. by my ministry.
- The support of those around me is a great motivator.
- That is a good list.
- I have continued to get many hours of additional training through workshops, seminars outside of credentialing institutions, especially in the areas of addiction counseling/facilitating, domestic abuse and sexual assault prevention.
- I think the most important thing in all of this is being true to the call and purpose God has placed on each person's life. That will make or break ministry.

Are there other factors that determine whether you are able to carry on bivocational ministry?

- A sense of divine calling is an important factor, near the top of the list; primary influences right now is the sense that I am to do both of these jobs.
- most all of these greatly impact my ministry;
- I've just come through a difficult time when it felt my ability to pastor was deeply questioned by several influential persons in the congregation. I guess I'm still smarting from that- I'm becoming more and more convinced we need to be studying and then following the example and teaching Jesus than the various "experts" around us.
- I honestly didn't really understand the question, so I answered as best as I could. All in all, the church is happy with what I'm doing, which spurs me on. My wife and pastor continue to help "shape" my ministry and vision - which is great too.
- I don't really have a choice – got to pay the bills.
- Stage of life (children grown), financial security from a life of controlled spending, and the fact that my wife has a professional job with benefits;
- it keeps me too busy;
- I have an excellent office assistant at my business;
- spouse expectations for time commitments;
- the call and continued anointing of God- without it it's just a lot of good intentions and hot air- one must be an instrument of God's grace and direction;
- my work is easier because it overlaps- in both jobs my role is minister, counselor and bereavement and all that entails;
- At this point in life, we have few financial obligations and can live on the part-time salary the church provides. Earlier, I was fortunate to have an employer who allowed me to work part-time. What really makes this possible is that my wife makes enough money so that I can afford to make less.
- For many years the church was not large enough to support me full-time; now that it is large enough, I still enjoy my work at the Camp and Retreat Center.
- The flexibility of my job is very helpful. I am available to take care of church issues almost any time.
- personal settled peace about God's leading throughout;
- I believe I am called to do this, so I do it.

**Support (answered by all respondent groups)**

29. Check all areas from which you draw support for your ministry:  
(Ranked here from most to least important)

- |    |                                      |
|----|--------------------------------------|
| 25 | friends                              |
| 24 | spouse/family                        |
| 20 | conference minister/overseer/bishop  |
| 17 | other staff at my church             |
| 10 | small group organized through church |

- 12 other staff at my other work
- 11 spiritual director/spiritual friend
- 12 local ministerial association (only so much can be said in these groups)
- 12 mentor(s)
- 8 online resources
- 5 professional ministerial organization
- 1 exercise group

Other areas from which respondents gathered support were:

- community theater organization
- supper club – people to eat with (important when you are single)
- personal study/prayer
- therapist
- Pastor Congregation Relations Committee
- (2) informal relationships with clergy of other denominations
- youth pastor's accountability group
- weekly pastor's prayer group
- others from church
- pastor support resource group
- God

30. Do you feel like you have adequate support in your ministry?

	Yes	No	Mostly	percent Yes
Part-time	14	3		82 percent
Bivocational	22	5	3	73 percent
Full-time	20	1		95 percent

31. If more support were available, do you feel you have time to partake?

	Yes	No	depends	percent Yes
Part-time	7	5		58 percent
Bivocational	17	13	2	57 percent
Full-time	6	10		38 percent

32. If bivocational, would you be interested in exploring a Mennonite Tentmakers Network?

	Yes	No	maybe
Part-time	1	1	
Bivocational	10	13	3

Interpretive Comments: Most felt they pastor with adequate support, although BV were the least adequately supported. More support is hard to turn down, apparently, because only about 60 percent of both PT and BV would make time for more support if available. If the maybes are put with the "yes" answers, only half the BV's are interested in exploring a network—less than convincing evidence that a network is a needed intervention?

33. Please respond to each of the following statements from your experience in the last year.

a. I have felt accepted, liked and appreciated by most members of this congregation.

