

Faith of Our Mothers: Religiosity in Adult Daughter-Mother Relationships

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ABSTRACT

In this hermeneutic phenomenological study, a purposive sample of 12 religious women considered their experiences of religiosity with their mothers and larger family systems. Adult daughters reflected on the significance and meaning of religion in their lives and relationships, particularly the interaction of mothers and adult daughters concerning spirituality, beliefs, and experiences including intergenerational transmission of religiosity. Adult daughters were queried regarding maternal religious influence and the challenges of being women. Data were collected to saturation and analyzed to consider individual narratives about families into the development of three themes: Family Connections, Religious Consciousness, and Encountering Community. Gilligan's theory of moral development, including the ethic of caretaking, is employed to consider religiosity in the adult daughter-mother relationship. Limitations, clinical implications, and future directions are explored.

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In loving memory of my grandmother, Dorothy Jean Gerbode Townsend and those
whose lives were cut short on April 16, 2007 at Virginia Tech

Dedicated to my beloved child, Jameson, who taught me to have the faith of a mother,

My own mother who made certain I had opportunities she never had,

And my partner and friend, Jamie.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

This hermeneutic phenomenology studies religiosity in adult daughter-mother relationships. This project inquires into the experiences, family systems, and religious transmission of 12 mainline Protestant adult daughters. These experiences were examined for themes, generational patterns, and the participants' perspectives on morality.

Area of Study

Adult daughter-mother relationships are essential to the understanding of extended families, including our knowledge of important markers of family strength such as resilience, cohesion, and closeness (Bojczyk, Lehan, McWey, Melson, & Kaufman, 2011; Fingerman, Sechrist, & Birditt, 2013). Townsend (1957) describes these dyads as serving a linchpin function, meaning they set the dynamics for the facilitation, interaction, and support of the wider extended family. Mothers, for example, perform the kinkeeping role in most families – that is, they ensure family members remain in touch with one another, alert members to milestones such as birthdays, and ensure holidays are recognized or planned – and this responsibility is frequently passed on to adult daughters (Rosenthal, 1985; Rowe & Harman, 2014). Adult daughter-mother relationships are thus highly salient intergenerational connections for women that endure through the life course.

While adult daughters and mothers report higher ambivalent emotions in their interactions than other parent-adult child pairings, discord in adult daughter-mother relationships tends to lessen over time (Fingerman, 2001; Fischer, 1986, 1991). Regardless of previous discord, for example, adult daughters are particularly likely to

turn to their mothers during life transitions and periods of increased strain such as the births of their children or tension in the adult daughters' relationships.

Adult daughter-mother relationships have undergone extensive theoretical consideration and some study but the religious components of adult daughter-mother connections are largely unknown (Keary, 2014). Religious meaning-making for women may be intimately connected with adult daughter-mother relationships and have roots in maternal modeling, instruction, and experiences.

This investigation starts from Durkheim's (1912/1995) definition of religion as "a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things." Baumsteiger and Chenneville (2015) note, "mental health professionals generally define religiosity as the adherence to beliefs, doctrines, ethics, rituals, texts, traditions, and practices" (p. 2).

Though secularism, or being unaffiliated with a religion, is on the rise in the United States, long-term projections for religious identification suggest increased religiosity will characterize the future population of the United States (Goujon, Malenfant, & Skirbekk, 2015). This phenomenon has been called "the end of secularization through demography" (Stonawski, Skirbekk, Kaufmann, & Goujon, 2015). That is, higher reproduction in religious populations, as well as immigration by people who are religious, will increase overall religiosity rates. This is in part because of immigration from predominantly Catholic countries and the high fertility rates of this group. Those identifying as Catholic have risen to over 30%. Other groups with high total fertility rates include Latter-Day Saints, charismatic and fundamentalist Christians, and Orthodox Jews. Pew (2011, 2015) projects Muslim growth in the United States surpassing Jewish population rates. Family therapists in the future thus will likely increasingly encounter persons of faith – including religions vastly

different from their own philosophical orientations – and may need guidance in working with clients from such populations (Henriksen, Polonyi, Bornsheuer-Boswell, Greger, & Watts, 2015; McGeorge, Carlson, & Toomey, 2014).

Avishai, Jafar, and Rinaldo (2015) call for researchers to consider religiosity in regard to women “not just as a variable but as a social structure” (p. 5). Religion is an organizing feature of societies as well as persons’ lives and the foundation of religious persons’ meaning-making, especially for women who are more likely to be religious, endorse the import of religion in their lives, and report religious beliefs. It is important to conceive of religiosity not as a simple variable but in a richly contextualized sense because there are many differences among religious women even within the same nominal religious sect.

Mainline Protestants

“Mainline” is an informal designation of those United States Protestants who differentiated themselves from twentieth century movements wherein Christians in the United States became increasingly fundamentalist, charismatic, and zealous in orientation (McLeod, 2015; Stamm, 2012). As mainline Protestants, the 12 women in this study fall into one of the shrinking religious demographics in contemporary society. This is because those identifying as mainline have fallen below 20% of the population and membership numbers have fallen sharply since mid-century highs (Lipka, 2015). The reasons for this decline are three-fold: comparatively lower birth rates, a rise in the religiously unaffiliated, and continued conversions by those who formerly belonged to mainline groups to conservative and nondenominational churches.

Many Protestant denominations may be called mainline. For example, most Lutherans, Presbyterians, and Methodists are considered mainline, although

conservative congregations and believers of these traditions may separate from the mainline designation or consider themselves to be at odds with what they view as liberal missteps. As well, some groups within Episcopalian, Disciples of Christ, Church of Christ, Baptist, Quaker, Reformed, and other traditions align themselves as mainline Protestants (Woodberry et al., 2012). However, many African-American Protestant traditions are simultaneously considered mainline and not, as the designation has sometimes been criticized as a northern and white ideal (Adeney, Bidwell, & Walker, 2012). Thus, the designation of mainline is imperfect but points to practitioners of older Protestant traditions in the United States predating evangelical shifts in affiliation.

Given these shifts, mainline Protestants are now a minority within Christianity in the United States. Ottati (2006) notes this change in standing is clear in media coverage wherein conservative religious perspectives are presented as “Christian” while mainline Protestant perspectives are ignored. In addition, less political attention is now afforded to mainline positions. In response to these changes, some mainline Protestants’ have begun self-identifying as “not that kind of Christian” to differentiate themselves from conservatives. Mainline Protestants have struggled in articulating, at least on the national stage, what kind of Christians they are. In attempting to describe their identity, they may point to family traditions, specific denominations, and founding theologians. As well, many mainline Protestants value past and present movements of social justice within their traditions as foundational to their beliefs and missions, such as women’s suffrage, civil rights, and ecclesiastical efforts to ameliorate poverty (Bean & Martinez, 2015; Heyward, 1984; McClure, 2014).

Many mainline communities are dwindling from what had once been a dominant religious presence. However, the mainline tradition has strong historical

roots, including important institutions that remain solid despite the decline. Thousands of hospitals, secondary schools, and universities, for example, have active mainline foundations. A potential rebirth may occur as centrists and progressives seek out spiritual communities in the future. As well, more women remain in the mainline than do men, and these devout women are the participants of this study. This is important because as men increasingly leave the mainline, the experiences of those women who remain are of great importance in understanding not only women's religiosity but also for exploring future avenues within the mainline. While social scientists cannot yet explain how religiosity is passed from one generation to the next, religious bodies within the mainline are experiencing increasing numbers of men leaving their churches. The present study is thus salient for understanding how religiosity moves from parent to child in the mainline tradition.

Justification: Religiosity and Clinical Practice

The current study seeks to contribute to the understanding of both religiosity and adult daughter-mother relationships, as well as to be helpful for family therapists in the future. Frame (2001) notes religious issues are "an area of family life that is rarely broached in counseling" (p. 109) and therapists may view religious belief in a variety of ways that inhibit its integration into the therapeutic milieu, from being uncomfortable with religious discussion to conceptualizing religiosity as pathological. Conversely, Fukuyama, Puig, Wolf, and Baggs (2014) observe there are, "increasing numbers of highly religious trainees who may need to expand their worldview to be sensitive to religious diversity" (p. 23). As well, there are strict schools of thought, such as nouthetic counseling, which promotes confronting clients with their sins (Kinghorn, 2015). These practitioners would fall into what Zinnbauer and Pargament (2000) consider the exclusivist stance of some psychotherapists, which may give

unequal status to certain religions. This, they note, along with the rejectionist stance – religion as pathological – may impede the integration of religiosity into sessions. They argue that constructivist and pluralist stances may better foster integration of clients' religious orientation.

A strong majority of clients consider their religious and spiritual views important, believe their therapist should be interested in these views, and see their beliefs as a resource in coping with their problems (D'Souza, 2002; Koenig, 2009; Post & Wade, 2014). However, clients do not always articulate the religious underpinnings of presenting issues as they may believe these facets of their lives to be outside the purview of therapy or they may not overtly connect religiosity (Frame, 2000). Conversely, clients may indeed state their religious views or conceptualizations of a problem but feel the therapist fails to grasp the import of the clients' beliefs (Boyd-Franklin, 2003).

Astute family therapists need to be able to assess how religious dynamics may be at play in clients' lives and conceptualize these religious dimensions. Therapists need to be able to engage clients of diverse religious orientations and work to meet clients where they are in terms of religiosity. Yet while therapists may indicate a desire to work effectively with clients regarding religious issues, they may feel unprepared to integrate religiosity into the models in which they have been trained (Balmer, van Asselt, Walker, & Kennedy, 2012; Carlson et al., 2002). Uncertainty may particularly arise when numerous facets of diversity are at play or when those facets differ significantly from the therapist's self-identification. For example, therapists who are most familiar with their own religious tradition may struggle to understand other religions. Boyd-Franklin (2003) explains this challenge in the need to conceive multiple layers for African-American clients such as race, gender, and the

part religion has played in the survival and resilience of the Black community. As well, sexual orientation and religion have important intersections particularly in regard to family of origin work and integrating religiosity with affirmative queer identity formation (Foster, Bowland, & Vosler, 2015). Eventually, therapist competencies may increase as training programs recognize the importance of including religiosity in their curriculum. A barrier to this recognition, however, may include training program faculty who feel unprepared to teach trainees in regard to religiosity (Baetz & Toews, 2009; Henriksen et al., 2015).

Framework

Family systems theory. Family systems theory applies general systems concepts to the problems, dynamics, and clinical treatment of families. Henry, Morris, and Harrist (2015) define the family system as “relational patterns among family members and in relation to ecosystems; composed of the overall family unit, family subsystems, individual family members, and ecosystems” (p. 28) Daughter-mother relationships are an example of an intergenerational subsystem, while religious communities can be seen as one of the ecosystems in which such relationships exist.

Gender. Hare-Mustin (1978) sees gender as an organizing social construct that fundamentally shapes the way power functions in systems. Male influence on adult daughter-mother pairs as well as adult daughter-mother attempts to counter and accommodate patriarchy are formative in the adult daughter-mother relationship (Gilligan, Rogers, & Tolman, 1991; Gilligan & Rogers, 1993). Caplan (2000, see also Caplan & Hall-McCorquodale, 1985) argues that societal expectations of mothers to be perfect lead to “mother blaming” to explain many individual and societal problems. By contrast, the current study examines gender from a strengths perspective recognizing these pressures on mothers and daughters.

Moral development. Gilligan's (1982) theory of moral development considers caretaking as formative in women's ethical decision-making. Gilligan's work began as a critique of Kohlberg's idea that persons advance morally through decision-making governed by cognitive processes, moving from avoiding punishment toward abstract philosophical reasoning. Lageman (1993) argues "Kohlberg's major flaw was his use of only male subjects" in his research. Gilligan, in contrast, argues women tend to prioritize caretaking and relationship health and that their moral development is different. She argues women move quickly from maintaining their own survival to self-sacrificing care for others. The moral task, Gilligan proposes, is to integrate self into the ethic of care to bring balance to human relationships, so that neither the self nor the other is neglected. In the present project, Gilligan is considered within the dynamic of the intergenerational adult daughter-mother relationship.

Hermeneutic phenomenology. Hermeneutic phenomenology is an interpretative process of inquiry that considers participants' experiences. Ricœur (1981) uses the symbol of an arch to describe the hermeneutic view as a process of understanding and explanation. Thus, the phenomenological researcher attempts to understand the meaning and context of the participants' experience. This requires moving beyond explaining participants' views to what Gadamer (1960/2013) describes as a communion of understanding as new experiences occur between the researcher and the researched.

Hermeneutic phenomenology is well suited to the study of religiosity because religion is the fundamental way religious persons make meaning. Much of religious experience includes rich stories, historical narratives, pregnant symbols, and communities of belief. These form the foundations of understanding and context.

Statement of the Problem

Van Mens-Verhulst (1993) notes, “Early childhood and adolescence have been recognized as very remarkable periods in [mother-daughter relationship] development, but clearly there are no logical or practical reasons for the assumption that the process stops there” (p. 161). At the other end of the life course, research in gerontology considers the decline of mothers and the role of adult daughters (usually as caregivers). Less research focuses on the time between daughter adolescence and maternal old age. That research which does focus on these middle years in the adult daughter-mother relationship, while including many aspects of this dyad, rarely looks at religiosity. Given the defining role religion plays in the lives of many women and the formative features of the adult daughter-mother relationship, however, it would seem imperative that religiosity in the adult daughter-mother relationship be studied. Current study in religiosity in adult daughter-mother dyads does not describe how religious traditions are passed from parent to child. The present study offers the potential to help explain this transmission in a Mainline Protestant population.

Purpose Statement

In light of the paucity of research concentrating on religiosity in the adult daughter-mother relationship, this project investigates that phenomenon. This study considers religiosity from the perspective of the adult daughter. Participants share their beliefs and experiences as daughters, as mothers themselves (when applicable), and as members in their larger family and religious systems.

Research Questions

Given this purpose, the research questions for this project are as follows:

1. What are adult daughters’ experiences of their adult daughter-mother relationships regarding religious issues? How has this changed over the span of the relationship?

2. How do adult daughters perceive their mother's religiosity and conceive of the transmission of religiosity from their mothers?
 - a. How do religious beliefs, language, symbols, and experiences function in the adult daughter-mother relationship?
 - b. How do adult daughters understand their mothers' religious influence?
3. How do adult daughters experience religion in adult daughter-mother relationships as a support or obstacle in regard to the challenges of being women?

Chapter II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Adult Daughter-Mother Relationships

Adult daughter-mother bonds are important for the psychological health of women as well as playing a pivotal role between generations (Miller-Day, 2004). Adult daughters and their mothers are usually close throughout the life course and relational cut-off is rare. Daughters report similar life experiences as their mothers – particularly in relation to gendered roles such as being a wife and mother – and mothers and daughters identify with one another.

In interviews, mothers and adult daughters give accounts of positive connection with one another and a high sense of loyalty and mutual concern (Fingerman, 2001; Philips, 1991). Nevertheless, mothers and daughters report emotional ambivalence in their interactions with each other and this is higher when daughters are culturally valued less than sons (Guo, Chi, & Silverstein, 2013). However, even conflict between mothers and daughters typically occurs within a close, mutually supportive relationship (Pillemer & Sutor, 2002; Rowe & Harman, 2014).

Onayli and Erdur-Baker (2013) argue that mother-daughter relationships have a “determining role in the life of the daughters in their social and psychological well-being and self-esteem” (p. 167). For example, mothers function as role models for daughters and are central in transmitting views of beauty (Maor, 2012). Adult daughters often receive advice and instrumental support from mothers including financial, childcare, and household assistance particularly during stressful times of increased need such as childbirth, divorce, illness, natural disasters, and economic crisis (Henderson & Hildreth, 2011; López, 2014; Reid & Reczek, 2011; Rowe &

Harman, 2014; Scelza, 2011). In return, adult daughters offer mothers emotional and instrumental support, such as sharing joys and concerns, paying bills, running errands, and cleaning (Fingerman, 2001; Fischer, 1986). These supports tend to increase as mothers age. Adult daughters are more likely than adult sons to learn about their mother's problems and more likely to offer support and have support requested of them than are adult sons (Suito & Pillemer, 2006). Daughters report a sense of responsibility for their mothers as they age and tend to adopt a caregiver role as their mothers decline (Bromberg, 1983; Lang & Brody, 1983; Seaman, Bear, Documet, Sereika, & Albert, 2014).

Adult daughter-mother relationships also serve an important function in the extended familial system (Miller-Day, 2004). Bonds between mothers and adult daughters, for example, are usually the closest intergenerational bonds within family systems, and help to ensure that families of procreation remain connected with families of origin across generations. These connections in turn tend to strengthen familial resilience to life stressors, especially in African-American populations (Boyd-Franklin, 2003; Pollock, Kazman, & Deuster, 2014; Reid & Reczek, 2011; Sechrist, Suito, Vargas, & Pillemer, 2011).

Religious Transmission

Religious transmission is the process by which religious identification of the parental generation moves to their children (Okagaki & Bevis, 1999; Pearce, 2002). Nominal religious transmission, that is children identifying in name with their parents' religion, is normative. Shared religiosity of parent-adult child bonds relate to important relational aspects including positive regard, closeness, and decreased conflict (King, 2010; Pearce & Axinn, 1998; Sechrist, Suito, Henderson, Cline, &

Steinhour, 2007). Parents whose adult children share the same faith are significantly more likely to receive assistance from those children (King, Ledwell, & Pearce-Morris, 2013). However, the mechanisms of this transmission, including religious understanding, or how actual belief rather than just nominal identification moves to the next generation, and the gender effects of that transmission, are less understood. Myers (1996) does consider familial variables that positively correlate with religious transfer across 471 families. These variables are high parental religiosity, parent-child relationship quality and support, and traditional family structure including moderately strict parenting and stay-at-home mothers. Still, the content of that transfer is largely unknown and few studies consider how religion moves through generations, especially once children are adults.

A rich and contextual two-wave study of 14 Jewish families found religious transmission stronger among mother-adolescent daughter pairs than other parent-child pairings (Davey et al., 2001; Davey et al., 2003). The authors focus on an authoritative parenting style as it relates to transmission and find strong gender effects. They conclude mothers tend to be more actively invested in transmitting Jewish identity than fathers and function as the primary Jewish “identity keepers” (p. 206). Daughters are higher in Jewish belief, affiliation, and synagogue attendance than are sons. While a united parental model of religiosity is related to the most religious transmission to the child, this dynamic is much less common in the sample.

Adult Daughter-Mother Relationships and Religiosity

Existing research on religiosity in adult daughter-mother relationships considers populations who are Catholic, African-American, and Jewish. For example, Carranza (2013) finds, of 16 immigrant Salvadorian adult daughter-mother pairs, mothers work to instill “obedience, respect, and chastity before marriage” in their

emerging adult daughters to encourage *marianismo*, the Catholic ideal of emulating doctrinal understandings of the Virgin Mary.

As well, Banks-Wallace and Parks (2004) considered the experience of individual African-American women in adult daughter-mother and sister relationships. This study described the participants as experiencing religion as central to their lives including their mother-daughter and sister relationships. Also, the participants reported attending religious services with their female family members as quality time. This is related to participants' descriptions of religion fostering a bond that overcomes mother-daughter and sister conflicts, even when there are significant disagreements. The women pointed to their faith as a way of resolving disputes. As well, religious coping is an important resource for these women in surviving trauma in childhood, intimate partner violence, and divorce. The authors described the women's views on such violence as evolving through the course of focus groups to collaboratively conclude abuse is not God's intention for their lives or the lives of their daughters, mothers, and sisters.

Sands, Roer-Strier, and Strier (2013) explored "religious intensification" in Jewish families from mother to adult daughter, defined as the daughter becoming more observant and orthodox than the mother. The daughters' changes to more devout practices are known in their communities as *teshuva*, meaning to repent. Mothers and daughters in this study remained close, despite the fact that the children of the adult daughters were being raised in a more orthodox manner than they themselves had been raised. The researchers describe mutual concern for the adult daughter's children as a "bridge" for mothers and adult daughters to express love and concern despite disagreements regarding the adult daughters' changes in religious views and practices. Mothers spoke with "effusiveness" about being grandmothers and this, the researchers

argue, was key to the resilience of the adult daughter-mother relationship through the process of *teshuva*. Mothers reported regular visits with grandchildren including helping their daughters with childcare and transportation. However, the authors poignantly note the grandmothers lost the role in their families as the keeper of traditions as they were seen as knowing less about *being Jewish* than their daughters and grandchildren. Thus, most mothers, influenced by their daughters' changed beliefs, experienced an increase in their own religiosity, often expressed in quest-like language and the desire to link their familial Jewish history with their grandchildren.

Keary (2014) by contrast considered Catholic adult daughters movement away from religious traditions, teachings, and sacraments. These daughters in Keary's study explained reinterpreting Catholicism in fresh ways or leaving the tradition as freeing, while mothers described feeling torn between Catholic teaching and their connections with their daughters. This study considered rites including confirmation, marriage, and the baptism of children in the Catholic Church as well as the difficulties experienced in adult daughter-mother relationships as mothers and their less religious daughters negotiate a trans-generational reduction in their religiosity transfer. Mothers voiced substantial emotional struggle with their daughters' movement away from Catholicism. These mothers, however, reported not commenting on these struggles prior to the study, and described prioritizing conflict-free adult daughter-mother relationships over pressing for the continuation of important familial religious traditions.

The Present Study

While, as the explorations discussed above show, the nominal transmission of religiosity in adult daughter-mother pairs has been examined, the contents of this transmission remain largely unknown. While some studies indicate mothers and

daughters share religious meanings and experiences, this research is limited in topic area or an identified religious tradition such as the Black Church, Judaism, or Catholicism. The present research considers the deep meanings of religiosity – beyond simply the transmission of traditions – for mainline Protestant women in the adult daughter-mother relationship. More knowledge about the content of that religious transmission may reveal that the adult daughter-mother relationship serves an essential function in religious systems. The present study will consider how religiosity is transmitted through the generations both intergenerationally and developmentally. The intergenerational transfer will be considered as a process moving from the mother to the daughter through her upbringing and as an ongoing dynamic in the adult relationship. Understanding the religious experiences of women within the adult daughter-mother context will provide greater understanding of both adult daughter-mother relationships as well as religiosity.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research is usually a highly collaborative endeavor whereby participants may be empowered in meaning-making through their stories and voice for the collection of data. Patton (2002) describes interviews as a primary kind of qualitative data noting, “Open ended questions and probes yield in-depth responses about people’s experiences, perceptions, opinions, feelings, and knowledge. Data consist of verbatim quotations with sufficient context to be interpretable” (p. 4). Phenomenological inquiry is a type of qualitative approach to effectively understand the implication and weight of participants’ experiences (Dahl & Boss, 2005). Patton (2002) states that phenomenology asks this, “Foundational question: What is the meaning... of the lived experience of this phenomenon for this person or group of people?” (p. 104).

To better understand these experiences of adult daughters, the approach for this study is hermeneutic phenomenology and leans here on the work of Ricœur (1973, 1974, 1981). Hermeneutic phenomenology is a richly interpretive process: this interpretation allows hermeneutic phenomenologists to position themselves with the meaning-making framework of the participants’ experience (Lavery, 2003). This is achieved through what Ricœur (1981) draws as a circle or arch transitioning between writer/speaker and reader/hearer or that which is explained and that which is understood. Once the transcript of a participant interview is written, this becomes the hermeneutic text.

Ricœur (1981) argues there is no possibility of bracketing or assuming an epoché stance in the hermeneutic because one cannot separate oneself to grasp an essence. Rather, a hermeneutic phenomenology aims to discern the participants’

experiences through inquiry about understandings, meanings, symbols, and contexts. Hermeneutic phenomenology allows for collaboration between participant and researcher. Instead of attempting an objective *recreation*, the phenomenologist reaches a new understanding in this collaborative process. As Marcel (1971) explains, the participant is “not only before me, he is also with me” (p. 21) in a caring relationship. Smith and Osborn (2008) outline a hermeneutical phenomenology method called interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA). This process was employed and is described below as it applies to the present project.

Sample

A purposive sample of religious adult daughters was sought to allow selection of participants who are experts on their experience and could provide thick descriptions about the phenomenon (Patton, 2002) of religiosity in the adult daughter-mother relationship. Recruitment was limited to women aged 18-45 in an effort to interview daughters whose mothers would be less likely to have age-related decline requiring extensive caretaking. Such decline has received considerable study in the field of gerontology as fundamentally changing the features of the adult daughter-mother relationship (Bojczyk et al., 2011). Religious traditions that have been specifically studied in terms of religiosity in the adult daughter-mother relationship include: Jewish, Catholic, and the African-American Church. The present study samples mainline Protestant adult daughters to add a religious tradition to the body of research and to compose a religiously homogenous sample of participants for study. An attendance cut off of at least six times per month in the life of the religious community set a threshold for ecosystem involvement in the church community.

Following Glaser and Strauss (1967), the sample size coincided with the point at which saturation is reached. Strauss and Corbin (1998) advise cutting off collection

when new data does not provide new material. Given the in-depth nature of phenomenological research, relatively small sample sizes are recommended (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006). This sample includes 12 adult daughters who are active mainline Protestants, aged 20-45.

Recruited mainline pastors contacted parishioners who fit the guidelines for participation. Ten pastors were contacted from three mainline traditions: United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church, and Presbyterian Church (USA). Participants were successfully recruited from the latter two denominations across four congregations. These congregations are in different geographical locations of upstate New York. One church is in an urban area of a large and diverse city with significant infrastructure. One church is in the downtown area of a small city that has economically declined with the loss of multiple manufacturing companies and failed renewal efforts. Two churches are in a small, economically bimodal (affluent and poor) village in a rural county with seasonal tourism. Ten pastors were contacted for recruitment. Six of these pastors were male and four were female. Out of this group, one male pastor and four female pastors agreed to help with the study. The four clergypersons who successfully linked congregants to the study identified all women within the age and attendance guidelines who are adherents in their own congregations. These ministers spoke or emailed with these potential participants. Pastors submitted information about those who were willing to learn more about the project and indicated a desire to participate.

The first three participants were identified by their pastor as having high attendance and scheduled at their church in individual meetings explaining the project following a worship service. The fourth participant was asked by her pastor if she would like to participate, contacted via email upon her pastor's referral, and then met

at her church following a worship service to explain the project and schedule the interview. The fifth and sixth participants were identified by their pastor as Sunday school teachers and scheduled at their church in individual meetings to explain the project following their Sunday school classes. The seventh and eighth participants were telephoned following referral from their pastors and scheduled over the phone.

The pastor of the ninth and tenth participants emailed them to see if they would like to participate in the study. She forwarded their acceptances and direct correspondence ensued over email to schedule interviews. The eleventh participant's pastor discussed the project with her following a service and then referred her via email. She was contacted by telephone for scheduling. The final participant responded to a recruitment email from her pastor but stated she could not participate until several weeks out. She was contacted via email to schedule at a convenient time for her.

One non-participant tentatively agreed to be in the study. Her pastor emailed her and she responded that she would be interested in being a part of the project. Her pastor forwarded this email but two follow up emails had no reply.

Procedures

The Institutional Review Board of Virginia Tech granted approval for this study prior to recruitment. Potential participants were informed regarding the purpose of the study and their opportunity to contribute. Criteria for participation were explained and scheduling ensued. Naturalistic settings were sought for interviews such as the participant's church or home where she would feel able to share freely (Yilmaz, 2013). Ten participants were interviewed at a private meeting place in their church; two participants were interviewed in their homes. Each participant was interviewed in person.

At the outset of scheduled interviews, each participant completed detailed consent forms including ethical guidelines and her ability to withdraw from the study at any time. Every participant received an offer to have the consent read to her. All paperwork was completed and semi-structured interviews with follow up probes were audio and video recorded. Double recording provided backup should an error occur. One participant expressed discomfort with being videoed so the camera was turned to visually record only the interviewer. Interviews ranged in time from one to three-and-one-half hours.

Notes supplemented interview material in the data collection process. Memos were typed throughout the project as organized field notes indicating thoughts, potential codes, details, and summaries of previous notes with increasing elaboration over time, in relation to data collection, and as an audit trail of accountability (Moustakas, 1994). These memos were retained to aid in analysis. Following each interview, time was taken to detail further information such as vignettes or other disclosures not captured digitally, considerations regarding the data obtained, emerging concepts for analysis such as potential themes, and points where clarification would be helpful (Patton, 2002).

Measures

Demographic information. A brief survey was employed to gather demographic data. Religious identification, frequency of church attendance, last high holy day and religious rite observance, identified house of worship, and an indication of years lived with mother is included on the demographic survey (see Appendix D; also Johnson & Turner, 2003). Identification of a specific house of worship is included as increasingly persons locate their religiosity in relation to a specific place over and above a denominational affiliation (Chaves, 2011).

Rites of passage. Each woman reported the age she experienced religious rites common for mainline Protestants including baptism, confirmation, and marriage. The ages for these rites were gathered primarily for descriptive purposes bolstering the understanding of the religiosity of the sample. The age at which a given rite is received may differ across traditions. For example, in some traditions it is believed a religious caretaker, such as parent(s) or Godparent(s), may offer an affirmation of faith for someone who is preverbal. Conversely, in other traditions one must verbally affirm a rite for oneself, sometimes at a specific developmental stage such as late childhood or the beginning of adolescence.

Salience measure. Each adult daughter completed the Salience in Religious Commitment Scale (Roof & Perkins, 1975; Hill & Hood, 1999). This scale was chosen primarily due to its theological neutrality and face validity in measuring salience, or the importance of religion to the respondent. Though previously correlated at .81 with orthodoxy, using a measure of doctrinal commitment among 518 Episcopalians, this salience scale does not internally confound orthodoxy as a measure of devotion, or use language specific to only certain Christian traditions as commonly found in a review of other measures of religiosity (including more contemporary scales) during the course of selecting a scale for this study. Linguistic neutrality was an important criterion in that selection process because the mainline, and sometimes progressive, Protestants of the present study may not feel comfortable with orthodox or evangelical language – possibly influencing results (see Dein et al., 2012 for a methodological consideration of orthodoxy as confounded with religiosity). Further, this scale is brief, practical to administer and score, and highly applicable to deeply religious persons (Hill & Hood, 1999).

Descriptors for image of God. A listing of names and descriptions for God is included as a hermeneutical device including symbols, metaphors, and depictions (see Appendix D). Respondents were asked to circle words that best matched with their image of God. Participants were told there was no particular number needed in response, rather to circle those that were the best fit for God in their own understanding. This provides a specific and concrete accompaniment to qualitative hermeneutics gathered in the interview. These descriptors were also referenced, as needed, when asking daughters about their and their mothers' understandings of God.

Interview. Each interview began by gathering information from the adult daughter to complete a simplified spiritual genogram (Frame 2000, 2001). Each genogram was drawn in the sight of the participant with on-going questions to collaboratively "draw a picture" of her family including noting denominational affiliations. A semi-structured interview with protocol questions, as found in Appendix C, was followed across each participant. Probes were included to facilitate questioning, with spontaneous follow-ups added to encourage disclosure of details and additional information (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The protocol was designed for deep questioning across a breadth of religious topics within the relationship as well as retrospective questions across childhood and adolescent development. The structured protocol allowed for repetition of questions across participants to give uniformity in the data collection process (Johnson & Turner, 2003). However, probes were flexible, changeable, and amendable in vivo to facilitate a conversation like quality to the interview process (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Mother's contact information. Ten of the participants have living mothers. These 10 were asked to provide their mother's contact information for a potential follow-up study to consider the relationship from the mothers' perspective.

Generational pattern. From the existing literature, three trans-generational patterns are identified to consider the importance of religion for adult daughters in relation to their mothers. The first is an intensification pattern as described in the phenomenon of *teshuva* (Sands et al., 2013). In an intensification pattern, the adult daughter describes religion as more important and is considerably more devout than her mother.

The second generational pattern functions in the reverse direction as a reduction in religious importance wherein the daughter is considerably *less* religious than her mother. Keary (2014) describes the overarching generational pattern of her Catholic sample as the adult daughters being less devout and less connected to the religious community than their mothers.