	Usually	Sometimes	Almost never	Never
Part-time	16	2		
Bivocational	29	2		
Full-time	19	1		

b. I have had trouble with one or more lay leaders in the congregation

	Usually	Sometimes	Almost never	never
Part-time	1	7	5	1
Bivocational		9	15	6
Full-time	1	11	4	2

c. I was able to maintain a separation between my ministerial duties and my private life.

	Usually	Sometimes	Almost never	never
Part-time	11	5	2	
Bivocational	8	18	3	
Full-time	10	11		

d. I felt lonely and isolated.

	Usually	Sometimes	Almost never	never
Part-time	1	9	7	1
Bivocational	3	6	13	9
Full-time		9	9	3

e. I had sufficient money to live comfortably.

	Usually	Sometimes	Almost never	never
Part-time	11	3	2	1
Bivocational	21	8	2	
Full-time	14	5	2	

f. I felt bored and frustrated by the limits of this job, resources or people.

	Usually	Sometimes	Almost never	never
Part-time	2	4	6	6
Bivocational	1	6	11	12
Full-time		5	12	4

g. I felt physically healthy and energetic.

	Usually	Sometimes	Almost never	never
Part-time	12	6		
Bivocational	15	9	3	2
Full-time	16	3	2	

h. I felt I was really accomplishing things in my ministry.

	Usually	Sometimes	Almost never	never
Part-time	8	8	1	
Bivocational	16	12	2	
Full-time	12	9		

i. I thought seriously about leaving the pastoral ministry for some other kind of work.

	Usually	Sometimes	Almost never	never
Part-time		3	7	8
Bivocational		11	7	10
Full-time		7	8	6

j. I have experienced burnout.

	Usually	Sometimes	Almost never	never
Part-time		8	5	5
Bivocational	1	13	9	6
Full-time	1	11	6	3

### Family

34. How would you rate your nuclear family's support of your ministry?

	Strong	Usually strong	Has some questions	Does not support
Part-time	13	4	1	
Bivocational	20	10		
Full-time	15	5	1	

35. How does your family impact your ministry, if you have one?

### Part-time answers

- I try to balance my time between my ministry and the needs of my family otherwise I would probably spend more time with my ministry and less time with my own needs.
- time constraints and lack of benefits;
- Because I pastor with my husband, our roles sometimes get a bit muddled. Sometimes it can feel like we are enmeshed, sharing far too much, but most of the time I am just really thankful that we are sharing this ministry. We have seen first hand, the strength of having two of us trying to tackle the problems together and providing a unified leadership. My daughters are (mostly) really proud of what I have done in particular. To my relief, my parents are also proud and very supportive of our ministry. This gets into women's issues rather than part-time issues, but one brother says it is OK for a woman to be pastoring if there is not a man around to do it. This hurts, but it isn't my job to try to correct his thinking. Thankfully, I don't live near him.
- Not much at all;
- Since my spouse and I share a pastoral position, we need to be very intentional about not letting our professional and personal lives become too enmeshed.
- My wife and I co-pastor. My kids all love and thrive at our church, although occasionally they resent the amount of time we spend there.
- children/grandchildren very supportive;
- We are alone now, but family and ministry worked well for me;
- basic support for the ministry but both my wife and I have questions about patriarchy and homophobia in the church;
- our children are gone from home- my wife works with me, all affirm my ministry;
- close supportive relationship with spouse;

- very supportive;
- They are understanding; this is proven by two sons following me into pastoral ministry.
- generally supportive, in home office is problematic at times (sharing computer);
- needing to keep things in balance...my spouse's academic commitments and the needs of our one child. My spouse's feelings about church and level of comfort in different church settings especially where I am taking an active leadership role.
- They take time and the ministry is left lacking.

#### **Bivocational answers**

- periodic lack of support is disheartening;
- I'm still the primary parent at home, so my family has first priority. The congregation affirms this, the university doesn't care. My wife supports my ministry, and she pays the bills. I couldn't do this if I had to earn a real wage.
- They impact it through listening, critique, contribution of perspective, gifts, etc.
- schedules;
- I'm a co-pastor and so we often talk about work at home, but then we don't keep strict office hours.
- My wife is Catholic, which enriches my faith, but can complicate matters in the congregation.
- My wife is very supportive, our children are all adults and not involved.
- very supportive (helpful);
- supportive;
- children are grown;
- ministry impacts spending time with family;
- Balancing ministry and family is tough. My wife supports me, though also grinds her teeth at me.
- very supportive;
- they are supportive, protective of my time;
- I have three daughters and all of them love the church. The youngest one is the only one at home and she frequently invites friends from her public school to come and visit our worship services.
- I couldn't do it without them but at times sense a time/energy conflict
- My wife supports me in ministry.
- It affects everything;
- My wife is also very involved in ministry and very supportive.
- supported and grounded;
- Positively.
- They are involved in the church and see it as much as their church as "mine." Our church seems like family to us;
- My wife is incredibly supportive and my kids are understanding.
- I experience their support.

#### **Full-time answers**

- Family members are very active in church life.
- They have a strong positive impact, both my immediate and extended family. They help in child care if needed, Drive me places, watch my house if we are away. They are a great responsibility of their own.
- My wife supports me in listening and helping me reflect on aspects of my work and relationships. I am a pastor to them too.
- My family generally provides energy and support. I feel encouragement from my wife and my children for my level of involvement.

- It calls for my first and best attention. I am trying to balance both demands. I have had to say no to church on occasion.
- My father always told me that I was doing the most important job in the world. My wife and children have also been supportive.
- Spouse is a fantastic and great support; children continue to be as cooperative as possible.
- Pressure to move closer to grandchildren;
- Help provide foci and connections outside the congregation; support and affirm my role and ministry;
- Because we are not a large congregation my family is heavily involved in the work of the church and consequently also involved with me. Being able to find the path between pastor/spouse/parent can sometimes get tricky.
- My family is very supportive. One of our challenges in ministry is being geographically distanced from extended family, though they have been very supportive as well.
- Very supportive; tremendous helpmate.
- My spouse is very supportive and my greatest mentor. While our children are grown, they are concerned that I do not let the pressures of ministry cause health problems.

36. How does geography impact your ministry, if at all?

#### **Part-time answers**

- Not at all (two).
- I live in an economically depressed area. There are times when I wish I could pastor in a place where there are lots of Mennonites who also have plenty of money. But that is not the case. I am impressed with the spirit of giving and generosity that flavors my congregation.
- Children live at a distance—mother and extended family are two hours away.
- I live 2 hours away from a major center of the denomination and local conference. This is close enough to participate in some activities that take place there, but far enough away to make regular participation difficult. Many pastors and congregational members in that area are unaware of my congregation.
- I like being in a city, with its ethnic and cultural diversity, greater potential for outreach, and greater anonymity (i.e. less of the “fishbowl” effect).
- I enjoy having lived around in several places.
- live in city and bike or drive out to rural community;
- I live 21 miles from the church and some members live 18 miles from the church.
- I drive 40 miles to the church building—this limits how many days I am in the community.
- children live at a distance, so support only through phone conversations and occasional visits.
- geographic distance is an important factor, but relationships are possible over longer distance. There is a price to pay.
- It does to the extent that this community where I serve has been shaped by historical/cultural factors related to this place. I am pretty far from my parents and my spouse’s parents and so we feel some distance from them in my current ministry setting.

#### **Bivocational answers**

- Little;
- family oriented culture;
- It’s really expensive to live here. I have to be careful to not comment to church people about my financial situation too much. It’s under control now, but last year when I had an unexpected expense to my house of \$8,000 I was really stressed. (My savings is still at about \$100, so if anything goes wrong, I’ll be right back into stress. I make less money now than I did before seminary and have a college debt as well. It’s tough.).
- The enjoyment of where I live makes a difference.
- Here it’s positive.