Finally, there may be little real difference in the importance of religion between adult daughters and their mothers as Banks-Wallace and Parks (2004) found in their study of African-American Christians. In the present study this pattern is termed a vertical transfer as religious importance moves vertically and relatively unchanged down the family system from mother to daughter. Thus, the three patterns are intensification, reduction, and vertical transfer.

Generational patterns were discerned from adult daughter descriptions in the present sample. Vertical transfers were marked by descriptions of relative continuity in the importance of religion from the maternal generation to the adult daughter's self-description. Intensification transfers were characterized by adult daughters' perceptions of mothers as holding religion as less important than their self-reporting adult daughters. That is to say, these adult daughters perceived themselves as markedly more devout than their mothers. Given the recruitment process of seeking a purposive sample of religious adult daughters, reduction patterns were less expected.

Conversion status. An additional variable was added as an unexpected feature of the sample is that some adult daughters converted as adults from the more traditional or fundamentalist sects of their childhoods to become mainline Protestants. These women are labeled here “converts” while those whose mothers are mainline and who themselves have been lifelong mainline Protestants are labeled in this study as “lifelong.”

Self-Reflexivity

Van Stapele (2014) describes self-reflexivity as a research approach to “unpack the way my own subjectivity impinged on my framing of her narratives” (p. 13). This is important in hermeneutic phenomenology because the researcher operates as a co-constructor with participants. This co-construction must work to present participants’ truths in way that illuminates rather than obscures information. Extensive field notes for the present study include self-reflexive memos recording subjective thoughts as a tool to bring to awareness encroaching biases, developing interests, and countertransferences. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) recommend inclusion of a brief autobiography to elucidate for the reader assumptions operating in the project for the researcher:

The present study overlaps my own life experience, as I would be a potential participant were I not the investigator of this project. I am a mainline Protestant within the age range who is devout in my practice. As a family therapist, religiosity as it intersects with family systems is my area of interest. I am interested in both the practice of faith and research on all religious traditions. I am also interested in research on women, particularly research that considers the strengths and perseverance of women. Additionally, I am interested in how adults retrospectively view the parenting they received and how that impacts their thinking about having and rearing children. My interests strongly influenced the scope of this project. I began with a desire to research spirituality in family systems and then identified an intergenerational female-female dyad within the family. This ticked multiple boxes in my areas of interest such as: religion in the family, women’s concerns, and parenting.

Data Analysis

A precision verbatim transcript reflected the video or audio from each participant interview. The entirety of each transcript was verified for word-by-word

accuracy. Hesitations in speech, partial words, and expressive sounds were documented as clearly as possible in the transcript to retain participant meaning. Pseudonyms for each participant and her family members were created to keep participant identities confidential. Great care was given to assigning a pseudonym to preserve cultural and/or religious connotations of the participants' and their family members' actual names. Naming traditions in families were preserved such as patronymic given names, matching initials, and in some cases specific meanings. First, a predetermined alphabet shift for the first letter of the name was followed. Then, an appropriate name was sought. If an appropriate name could not be identified beginning with that letter, an additional alphabet shift was added and this process repeated until an appropriate pseudonym was found. All pseudonyms are sufficiently distinct from actual names to completely obscure identities. Participants were assigned confidential pseudonyms known only to the author early in the study and this pseudonym was used throughout the project. Identifying information and recordings were kept confidential under double lock and ethically transported.

A reflective, interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) process as outlined by Smith and Osborn (2008) was followed. A deep, close, and detailed reading of a transcript was followed by re-reading and reviewing transcripts extensively noting comments and ideas. Then, initial sub-themes were generated as a working list. Each sub-theme was assigned a color and marked in the transcript as it appeared. These sub-themes were flexibly linked together into potential themes. This process was repeated with each transcript until the sub-theme list became stable. Following this stability, saturation was reached once new sub-themes were no longer being added or meaningfully developed from newly collected data.

All material in each transcript falling under a given sub-theme was highlighted with one of 13 assigned colors. A frequency count of lines highlighted for each sub-theme was constructed from all of the transcripts. There was significant overlap of sub-themes in participant dialogue and additional sub-themes were assigned by underlining. The frequency count was done line-by-line with each color appearing in a line counted as one occurrence. Each line was counted for text with sub-themes that wrapped lines. The frequency of lines was tallied and totaled for each sub-theme appearing in each transcript. These totals are included in Table 1.

Sub-themes were set into themes, sub-theme names finalized, and meanings summarized. This summary was provided to participants for member checks including a request for additional information or feedback (Kornbluh, 2015; Morse, 2015). After successful member checks, quotations were chosen that highlighted particular themes. Excerpting quotations for explication of themes, in light of the successful member checks, further developed descriptions. Information gathered during member checks was then used to further develop descriptions (Cho & Trent, 2014; Kornbluh, 2015).

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is vital in conducting qualitative research as the final judgment of the project's value rests with the reader (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olsen, & Spiers, 2002). Rapport building with participants was important using family therapy joining and interviewing skills. Every effort was made to investigate and present participants' varied realities while also finding common themes. Extensive memoranda during data collection and analysis recorded research processes as well as the researcher's thoughts, assumptions, and countertransferences. These are summarized and presented in the discussion section's segment on researcher

self-reflexivity. Procedurally, the systematic step-wise progression through the interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) was followed to both approach a systematic consideration and highlight participant voices in the process. The frequency count of the qualitative interviews shows the volume of text given to each sub-theme by each participant and is summarized for review in Table 1. Limitations of the project will be delineated in the discussion.

Member checks were used to verify findings and as a method for enhancing the trustworthiness of the project (Kornbluh, 2015; Morse, 2015). It was important to check that participants supported the findings as well as to request and incorporate their feedback. Following completion of initial data analysis: an email, a call, or an in-person visit to each participant was made. During these communications, participants read a detailed summary of each theme and its compositional subthemes. Participants were asked for feedback regarding the summary.

All participants offered affirmative feedback regarding the overall summary. Some participants gave confirmatory feedback to the subthemes or a specific subtheme(s). Two participants also offered clarifications for their spiritual genogram regarding familial denominations of which they were unsure during the interview. They sought this information from family members following the interview and shared these denominations during member checks. One participant wished for her thoughts to be included regarding the Supreme Court decision on same-sex marriage. Though we had not discussed this topic in her interview, a quote she provided regarding her feelings on the decision was subsequently added to the Christian Ethics subtheme (see Kornbluh, 2015). One participant whose transmission pattern was classified as intensification noted dissimilarities with her own experience and the overall summary, which described vertical transfers more than intensifications. She

stated it made sense to her that other women would feel differently. In an email response, she was assured the participants with intensification patterns would be specially noted in the project. None of the participants objected to the overall summary, the subthemes, or specific points within the summary.

Chapter IV

FINDINGS

Based on the 12 in-depth qualitative interviews, an hermeneutic process of interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) considered the responses of the participants. This analysis generated three overall themes of religiosity in the adult daughter-mother relationship as follows: Family Connections, Religious Consciousness, and Encountering Community. Below, each theme is explained with sub-themes and contextualized quotations from the transcribed interviews of the participants. Each theme and compositional subtheme is listed with the frequency count in Table 1 for reference throughout the project.

Table 1

Themes and Sub-Themes with Frequency Count

Theme	Sub-Themes
Family Connections	Mother as Religious Foundation Importance of Relatives Husband/Significant Other's Influence Her Own Children
Religious Consciousness	Spiritual Struggle Coping God and Jesus Prayer and Scripture
Encountering Community	Church and Religious Ritual Christian Ethics Women's Concerns Friendships Positioned in the Culture

Sub-themes

Daughter	Mother	Church	Family	Women	Children	G-d	Struggle	Partner	Culture	Ethics	Devotion	Coping	Friends
Brenda	177	168	63	44	112	69	65	32	23	12	36	38	11
Vicky	178	149	188	128	87	95	7	85	6	27	22	29	43
Lenore	275	233	114	221	50	78	107	13	34	30	50	12	39
Laurel	138	175	75	35	95	5	34	53	3	7	5	35	13
Mindy	124	216	76	77	45	14	11	8	19	2	3	6	3
Bethany	154	161	67	56	26	25	26	48	39	5	18	15	7
Shiphrah	416	113	217	10	97	101	19	131	85	131	26	0	28
Britany	138	86	159	13	38	2	11	15	15	3	4	24	13
Melissa	203	206	155	86	55	23	54	14	24	38	8	0	14
Clara	291	425	199	189	7	112	163	37	87	54	55	37	26
Karen	80	131	24	40	2	14	0	2	0	0	12	13	7
Lucinda	165	133	64	40	34	24	9	4	27	23	29	7	5
Sum	2339	2196	1401	939	648	562	506	442	362	332	268	216	209

Sample

The 12 participants completed a demographic survey, which is summarized in Table 2 including the number of years the adult daughter spent living with her mother.

Table 2

Demographics

Participant	Age	Children	Years with Mother	Relationship Status	Education
Brenda	32	2	26	Married	Graduate
Vicky	44	2	22	Married	Some college
Lenore	36	6	18	Separated	Bachelors
Laurel	32	3	19.5	Married	Bachelors
Mindy	45	4	17.5	Married	Associates
Bethany	42	2	19	Married	Graduate
Shiphrah	38	3	18	Married	Some college
Britany	42	1	40	Married	High School
Melissa	38	1	18	Single	Graduate
Clara	29	0	23	Single	Bachelors
Karen	20	0	20	Single	Some college
Lucinda	38	2	18	Married	Graduate

Education ranges from high school to doctoral degrees, as presented in Figure 1.

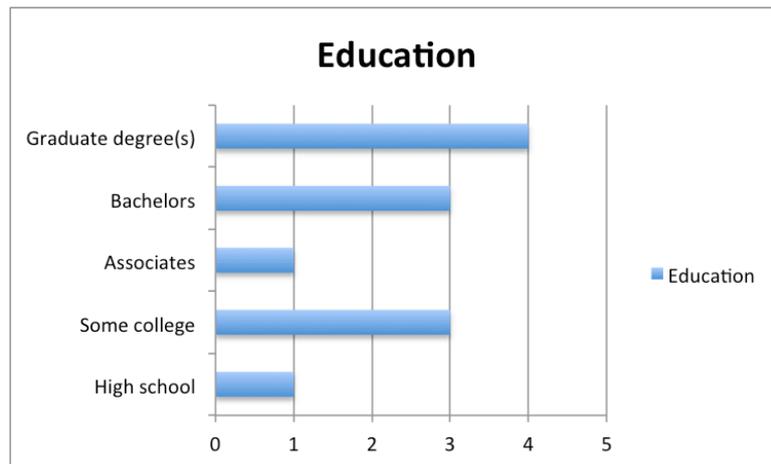


Figure 1. Frequencies of educational attainment.

The modal educational attainment for the sample is a graduate degree ($n = 4$); 42% of the adult daughters hold or are currently pursuing a graduate degree(s). Participants ranged in age from 20-45 with a mean age of 36 ($SD = 7.16$). All of the adult daughters identified racially as white/Caucasian with many specifying a specific European ancestry (i.e. Dutch, Irish, Polish). This type of identification is a frequent practice among New York whites (McDermott, 2015; Smith, Thomas, & DeAmicis, 2013). All the adult daughters lived with their mothers throughout their childhoods with the modal time of leaving home, or launching, at 18 years of age ($M = 21.58$ years lived with mother). Socioeconomically, participants ranged from those dependent upon governmental assistance to meet basic needs to successful professionals. Eight of the adult daughters were married; three were single, never married; and one was legally separated. All of the married (including now separated) women have children. Two of the women were single, never married and have no children. One woman was a single, never married mother of one. The number of children per mother ranged from none to six with a median of 2 and a mean of 2.17 ($SD = 1.70$).

Rites of Passage

Baptismal age. All respondents reporting baptism at or close to birth up to and including six weeks of age were calculated as 0.1 years, which was the modal response. All other months were converted into decimals via ratio for a median of 0.5 years. Two women belonged to traditions during childhood which asked them to make a profession of faith themselves in order to be baptized at the ages of eight and 12. One woman was baptized as an adult at the age of 40. One woman could not recall the age she was baptized.

Confirmation age. Seven women reported being confirmed ranging in age from 12 to 16 years old. One participant was raised in the Orthodox Church in America, an autonomous branch of the Eastern Orthodox Church. She received their confirmation rite of *chrismation*, directly following baptism, and is the only participant confirmed in infancy. Four participants were not confirmed: three were not highly engaged in church life during adolescence and one belonged to a fundamentalist Baptist tradition without the rite of confirmation.

Marriage age. Nine of the women were married in an ecclesiastical service presided over by a pastor. The average age of marriage was 27, and their ages at marriage ranged from 22 to 32. One of these participants was married prior to her current marriage. As well, another one of these participants recently legally separated from her husband. Three women were single, never married.

Church Attendance

A heavily influential factor in recruitment of the purposive sample was church attendance, as this indicates frequency of engagement with the religious community. (Recall, an attendance cut off of at least six times per month in the life of the religious community set a threshold for involvement.) The adult daughters are all high

attenders in upstate New York – in a geographical area identified as one of the least religious locations in the United States (Barna, 2013). Self-reported monthly church attendance ranged from six to 17 ($M = 10.92$, $SD = 4.17$) occasions of attendance in the life of the religious community per month. All participants reported regularly attending weekly Sunday morning worship services.

Religious Salience Scale

In an effort to see if participants' own descriptions of the importance of religion in their lives might be capable of being measured against a known benchmark of religiosity, participants completed the Salience in Religious Commitment Scale (Roof & Perkins, 1975; Hill & Hood, 1999). Appendix D lists scale items and multiple-choice responses. This scale has a prior reliability alpha of .72, which Hill and Hood say is "minimally acceptable for research" (p. 214). The alpha reliability coefficient of the Salience in Religious Commitment Scale in the present study is higher at .80. Pedhazur and Schmelkin (1991) consider an alpha of .75 high for a three-item measure. Thus, the measurement of the construct of salience is presently found to be internally homogeneous for reliable use. The mean score on the scale is 8.42 ($SD = 2.02$; range of 4-11). The median is 8.5. Overall, participants' mean score did not match Roof and Perkins suggested threshold of a score of 10 or higher for inferring significantly high religiosity when correlated with variables for another population. They argue scores may not be linear and only four of 12 participants in the present study met this threshold of scores. This may confirm that participants' experiences with religion cannot be easily quantified. In this sense, it may be seen as validation for the phenomenological approach taken here. As well, the qualitative data provides a context for understanding participants' scores.

Image of God

Figure 2 lists each potential descriptor of God provided to participants. The frequency with which participants circled each term is represented in the bar graph (N=12).

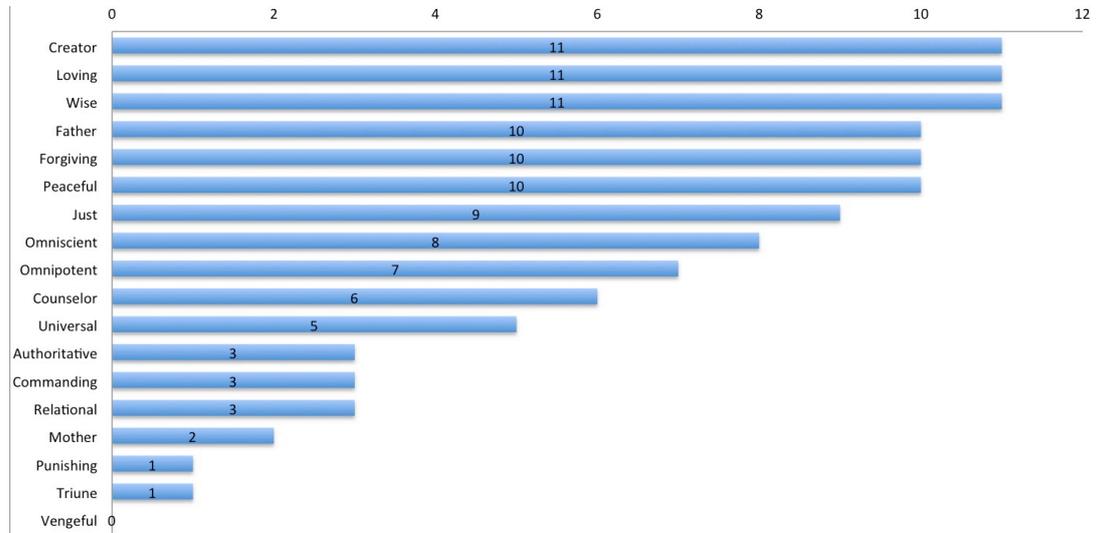


Image of God N = 12

Figure 2. Frequencies of descriptors for images of God.

Conversion Status

Four adult daughters were converts, who left the more traditional or fundamentalist faiths of their mothers to become mainline Protestants. The remaining eight participants are “lifelongs,” which is defined for this study as those adult daughters whose mothers are mainline and who themselves have been lifelong mainline Protestants. Table 3 summarizes the childhood and present denomination of each participant including the adult decision of religious affiliation (please note that confirmations listed here occurred in developmental adolescence not adulthood).

Table 3

Tradition and Adult Decision of Affiliation

Participant	Childhood Tradition	Present Tradition	Adult Decision
Brenda	Catholic	Mainline Methodist	Conversion/Joined
Vicky	Mainline Lutheran	Mainline Presbyterian	Joined
Lenore	Fundamentalist Baptist	Mainline Presbyterian	Conversion
Laurel	Mainline Presbyterian	Mainline Presbyterian	Confirmed
Mindy	Mainline Presbyterian	Mainline Presbyterian	Confirmed
Bethany	Mainline Presbyterian	Mainline Presbyterian	Joined
Shiphrah	Mainline Presbyterian	Mainline Presbyterian	Confirmed
Britany	Mainline Presbyterian	Mainline Presbyterian	Joined
Melissa	Catholic	Mainline Presbyterian	Conversion/Joined
Clara	Orthodox Church in America	Mainline Presbyterian	Conversion/Joined
Karen	Mainline Methodist	Mainline Methodist	Confirmed
Lucinda	Mainline Disciples of Christ	Mainline Presbyterian	Confirmed/Joined

Generational Patterns

Adult daughters described religious transfers from their mothers that were either vertical or intensified in generational pattern. Ten adult daughters described vertical transfers and the remaining two women described intensification patterns.

None described a reduction in intensity from their mother's religious beliefs. The generational pattern was overwhelmingly vertical in transfer. Vertical transfers equal 83% of the sample. Table 4 summarizes the conversion status and generational pattern for each participant. Figure 3 further summarizes quantitatively the conversion status and generational pattern of the sample.

Table 4

Conversion Status and Generational Pattern

Participant	Conversion Status	Generational Pattern
Brenda	Convert	Intensification
Vicky	Lifelong	Intensification
Lenore	Convert	Vertical Transfer
Laurel	Lifelong	Vertical Transfer
Mindy	Lifelong	Vertical Transfer
Bethany	Lifelong	Vertical Transfer
Shiphrah	Lifelong	Vertical Transfer
Britany	Lifelong	Vertical Transfer
Melissa	Convert	Vertical Transfer
Clara	Convert	Vertical Transfer
Karen	Lifelong	Vertical Transfer
Lucinda	Lifelong	Vertical Transfer

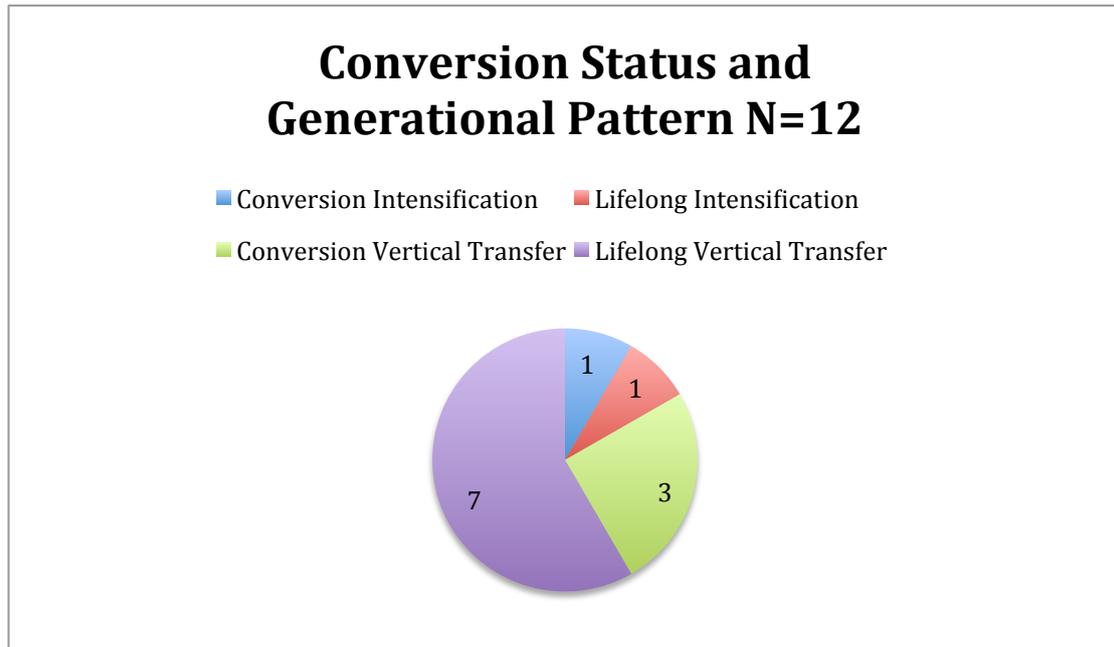


Figure 3. Conversion Status and Generational Pattern

Trends

Trends emerge in the quantitative data set regarding church attendance and salience. While all of the participants met the attendance threshold for the present study and are high attenders, lifelong have the highest church attendance ($M = 12.5$; $SD = 4.17$) when compared to converts ($M = 7.55$; $SD = 1.71$). Although only one-third of participants met previous population threshold score for salience, there are trends in the present data. Those women who are single (including separated) have the lowest scores on the Salience in Religious Commitment Scale ($M = 6.25$; $SD = 1.50$). All the members of the single/separated group ranked lower than each member of the married group for religious salience ($M = 9.5$; $SD = 1.20$). Converts tend to score lower on the Salience Scale ($M = 7$; $SD = 2.45$) than do lifelong ($M = 9.13$; $SD = 1.46$).

Introduction of the Adult Daughters and Their Family Systems

Below are descriptions of each participant and her family system with simplified spiritual genograms. Identifying details that do not change the religious content of the material were altered for anonymity. All the women were born and raised in upstate New York unless otherwise noted. Generational patterns of intensification are noted (all others are vertical transfers). For parsimony, families of procreation for participants' siblings are omitted. Known emotional cut-offs are noted. Participants are indicated in the genogram with a double circle as an identified informer. Information is circumscribed to their knowledge, perception, and disclosure of their family system. Standard genogram symbols appear with less common markings explained.

Brenda. Brenda was a married mother of two daughters who worked at a local college as an academic counselor. Brenda converted from Catholic to mainline Methodist and described a generational intensification pattern. She was raised as a Catholic in a large extended family wherein everyone was Catholic in the previous generation. Many of Brenda's cousins and both of her siblings left the Catholic Church. Brenda described her brother as "spiritual, not practicing." Both Brenda and her sister are mainline Protestants. Brenda's husband, Vaughn, grew up a Methodist. Brenda converted to Methodism while they were dating and they then married in his familial church. Brenda reported she and her husband are raising their girls as mainline Protestants. Brenda reported she attends church regularly with her husband and daughters.

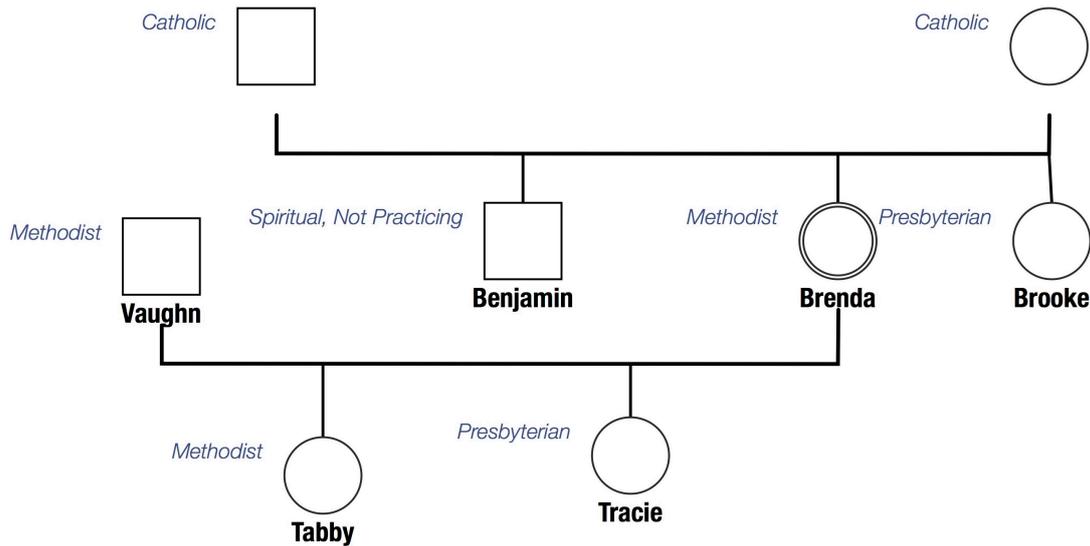


Figure 4. Brenda's family genogram.

Vicky. Vicky reported being married to her second husband, with whom she has two children. She attended design school and reported owning her own alterations and custom sewing shop. Vicky's mother was reported as identifying as Methodist, though non-practicing. Vicky was baptized a mainline Lutheran as an infant and became Presbyterian as an adult. Vicky described a generational intensification pattern. Vicky reported a childhood history of physical and emotional abuse. She reported having one full sibling and multiple stepsibling and half-sibling relationships. Her siblings have a high level of religious diversity. Vicky reported regularly attending church with her children while her husband stayed home. She reported being active in church governance including serving on the finance committee, the elder nominating committee, and the church session (a decisional board). She also reported being the church's children's education coordinator, teaching Sunday school, and starting a new youth group at the time of the interview.

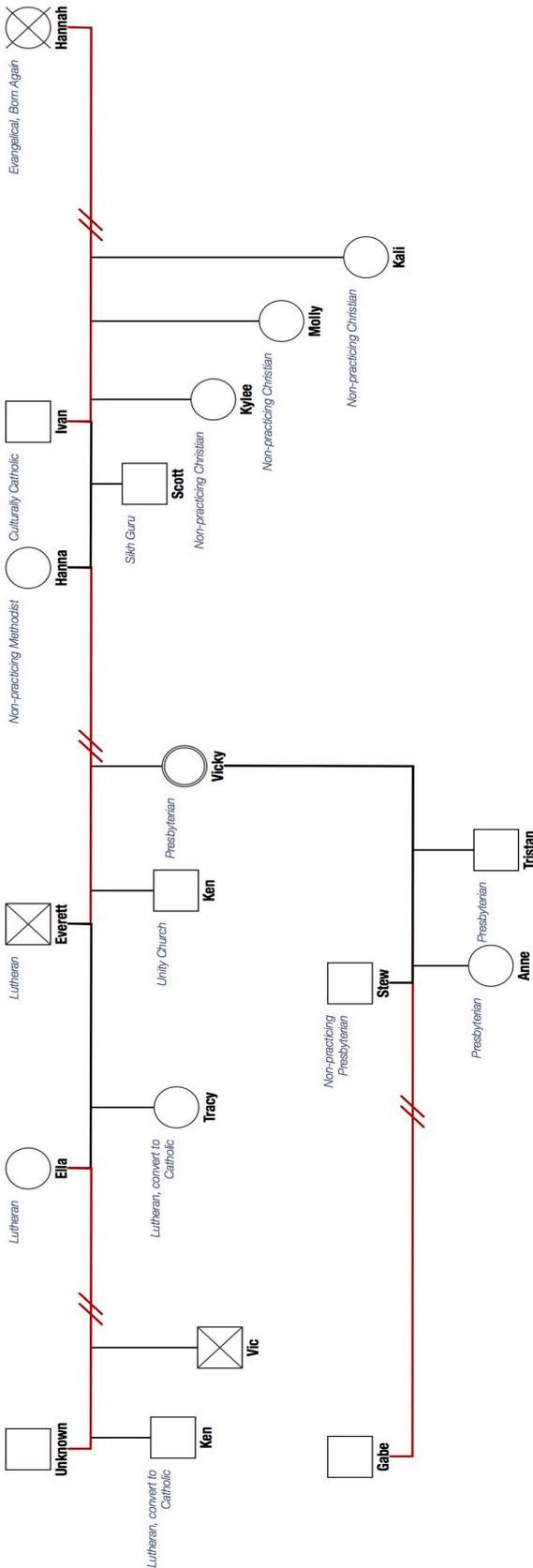


Figure 5. Vicky's family genogram.

Lenore. Lenore very recently separated from her husband, Luke, with whom she had six children. She returned to college as a social work major as her bachelors degree has limited job applicability since it is from an unaccredited fundamentalist Baptist College. Lenore's adoptive parents were devout fundamentalist Baptists in North Carolina, where she was raised. Lenore moved to upstate New York to help Luke's father start a church. However, Lenore began attending a Presbyterian congregation after radically deconstructing fundamentalist teachings. Lenore reported that her brothers are the biological children of her parents. She reported being emotionally cut-off from her eldest brother and did not know his religious information. Her younger brother was also a Presbyterian but Lenore reported he was not mainline as his church was very conservative. Lenore and Luke explored joining the church she is now attending but he disagreed with its teachings. Lenore left Luke, who remains a fundamentalist Baptist. At the time of the interview, she reported she was attending church regularly taking her six children with her except on those Sundays when they were visiting their father. She further described that Luke had just moved to another area and she did not think he had found a church there yet.

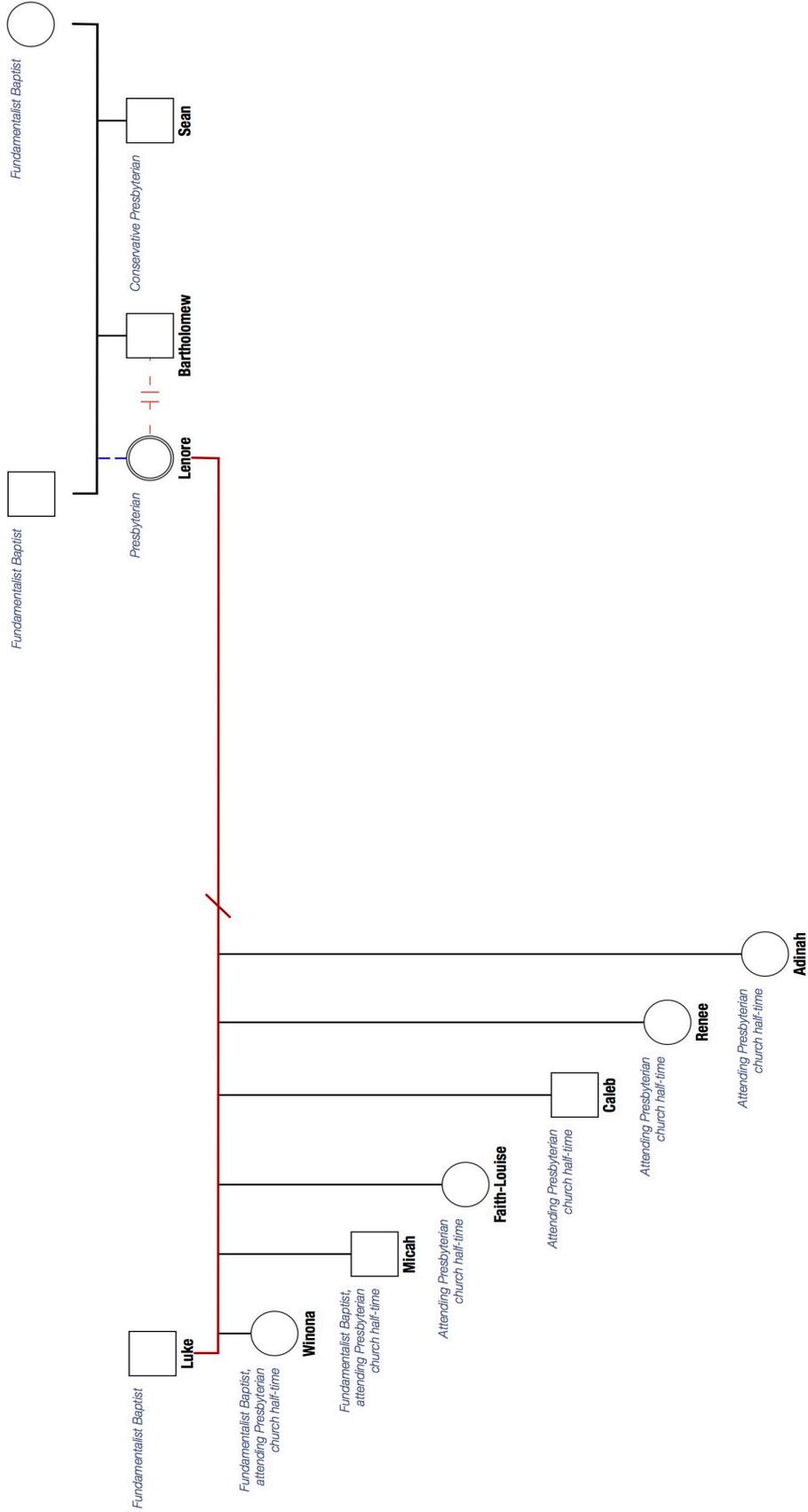


Figure 6. Lenore’s family genogram.