- I pastor in a rural, culturally-isolated area. That impacts every other aspect of my life.
- Very little, we recently moved for an interim ministry position;
- In the rural area where I serve, there are many blue-collar workers, and my bi-vocational status seems to be positive thing to them.
- All family live at a distance – people in the congregation visit family on weekends, we can't;
- (farmer) limited to present area of ministry;
- I live less than five minutes from the church.
- There aren't a lot of part-time teaching positions that are as good as mine, especially in areas with Mennonite pastoral opportunities. If we moved, I suspect I'd have to move to a full-time position in one of my two fields.
- It is in my home area where I grew up. I am very comfortable there.
- We are an hour away from the conference headquarters and sometimes I need to take the day off to attend meetings which I want to participate in. My secular job is flexible, but every time I take off I also don't get paid.
- We live about five miles from the church- close but not too close.
- the closer the better;
- I live only four miles from church which helps save me time and I feel like I'm in area of our congregations ministry;
- Very much. We love where we live and have had many offers to move elsewhere to which we have said no—one of the very important factors being geographical considerations.
- I adapt.
- none (two).

#### **Full-time answers**

- Limited in multi-cultural experiences.
- I live in a less populated area which impacts my role and identity in the community.
- I think that it impacts ministry a lot. For example, we are in essence, planting a new church in our community, within the context of an existing congregation. I need to be involved in our community so I can champion the cause for others to be heavily involved as well. One cannot be actively involved in the community you're trying to reach without residing either in it or closely to it. We were living 30 minutes away from our church community when I accepted the pastorate and this past summer, we moved to the community so I can be more involved in it.
- don't know that it does.
- I don't think it is significant.
- None.
- Make trips to Indiana to visit grandchildren;
- Isolated from other Mennonite communities/congregations, so less sense of connectedness to the larger Mennonite Church. Great outdoor activity.
- Being in Elkhart makes much of the broader church readily available.
- I feel that my upbringing in a rural area prepared me well for ministry in this rural setting.
- Not at all.
- I don't know that it has any affect.

#### **Supply**

37. Mennonite Church USA needs about 50 percent of our pastors to be willing/able to serve part-time. Only 10 percent of last year's candidates were open to bivocational ministry and we're trying to discern the reasons behind that. What do you think are the biggest deterrents to serving bivocationally?

#### **Part-time answers**

- Time; in the ministry you are called at all hours of the day. How do you divide the time in serving and working another job?

- Pastoral work is very demanding work. Finding part-time employment that allows pastoring to come first is not always easy. Also, after training for ministry, that is where one wants to spend their time and efforts. To try to juggle two jobs, one of which can be very consuming, along with family responsibilities, is crazy-making!
- Difficulty in setting boundaries, many expectations of pastors;
- Lack of finances; fear of full-time expectations on a part-time salary; sense that two part-time jobs usually require more time and energy than a single full-time job; unwillingness to live in remote area or serve a congregation with an uncertain future.
- The stress of maintaining two jobs—greater than the sum of the parts.
- containing ministry time within time paid/ finding the right other job;
- being asked to do a lot of work without adequate financial remuneration- I would not want to be the only part-time pastor. I am grateful there are two pastors here.
- How can you get compensation and health benefits?
- getting a part-time job that allows time needed for ministry;
- lack of focus on one task/job;
- I think bivocational ministry is a strong option and we need better vision and more examples to make it more accessible to more people.
- 50 percent time jobs usually expect 75 percent work;
- concerns about division of time, adequate compensation, parishioners demands;
- the large expectations placed on pastors to do a wide-variety of tasks and the “on-call” nature of ministry (needing to meet need as they arise). I know that I do more than part-time most weeks. Another factor is difficulty of finding another job that fits with a pastor’s schedule and congregations that recognize the limits of time/energy on bivocational ministers.
- the church still expects full-time service. Here it does not work at all. In a previous setting I was employed full-time outside of the church and was essentially a “Sunday pastor.” It worked very well because the church wanted it to work They were a wonderful group. The other difficulty is finding outside suitable employment.