Laurel. Laurel was a shy, stay-at-home mother of two who was pregnant at the time of the interview. Her husband worked long hours as a landscaper and snow removal small business owner. Laurel’s parents were Presbyterians and raised her in their denomination. Laurel reported an emotional cut-off from her brother and stated that he is Presbyterian but she did not know if he was then practicing. She and her Presbyterian husband, Edward, married in the church in which Laurel was raised. Laurel’s parents, Laurel and Edward, and their two children were all attending church together regularly at the time of the interview.

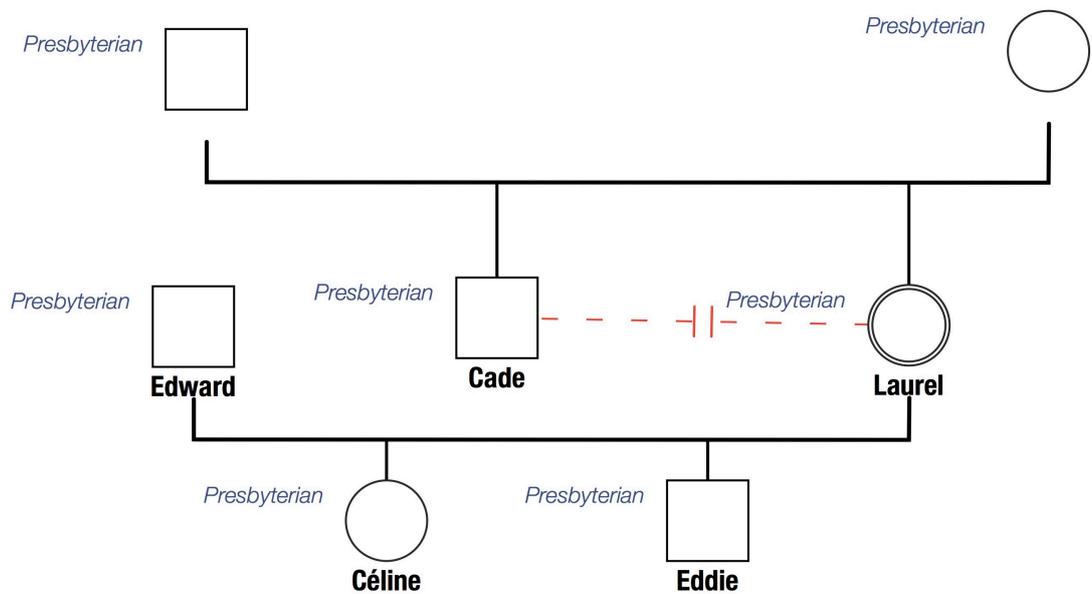


Figure 7. Laurel’s family genogram.

Mindy. Mindy was a married bookkeeper with four children. Mindy attended the same church at the time of the interview that she grew up attending with her Presbyterian parents. Mindy’s father died during Mindy’s childhood and her mother raised her and her brothers by herself. Mindy’s mother is now deceased as well. Both of Mindy’s brothers continued to identify as Presbyterian but were non-practicing. Mindy’s husband was also a non-practicing Presbyterian who stayed home with their two non-practicing Presbyterian sons while Mindy and their daughters attended

church. Mindy reported being a deacon, a ringer in the hand bell choir, and teaching Sunday school.

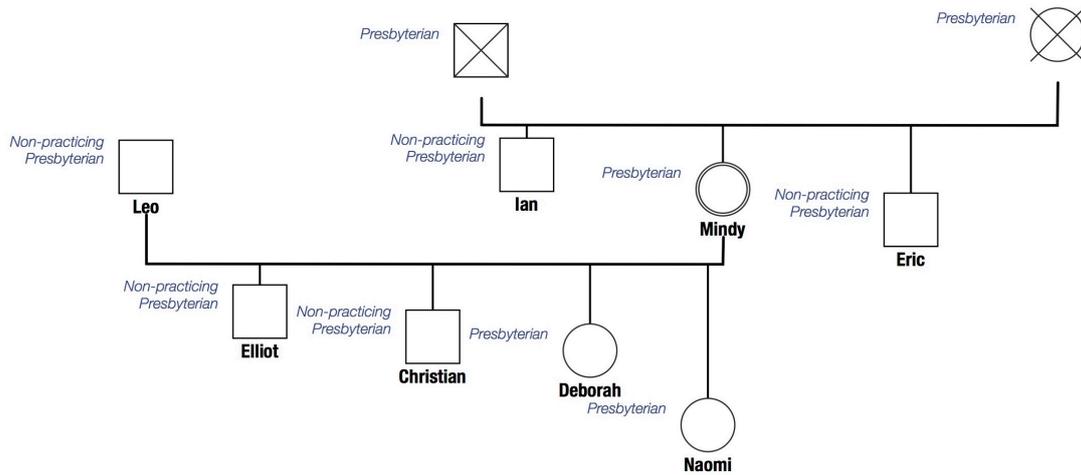


Figure 8. Mindy’s family genogram.

Bethany. Bethany was married with two children and working as a remedial mathematics teacher. She was raised as a Presbyterian by her mother, though the demands of agricultural life meant her family of origin was less involved in church than Bethany believes her mother would have liked. Bethany reported both of her sisters are Presbyterian: one as active and one as non-practicing. Bethany described her brother as “secular” and unaffiliated with a religion. Her other brother died as an infant. Bethany was attending church regularly at the time of the interview with her husband and children. Bethany reported being a Sunday school teacher and serving on the session and the elder nominating committees.

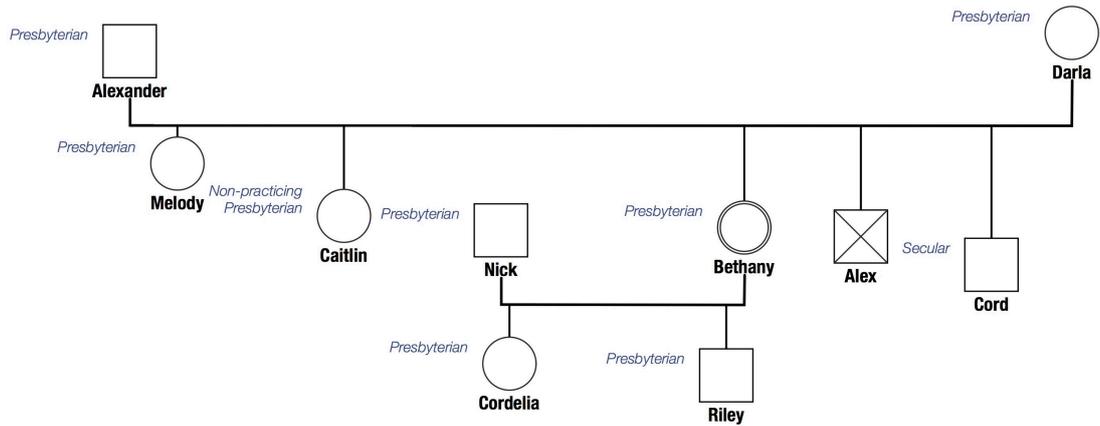


Figure 9. Bethany’s family genogram.

Shiphrah. Shiphrah was a married mother of three. She and her husband owned an excavating company and she was a stay-at-home mother at the time of the interview. Shiphrah was a second-generation immigrant born to Dutch Reformed parents just across the New York state line. Her parents became mainline Presbyterians once in the United States because her mother felt comfortable with the worship style as it was similar to her church in the Netherlands. Shiphrah reported that all five of her siblings are Presbyterian. Her husband was also second-generation Dutch and a Presbyterian. The couple were regularly attending their church with their children at the time of the interview.

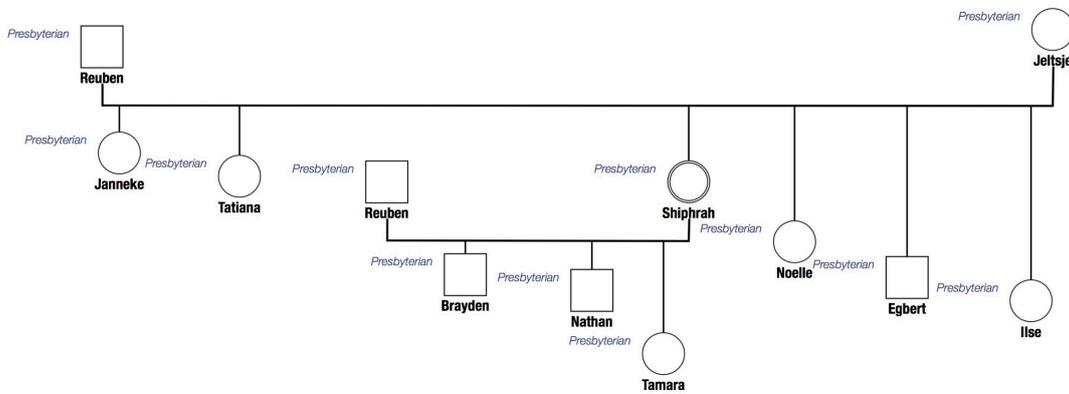


Figure 10. Shiphrah’s family genogram.

Britany. Britany was married to Eli. She was the mother of one adult daughter, Dakota, who returned home part-time with her son, Wolfie. Britany was Wolfie’s primary caretaker and she stayed home with him. Eli was a grocery store stocker. Britany’s deceased Presbyterian mother, Mabel, was a member of the church where Britany and Eli belong. Britany had two living brothers: one converted to Catholicism and one was a Methodist. Britany and Eli returned to their church to have Wolfie baptized shortly after he was born. At the time of the interview, Britany and Eli were attending regularly and taking Wolfie with them. Britany reported that Dakota attended when she was not working or with her boyfriend, Colton, who does not go to church. As the genogram below pictures, Dakota and Dietrich were previously a cohabitating couple but separated. Dakota and Colton are presently cohabitating part-time. Britany reported volunteering in the church kitchen and nursery.

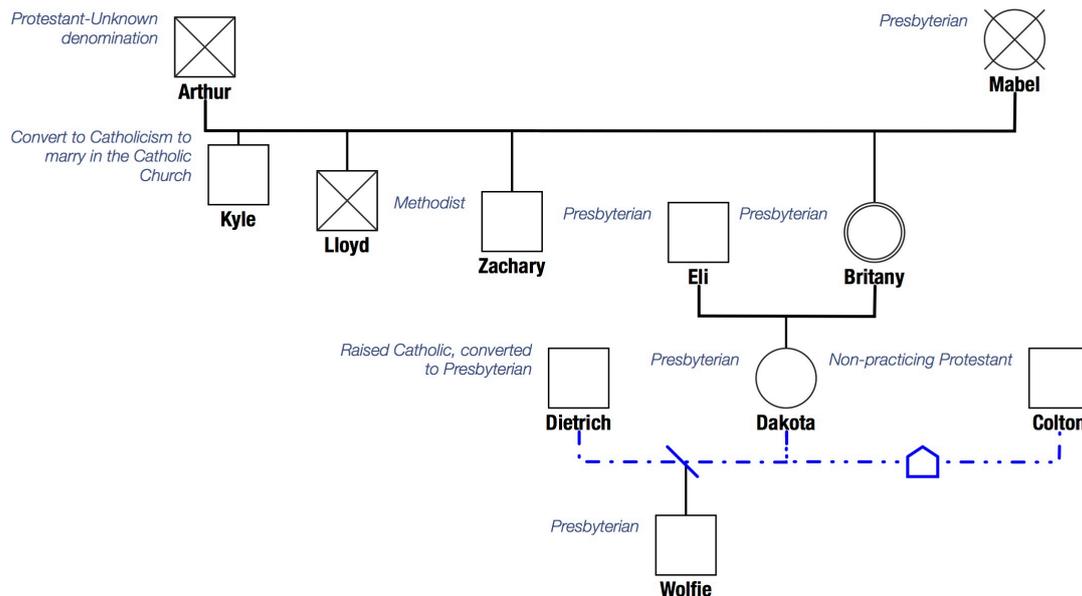


Figure 11. Britany’s family genogram.

Melissa. Melissa was a single, never married mother of baby daughter Ida. She worked as a professor of business administration at a large university. Melissa was raised in an Irish Catholic home and explained growing up with spiritual tension

between her parents' Catholicism and her mother's feminism. She left the Catholic Church. Melissa joined a progressive Presbyterian congregation, as she was attracted to both its liberal political stances and its liturgical worship and ritual observances. She felt she resolved the tension between her faith and feminist commitments. Melissa reported both of her younger brothers as Catholic. Melissa described one as observant and the other as an "atheist, practicing Catholic." She had Ida baptized Presbyterian and they attended together regularly at the time of the interview.

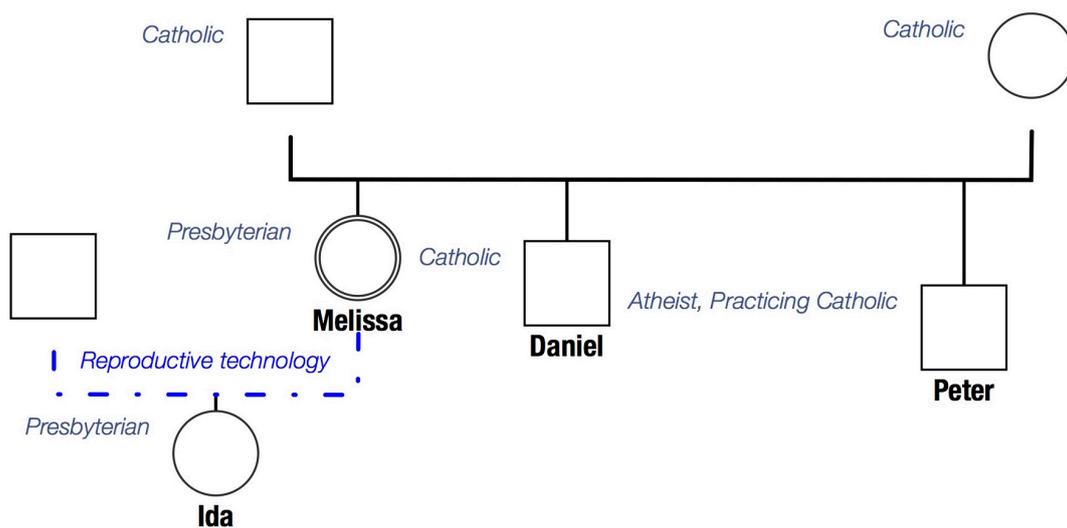


Figure 12. Melissa's family genogram.

Clara. Clara was a single, never married woman who did not have children. She reported being a graduate student in media science. Her parents were devout members of the Orthodox Church in America in which her father is a priest. Clara began exploring mainline Protestantism through an ecumenical campus ministry led by a United Church of Christ pastor. Clara recalled her participation in this group shifting her beliefs as she encountered theology that prioritized the message "God is love." She reported feeling her Eastern Orthodox upbringing was becoming hollow as rituals and beliefs she once held sacred began to feel increasingly empty, judgmental, and damaging to her. All of her siblings remained in the Orthodox faith and her

brothers were clergymen. Clara attended her progressive Presbyterian congregation regularly at the time of the interview.

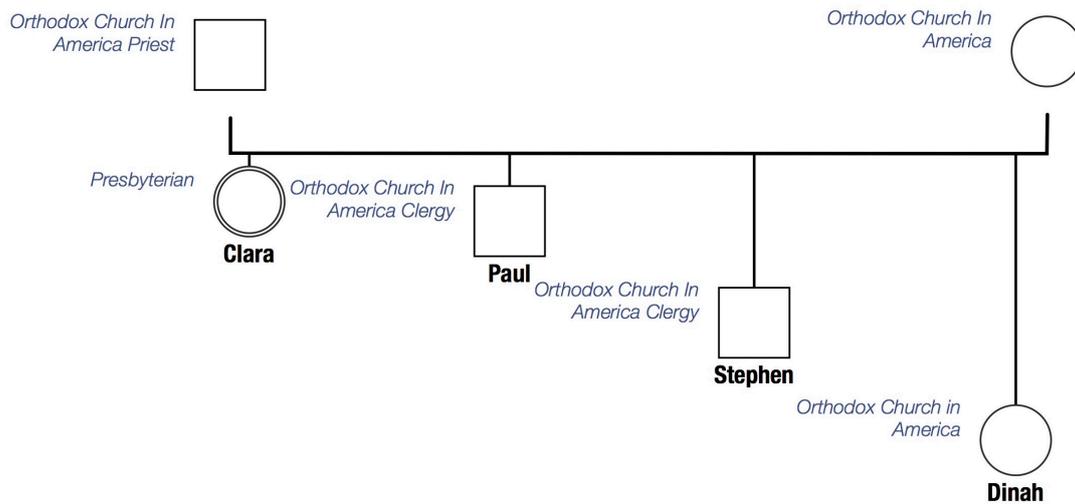


Figure 13. Clara's family genogram.

Karen. Karen was a single, never married woman who did not have children. She reported being a part-time college student living with her mother, Krista. They relied on each other for mutual support in dealing with Loey's-Dietz, a rare genetic and sometimes fatal genetic disease of the connective tissue, from which they both have suffered. Karen was raised Methodist and had been attending the same church all her life. Karen reported her brother was a non-practicing Methodist. Karen taught the children's Sunday school class she used to attend, and that her mother used to teach. Together, Karen and Krista were singing in the choir, going to Bible study, and volunteering in the church kitchen at the time of the interview. Karen's father was traveling on business and infrequently home but attending church with them when in town.

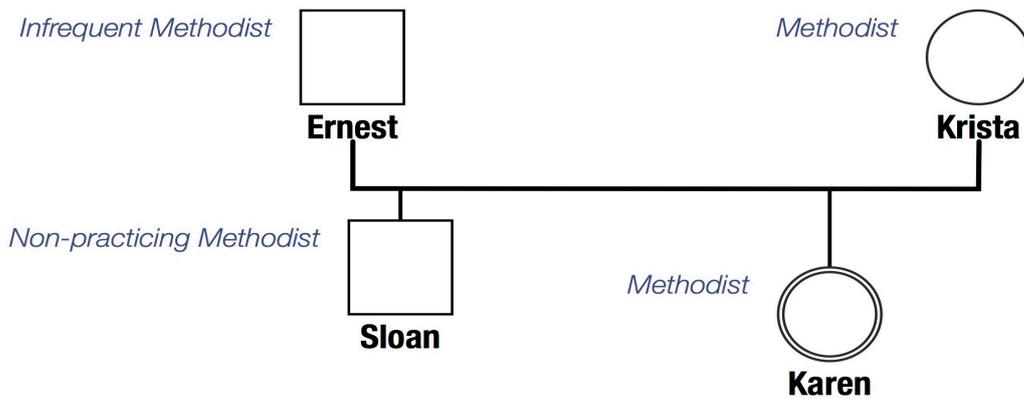


Figure 14. Karen's family genogram.

Lucinda. Lucinda was a married mother of two boys. She was working as a professor of environmental law, specializing in sustainable egg production at a large university. Lucinda grew up in Indiana attending a Disciples of Christ congregation she described as open, vibrant, and on the politically left “edge” of her small city’s culture. She moved to upstate New York for her tenure track position and looked for a similar church—finding a progressive Presbyterian congregation. She reported having a brother who left the mainline for a fundamentalist Assembly of God congregation. Lucinda’s husband was Methodist. He attended special services, such as Christmas and Easter, with Lucinda and their sons at their church. Lucinda attended regularly with their boys at the time of the interview.

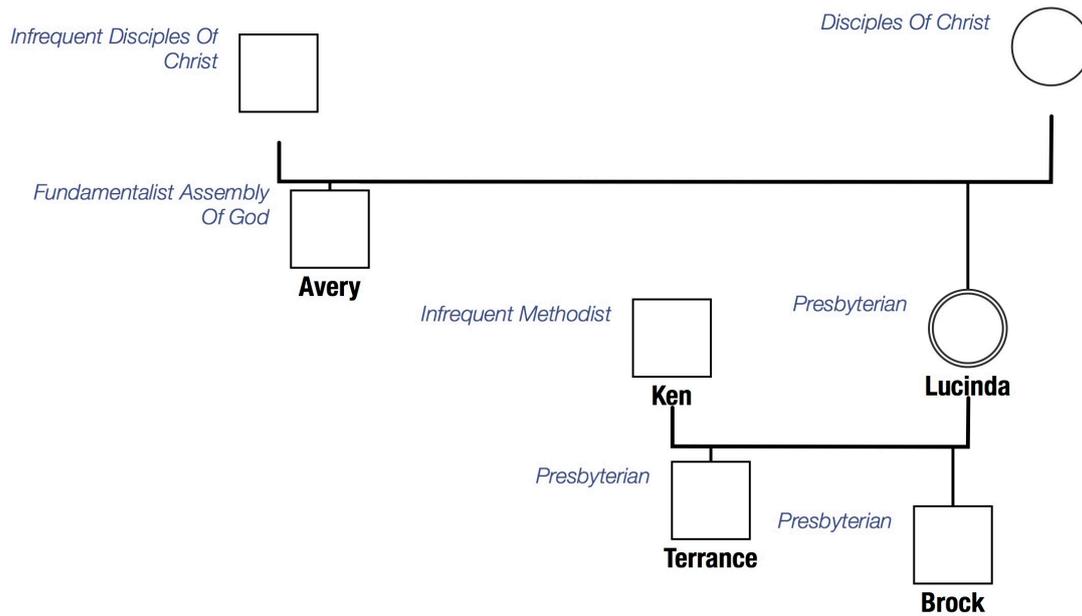


Figure 15. Lucinda's family genogram.

Generating Themes

Using the interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) process, three themes from 13 sub-themes emerged. The three themes are Family Connections, Religious Consciousness, and Encountering Community. Below, the descriptions of each theme and its compositional sub-themes are accompanied by contextualized quotations from participants that illustrate their reported experiences. Subthemes are not mutually exclusive and many constructs intersect in the participants quotations.

Family Connections

The Family Connections theme begins with religiosity in the mother-daughter relationship and considers that bond as nested in the family. Mothers are the religious foundation for daughters and the primary influence in daughters' religiosity through their development. Universally, other family members impact religiosity in the mother-daughter relationship. Adult daughters are influenced in their religiosity and their maternal bond by significant others who entered their lives in romantic relationships. For adult daughters who had a child or children, these children became

important as the next generation in the transmission of religiosity and thereby influenced religiosity within the adult daughter-mother dyad.

Mother as religious foundation. Mother as Religious Foundation is the first sub-theme in Family Connections. Adult daughters describe this influence beginning powerfully in early childhood and extending through their upbringing and adulthood.

Memories of religiosity in the mother-daughter relationship begin early and include affection, songs, play, and stories. Lenore recalled,

Preschool age, there's a lot of 'God is love' and so that was really, really poured into me, um, as a very, very, very young child. And that was an incredibly positive thing... I have memories of being in a rocking chair with her and her rocking me and telling the story about how much Jesus loves me. So those are incredibly wonderful things.

These memories included religious education being incorporated into play between mother and daughter. Lucinda explained,

I remember singing 'Jesus Loves Me' and, um, other simple songs. Fingers placed, you know, 'here's the church, here's the steeple' that kinda thing. Um, and I remember singing songs with her from, um, Sunday school. I think we had a crèche, a nativity scene, we played with and reading simple Bible stories.

Even for both adult daughters who described an intensification pattern, religiosity in their mother-daughter relationships began early with infant baptisms and the relationship was influential in their faith journeys. Vicky stated,

My mother brought us up Lutheran and I was baptized Lutheran... I'd have to say she's the one who introduced me to church in the first place to be, you know, to bring me to the church and open my eyes to it, you know? Um, I don't know as if, she just led, you know, led me to water and I just drank.

Similarly, Karen, who described a vertical transfer pattern, portrays her mother's religious influence as foundational and guiding saying,

She introduced me to the church as a child and brought my faith to go willingly to church every Sunday and do it all, be involved in that... By introducing me to a good church and to people that she knows at the church and just getting to know everybody.

As daughters grew, mothers supported youth activities and continued engagement with the religious community. Lucinda explained, "[My mom] supported involvement in church youth groups and on mission trips and all those sorts of things... we still

prayed before dinner and went to church and all those things.” Most adult daughters remembered this time as one in which mothers were encouraging and supportive of religious engagement as part of the normative life of their family. Mindy described a typical portrait of how the mothers of lifelong daughters transferred their faith by providing a model and guide:

She kind of led by example, you know? I thought about that. Like, how did she? She really just encouraged us to come and she *always* came. She was involved with the church – past elder and deacon, as was my dad. She rang in the handbell choir, um, so it just seemed, it was just the natural thing to do. She never told me I had to come once I became an adult but I just, you know, did... I’d say it’s, it is pretty, it felt really good to come to church with my mom. My grandmother used to come as well... Um, cuz [Mom] never was one, Lesley, to say... She just totally let me figure out my life. I guess if I, I never asked her what she thought so maybe if I asked her what she thought she would have told me. Um, but I guess she didn’t have to tell me how she, if she was religious or not. Because I knew that she was. Just by her actions and how she lived her life and the things she did for other people.

Lifelongers endorsed the importance of following their mothers’ religious modeling including sharing a religious tradition. Some lifelongers reacted to the idea of being a different religion or changing religions from their mothers’ tradition as being completely foreign from their consideration. Karen freshly imagined the difficulties it might pose to be a different religion from the mother who taught her faith:

I think it would be hard. Because not all religions are the same. Like a lot of them believe in different things and if my church believed in one thing and her church believed in the other it’d be hard to talk about the church and I think it would just be hard to get through [life] knowing that she may not believe in something I believe in.

Conversely, those adult daughters who converted from other traditions to the mainline considered this change as addressing tensions between their mothers’ faiths and their mothers’ status as women within those sects. Melissa described this tension between her parents’ faith tradition and the beliefs of her mother. She said,

I think one of the things that [Mom and I] would both agree about is just, my mom is just the stark feminist and was a real, like a hellfire, when she was my age and younger. And I think that, um, I, especially in the Catholic faith, the unfair, uh, the, the lack of women, and I think, probably disturbs her and fair treatment of women. And so I think that’s absolutely something that we both agreed upon that the Catholic faith is not kind to women. Um, it takes away a lot of their power and their choice and their ability to like, lack of birth control, and things like that. That really anti-women stances really bother her and they bother me and were a chief reason why I left. But never really, I don’t think ever really inspired her to leave.

Melissa viewed her feminist convictions as coming from her mother and that these were untenable for her within the Catholic faith. All of the adult daughters who converted felt their mothers were unhappy, sometimes deeply so, with their decision to change traditions. However, all these daughters framed their conversions as partly responsive to their mothers raising them with faith and their view of their mothers as subjugated by those traditions. Some adult daughters who converted described their mothers as trapped and felt strong compassion for their predicaments even in the face of their mothers' profound disapproval of their conversions.

With tears in her eyes, Lenore lamented her parents' fundamentalist church saying, "They hurt women. They hurt her." However, Lenore also has strong positive memories within the mother-daughter bond. Though Lenore fears emotional cut-off in her maternal relationship because of her mother's disapproval of her conversion, much of what Lenore finds important in her religious faith begins in her mother-daughter relationship. Lenore continues to serve her church musically and identifies her continued love of spiritual music as emerging out of her mother-daughter bond. She remembered how her mother influenced her faith in the confines of their wider church system,

[My mom] was so involved with the music in the church. She got me involved with that at a very young age and so I remember rehearsing for services with her. I remember her talking about how music is a really important part of worship... She was very adamant that music be done well and it point people to God and that's something that I've taken with me and I think that was, those were some of the best memories I have. Our, even just preparing for special services like mother-daughter activities or, um, missions conferences, we'd come up with little skits or things and again, our denomination it's not done, like anything modern is, tends, tends to be frowned upon. So the fact that she's adding an element of fun or even musical theater. Something that other people can relate to... something that was enjoyable and it showed me that God isn't a dry dusty sermon or a man standing up front yelling at me about how I'm a sinner, um, it's so much more than that and she did that through music. So, that's really special.

Two lifelong adult daughters had mothers who are deceased. Both women expressed tremendous grief at the loss of their mothers and report dual religious supports of the church and their faith. Mindy and her mother attended the same church and she explained, “When my mom got sick and then she passed away, they just, you know, these people are like your family when you’re in church.” Britany felt that her mother has a spiritual connection with her grandson, Wolfie. She said, “He’ll come over and hug me and kiss me, and okay, she’s sending some love.”

Importance of relatives. Importance of Relatives is the second sub-theme in Family Connections as mother-daughter relationships are surrounded and impacted by family members. Members of the adult daughters’ families of origin were, without exception, important influences on religiosity in mother-daughter relationships, namely fathers and siblings. Grandparents were the most important extended family relatives and their religiosity and presence impacted subsequent generations considerably. For both adult daughters describing an intensification pattern, other extended family members were religiously meaningful.

Fathers. Fathers ranged widely in their religious impact on adult daughters. Lifelong adult daughters viewed fathers as one of two types: either joined with mothers in a united parental religious presence or as markedly less religious. Adult daughters who describe the former, a united religious presence, in their parents’ religious rearing describe mothers as joined with fathers in their efforts to transmit religiosity within the family. These fathers are the most influential in terms of religious transfer and are often described by their adult daughters jointly with mothers. Shiphrah explained growing up in a family with a father who is part of a devout united parental religious presence with the mother. She said,

When you saw kids in Sunday school they were here and there, here and there. We were there *every* week. And I would, I would think sometimes, ‘Why don’t they come every week? I mean, come on! You’re supposed to be here every week!’ That’s just the way,

that's the way [my father and mother] were raised and that's just how they [raised us, too].

Her father was instrumental including leading family devotions. He took his children to the familial Presbyterian congregation as well as children's ministries at other area churches. Shiphrah does the same with her own children. She stated that she raises her children in the same way her father raised her,

I want [my kids] to see bigger pictures. Like, I send my kids to Taghkanic Bible [Camp], they go to the Bible conference at the camp. And they go to the Baptist Church for Awana [curriculum], for Bible [study]. So, we're Presbyterian, but you know, I've wanted more, little more for my kids because [growing up, my siblings and I] always, we always went to our church and they had Sunday school but then there was another church that offered Vacation Bible School and then, like a Bible club once a week. So, we would go to other churches because my father wanted us, wanted us to have that learning and have that foundation and see what other churches are like, too.

Laurel describes her father as devout with her mother during her upbringing and also having a united religious presence. Her parents typically attended worship with her, her husband, and her children. She described a typical Sunday when her parents drove to their town to go to church:

[My father and mother] like to come to church with us here... We meet [at the church], and then it's always, you know, church [service]. And then some type, some type of meal be it making something at home or going out to dinner. And then we spend time together, and they usually, if they come up, they usually end up staying 'til like three or four o'clock, something like that. But it just always ends up being a lot of time together.