#### **Bivocational answers**

- Candidates and congregations inability to maintain boundaries.
- I think of three reasons. 1) if you’ve been through seminary and put all that time and energy into being trained, you want to use it full-time. 2) I’m fortunate in that my second career pays really well, which helps to offset the lower pastoral salary. For some people, a second job means a lower paying job and they simply can’t afford it. 3) two part-time jobs always equals more hours of work than one full-time job. Just the way it is.
- Deterrents are being able to find two jobs that are compatible time-wise. Being able to find two jobs that will provide sufficient finances. Ministry demands often depend more on the needs of the congregation than size thus smaller congregations do not necessarily equate to less time demands.
- Churches and local conferences don’t understand the stresses of bivocational life. In Virginia Conference, the ‘box’ that pastors are expected to fit into is too narrowly-defined.
- Preference to focus on one job rather than divide time; it is hard to get two jobs to work together; ministry is a full-time job regardless of how much time one is paid for. A bivocational minister must be very ambitious; successfully drawing boundaries and keeping a healthy balance;
- money worries;
- commitment to the call of Jesus on one’s life is a step of faith (as with Abraham) and is a ministry of which we receive remuneration not a job we get paid for; it does not seem fair to ask a pastor to serve in two roles- the lack of benefits does not make up for the difference;
- financial and stress of balancing two professions—neither of my jobs provides benefits;
- big investment in training/education and benefits;
- Two part-time jobs seldom add up to one full-time job in terms of salary and benefits. The ministry is demanding and should have full-time attention.

- Difficulty in setting boundaries and many expectations of pastors. It is hard to get good wages and benefits with another part-time job. My other income is only a fraction of another half salary. Every move means starting over with another job or if self employed, getting established with repeat business.
- availability of adequate(financially) part-time work, the time pressures of bivocational ministry;
- It's hard. I honestly wouldn't pick this situation long term. The reason for being tough would most likely be that it's hard to run a full-time job, run a ministry, and run a family. That's too much for one person to carry by themselves.
- money, training, health insurance, lack of imagination;
- Salary, availability of another compatible job;
- time and a job that works well with the ministries schedule that also pays adequately;
- Many churches that can't pay a pastor full-time are smaller. The pastor has multiple tasks including secretarial, sometimes set-up and clean-up leading worship and songs, enabling others to lead, teaching SS, children's messages, etc. plus they need to do much of this in the evenings and week-ends after working somewhere else all day.
- Having two 100 percent careers, feeling unsure of who you really are;
- time, money and family issues;
- over commitment;
- The difficulty of finding a second job with schedule flexibility for the unexpected events, time management and sufficient income;
- Not enough time to devote to ministry;
- Healthcare benefits, retirement, etc. are often denied to part-time workers;
- It is not easy to divide ones time unless one is really called to that particular way of life.
- I have been a bivocational minister in numerous locations and in two denominations. Many times I have found this situation a necessary cross to bear for the sake of ministry, and of the local congregation. But when we consider the sizes of over half of the congregations in Mennonite Church USA, the need for either bivocational ministry or a multi-congregational ministry is apparent. My frustration is that our seminaries and Bible colleges are training for full-time ministry. This is not just a "Mennonite" issue, but is true of all f the institutions I know about.