Laurel valued this time of three generations joining together on Sundays. Lucinda also described being raised in the church with a father who was part of a united parental presence:

[My father and mother] both definitely, I mean we attended church as a family. So they, um, they were a big part of the church in terms of contributing to committees and doing things within the church... They'd devote money and time... to the church directly but also to organizations that were carrying out church teachings.

While Lucinda grew up with this sense, her father became an infrequent church attender over time while her mother remains highly involved.

Some lifelong adult daughters describe fathers who have always been less involved or have actively distanced themselves from church life. These adult daughters present a contrast between their parents with an identification aligning with

their mothers. Karen's father attended church when he was in town but traveled extensively on business. Karen's father still joins her and her mother to attend when he is in town. Bethany shares that Sunday church attendance "was just me and my mom" though her father attended for special occasions. Britany's father did not attend; she shares in the following:

- Lesley: How important do you think it is, um, that you and your mother share a religion?
 Britany: I think it's good.
 Lesley: Mmm, hmm.
 Britany: Because we always talked about church and everything. And my father, he really didn't want to go nowheres. He, he didn't want to go to church. There was the time when [Eli and I] got married and he was like, 'Gotta get dressed. Gotta go to church.' And I was like, 'Yesssss!'
 Lesley: Okay. So there's a difference there?
 Britany: Mmm, hmm.
 Lesley: Between your mom and your dad?
 Britany: Mmm, hmm. Yeah. My mom was my best friend.

Conversely, all the converts described fathers as the more religious of their parents. "I remember," said Brenda, "every single night we'd be in one of our bedrooms and we'd kneel down and we'd say prayers, um, before bed, but it was always my dad." These fathers were the religious authority in their homes and worked in church power structures that privileged men's leadership. "So, I felt like it was more my father's faith than my mother's faith," explained Melissa. However, in vertical transfers those daughters who converted described their own faith journeys as more influenced by their mothers: identifying with her struggles in patriarchal church systems, valuing her modeling as a woman of faith, and internalizing her direct teachings. While Clara grew up viewing her father as the religious authority she was affectively closer to her mother and identified with her. Clara described these differing roles of mother and father,

It more sticks out with my dad. Because my dad was already much more in a [clergy] role in the church. Um, but you know, you know, my mom, my mom was *my mom*. ... I probably saw my mom, more of, more of like the nurturer. And my dad was more of the enforcing the rules, again, very much that authoritative figure... He sort of had the main say in how we acted out things and what we did and my mom would sort of basically,

follow along with that... My mom and I were sort of close during high school, you know, we certainly talked a lot, um, I would go to her with, you know, questions about everything and, and, whatnot. And I mean, if you're talking like in terms of like, religious authority, you know, it was always, always, you know, defer to my dad... This isn't to say that my mom hasn't been influential in my religious life but just by the nature of their personalities, the culture they grew up in, the church I grew up in, um, it's, it's my dad who has been the more prominent figure and still is.

Two adult daughters experienced the death of their fathers during their childhoods. Mindy remembered her parents' united parental presence before her father died and her mother raising her and her siblings alone after his death,

We came to church every Sunday and my mom would, with Daddy then, because my dad didn't die until I was just about 12. They were involved with the life of the church, attending meetings, um, doing things for other people, um, and I'd say [religion] played a big role because every week we, you know, were coming [to church] and they continued to help people throughout.

Mindy described the time when her father died. She said, that it "seemed like the bottom fell out" of her family but that her mother was strong and devout taking on a central role, almost as if she were both mother and father to Mindy and her brothers.

Siblings. None of the participants are only children. Many experiences adult daughters shared about growing up with their mothers and their faith influences shifted to the *we* pronoun to include siblings. Contemporary sibling relationships can be highly ambivalent and in two cases were emotionally cut-off. Both cut-offs were with brothers and discord with brothers is higher. Among lifelongs, frustrations about brothers included their being less religious or leaving the mainline. Karen notes with sadness and irritation that her brother stopped going to church when he moved to Nevada, she explained how he left the tradition of their church and family,

He's just stubborn. He doesn't like doing anything that he doesn't want to do. So, it's probably because he felt he was, we all went to church as a family and so he probably felt that he *had* to and just wanted to be stubborn and not want to.

Lucinda's brother joined a fundamentalist church and she described the difficulties this posed, as was particularly pronounced at his wedding. She identified this as her most difficult religious experience she shared with her mother. Lucinda was upset

with her brother both in terms of a sense of injustice in his new beliefs and how she felt this has impacted her mother in his going against her religious teachings. She said,

I'm uncomfortable and I think [my mom's] uncomfortable with some of the religious teachings [in my brother's new church]... I'm thinking about his wedding. So I knew when the minister was talking about passages that they were going to read and I knew that it was pretty conservative in its interpretations and so when [the pastor] said they were going to read. Going to the house after the rehearsal with my parents. And my dad was being asked to read scripture and it was kind of ironic since he's not as present [in church life anymore] but it was a conservative congregation with male pronouns of speech. [I told my father,] 'I bet they are going to have to you read *Adam's rib* and *wives submit to your husbands*.' And I was totally right. Um, and so I was, pretty upset about the whole thing but I was standing at the front of the church so I had to sort of put on a face. But I know my mom was probably uncomfortable as well, but she is not at all one to ruffle feathers.

Positive interactions with brothers among lifelong churchgoers included going to church as a family growing up, as Mindy laughingly recalled, "My brothers would be out in the car, 'Come on, Mindy!' Because I'd be doing my hair!"

Brenda described how her siblings left the Catholic Church together and explained to their mother their exit. She said,

My sister and my brother and I started being, like, okay, like, we don't want to be in the church choir anymore. Like, the Catholic religion really isn't for us. Um, my sister is very, like, she'll come out and just say whatever.

Brenda is close to her sister who is now also mainline Protestant. She described her as maternal and identifies her as a religious model:

My sister's a really good role model for my daughter. And I get a lot of good advice from her, motherly advice, um, when I don't have an answer a lot of the time, um, in terms of religion... You know, [her Presbyterian congregation] just helped her so much, you know going to church and um, and I think we know we can talk to each other about things. And we can be open talking about religion and so it's, it's nice, um, and we both bring our kids up similarly. So, she has two kids as well, um, and so we feel comfortable, like I feel comfortable with her talking to my daughters about, I would feel comfortable with her talking to my daughters about anything, you know, pertaining to religion or spirituality.

Among converts, most siblings remained in their parents' church. In Melissa's family, these relationships have a subversive quality wherein she feels she knows her siblings true feelings and thus aligns with them in this knowledge. Melissa's brothers remained Catholic but Melissa described them as less devout than her parents. She

described her brother, Peter, as privately atheist but overtly a practicing Catholic.

Melissa described adopting a mediating role between her mother and her brothers,

The number of times, like, when [my mom has] panicked, ‘Aww, you didn’t have, they didn’t have communion at their Mass!’ or, like, when my brothers got married, ‘There wasn’t communion!’ Like, to talk to her, it was kind of my job, ‘You know, *well*, that doesn’t have to happen everywhere and that’s an unrealistic expectation and you’re lucky they are getting married in a church!’

Melissa’s described her view of her brothers’ feelings about her conversion as contrasting her mother’s lack of acceptance,

Daniel, who’s the practicing, I mean, somewhat practicing Catholic, he has three really small kids, so not super practicing, um, said ‘Yeah, that’s probably more where we are.’ I mean, I think, think philosophically they are more along the lines of Protestant or Presbyterian than they are Catholic, um, and then at [my daughter’s] baptism, my other brother, [Peter], and sister-in-law, they said, they both said, ‘we totally understand why you come here [to this Presbyterian congregation].’

Converts whose siblings remain aligned with the parental religious tradition are less close and adult daughters feel their siblings want them to return to the familial faith.

Grandparents. Maternal religiosity is directly tied to grandparents who were instrumental in adult daughters’ religious upbringing. Brenda laughingly recalled, “If we weren’t there at church my grandmother would be driving her car picking us up!”

Among converts, grandparents’ efforts to religiously inculcate their grandchildren were not always appreciated. For example, Brenda said,

My grandmother, she would probably be the biggest influence. Um, and it was more like, um, you know, we’d go to church and I remember being at her house, all our cousins. She would play the piano. We all, like, had to practice our church songs and we hated every minute of it.

Among lifelong, grandparents were remembered more as companions for church services and associated with holiday celebrations, as Mindy remembers,

I’d even pick up my grandmother, before I had kids and got married. I felt really, like, hot, to do, because I’d pick up my grandmother to go to church, because she didn’t drive... We said grace before we ate when we would go over [to her house] for holidays and other meals. She was, well, and they came to [our] church every Sunday also. She had strong faith. She raised her, she had four daughters, my mother being one. Um, they all, um, well, I think they all feel that faith is an important part of their life [and] have the love of God.

Mothers tend to be conduits of familial religious information about grandparents and past religious traditions, including paternal sides of families. Lucinda remembers her grandmother and describes her influence on her mother's and her own religiosity, saying,

She was Methodist, uh, and much of, I mean, she was very much involved in the congregation... Obviously, influencing my mom and my aunt's religious life. Some of the [hymns] that my mom sings are the same songs that my grandmother sung!... She had passed by the time, around the time I was 10 or 11 or so. I'm not as familiar with her church life except knowing it through my mom.

Grandparent deaths were the most commonly cited difficult religious experience shared with their mothers. The following exchange with Laurel is typical,

- Lesley: What has been the most difficult religious experience that you've shared with your mom?
- Laurel: My grandma's funeral... Every time [my congregation sings] 'Amazing Grace,' I actually have to, like, hold back tears. Because, and there's a lot of ti — there's three different songs here that we sing here that we sang at her funeral... She lived a long life it, you know, was just hard.
- Lesley: Sure.
- Laurel: So. That's the only time I associate church with being, sad and, like, awful.
- Lesley: Right. And so, tell me about you and your mom being at the funeral together.
- Laurel: ... We were all in the front row and, and that's back when my brother and I were still spea[king] — okay. We stood up and did, I think, a poem about her. But, [my mom] was just like a rock that could comfort you, during it.

Vicky recalled mourning a grandparent with her mother as difficult but relationship enhancing. She said, "I'd have to say my grandfather's death was the most difficult time but it kind of brought [mom and me] closer too, at the same time." Lucinda reframed her grandfather's funeral as the best religious experience with her mother. For Lucinda, the connectional nature of the church experience, the opportunity for her mother to grieve in a healthy way, and the sense of familial history made her grandfather's funeral a positive religious experience to commemorate his life. She said,

I think it was, both a meaningful service and it was at the church that they had been a big part of. Um, and then there was still a lot of the family members. Well, a whole lot of family members but the church had um, helped create the funeral dinner and it was really important for [my mom] to see that even though my grandfather was quite old and the church wasn't really that vibrant [any more] but they still recognized the family that had made a contribution and I thought it was special that you could also see the deferential

influence.

Extended family. For both adult daughters describing a generational pattern of intensification, other extended family members were important. Some of Brenda's cousins left the Catholic Church. She recalls her mother's disapproval of their converting from the Catholic Church,

I had a few cousins who were probably about 10-15 years older than me and they um, started going to, um, Christian churches, not Catholic, um, more, like, born again Christian churches, and, you know, that was like, [throws her hands up in the air]. And not, my mother never came out and said it but I *knew*, like, that's, from, like, conversations with her, that that was, like, *frowned upon*. Like, if *I* was to do that, it would have been *frowned upon* by our family.

Though her cousins' departures did not meet approval, Brenda found it easier to leave the Catholic Church after them and also began attending evangelical churches. For Vicky, her stepfather's ex-wife became a powerful religious role model and a second mother, but also a source of tension between her and her biological mother, as she described,

She would talk about, she would say stuff about God... I went to her church down there. Huge, huge church. Um, and uh, and I remember sitting there and seeing how well her life was going, you know what? I mean, putting her faith into God, after becoming a seamstress, she worked for United Airlines and she used to talk to me about all this stuff and how she put her faith into God... I will always want my mom to be like her, you know? Um, she was very pretty... I got up, I got up and stood at her, her, ah, her funeral and said some words about her and I, I, I fear, myself because what's my mother gonna think? Get up and talk about my stepfather's ex-wife and I'm gonna talk in a way that it wasn't just, I wasn't just, water in the family. I felt like it was blood in the family.

Vicky's intensification may be linked to this powerful mother-like relationship.

Husband/significant other's influence. Husband/Significant Other's

Influence is the third sub-theme in Family Connections and marks a shift in adult daughters' religious life experiences. Dating opened maturing daughters to new relationships that interacted with religiosity in the adult daughter-mother relationship. Men who became husbands influenced religiosity in participants relationships with their mothers and their children.

Dating and marriages were religiously nodal for adult daughters who converted. Men were sometimes highly influential by introducing new religious ideas that contrasted with maternal teaching. Clara's Eastern Orthodox parents were unsure of her dating Spencer, a Presbyterian college classmate. Clara describes this relationship's impact on her religiosity saying,

I met this guy who was also a Presbyterian and his life as a Presbyterian was probably equally important to him as, as was being Orthodox was to me... It kind of turned my world topsy-turvy and, um, I began, you know, thinking, you know, and realizing that, this is all just so weird, like, [his religious views are] not at *all* like what my, what my worldview was, this doesn't make sense anymore.

When Clara and Spencer broke up she wanted to explore his faith in an effort to reconnect with him, and also understand the dissimilar Christian beliefs he embraced. She attended a mainline campus ministry. Clara describes encountering this group as very different from the church of her parents,

It was a small, small group but it was really wonderful... This was sort of when I got the idea that, that God was about love! And not just about, like, a vindictive nature of, you know, punishing sinners and that sort of thing. And it was so different from what I had grown up with and um, it was just like, sort of a moment of revelation for me. It was like, wow! Like, *this* is what Christianity can be about? ... So that was sort of how falling in love with a Presbyterian ended me up on this path.

Clara's curiosity in moving from a very traditional and conservative Eastern Orthodox family to this campus ministry began shifting her religious identity and theology from her parents' teachings – in the wake of her romantic relationship.

Melissa seriously dated a man who is Muslim and they began considering an interfaith marriage. Melissa recalled,

So we were talking about getting married and the faith the children would be raised in. And so I ended up having a lot of really deep, like, thinking about what that would mean to me, and um, while, ultimately I would be okay with [them being Muslim].

Melissa first considered her children as not Catholic like her parents tradition in the context of this relationship. Though she did not marry, she did leave the Catholic Church, became Presbyterian, and had her daughter baptized in her new faith. After

Brenda left the Catholic tradition of her family, she attended evangelical churches. She converted from Catholicism to the mainline when she joined her future husband's Methodist congregation where they were married. Brenda, who describes an intensification pattern including a mother who did not attend church with her, expressed a strong desire for a husband who would want to attend jointly.

Brenda says her fiancée's strong faith was a primary reason she knew he was "the one." She explained,

I knew when I was finding a mate, somebody to marry, I definitely knew I wanted somebody who would go to church with me every week, somebody who, you know, I thought it was very important for, um, for us to go to church together.

Husbands of lifelongs are also religiously influential in the adult daughter-mother relationship. Some lifelongs returned to their mother's church to be married. Bethany describes her husband's health as providing the impetus for her return to the Presbyterian faith of her mother and her childhood. Facing the mortality of her husband brought the family to the local church and they chose the Presbyterian tradition of Bethany's mother. She said,

He had to have open-heart surgery... It was like, [prayerfully] 'Oh, God!' And it was good that he, he did the signs, you know, because he was having pain, and if he, if he didn't go to the hospital? I probably would have been a widow or a single mom [crying]. So that kind of changed things. So once he got back on his feet and it was that summer and like, I'm gonna start going to church again.

Shiphrah never left the church but her relationship with her husband, Reuben, caused a seven-year rift between her parents and her when she and Reuben lived together before marriage. Shiphrah's parents, especially her mother, viewed her living with him as immoral. Shiphrah begins as if she was speaking to her mother about her disapproval of her husband at the time of her marriage. She determined that though she and Reuben did not have a courtship as her parents would have wanted, she ultimately acted in accordance with their hopes for her by marrying a good Christian.

Shiphrah said,

He's a good Christian person and a good person and I think I'm doing it. I'm find[ing] the type of person you wanted me to find. The way you taught me and brought me up. I didn't go about it exactly the way you wanted me to but in the end, that's how, that's how you wanted it to be. And I think with [my mom], she knows it too. Of course she wouldn't be anyone to say anything about it, but, I think I ended up with a person that she, what type of person she wanted me to be with.

The husbands of some lifelongs were not active or were marginally active in church, corresponding with a tension between adult daughters engaging in the faith of their mothers and partnering in a marriage with a nonobservant husband. All the wives of inactive husbands expressed difficulty with either managing children on their own at church or feeling deeply pained that their husbands were not engaged in spiritual life with them. Some expressed both. Especially when children are very young – infants and toddlers – mothers shared that it is nearly impossible to have personal spiritual growth and single handedly care for children in church. Lucinda explained that while her mother was part of a united parental presence to take her children to church, Lucinda was usually on her own, saying,

I wouldn't say it's an active time of spiritual growth in that regard because, just, I'm mostly focused on child rearing since my husband rarely attends and with a two-year, two-and-a-half-year-old in service, I try to stay but there's not much in terms of worship service... It's hard to do.

Vicky similarly describes having her children in church without her husband. Vicky's son began asking why his father did not go to church. Vicky says,

Tristan used to sit there and say, 'How come Daddy never comes?' I'm like, 'Well, you know what? You need to go ask your father about that...' And he used to sit there and say, 'because Daddy's gotta work or Daddy's too busy.'

Vicky says she encourages her husband spiritually and considers this her biggest faith challenge but notes many women have the same struggle in trying to bring their husbands to church. For example, the following:

I tried to tried to explain to [my husband] that there's a lot of things that have happened in my life because I have put my faith in God... When I was going through the [breast] cancer thing, you know, I put my faith in God that I was going to come out of it okay

and that I was going to, that everything was going to be fine and it worked, it did.

Mindy took their daughters to church each week while her husband stayed home with their sons. She continues to attend her now deceased parents church where her mother donated floral arrangements, purchased items for the church, and contributed money regularly in partnership with her husband. Mindy notes financial aspects of her own husband not attending, saying, “I want to be able to donate to the church and, um, sometimes it’s hard for me because my husband is not religious so I wouldn’t be able to use, like, any of his money to donate.” As she speaks about this difficulty, tears begin to well in her eyes.

Her own children. The fourth and final sub-theme for Family Connections is Her Own Children and applies to adult daughters who have children as well as those planning families. The religious upbringing of children in light of their own maternal relationship was an area of central meaning. Adult daughters who are mothers view their mothering as a spiritual role and are deeply influenced by the way their mothers raised them. Adult daughters’ children enter the adult daughter-mother bond and change the religious features of the relationship in important ways including transmission of faith to their generation. Women who do not have children are cognizant of religiosity in the adult daughter-mother relationship in family planning.

Lifelong adult daughters describing a vertical transfer view raising children in terms of religiosity as akin to the way their mothers raised them. Shiphrah explains,

Why do I want to raise my children in a Christian home with a Christian basis? Because I want them, I wanted them to know, to know God and to know that we’re all miracles through God and to know, to know what, what’s it’s like to, to have something to believe in... My 13 year old, he can see what he has. He has friends and he knows they don’t have an upbringing like we do. He can see the difference. He can see right from wrong. He knows the choices he has to make but he can definitely tell and see the difference and I want that to be eye opening for my children... I see what [my mom], how she taught me, how she raised me. And how I’m doing the same for my kids...

While vertical transfer lifelong found strong similarities they also point to the quiddities of contemporary life as requiring more flexibility or greater openness than

the time of their own childhoods. Shiphrah continued,

I don't try to be as cut and dry as my parents are, I try to see the bigger picture because things are a lot different these days and I think we're raising our kids in a little bit more difficult era than when we were raised or they were raised.

Lucinda brings this expansiveness to the prayer life she shares with her children. She says, "The range of issues that are addressed in prayer for my children is probably broader reflecting my, my and their worldviews." Lucinda feels she prays for things with her children her mother would not have considered but that her mother would not object to their importance such as care for creation and "animals and oceans."

Mindy describes greater flexibility than her mother in what her children wear to church, thinking her mother was under more pressure for them to dress up, She said,,

I think they used to dress to the nines to come to church so that's a lot easier because I don't really care what the kids wear as long as it's clean... Knowing God doesn't care what you wear. You can come in sweatpants if you want!

Adult daughters who described intensification patterns shared raising their children differently from their mothers and described reactions to their own upbringing. Vicky explained she joined other families going to church. Now, she encourages her children to come with her:

Lesley: Would you say that you are raising your children in your faith in a similar way to how you were raised or in a different way?

Vicky: A better way. A more, better way. Because, I mean, not that I force my kids to come every Sunday but I encourage them to come every Sunday. I didn't have that. If I wanted to go it was because it, I said I wanted to go. You know, I'm not, like I said, I attached myself to people that were doing things with the church faith.

Brenda described the importance of attending church as a nuclear family in contrast to her upbringing when her mother sent her to church but seldom attended. She emphasized teaching faith as more than attendance, saying,

It's like a nice sense of community to go to church but I think it is just equally as important to, you know, be religious on your own and be able to have that within yourself, too. So, um, which I never had growing up, it wasn't like, 'Oh, lets talk about God. Let's have a conversation.' or 'Let's read the Bible.'

Adult daughters depicted mothers as religiously engaging grandchildren. During visits, three generations attend church together. This is normative for families of lifelong but none of the converts took children to the church of their family of origin. Yet, all mothers of converts who are grandmothers have attended their daughters' churches. Lifelongs who described vertical transfers express a desire to raise children in the faith, as supported by their mothers and family systems, in a way that is not, as Mindy explained, pushing religion "down their throat." Lucinda said, "I think, [my mom] as well as I, try to engage with my children gradually, teaching them about religion." These adult daughters use metaphors such as "open doors" and describe "engagement with the community" as a primary means of religious transmission. Many adult daughters see raising children well and in the church as fulfilling a primary religious expectation or hope of their mothers, as Bethany explained,

- Lesley: What religious expectations do you think [your mother] has of you now?
 Bethany: Probably the, probably the same [as when I was growing up], just... Being a good mother! And um, just, I, I think she's *happy* that the kids are going to church and learning and growing in that way.

Similarly, Laurel connected her mother's faith and being a mother herself as follows:

- Lesley: How important do you think it is that you share your mom's religion?
 Laurel: Now that I'm a mother I think it's really important... I think [my mom is] happy with the way we're raising our children.
 Lesley: Um, hmm. Do you think that she hoped you would raise the children, um, Presbyterian?
 Laurel: Yeah. I think it's more like she would not be disappointed if we didn't but now that we are, it's like a nice thing that she's happy about.

Adult daughters who do not have children considered religiosity in their maternal relationship when contemplating future families. Karen imagined her mother's religious expectations for a future family. She said, "When I have a family, bring them to church... my husband, my kids, bring them to church. Have them participate in the activities and Sunday school and just, regularly go." For Clara, such expectations are more complex given her conversion and her fears of being cut off

from her family. She explains these tensions in the adult daughter-mother relationship in the following conversation:

- Clara: I think there's probably still an expectation that if I am to get married at some point that, you know, that ceremony would somehow be Orthodox, or that my dad, you know, especially my dad would be involved [as the Priest presiding]... It's going to be a very awkward conversation, because, you know, not getting married in an Orthodox Church, will pretty much essentially cut me out. I mean, you know, I don't *think* they'll think it will condemn me to Hell but you know, I will very clearly, no longer be a member of the Orthodox Church. And that's a very big, public statement to be taking and then if I had children, *not baptizing them!*? There again is a very big, very big, very public statement to make.
- Lesley: ...If you were to baptize them Presbyterian that would be?
- Clara: That would be, like, a no no... I would have to wonder if my parents would come to my wedding or my [future child's] baptism... If I were to get married here at Grace Pres[byterian]? Um, I mean, Priscilla and Hiram are co-pastors and women aren't allowed to be pastors [in the Orthodox Christian tradition] and I'm not sure that they would recognize it.

Religious Consciousness

The second theme of the interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) is religious consciousness. Adult daughters' personal consciousness is intimately related to the adult daughter-mother relationship. Adult daughters connected mothers in important ways to the following: spiritual struggle, religious coping, images of God, Jesus' place in their faith, prayer, and their ideas about and knowledge of scripture.

Spiritual struggle. Spiritual Struggle is the first sub-theme of Religious Consciousness. Many adult daughters poignantly described religious turmoil in their lives. Some left the church for a time away from religious life. Mothers' roles varied in adult daughters' spiritual struggles including patient silence, overt encouragement, and instrumental assistance. For four women, weighty spiritual struggle led them to leave their mothers' denominations to convert to the mainline. The impact on the adult daughter-mother relationship of such conversions can be profound to the point of adult daughters' feared emotional cut-off from mothers.

Most lifelong vertical transfers described a normative time away from their mothers' churches. This time period typically began when they left home and ended

when they married in the church or returned to have their first child baptized. Mindy sheepishly explained,

I didn't always come to church. When, after I got out of high school and you know, was doing my own thing, but eventually I circled back. And, you know, during that time, my mother, she didn't say, 'Oh, you should come to church. Oh, you should do that.' You know, again, she, she was not a woman of many words. She just was a good example.

However, when lifelong vertical transfers described this time, it is not a literal time away but a time less involved. Laurel described this time saying,

Like the college years, when I was out on my own. It wasn't a part of, a big part of my life and then when we had Céline we wanted her baptized and it wasn't a huge part of our life her first year but then, um, shortly after that is when we started getting more, back into it a little bit.

During this time, mothers provided a never-severed connection to the church for lifelong describing vertical transfers. None of the lifelong repudiated the church or stopped identifying with their mothers' denomination during their time away. They continued attending services on holidays or when they visited their childhood home. Some lifelong who attended college did not attend church but were involved in mainline campus communities or attended mainline colleges with chapel services. Lucinda described her time away from the church at a Lutheran college as sometimes having included "a daily chapel service and a weekly worship service." Bethany shared the following about this time:

There was this church right up the street from where I lived and there was a few Sundays that I had gone there to, um, I guess I just felt like I needed to maybe find a place near where I was living and I remember going there.

A time less involved may be considered a time away because for devout adult daughters with a vertical transfer, engagement with the religious community is so markedly reduced. Mainline mothers arranged for their daughters' returns including planning weddings in the church and smoothing membership issues for baptisms of grandchildren. For example, Britany's mother arranged for her and Eli to marry in the church and undergo premarital counseling with her pastor. A generation later, Britany

brought Dakota and her boyfriend to join the same church and have Wolfie baptized. Vicky, who described an intensification pattern, is the only lifelong to have a literal time away. She described her religiosity at this time as “Zero.” Shiphrah did not have a time away from the church but she did have a time away from her mother’s religious approval. When she left home and moved in with her boyfriend’s family she attended church with them. However, Shiphrah recalled this period of being outside of her mother’s religious approval as “the worst time in my life.”

Most converts did not have a time away but shifted rapidly from devout engagement in their familial tradition to exploring other Christian options. These transitions were fraught with turmoil. Brenda left the Catholic Church to which her mother sent her and began attending evangelical and nondenominational churches. She explains,

When you are brought up Catholic, you don’t learn the Bible. It’s like you go to church, you say the same prayers every single week, you sing your songs, it’s like boom, boom, boom, and you go home, you know what I mean? And it’s not, it’s just very, but yet, even though I went to, you know religion class from the time I was in kindergarten ‘til I graduated high school, do I know any of the Bible? No, and I feel, I feel like, it’s more, like, it is more like a scare tactic in the Catholic religion, like, its more like, I don’t want to say my parents, like, or my mom, like, tried to scare me into, like, being a good kid or, you know what I mean? But I feel, like, that almost, like, I feel like, that’s the way of the Catholic Church. Um. Its not like, ‘Oh, God’s forgiving!’ You know? *They* don’t teach you that! It’s almost, they, like, scare you. Like, when you’re a kid growing up Catholic, almost. Um, it’s like you go to church, and you do this, and that’s it, and that’s it, and then you don’t have to think about it again until next Sunday.

The implication is that not having to “think about it again” is a negative, in that, she felt her faith in her mother’s tradition and her life were bifurcated. Further, she points to an affective experience of both fear and emptiness.

For Clara, unchanged rituals and her father’s religious instruction had become difficult to embrace in the midst of growing questions and uneasiness, especially in the face of the differing faith of her boyfriend. She drew a parallel between the religious tradition of her upbringing and a hypocritical “show” of faith. and shared

that her childhood tradition hemmed her into a way thinking that was increasingly breaking down for her. She finds in her conversion opportunity to engage questions and vent her anger.

- Clara: I sort of think of it being like the Publican and the Pharisee. You know, one being a very public proclamation of your faith and the other being very much, you know, like a humble, you know, sort of thing... We have the little prayer books and especially during Lent and Advent my dad would encourage us to sit down and go through stuff and I'd be reading the prayers and it didn't feel like it was genuine... If I ever brought this up, you'd be told, you know, 'You're just doing something wrong.' You know?
- Lesley: Okay.
- Clara: Which isn't to say that I didn't feel connections throughout my life but the older I got the more it was like, you know, I, I need to go find God somewhere else. I need to figure out what this really is, because this doesn't feel right. So I need to go, you know, you know, I, I had never thought it was okay to be unsure and to not know the answer and um, and then I realized, I just couldn't do that anymore. So, you know, so, so now even though I don't know half the time the answers, at least I feel a little bit better about it and I feel like...
- Lesley: That you're wrestling with them?
- Clara: Yeah! I feel like, I, I feel like I can ask questions and talk about things and heck, I can yell at God if I want to! And, you know, and you know, it's like, it's okay to be human and wrestle with your faith and you don't have to be perfect. And, and, I'm in a place [at my Presbyterian congregation] that's full of other imperfect people and we're all trying to do the same thing and, you know, and for me that was, you know, how I needed to go about it.

Lenore left the tradition of her mother and the Baptist congregation to “church shop” settling on a Presbyterian congregation. She described how her parents’ Christian fundamentalism became no longer tenable, saying,

I was very much, still very into “breaking the will of the child” and I was really struggling with that because I remember how awful it was for me as a kid and here I was doing this. I had sworn I was never going to spank my kids but then here I am reading the Bible literally. Thinking that I had to, in order to please God. And so I was really struggling and I mentioned this to one of my online friends and she said, ‘there’s another forum that you might be interested in and it’s called *Gentle Christian Mothers*.’ And you know, they believe in discipline but not spanking and it’s, it *is* Christian. It’s not like a bunch of secular people telling you your Bible is wrong, it’s ‘Hey, have you thought about interpreting it this way?’ And they go back to the *original* languages and, you know, talk about how, well this isn’t, this isn’t a literal thing. You know, this is allegory or this is a simile or metaphor and in true fundamentalist style I joined in order to prove them all wrong! And within three months, just reading all the reams of information that they had completely, completely, dismantled my belief that those verses were supposed to be taken literally. But by then, Pandora’s box was opened. What else is not supposed to be interpreted literally? What else was I taught wrong? So that started a huge process of deconstruction.

Such conversions also involved secrecy from mothers. Brenda hid a study Bible that was a gift from a friend from her mother,

It was, kind of, awkward even though I was older to tell. I mean its not like I would lie to my mom about it, but to just to tell her where I was going? Because I know, like, um even though she wouldn't say anything, I know that she [would] probably [be] thinking oh, like, like, *weird*, like, you know, that type of [evangelical] church.

Clara described a period of discovery followed these secret transitions:

Clara: [After] I graduated from college, during the summer, um, I took what was, for me, a really big step and I started going to a Presbyterian Church in my hometown which was, you know?
 Lesley: That is a big step.
 Clara: Yeah, that is. I, I think that was a, bit of a, *shock* for everybody.

Melissa is the only convert who described a time away, though she still attended Mass with her parents when visiting home. She shared her mother's view of her conversion.

She said,

When I changed over to Presby[terian], it was a frustrating experience because I kind of felt like, 'Well, I'm including religion in my life and I'm enjoying it and I'm actively participating! I'm enjoying this.' Um, and for [my mom] to express her discontent.

Both Lenore and Clara felt their parents regarded them as having left true Christianity. Both also expressed a fear of potential emotional cut-off. They described these exchanges with their mothers as delicate matters that could break the adult daughter-mother bond.

Lenore described her mother as praying for her post-conversion, saying,

'I'm praying that you find your way back to God.' Or, you know, or 'I'm praying, I'm praying, for you' but... it almost sounds like [my mom] is praying against me because she doesn't believe that I am making the right choices. Um, just, yeah, her demeanor is not such that she would say, 'you're wrong,' especially not in matters of faith because she does know that there is some new way but their tradition is very much you basically check off these boxes or you're not a quote-unquote, true Christian. So I know that she's very concerned because I don't check off a lot of the boxes anymore.

Clara described her parents as expressing disapproval including her mother directing Clara to hide her conversion from other Eastern Orthodox Christians, as she relates,

When my dad was ordained in August, um, she told me several times, you know, well, you know, 'If people ask you, like, where you go in Buffalo, you should just say you don't go' and I'm like, 'You want me to lie? And I, I, I can't lie about where I attend church!' and she's like, [gestures with hands,] and [I said,] 'You make it seem like it's embarrassing.' And her answer was like, 'Well!' And I'm like, 'Gee, thanks!'...

Coping. Coping is the second sub-theme of Religious Consciousness and differs from Spiritual Struggle. While Spiritual Struggle concerns difficulty with the adult daughter's religious life, coping is employing religiosity to deal with adversities. Maternal roles in coping included being a confidant, partnering with adult daughters during times of grief, and being a source of religious support and advice. Also, adult daughters were able to reciprocate during times of mothers' life difficulties. Karen reported she coped with the severe medical problems she and her mother share by trusting God in relation to everything in their lives. Karen and her mother go nearly everywhere together to help one another physically. They were diagnosed with a rare and debilitating connective tissue disease called Loeys-Dietz. Karen said that when she is struggling she focuses on God being in control and able to give her strength. She further seeks out her mother in all her difficulties, especially because her mother understands what she endures. Karen says, "[I] talk to my mom about it. See what she, what her view of it is and her opinion."

Some of the adult daughters described themselves as having specific emotional struggles such as anxiety or depression. These women found engagement with the religious community and having their faith as a resource for coping with these difficulties. Laurel struggled with what she describes as a mix of postpartum depression and anxiety after the birth of her first baby. She says her midwife was helpful in addressing these issues with her and that her mother then found a church for her and took her there in order to connect her with social support. Laurel explains, "I think that [social support is at the church] if you want, it's just that you've got to seek it out. You have to want the help and you have to want to socialize."

Following the death of her mother, the need for religious coping became more pronounced for Britany. Britany said her counselor advises her to kick her daughter,

Dakota, out of the house but does not realize Dakota would take Wolfie and be unable to care for him. Britany sees Wolfie as having a spiritual connection to her mother. Britany feels her church family understands her need to care for Wolfie and let Dakota stay home as her maternal and moral responsibilities whereas her counselor does not understand. Britany described church support in the following exchange:

- Britany: I didn't talk to nobody. But my brothers wanted me to talk to, um, a counselor for, with the hospice and they didn't help.
- Lesley: No?
- Britany: Mmpt, mmnn.
- Lesley: Okay.
- Britany: Things got so bad that I ended up with anxiety.
- Lesley: Aww.
- Britany: And helping Dakota and fight with Dakota don't help either.
- Lesley: No.
- Britany: [My brothers then told] me to go to, um, a counselor at St. Olivia's so I go there once in a while.
- Lesley: Okay.
- Britany: And she helps a little bit but I get more satisfaction with [church] than with her.

Mothers were important resources in religious coping including being a confidant, partnering with daughters through mourning, and as a source of spiritual encouragement and guidance. Clara asked her mother for religious support. She said,

I tell [my mom], mostly, that you know, especially when times are tough, like with, um, like with my grandparents and everything with my dad, you know, keeping me all in good thoughts and prayers and that sort of thing and um, and sometimes I'll ask my mom to light a big candle for me... You take a candle and you put it on the candle stick and you light the candle and you are supposed to say a prayer as you do that and that's sort of like an offering, so, so, sometimes I'll ask her to do that for me. You know, especially for like a job interview or something like that.

Adult daughters reciprocate support and describe offering their mothers help. Brenda describes these roles in times of a national tragedy in the following conversation:

- Brenda: I'll talk to my mom. Like if there's like any sort of tragedy ever, or something like that. I think, its, its always difficult for my mom. My mom's a very emotional person. Um, And so am I. Um, and so it's like really hard. Like if something... I remember I mean anything like the, the um, in Connecticut, the new, what was the school? The school shooting?
- Lesley: The Sandy Hook Shooting.
- Brenda: Like, for, like, me to talk to my mom about something like that. It's, like, something that's really, like, hard and emotional because I remember when that happened... and religion always comes in, you know, comes into the conversation, typically.
- Lesley: Mmm hmm. How so?
- Brenda: Um, just, you know, talking about, um, you know and you even see on the, on the television, you know, these people are forgiving. And how God has

a plan for these children and the families, and um, but yet it's just so sad.

Laurel described similar mutual religious support between her and her mother.

She said,

I mean it seems like every time [my mom and I] have something going on in our life that we would turn to God it's, like, we're always together. And something like my dad getting cancer, that's probably when they were coming up to church the most, here, just so we could all be together. And so we can come to church and prayer. But, you know, we try to keep [our faith] in everyday life but when, sometimes when something's not going good, we sort of lean on it, I guess. So, we can get through that.

Grief was a time when mothers and adult daughters depend upon one another for religious support. Bethany's family experienced the death of her brother, Alex.

Bethany considered her mother's strength in surviving his death and the agony of burying a child. "I just think of my mom, having to lose a child, you know? How hard that must've been," Bethany recalled, "[Mom and I] would always... take flowers to his site."

Adult daughters also describe the deaths of their grandparents as times of mutual support in grief (see Grandparents section under Importance of Relatives subtheme). Mindy considered a different kind of grief in the loss of her family's church building. She described the burning of the church in relation to many family associations such as the Christmas decorations that were in honor of her father, the bells that her mother had rung for many years, and the art her mother and another church member had collected. She described coping with the loss of a tangible connection to these memories as well as the space of sanctuary. She and her mother joined together in the effort to rebuild the church. She recalls with tears her mother having told her of the fire,

When the fire happened and burned the church down, that was, like, [my mom and I] coming together and grieving together and just kind of bonding together... It was really hard when the church burned down. I was, um, seven months pregnant with Elliot and so all emotional anyway. And I could see the flames, you know, the smoke, not the flames but the smoke and the – my mother called me, she was at work already and, you know, said somebody had told her the church is on fire.

Prayer and scripture. Prayer and Scripture is the third sub-theme of Religious Consciousness. Some adult daughters remember learning to pray in very early interactions with their mothers. Many adult daughters report they pray for their mothers and know or assume their mothers pray for them as well. Similarly, first exposure to scripture was often from mothers in songs, stories, and moral teachings. Some adult-mother daughter pairs discuss and/or study scripture together. While prayer and scripture are not necessarily linked, there is overlap in terms of devotionals and the way transmission occurs.

Prayer also overlaps with religious coping as one of the primary ways adult daughters report they and their mothers support one another. Britany described herself as a survivor and the mutual encouragement she and her mother provided each other when her mother was alive in the following conversation:

Britany: I'm still here.
 Lesley: Yeah.
 Britany: I'm still here.
 Lesley: Yeah. What kinds of religious support did you and your mom offer each other around health issues?
 Britany: We just prayed a lot.

Lucinda indicated prayer as a primary support between her and her mother as well. She recalled her prayer life with her mother beginning very early in her childhood. She recalled, "We said prayers before bedtime. We said grace before meals." However, Lucinda notes she was not aware of her mother's own prayer life growing up and similarly considers the difficulty of having devotional time herself as a busy working mother in the following exchange:

Lucinda: In terms of, um, spending prodigious amounts of time spent in devotion or those sorts of things is pretty...
 Lesley: Challenging?
 Lucinda: Yeah.

Bethany similarly described the help of prayer and the difficulties of balancing religious practice and the care of children in the following conversation:

- Lesley: How does, um, how has your faith supported you in those challenges?
 Bethany: Um, through prayer. Definitely.
 Lesley: Mm, hmm.
 Bethany: It just feels comforting, getting it out there. So. Coming [to church] has helped. So some, you know, um, sometimes I miss being in [the sanctuary during worship] because you can't always hear the message in [Sunday school], you're working out here [with the children].

Vicky described depending upon prayer through her cancer diagnosis and treatment.

She reported praying multiple times a day and how this differed in a generational pattern of intensification. She said,

I could be driving down the road and, and just like say, like, I'll pray to God, you know what I mean? I don't know if my mother would or not. I don't know if she does or not or if she just feels like I don't know if she understands you can pray anytime. You know what I mean? Or you don't have to be in a sanctuary, you don't have to be, you know, something bad doesn't have to happen for you to have to pray for something? You know, like, I know in my heart that I feel like my prayers are answered if I pray, you know? Uh, whether it's for comfort or guidance, whatever.

She credited her prayers with bringing about positive outcomes in her life and describes these to her mother and husband. Vicky recalled saying to them, "That was God helping out. You know? Just little things, um, you know. I'll tell 'em, 'But I prayed for that, you know. That's why that happens, because I prayed for that.'"

Karen and her mother similarly depended on prayer to cope with their medical problems and Karen noted specifically going to church "together and saying the prayers that's in the bulletin together" with her mother as a meaningful weekly ritual.

Conversely, Brenda, who described an intensification pattern, reports, "I've never prayed with my mom" and imagines her mother may pray in dire circumstances, though she does not actually know. "Whereas I pray, you know, three times a day because I don't know, I'm just riding, cutting the grass and I'm you know, [praying]?" Brenda connected the difficulties in her upbringing with her mother's distance from the church and faith whereas she strongly links these elements for her own daughters. Brenda said that prayer for her is an ongoing conversation with God wherein she describes her concerns such as her daughters' futures, saying,

I was like a terrible, like preteen, like awful, um and kids go through so much especially

now it seems like so much stress and so much, um, there's so much bullying and so much teasing and so many mental health issues and you know so many, you see like teen suicides, and I said, I always pray... 'I hope that if our daughters ever feel that, um, you know, have any of those feelings they feel supported enough, whether it's [my husband and me], or, like, their friends and, like, their church or, like, whatever, like, and so it's really important just for them, and me, for me to have a place.'

Clara also described her prayers in a conversational sense as differing from the way she was taught to pray in her mother's tradition as more standardized. Clara put her spiritual struggles into scriptural language in the midst of describing her prayers as she has transitioned from her mother's religious tradition to converting to the mainline. She explained in the following:

- Clara: I've kind of gone a different way and I've said, you know, I'm not understanding things and I'm not sure these answers are necessarily right. I need to go, um, I need to go. Whoever it was who wrestled with the angel?
- Lesley: Jacob, yeah.
- Clara: Yeah, I need to go wrestle with my angels in the wilderness and figure this out.

Both of the adult daughters who were raised Catholic and many of the lifelong reported limited familiarity with scripture as this was not central in their mothers' or their churches' teachings. Laurel said, "I'm just not as knowledgeable about everything myself. I have a hard time reading the Bible. I need to go to, like, a study group." Mindy reported that when she began teaching Sunday school she had no idea what she was doing, saying, "You know, here is the [curriculum] book, uh, I think I was, like, in my early twenties and um, I couldn't even, like, pronounce people's names or cities, and I just winged it!" Bethany recalled her limited memory of learning scripture in childhood to when her mother took her to church services in the following conversation:

- Bethany: I remember the, um, the, um, the one prayer. I can't even remember, I can't remember exactly, the wording of it but it's right in here [points to the Hymnal]. The Lord's Prayer, right?
- Lesley: Oh, okay. Yeah, yeah, sure.
- Bethany: I remember that one. Um, I remember you know, hearing that at, like, funerals and, and uh, the service and that was like, that was the thing that really stuck with me when I was little. That prayer [with] the trespassers and, you know.
- Lesley: Right.
- Bethany: You know? It's stupid [of me that I don't remember more] but, um.

Lesley: No, not at all.

Bethany said teaching Sunday school helps her learn scripture in her mother's faith tradition,

I get a lot from working with the kids, too, because its kinda at the level that I'm at some of the times with some of the lessons, you know, with some of the readings. Readings that I'm not familiar with. [The authors of the Sunday school curriculum] do a good job making it real for the kids and sometimes I need that, too. Making it more, um, concrete.

Bethany concluded that while she felt she needed to learn more scripture, her faith was not taught to her externally through the Bible but as something to internalize. She said, "[Mom and I] don't talk about, you know, um, the Bible or, you know, that kind of vocabulary but, I think it's more internal to us."

Clara resonated with this view post-conversion, saying,

I more think that your personal faith is more of a private thing, you know? So, I'm not, you know, interested in converting everyone to [be Presbyterian]. In other words, I don't necessarily believe that you have to go out and convert everyone through baptism, necessarily, you know its, um, I think it's a quote attributed to St. Francis of Assisi, that's uh, "Preach the gospel at all times, if necessary, use words." You know? I, I more sort of belong to that line of thinking.

Clara described working to influence her mother's reading of the scripture, however, as she related in the following conversation:

Clara: I did give her one of Anne Lamott's books.

Lesley: You did?

Clara: I did. For Mother's Day. I don't think she's had the chance to read it yet, but, then again, my mom doesn't read much, so.

Lesley: Okay.

Clara: But, um, I sort of hoped that she would because it's not, you know, I, I like Anne Lamott in that, you know, she's very much in more about the Spirit things and not so much a specific Christian denomination.

(Lamott is a progressive Presbyterian author.)

Vicky, who described an intensification pattern, did not learn scripture from her mother. She explained teaching her mother Sunday school lessons by explaining to her mother the content she teaches her Sunday school class so she will learn the material as well. Vicky illuminated this process in the following conversation:

Vicky: What they do in kids' worship and things like that?

Lesley: Uh huh?

Vicky: And I'll describe to her something like that. So that, I don't know, I guess

- sometimes I described it to her so that she understands it. Do you know what I mean?
- Lesley: Mmm hmm.
- Vicky: Like I'm teaching her, too, at the same time.
- Lesley: Yeah? Like the same concepts that you taught on Sunday?
- Vicky: Exactly, exactly.
- Lesley: Uh huh.
- Vicky: Because, she's not, she's not into knowing some things about religion herself.

Vicky covertly couches these children's lessons to her mother as simply relaying the content of her day in regular conversation. Vicky says she does this so her mother can see, "You'd be amazed how many times you could put [this lesson into] your life. The scripture will *be* your life. Even if it's one part of [the scripture]. You can start generating it to be, 'Oh, this is me!'"

Some of the lifelong reported more direct instruction in scripture and memories of scripture in childhood. Consider the following question and Lucinda's answer:

- Lesley: How do you think that your mother tried to influence your religion?
- Lucinda: Um, well, I think, certainly by exposing me to worship. And, um, to books and songs that we would read as kids. Obviously, Bible stories but also just stories that would involve, like, the life of Jesus and that sort of thing, the Virgin Mary, they were on our shelf, with other stories.

Shiphrah similarly recalled, "We'd read the Upper Room [Devotional]. And we'd read the Bible at dinner. And we'd say our prayers at bedtime. Um, I guess it was just a normal part of my life." Mindy recalled her mother reading scripture in church in the following conversation:

- Mindy: I think that the best memory I have is, um, like, [my mom] being liturgist on Christmas Eve... I always liked Christmas Eve service. It's, like, my favorite. She did that, you know, numerous times. So, I'm gonna go with that [as the best religious experience I shared with my mom].
- Lesley: Yeah, that's a strong memory that you have of her doing liturgy.
- Mindy: Yeah.
- Lesley: Why do you think that that's so powerful for you? Your mom standing up reading scripture.
- Mindy: She was, uh, like I said, not a wo – she wasn't a woman of many words, you know? Because I thought it must have been cool that she could stand up there and, and read scripture and lead people in prayer and I guess cuz she had that, you know, love within her heart and found the strength to do that and she had a good strong voice.

Karen was in a Bible Study with her mother as she described in the following exchange:

- Karen: I go to the women's Bible group... We go to the parsonage on Tuesday nights and we go and we do a chapter and we discuss it and what we think about it and we're on our second book, I believe.
- Lesley: You are? Okay. And are you in that group with your mom?
- Karen: Yes.
- Lesley: Oh, you are?
- Karen: Yes.
- Lesley: Okay. So, what's it like to be in a Bible study with your mom?
- Karen: Seeing how she, like, answers, like, the religious questions and how she participates.
- Lesley: Yeah. And do you think that you participate similarly to your mom? Do you think that you think about the book similarly to your mom?
- Karen: I think so, yeah.

Lenore recalled scripture in her childhood as a fundamentalist Baptist very differently from lifelong. She explained,

There was so much literal interpretation around scripture from my formative years and then going through and having to deconstruct all that, um, realizing that some of the things that I was taught are actually damaging later on in life. I, I think at this point I'm almost afraid to say, 'Alright, this is what I believe.' Um, so right now I'm kind of, it's almost like sifting through, trying to figure out which pieces work, which pieces I want to keep. Which pieces I don't.

Lenore explained memories of scripture growing up and her current emotional associations with those teachings. When Lenore spoke about the difficulties of scripture, it was in the context of the fundamentalist church. When she talked about learning about Jesus' love and positive scriptural framings, these were from her mother. She said,

Elementary age is when they're starting in on the really high-pressuring you to make a decision for Christ. You need to choose salvation and, um, they're very, very clear that, not choosing Christ means an eternity in hell, *literal* hell. And that's pretty frightening for an elementary school aged kid, It's probably pretty frightening for older people, too. Um, so, there was a lot of, a lot pressure, and a lot of fear and a lot of – and as a result of that there was a lot of manipulation. And there's the children obey your parents commandment *constantly*, like, you had scripture memory but it was all, in that age group, it was all about, um, how to respond to authority.

However, not all of Lenore's childhood associations with scripture are negative. She also recalled her mother framing her adoption in Biblical terms. She said,

[My mother] talked about, you know, how God and God's people are family and it's mentioned in the Bible we are all brothers and sisters with Jesus because God's adopted us and 'You've been adopted twice because you've been adopted by our family and you're adopted into God's family.'

God and Jesus. The fourth sub-theme of Religious Consciousness is God and Jesus. Adult daughters' images of God are very similar to their perceptions of their

mothers' images of God. Even in areas daughters have formulated a critique of certain understandings of the Divine, they continue to hold their mothers' images of God.

Adult daughters who do shift their image of God speak of increased focus on certain aspects their mothers give less emphasis or a subtractive view that holds the same image minus certain characteristics seen by adult daughters as less desirable in one's deity. All lifelong adult daughters feel they conceive of the person of Jesus in the exact way their mothers do or did. Conversely, some of the converts feel their understandings of Jesus have shifted markedly from their mothers' beliefs.

Lifelong perceived their mother's image of God as the same or very similar to their own. Karen explained she and her mother have the same view of Jesus and his role in death. She said,

[My mom and I] were just talking about how he, he takes, he only takes the good and he only takes someone when it's their time. And he wouldn't take them if it wasn't their time, so. We both were pretty much saying the same thing about that.

She spoke about the difficulties of understanding the way of God. She said,

Karen: There's challenges because sometimes you don't think that he's doing the right thing or...
 Lesley: That who's not doing the right thing?
 Karen: God.
 Lesley: Okay.
 Karen: That he's, doing the right thing or I don't know...

Karen explained that when she is unsure about God, she sought out her mother's point of view to try to have a better understanding. Ultimately, she felt that even in the midst of her questions, "[My faith] helps me get through, I feel. Knowing that there's always someone there watching from above and guiding me."

Bethany had a picture of Jesus she carried in her car that belonged to her mother. Bethany explained,

I have this picture of Jesus that was my mom's and she had it. It was something that, like back when she started driving or back when she got, was young and had one of her first cars. It was this picture of Jesus. I think she was, they were maybe moving or something, and she just stuck it in her glove box and over the years it just went from one vehicle to another to another and so then she passed it on to me. So, I still have this picture, it's this framed picture of Jesus. So whenever I get a new car it just goes from that car to the next

car to the next car... Knock on wood [laughs], you know, we haven't had any major, major accidents ... It may have even been her mother's, I don't know. Um, just that, I just think of my mom having to lose a child, you know, how hard that must have been.

Lucinda shared that she believes she has a very similar image of God as her mother but certain aspects are more important for one than the other. She clarified that these are points of emphasis, not distinctions. She said,

There are certain hymns that I think resonate for me that might not for her [and] vice versa... 'You Are the Potter, I Am the Clay.' I'm thinking of that. That song I know that my mother loves. And it's fine for me that my mom likes it, but it's not for me spiritually, religiously significant. I don't really think about it in that way. But, yeah, I think if I had it, a hymnal, and I could sort of circle like the hymns that, that would be meaningful for me versus the ones that would be meaningful for her... I guess I'm more drawn to God at work in the world and probably the creator part because, like, um, I think that caring for creation is really an important part of my faith and it isn't unimportant for hers but it's just more important for me.

While Lucinda saw shifts between her and her mother's image of God in terms of emphasis, Shiphrah saw herself as having an image of God that was shared with her mother in terms of tradition but also an image that was less judgmental and rule bound than her mother's. Shiphrah concludes that in her family, "we all believe in God and everyone does a little bit differently but as long as we're on the same page."

Converts described stronger tension between their image of God and their mother's image of God. They were in many ways actively working to change their image of God and feel pulled to understandings deeply seated in their maternal relationship and the tradition of their family of origin. Clara explained,

I think probably, still think about God in sort of the same way [as my mom] does but also, that very much comes from me being raised in one way for so long and I do, you know, try to alter my thinking but, um, [my mom and I] would both have grown up, you know, thinking very much of God as a male figure and a very dominant figure, as God the Father, and again, very much this idea that God is the God of the Old Testament... We also have to refer to God, you know, mostly as the male, you know, God is almost always a he, um, and even when I think about it consciously I have such a hard time making God a woman. It's just so engrained in my brain...

Melissa similarly considered her image of God in her belief in regard to her mother and the transmission of faith. Melissa pointedly departs from the belief in *homoousios*, that God and Jesus are of the same essence. While questioning this belief in a progressive Presbyterian congregation would be rather unremarkable, in their

mothers' traditions, who Jesus is in relationship to God is an affirmative absolute and part of the fundamental teachings of the Catholic Church. She said,

Yeah, [my mom and I] probably [believe] similar things. Um, I mean I must have gotten this image of God from somewhere but I don't know, um, the one that strikes me that I didn't circle that she might have is triune... I've always been highly agnostic about that... I think more of God as God and less as Jesus Christ so, I think.. if we discussed it, it would probably be a deep, stick, sticking point.

Vicky similarly described her different views on God and Jesus without the tension of orthodoxy. She explained, "There's God and there's Jesus, I mean, I think of God as being the higher person over Jesus but, um, there's certain words in there that you could say is Jesus or God." Vicky imagined that her mother might have the same image of God she does. She said, "Like a *loving* God, um, because there are, I would say a typical thing that people would, you know what I mean, think of."

Though, in a generational pattern of intensification, she said she really does not know.

Vicky said,

I'm sure she believes in God and she might pray to him sometimes but it's not like she comes out and says it to me like she's closed about it, her thinking. She's not open... I don't think she doesn't believe in God, but I just don't think she's a practicing Christian.

For Vicky, the intensity of religious symbolism differed as well. She described a stained glass window, depicting Jesus praying in the wilderness, at her church as being a powerful and transformative experience for her and yet likely only aesthetically meaningful for her mother. She said,

When we're in service and looking up at the stained glass. Like, I could get tears in my eyes, looking up there, think about Jesus being in the wilderness and looking up to God... but I don't know if [my mom] would have the same feeling, do you know what I mean? She might look up and say, "That's a pretty stained glass picture."

Brenda, who also described a generational pattern of intensification, considered her mother's image of God and view of religious symbols as the same as her own. Brenda did not perceive this to have changed even though her mother is Catholic and "all things are Catholic for her" while Brenda reported being a Methodist. Like Vicky, Brenda believed these constructs were much more important than she perceived them

to be for her mother, though she did not know this for certain as she felt her mother did not explicitly voice her religious thoughts. Brenda explained in the following conversation:

- Lesley: Do you feel like you [and your mother] think of God similarly?
 Brenda: Mm hmm. I do. Um, I think about it probably more often than [my mom] does.
 Lesley: Mm hmm.
 Brenda: Um, whereas, I mean this is just my view, um, but, I feel as though she thinks about it if something out of the ordinary happens and she'll think 'Oh! God must've been watching out for me. Wheew, that car didn't hit me. That was a close one!' You know? Whereas I think about it in like everyday things that she wouldn't think about... Like, um, you know the first thing I wake up in the morning to, you know, I pray all the time. And um, it's only when those instances for her happen that um, that something that everybody would notice that she, she thinks of God. Whereas I mean, I could be wrong. Because she doesn't express her feelings about that, so I don't know, um, whereas I think I'm more vocal and I'm more um, um I guess religion plays a bigger role in my everyday little things than it does with her.

Both adult daughters who describe an intensification pattern report expressly incorporating their image of God into their parenting, especially teaching about a protecting God who offers strength in the midst of difficulties, in direct contrast to the way they describe their mothers raising them.

Encountering Community

Encountering Community is the third and final theme; the sub-themes are: (a) Church and Religious Ritual, (b) Christian Ethics, (c) Women's Concerns, (d) Friendships, and (e) Positioned in the Culture. These sub-themes address the interaction of the adult daughter-mother relationship with the larger community.

Church and religious ritual. The first sub-theme in Encountering Community is Church and Religious Ritual. The church is where mothers and adult daughters interact with their faith community. Sacraments conveyed by the church are an important part of adult daughter-mother religiosity. Many nodal events in mother-daughter relationships, including rites of passage, occur within the life of the church. These rituals, along with annual holiday observances, are meaningful for

adult daughters and continue through generations in the family system. Holidays center around religious observance for adult daughters. For those who describe vertical transfers, traditions are passed through the adult daughter-mother relationship.

Sacraments and rites in the church are prominent aspects of religiosity in the adult daughter-mother relationship. The first of these is baptism. Melissa explained,

I mean, baptism is really an important ritual in our family and if [relatives], if we are capable of getting there, we *go*... We have a lot of traditions involved in it. My grandmother knitted a Christening gown that all of the babies wear.

Melissa and her siblings wore this gown. Ida, Melissa's daughter, and her cousins have now also worn the gown. Most of the adult daughters do not remember their own baptisms as these occurred when they were infants. However, nearly all were aware of their baptisms and have seen pictures their mothers have that were taken on the day of their infant baptisms.

Karen pointed to such a picture that hung in the dining room of her family home. She said, "I know we have a, um, certificate somewhere and there's the picture." In the picture, her grandparents stood in front of the church Karen still attended with her mother and she is a small baby in her mother's arms wearing her baptismal gown. Karen added as she looked at the picture, "Well, I know my grandparents were there." Adult daughters were often aware grandparents were in attendance.

Vicky knew she was baptized Lutheran and that her parents and Godparents were there. She shared,

I don't remember my baptism because I was too young... [My mom] did have me baptized right away as an infant... I remember seeing pictures of me baptized with my Godparents, in my Godparents arms. I have those, my mom has those pictures.

The baptisms of adult daughters' children were nodal events in adult daughter-mother religiosity. Adult daughters perceived mothers as invested in children being baptized.

This was complicated post-conversion. None of Lenore's children were baptized

Presbyterian. Her two oldest were baptized by immersion following a personal profession in the Baptist tradition. Lenore's parents and husband disapproved of the Presbyterian practice of infant baptism and non-immersion. Melissa described the prelude to the baptism of her daughter, Ida. She said,

One of the first questions [my parents] asked was, when I told them I was pregnant was, 'Well, do Presbyterians do infant baptism?' ... If Presbyterians didn't do infant baptism then I think perhaps there would have been a lot of pressure to go to their church and have Ida baptized.

Baptisms for lifelong members were equally important. Laurel described wanting her babies baptized in the same church where she was baptized and married because of the "sense of history." For her son's baptism she and her mother planned a catered reception for the congregation. Laurel referenced part of the service wherein the congregation agrees to nurture the baby in the faith. Laurel described why they had this luncheon, saying,

Realizing that there's more to, you know, life and church. And, well, we just had our child baptized. Well, we need to invite everybody and we shouldn't have, you know, [only] our parents and the Godparents [for a reception] but also invite everybody at the church because we just talked about how everyone raises them.

Britany did not have her daughter baptized despite her mother's requests. But after her mother died she changed her religious practice, becoming more devout in her mother's tradition largely in the midst of her grief,

Lesley: Something shifted then, because you, um, you didn't have Dakota baptized, um, and then with Wolfie, you wanted him baptized straight away, so what happened there? What was the shift do you think? Like, the change?

Britany: My mom [crying].

Lesley: Your mom, yeah. Okay. So can you tell me about that? Aww, I don't mean to make you cry.

Britany: I see her in him.

Lesley: Yeah. And you knew that she would want him to be baptized? I'm sorry. I don't mean to make you cry.

Britany: Yeah.

Mindy expressed her connection to her and her mother's church. She concluded, "I had all my children baptized here and, you know, I just felt cared for and loved."

Both adult daughters who were raised Catholic and five of eight lifelong members were confirmed as adolescents. Lifelong members with a vertical transfer described mothers as

invested but, as Lucinda termed, they made “hands off” to them regarding religious doctrine during adolescence. Laurel recalled a typical mainline experience of confirmation and the separate, supporting role of her mother in the following conversation:

- Laurel: There was all the fun stuff that we did and now then we had to do all these classes and stuff at the end before we were confirmed. And I remember, yeah, you know, we had the teachers across the street, and, and, it’s like, I don’t remember half the stuff that hey made you memorize and repeat back... I started to get a little bit bored.
- Lesley: Yeah, yeah. Sure.
- Laurel: But I’m glad I did it and it was fun cuz you really know. And you know we were young and we went through it together.
- Lesley: And then, [you said], you had, like, a ceremony in church?
- Laurel: Mmmh hmmm and then they presented us with a Bible. And they had a, a ceremony, like a blessing in church.
- Lesley: Okay. And your mom was there for that?
- Laurel: Mmm hmm. And there was like a bunch of us. There had to have been like, there was a bunch, us that went through it.

Lucinda was also confirmed in the church as an adolescent and recalled her mother’s investment in her being confirmed and attending church camp in the summer, children’s choir at church, youth group, and mission trips. Lucinda says her mother never required her to do these activities but encouraged her and made sure she had these opportunities.

Karen was similarly confirmed and involved. In sum, she stated, “I just did it all.” Karen described her mother as more involved at this time than did other lifelongs including her mother having been her Sunday school teacher throughout her childhood and youth. Karen said, “It was cool” having her mom for a Sunday school teacher and remembered having fun making crafts with her mom at their dining table because her mother had the workbook and supplies. She explained, “The lessons we already did, redo them, like, we’d do, like, a cross craft for Easter and I could redo that if I wanted.”

Communion was a shared ritual in most of the adult daughter-mother relationships. Lucinda described connecting her mother and communion; “I think of

my mom whenever we sing a communion hymn! Just because in the Disciples of Christ church we did communion every Sunday. And so, with the communion hymns that we sing, we sung them all the time.”

Lenore described communion as something she and her mother still shared post Lenore’s conversion. She explained, “We share communion. That’s a big one. Um, so that symbolism definitely.”

However, for Brenda post-conversion communion is complex. She no longer takes Catholic communion in her mother’s tradition. Her husband and daughter, being Methodist, cannot take Catholic communion, as it is only open to confirmed Catholics. She compares this to communion at the Presbyterian congregation she now attends where everyone in her family participates. She says,

Whenever [my pastor] Marty does, um, communion I, like, get tears in my eyes. Because we were just at a wedding... in the Catholic Church. You cannot take communion unless you’ve made your First Holy Communion. So my daughter was like, “Oh communion!” She loves to get the bread and juice, right? And I said, “Well, you can’t do it here.” So I don’t go [up for communion] because I’m not going to do it without my family. Um, and [Pastor Marty says] always, ‘This is not my table, it’s not the Presbyterian table, it’s God’s table and at God’s table [no one is turned away]’ and that’s one of the reasons why, you know what I mean, I don’t go to a Catholic Church you know, but, um, and so now my mom understands like certain things, like, I’m not going to.