#### **Full-time answers**

- Churches hiring/paying for part-time, but expecting full-time hours and availability.;
- Expectations placed on candidates by churches, seminaries and family. Divided interests results in poorer job performance;
- Trying to keep up with pastoral/congregational demands and then other work demands at the same time;
- Our cultural emphasis on success is being connected to wealth accumulation. Also, on the practical side, trying to provide for your physical needs of your nuclear family while providing for the spiritual needs of a congregation is tough.
- It is too much to expect of persons. One job is enough. Already a pastor gives 110 percent. Imagine having two jobs to juggle. It is unfair to the marriage and family.
- It is hard to juggle two jobs. I went to graduate school and later taught while serving as a part-time pastor. I enjoyed doing it at first, but it got increasingly difficult to try to keep up in two different fields.
- For me, at present I do not feel that I have a skill that is capable of producing adequate income, although I once had a professional skill, but since I have been out of that realm for over 25 years I do not see it as feasible to re-enter that vocation.
- More difficult to juggle time schedules. Employers need to be willing to work around funerals, and other mid-week emergencies. As I look back at some bivos I saw many families getting what little "left-over" time their pastor, usually father, had for them. Churches seem to want the same for bivocational as full-time. A desire to be able to put all of ones self toward one task.

- Finances would be my primary assumption but I think we are also in a time where congregations and the denomination want trained pastors for their churches and the return on the investment of time and resources for pastoral training in a part-time setting is not adequate. A second factor would be Mennonite Church USA's tradition of maintaining congregations past a point of viability. If a person is pastoring part-time and that church is small and struggling it detracts from the pastors sense of self as pastor (though the issue is more than likely systemic) and is a great drain on personal energy.
- Two part-time jobs almost always carry with them the demands of at least two full-time jobs. To me, burnout would be the primary concern.
- Personally, I would have a hard time dividing my time and finding a part-time job that would be satisfying.
- It is incredible (almost ridiculous) that we encourage and expect pastors to get formal training at significant cost, and then expect them to work in something else half of the time! Do other professionals (teachers, health care workers, social workers, etc.) do that without having started with a significant other source of income?
- Several of the second income options that I have considered through the years of bivocational experience like real estate sales, home business, crafts and such like seemed unworkable due to time demands or conflict of influence (you should buy from me as your pastor).
- Fear of insufficient income is probably the main reason;
- Scheduling, lack of understanding employers, personally- I'm unclear what other vocation I might engage in;
- financial limitations;
- not being able to give oneself fully to pastoral ministry, the vision for the congregation, and to the time needed for ministry- the boundaries between other work can be very difficult
- I think this is the wrong question: better questions might be "How can we significantly lower the number of churches that can only afford part-time or bivocational leadership?" or "How can we attract and train visionary leaders who will not be satisfied with the status quo?" Rather than seeking to enable what is often a dysfunctional situation, conference should be looking outside the box (the comfort zone) and helping congregations to vision something beyond where they are. I realize each situation is different, but most churches should either be visioning significant growth or planning to close. If a church wants to be a house church, with lay leadership, that is a possible model. If a church wants to hire someone temporarily on part-time basis with a vision and time line in place to move to full-time, that is valid. Many of our congregations have no vision beyond survival and little motivation to gain the vision necessary to significantly impact their communities. I have visited and worked with dozens of congregations in various capacities and know this to be the case. These churches need to be led to transitioning their resources to ministries that can flourish, even if that means the present work, or tradition, dies. In order to enable/challenge congregations to do this, leadership both at the conference and congregational level cannot be "nice." David Augsburger emphasized that "It is not nice to be nice." Churches must be led to hard choices, not enabled in antiquated methods--- vision and thinking outside the box must be the benchmark for the church of the future. I really think looking at what is instead of what could be misses the mark and follows in the footsteps of the Main Line denominations that have suffered such horrendous numerical losses over the last 30 years.
- My observation is that bivocational ministry is a life sentence.
- Many churches that can't pay a pastor full-time are smaller. The pastor has multiple tasks including secretarial , sometimes set-up and clean-up, leading worship and songs, enabling others to lead, teaching SS, children's messages, etc, plus they need to do much of this in the evenings and weekends after working somewhere else all day.
- Mennonites value educated pastors- if one spends 7 years to get a M.Div., a pastor normally wants a full-time position to apply what was learned and to pay of educational costs.
- lack of benefits, stress of juggling two or more jobs, lack of adequate salary;

- availability of other part-time work to accommodate a pastor's financial needs and pastor's schedule at the church;