All married adult daughters were wed by a pastor in a religious service. Some lifelong married in the same congregation where their mothers were married. Bethany was married in the same church as her mother and her sister and emotionally connects her parents wedding experience and her own. She explained,

That was the church where my parents were married. That was the church, you know, we decided to get married in... [A videotape of my parents’ wedding] showed them coming out of [the church] and people throwing rice... My grandmother when she was younger and my uncle and stuff like that. And you get to see [my parents] drive away... It’s a beautiful stone, um, church in Dunkirk... I think just knowing that we had that same experience together, in the same church.

Laurel was also married in the same church where her parents married and likewise picked her wedding as the best religious experience she has had with her mother in the following conversation:

- Lesley: The best religious experience that you've shared, um, with your mom. What might that be?
- Laurel: I don't know. There's so many, much. You know?
- Lesley: Yeah. It's hard to pick just one. Well, maybe. I mean, you don't have to pick just one. If you want to pick, like, two or three and talk about each that'd be great.
- Laurel: I probably, you know, like my wedding!
- Lesley: Yeah?
- Laurel: They were preparing, my parents were a big part of. And we had, during our ceremony, a, a blessing and we gave our parents a rose — you know, both of our mothers a rose. So, I'm sure that was a big part for her. And then obviously the kids getting baptized.

Mindy married in the same church building as her mother and this was the church she describes being destroyed by fire. Britany's paternal grandparents married in the church where her parents later married. Britany's mother then planned Britany and Eli's wedding there as well. While other weddings were meaningful, those in the same church building as mothers had particular significance for adult daughters.

Holidays among adult daughters who describe generational patterns of vertical transfer were, indeed, holy days. Christmas Eve/Christmas and Easter were the most significant for these families and centered on church worship services and their mother's at home preparations. Laurel recalled holidays growing up with her mother,

We always went to the candlelight service on Christmas Eve which is why I love that [my church does] one here because that is always what we did at home. And so that was a huge part of Christmas, is we would go to church and then we would come home... and then when we did do our present opening and stuff like that, we would just do food and, you know... Easter was always just church, come home, family dinner. That's what we did. We did, we did always go to church on Easter.

Shiphra described her familial holidays with her mother, saying,

Say Christmas. Um, obviously if it fell on a Sunday you went to church and that's still how things are these days. If it falls on a Sunday, then church, and you go to church on Christmas Eve. A lot of people have parties [on Christmas Eve] but that just seems weird for me. Um, it was based around, that the Christian holiday, what it was for and what it was about... going to church. And we, we looked so much forward to going to church on Easter.

For Clara, holidays included multiple services requiring driving about forty-five minutes away from home. Clara recalled Christmastime with her mother,

You have a fasting meal that begins right around sunset on Christmas Eve. Yeah, you are supposed to wait for the first star to appear, um, and it's a lot of traditional foods... a dish call machanka which is, uh, tomatoes and mushrooms and, um, they used to have big bags of mushrooms sent over from Europe for this... You would go to, uh, services,

afterwards, usually like seven or eight o'clock and that would be, about an hour and a half, two hours and then you would have services, uh, Christmas Morning... Following Christmas, for two days afterwards there were also services, um, because St. Stephen [and] Mary, um, that this is the mother of Jesus... Θεοτόκος and then the Holy Innocence, you know, the children that were slaughtered by Herod so those are two big days afterwards, um, and then it's sort of like business as usual, um and then you have the celebration of [Jesus] presented at the temple and circumcised and everything, but like that's the big thing for Christmas.

Clara considered her mother's preparation of traditional Easter foods, saying,

Easter also has a lot of traditional big foods, um, you know, and you, you break the big lunch and fast. So you have big huge breads called the Paska bread, um, and we have, you know, family recipes passed down... Everything you *weren't* able to have during Lent. Um, very rich indulgent stuff... You take very lovely decorative bowls and you fill one with salt and one with butter and you make a cross in each and it's the triple bar cross with cloves, um, gives it a great flavor. Um, but you also, you put this all in a big basket and... like a special decorative cloth and uh, you cover it with that and you take it to church, uh, for the, that sort of midnight, overnight service and the baskets are all blessed and then, you know, that is your meal on Easter.

For the two adult daughters who described intensification, holidays were more variable. Brenda described her mother attending some services. She said, "My mom, it was more like, when I was growing up, 'Do as I say.' Like, you go to church on Sundays, yet, my mom wouldn't go. I remember her going to church, maybe on Christmas." Vicky's family celebrated Christmas and Easter in a secular sense. However, Vicky recalled one exception when her mother took her to church on Easter. She recalls,

I remember going to a certain church for Easter and we had an Easter Egg hunt, and I remember that's like one of the only times besides baccalaureate, um, for my parents to go to church... This small rural church... is so old that the pews were in boxes!... They had a, um, the choir was up behind us, on like the balcony. That's where the choir was. It was pretty cool. But, um, you know, like, every time I go back there must have been something that drew me to that time to remember, *that* Easter. But nothing, nothing else is being a family in church.

For both adult daughters who described an intensification, their holidays differ from growing up with their mothers. Brenda reported attending mainline Protestant services with her family. Vicky reported attending with her children. Both Brenda and Vicky expressed a wish their mothers would attend church and reported they have encouraged and invited their mothers. Brenda reflected on her mother not attending. She related a time with her mother and sister for Good Friday. She recalled,

It's almost, like, sad for me. I don't know what keeps her from going to church, you know what I mean? I know she'd enjoy it and I know it would be good for, like, her mental health... yet she doesn't. But that one day, I remember one night, um, when we went to my sister's church, um, and we talked about it on the way home, and it was like a really emotional... it was almost like a bonding, sort of, like, me and my mom and my sister. Um, yet, my mom, yet, she, it's not something that probably will happen again for another like 10 years.

Vicky considered her own mother, saying,

I always ask her, 'Do you want to go to church with me? Because you mentioned that you wanted to start going to church'... It'd be great if she would come to church with me, I think we'd have a better relationship. Because our relationship is more uphill and downhill and sometimes our relationship is more uphill than downhill. But it'd be wonderful if we could share a faith. Um, Maybe she would be able to relax a little bit more and understand me... My mother thinks that things have to revolve around her and not what's going on around her. Um, she doesn't have time to, she has time for her friends and she can do everything for her friends but she can't, she doesn't have time for her family... I put my faith in God and my mother puts my, her faith in other things, that's what's wrong. We're just like on two totally opposite ends of that. I believe in going to church and I believe that, you know, you, you lose, [if you are not] going to church and it's almost like I get refilled for the next week. You know what I mean? By the end of the week, okay, I need to go again. Um, um, I, I can ask God for forgiveness and I don't know if my mom can ask for forgiveness.

For both adult daughters who described an intensification pattern, there was considerable ambivalence in their adult daughter-mother relationships both regarding religious issues and more broadly.

Christian ethics. Christian Ethics is the second sub-theme in Encountering Community. Mothers are frequently moral models for adult daughters, even when the outcome of adult daughters' reasoning differs from their mothers' ethical stances. Some adult daughters raise ethical issues about what it means to be a Christian in terms of relating to others in their interpersonal relationships as a follower of Jesus. Also important are macro ethical issues such as how religious bodies treat others – both within and outside the church. This particularly arises for some regarding same sex marriage, as these interviews took place following the 2015 decision of the United States Supreme Court regarding the constitutional protection of marriage equality.

Lifelongs reported their mothers were their primary moral models in their childhood and that this influence continued to the time of the interview. Lucinda

reflected on her mother's ethical presence in her upbringing and impact on her adult life. She said,

I definitely think she's a very good listener, uh, she's a teacher and so she's very much, um, concerned about the broader community. Um, and very kind to all she met and very loving towards others, I think that was a part of her faith and a part of her personality and just who she is as a person. She's always looking out for those who are sick or if there was a death in the family or something like that. So, yeah, definitely part of her presence in me. So I guess that model, as a parent, has influenced me more and more. I don't know that she would say that she has, but, um, so, that's part of who she was as a mom but also who she was as a part of me.

Lucinda described her mother's influence and noted that while her mother may not know she had this effect, Lucinda strongly felt her impact. This included Lucinda's interest in teaching her children about local missions. She described her childhood mission activities such as, "Taking food to a family at the church or visiting elderly people... Contributing to... the county's food [bank] and shelter. That was just looking after, um, those without means." She considered this example as connected to teaching her own children. She explained,

We do bring food sometimes for the, the food pantry as well as, um, we have a relationship with the Hawkins School [of] Buffalo which is low-income and high-poverty. So we've been involved some in giving books that are not highly used or things like that as a way of trying to inculcate my children of thinking about those less fortunate. And I think that's consistent with the kinds of ways my mom would have created devotion in us.

In her life outside church, Lucinda said, "I do try to live the rest of my life consistent with Jesus' teachings." She considered these efforts as emerging from what she perceived as the primary religious expectation of her mother: "to treat others the way you would want to be treated yourself."

Bethany similarly described her perception of her mother's religious expectations as primarily ethical, saying, "I don't know if there was, any *religious* expectations, because the expectations were related to being a good Christian, you know, being honest, and um, hardworking and just, you know, respectful and those kinds of things."

Adult daughters with intensification patterns reported more ambiguity in ethical

teaching. Brenda described her perception of her mother's religious expectations as possibly ethical in the midst of a generational pattern of intensification, and recalled specific instruction about not viewing herself as more or less than other people because of financial resources and these teachings may have been related to Catholic views of social justice,

We went to church. I think she expected us to go. That was just kind of what we did, even though she didn't. And she really just wanted us to be good kids, I think. And I think maybe that was, like, her way of like sending us to church, like, she thought we were going to turn out to be okay people. I don't know.

. Vicky, also described an intensification pattern. She explained ethics in the adult daughter-mother relationship in a way that is directionally different from other adult daughters. She described her maternal relationship, saying,

Things that she does that I could really go off the wall about, you know what I mean? I try to bite my tongue with that, um, I try to tell her that, um, there's sometimes that she has to put, she has to let God handle it and not, but, herself handle it. Certain situations, you know? Whether it be someone's illness, you know what I mean, or if she's having a really bad time in her life with my father, my stepfather, I'm like, you can't put yourself before him. You have to learn to [be patient] and understand his illness that he has going on, be there for him and not put yourself before him.

Vicky saw her family members as caring for her mother despite a long history of her not reciprocating care. She reported her siblings are increasingly frustrated with her mother. Vicky described understanding their frustrations but she said she tried to continue investing in her adult daughter-mother relationship, such as throwing her mother a big birthday party. Vicky noted with a distant sadness, "I know she would do the same for me," though the implication is clearly that Vicky's mother has not done similarly for her. Vicky concluded, "I have a love for my mother but it's just that I can't stand some things that she does."

A few of the adult daughters reported sexual ethics implied or explicitly emphasized. Britany considered her mother's primary religious expectation. "She wanted me to be a nice young lady and respect everybody," she said, "Not to be like everybody else, out on the streets." She contrasted her daughter's

behaviors with her own despite her efforts to raise her daughter well, saying,

I try teaching her the same ways my mom did; it's gone pffft [thumbs down motion]. Now she's got a kid. It's just, like, everything I taught her goes out the window. She's doing everything on her own and she keeps telling me, 'Yeah? I'm twenty-years-old! I'll do what I want! Blah, blah, blah.' And I'm, like, I said, 'I didn't raise you like that.'

Some adult daughters described more emphasized sexual prohibition and direction.

Clara described the messages she received about sex and reproduction from her mother in the following:

You can certainly stay single, um, but, if you are married, you are expected basically to have children. You know, it's like, because it's assumed that you'll be engaging in sex [after marriage] and if you engage in sex, you know, that will very likely lead to pregnancy and, you know, you're not supposed to be allowed to enjoy [sex] for your own personal pleasure or things like that. Um, you're not supposed to, like, like, you're not supposed to, like, get married and expect to be the, just two of you for life. Um, you know, um, something like abortion would be completely and totally out of the question. Even birth control is very, very much frowned upon.

Lenore reported strong messages about sexual purity and modesty from her mother and their fundamentalist church in the following conversation:

I wore a dress to church that um, had a knit bodice and... [my mom] pulled me aside and said, 'All the men are staring at you. We need to get you a bra.' And I hadn't even noticed until she said this and then I was just mortified and, um, and she was, she sounded almost put out with me, and I, I don't even know now if she was, or if she was just irritated with what was happening. But these are men at church... I, just remember thinking, 'What did I do wrong?'... I never knew, is this gonna be okay? Is this not gonna be okay? And so you're constantly double-checking, pulling at your clothes, and your clothes pretty much wear you.

Lenore described the impact of fundamentalist sexual mores on her relationship with her parents as an adult who is separated. She said,

Their view: that when you are married you are married 'til death. And so being separated and heading for a divorce it's been really, really difficult because there's no support from them. So, yeah, that's, that's been the hardest, it, been, um, a lot of blaming and, you know, 'You needed to submit more.' 'You needed to try harder.' 'You needed to listen more.' And I'm sure those things are true. I'm sure of that. But, um, it goes back to also, the not being treated like an adult, and you know my decisions are always questionable and, but, yeah. With the whole religious idea of marriage being a covenant until death, that's been really really difficult.

Shiphrah described sexual prohibitions and direction in her adult daughter-mother relationship growing up and when she moved in with her boyfriend's family. Her boyfriend became her husband after years of her residing with his family.

Shiphrah recalled,

My mom was, ‘This is what was said and that’s that.’... When my husband and I got serious and I started to want to be with him and I think, ‘I want to marry him.’ And I, I went against everything I was taught, everything I, not everything I believed in, but a lot of what I believed in... You don’t do anything until you get married. And I left home, I had sex, and this and that before I got married. And when it came to that point, I thought, hmm, I remember, you know, I remember saying to myself, ‘Well, yeah, [my mother’s way] is right. That is the right way, right thing to do, right way to live. Um, and then [I] did everything different that I could!

Some adult daughters perceived tension with mothers regarding same sex marriage. Clara explained her view on the Orthodox faith and homophobia. She said,

Extremely homophobic... if you’re gay they won’t kick you out but if you’re in a gay relationship, they will. And, um, yeah, and you’re encouraged to, uh, to basically seek out like the conversion therapy, sort of thing and I grew up thinking all this was normal.

Once she converted, her beliefs aligned with her church’s stance on social justice. She described resulting tension with her mother. She said,

Like gay marriage, um, like I mentioned [to my mom]... the Presbyterian Church, [allows same sex wedding] services to be preformed. Well, she, you know, asked me, ‘Where does it say that in the *Bible*?’ and stuff like that and I’m like, oh boy, this is going to get really complicated because she still holds a lot of very, sort of, rigid ideas.

Of her mother, Clara says, “She couldn’t have that freedom to go.” Such ethical issues, Clara felt, impacted their relationship. She explained,

I was probably a little less inclined to, um, maybe talk to her about certain things, you know, it’s, even now it’s kind of hard to talk to your mom about something like, being excited when the Supreme Court rules on gay marriage, when, when, you know, she doesn’t think that gay marriage should be allowed at all... It was kind of rough because I was having all these questions and trying to figure stuff out and being very confused and I would have loved to be able to talk to her more but I really just really didn’t think that I was going to get a positive response or that she would know how to respond or she would just tell me, you know, I just needed to get back to the Orthodox Church, and that, um, you know that, um, maybe I was having, you know, like a crisis of faith but, you know, it would only be something temporary. And it was, you know, because of worldly influences and stuff.

Shiphrah described disagreement with her mother as well regarding same sex marriage. She and her mother were both Presbyterian but her mother’s church left the denomination to establish more conservative ties and “become Reformed again.”

Shiphrah described frustration with her mother’s increasing rigidity within this church in light of her cousin’s same sex marriage. She said,

I listen to my mother and I listen to everything else. I think, ‘You know what? We all want to be loved. There’s someone out there for everyone. If it ends up, if it ends up being a man and a man and they love each other. If [my cousin and his husband] want to be together and they love each other, whether they’re gay or straight and how is it really

hurting someone else? ...As long as you're a good person and you try to do good to others and you love people as God would want us to love, I don't see a problem.

Lenore said though she was “ecstatic” when the Court acted to protect marriage equality, she avoids such topics with her mother, even though she “was pleased [for] the rights of the LGBTQ community to marry.”

Converts reported a shift over time in the ways they engaged ethical conversations with their mothers. Lenore said the one concept she discussed with her mother post-conversion was grace,

Their view of grace is a little bit different... God giving me the ability to do what I should is their definition. It's very works based. Um, but, she's opened up beyond that at this point and so to be able to talk about grace with her. She's still really hesitant to be lavished with grace because she still thinks of it as an invitation for sin.

Clara explained she avoided doctrinal issues with her mother. She said,

I just try to approach my relationship with her as, more as being a good person and an empathetic person. Caring, listening, that sort of thing. It's less about the actual structures of religion, um, you know, and what, you know what she believes about communion versus what I believe about communion and I would rather our relationship be more about, you know, about, you know, just family life and, and our lives and things like that.

Brenda explained her mother reached an understanding about her conversion allowing them to move beyond differences. She said,

Now my mom understands, like, certain things, like, I'm not going to make my daughter sit and tell her penance to a priest. I'm not going to make my daughter take premarital classes from somebody who's not allowed to get married. Like, certain things that I just, I don't agree with and my mom, I think she totally understands now.

Women's concerns. The third sub-theme of Encountering Community is Women's Concerns. Most adult daughters recognize difficulties being women in their churches and many pointed to gains made since their mothers' generation. Many also consider increased difficulties today from the time of their mothers. Most speak about the pain of gender discrimination in their lives, their mothers' lives, and the lives of all women. Some express ideas about what could be done to improve the lives of women and how they and their mothers support one another. Several participants note

distinctions between their own congregations, their denomination, or the mainline generally as a positive place for women in contrast to other churches or traditions.

Lucinda described well gender dynamics for her and her mother seen by many participants, saying,

Woman not being able to be religious leaders... it certainly wasn't present within my denomination. So it wasn't present in the teachings of my own congregation, but it still shapes religious faith in the wider world. It effects how women are perceived as equals within the church, so I think it's a big deal. And I think relying on women in service roles without recognizing their roles as leaders continues to shape the church today. I think that my mom has been willing to do that service work and I do see it as being important and significant but it's not always held in high esteem... I guess I'd be more inclined to lift that injustice than [my mom].

Melissa concurred as a single mother. Drawing distinction from her mother's generation, she said,

I think fitting faith in can be harder for women now. Like I feel that, um, now that women are closer to parity in the workforce and are working, um, family life gets more and more hectic. I think that faith gets crowded out.

Mindy considered difficulties of women in terms of full-time work and labor division in the household and marriage as increasing between her mother's generation and her own. saying, "To do more for the church? Trying to raise the family, you know, cook dinner every night, taking care of the kids and the house. Um, sometimes the men don't have to do that."

Britany shared a story of holiday preparations and the transfer of these duties from her grandmother, aunt, and mother,

The [girls] helped out too, in the kitchen, while the boys went out and played. At the point where I got to about like 14, I was like, 'That's it. I've had enough. I'm going outside!' They were like, 'No, you gotta help.' ... [I said,] 'I've been here long enough in this family!' I made my grandma cry.

Bethany did not see a change in women's responsibilities in familial work between her and her mother's generation as she felt the wife and mother are responsible for,

The whole family unit. And for me, so I see it for [my mom], too, like, just keeping, doing the cooking and the cleaning and the shopping and keeping things running smoothly and you know, I see, challenges with both of us.

Lenore considered similar duties in the church being fulfilled by women in her mother's and her own generation and the changing roles of women, explaining,

The perennial challenge of being a mom and still being expected to do everything. Um, You know, okay, yeah, 'Here, you have kids? You can run the [church] nursery. Bring your own kids and run the nursery and watch everyone else.' *You* know what this is like. Or, 'Yes, you have your own children, hey what are you going to bring to the potluck?' You know, hey, maybe the potluck is my day off, you know? So, those challenges are, and these are women who are working outside the home and have much larger range than women of my mother's generation.

Brenda hoped for improvements for women in this generation in comparison to her mother's generation. As more women are clergy, Brenda is optimistic women will take more leadership roles in the church. She said,

Everything is going to be more equal. I think there's more women in religion you know more women in the field... Women, just didn't have a role, really in the church... A male priest, um, the men collected the offerings, the men did pretty much everything, you know, and the women were, taught like Sunday school, and that was, you know, and that was just like the role.

However, Vicky considered the difficulties of multiple roles. She described owning a business, raising children, keeping house, and work in the church such as coordinating children's ministries and teaching Sunday school, as well as leadership serving on the session and in the finance and nominating committees. As Vicky listed her church responsibilities she laughed, then said, "Pretty much everything!" Vicky related multiple duties to fathers not attending church as they did in the previous generation as a primary challenge for women in the mainline and used her humor to cope when asked what could be done to bring men back, quipping, "Besides holding poker [night]?" Mindy says she tries but fails to follow maternal advice to balance self-care and is overwhelmed by the demands of work, home, and church. Mindy considered her mother's expectations including helping in the church but also said her mother would say, "Don't do *too* much."

Several women saw the decline of the mainline as a women's concern. Karen spoke of women's efforts in her church, including her mother, herself, and her pastor,

to grow the congregation and said wistfully, “Wish we could come up with that one plan that would bring a lot in[to the church].” While lifelong members see decline in the mainline and several frame this as an issue for the remaining women, converts never mention the decline. They have not witnessed these generational shifts and for them, the mainline is a place of refuge from the gender oppression they experienced in more traditional and fundamentalist denominations. Mindy, a lifelong, considered the decline of her church between her mother’s generation and her own with tears in her eyes. She said,

The people that I went to church with and I see them out and about and I don’t know why they don’t come to church. Like, what did they lose? That they don’t come anymore and they don’t feel it important to come, you know? I wonder if they would care if the church dissolved because we don’t have enough members.

Converts described growing up in denominations where women, especially their mothers, were undervalued. They described theologies specifically subjugating women and the pain of developing as girls in these structures. They saw their mothers as trapped in these systems despite internal qualities refuting those teachings. Two described their parents’ relationships as abusive and connect that abuse directly to the dynamics and philosophies of the denominations in which they were raised. Each convert described oppression of women, specifically their mothers, as the primary reason they left their denomination. Adult daughters described beginning healing in the mainline from their mothers’ religious denominations including: damaging theology, internalized degrading views of women, and a sense of being blanketed by oppression. Adult daughters who converted reported that their mothers all disapproved of their conversions. Adult daughters reported tension between leaving their mothers’ denominations because of the way their mothers have been treated in

their churches, the strength with which their mothers raised the daughters to be strong enough to leave these denominations, and their mothers' subsequent disapproval.

Lenore described growing up in her fundamentalist congregation as a girl,

Women and children don't have a voice was also very important, not in church, not to speak up in church... I remember getting into a debate with, um, the visiting youth pastor who was talking about something in Jonah that just did not make any sense and I challenged him... Later on, people were like, 'Lenore! I can't believe you embarrassed *him* in that way in front of everyone.' So that was the mindset.

Lenore contrasted the limitations of her mother's ability to lead the church with her mother's talents, education, and capabilities in the following conversation:

Lenore: [My mother is] actually, very, she's very intelligent. She's highly educated. She has a master's degree in music education. So she knows that women are capable of things and I think she really, um, and she's got a really go-getter personality. She really had a hard time balancing that and so I did get some mixed messages... she would just go ahead and do something because it needed to be done... And then sometimes it would come back to bite her, and she would get in trouble.

Lenore described a male teacher at her parochial school in contrast to her mother's abilities,

My first male teacher ever going on about, you know, a woman's place is in the home... I felt like I was smarter than he was and could teach the class better. And I'm thinking, you know, here, and, I knew my mom could!

She described persistent challenges for her and her mother as women in this system:

Just being women is a huge challenge... You're viewed as subpar, um you know, one of the more well known fundamentalist pastors: 'It'll be a cold day in Hell before I get my theology from a woman.' And I'm thinking, 'What about Mary? She carried Christ.' There's some theology right there... A huge challenge that we faced and she still deals with that... It bothers me for my friends who are still in that belief system but yeah, for my mom, for sure, um my dad is abusive and and you know, in my opinion, she should have left years and years and years ago but according to their belief system... It hurts me to know that she thinks she's serving God by doing this. That makes God a very, very harsh taskmaster and I think that's why I talk about grace so much with her and why I'm willing to do that is because that's not who God is and who, would God expect this of you? A

Clara described challenges she and her mother face as women in the Orthodox faith,

Women aren't allowed to be preachers of any kind, you're, I mean technically, you're only supposed to be in the altar space if you have a reason but I always grew up learning it was very prohibitive to women anyways. So, you know, women were very much barred from being any sort of participant in the service unless you were singing in the choir... I found it to be, you know, especially as I got older, very, very sexist.

Clara felt these challenges as pervasive in their home life as the authority of her father was unquestioned, “because he really just always had a nasty temper.” Clara reports she lived in fear of her father and her mother had anxiety attacks that were never discussed. Clara describes their roles at home and church as being consistent, saying,

I would say, saw my mom as more of a passive figure, um, which isn't entirely accurate because of all the work that she does do... but my dad was always the one who was active directly like in the church services. Now, you know, my mom would be the one that continued at all the cultural traditions, like all, like the baking and the cooking and the helping to decorate and prepare like the big meals on Christmas and Easter and that sort of thing, um, and you know we would sing in the choir but, uh, again, you know, especially if you're a woman in the Orthodox Church, um, very, very, gendered and the division of labor tends heavily towards women doing all the domestic stuff and that, the men are kind of in charge of the religious stuff and kind of the head.

She gave an example of internalizing the view women should be passive, saying, “I'll see a woman who, like, talks a lot or may be a leader in some respect and, I will sometimes, like, even think of her, like, ‘Wow, she's kind of getting up there and uppity, isn't she?’” However, Clara imagined empowering other women with what she has learned. She said,

You are a child of God and loved by God and you know, that's really strong and powerful!.. Especially if they were coming to me with challenges that they are facing say within the Presbyterian Church. I would say, we are all equal in the sight of God and I think we need to remember that and we need to move forward with that knowledge and we need to remember that we are strong and to, you know, to empower each other.

For Clara, the religious tradition of her mother does not allow for the empowerment of women and she would advise leaving for a denomination that does.

She looks down and whispers, “I would probably tell a woman who's having a lot of issues in the Orthodox Church, ‘Just leave.’”

Melissa left her mother's Catholic Church “for good” and explained,

I knew being a single mom that I had some issues with the Catholic teachings. So I went in search of a, a different Christian denomination. That I think would be a better fit for, um, my beliefs and the values that I wanted to teach. Um, well, I didn't like the Catholic stance on, uh, reproductive technologies... I couldn't imagine going to a priest and ask to have my, my child baptized and not get a, um, long lecture on family values so I was looking for something, a religion or denomination that was very liberal so, I, I, and that's what I really liked about Grace Pres[byterian]. They fly [queer pride] rainbow flags and they're very progressive and so I was kind of looking for a faith that was, or a congregation that was very, very, very progressive um.

Though Melissa's mother remains in the Catholic Church and expressed displeasure at Melissa's conversion, Melissa saw commonalities in their views. She explained,

My faith has told me that, that's not stuff God cares about, right, like my, my feeling and my relationship with God and my understanding of God tells me that what the manmade [Catholic] Church has determined to be true could be flawed because... it is being interpreted by man... I ignore the institution because my faith itself is different. Um, so I think that, one of the areas that [my mom and I] definitely agree on is that the institution of the Church itself can be flawed.

Another area Melissa saw agreement with her mother is their shared feminism.

Melissa explained the tension of Catholic teaching, her mother's feminism, and gender neutral parenting. She said, "I found it somewhat hypocritical that we were raised in the Catholic Church when my mother felt this way." By leaving Catholicism to be Presbyterian, Melissa feels she integrated faith and feminism.

I had to choose between being a woman or being a member of the Catholic Church. I did not feel – and then the thought of having a daughter and then putting her through that again was not fair and was not in line, the values of that Church, I was trying to raise her in was not the same values that were going to be so deeply rooted in the home so it just wouldn't have aligned.

Melissa freshly considers the idea of religion changing to address women's challenges:

An honest discussion about the challenges that women face... A conversation about how women's lives have been changing and new expectations that we have and where does faith fit into that?...Opening up a dialogue. Um, and that, that's one of the areas that I rarely got to explore. I mean, I'm so used to the Catholic treatment of women.

Friendships. Friendships is the fourth sub-theme for the Encountering Community theme. Many adult daughters speak about positive opportunities for camaraderie with women in the church for themselves and their mothers' generation. Some speak about certain women in the church as dear friends for their mothers, themselves, or both. These women and others in the church are often described in familial terms or as church family. Some describe the roles of peers in adolescence or young adulthood as influencing religiosity in the mother-daughter relationship.

Karen spoke about social support she and her mother find at their church,

There's so many people [at church] that you can turn to when you're in need and so many people pray for you when you need it. You just never feel alone when you're there or even when you're not. Because you can always call them... People care and want to try and help.

One of the reasons Karen and her mother would seek support was in dealing with debilitating health issues but Karen says she and her mother might have sought out help from the church with any problem. Part of the support system she described was their pastor. Karen considered what it was to be a young woman with a pastor who was also a woman in the following exchange:

Lesley: And you have a female pastor?
 Karen: Yes.
 Lesley: So what's that like?
 Karen: Um, it's the first female, well, not the first female pastor but the first female pastor since I'm older and understand more.
 Lesley: Okay.
 Karen: Um, I don't know, I think it's easier to kind of understand the female than, because we had a male pastor before.
 Lesley: Yeah?
 Karen: And it's just a different feeling. Like, having the male pastor and the female now.
 Lesley: Okay.
 Karen: And I kind of like having a female better.
 Lesley: Yeah? How come?
 Karen: Well, I just feel like you can connect more.
 Lesley: Really?
 Karen: And like, more like, personal problems you can talk about and just more comfortable.

Clara described support in the women at her church post-conversion from her mother's faith, including a co-pastor,

I try to look a lot to, um, strong women in my church. Um, there's so many great people here that it's really wonderful especially to, um, to have people like [my pastor] Priscilla or like some of my friends like, Heloise, like Rosie, and like all the other wonderful ladies in the church. Just having women friends who are also Christian and share a lot of the same experiences is a really helpful and wonderful sounding board... Although sometime it can be a little weird especially pastors, because, I grew up, yo

. A few adult daughters and their mothers had clergy as family and friends. Clara reported her father as a priest and her brothers as clergy. Melissa described her father's links to the Catholic Church. She said, "my father um, attended, uh, attended Catholic High School, so he grew, Catholic Schools, he did K through 12 Catholic

Schools, attended a Jesuit college, has many friends who went to seminary and are now priests.”

Lucinda went to a Lutheran college and explained,

I have a lot more friends that are clergy than a lot of other people, in part probably because I went to Thiel [College], and I've been involved in the church, so, um, to have those strong social networks with other people that were [good]... sort of hooked into a different type of support network.

Sometimes those in the congregations of adult daughters and their mothers were described in a familial frame. Lucinda described her mother raising her with a sense of church as a familial extension and how this was a support but made joining a different church later challenging. Lucinda considered the older people in her mother's congregation as like grandparents. She shared,

I did really find it difficult as a, um, as a student, as someone who had been in the same congregation from the time I was young all the way through adolescence to figure out what, how, how I would join the church just as an adult because the people I had gone to church with as a child had known me since I was a toddler and [I] sort of had this built in set of grandparents and community and when you're an itinerant grad student, um, you're not already linked to a family group and so it's a little hard.

Shiphrah considered difficulties of having church friends as an extension of family as organized by her mother's social networking. She explained the complexities of living with her husband's family before marriage. She said,,

I think, after [my mom] came here, she started looking more Dutch [Reformed] people up... They knew each other from the old country and then we started visiting them, okay? Um, so when I, and she always said, 'Oh! I'd always like my girls wedded to young [Dutch Reformed] boys' and I fell in love with one of them!... [Then,] two families were friends and we're all brought up together the same way, [but] everything is being torn apart, you know? I, I knew his parents were good people and knew they, well, they didn't know we were coming. So, when we came home, [his dad] says, well, she's here and [his mom] says, well, we can't have them living on the streets by themselves so obviously they're gonna stay with us so we gotta work something out.

Friends sometimes acted as gateways into churches. Bethany described comfort at her local church in the same Presbyterian tradition of her mother. She recalled,

We knew Maxine... I think I knew Vivian came here because I knew Viv before we started coming here and I think I knew that she came here and I just knew, well this is the Presbyterian Church and that's what I know, you know? So we just started coming here. Maxine was here and Cordelia and Mary Beth were friends and so [it] just clicked.

Laurel described her church as the place her mother took her where she was able to find friends and end social isolation. She explained,

Coming here is great because it just opened me up, meet new people, and, you know, Céline has friends and it just, I don't know, for me it just, I don't know about, it, just coming here and being associated with a church and everything, and, are awesome.

Vicky described childhood relationships with church-going families to whom her mother connected her. She said,,

We were always involved with families that were of faith. And that's what I attached myself to. Is the one's that [my mom] introduced me to. That's how, that's how I got to know those people. My fondest memories were of a lady who's passed on now. Whose parents used to live a few doors down from us and they were the ones who used to go to church all the time and I went with them all the time. Um, I don't know why we were never really brought up to say, 'Okay, it's Sunday we're going to church.' Very, you know, I was younger. I stayed with them. I went to church with them.

Peer relationships had this gateway function in adolescence and early adulthood as a conduit into and out of the congregational and denominational base of mothers.

Brenda attended her first evangelical church before formally leaving her mother's Catholic tradition, as she recalled,

I remember I had one of my very best friends, um she used to go to Destiny Tabernacle, um, Assembly of God... If I was like going to go with her to like her youth thing, I had to like, like, lie to my mom about it.

And in college she attended a fundamentalist church with friends. She remembered,

I mean what college kid goes to church, I mean you are hung over on a Sunday usually not going to church on a Sunday, right? Um, but I remember they had church at like 4:00 [in the afternoon] on a Sunday and she was like my, and two of my good friends, that I made, we used to go to church on Sundays.

Vicky visited churches with peers following a childhood of going with other families.

Conversely, Britany recalled leaving her mother's church:

Lesley: How about as you got a bit older, as you got into high school?
 Britany: I think it stopped after that.
 Lesley: Okay.
 Britany: Because, I, I was never home. I always was out with my fr-friends!

Positioned in the culture. The fifth and final sub-theme of Encountering Community is Positioned in the Culture. For many adult daughters, their ancestry and heritage are important for understanding religiosity in their adult daughter-mother

bond. Some describe their mothers or families as typical of a certain group – such as a cultural group within a religious tradition. Most adult daughters refer to upstate New York and its attributes. Prominent descriptors such as *highly Catholic* or *very secular* are used to describe the area. Often, comparisons between Catholicism and the mainline were made. Some participants describe being mainline in an area where persons are predominantly religiously unaffiliated, with the primary religion being Catholic, as being a religious minority. Mainline as a religious minority is also found in adult daughters' descriptions of diversity in Christianity in the United States broadly. Those who moved to upstate New York contrast the area to their home regions in the mid-West and the South.

For all the converts immigration or familial culture was an important concept in their and their mothers' faith traditions. For both Catholic mothers, Catholicism was strong within their Irish and Polish heritage. Melissa considered her family as typical of Irish-American Catholics and her mother as the consummate Irish Catholic mother,

We grew up in a very Irish Catholic cultural, cultural household, so, it's so much part of our family identity and, uh, the traditions of the family so I really appreciate that and I, I still like the bond with my, with my family... The Irish Catholic mother? Like, 'Your father isn't going to approve!' [laughs] which is her way of saying, 'I don't approve of this.' ...And I also think [being Catholic] is a huge part of growing up in the Northeast.

Brenda described her Polish Catholic family. She said,

I had 26 first cousins on my father's side, every, all of us, very Catholic. Because that's just, we came from a, like, farming, Catholic, Polish family. Everybody was Catholic. If you weren't Catholic, like, it was, like, you know [makes an undesirable face].

Clara traced Orthodoxy thorough her family's emigration from Eastern Europe including tracing her maternal side,

My parents' church is just over 100 years old. And my mom's mom was born in 1918 so, um, so I think she would have been baptized there as well. But, you know I'm from an immigrant background on both sides, on my mom's and my dad's side. We're all sort of Eastern emigrants from, um, oh, you know, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, like sort of thing... and Orthodox was the primary religion and so when they immigrated over, um, there was a very big, um, immigrant community of those from that area, um, and um, this is right around the turn of the century and eventually they all came together and raised funds and had a church built. Yeah, and so that's where, you know, my great-grandparents, um, and who were the ones that immigrated over and then my

grandparents and my parents all would have attended.

Clara noted the intersecting influence both faith and culture had on her mother and the rest of her family,

Gendered rules of men and women where men are very much one thing and women are very much another thing, um, that was certainly religiously influenced, um, but, um, I'm sure it was also culturally influenced to some degree but I think very much like religiously and so, probably, you know, from what my parents had grown up, um, learning, uh, as well, you know. I mean, I spent a lot of time with my mom and I was always with my mom in the service, like in the pews and stuff because that was just where you were especially when you were a young kid.

Lenore's mother's fundamentalist church positioned itself as a subculture against wider influences. Lenore described an all-encompassing experience, including multiple services per week, a strict affiliated parochial school, a tight-knit insular social circle, and familial dynamics closely tied to the teachings of the church. She said, "It was very conservative; it was very patriarchal," and describes it as a "bully system."

Lifelongs considered familial cultural influences on their and their mothers' faith tradition as well, although this was less extensive. Shiphrah's mother, father, and in-laws emigrated from the Netherlands and are Dutch Reformed. Shiphrah recalled immigration in her familial history, saying,

[Mom] was born during the War and I think it's different because violence was part of World War II and the way that they lived and the way that they were raised compared to how Americans see it, um, I think she brought a lot of that over... They know what it is like to, to *need*. You know, to need things... I think religion was just part of it... So [my husband and I have] always known each other, um, we were all pretty much raised the same. You know, my husband's parents, they're Dutch, I'm Dutch, we're all Dutch.

Bethany and her husband grew up on dairy farms and she considered her familial patterns in light of the farming culture and the demands in an agricultural life. She described difficulties attending church as she and her mother had many responsibilities on the farm. Bethany says her mother might send baked goods to a function to support the church but not attend because of the farm schedule. She described an upbringing that was, "busy at home and doing chores on the farm."

The two primary religious aspects of note in upstate New York are the experience of being highly religious in a chiefly secular culture and the predominance of Catholicism as the most practiced faith. Vicky described her Catholic stepfather and her non-practicing mother at her Protestant cousin's wedding. She said,

[My mother will] go into a church. Like, my stepfather going to a church and before going in the pew he does the sign of the cross, you know, because that's the Catholic things and he does what they say... My mother would just go in and sit down, you know what I mean? Stuff like that.

Shiphrah described secularism and Catholicism from her perspective. She said,

You can have a lot of people go to church and say they're Christian and I see it a lot of the Catholic Church. Like I've gone to, my sister-in-law is Catholic and we went to church with them and my husband said, 'You know, let's try it. Going there.' Well, I see how different it is from say our church... [Catholicism] is, 'Okay, we're Christians. I go to church on Sunday. If I go to church I'm good.' You recite the same things and they're singing the hymn, the last, at the end we're singing the hymn, well, in our church, we *sing* the hymn. Everybody's leaving! They're looking around, they're shaking hands. 'Bye, see you!' So, the way I see it as, 'Wow, it looks like as long as I make, make my one visit a week I'm good. Then let me get a clean slate every week.' Whereas, I see my church, you know, it's, it's, there's *more* to it than that.

Adult daughters marked differences between their mothers and the wider secular culture. Laurel set up the division between religious and secular in terms of her mother's religious teachings versus the problems her school peers experienced,

I think [my mom] set a good foundation for me. In terms of most of the other kids in school, the things they do, the people they hang out with, and things they get involved with, and I didn't get involved with any of that!

Brenda considers being a role model to her daughter in a secular culture. She says,

Maybe it's expected of women to be more that, that role model, but um, and also, when we have so many people in our lives that aren't religious. I know my daughter's going to have so many questions. She, we have a CD in our car, um, and there's a song, 'Having the Love of Jesus in Your Heart' and she's said to me, like, she was talking, she's like, she's like, 'Everybody has the love of Jesus in their heart.' And I'm like, hate to break it to you but they don't. Like, you know, and it's sad like just to be that motherly, like, figure and have to like break that to your kids.

Clara questioned if her strength to question her faith tradition came from her mother or if she was falling away from the church into secular society where any number of poor choices and outcomes might occur,

Is that my mom's influencing? Or am I just succumbing to like society and that sort of thing and so it was this idea that, you know, you know, that I'm kind of, I've gotten this

mind of my own from somewhere and these uppity ideas and I somehow think I'm better than the Church or that I know better and so I could end up doing, who knows what.

There was tension in lifelong's descriptions to define the mainline tradition of their mothers apart from both secular culture and conservatism, as Shiphrah considered her faith,

I wouldn't say I'm like a 'holy roller' that would say, like, everything is bad. Um, I try to, I try to have everything go back to a religious standpoint. Um, so what religious level am I right now? Like, I mean, you're strict [versus] you're nothing? I'm right in the middle. Because it does, it does mean *a lot* to me.

Shiphrah went on to explain she does not talk about her faith extensively away from church and home. She said, "I don't vocalize it, a lot, I guess. But we do, we do at home... When you're around people in public, you know, you don't, you don't talk about it a lot because, because a lot of, you know, like I said, a lot of people my age don't go to church."

Bethany describes a similar approach in locating religious conversations within her family, especially with her mother, but not the wider secular culture where she feels spirituality is unwelcome and assumed to be conservative.

Converts from Catholicism voiced the most difficulties with the Catholic Church and its influence; however, many speak of the Catholic Church as a dominant religion. Some comparisons are in passing to explain particulars of traditions. For example, Clara compared Easter services saying, "Whereas the Catholics have a midnight mass at Christmas, we had..." Or the population of the area, "Mainline Protestants are pretty small compared to the number of Catholics." Some descriptions of Catholics drew sharper distinctions and cultural contrasts. Bethany explained her mother is happy she is Presbyterian and raising the children in her mother's faith but that she would not be upset if they were not Presbyterian. She said, "She wouldn't be, like, I, I know how some Catholic people are but, you know how they get upset if their children aren't Catholic." Certainly Catholics were compared because of their

population and cultural heft in the area but part of the underpinning of these views includes a broadly anti-Catholic sentiment. Specifically, the requirement of Catholics to wed in the Catholic Church means adult daughters have family or friends who left their and their mothers' churches to marry Catholics. Clara explained, "My dad's sister married a Catholic from a very strong Catholic family... That made some interesting dissension that still sort of exists... with my Aunt Paula and her in-laws." Whatever the totality of the reasons for these conversions to Catholicism, changeovers were primarily viewed by adult daughters as token switches for the sole purpose of marriage and were framed as the massive Catholic Church poaching needed members from smaller faith traditions. Britany explained her childhood experience with her brother after he became Catholic and married in the Catholic Church:

- Britany: A couple of times I went to midnight Mass with my brother, when he turned Catholic. We went to St. Olivia's... on Christmas Eve... me, [my mom], my brothers, and um, a friend, a family friend, because he's the one that took Kyle to get him Catholic and all that... I sat most of the time.
- Lesley: Yeah?
- Britany: Because I said, I wasn't standing all the time... Even though I wasn't Catholic, they even let me go up there with Kyle to do the, the drinking and the, and like, 'I get to drink wine?' They were like, 'no, the kids get grape juice.'
- Lesley: Yeah. Okay. Um,
- Britany: But I didn't like the, the, the thing they put in your mouth.
- Lesley: Yeah, like, the wafer?
- Britany: Yeah.
- Lesley: Yeah.
- Britany: I, I spit it out.
- Lesley: Did you?
- Britany: I actually think I spit it on my brother. He's like, 'What are you doing?!' I was like, 'It tastes nasty!'

Lenore and Lucinda were the only adult daughters who moved from their mothers' regions to upstate New York. Both pointed to cultural differences experienced in their relocation. Lenore moved with her now separated husband so they could help her father-in-law start a new church. Lenore found the diversity of

upstate New York interesting and sees this as positive exposure for her children.

However, leaving the security of her community was difficult once she changed denominations. She said,

That was one thing that was very hard actually for me. Um, when I decided that I was no longer interested in being a fundamental Baptist because it's very, very, tightly knit community and it's almost Amish in the sense that once you decide that you're not part of it anymore? You're cut-off.

Lucinda spoke at length about differences between her mother raising her in a small town in the mid-West and her raising her own children in urban upstate New York.

In my hometown, just because of it being very rural and very small, it was more overtly religious generally and so, perhaps, the biggest difference is that, whereas my family growing up was probably one of the more, I mean we attended one of the more liberal leaning churches in town so that compared to my peers, uh, you know, we were probably viewed as kind of on the edge, right? Here, the fact that one attends a church whatsoever, uh, sets you apart as more overtly religious than your peer group, right? So, um, it's not so much that my, or our religious tradition is any different, it's just that the broader surroundings, um, make it seem different.

Further, she considered the denominational changes, as her mother before her, coinciding with her relocations to different states. She said,

I was just looking for another mainline denomination that shared some of my interests and seemed like a match... it's *not* like changing from Catholic to mainline Protestant Church, you know? I guess, in part, perhaps because Mom had changed through so many mainline denominations... 'What's the liberal and vibrant congregation in town?' Might be a way in which people make decisions about church homes more than denominational affiliations.

Summary of Findings

Adult daughters share a common experience of being devout mainline Protestants though each experience is distinctive. Interviews provide a window into the religiosity of their adult daughter-mother relationship. These important bonds changed over daughters' lives as they developed, had romantic relationships, and planned or had families of their own. Adult daughters who are planning or have families describe religiosity in the adult daughter-mother relationship as impacting the next generation and their own mothering. Adult daughters view their mothering as spiritual and endeavor to transmit their religion to their own children. The content and practice of faith was strongly connected to the adult daughter-mother relationship

including images of God and ethical understandings. Daughters express a depth of religious importance and wrestle with meaning in their lives and relationships. For many of the adult daughters their faith is the single most important construct in their lives and they view their life roles as daughter and mother as part of this construct. Adult daughters describe spiritual struggles and the power of their faith to cope with many adversities. One such adversity many adult daughters describe is the gendered realities they and their mothers face both in and out of the church. However, adult daughters also see the church as a place where refuge from sexism is found in the connections women have in the church as well as the stands and progress their own congregations and denominations have made.

Chapter V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Adult daughter-mother relationships are important intergenerational bonds in the family system. However, little has been explored regarding religiosity in these relationships. The present project offers new insight into this phenomenon with a hermeneutic valuing the voices of women as grounded in Gilligan's theory of moral development. The research questions posed inquire into the experience of adult daughters' religiosity in daughter-mother relationships, the transmission of religiosity from mother to daughter, and the challenges of being women in religious ecosystems. The present study considers the heretofore little known phenomenon of passing religion from one generation to the next. This may be of particular interest to mainline churches as they are seeing a decline in church membership. While men are leaving the church in higher numbers, the process of religious transmission within the adult daughter-mother dyad is of importance to consider how religiosity is successfully passed to the next generation.

Mainline Protestant adult daughters, identified for a homogenous sample, provided descriptions of religiosity in their relationships with their mothers. Measures included frequency of church attendance, a score of religious salience, ages of religious rites, descriptors for image of God, and brief spiritual genograms. Generational patterns from the literature review – here termed intensification, vertical transfer, and reduction – were used to consider the intergenerational transmission of the importance of religion. Qualitative interviews with in-depth questions, probes, and spontaneous follow-ups were completed with 12 adult daughters meeting recruitment criteria. The recordings of these interviews were transcribed into verbatim transcripts. These transcripts were considered using a hermeneutic methodology: interpretive

phenomenological analysis (IPA). Given the conversion of one-third of the sample to the mainline during adulthood, a variable was added for conversion as lifelong versus convert.

Three themes developed from thirteen subthemes generated through the interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) step-wise progression. These subthemes are described with contextualized quotations and descriptions of participant experiences. Self-reflexivity is reported for project design, continued throughout the process, and is in summary below as part of the assurances of trustworthiness for the hermeneutic phenomenology. The findings offer information about adult daughters' experiences and insight into many aspects of religiosity in the adult daughter-mother relationship, specifically among these mainline Protestants. These findings will contribute to the body of the scientific study of religion in the family.

Self-Reflexivity in Project Reflection

Revisiting self-reflexivity provides opportunity to consider further researcher assumptions and perspectives. Through the course of this project, memos were used to bring to further awareness to the self of the researcher. This is vital to continue to follow Van Stapele (2014) to “unpack the way my own subjectivity impinged on my framing of her narratives” (p.13). Important considerations included:

My assumption is mothers strongly influence adult daughters' religiosity. While this is in the literature and stories of participants, it was important to let the data draw connections not my opinion. I feel I was able to do this. Also, by identifying the importance of fathers there is a parental balance. Though not as central in the religiosity of adult daughters, fathers were highly salient for some, as detailed in Importance of Relatives.

Throughout the study I was struck by the way my knowledge of theology, scripture, and church polity and traditions helped me understand participants' framing of their stories. I was United Methodist for 15 years and became Presbyterian eight years ago. All participants are presently Methodist or Presbyterian so I was familiar with their church governance structures, liturgical calendars, and clergy practices. While these features were not crucial to the process of adult daughter-mother relationships, this information gave me a backdrop for understanding much of church life. Similarly, I was familiar with all of the scripture quoted or referenced. When participants discussed theological struggles I understood denominational teachings as well as the philosophical and historical underpinnings. My denominational ties made it possible for me to recruit clergy, most of whom were reticent to provide access to congregants. By networking

through clergy, I was able to provide pastors assurances using capital within these systems. Conversely, this familiarity occasionally proved challenging during interviews when participants would make comments, particularly about being women in the church, such as “*You* know how it is.” When encountering these comments, I would work to allow quiet space for women to elaborate or follow up with explicit probes asking for explanations of their meanings rather than, for example, nodding in agreement.

At the outset of this study I expected the primary generational pattern to be vertical transfer. I was raised in a culturally Protestant, religiously unaffiliated family so I expected these stories of religious transmission to be very different from my own life experiences. This was the case as only one participant, Vicky, described a generational pattern of intensification from a culturally Protestant mother. Her story has substantial intersections with my own and memos surrounding this interview include notes of countertransference and details of similarities and differences in our lives. During part of her interview, I was so struck by our considerable similarities that I offered limited self-revelation. As a family therapist, I have been trained extensively in appropriate disclosure and used these guidelines. As Vicky apologized for the complexity of her spiritual genogram, I explained my own genogram looked very similar and it was not a problem to fill in her relatives – I wanted to make certain I got everything properly represented. When I quoted and described Vicky in the body of this project, I read and reread with care my presentations of her views and quotations to be mindful of countertransference and to consider the uniqueness of Vicky’s experience. While Vicky and I have many contemporary differences, I felt it was important to pay particular attention to the many similarities in our families of origin so her words were not obfuscated by my own experiences. Finally, I discussed these similarities and how I present Vicky with a colleague who offered an opportunity to process my feelings and hear feedback.

A surprising feature of my sample is four participants are converts. Although it is in the literature women may convert to a more progressive sect to counter oppression, I did not expect a third of my participants would be converts. My first interview was with a convert and I assumed then she would be the only one and I wondered how she would ultimately fit into the analysis, especially given the IPA steps that start with the first participant. I found the stories of each conversion to be fascinating and at times I was jarred by disclosures of extreme sexism, repression, and subjugation. I could not help but feel these women had done the “right” thing by escaping these systems. During the course of the study, I worked to note these feelings and reflected on how I could be present with their stories compassionately – as what these women had found was right for them. This was especially important to me in light of some of the very difficult familial consequences some of these women faced and feared because of their conversions.

Discussion of Findings

The frame to consider the research questions is family systems theory and Gilligan’s theory of moral development. The mother-daughter dyad is ensconced in the broader family system as well as in relationship with the ecosystem of the church. The way power functions in systems is also considered in a gendered lens in the hermeneutic of this study, which marries well with Gilligan’s theory. Rather than viewing women as morally stunted, Gilligan argues women prioritize caretaking and must learn to include care of the self in their morality. These theories provide a frame

to consider religiosity in the adult daughter-mother relationship in this phenomenology. The results are decidedly relational and not lineal in nature and the constructs of gender are foundational within the family systems. Given the hermeneutic approach, the consideration of metaphor, symbol, and belief are important and well suited to the study of religion. This study poses the following research questions and below each one is taken in turn:

1. What are adult daughters' experiences of their mother-adult daughter relationships regarding religious issues? How has this changed over the span of the relationship?
2. How do adult daughters perceive their mother's religiosity and conceive of the transmission of religiosity from their mothers?
 - a. How do religious beliefs, language, symbols, and experiences function in the mother-adult daughter relationship?
 - b. How do adult daughters understand their mothers' religious influence?
3. How do adult daughters experience religion in mother-adult daughter relationships as a support or obstacle in regard to the challenges of being women?

Religiosity in the daughter-mother relationship. Religiosity is an important construct within the mother-daughter dyad for all of the participants. Though there are important differences between lifelongs and converts as well as those describing a generational pattern of intensification versus a vertical transfer, religiosity in the maternal relationship is salient for all the adult daughters. Many adult daughters have familial knowledge of infant baptisms in the Catholic, mainline, or Orthodox faiths. Several adult daughters describe early religious memories featuring their mothers. All of the adult daughters describe their mothers as influential in their religious

upbringing and most mothers offered direct instruction, engagement with a religious community, and continued religiosity once daughters became adults.

Families of origin surround religiosity in the mother-daughter relationship. Adult daughters describe their mothers as a religious foundation and a primary spiritual influence in their lives. Religiosity in the mother-daughter relationship is nested within familial systems. The relationships within these systems influence religiosity in the mother-daughter relationship. Adult daughters who describe a united parental presence between their mothers and fathers have spiritually influential fathers in the mainline. Converts consider their fathers the religious authority in their childhood homes but also describe identifying with their mothers within patriarchal church and family systems. Some fathers of lifelong were less active or not active in faith communities. All of the adult daughters have siblings and many adult daughters describe religious experiences with their mothers in common with these siblings. Sibling relationships vary from close bonds to complete emotional cut-off. Discord in relationships with brothers is markedly higher and often correlates with religious differences. Grandparents are the most important extended family. Some grandmothers were companions to worship services and offered direct religious instruction. Grandparent funerals were times of both religious difficulty and healthy grieving within the mother-daughter relationship.

Most adult daughters left home at the age of 18. For most lifelong, religious participation fell to what is described as a time away from the church. However, only Vicky, who describes an intensification pattern, had a literal time away. Lifelong remained connected to their faith traditions through their mothers and religious activities at college and/or on holidays. Melissa describes a similar time of less involvement but none of the other converts had a time less involved. Significant

others entered adult daughters lives as external influences on religiosity in the adult daughter-mother relationship. Most converts encountered faiths other than their mother's tradition in the context of romantic relationships. All intact marriages are with husbands that adult daughters identify as in the mainline. However, these husbands vary from devout to non-practicing. Devout husbands reinforce religiosity in the adult daughter-mother bond and religious transmission to the next generation. Adult daughters with infrequent or non-participating husbands describe tension between their marriage and following their mother's faith tradition.

Gilligan's ethic of caretaking is pronounced in the religiosity of adult daughter-mother relationships. Adult daughters describe their mothers as primary caretakers in childhood and influential in their religiosity from infancy through adulthood. Earliest memories of religiosity in the mother-daughter relationship include mothers in caretaking roles including providing affection and play with their daughters. Adult daughters with vertical transfers view their mothers as deeply connected with church communities. This engagement with the ecosystem of the religious group provides a caretaking milieu for children with changing activities through development such as youth groups and confirmation as supported by maternal involvement. All adult daughters, except Vicky, describe their mothers having integral roles in the church community including Sunday school teaching, cooking, organizing, and musical contributions. As well, informal ritual tasks in rites of passage and holiday observation are caretaking roles of mothers. Adult daughters describing a vertical transfer indicate religiosity as an important construct in their current caretaking relationships with their mothers including mutual emotional and/or instrumental support. For these daughters, maternal relationships include caretaking roles of mothers including grandmothering adult daughters' own children including

religious constructs. Adult daughters also describe what Gilligan describes as daughtering roles of caretaking for their mothers. While none of the adult daughters describe mothers as currently experiencing age related decline, daughters care for mothers in regard to medical issues and as supports for fathers' medical problems.

Religious transmission from mother to daughter. Religious meaning-making for adult daughters is deeply connected to the mother-daughter relationship and most prominent for those describing a vertical transfer. These adult daughters characterize their mothers as determining role models. For lifelong with such a generational pattern, their mother-daughter relationship is the fundamental source of their religious transmission even when adult daughters describe a united parental religious presence.

For converts, though their fathers were named the religious authority and as more religious, these adult daughters identified with their mothers and emulated maternal religiosity. Ultimately, these traditions were deemed to belong more to fathers than to mothers and were subsequently rejected for the mainline – perceived by converts as a place to continue their faith without the subjugation of women. For converts with a vertical transfer, religious transmission simultaneously rejects the religiosity of their family of origin while also continuing those aspects of religiosity these adult daughters viewed as positive from their mothers. Converts continued their religious practice in the mainline to the perceived disappointment and even anger of their mothers. However, converts with a vertical transfer describe their conversions as leaving manmade church structures and continuing internalized faith from the spirituality in the mother-daughter bond. Thus, there is a religious transmission paradox for converts. They have rejected the structures of their mothers' faith tradition, radically changed the identity and content of their faith, and practice

devoutly in houses of worship considered heterodox by their mothers. As well, they have rejected the faith tradition they perceive as trapping, oppressing, and hurting their mothers. They identify their mothers' religious instruction, image of God, and ethical system as archetypal. Yet, the changes they have made in their faith challenge the bedrock of more traditional and fundamentalist sects in their views of scripture, church ritual, the divinity of Jesus, and/or the proper role of women.

For adult daughters describing a vertical transfer, mothers are role models in their faiths. Many adult daughters have the same tasks and roles as their mothers, sometimes in the very same church structure, a generation later. Roles adult daughters report include those integral duties described above such as mission work, teaching Sunday school, playing music, cooking, and organizing as well as leadership roles in decisional bodies. Some lifelong describe their mothers having these leadership roles as well while converts describe mothers as silenced and segregated in thankless roles without authority. However, though leadership roles are available to women in the mainline and highly populated by the lifelong in this study, none of the converts hold a leadership role such as being a deacon or on a decisional body. Converts may be less likely to take such positions given their mothers were not role models in these leadership capacities.

Religious transmission includes sacred experiences for adult daughters with their mothers. All of the adult daughters describe these experiences including nodal events such as special holidays and rites of passage. Adult daughters take on the role of carrying much of the families' religious activity and identity through these events, often with the assistance and direct instruction of their mothers. Other sacraments, or ordinances, are important to adult daughter-mother relationships. In particular, communion is pregnant with shared meaning with their mothers for many adult

daughters and this ritual is largely shared within the church environment (though conversion complicates this connection). The dyadic mother-daughter relationship engages with the religious ecosystem wherein adult daughters describe extended family-like relationships.

For all of the adult daughters who have children, many rituals are continued for religious transmission to the next generation. Adult daughters with children are heavily influenced by religiosity in the mother-daughter relationship when rearing their own children. Adult daughters view mothering as spiritual and are heavily influenced by the way their mothers raised them religiously. Adult daughters describing intensification explain their parenting as in opposition to the way they were raised while those describing a vertical transfer point to clear continuation of parenting practices regarding religiosity. However, the latter describe their religious mothering as more relaxed in style or expansive in theology than their own mothers.

For lifelong describing a vertical transfer, there is a direct movement of beliefs, religious language, and symbols. These adult daughters describe nuanced changes and a sense of autonomy to adjust their religiosity to work for a new generation. However, they consider their view of Jesus as identical to their mothers and their view of God as very similar. Those daughters describing an intensification pattern describe assumed transmission of religious content but consider religion more salient in their own lives. However, both adult daughters with this pattern report they are unsure of these conclusions and perceive their mothers as religiously closed. Most converts describe actively working to change their religious beliefs but also depict and perceive a primacy of their mothers' beliefs. Converts explain finding continued meaning in the symbols of their mothers' faith but some consider ongoing deliberation of the reality to which symbols point. While they describe their image of

God as grounded in the religious teachings of their childhood, they are working to change these images. Further, for most of the converts, their view of Jesus now differs to the point of being considered heretical in their childhood faiths.

Lifelongs describing a vertical transfer consider mothers transferring faith to them primarily through strong modeling and engaging with the faith community. Except Shiphrah, these mothers are perceived by their daughters as providing a soft religious touch including not demanding or requiring certain dogma or observance. These daughters use words like “encouraged” and employ open metaphors to describe the religious transmission efforts of their mothers. Some of these adult daughters consider this process with an air of mystery sharing that though they believe their mothers did strongly and effectively influence them, they are not sure methodologically how their mothers accomplished this. Shiphrah and the converts describe much stronger direction from their mothers and wider religious systems designed to instruct them in doctrinal teachings, religious customs, and adherence to key tenants. Both adult daughters who grew up Catholic and some lifelongs report limited familiarity with scripture. However, the other converts and lifelongs consider scripture in the home and church important vehicles for their religious transfer.

Role modeling and the reproduction of those models are important in religious transmission, which is a type of socialization. Gilligan views the socialization of women as emphasizing caretaking roles, which participants universally describe in the family and the church. In the patriarchy, Gilligan notes, women’s caretaking is often undervalued. Some of the adult daughters describe work they and their mothers do as less prized and more presumed both in the home and in the church. Balance in caretaking is needed, Gilligan argues, which can be realized as both genders extend care as well as women being able to engage in needed care of the self. While

primarily women in the church fulfill caretaking roles, the church as a religious body also extends care through the administering of rites, sacraments, rituals, and worship meaningful in these adult daughter-mother relationships. As well, women offer each other caretaking through the social connections in these roles in the religious community, described as vital to the vertical transfer for lifelongs. Self-care incorporated into broader caregiving brings women to the peak of Gilligan's stage theory of moral development. Mindy reports her mother prescribing this integration by encouraging her not to do too much of the work of the church. Lenore describes the subjugation of Gilligan's second stage in expectations of women to be proper servants in the fundamentalist church in which she was raised.

Adult daughter-mother religiosity and the challenges of women. Given role modeling as a primary means of religious transmission; the roles women serve in the church, the level of caretaking demanded in those roles, and the prestige afforded to those roles are important considerations through a gendered lens of power as it operates in systems. Lifelongs describe further difficulty in both the decline of the mainline and the absence of men in the church. Many lifelongs express hardships in balancing work-life demands with church duties. Multiple roles include employment, homemaking, caretaking, and leadership in the church. Women describe the difficulties of balancing these roles with self-care and spiritual growth. They employ an ethic of caretaking and these systems are burdening them with more work than they can manage, quite apart from any self-care. A few women wept as they described the pressure of these roles and the spiritual consequences of being overwhelmed with caretaking duties. Women describe how their work is not afforded enough value and that solo care for children leaves them unable to grow spiritually.

These multiple roles and the resulting role strain are a primary challenge for lifelong. However, for lifelongs describing a vertical transfer whose mothers are still living, these adult daughters describe mothers providing pronounced instrumental, emotional, and religious support. Such support is common but especially pronounced during times of increased difficulty and the intensive infant and toddler raising years. All vertical transfers describe some level of religious support and many adult daughters describe prayer, shared worship, and joint experiences in the church.

Converts describe pronounced obstacles in the religiosity of their relationships with their mothers post-conversion. For two converts this includes fear of emotional cut-off in the adult daughter-mother relationship. These adult daughter-mother challenges follow converts' experiences of gender oppression in their childhood faith traditions.