Interpretive Comments: The perceived deterrents to serving bivocationally were basically the same among groups surveyed. The **full-time** pastors believed educated pastors would want and need full-time. They thought deterrents would be the lack of adequate salary, lack of benefits and the lack of availability of other part-time work that would fit a pastor's schedule. But note that 22 BVs in this survey **did not** carry training debt. So perhaps the ones with debt aren't willing to work bivocationally. FT's also cited the stress of schedule juggling, congregations expecting more than the time contracted, and the systemic problem of keeping churches alive past their viability would contribute to a pastor's low self-esteem. **Bivocational** pastors agreed that deterrents including time management and boundaries, lack of benefits, two part-time jobs equals more than one full-time, but added that churches and local conferences do not understand the stresses of bivocational life and too-narrowly define the "box" that is pastor. They also cited lack of imagination as a deterrent to bivocational ministry! The **part-time** pastors agreed that 24 hour call, finding the other employment, difficulty in setting boundaries, lack of benefits and high expectations are all deterrents. However, one part-time pastor thought bivocational ministry is a strong option and we need better vision and more examples to make it more accessible to more people.

### Education/ Training / Credentials

38. Please enter educational preparation for your secular job as well as for ministry.
39. Are you credentialed by a Mennonite Church USA conference? 68 Yes; 2 No (one lay, one AMEC)

### Part-time answers

- I have always served as a part-time pastor (two-thirds to three-fourths time). Most of that time, my spouse has also worked part-time—first in a separate field and for the past 6½ years as co-pastor with me. Until recently, this has been a very good arrangement for us and has allowed us to devote time to our children. As the children age, however, they are spending more time away from home and are involved in activities that are becoming more costly. In addition, I am considering pursuing a D. Min. in the near future. For these reasons, I am currently seeking additional employment in order to meet our family's financial wishes.
- I must admit that having served for six years full-time as an associate pastor in a large congregation and how five years part-time in a small congregation, I cannot imagine going back to full-time. I so much enjoy pursuing other things besides my church work. At the same time, the change has wreaked havoc on my ego. I have told my wife that parenting is even harder, with fewer external rewards and more relational rewards than pastoring. I also think that being an at-home parent mixes fairly well with being a pastor. If churches were not so sexist in their hiring practices, I think a lot more women would be doing this. Of course, if our culture was not so sexist more men would be at-home parents.
- Even though I am not now bivocational, I have had a few years as bivocational early in my ministry. I always felt this was a positive option and a good experience.

### Bivocational answers

- What I would like to see is our educational institutions offering some practical on-line classes. How do we better time-manage? How might we maximize home visitation and counseling sessions? We need upgrades on our current degrees and sometimes even our licenses. We need tools that equip us for meeting and dealing with current problems and issues in society. And as much as any other need, we need to be equipped to stimulate church growth. We need hope that we are not endlessly stuck in a diminishing or dying congregation, but that there is equipment available to help us redirect. We need to know we are not alone, and how others

cope with similar situations. I also find it frustrating that most of the continuing education courses, as well as many of the seminars available are geared toward full-time ministers. A bivocational minister must ask for time off from the job to be able to attend these. There is only a limited amount of time that an employer will be able to allow.

- We made a conscious choice to work as a pastoral couple. We hoped to find a congregation who could use us (one and one-half full-time equivalents) between the two of us. That has never happened. If we had not saved significantly early in life, we could not have afforded to both be working for the church on one full-time salary between us and for many years significantly below church guidelines.
- I have been at my church, as a youth pastor since June 19, 2004. So these perspectives are from a first year pastor. Hope they still help you out.

#### **Full-time answers**

- I have been in ministry for 38 years. I have been full-time only in the last four. Now that the “ship” has stabilized I very much miss the broader experience in the life of my community. My other vocations had been a source of experiencing realities, challenges, opportunities and “learnings” that took me far beyond the classroom. I attribute much of my effectiveness and love for the ministry to factors that came from my other vocations— teaching, business management and product designer. Problem solving skills were developed both with product and people difficulties and challenges. Litigations ownership responsibilities, serious indebtedness, manufacturing, marketing and a need to work with six brothers taught many lessons about PR skills, teamwork and things that you “can’t change.” These experiences have often served as identity and connecting points with parishioners. Often sermon illustrations were gleamed from this “bigger” world. My enthusiasm ignites just thinking about these things and the privilege I have had to be bi-vocational. I have just started an equipment dealership here in Florida a few months ago. I have hired a local man to operate the business. I told him that I am his helper on some of my days off. I anticipate going part-time with the church when closer to retirement and further build the business and also take on some mission projects or maybe a director of our conference camp. My wife has been a significant part of this “journey” but less enthused than I ....but we work it out....we always have. Our children affirm our “journey” as well.

Overall interpretive comments on next page.

### **Overall Interpretive Comments: what did we learn?**

Bivocational ministry is creative, fulfilling, imaginative, and a possible option for smaller churches or as components of a pastoral team. A stronger vision and imagination of what is possible is needed, as well as examples to demonstrate where it's working. But alongside this imaginative response is needed conference commitment not to sustain churches beyond their viability. Serving a congregation that should close is harder on pastoral identity. Advantages cited for serving bivocationally include a relief from the ambiguity of ministry that the second job offers, a broader exposure to a variety of settings, and a flexible life. One strongly believes that manual work helps understand member's lives, and encourages lay ministry to pick up where the pastor cannot.

Several pastors who had moved from bivocational to full-time look back on the two jobs and say it felt like having two wives and find the singular focus of full-time a better fit. Another said much of his effectiveness and love for the ministry came from the other vocations he had alongside pastoring, and he misses the problem solving skills, and connections and identifying with parishioners as well as the sermon illustrations gleams from this "bigger world." He considers it a privilege to have been bivocational.

The deterrents pastors see when they consider working bivocationally include time management, the difficulty of finding the second vocation that fits well with pastoring, the lack of benefits in either vocation, and boundary maintenance in a field with few natural 9-5 boundaries (although some BV pastors felt the second job helped maintain boundaries- the church doesn't "own" all the pastors time). The understood next step after seven years of training is a full-time pastorate. The bivocational pastors did not cite debt as a determining factor but the full-time pastors did, thus indicating that debt does drive pastors to work full-time.

Pastoring part-time had more of the benefits of part-time work without the complications of a second job. This work seems easier on the family and one even sited it has made his sermons more grounded in real life since he parents half-time, too. Some couples who split a full-time pastorate like the flexibility. Part-time pastors appreciated having time to do other things they enjoy. It is a luxury that not all can afford.

More nuanced but present was the diminished identity, ego, recognition and value placed on part-time ministry from the congregation, the conference, the denomination and the pastor's own self-identity. I was surprised to learn that part-time pastors (with no second job) suffered the lowest identity- only 16 percent PT pastors rated their identity "clear," not bivocational pastors as I had suspected- 43 percent BV pastors rated their identity "clear." However, bivocational pastors rated their secular identity as a much clearer 76 percent. This highlights the blurry nature of pastoral self identity across all three groups, however, when compared with secular identities, Only 57 percent of FT pastors rated their pastoral identity "clear."

I was most surprised at the percentages of bivocational pastors who felt highly validated by congregation (77 percent), conference (63 percent) and denomination (43 percent). Part-time pastors have the lowest sense of high validation by congregation (55 percent), conference (64 percent), and denomination (32 percent). full-time pastors felt highest validation from congregation (95 percent), then conference (75 percent) and denomination (40 percent). The full-time pastors showed that **all** pastors are in need of more validating experiences, particularly from the denomination.

My hypothesis was the bivocational pastors were suffering from lack of recognition, appreciation and identity. While that is partially true, the numbers show part-time pastors without the validating second vocation are most in need of validating experiences and appreciation from the denomination, congregation and conference.