Adult daughters describing intensification perceive mothers as insufficiently religious and view this as an obstacle in their adult daughter-mother relationship. Both express the belief their mothers would be happier, have improved mental health, understand them better, and have better relationships with them if they would attend any house of worship of their choice. Perhaps this view of adult daughters describing an intensification pattern is partly rooted in the overall finding that these highly religious adult daughters depend upon religious coping for dealing with difficulties.

Spiritual struggle related to gender are pronounced obstacles for adult daughters. While spiritual struggle for most lifelongs was a low-distress time of being less involved in the church, Shiphrah and the converts had pronounced spiritual struggles. Shiphrah experienced herself as being outside of her parents' grace and religious teachings when she lived with her husband before marriage and this had pronounced effects in the adult daughter-mother relationship. The converts left their

childhood religious traditions in part due to the subjugation of women. The primary oppressed woman each convert who describes a vertical transfer identifies is her mother. However, adult daughters perceived these conversions as universally disapproved by mothers. These conversions remain obstacles in the mother-daughter relationship for all converts describing a vertical transfer.

Caretaking within this key relationship is formative for adult daughters' ethics, family relationships, and religiosity. Adult daughters prioritize caretaking relationships in their families and churches. A challenge for many adult daughters is incorporating care of the self into their lives. The mutual supports mothers and daughters provide engage Gilligan's ethic of caretaking. Further, by making this relationship reciprocal through daughtering, mothers and adult daughters integrate opportunities for self-care in the religiosity of the adult daughter-mother bond. However, conversions strain this bond and limit these opportunities within the relationship. Converts, by leaving their familial traditions and joining a faith they believe is more congruent with their own views ultimately reach toward Gilligan's final stage. All converts describe attempting to both do what is right for their own religiosity while also continuing to engage their mothers. Converts describe their mothers as torn between their relationship and the religious and familial systems. Through Gilligan's theory, mothers are employing both a caretaking relationship with their daughters and overarching principles that prioritize *a priori* religious beliefs. Rigidity in the latter undermines the ethic of caretaking. For example, in Lenore's relationship with her parents, she describes her father as having cut her off spiritually. He has applied his *a priori* religious beliefs and not an ethic of caretaking with his daughter. Conversely, Lenore's mother depends upon her personal knowledge as a mother to remain in relationship with her, including attending her Presbyterian

congregation with her. She engages Lenore in discussions about grace and God's love in attempts to find common ground and expresses religious care in praying for her daughter. Lenore's mother applies this ethic of caretaking despite her *a priori* religious beliefs that one who leaves their tradition has left the salvific faith.

Adult daughters' own ethics relate to their gender and their familial roles including employing an ethic of caretaking. Adult daughters describing a vertical transfer, especially lifelongs, draw their ethics from religiosity in the mother-daughter relationship. Caretaking is a primary ethical value in missions based outreach such as to the poor and elderly. This is traditionally considered women's work in the church, was observed by adult daughters in their mothers' religiosity, and is continued by most of the adult daughters. However, adult daughters do not always agree with their mothers' ethical conclusions though they employ their ethical models and internalize their moral expectations. Interviews for this project occurred during national debates regarding same sex marriage following a long history of social justice advocacy in the Presbyterian denomination. Some adult daughters who consider same sex marriage make specific connections to friends and relatives including a caretaking stance. Clara describes her mother's struggle between applying an ethic of caretaking versus an *a priori* religious teaching for attending a same sex marriage. Clara concludes that her mother cannot make an autonomous ethical decision given her role as a priest's wife.

Connections to the Literature

Adult daughter-mother relationships perform a *linchpin function* of extended families (Townsend, 1957) and pass the kinkeeping duties of family life through the generations (Rosenthal, 1985). The present project supports the role of the adult daughter-mother relationship as performing these functions in the religiosity of family systems of lifelongs as well. Joining with the work of Banks-Wallace and Parks'

(2004) consideration of women in the Black Church, adult daughter-mother relationships carry the religiosity of these family systems. Further, mothers of lifelong describing a vertical transfer in this study function as religious identity keepers for their daughters as found in studies of Jewish family systems (Davey et al., 2001; Davey et al., 2003).

This *linchpin function* is less clear for converts and those describing a generational intensification pattern. Converts name their fathers as the more religious of their parents and the religious authority in their homes. They identify with the subjugation of their mothers and convert to the mainline to address tensions between gender and religion. The experiences of these adult daughters are somewhat in line with the findings of Keary (2014) in her sample of Catholic mothers and daughters. However, while Keary finds movement of Catholic daughters away from their faith, the converts in the present project remain highly religious in the mainline with pronounced influences in the adult daughter-mother bond. Two adult daughters describe the pattern of intensification found by Sands et al. (2013) in their consideration of *teshuva*.

Emotional ambivalence in adult daughter-mother relationships, as found in the literature, is voiced by adult daughters in the present study. Ambivalence is greatest for daughters describing a generational intensification pattern. Converts also experience ambivalence and this may be related to the value of women as found by Guo et al. (2013) in childhood religious traditions of converts, as well as the strain of the conversion in the relationship. Emotional cut-off in adult daughter-mother relationships is unusual in the literature and none of the adult daughters in the present study were emotionally cut-off from their mothers. However, two converts feared maternal cut-off. Conversely, ambivalence among lifelong is low to non-existent for

those with a vertical transfer pattern. Shiprah is the only lifelong describing a vertical transfer with marked ambivalence. She is among the first generation born in the United States in her family and she describes immigration and assimilation concerns in her adult daughter-mother relationship contributing to pronounced ambivalence. As found by Fingerman (2001) and Philips (1991), ambivalence is far lower than the support and concern adult daughters describe in their relationships with their mothers regardless of conversion status or generational pattern. Existing research emphasizes either alignment of roles or maturation effects as ameliorating ambivalence between mothers and adult daughters. In the present study, some adult daughters speak specifically to the alignment of roles between generations once they became mothers as increasing the adult daughter-mother bond. As well, some adult daughters describe maturation in terms of views of mothers as adolescents versus now. Perhaps this tension in the adult daughter-mother literature between alignment and maturation could better be understood as two mutually reinforcing constructs reducing ambivalence.

Each adult daughter shares the nominal religious transmission of Christianity with her mother as found across the research on parent-child religious transmission. However, deep exploration of the adult daughter-mother relationship in the present project reveals both radical changes within Christianity between generations as well as strong vertical transfer of the *content* of faith within the adult daughter-mother relationship. Radical changes for converts are rooted in the adult daughter-mother relationship as converts identified with their mothers in religious systems wherein they were subjugated and moved to change their faith tradition in response. Strong vertical transfer of religious importance, content, and practice is characteristic for lifelongs.

Nationally, secularism on the rise while religious diversity is increasing. Secularism is prominent in the location of upstate New York and featured in the sub-theme of Positioned in the Culture. Adult daughters draw themselves as distinct from secular culture and yet are engaged with multiple secular systems and relationships with the unaffiliated and the non-practicing. As well, religious diversity is high even in the present homogenous sample of mainline Protestants. For example, adult daughters have interfaith relationships such as a Muslim boyfriend and a Sikh brother. In addition, converts have childhood faith traditions and families who are fundamentalist Baptist, Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox. These diversities highlight the need for understanding intersections of diverse faith traditions and family systems. Some of the adult daughters point to immigrant histories in their families and the lasting effects these traditions have on their contemporary familial religiosity. These families brought their faith into a new land with generational impacts. Current research on immigration patterns predicts the cultural and religious effects some adult daughters describe in the present study. The decline of the mainline and the experiences of lifelong in regard to this decline are found in the present study as a microcosm of national trends but here through qualitative data. However, converts may be part of broader new movement into the mainline.

Avishai et al. (2015) call for research to consider religiosity for women “not just as a variable but as a social structure.” The present study seeks to represent the experiences of adult daughters as contextualized and within the complexities of their social structures. The truths of religious women from many walks of life are included herein to provide a platform for their voices. These adult daughters are devout in their religious practice and understand many of their life choices and caretaking as extensions of their religiosity. Roles as wives and mothers (and in one case

grandmother) are religious roles for these adult daughters as found in the literature and their ethic of caretaking is grounded in moral reasoning.

Limitations

Findings of the present project offer insights into religiosity in the bonds of mothers and adult daughters. However, there are multiple limitations in the study and the application of its findings. Limitations include the one-sided perspective of adult daughters without their mothers' in the midst of a two-way relationship. While religious transmission is commonly conceived as a process that moves from the older generation to the younger generation, familial connections are interactive. Daughters do not passively receive mothering but act in their relationships to also influence mother-daughter bonds. The mothers' perspectives on daughtering, their own mothering, and their religious views are not present here. While mothers' contact information was requested for an additional wave of study to include mothers, only four adult daughters provided this information. Many expressed sharp apprehension about their mothers knowing they discussed their relationship or religiosity. Two adult daughters expressed a desire to protect their mothers from contact or questions their mothers might find uncomfortable. Two mothers are deceased.

Participant diversity in this study is remarkable across multiple parameters including socio-economics, area population density, education, and familial composition. However, this study is limited to a Caucasian population. The construct of mainline as a white understanding arising out of white historical experience, particularly in the northern United States, is unchallenged by the composition of this project. This is partly due to the historical and contemporary segregation of churches along racial lines as well as the majority white racial make-up of upstate New York.

Three of four pastors who connected participants with this project are women. Five of six male clergy contacted did not even respond. All four female clergy contacted agreed to help connect participants and three successfully did. It is difficult not to see in this (non)response pattern the gendered nature of people's religious experience repeating itself. While it may be too much to argue that, had this been a study about adult sons and father's patterns of religious transmission, the male pastors asked to help identify participants might have all successfully sought out male congregants to take part, it is striking that 80% of the male pastors contacted for this study did not even reply to the request at all. If a non-response suggests the importance with which the study itself may have been viewed by the male clergy contacted, things may be worse in terms of gender roles in these congregations at least than they may otherwise seem.

And while the sample is purposive and qualitative data make no claim upon absolute representativeness of a wider population, it is reasonable to reflect on the idea that congregations and women with female pastors may differ in important ways from those with male pastors (such as being more progressive, more rural, and/or more impoverished). As well, those pastors who contacted the women in their congregations served as a go-between the population in their congregation and the research project. Though the five pastors who did seek participants reported providing as many participants for the project as possible, specific numbers were not requested of them in an effort to make their role in recruitment as simple as possible.

Though the overwhelming generational pattern of this sample is vertical in religious transfer, this is not a generalizable mainline pattern. The adult daughters were recruited as highly religious and involved women in their congregations. Therefore, the pattern found by Keary (2004) in Catholic families wherein most adult

daughters were far less religious than their mothers was not likely given the recruitment method. Similarly, Sands et al. (2013) worked to recruit adult daughters who had experienced *teshuva*, a Jewish intensification. The intensity of religiosity across generations is presently best considered as descriptive of particular relational patterns and more research on religiosity in mother-daughter relationships is needed.

Self of the researcher is also a limitation in the project. While familiarity with the mainline tradition had countless advantages, it also had some disadvantage as outlined in self-reflexivity. While most lifelongs immediately provided thick descriptions, a few struggled at times both to articulate their experiences and to describe constructs to someone they assumed already had knowledge of their faith tradition. Further, there may be a tendency for converts to be more interested in this project and therefore more likely to participate, thereby yielding one-third of the population of this study. Converts expressed interest in research questions, the planned applications of the research, and when they would learn of results from participating in the study. As well most converts had a lot they wanted to process and these interviews were generally, but not always, longer than lifelongs' interviews.

Practice Implications

While religion may not be frequently broached in counseling, adult daughters of this study find religion very important. Participants make multiple connections to religion in familial relationships including sources of support and tension. These connections are of interest to family therapists seeking to consider diversity in the therapeutic milieu. The religious diversity in this sample is pronounced even though all of the adult daughters are practicing mainline Protestants. Their childhood religious traditions vary as well as the denominations of their family members. There

are layers of diversity represented in the intersection of religion and gender as well, which are especially pronounced for those women who converted.

Approaching religiosity as an area of diversity is needed as a competency for ethical and effective assessment and intervention. Britany specifically states she is thinking of discontinuing counseling because she feels her counselor does not understand her religion or related moral decisions. Britany has pronounced grief following her mother's death, feelings of guilt, and multiple stressors as a caregiving grandmother in poverty. In the same way therapists must have competencies in racial diversity to effectively work with clients, an openness to considering religion and how it functions in families and presenting issues is vital in training sound therapists.

Therapists who explore religious aspects of cultural terms may have a fuller picture of the impact of religion, such as important rituals and beliefs. For example, Shiphrah repeatedly describes her family as "Dutch" but this has for her not only cultural connotations of a country of origin but also religious connotations as within the Reformed tradition. "Dutch" for her is shorthand for "Dutch Reformed."

Convert is a strong word. Using this term to describe moving between Christian traditions may seem to be an over application of the term, however, all the converts used this term to describe their switch to the mainline. There is a momentous shift for each convert in the type of Christianity practiced and the departure from the familial tradition. While these converts describe the familial consequences and changes in their personal beliefs in detail in the scope of this project, a full exploration of these conversion experiences in the therapeutic milieu would require a therapist to be open to understanding a change in religious sect within a given tradition as a conversion. Describing a conversion such as Lenore's as, "Baptist to Presbyterian, yes, but both are Christian," would minimize a client's departure from a

fundamentalist Baptist culture to a progressive Presbyterian congregation as well as the familial influences during this change. Embedded in contextual understandings of conversion within and between faith traditions is recognition of a vast diversity. This diversity is seen here within the family systems adult daughters describe. Some participants express disagreement with Christianity being seen as monolithic, note differences in beliefs and terms across traditions, and consider the mainline as a minority and often-misunderstood faith.

Emotional cut-off and feared cut-off has a strong presence in some of these family systems. As highly religious participants, adult daughters describe cut-off and familial tensions wherein pointed religious matters are concerned. Family therapists who encounter emotional cut-off or the threat of cut-off and seek to strengthen bonds between family members may explore religious features of cut-off with highly religious clients or clients from highly religious families. Two of the converts express angst regarding the possibility of being emotionally cut-off from their families of origin as well as point to intersections of religiosity and changes in familial connection and support. Clara considers marrying outside the Orthodox faith as a potential point of *spiritual cut-off* wherein she would no longer be part of her family's religion on in their graces. Lenore is the only convert married prior to her conversion. She is now separated from her husband and describes alignment between her parents and husband as fundamentalist Baptists and her turn away from her church and marriage as cause for her parents' withdrawal of support. She considers her relationship with her mother tenuous to the point of feared emotional cut-off and describes herself as already cut-off from her brother, her childhood community, and lifelong family-like relationships. Lenore experiences herself as already *spiritually*

cut-off from her father and fears her mother will join him once marital separation becomes finalized into a divorce.

Interfaith marriage is an important area of study, and this construct does appear in this project. However, far more numerous are those marriages between religious and non-practicing partners. Numbers of the religiously unaffiliated and non-practicing are on the rise in the United making these marriages increasingly likely as is found in the present study in a markedly secular area. Adult daughters in this study point to many tensions in these marriages even though this was not a specific topic of study for this project. Family therapists may not realize religious differences are contributing to marital discord, especially when one partner is nominally of the same tradition or does not view religion as significant. Further, these are not interfaith marriages (because there is only one faith) and a lack of labeling and definition may further contribute to the difficulty in identifying and naming the marital bond and discord. Just as children born of interfaith marriages have specific needs and concerns, children of these marriages, such as Tristan, may have questions, sense tensions between their parents, or feel split loyalties. Gender effects may be important considerations in families such as Mindy's where mom goes to church with daughters while dad stays home with sons.

Religious coping is an important aspect in the hermeneutic phenomenology and Coping composes one sub-theme in Religious Consciousness. Another sub-theme, Prayer and Scripture, has significant overlap with religious coping as well. Therapists who consider the spiritual resources of clients who are already accessing religious coping may be able to leverage a fundamental client strength in which the client herself already has faith. Therapists may be able to explore how religious

coping may be understood and accessed by clients for problems such as dealing with medical issues and grief.

Adult daughter-mother relationships in this study provide significant instrumental and emotional support. While emotional ambivalence in adult daughter-mother bonds is found and considered in the study, this ambivalence is low to nonexistent for nearly all lifelong vertical transfers. Families wherein religious transmission is strong may have untapped resources for support that therapists could provide scaffolding to access such as shared religious traditions and conversation, worship, congregational connections, and prayer. These families also have clergy and networks of ministry that may be accessed for additional support as well as “church family” with existing formal and informal arrangements to help persons and families in need.

Future Research Recommendations

In order to establish a *linchpin function*, more research is needed regarding religiosity in the adult daughter-mother relationship. Given the diversity of religious traditions, future populations may be identified for study of the adult daughter-mother dyad. Mainline Protestants in different regions, specifically regions where Protestants are not a minority could offer a different perspective of religiosity in the adult daughter-mother relationship. Immigration is a strong influence in the sub-theme Positioned in the Culture and further research on religiosity in adult daughter-mother relationships post immigration could point to generational differences in religious practice in a new country. Existing research considers only African-American, Caucasian, and Jewish groups, which limits the understanding of cultural influences on religiosity in adult daughter-mother relationships. Also, only western and

monotheistic religions, specifically Judaism and forms of Christianity are currently represented in this body of research.

Missing from the present project is the perspective of mothers in the adult daughter-mother relationship. The voices of mothers are present in this project in terms of adult daughters as mothers themselves, however, future research could benefit from explicitly including the mothers in the dyadic relationship. In terms of religious transmission, the perspectives mothers themselves have on how they view their parenting would provide an understanding broadening that provided by the work of Keary (2014), and Sands et al. (2013). Further analysis of the present data, even without interviews directly with mothers, could generate a theory of maternal religious types. Such a typology may have connections to generational patterns as well as levels of emotional ambivalence in the adult daughter-mother relationship. As well, Clara concludes her interview noting that a conversation about religiosity in her adult daughter-mother relationship would be even more interesting several years down the road when she has perhaps navigated marriage and children as a convert. A longitudinal study of religiosity in the adult daughter-mother relationship with both converts and lifelong would be informative research regarding changes over time.

One third of the participants in this study converted to the mainline. However, the exigencies of converts lives, specifically their familial systems in relation to these conversions is explored here in very initial footings for four women. The protocol of this project was created without inclusion of conversion as a construct in adult daughter-mother relationships. Specific exploration of conversion in the adult daughter-mother relationship as well as other familial relationships could contribute to understanding the kinds of benefits and costs converts incur as well as the process of conversion. Two of the four converts disclose a history of abuse in their parents'

marriages and this relationship may be strong as an impetus toward conversion, especially among women. Converts describe religious concepts with the push and pull of competing traditions and these theological shifts are ripe for exploration as well. Research may also consider the experiences of family members related to converts and their understanding of conversion. For example, Lucinda describes her brother converting to a fundamentalist church, her feelings about this change, and her sense of the refutation of her mother's religious teachings.

Future research could address religious tensions within the family. While emotional cut-off is an area of deep familiarity for family therapists, *spiritual cut-off* could be developed as an area of religiosity research in adult daughter-mother relationships. More generally, the religious tensions in relationships of families such as attending versus non-attending siblings or intergenerational dynamics offer areas for further exploration. Particularly, the marital relationships of religious persons and those who are non-practicing or unaffiliated requires study.

This study uses a gendered lens of family systems in the consideration of religiosity in the adult daughter-mother relationship. Moving forward, this lens in future research could reasonably take an overtly feminist approach. Specifically, efforts by adult daughters and their mothers to covertly and overtly counter patriarchal systems, especially in the stories of converts are plentiful. Converts described their fathers as the primary religious authority in the home and the church. For both converts and lifelong, the mainline tradition is often described as offering a different gendered experience and feminist concepts such as safe space could be explored.

Britany, who was in counseling at the time of her interview, explained that she was considering discontinuing it because she felt her counselor did not understand her

religion and her moral reasoning. The experiences of religious clients in therapy and their view of the therapist's comprehension of their religion may offer insight to religious persons and families views of their therapeutic experience. Religious clients and families may offer valuable feedback regarding their perceptions of treatment. As well, therapists experiences of working with highly religious clients, particularly clients with different religious traditions may clarify areas of comfort/discomfort, skill development, and proficiency for training therapists in religious diversity.

Clergy and church issues for further research arise in the present project, as well. Given the gender differences in the response rate of recruited clergy, how clergy understand the importance of women's religious experiences and relationships is of interest. A reexamination of the stained glass ceiling given the increasing history of ordination of women in the mainline is in order including the experiences of clergy who are women and their parishioners. While it is assumed congregations prefer male clergy, this may be beginning to change as both Clara and Karen, as young women active in the church, expressed a preference for female clergy. Gender differences in such preferences would be expected. Unpaid work of women in the church is of interest as well to further consider Hvidtjørn et al.'s (2014) paradox of women in the church. As women continue to be responsible for what has traditionally been considered women's work in the church and as they take on more leadership roles, the weight of these responsibilities in the paradox intensifies even as gains in equality are ostensibly made. Vicky highlights the work of women in the mainline as fulfilling *both* traditionally female and male roles to do the majority of church work.

Conclusion

This project brings together 12 adult daughters in the mainline Protestant tradition who are devout in their practice to consider religiosity in their relationships

with their mothers. These foundational relationships interact with wider familial, church, and cultural systems. There are many commonalities in the lives of these adult daughters, though a particular divide is found in the lives of those four women who converted to the mainline and those who were raised by their mothers as mainline Protestants. As well, two women describe a generational pattern of intensification in their adult daughter-mother relationship. This project provides a platform for the voices of these women to describe their experience of religiosity in their adult daughter-mother relationship and thus insight into the constructs of this phenomenon. The outcomes of this project are of value to family therapists considering religious diversity, pastoral counselors, counseling and seminary training programs, clergy of all faith traditions, and Christian educators. The experiences herein provide an invitation to understanding the importance of mothers in women's religious beliefs, experiences, and practices. Van Deusen and Courtois (2015) note faith "fosters positive identity and hope." Perhaps most importantly, women can increasingly recognize and understand their and their mothers' familial and spiritual influences to find identity and hope in the Faith of Our Mothers.

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APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL LETTER



Office of Research Compliance
 Institutional Review Board
 North End Center, Suite 4120, Virginia Tech
 300 Turner Street NW
 Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
 540/231-4606 Fax 540/231-0959
 email irb@vt.edu
 website <http://www.irb.vt.edu>

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 31, 2015
TO: Scott W Johnson, Lesley Ann Earles
FROM: Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (FWA00000572, expires April 25, 2018)
PROTOCOL TITLE: Faith of Our Mothers: Religiosity in Mother-Adult Daughter Relationships
IRB NUMBER: 15-309

Effective March 31, 2015, the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chair, David M Moore, approved the New Application request for the above-mentioned research protocol.

This approval provides permission to begin the human subject activities outlined in the IRB-approved protocol and supporting documents.

Plans to deviate from the approved protocol and/or supporting documents must be submitted to the IRB as an amendment request and approved by the IRB prior to the implementation of any changes, regardless of how minor, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. Report within 5 business days to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

All investigators (listed above) are required to comply with the researcher requirements outlined at:

<http://www.irb.vt.edu/pages/responsibilities.htm>

(Please review responsibilities before the commencement of your research.)

PROTOCOL INFORMATION:

Approved As: **Expedited, under 45 CFR 46.110 category(ies) 6,7**
 Protocol Approval Date: **March 31, 2015**
 Protocol Expiration Date: **March 30, 2016**
 Continuing Review Due Date*: **March 16, 2016**

*Date a Continuing Review application is due to the IRB office if human subject activities covered under this protocol, including data analysis, are to continue beyond the Protocol Expiration Date.

FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS:

Per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.103(f), the IRB is required to compare all federally funded grant proposals/work statements to the IRB protocol(s) which cover the human research activities included in the proposal / work statement before funds are released. Note that this requirement does not apply to Exempt and Interim IRB protocols, or grants for which VT is not the primary awardee.

The table on the following page indicates whether grant proposals are related to this IRB protocol, and which of the listed proposals, if any, have been compared to this IRB protocol, if required.

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APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPANTS

Project title: **Faith of Our Mothers: Religiosity in Mother-Adult Daughter Relationships**

Investigators: Lesley Ann Earles, Ph.D. Candidate, MAMFT
Scott W. Johnson, Ph.D.

Department of Human Development,
Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA.

TO YOU, THE PARTICIPANT:**I. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to learn about women for whom religion is an important part of their lives. The study is to learn about religion in the context of mother-daughter relationships from Mainline Protestant adult daughters. The study will consider how adult daughters share religious experiences with their mothers and understand challenges. For this study, women who are aged 18 to 45 and active in their Mainline Protestant Church may decide to participate. Approximately 12 women will be interviewed about their relationship with their mother in regard to religion. Upon discovery of initial findings of the study, participants will have the opportunity to offer follow-up comments and reflections.

II. Procedural Information

The entire interview process will take approximately two hours, depending upon the length of answers and reflection. Interview questions are identical across participants and were written to invite consideration of how religion operates in mother-adult daughter relationships. Interviews may take place in your home, house of worship, or another comfortable location. If needed, interviews may also take place via teleconferencing. The interview will be video recorded. Once the interview is completed, a word for word transcript will be completed. Themes will be generated from these transcripts to study religion in mother-adult daughter relationships.

III. Potential Risks

The risks of participating in this study are very small. The topics of questions may, in some cases, lead to personal anxiety/discomfort as they are considered. You may choose not to answer any given question.

IV. Potential Benefits

This study may benefit you by helping you to see the importance of your role as a daughter and/or participant in your religious community. The information gathered in this study will contribute to the understanding of religion in mother-adult daughter relationships. It may also provide valuable information for family therapists who work with religious families. There is no guarantee

of these benefits and no promise is implied to encourage your participation. You are welcome to contact the researchers for conclusions drawn from this study.

VI. Anonymity and Confidentiality

Your identity will be kept confidential. All names and identifying information will be protected and not disclosed. Questionnaires will not ask you to include your name or the last names of your family. All identifying information related to the study will be given a number code. Recording and transcripts from the interviews will be kept under lock at all times. While being transported, your information will be kept under lock and while stored it will be kept under double lock. It is possible that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Virginia Tech may view this study's collected data for auditing purposes. The IRB is responsible for the oversight of protecting human participants, such as you, who are involved in research. In certain specific situations, it may be necessary for the investigator to break confidentiality. If child or elder abuse is known or strongly suspected, investigators are required to notify the appropriate authorities. Also, if you are believed to be a threat to yourself or others, the investigator will have to notify the proper authorities.

VII. No Compensation

There is no compensation offered or implied for the completion of this study. If as a result of participation the investigator believes that you would benefit by seeking counseling or medical treatment, a list of local providers will be given to you. Any accrued expenses will be your sole responsibility and not that of the research project, research team, or Virginia Tech.

VIII. Freedom to Withdraw

You are free to withdraw from this study at any time without any penalty. You may ask that the video recorder be turned off at any time during the process of the study. You may decline to answer any questions that you choose without penalty.

IX. Informed Consent

You will receive a copy of this consent form prior to beginning the interview. The investigator will verbally review the informed consent, offer to read the consent to you, and thoroughly answer any questions regarding participation. You will be asked to verbally indicate your agreement and required to sign the document.

This research project proceeds only upon approval of the Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects at Virginia Tech.

X. Your Permission to Participate

I have read and understand this Informed Consent Form and I voluntarily agree to participate in this project. I have had questions I have about the project answered to my satisfaction and comfort. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent to participate in this project.

You, the Participant

Print Name _____

Your Signature _____

Date _____

Researcher Signature _____

Date _____

For questions related to this research, contact:

Lesley Ann Earles, Investigator, (910) 733-1734 FOOMproject@gmail.com

Scott Johnson, Principal Investigator, (540) 231-7201 scottwj@vt.edu

Joyce Arditti, Departmental Reviewer (540) 231-5758 jarditti@vt.edu

Anisa Zvonkovic, Department Head (540) 231-4794 anisaz@vt.edu

For questions related to the rights of the participant, the conduct of investigators, or in the event of a research-related injury to the participant, contact:

David M. Moore, IRB Compliance Chair, (540)-231-4991, moored@vt.edu

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Construction of spiritual genogram.

Questions as follows:

1. Describe yourself religiously at this point in your life experience.
2. Do you experience yourself as having been raised in your mother's faith?
 - a. How has your mother tried to influence your religion?
 - b. How important do you think it is that you share her religion?
 - c. How has your maternal grandmother influenced your family's faith?
 - d. As applicable: Are you raising your children in your faith in a similar way to how you were raised? Differently?
3. Describe the influence of religion on your relationship with your mother (early childhood, elementary to high school, launching, thereafter).
4. What religious expectations do you feel your mother had for you growing up? How do you feel you have met or not met those expectations? What religious expectations do you think she has for you now? Do you feel you meet these?
5. Describe the religious activities and experiences you share with your mother.
 - a. What kinds of activities do you do together? How often?
 - b. What has been the best religious experience you have shared? What happened? What was positive? Who experienced this?
 - c. What has been the most difficult religious experience you have shared? What happened? What was difficult? Who experienced this?
6. Do you and your mother share the same religious language, symbols, and meanings?
 - a. Tell me about the religious language you and your mother use. What kinds of religious topics do you discuss?
 - b. How is your religious symbolism the same? Different?
 - c. Do you have similar religious meanings as your mother? Dissimilar?
 - d. Do you and your mother understand God in similar ways? Dissimilar?
7. Are there challenges you uniquely face as women?
 - a. What challenges do you face as a women in your faith?
 - b. How do you cope with those challenges? How has your faith supported you in those challenges? What kinds of religious support do you and your mother offer each other?
 - c. How do you feel things have changed for women of faith between your and your mother's generations? What challenges have decreased? What challenges have increased?
 - d. What might be helpful in terms of your religion changing to address these challenges?
8. Is there anything else you would like to share about the religious features of your mother-daughter relationship?

APPENDIX D

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Denomination _____

Name of Church _____

Frequency of Attendance (please include services, suppers, committees, circles, activities, clubs, classes, volunteer activities, et cetera that occur in your religious community)

_____ per month on average

Last high holy day service attended _____

Last rite of passage observance _____

Indicate at what age the following occurred for you (mark X if never):

_____ Baptism _____ Confirmation _____ Covenant of Marriage

(Continued on next page.)

First names of Children (please indicate if none)	Age	Gender	Relationship (Biological, Adopted, Step, Other-describe)
First names of Siblings (please indicate if none)	Age	Gender	Relationship (Full biological, Half, Adopted, Step, Other-describe)

Number of years you lived with your mother _____

City, State, and Country of Birth _____

What is your current marital status (please circle one)?

- Single
- Married
- Widowed
- Domestic Partner
- Separated
- Divorced

(Continued on next page.)

Age: _____ Racial Identification: _____

What is the highest level of education you have obtained (please circle one)?

- | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Less than High School | High School or GED | Some College |
| Two-year College Degree | Four-year College Degree | Graduate Degree |

Please circle those words most consistent with your image of God:

- | | | |
|---------------|------------------------|------------|
| Loving | Omniscient/All-knowing | Punishing |
| Mother | Omnipotent/Almighty | Father |
| Counselor | Triune/Trinitarian | Creator |
| Vengeful | Forgiving | Just |
| Commanding | Wise | Peaceful |
| Authoritative | Universal/Ecumenical | Relational |

My religious faith is (check one):

- Important for my life, but no more important than certain other aspects of my life.
- Only of minor importance for my life, compared to certain other aspects of my life.
- Of central importance for my life, and would, if necessary come before all other aspects of my life.

Everyone must make many important life decisions such as which occupation to pursue, what goals to strive for, whom to vote for, what to teach one's children, etc. When you have made, or do make decisions such as these, to what extent do you make the decisions on the basis of your religious faith? (Please check one.)

- I seldom if ever base such decisions on religious faith.
- I sometimes base such decisions on my religious faith but definitely not most of the time.
- I feel that most of my important decisions are based on my religious faith, but usually in a general, unconscious way.
- I feel that most of my important decisions are based on my religious faith, and I usually consciously attempt to make them so.

Without my religious faith, the rest of my life would not have much meaning to it.

1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree