

More Than a Place of Worship: Resilience Through Social Capital in the Korean Church During the COVID-19 Pandemic

**by
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Abstract

In an urban context, the immigrant church is not only a place of worship, but it is also a community hub, a cultural center, and a social gathering place. When COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic in March 2020, there began a ripple effect of economic, social and mental health impacts.

This study explores the use of social capital at three Korean immigrant churches in the Greater Toronto Area and Metro Vancouver to demonstrate community resilience. This research explores how and what kinds of supports were provided between the leadership and congregation, as well as between congregant-to-congregant. Although the physical locations were closed, the communications infrastructure and social relationships that existed prior to COVID were instrumental in sustaining a support network for Korean churchgoers during the pandemic. The immigrant church is a valuable urban asset that cities ought to support and partner with for future shock and stress events.

Keywords: Korean immigrant church; social capital; community resilience; COVID-19

Dedication

To my parents, who left their country with two young children, and made a new life in a new country. They are the most resilient people I know, and it is because of their resilience that I have the opportunity to present this project.

Thank you, mom and dad, for your dedication, sacrifice, and love.

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This research took place on the ancestral and unceded territories of the Squamish, Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Kwikwetlem nations. This research also virtually took place on the ancestral traditional territories of the Ojibway, the Anishnabe, and the Mississauga of the New Credit. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

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List of Acronyms

CERB	Canada Emergency Response Benefit
CMA	Census Metropolitan Area
COVID	Coronavirus disease
CWB	Canada Workers Benefit
EM	English Ministry
GTA	Greater Toronto Area
KM	Korean Ministry
TDSB	Toronto District School Board

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background

I arrived in Canada as an immigrant from South Korea in 2000, as a five-year-old child. My parents came with no social connections whatsoever, with a few thousand dollars, and the hope of a new life in Canada. It was an incredibly trying first decade, as my father realized both his educational credentials and work experience were worthless in this new country. The language barrier was the most difficult to overcome; learning any new language is challenging, but at 35 years old, even more so. My mother took care of my younger brother and I, and we began to acculturate to our new environment. We, of course, had a much easier time mastering the English language, and understood the cultural norms through exposure to elementary school.

One of the first things my parents did was finding a Korean church to attend. They were already Protestant believers in Korea, so naturally they needed to find a place to worship. As a result, I also attended church every week. As I grew up and reflected more on the role of the Korean church in our family's life, I began to understand it was more than a place of worship. Of course, the primary function was to observe religious rituals, but I soon realized it was also a place where my parents could ensure that I retain a strong ethnic identity, observe cultural holidays not celebrated as widely in Canada (such as the mid-autumn festival) and share Korean meals together. It also served practical purposes: my parents formed relationships with other peers, where they could informally exchange information on where best to send their kids to school, employment opportunities, updates on the housing market, and more. For me, the Korean church was a safe place where I did not have to defend the value of my ethnicity, explain certain cultural norms I observe, and be among others like me who shared the experience of being ethnic minorities in Canada.

When I started this Master's program, I looked around in my classes and noticed a familiar sight: I was one of perhaps two or three Asian students. Among those, perhaps I was the only Korean. As a graduate in a Bachelor of History, this was not an unusual experience for me. For most of my academic career, I made an intentional effort to study, document, and write from an Asian perspective, and a Korean one if I could. More often than not, no one else was around to do it. It felt natural to continue in that

spirit and write my thesis on Koreans in Canada. At first, I wanted to study the urban experience of Korean Canadians – what is it like to be a Korean Canadian living in Metro Vancouver? However, as the COVID¹ pandemic rolled around, I felt it would be a unique opportunity to pivot my topic and document the church’s role in being a support system for Korean immigrants. I thought of my parents, whose entire social network is tied to their church and how crucial the institution is to their thriving. I thought of the countless Korean immigrant families, who have endured so much, COVID or otherwise, and continue to fight for a livelihood in a country that is ambivalent about their existence. In the strength of their perseverance and resilience, I wanted to share with a broader audience the aspects of Korean immigrant life that ought to be celebrated. Who else is going to do it?

1.2. Context

1.2.1. Why Study Korean Canadians?

I chose to conduct research with Korean Canadians for four reasons, some of which have been highlighted in the previous section: first, as a Korean Canadian immigrant myself, I experienced first-hand the difficulties and joys of growing up in a new country. I have seen and heard my parents’ experiences and frustrations as well.

Second, I have established cultural context and rapport with the study population, with the necessary understanding of the distinct characteristics of Korean culture, and particularly Korean church culture (Morgan & Guevara, 2012). However, I do acknowledge the potential for bias as a co-ethnic and the desire to represent my ethnic group in a positive fashion. As a result, in my methodology section, I have provided a number of strategies I used to minimize bias and increase validity and credibility in my study. On the other hand, my positionality as a Korean Canadian provides me with the advantage of pre-existing trust in relationships and an understanding of informal cultural norms.

Third, Koreans are a fairly new group of immigrants to Canada; the majority of Koreans (57%) arrived in Canada after 2001 (Statistics Canada, 2017b). Although they

¹ For brevity, the COVID-19 pandemic will be called “COVID” where appropriate.

are recent immigrants, they have grown to become a sizeable population in Canada's urban regions – Koreans are the eighth largest racialized minority group in the Greater Toronto Area, and the fourth largest in Metro Vancouver (Statistics Canada, 2017c). However, on a national scale, Koreans are still proportionally a small ethnic group – 198,210 were accounted for in the 2016 census, making up just 0.6 percent of Canada's population (Statistics Canada, 2017a). As such, research on Korean-Canadians is not as developed as earlier and larger Asian immigrant populations to Canada, such as Chinese Canadians. Min-Jung Kwak produced a pioneered overview of the Korean Canadian community in Vancouver and their immigration patterns over the past few decades (Kwak, 2004). Sherry Yu has done extensive research on Korean diasporic media in Vancouver and Los Angeles (Yu, 2018). There is also an edited collection dedicated to Korean immigrants in Canada (Noh et al., 2012). However, many of the academic journal articles on Korean Canadian immigrants tend to share critical insights on experiences of immigration, such as barriers to healthcare (Wang & Kwak, 2015), racial discrimination and mental health (Noh, Kaspar & Wickrama, 2007), and depression among Korean immigrant elders (Kim et al, 2015). In contrast, my contribution to this growing body of literature takes a different approach by using an asset-based approach to present a narrative of resilience within the Korean Canadian community.

Lastly, research with Korean Canadians is inherently urban, due to their propensity to settle in major cities (as many other racialized immigrants do). In Canada, as of the 2016 census, 65 percent of all Koreans live in either Vancouver or Toronto CMA (Statistics Canada, 2017c). The concentration of Koreans in major city regions like Metro Vancouver and the Greater Toronto Area makes possible the founding of organizations and religious groups, and consequently the building of social capital and community resilience. However, it is worth noting that Korean immigration in Metro Vancouver and the Greater Toronto Area is specifically *suburban*, hence the usage of the city region rather than the City of Vancouver and City of Toronto. In the US, prior to the 1980s, European immigrants tended to settle within the city core in ethnically concentrated neighbourhoods, mainly for affordable housing, language comfort, and to build social capital. As they became more upwardly mobile, they dispersed into more predominantly European white neighbourhoods, assimilating into the rest of society (Massey, 1985; Zhou, 1997). Immigrant settlement patterns began to shift beginning with

the wave of Asian immigrants of the 1980-90s, who were different from their predecessors: they were economic class immigrants who came mostly by choice, and with far more capital (both monetary and social) as part of the burgeoning global economy. As a result, many of them could afford to buy homes in the suburbs (Logan, Alba, & Zhang, 2002). This has led to a phenomenon coined by Wei Li (1998) called “ethnoburbs,” which are ethnic communities in the suburbs.

In Canada, the historic concentration of poverty and racialized immigrants in city cores was less pronounced than in the US, but what is similar is that the ethnic population concentration is now located in the suburbs for both Canada and the US (Qadeer & Kumar, 2006; Hiebert & Ley, 2003). In Metro Vancouver, places like Richmond and Surrey are prime examples of ethnoburbs, with a strong Chinese population in the former and a South Asian population in the latter. For the Korean community, the Figures 1.1 and 1.2 in the next section will illustrate concentrations in Coquitlam and Langley in Metro Vancouver, and North York in the Greater Toronto Area. While this body of literature surrounding ethnoburbs will not be a focal point of this research, it is contextually helpful in understanding why the concentration of Korean residents and churches in Metro Vancouver and the Greater Toronto Area are in the suburbs.

1.2.2. Why Study Korean Churches?

Ethnic churches, whether German, Chinese, Korean, or otherwise, have been instrumental in supporting immigrant integration in Canada and the US (Ley, 2008). In fact, immigrant churches are known to be community hubs that serve as more than places of worship: they are places where co-ethnic individuals and families can form connections that help them survive the transition into a new country, filling the cultural and linguistic gap in governmental immigration services (Ley & Tse, 2013). Korean immigrants to North America have the highest level of affiliation to their own ethnic Protestant churches than any other ethnic group (Min, 1992), and thus the church is a highly representative institution. In Canada, 47 percent of Koreans identified as Protestant or non-Catholic Christian (Statistics Canada, 2011).

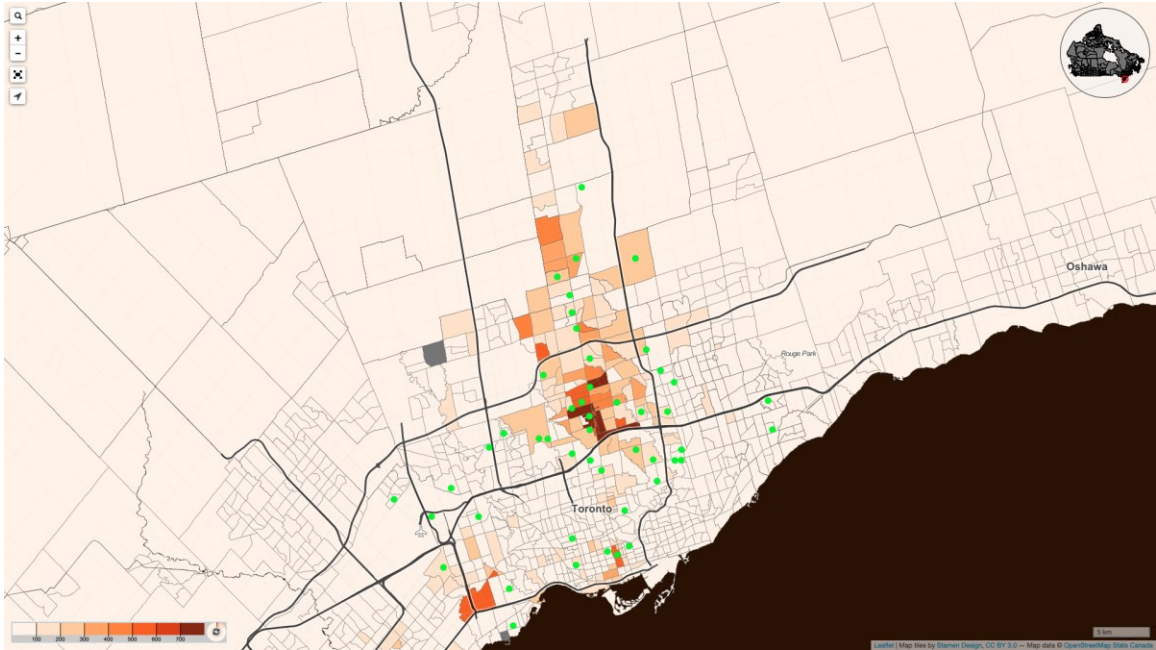


Figure 1.1. Map of Korean Population Density and Church Locations in the Greater Toronto Area
 (Map generated from censussmapper.ca, 2016 Stats Can figures used by census tract)

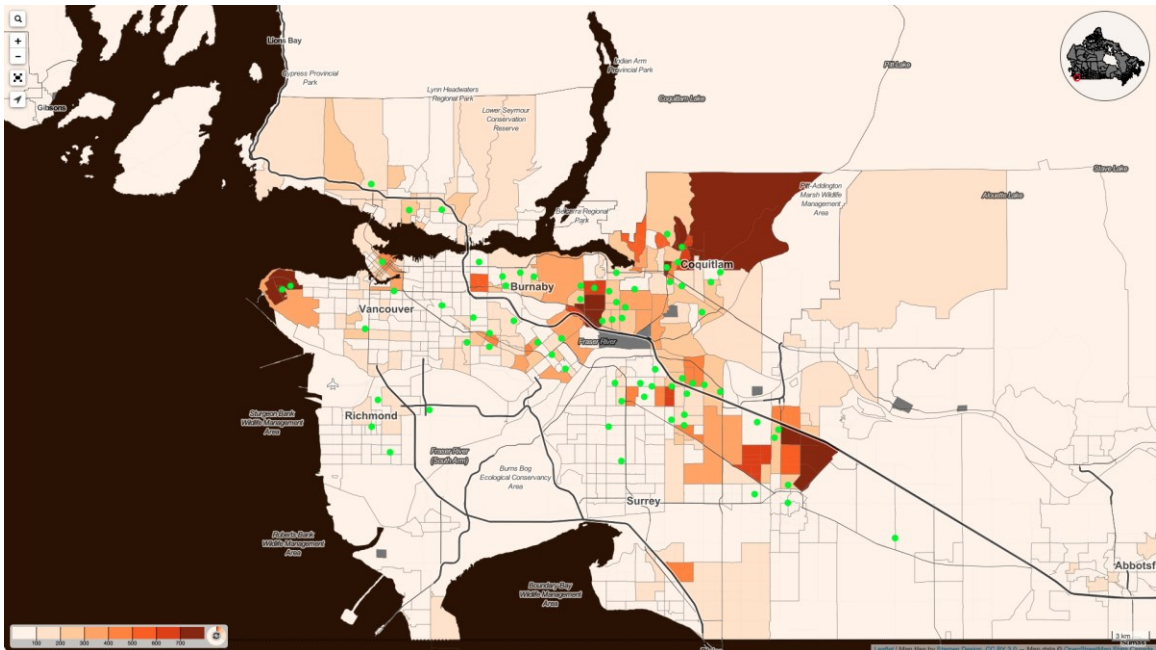


Figure 1.2. Map of Korean Population Density and Church Locations in Metro Vancouver
 (Map generated from censussmapper.ca, 2016 Stats Can figures used by census tract)

Figures 1.1 and 1.2 are population density maps of Koreans by ethnic origin using the 2016 census by census tract, along with approximate church locations manually inserted.² As can be seen, Koreans predominantly live in the suburban areas of both city regions, and there is a general correlation between population density and location of churches – the areas with more Koreans also have a higher concentration of churches.³ The sheer number of churchgoers means there are also a plethora of churches: in Metro Vancouver, there are an estimated 200 Korean Christian congregations, with congregations ranging from 40 to 3,000 members (Todd, 2014).

As mentioned by other researchers in the field, a better understanding of Korean churches is crucial in understanding Korean Canadian immigrants, and therefore further research is necessary:

Thus, without understanding Korean immigrant churches, including second-generation Korean churches, fully comprehending Korean immigrants' adaptation in Canada is difficult. Although this subject has not been addressed in this book, it is one needing future research (Noh et al, 2012, p. xii).

In addition, there is a precedent for sampling from Korean churches as a way to study Korean Canadian immigrants: Hyejin Yoon's 2016 study of Korean immigrants in Winnipeg featured a survey that was completed by soliciting respondents from two Korean protestant churches in the city. Her justification was that "immigrant churches usually play important roles as both centers of congregation for particular ethnic groups and service providers to newcomers. Thus, a high percentage of Korean immigrants (70-80%) engage in Korean ethnic churches" (Yoon, 2016, p. 249). This is the same rationale that I am using to undertake this research.

However, affiliation and participation in Korean churches can be impacted by generational changes in the congregation. As the children of first-generation immigrants grow up in Canada, become proficient in English, adapt to the cultural norms, and develop friendships and connections outside of their ethnic community, they choose to

² The churches were identified by Google Maps, searching "Korean church," and the same term in the Korean language. The two maps are not to the same scale, due to cropping required to make it more legible.

³ For various reasons, many of them are located near major highways and in industrial zones, which explains the churches along the borders of certain high Korean population density census tracts in Coquitlam, Surrey, and Langley (Hennig, 2018; Gold, 2021; Cheung, 2016).

either opt out or participate less frequently in the immigrant church (Ley, 2008). In Canada, 22 percent of Koreans are non-immigrants, while 78 percent are either immigrants or non-permanent residents (Statistics Canada, 2018). Therefore, the experience of these (sometimes adult) children of Korean immigrants at church will differ from their parents, and is a discrepancy that will be addressed in the research design.

1.2.3. Impact of COVID-19 on Canada

There have been numerous economic, mental, and social impacts of COVID on Canadians since the onset in March 2020. The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected Canadians, and then to differentiate that experience for racialized minorities.⁴ This document uses the term ‘racialized’ rather than ‘visible’ to step away from categorization by skin tone, and to “acknowledge the fact that barriers [faced] are rooted in the historical and contemporary racial prejudice of society and are not a product of [intrinsic] identities or shortcomings” (City of Ottawa & City for All Women Initiative, 2016). Canadians in general have all faced hardships of various kinds, but the impacts have been unevenly spread out based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, and immigration status. Of the available data from a recent national survey conducted by Statistics Canada, I have compiled what is most relevant for my study. The results for quality of life, mental health, and economic impacts have been noted for Canadians at-large, while experiences of racism, risk of exposure to COVID, and vulnerability to unemployment refer to racialized minorities, some of which include Koreans specifically.

In 2020, only 40 percent of Canadians rated their quality of life at 8 or higher on a scale of 0 to 10, which is down from 72 percent in 2018. When differentiating by immigration status, Asian immigrants have reported the lowest life satisfaction rate of all Canadians (Statistics Canada, 2020). Mental health has been on the decline for all Canadians, but there has been a greater decline for youth aged 15-24, and there has been no significant decline for seniors aged 65 and older. Overall, those reporting excellent or very good mental health has decreased from 68 percent in 2019 to 55 percent in July 2020 (Statistics Canada, 2020). There is also a strong correlation

⁴ Due to the generality of the Statistics Canada report, effort was made to use findings as specific to Korean Canadians as possible, such as for Asian Canadians. However, in some cases, national trends were the only available findings that could be used.

between employment status and mental health: those not working due to COVID at the start of the pandemic reported the lowest levels of very good or excellent mental health (Statistics Canada, 2020).

As for economic impacts, the entire country faced a recession far worse than that in 2008/2009. Canada lost a total of 3 million jobs from February to April 2020, with nearly two thirds of those jobs being full-time work; the unemployment rate was as high as 10.9 percent in July 2020, which was almost double what it was in February 2020. Recent immigrants were more likely to have faced difficulties retaining employment during the first shutdown⁵ “mainly because of their shorter job tenure and over-representation in lower-wage jobs” (Statistics Canada, 2020). Hourly paid workers were far more vulnerable to being laid off than salaried employees: while 94.2 percent of salaried employees retained their jobs, only 76.4 percent of hourly paid employees did. Business owners, especially small-business owners, took a hard hit during the pandemic. Almost a quarter of businesses have been granted rent or mortgage payment deferrals as of May 2020, and 75 percent of small businesses have taken on debt to stay afloat. Many have closed their doors, with 88,000 businesses that shut down permanently in April 2020 (Statistics Canada, 2020). This is important to note because many of the first-generation of Korean immigrant church congregants in this study were small businessowners. While recovery has picked up some speed over the summer and fall months, the benefits have been uneven across sectors. In-person customer services-oriented sectors such as tourism and hospitality have been struggling most to get back to pre-pandemic output. Employment gains were made from April to August, but still 5.3 percent lower than pre-pandemic (Statistics Canada, 2020).

One experience unique to Asian Canadians is the unfortunate reality of having to deal with harassments, attacks, and stigma due to their appearance. In a May 2020 survey on perception of safety, 43 percent of Korean, 38 percent of Filipino, and 31 percent of Chinese respondents reported feeling unsafe. Racialized minorities were in general three times more likely to perceive an increase in frequency of harassment or attacks based on race, and twice as likely as Canadian-born people to be afraid of being targets of unwanted violent behaviours (Statistics Canada, 2020). Racialized immigrants are more likely to be front-line or essential service workers, which puts them at greater

⁵ Approximately April to May 2020.

risk of exposure to COVID, and to harassment from the perpetrators of racism. Moreover, these front-line occupations are concentrated among food and accommodation services, which also made them more vulnerable to unemployment. All racialized minority groups saw unemployment rates higher than those not a racialized minority or Indigenous as of August 2020. Furthermore, racialized minorities were more likely than White respondents to experience job loss, reduced work hours, and not be able to meet financial obligations or essential needs (Statistics Canada, 2020).

In summary, Canada as a whole has seen sharp declines in mental health, GDP, job rates, and small businesses, while all racialized minorities have higher unemployment and risk of contracting COVID than average, and Asian Canadians in particular have experienced increased racial harassment. These findings are only moderately helpful for the purpose of understanding the experience of Korean Canadians during COVID, because of the broad categorization of racialized minorities. However, the important point from these findings is that there was immense financial, mental, and emotional strain on all Canadians, but those outcomes were disproportionately higher among racialized minorities. Those who were already vulnerable before the pandemic have seen their vulnerabilities exacerbated, while those who were stable have experienced only minor inconveniences. Korean immigrants share this narrative, and this study will explore how Koreans at three churches in the Greater Toronto Area and Metro Vancouver experienced the pandemic, and how they demonstrated resilience by sharing social capital.

1.3. Research Question

This study's main research question is:

How have three Korean churches in Toronto and Vancouver CMAs been a site of social capital and community resilience during COVID-19 (or not) for its congregants?

In March 2020, when in-person gathering restrictions became stricter in B.C., limiting event attendees from 200 to 50 people, most places of worship were forced to shut down and congregants were unable to meet together – including in Sunday worship, weekly small group gatherings, and other large celebrations (Weichel, 2020).

Unemployment soared and people were ordered to stay at home, which exacerbated already-difficult family dynamics and housing conditions (“Canada’s unemployment rate”, 2020; Statistics Canada, 2020).

The church is an important gathering place for Korean immigrants to connect with fellow co-ethnics and accrue social capital by sharing knowledge and resources – the reasons why and how this is operationalized will be discussed more in subsequent sections. In both Ontario and British Columbia, churches have not been able to gather in person since the onset of the pandemic in March 2020, with a few exceptions when they were able to host a limited number of people during loosened restriction periods. Consequently, I am curious how these social distancing restrictions have impacted both church leadership and congregants. More specifically, I am interested in how two Korean churches – one in Toronto and one in Vancouver⁶ – have adapted to the new reality of social distancing and economic hardships, both in the way the leadership has adjusted the mode and nature of their programs, and how congregants have managed the challenges of unemployment, working from home, family conflict, etc. Another related topic of interest is whether or not the inability to gather in person has negatively impacted congregants’ source of social capital, thereby exacerbating difficulties experienced due to COVID-19. The other possibility is that the church been able to demonstrate resilience by adapting and continuing to support each other in community, thereby mitigating the difficulties experienced due to COVID-19.

I use a mixed-methods research design to seek convergence, in order to increase validity and credibility, as well as expansion, to “extend the breadth and range of inquiry by using different methods for different inquiry components” (Gaber & Gaber, p. 99). In Chapter 2, I provide a conceptual framework that explores the literature surrounding social capital, urban resilience, and the immigrant church. Chapter 3 explains my methodology in detail, providing a breakdown of each of the methods used in this study and rationale for the decisions I made regarding the research design. Chapter 4 is the beginning of my primary research, using Statistics Canada data and church document analysis to set the immediate context for the study. Chapter 5 uses survey and interview data with church leaders and congregants to explore various

⁶ For simplicity, when mentioning Toronto and Vancouver, I am referring to the census metropolitan areas, not the City of Toronto or the City of Vancouver.

activities, programs, and informal actions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic that exemplify use of social capital and demonstration of urban resilience. I conclude with a discussion that extrapolates my findings into future application and implications beyond the church.

My hypothesis is that the Korean church community has been able to adapt technologically and culturally to continue fostering social capital during COVID-19, in spite of not being able to gather in person. I expect that church leadership and congregants have been active in providing tangible support to meet the needs of those facing more acute difficulties due to the pandemic. I also anticipate distinctively different experiences of the pandemic between the first and second-generation: the first-generation will presumably be harder hit as a significant portion are small business owners, while the second-generation will have adjusted to working at home. There may also be a contrast in the level of involvement regarding support: the first-generation may rely more heavily on the church community during a time of need, while the second-generation will have multiple networks outside of the church if needed. Lastly, I hypothesize that the Korean church would have focused mainly on supporting its own congregants, as opposed to the community at large, whether in their neighbourhood, city, or region. The intention of this research project is to explore three Korean churches as case studies to test this hypothesis.

The concepts of social capital and resilience will be explained further in depth in the conceptual framework section. When referring to social capital, there are two pertinent types that will be discussed in this thesis: bonding and bridging social capital. This distinction is important because there are various iterations of social capital, which will be discussed later. In terms of bonding social capital, I am interested in how social connections within the Korean church helped or did not help cultivate resilience during COVID-19. Regarding bridging social capital, I am interested in how the Korean church connected with external organizations (local or international) to cultivate resilience in communities outside of the church. Resilience is important because it enables individuals and communities to absorb external shocks and continue functioning. This benefits communities' overall health and prevents people from falling into dire emergency situations. Also, there is a direct correlation between social capital and community resilience – those with higher levels of social capital are more likely to be able to respond to, and rebound from, economic, social, or natural disaster shocks

(Mayunga, 2007). Therefore, I want to explore the role of bonding social capital within the Korean church in increasing both the organization's and its member congregants' resilience.

1.4. Normative Stance

My normative stance in this study is that the ethnic church is important and relevant in an urban context for the purpose of building social capital and resilience in immigrant communities, especially racialized immigrant communities. The intention of this research is to serve as an argument in favour of municipalities making it more accessible, not less, for ethnic churches to have spaces of gathering. Urban Studies scholars and urban professionals can look to the Korean church as an example of how ethnic communities provide a support network for their members, as well as provide tangible assistance to the community-at-large. Though the study addresses Korean Christian immigrants specifically, the observations can be applied more broadly.

The Protestant church is not the only faith institution that has worked to aid immigrant integration in Canada. Moreover, Koreans are not the only ethnic group to gather in religious institutions and benefit from community formation. Buddhist temples, Muslim mosques, Jewish synagogues, and Sikh gurdwaras are also sites of social capital and community resilience. While the findings of this case study apply specifically to Korean churches, this research is situated within the broader urban immigration literature. My intention is to contribute the stories of a particular ethnic group that identifies with a particular religion as part of a larger and diverse tapestry of immigrant experiences, while being cautious to not make overgeneralizations out of a small, sole researcher study. Therefore, the Korean church is not a unique case study, but rather a typical case. Many other ethnicities have places of worship that serve similar roles within their communities – as community or service hubs that foster social connection, encourage ethnic identity, and provide practical services for their congregations (Foner & Alba, 2018). By understanding how Koreans support one another in the context of a faith community, it provides insight on how faith communities in general are integral response agents in times of hardship and crises.

As the majority of immigrants (56%) arrive in urban regions such as Greater Toronto Area, Metro Vancouver, and Greater Montreal, and as a larger share of those

immigrants are non-white (85% of all immigrants from 2011-2016 were not from Europe or North America), faith institutions with racialized members will continue to play a vital role in helping build social capital and resilience for new immigrants (Statistics Canada, 2017b). Racialized immigrants also bring their faith backgrounds, creating religious diversity in urban centres like Vancouver and Toronto. The “Highway to Heaven” in Richmond is a perfect visual cue of this diversity, with over twenty religious buildings spanning a three-kilometre long section of Number Five Road: “two mosques, eight churches, three Buddhist temples, two Hindu temples, a Sikh gurdwara and six religious schools, including both Jewish and Muslim schools” (Dwyer, Tse & Ley, 2016, p. 668). In Metro Vancouver, of the people who were affiliated with a religion, 29 percent identified with a non-Christian religion, virtually the same as the Greater Toronto Area at 28 percent (Statistics Canada, 2013).⁷ In a more rural part of British Columbia, such as Salmon Arm, only 3 percent of residents identify with a non-Christian religion (Statistics Canada, 2013). The point here is not that religious plurality equates to ethnic diversity (which it does not), but rather that there is a diversity of religious backgrounds in urban centres. These faith institutions, including churches, provide social services for their own members as well as the community-at-large, contributing countless hours of volunteerism and resources that serve as a valuable amenity to the cities they are located (Canadian Council of Christian Charities, 2018; Fourot, 2010; Foner & Alba, 2018).

However, due to the ever-increasing cost of renting or owning space within the city, faith institutions, along with residents, businesses, associations, and other groups that require a permanent gathering space, face constant financial pressure (Hennig, 2018; Gold, 2021; Cheung, 2016). This not only affects Christian community, but also the Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, and Buddhist communities. During a couple of interviews, it was brought to my attention that some smaller racialized immigrant churches and church leaders are increasingly finding it difficult to secure permanent and affordable spaces to gather, whether from having difficulty obtaining permits to build their own building, or to rent affordably in accessible locations. For instance, in Montreal, some Muslim organizations have faced neighbourhood and local government opposition in building or opening mosques (Fourot, 2010). This can be an issue for any faith institution, but often

⁷ The 2016 census does not include religion; therefore the 2011 census was used.

has disproportionately negative consequences for smaller, less established faith institutions that do not have the financial or human capital to acquire ownership of a dedicated building, and therefore need to rent other available spaces such as public schools or buildings in industrial areas. In 2012, the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) hiked fees for religious groups to rent their schools, such as churches on Sundays, with increases ranging from 43 to 400 percent depending on the school (McNaughton, 2012; Burton, 2012). In the same year, Toronto amended zoning bylaws to prevent places of worship from renting in areas zoned for industrial use. Smaller faith groups, including Christian churches, who have turned to industrial land as a more affordable option, now face difficult decisions on where to gather (Moussaoui, 2012).

This is an urban equity issue where established, older churches with more resources have access to space in a way that newer, smaller churches do not. The benefits of ethnic churches and other faith-based groups merit public investment that produces equitable outcomes rather than support those already well off (Fainstein, 2010). These spaces are also valuable because they intersect with the ideals of the 'right to the city' as discussed by Henri Lefebvre (Purcell, 2014). Immigrant churches can be a space where individuals "assert use value over exchange value, encounter over consumption, interaction over segregation, free activity and play over work" (Purcell, 2014, p. 151). In my normative stance, the immigrant church is a vibrant microcosm of what our cities *could* be like, supporting one another in mutual trust, bonding as a unified community, and serving as a reprieve from the toil of work.

In addition, another application for this research is that these observations and conclusions can provide insight on how municipal governments can leverage lessons learned towards an effective crisis response. Developing and building community resilience is becoming more important as Canada, and the rest of the world, prepare for future shocks such as a global pandemic, more frequent wildfire seasons, or another major recession. It is imperative to accelerate our understanding of how civil society responds to crises on its own accord as a means for the public sector to find the gaps of need, but also to learn what key attributes make faith communities effective in terms of organizing and mobilizing relevant support systems in a timely fashion.

By highlighting the significance and effectiveness of the ethnic church in providing social services, the intention is not to provide evidence in favour of

disinvestment from current governmental services and shifting responsibility (and funding) to non-governmental organizations (Shields & Evans, 1998). Over the past few decades, there has been a continued trajectory of governments creating a fixed amount of funding that non-governmental organizations compete to access in order to provide services that have been traditionally administered by the state. In a more nuanced position, the takeaway from this research project would be that the state must take a multi-pronged approach to disaster or crisis response in order to minimize the number of people who fall through bureaucratic cracks, which may involve both governmental and non-governmental administering of services or resources.

Chapter 2. Conceptual Framework

There are three bodies of literature I will explore to formulate my conceptual framework: social capital (specifically bonding social capital), community resilience, and the immigrant church as a place where social capital and community resilience is produced.

The term **social capital** serves to conceptualize the phenomenon of social trust and cooperation for mutual benefit; individuals can benefit economically, socially, and emotionally from being part of a network of other individuals. This concept will be used to understand the (social) capital-based approach to community resilience, which will be explained together in Section 2.2. Of the many 'variants' of social capital, bonding social capital will be the focus of this study. Bonding social capital refers to connections made between members of a single community.

Community resilience, and resilience in general, has many varying definitions. It can be broadly defined as the capacity of a social entity, such as a group or community, to bounce back or respond actively to adversity (Maguire and Hagan, 2007). This study will utilize a specific framework for community resilience: a *capital-based approach*. Within this model, there are five forms of capital: social, economic, physical, human, and natural. I will focus on the social capital component and use the model's indicators of resilience as an evaluation tool.

The immigrant church plays a role in facilitating a space for accumulating social capital and fostering community resilience. This section will explain how historically the church has been not only a space for worship, but also a place where individuals can make connections with others and support one another. Moreover, this was true long before COVID-19. Though the literature reviewed will explore immigrant churches broadly, more attention will be given to the Korean church, given its relevance to the case study. The level of bonding among congregants within the Korean church is particularly strong due to national identity and the shared difficulty of immigrant life in Canada.

2.1. Social Capital

The term “social capital” was coined by Bourdieu (1983) and expanded on by Coleman (1988). They define social capital as an extension of economists’ notions of financial and human capital. Social capital is one part of three intermingling concepts: economic, cultural, and social capital. According to Bourdieu (1983), membership in a group provides each member with “collectively-owned capital, a ‘credential’, which entitles them to credit” (p. 242). The amount of social capital that a person possesses is dependent on two factors: the size of the group, and the amount of capital each individual possesses in that group (p. 248). Putnam (1993) made a major departure from Bourdieu’s and Coleman’s conception of social capital – he emphasized the social capital of communities, not individuals. Putnam conceived of social capital as a community-level characteristic – as the “density of social ties within communities” (p. 14). Communities where individuals have overlapping social networks tend to have more social capital. His analysis focused on benefits accruing not to individuals, but to communities, such as reduced crime rates, lower official corruption, and better governance.

Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) followed more closely to Bourdieu and Coleman’s conception; they define social capital as “collective expectations affecting individual economic behaviour” (p. 1326). They identified four sources of social capital: value introjection, reciprocity exchanges, bounded solidarity, and enforceable trust:

1. Value introjection: socialization into consensually established beliefs
2. Reciprocity exchanges: norm of reciprocity in face-to-face interaction
3. Bounded solidarity: situational reactive sentiments
4. Enforceable trust: particularistic rewards and sanctions linked to group membership

For the purpose of my thesis, bounded solidarity will be the most relevant notion. To explain further, this term refers to:

An emergent sentiment of ‘we-ness’ among those confronting a similar difficult situation... forms of altruistic conduct emerge that can be tapped by other group members to obtain privileged access to various resources. The fundamental characteristic of this source of social capital is that it does not depend on its enforceability, but on the moral imperative felt by

individuals to behave in a certain way. (Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993, p. 1328)

When extrapolating this definition, Korean churchgoers' sense of 'we-ness' can be attributed to a heightened nationalistic identity in the face of the difficulties of adapting to a new country. An additional layer of difficulty is added when factoring in the mental, emotional, and economic impacts of COVID-19 as discussed in the introduction.

Bounded solidarity functions most closely with the concept of *bonding* social capital, as opposed to *bridging* social capital. This was a distinction that Briggs (1998) and Putnam (2000) created to discuss the types of groups and connections to groups within social capital. Bonding social capital is inward looking, emphasizing homogeneity, exclusivity, and identity reinforcement. Bridging social capital refers to interactions that emphasize inclusion, sharing resources, broadening identity, connecting across ethnic, social, and economic differences. Gittel and Visal (1998), Woolcock (1998), Szreter (2002), Beyerlein and Hipp (2005) expand on the types of identities that can encourage or discourage bonding and bridging social capital, such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, and/or religion. Bounded solidarity, and its sense of 'we-ness,' is more closely attributed to an inward looking social capital, where members of a group share knowledge and resources for the advancement of individual gains. The Korean church's social capital accumulation is primarily bonding, rather than bridging, because the congregation is exceptionally homogenous in terms of ethnicity (Korean), class (middle), and religion (Christian Protestant). However, the Korean church does engage with the community-at-large too, bridging across socioeconomic and ethnic boundaries.

Particularly for an immigrant congregation, the church is a place where social capital is formed for the use of adapting to a new country. Within the Korean immigrant church, congregants "develop and reinforce social ties that they self-consciously use for business purposes" (Stepick, Mahler, & Rey, 2009, p. 7). Business purposes are not the only function of social capital. Social capital can be defined as any benefits accumulated by individuals or families for the purpose of "economic advancement or as a social safety net tapped in times of need" (Stepick, Mahler, & Rey, 2009, p. 14). When discussing bonding and bridging social capital, another way to them is through viewing bonding social capital as "social support" that helps people get by, and bridging social capital as "social leverage" that helps people get ahead (Briggs, 1998, p. 178). Since this study is conducted in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, social capital as a concept will be

used to describe the mode for a social safety net to 'get by' in a time of hardship (Alini, 2020; Slaughter, 2020; Statistics Canada, 2020).

2.2. Community Resilience

There are many different definitions of resilience – far too many to list them all. Mayunga (2007) categorizes several into five categories: a systems perspective, a long-term perspective, notion of adaptation, the concept of sustainability, and the opposite of vulnerability. For this study, the focus will be on definitions that include the notion of adaptation. Moreover, though the study is about the level of individual congregants' resilience, I am understanding it in the context of a church as its support system – both from leadership and fellow congregants. Therefore, I also need to consider how the Korean church has adapted as an organization, and therefore as a platform for support. The question is: how did the Korean church “reorganize itself to maintain essential structure and process” (Mayunga, 2007, p. 4), and was it successful in being a platform for support?



Figure 2.1. Dynamics of resilience for the Korean ethnic church

In addition to organizational resilience, the congregation's resilience will also be explored in two ways: individual and social resilience. Individual resilience can be defined as the “psychological strength [that] enables them to handle extreme events and stress” (Schlor, Venghaus & Hake, 2018, p. 384). Social resilience can be defined as the capacity of a social entity, such as a group or community, to bounce back or respond actively to adversity (Maguire and Hagan, 2007). For the purpose of this study, the

conceptualization of the congregation’s resilience will be a combination of both the psychological strength to handle extreme events (individual level), and the capacity of the community as a whole to respond and rebound from COVID-19 (communal level). In summary, resilience will be explored on two levels – the church leadership (the organization), and the congregation (the community) (refer to Figure 2.1).

In order to create a cohesive connection between resilience and social capital, I intend on using the capital-based approach to resilience (Mayunga, 2007). This approach combines both concepts and provides an understanding that there is a relevant connection between resilience and social capital; an individual’s or community’s level of social capital is correlated to capacity for resilience. Mayunga (2007) suggests that the success and sustainability of a community depends on its ability to appreciate, access, and utilize five major forms of capital: social, economic, physical, human, and natural (refer to Figure 2.2). For the purpose of this study, I will focus on the social capital component, and observe its three indicators of resilience: trust, norms, and networks. The purpose of social capital in the context of resilience is to facilitate coordination and cooperation, and access to resources. For Mayunga, the measurement of social capital is through activities such as involvement in public affairs, public meetings, informal sociability and trust. In the context of the Korean church, these activities will vary slightly in order to make it more relevant to this specific study. As I mentioned in the social capital section, this study intends on focusing on bonding social capital. Table 2.1 offers a chart operationalizing the activities relevant for a church, separated by bonding and bridging social capital.

Table 2.1. Programs that build social capital

Bonding social capital		Bridging social capital
Religious programs	Social programs	Social programs
Church attendance	Pastoral care and counselling	Sponsorship of external non-profit organizations
Bible study/small group	Groceries/meals ministry for the elderly and sick	Fundraisers and donation drive for local charities
All-church gatherings	Language programs	Tutoring for children and youth
Prayer meetings	Choir and music instruction	Seniors ministry
Wednesday evening service	Housing and school advice	
Retreats	Job seminars	

Table 2.2. Community Resilience Dimensions

Community Resilience Dimension	Examples of Indicators
Community Resources	To what extent community leaders are networked with resources outside the community
Resource Development	The extent to which communities affected by change try to keep things the same or try new ways of doing things
Resource Engagement	The extent to which the organization contributes leadership and volunteers to community endeavors
Impact	The changes in participation and collaboration over time
Equity	Access of various groups to community's resources
Strategic Action	The extent to which planning processes generate community-wide commitment on a common future
Collective Action	The extent to which leaders facilitate collaboration between groups
Active Agents	Community members' involvement in various groups and events

Adapted from Magis, 2010

A second framework that will be used to conceptualize resilience, but also to inform my research methodology, is the Community Resilience Dimensions (Magis, 2010), which was originally developed for the U.S. Roundtable on Sustainable Forests. This has been adapted to the smaller scope of the thesis, and is helpful in operationalizing indicators for bonding and bridging social capital (refer to Figure 2.2). In brief, there are eight dimensions: community resources, resource development, resource engagement, impact, equity, strategic action, collective action, and active agents. The examples of indicators in Table 2.2 provide descriptions of each dimension. Some of the terminology and metrics have been adapted to be relevant for a church community, and the result is a key document in providing a framework for community resilience. Many of its components will be used to shape both interview and survey questions for my study.

2.3. Korean Immigrant Churches

Long before COVID-19, immigrant churches were a site of social capital and community resilience. Immigrating to a new country, oftentimes having to learn a new language, culture, and way of living, is especially difficult. The church has been a place for co-ethnics to support one another by sharing resources, whether it be local knowledge, economic opportunities, or social connections. This review of literature is

intended to showcase the Korean immigrant church and its ability to foster social capital and resilience.

However, the Korean immigrant church is not the only religious space that fosters social capital. Various other places of worship such as mosques, temples, and gurdwaras serve similar functions (Foner & Alba, 2018). Moreover, other ethnicities of the Christian faith have also served a similar role to their communities, such as German Christians and Chinese Christians (Ley, 2008). Therefore, the Korean immigrant church is not unique in being a community hub; the purpose of this review of literature and study in general is not to highlight its uniqueness, but its typicality. With caution as to not make overarching generalizations, observations and conclusions from this study have the potential to reflect similarly for other places of worship and ethnicities.

David Ley (2008) looks at Chinese, Korean, and German churches in Metro Vancouver. The purpose was to compare Chinese and Korean immigrant churches to German immigrant churches; the latter being a much older institution that has experienced the growth and decline trajectory that the former is only beginning to experience. Based on interview findings, Ley provides a list of pull factors that attract immigrants to attend church upon arrival: the church feels like home away from home, a safe place to grow and feel accepted, a non-threatening place, a refuge, and a place to establish confidence in a supportive social context to continue the struggle outside. This study provides the crux of my understanding of church as not only a religious institution, but a community centre. In the study, a German churchgoer recollected how “the church... was somewhere in between a religious group and a community centre so it served both purposes” (p. 2064).

Reimer et al (2016) looked at the church’s role in assisting newcomer immigrants from an organizational ecology framework, and provided valuable insight into the types of support that Canadian churches provide. They conducted focus groups and interviews at churches in Toronto, Montreal, and three cities in the Maritimes. In their study, they found three major themes with respect to characteristics of churches that provide support for immigrants: response to need, cooperation, and mutual benefit for the congregants giving support. They found that church support for immigrants is generally ad hoc, contextual, and reactive depending on who is joining the church at a given time. Moreover, the human resources required to provide support is usually driven by a small

number of passionate volunteers, and they only have capacity to meet short-term needs. There is a strong sense of friendship and personal relationship with incoming congregants, and they assist in a range of services, as well as linguistic and cultural navigation. The authors also found strong cooperation between churches and denominations to support immigrants and migrant workers. Lastly, though there is no monetary gain to providing assistance, the churches nevertheless saw their generosity as a benefit, “a tangible expression of their mission,” based on the Scriptural admonition to “serve,” as one congregant put it, “the poor and the stranger” (p. 508). Reimer et al (2016) conclude by stating churches play a significant, and often hidden, role in helping immigrants settle and grow roots in Canada. Churches, though limited in their capacity, can be more responsive and relationship-oriented, which can make them more effective providers of support for immigrants. Research that illuminates the hidden role of churches is important, first because the work ought to be acknowledged, and second, because it can provide valuable information for urban professionals on how to incorporate church activity into strategic planning for immigrant settlement.

Hurh and Kim (1990) and Min’s (1992) work on the Korean Church in the United States echo Ley’s findings: they explain that the Korean church 1) functions as a social center and a means of cultural identification (specifically for language and traditional values); 2) serves an educational function by teaching American-born Koreans the Korean language, history and culture; and 3) keeps Korean nationalism alive. Not only is the church a service hub for individual economic purposes, but it also provides shared cultural and linguistic resources. These authors conclude that among the majority of Korean immigrants, the religious need (meaning), the social need (belonging) and the psychological need (comfort) for attending the Korean church are functionally intertwined (Hurh and Kim, 1990).

Min (1992) also explores why so many Korean immigrants attend church in the US, even if Korea itself was never a majority Protestant country; Koreans have the highest level of affiliation with ethnic churches than any other ethnic group in the US. Min identifies four major social functions of Korean immigrant churches: 1) fellowship, 2) maintenance of Korean cultural tradition, 3) providing social services for church members and the Korean community as a whole, and 4) providing social status and social positions for adult immigrants (p. 1372). Min posits that nonreligious ethnic organizations are less effective in maintaining social capital because they do not have

frequent meetings. Min also points to similar observations as Ley, explaining how the Korean ethnic church seems to be the only social institution that most immigrants turn to for useful information and services. They provide information and counseling on employment, business, housing, health care, social security, children's education, and so forth. They also help by visiting hospitalized members, interpreting and filling out application forms for those with serious language difficulty, going to court as a witness for members with legal problems, etc. Second, they provide formal programs such as the Korean language school, the Bible school, seminars and conferences (p. 1385). This makes the Korean church an excellent case study to explore the interaction of social capital and community resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic, because it was a place of strong communal support even before the pandemic struck. Moreover, the church is a strategic institution to study when considering the Korean ethnic community due to the high level of affiliation and participation among Korean immigrants.

Chong (1998) focuses on the role of the Korean church in more of a cultural replication lens for the immigrant generation and their children. In her study, when churchgoers were asked to explain why they attend a Korean church, many of them placed strong importance on the "social" and "cultural" reasons for coming to a Korean church. Most of the research participants responded that being able to maintain social networks with other Korean Americans or to "keep up" the Korean culture and language were just as important as, if not more important than, "religious" reasons for attending the Korean church (p. 267). She concludes that Christianity is above all a system of values and ethics, and the way it interrelates with the Korean system of values creates a powerful sense of group consciousness and boundary among the second-generation (p. 270). Some of these values include reverence and respect for those in powerful positions, an affinity for vertical hierarchies of power and titles, an obligation of duty for parental figures (in the Christian context, God the Father), a belief in Korean exceptionalism similar to the Jewish belief of 'being chosen by God,' and strict discipline in spiritual practices. The dynamic between first and second-generation Koreans is also reflected in what is emphasized more within the church. While first-generation congregants tend to focus on retaining and passing on Korean culture, second-generation congregants are "more likely to express concern for the broader local community and value diversity" (Stepick, Mahler, & Rey, 2009, p. 9). Therefore, it is

more likely that second-generation Korean congregations would focus on outreach to the community-at-large across ethnic and socioeconomic boundaries.

Combined, the literature on ethnic immigrant churches, and notably the Korean immigrant church for the purpose of this study, provide a consistent basis for the motivations for congregants in attending and the niche needs that are met within a church community. Though these authors do not always correlate the activities occurring within the church to social capital or community resilience, that is in fact exactly what is happening in the Korean immigrant church.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The main method of inquiry employed for this study is the hypothetico-deductive reasoning (or approach). This approach has three stages: first, the researcher establishes a claim through observations and data collection on a particular phenomenon. This claim is then used as a hypothesis, which is then tested for the likelihood of truth. The tested hypothesis then serves as a premise for further research and the cycle continues (Shank, 2012). Though not formally documented, I have made observations and collected data to present a claim, expressed in the form of a hypothesis. This research study is the empirical test of the hypothesis, which can then serve as the premise for related or more specific studies.

To collect the necessary data for the analysis, my research design includes three methods: document and census analysis, semi-structured interviews, and surveys in the context of a case study, which is when a researcher “focuses attention on a single instance of some social phenomenon... an immediate variation is to study more than one such instance (case), usually a limited number like two, three, or four” (Babbie & Roberts, 2018, p. 267). The case study is an appropriate design for this particular instance because I am an individual investigator with limited resources such as time, funding, and additional research partners. The assumption underlying the selection of this design was that intensive investigation of a select few cases would yield richer and more interesting results than a wide and shallow scope. The case study is often exploratory in purpose and descriptive in objective (Babbie & Roberts, 2018), and that is precisely the intention of this research. Since research of the Korean Canadian church is currently limited, the goal of this study is to provide a basis for further investigation.

This case study includes three Korean churches: two in Toronto and one in Vancouver.⁸ As the researcher, I decided to keep the identity of the churches anonymous so participants would feel comfortable providing honest and candid responses. These three specific case studies are intended to represent typical cases of

⁸ The two churches in Toronto are named TOR-A and TOR-B, while the church in Vancouver is named VAN-A for confidentiality purposes. These code names will be used from now on.

the Korean church in general. Aside from the geographic location, TOR-A and VAN-A have similar compositions that make them appropriate to compare, while TOR-B was selected to determine if membership size of church has an impact on overall findings. TOR-A and VAN-A are both estimated to have total membership between 1,000-1,250 people, which make them large and established organizations with sufficient diversity for sampling purposes. TOR-B hosts just over 100 congregants. TOR-A and VAN-A are commuter churches, with members attending from all across Metro Vancouver and the Greater Toronto Area. Therefore, the population is reasonably dispersed across both metropolitan areas; they are comparable churches in these regards. TOR-B is located within a high Korean population density area of the GTA, and most members live nearby.

This study was conducted with a mixed methods approach, combining mostly qualitative data with quantitative data from the Canadian censuses. The difference in function between interviews and surveys was also leveraged to make effective and efficient use of each method. All three of these different methods were employed to provide a more complete understanding of the topic, and also help triangulate each data set in order to validate one another (Creswell, 2012). I solicited feedback from the church leadership (i.e. the pastoral staff) which represented the organization, and the church congregation (i.e. the congregants), which represented the member community. This distinction helped separate the role of the leadership and their efforts to support their congregants, and the role of congregants in helping each other, independent of any formal direction from church leadership.

The interviews were administered only to church pastors, because they are fewer in number and their leadership position enables them to have more high-level observations of their respective congregations. More in-depth questions allowed me to collect richer, more nuanced data, than a survey. Three interviews were conducted before the survey was distributed. This was so I could use knowledge gleaned from preliminary interviews to inform survey questions and response options. Then, surveys were administered only to church congregants. Due to the much larger sample frame for church congregants, a more efficient method had to be deployed in order to collect data from as many individuals as possible. Also, since the majority of questions were closed-ended, the uniformity of responses allowed for more streamlined comparisons between

respondents, resulting in the observation of trends and patterns through aggregate means (Rea & Parker, 2014).

TOR-A and VAN-A were selected due to existing personal connections with both pastors and congregants; I attended the one in Toronto for nearly a decade before moving to Vancouver, and the other I have visited occasionally over the past five years. My rationale was that the pre-existing trust would increase the likelihood of pastors and congregants to speak with me, particularly due to the nature of the interview and survey questions; some questions involve descriptions of how difficult COVID restrictions have been and explicit mentions of financial hardship or assistance. I was able to contact a pastor at TOR-B because I was introduced by a pastor at VAN-A. However, the close affiliation I have with these two larger case study churches may raise concerns about potential/perceived conflict of interest, or at the very least a biased research design and interpretation of data. A more elaborate reflection of my positionality as an insider, and the impact of 'saving-face' behaviour in Asian cultures will be explored in the Validity and Reliability section, as a way to acknowledge how these factors have affected the research design and findings. Although the intention is not to eliminate bias, since that is not possible, many of the "Rules for Minimizing Bias" have been observed, such as alerting key players to the problem of bias, being skeptical of research findings, being sensitive to my own outcome preferences, not disclosing the hypothesis to research participants, being accepting of all responses, and avoiding leading questions (Jackson, 1999).

3.1.1. Ethics Approval

Since this research project required human participants, I was required to receive research ethics approval before commencing interviews and surveys. Typically, Simon Fraser University's Office of Research Ethics provides this approval on an individual basis, but the URB 696 class of Fall 2020 was permitted to receive approval via Dr. Karen Ferguson, who is the principal investigator for each of our projects, including mine. I completed the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans Course on Research Ethics on September 10, 2020, and I received approval for my ethics application on December 4, 2020. Informed consent forms for both interviews and surveys were also approved, and subsequently used to obtain consent before conducting said methods. For interviews, participants were given a digital

copy of the consent forms ahead of time, and before the interview, I explained for what they were providing consent. I obtained verbal consent from each participant and informed them their statements would remain confidential, and that they had a right of withdrawal. For surveys, I placed the informed consent statement as the first page, and it was indicated that clicking 'next' would be considered voluntary agreement to participate in the study.

3.1.2. Census Data and Document Analysis

The census data analysis provided me with broad statistical information, which helped contextualize the small sample within a larger sample, and it allowed me to make comparisons to the total Canadian population. Using Statistics Canada data tables, I compiled relevant information on immigration and generation status, period of immigration, citizenship, geographic distribution, language proficiency, family status, income, employment, and religion. I also analyzed data from the CMA level to identify any significant differences between Koreans in Toronto and Vancouver. This information set the context for what to expect from my qualitative data, in case there were noticeable differences in interview and survey responses from Koreans in Toronto and Vancouver.

The purpose of the document analysis was to provide me with preliminary context for both churches. I browsed the websites for information on the types of ministries, how many services conducted, and other social programs such as marital counselling, parenting workshops, and Korean language school. I also filtered through the sermons and announcement bulletins for any indication of explicit support for those most negatively impacted by COVID-19, or changes to offering funds or programmed activities. This helped me get a better understanding of the scope of ministries, staffing, services, and capacity of each church.

3.1.3. Interviews

The purpose of the interviews was to collect information from pastors that reflects both a recollection of church activities and functions prior to COVID, and their understanding of the church's efforts to support its congregants during COVID. The questions begin by asking what a typical week looked like before COVID restrictions shut down social gatherings, and then transitions into how they have adapted to the

changes. There are also questions about what the church has done as an organization to help their churchgoers and any anecdotal stories about congregants helping each other out using their own resources. The full set of questions are disclosed in the appendix.

I completed 7 semi-structured key informant interviews: three with pastors at TOR-A, three from pastors at VAN-A, and one from TOR-B. While TOR-A and VAN-A are large churches (over 1,000 attendees), TOR-B is much smaller (under 100 attendees). While the focus is on TOR-A and VAN-A, the TOR-B is used as an anomaly case to provide insight on any differences in social capital or resilience due to size of congregation. TOR-B is also atypical in that there is an even distribution of Korean Ministry (KM) and English Ministry (EM) congregants (i.e. 50% KM, 50% EM), compared to TOR-A (approx. 80% KM, 20% EM) or VAN-A (approx. 90% KM, 10% EM). The purpose of selecting key informants for interviews was to recruit individuals who can “construct a composite picture of the group,” namely their congregations (Babbie & Roberts, 2018, p. 152). Their roles as pastors, who are in regular conversation with many members of their congregation, means they have a broader understanding of the community’s dynamics and health. Due to my inadequate language proficiency in Korean, all interviews were done with English speaking pastors who generally represent English Ministry congregations. Only TOR-A was unique in that the pastor is English-speaking but serves a Korean-speaking congregation. As a result, the data is more representative of English-speaking Koreans, though effort was made to ask about the church as a whole. Interviews at Toronto churches were conducted with two EM pastors (for university age and older members) one EM youth pastor (for high school student members), and one KM assistant pastor. Interviews at Vancouver churches were conducted with one EM pastor (for university age and older members), one EM youth pastor (high school students), and one children’s ministry pastor. The following table lists the interview participants by job title and codename location.

Table 3.1. Interview participant list

TOR-A	VAN-A	TOR-B
EM lead pastor	EM pastor	Assistant pastor
EM associate minister	EM youth pastor	
EM youth pastor	Children’s pastor	

Interviews were conducted on Zoom, lasting between 60-80 minutes, and the interview questions were used as guides, divided thematically and generally chronologically. Sometimes, I asked questions not included in my list, and other times, the questions were not asked in order. I also omitted some questions depending on what direction the conversation was headed. Herbert and Riene Rubin described qualitative interviewing design as “flexible, iterative, and continuous, rather than prepared in advance and locked in stone” (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 43). The conversation was set up with open-ended questions that allowed participants to interpret them as they saw fit, and then I listened to either frame another question to dig further (such as asking for specific examples), or to pivot back to a topic more relevant to my research (Babbie & Roberts, 2018). In order for the conversation to flow as naturally as possible, I did not take any notes while speaking with participants, and allowed the live transcription feature in Zoom to capture dictation. Zoom’s live transcription function was not perfect, so I still had to listen to the audio and proofread the transcript after each interview. After each interview, participants were sent a thank you note and an H-Mart gift card for their time, funded by the SFU Department of Urban Studies Travel & Minor Research Grant.

Interview participants were recruited using the snowball method – I asked for a referral to another pastor at the end of each interview (Babbie & Roberts, 2018). I began by contacting the EM pastor at VAN-A church, and while trying to schedule a time to speak, he/she referred me to two other pastors at the same church. The VAN-A EM pastor connected me via email to the other pastors, and I was able to conduct interviews with both. Each of those interview participants referred me to one other contact – one from VAN-A and one from TOR-B. I then contacted three pastors at TOR-A, with whom I have prior personal relationships with, and I was able to schedule interviews for all of them. Interviewing three to four pastors from the same church was the maximum number of participants pursued due to the principle of saturation; at this point, narratives began to overlap and sufficient commonalities were documented that it was unlikely new insights would be added (Babbie & Roberts, 2018).

With consent from participants, all interviews were recorded remotely on my personal computer, and then securely stored on SFU Vault. Interviewees were informed that their responses would only be used for this research project, and would not be used in another separate study without their explicit consent. Each participant was notified that their identity would remain confidential, and their church would not be referred to in

name. Instead, participants were told the churches would only be identified by their regional location. Lastly, participants were informed that they have the right to refuse a further interview and may withdraw from the study at any time prior to the publication of the material. If they choose to withdraw, their interview recording, transcript, and any notes taken during the interview will be destroyed. All of these statements were mandated by the Office of Research Ethics.

3.1.4. Surveys

The main purpose of the survey was to assess the impact of COVID-19 on congregants and seek validity of interview participants' responses regarding measures and initiatives put into place during the pandemic. Moreover, it also provided an opportunity for respondents to indicate to what degree congregants helped each other out independent of church leadership. Congregants from TOR-A and VAN-A were sampled, while TOR-B was omitted due to the lack of distribution channels; the TOR-B assistant pastor was not confident that the senior pastor would approve of its dissemination. TOR-B was the church with the furthest degree of separation from me as a researcher, and thus there was presumably insufficient trust built to warrant agreement.

Purposive sampling was used because "sometimes it's appropriate for you to select your sample on the basis of your own knowledge of the population and the purpose of the study" (Babbie & Roberts, 2018, p. 150). Though the most thorough method would be to make the survey available to every congregant at each church, the pastors advised me it would not be feasible to feature it on a bulletin or on the website homepage. Moreover, there would be no guarantee that I would reach a satisfactory response rate that way. As Babbie and Roberts indicate, this method is best used when enumeration of all members of a larger population is difficult, but studying a sample of the most easily accessible members could yield sufficient data for the study (Babbie & Roberts, 2018). Another reason why I used purposive sampling was to ensure my sample was as representative of the study population as possible. Making the survey available to anyone and everyone may have led to sampling bias or errors – those who were most enthusiastic may choose to complete it, and particular demographics of people may be over or underrepresented.

For all these reasons, I chose to distribute the survey through two close KM contacts at their respective churches, who sent individual messages to their contacts with the survey link. The total target for responses was 100, and I provided each contact with their own quotas based on two main independent variables: location and generation status. Since the church in Vancouver has a higher attendance population than in Toronto (1,250 in Vancouver vs. 1,000 in Toronto), I made sure to set the quota higher for Vancouver (56 percent Vancouver vs. 44 percent Toronto). Quotas are “used to control the final selection of participants so that the study sample matches the sample design set out in the sample matrix” (Ritchie et al., 2003, p. 135). For generation status, I expected a correlation to impact of COVID on individuals due to differences in occupation and income. Therefore, I set the quota to ensure my sample size was as representative as possible of the distribution at each church. In Toronto, of the total 1,000 attendees, excluding children and youth aged 18 and under, about 700 are KM adults, and 100 are EM adults (university age and older), which makes the split 86 percent KM and 14 percent EM. In Vancouver, there are about 50 adult EM attendees and 700 adult KM attendees, making the split 93 percent KM and 7 percent EM. In total, this sample size constitutes approximately 6.5 percent of the estimated total church congregants over age 18.

For the purpose of this survey, the definitions used for first and second generation are as follows: first-generation refers to those who immigrated to Canada as an adult (after high school), 1.5 generation refers to those who arrived as a young child, and second-generation refers to those who were born in Canada. Third generation refers to individuals whose parents were born in Canada or arrived as a young child. These are generally accepted definitions in the Korean community. For analysis purposes, I have combined 1.5 generation, second-generation, and third-generation into one category; the main differences occur between adult immigrants and those who were socialized and educated in Canada.

Table 3.2. Case study church population distribution by generation status

Location	Generation status	Actual attendance	Distribution (%)
TOR-A	First-generation	700	86
TOR-A	Second-generation+	100	14
Subtotal		800	100
VAN-A	First-generation	700	93
VAN-A	Second-generation+	50	7
Subtotal		750	100
Total		1,550	

In the survey, the dependent variable was a synthesis of social capital and resilience, which was measured by indicators such as individual support from the church, congregant support for one another, and innovations implemented due to the pandemic. Independent variables include demographics (measured by indicators such as age, geographic location, generation status), involvement in church (indicators: frequency, duration, and role), and impact of the pandemic (indicators: self-reported on a scale). Control variables include ethnic Koreans living in the Greater Toronto Area and Metro Vancouver age 18 years and older, which were controlled through purposive sampling. One oversight was the omission of gender as an independent variable. As I focused on making the survey as succinct as possible, asking what felt like only the most essential questions, I decided gender would not be an important variable. However, after conducting the survey, I reflected on this and realized there was a missed opportunity, and that a simple gender question would not have made the survey significantly longer. I acknowledge I made a mistake in this regard.

The survey questions were mostly closed-ended, with some Likert scales and optional spaces for additional comments if the provided options do not fit the respondent's experiences. Participants were informed at the beginning of the survey that the first 100 respondents would receive a small e-gift card, which was funded by the David Lam Centre's Graduate Research Award. The survey was designed to be completed in approximately 15 minutes, and it was administered electronically via SurveyMonkey. The entire survey has Korean translation below the English questions and statements for first-generation Koreans. The full set of questions are included in the appendix. SurveyMonkey was chosen as the platform for the survey mostly because it was easy for participants to complete it on their smartphone or computer. The COVID-19

pandemic also made it infeasible to collect survey responses in person. Lastly, the platform provides helpful analytical tools such as filters so I can isolate certain independent variables, and tables and graphs that calculate totals and averages for me.

Though an effort was made so that the survey sample was diversified, there were limitations to this method of sampling. Since I left the selection of survey respondents up to my key contacts' discretion, there may have been internal biases that influenced to whom they sent the surveys, for example sending the survey primarily to those expected to respond positively and complete it. Moreover, by sampling only from within the church, it is more likely that I received positive feedback about church and peer support. On one hand, deviant case testing, which examines outliers as opposed to typical cases, could have helped me gain a sense of either how the Korean church has not been able to support its congregants, or stories of congregants who have had negative experiences within the Korean church, which would disprove my hypothesis (Babbie & Roberts, 2018). On the other hand, sampling Koreans not affiliated with a church could have yielded evidence that those not connected to a church fared worse than those who are connected, and thus positively affirm my hypothesis. However, this would have been a huge undertaking beyond the relevant scope of my research, and there was the added difficulty of identifying and finding these individuals.

Table 3.3. Survey respondents by location and generation status

Location	Generation status	Target (%)	Actual (%)
Toronto	First-generation	38 (38%)	46 (37%)
Toronto	Second-generation+	6 (6%)	12 (10%)
Vancouver	First-generation	52 (52%)	55 (45%)
Vancouver	Second-generation+	4 (4%)	10 (8%)
Totals		100 (100%)	123 (100%)

Table 3.3 above shows the variance between the target responses by location and generation status, and the actual number of respondents. The survey link was active for a period of two weeks, and once I received confirmation from my contacts that everyone had submitted a response, I closed the collection link. Due to the particular survey distribution method, it is difficult to generate an accurate response rate. Given informal estimates from my contacts who distributed the survey on my behalf, the response rate was upward of 80 percent. There was also a snowballing effect, whereby

my contact distributed the survey to a handful of people, and select individuals then distributed it to their own networks. As a result, I achieved more than the target total responses. Second-generation respondents were overrepresented in proportion to their estimated share of the population at both TOR-A and VAN-A, as seen in Table 3.4. Despite the variance, this yielded potential for more conclusive evidence for EM respondents because their original target figures were so low.

3.2. Data Analysis

3.2.1. Census Data and Documents

Census data was retrieved from Statistics Canada, and then exported to Excel as three different datasets: Koreans in Canada, Koreans in Toronto CMA, and Koreans in Vancouver CMA. The purpose exporting all three was to identify any notable variances depending on geographic location. Figures were then generated in the format of pie and bar charts primarily identifying percentage distributions for pertinent variables such as generation status, immigration period, age of immigration, income, and classes of worker. The results of this statistical analysis can be found in Chapter 4.

The document analysis was conducted primarily for TOR-A and VAN-A's websites, which were identified as important digital hubs for information. Audio recordings of Sunday sermons were also analyzed, but it was determined that there was no relevant information to be found. The KM websites were translated into English, and each relevant webpage was documented. Information from both KM and EM websites were then organized into four categories: social functions, group gatherings, program offerings, and volunteer opportunities. These were then used for two purposes: to create a basic understanding of the various programs offered by each church, and to inform the development of interview questions.

3.2.2. Interview Thematic Coding and Analysis

For my qualitative data, I adopted the content analysis method, which is defined as:

The intellectual process of categorizing qualitative textual data into clusters of similar entities, or conceptual categories, to identify consistent patterns and relationships between variables or themes (Julien, 2012, p. 121).

I began my analysis by exporting the transcribed interview text from Zoom's live transcription into Microsoft Word. There were many errors in the transcription, so I listened to the audio recording and corrected the text for each transcript. After this, I printed all of the transcripts out and began my first round of open coding (Babbie & Roberts, 2018). This was the first of three rounds of coding, where each additional layer solidified the themes to be used in Chapter 5. In the open coding stage, I was not concerned about getting the 'right' themes identified right away. Instead, I began creating notes on the margins of anything that caught my attention in the form of descriptive codes. Qualitative research is an iterative process, where reflections and analysis are done as data are being gathered, so I was weaving potential themes and narratives together in the process of open coding (Saldana, 2011).

As these internal reflections were becoming too complex to hold, I began externally processing my thoughts through analytic memos (Saldana, 2011, p. 98) I connected similarities across different interviews, and also noted differences or incongruencies despite asking the same question. I asked the question 'why' these similarities and differences occurred, testing what factors may have contributed to the patterns I saw. I looked for patterns, categories, and how these may interact and interplay with each other (Saldana, 2011). In the following stage of axial coding, I narrowed down my codes into specific concepts, categories, and relationships (Babbie & Roberts, 2018). In the final stage of selective coding, I identified seven overarching themes, which are outlined in the Chapter 5 subheadings. Within each theme, several supporting themes were identified that categorized similarities, differences, and the interrelationship of factors that contribute, or do not contribute, to the demonstration of social capital and resilience.

3.2.3. Aggregate Survey Data Set Analysis

The survey responses were automatically aggregated by SurveyMonkey, and the responses were tabulated into univariate tables. Interpretation of the survey data set also went through an iterative process, which began with analyzing all responses, and then using filters to create sub-data sets based on relevant discrete variables such as

generation status and geographic location. Upon a second round of analysis for separate sub-data sets generated for first and second-generation respondents, and Toronto and Vancouver respondents, I identified pertinent patterns and trends that either correlated or did not correlate with census data. It was in this second round that I observed geographic location was not as significant a variable as generation status; both Toronto and Vancouver data sets revealed very similar responses. This may have been due to limitations in the sampling, since most participants were long-term members, or that Korean immigrant churches create a ‘bubble’ effect and share many similarities across North America. As a result, most of the questions underwent a bivariate analysis, differentiating between first and second-generation respondents. For the questions requesting responses on a Likert scale, each option was weighted (i.e. strongly disagree = 0, strongly agree = 5), and an average was calculated by SurveyMonkey for each row.

Many of the questions intentionally had comment sections, in order to make space for ‘marginalia’ (Stoudt, 2016).⁹ The comments were written in either English or Korean – I translated the Korean ones into English, and then I treated them like the qualitative interview data, categorized by the themes identified in selective coding. They were then incorporated into the survey data analysis to provide additional information or to provide counter arguments that could not be expressed in the closed-ended questions. Marginalia was helpful to reveal to me the assumption that everyone needed and wanted support from the Korean church, or that people were impacted negatively by the pandemic.

3.2.4. Validity and Reliability

In the collection and analysis of data, both validity and reliability are important aspects that inform readers’ perception of the credibility of the research. Internal validity is achieved when a researcher makes “correct observations on causal relationships among studied variables” (Gaber & Gaber, 1997, p. 102). In other words, internal invalidity can occur when the conclusions derived from the interpretation of a study’s results may not accurately reflect what occurred (Babbie & Roberts, 2018). Researcher

⁹ In this participatory action research study conducted in South Bronx, New York, researchers found comments on the margins of their surveys provided nuanced perspectives that could not be captured in the closed-ended questions, and also revealed the flawed assumptions implicitly embedded in the survey.

bias, or “anything other than the experimental stimulus” may affect the results of the study or the interpretation thereof (Babbie & Roberts, 2018, p. 188). There are a few potential sources of internal invalidity that need to be disclosed for this study:

1. Selection bias from survey distribution contacts
2. Researcher bias due to affiliation with the Korean church
3. Study respondent bias due to concerns of appearance

First, though it was unintentional, my survey distribution contacts disclosed to me that they sent the survey links to those who they felt would be most likely to respond promptly. Also, because both distribution contacts are well-connected and very active members of their respective churches, it is highly likely that their peers are also very active members. As a result, the responses may be overrepresented by those who are very committed individuals who view their churches favourably. Second, there may be a perception that due to my affiliation with the Korean church, I have an active interest in presenting a positive view of the institution. I am fully aware of this, and as mentioned before, various “Rules for Eliminating Bias” (Jackson, 1999) were used to reduce the chances of biased interpretation. Lastly, due to the cultural context of the study, it is possible that the respondents may “give answers that they think we want or that will make them look good,” due to the proximity of relationship (Babbie & Roberts, 2018, p. 188). Although it was an anonymous survey, there is a possibility respondents may have understated the impact of COVID on their lives, while overstating their involvement in the church.

External validity is the “extent to which research findings can be generalized to a larger theoretical realm” (Gaber & Gaber, 1997, p. 102). Given the research limitations of a one-investigator Master’s level thesis, the sample sizes were not as large as I would have preferred. However, given the limitations, I used an extended case study, interviewing pastors from three different churches, in order to increase external validity. Observations from the two large churches served to confirm one another’s claims, while the small church interview data were used as an anomalous example that refuted certain claims from the large churches. Not all Korean churches have more than a thousand congregants, and therefore their experiences with social capital and resilience are likely different. As for the surveys, I estimate a very high return rate (80 percent or more), and the total number of responses account for 5 percent of the sample frame. According to

Dillman (2007), with a study population of 1,000, accounting for an 80/20 split, 58 responses would be required from each church to achieve a $\pm 10\%$ sampling error, and this study passes this test. Therefore, the interpretations and conclusions made from these datasets can be reasonably attributed to the case study churches. However, with each 'larger theoretical realm,' such as the Korean church in Canada, or the immigrant ethnic church, or at broadest immigrant faith communities, caution must be exercised. The conclusion of this study contains generalizations with regard to extrapolating the findings to broader groupings of communities, but there is full disclosure that no conclusive statements can be made. In the spirit of the hypothetico-deductive method, more premises and hypotheses can be made about whether or not the findings from this study apply more broadly, but they must be tested in further, more well-resourced studies.

Reliability is the "assurance that procedures used can be repeated and would yield the same results" (Gaber & Gaber, 1997, p. 102). To achieve a high level of reliability, the study must operationalize as many steps as possible, so that someone else could produce the same results conducting the same research. Checks for reliability can also be incorporated into the different methods used in a study. Each method used in this study adheres to some system of analysis, whether by categorization, coding, or observation of trends. Moreover, the questions asked in both the interviews and the surveys avoid the pitfalls described in Flowerdew and Martin (2005): no double-barreled questions, double negatives, leading or loaded questions, inconsistency and suggestion, failure to state the alternatives, and potentially embarrassing questions. For interviews, some important questions were asked to all of the participants, in order to verify that the response was a generally held belief, and not an anomalous one. The use of the mixed-methods approach is in itself a reliability test to ensure that the document analysis, interview data, and survey data triangulate on similar conclusions.

My positionality as an insider granted me eagerness from participants due to the relational ties already formed. There may have been other reasons, such as high value for educational pursuit of a Master's degree, and an opportunity to present their churches in a positive perspective. However, there was hesitancy from certain pastors when I asked if I could distribute the survey in the weekly bulletin or their websites, because they anticipated pushback from their senior pastors. There were fears that any negative views could be linked back to the church publicly in some way. Within the

research design, I attempted to balance between asking the questions that I'm curious about, but also ensuring I do not break any trust in the relationship. As a result, I did not press very firmly on questions regarding money, for example. Pastors did answer on questions regarding money, but they kept their responses vague enough to not disclose too many details about their financial position. There were also some topics such as physical and emotional abuse that were discussed vaguely; at most, pastors acknowledged the existence of such cases within their congregation, but were hesitant to expand further. As the researcher, I made a conscious decision to not ask for more, understanding the sensitive nature of the topic. In general, Asian individuals tend to default to 'saving-face,' which means "maintaining one's dignity and reputation by hiding and avoiding humiliating or embarrassing situations" (Chung, 2016, p. 15; Kim, P.Y. & Yon, K.J., 2019). Therefore, it is important to keep in mind in the interview and survey responses what has been left *unsaid*. Further, overly positive responses must be read with some skepticism. In my analysis of the data, I have included critical interpretations to account for questions may have attracted face-saving responses.

Chapter 4. Korean Canadians and the Korean Church in an Urban Context

4.1. Census Data Analysis of Korean Canadians in Toronto and Vancouver CMAs

As of the 2016 census, there are 198,210 Koreans living in Canada, which has been determined by the ethnic origin portion of the census. There has been a steady increase in the Korean population in Canada over the past 40 years, and particularly in the last 20 years. The 2016 census figures represent a 35 percent increase from 2006, while the overall Canadian population grew by 11 percent. (Statistics Canada, 2017a; Statistics Canada, 2007). In the previous decade, from 1996-2006, the number of Koreans in Canada more than doubled from 66,655 to 146,550 (Statistics Canada, 2007).

4.1.1. Immigration Status

22 percent of ethnic Koreans in Canada are non-immigrants, while 65 percent are immigrants, and 13 percent are non-permanent residents (Statistics Canada, 2018). Of the 129,650 Korean immigrants to Canada, 18 percent arrived between 2011-2016, 39 percent arrived between 2001-2010, 23 percent from 1991-2000, 9 percent from 1981-1990, and 11 percent before 1981. Therefore, the majority of all Korean immigrants to Canada arrived between 1991-2010 (Statistics Canada, 2018).

Among all ethnic Koreans in Canada, 79 percent are first-generation immigrants, while 19 percent are second-generation, and 2 percent are third generation (Statistics Canada, 2018).¹⁰ While the majority of Koreans were born outside Canada, the share of second-generation immigrants has more than doubled since 2006, when just 8 percent of Korean Canadians were second-generation (Park, 2012). However, there are some notable differences between Toronto and Vancouver in terms of period of immigration and generation status. In Toronto, 27 percent of Korean immigrants arrived before 1990, while in Vancouver, only 14 percent arrived in that timeframe. Put in another way, almost

¹⁰ These figures include non-permanent residents, who are not technically immigrants. I was unable to isolate for just immigrants.

half (42 percent) of all Korean immigrants to Vancouver arrived between 2001-2010, while just 36 percent of Korean immigrants in Toronto arrived in that decade. Therefore, Koreans in Toronto are more established, and have a longer history of living in Canada than those in Vancouver (Statistics Canada, 2018).

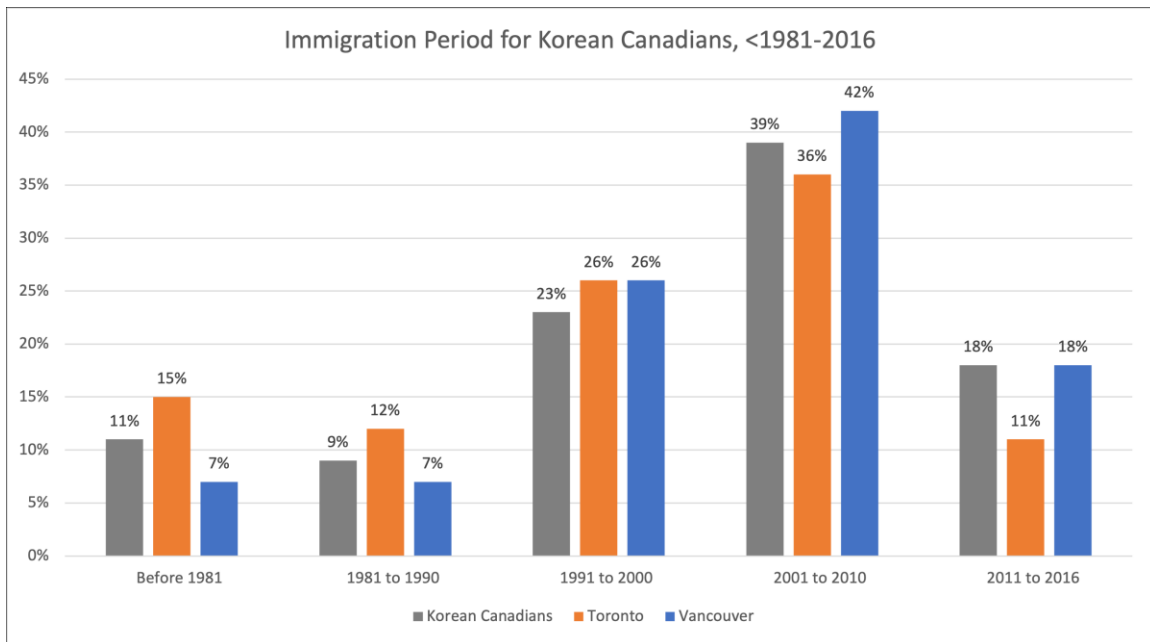


Figure 4.1. Immigration Period for Korean Canadians

This is also reflected in the difference between generation statuses: while almost a quarter (24 percent) of Koreans in Toronto are second-generation or more, only 17 percent of Koreans in Vancouver fall under those categories. Since Koreans in Toronto arrived earlier than those in Vancouver, there are more Koreans born in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2018). Most Koreans immigrated to Canada between the ages of 25-44 years old; they make up 45 percent of all Korean immigrants to Canada. There is no significant difference between Toronto and Vancouver (Statistics Canada).

For citizenship, 68 percent of all people of Korean origin were Canadian citizens in 2016, which is up from 57 percent in 2006 (Park, 2012). In Toronto, it is slightly higher, at 75 percent, and slightly lower in Vancouver, at 66 percent; this is correlated to the difference in period of immigration and generation status as mentioned before. About 32 percent of Koreans were non-citizens, which is much higher in comparison to the total Canadian population of 7 percent (Statistics Canada, 2017a; Statistics Canada, 2018).

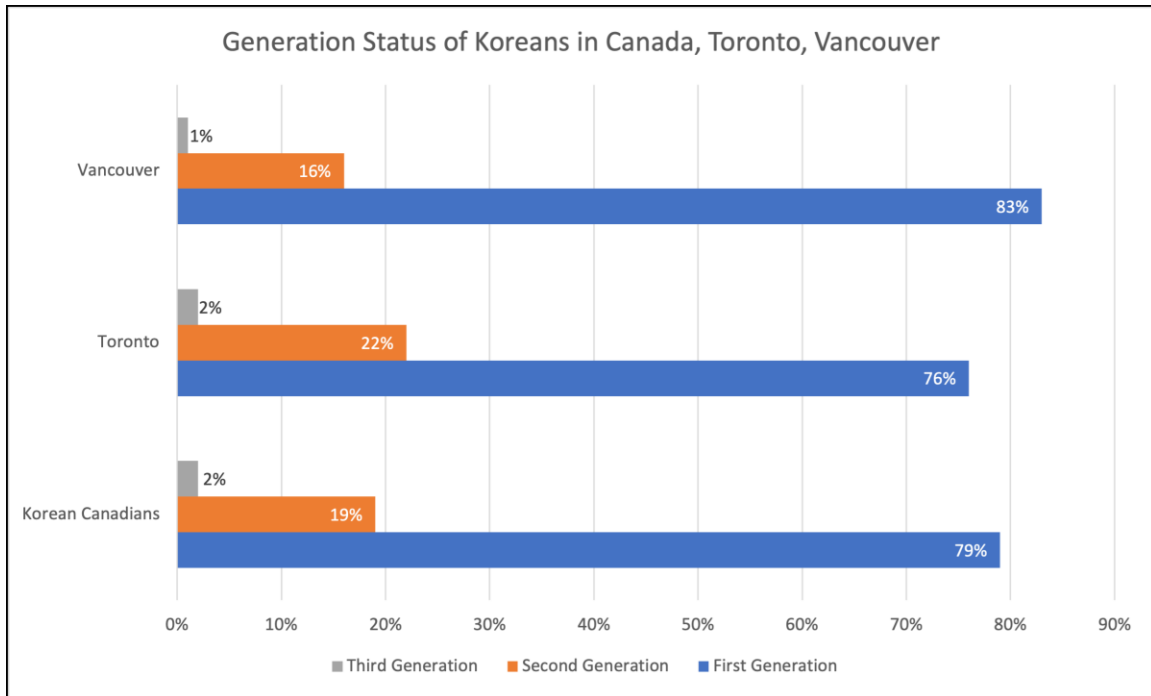


Figure 4.2. Generation Status of Koreans in Canada, Toronto, and Vancouver

4.1.2. Geographic Distribution

Of the 198,210 Korean Canadians in Canada, 28 percent reside in Vancouver CMA, while 37 percent reside in Toronto CMA; this makes up 65 percent of total Koreans in Canada living either in Vancouver or Toronto CMA (Statistics Canada, 2017c). It's interesting to note that more recent Korean immigrants have been choosing to settle outside of Ontario, and notably away from Toronto CMA. Of the 21,710 Korean immigrants who arrived between 2011-2016, 23 percent chose Toronto CMA – this represents a decline of almost half the share of Korean immigrants compared to 1991-2000, when 41 percent of Korean immigrants chose to live in Toronto CMA (Statistics Canada, 2017b).

On a provincial level, provinces outside Ontario and British Columbia have seen high increases in Korean settlement. From 1991-2000 to 2011-2016, Ontario dropped from 51 to 29 percent of all Korean immigrants to Canada, while British Columbia has maintained virtually the same share at 37-38 percent. In contrast, when comparing the same periods of immigration, the percentage of total Korean immigrants to Canada who settled in New Brunswick increased by 14 times from 0.2 to 2.8 percent. In Manitoba, the percentage increased 12 times, from 0.5 to 6 percent, Saskatchewan quadrupled from

0.5 to 2.2 percent and Alberta doubled from 9 to 18 percent (Statistics Canada, 2017b). However, by count, British Columbia and Ontario are still the top two destinations for Korean immigrants who arrived between 2011-2016, making up 14,345 of 21,710 total Korean immigrants to Canada, or 66 percent.

4.1.3. Language Proficiency

88 percent of Korean Canadians indicated English as their first official language spoken, while 92 percent Korean Canadians speak either English, French, or both. Only 9 percent indicated they could speak neither of the official languages (Statistics Canada, 2018). In contrast, 75 percent of the total Canadian population indicated English as their first official language spoken, while 98 percent of Canadians speak either English, French, or both. Just 2 percent indicated they could speak neither of the official languages. (Statistics Canada, 2017a).

Since 83 percent of Korean Canadians indicated their mother tongue is neither English nor French, their language use differs between home and work. At work, 84 percent of Korean Canadians aged 15 years and over speak either English or French, but 56 percent speak Korean at home (Statistics Canada, 2018). Due to their more recent arrival, Korean Canadians in Vancouver are more likely to speak Korean at home than Koreans in Toronto: 62 percent of Korean Vancouverites speak Korean at home, compared to just 54 percent of Korean Torontonians (Statistics Canada, 2018).

Table 4.1. Language spoken at home and at work

	Korean Canadians		Korean Torontonians		Korean Vancouverites	
	At home	At work	At home	At work	At home	At work
English	33%	82%	36%	84%	27%	75%
Non-official (Korean)	56%	12%	54%	11%	62%	18%
French	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%

4.1.4. Family Status

58 percent of Korean Canadians are either married or living common law, which is almost identical to the rate of total Canadians (Statistics Canada, 2018; Statistics Canada, 2017a). Korean-Canadians are more likely to be in one-census-family

households with children than Canadians at large: 77 percent of Korean Canadian households are one-census-family households without additional persons, of which 69 percent are couple census families with children, while in contrast, 66 percent of total Canadians live in one-census-family households, and 59 percent of those are couple census families with children (Statistics Canada, 2018; Statistics Canada, 2017a).

Korean-Canadians are four times less likely to live alone and 2.5 times more likely to live in multigenerational households than Canadians as a whole. Only 7 percent of Korean-Canadians live alone and 5 percent live in multigenerational households, while 28 percent of total Canadians live alone, and 2% live in multigenerational households. There are no significant differences between Koreans in Toronto and Vancouver (Statistics Canada, 2018; Statistics Canada, 2017a).

4.1.5. Income and Labour

Overall, Korean Canadians have lower incomes than Canadians in general. While the average total income for Canadian individuals was \$47,487 in 2015, Korean Canadians made just 67% of that, bringing in \$31,793. The discrepancy is more pronounced in Vancouver than Toronto: the average total individual income in Vancouver was \$28,549, compared to \$33,606 in Toronto. This equates to Korean Vancouverites earning 60 cents for every dollar an average Canadian earns, and Korean Torontonians earning 71 cents for every dollar an average Canadian earns. (Statistics Canada, 2018).

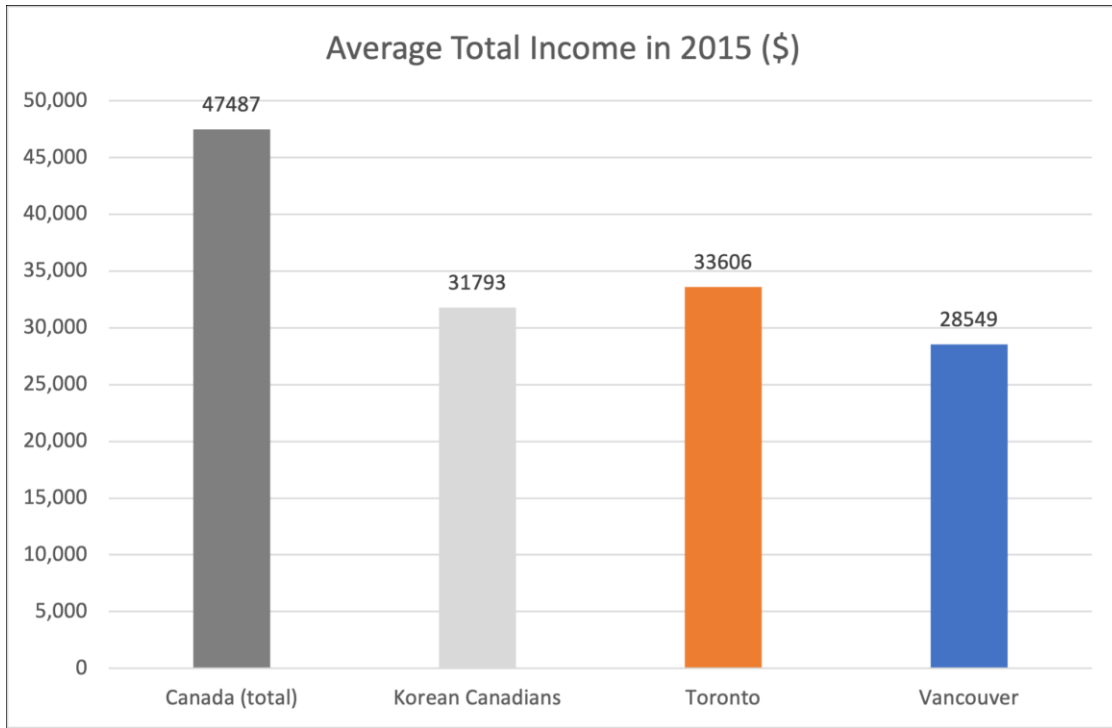


Figure 4.3. Average total income for Canadians (total) and Korean Canadians

This is also reflected in the percentage of households under the low-income cut-off after taxes (LICO-AT). Korean Canadians are almost three times more likely than Canadians at large to be under the LICO-AT (25.2 vs 9.2 percent). This makes up over a quarter of all Korean Canadian households. Korean Torontonians sit at 24.1 percent, while Korean Vancouverites hover slightly under one third, at 29.4 percent (Statistics Canada, 2018).

Moreover, Korean Canadians are almost twice as likely than the total Canadian population to be self-employed. While 12 percent of the total Canadian population is self-employed, 21 percent of Korean Canadians are self-employed (Statistics Canada, 2018). The lower incomes and higher levels of self-employment may point to the fact that many Korean Canadians operate their own small businesses, due to Canadian employers requiring job experience and schooling from Canada. Many do not operate highly profitable businesses – many own retail storefronts such as gas stations, convenience stores, and dry-cleaning (Park, 2012).

However, there is a notable upward socioeconomic mobility between first and second-generation Korean Canadians regarding employment: while a considerable

number of first-generation Koreans were in management, including unincorporated family-owned small businesses (30 percent of men) and sales and services (31 percent of women), second-generation Koreans pursued occupations in business, finance, and administration (Park, 2012).¹¹

4.1.6. Religion

Since the question of religion was not asked in the 2016 census, the most recent census data on religion are provided in the 2011 National Household Survey. However, given the high global non-response rate (26.1 percent), the data has a higher risk of inaccuracy. Of the 168,890 Koreans in Canada in 2011, 47 percent indicated they belong to a Protestant or non-Catholic denomination, and 21 percent selected Catholic. This is a slight decrease from 2001, when 51 percent of Koreans reported to be Protestant/non-Catholic and 25 percent Catholic (Statistics Canada, 2013; Statistics Canada, 2007).

Even by 2011 figures, the percentage share of Korean Christians in Canada is far higher than in Korea. In 2010, Pew Research Center estimated 29 percent of Koreans in South Korea were affiliated with a Christian denomination, including Catholics, Protestants, and other Christians (Connor, 2014). This means Koreans in Canada are 2.3 times more likely to be Christian than in South Korea. There are many plausible reasons why this is the case, but the significance is that a majority of Koreans in Canada are affiliated with a Christian church and “many Koreans join ethnic churches to seek practical social supports for immigrant life as well as for religious accommodation” (Park, 2012).

4.2. Document Analysis of Case Study Churches

The two main churches consulted for this study are identified with codenames TOR-A and VAN-A, as mentioned in the methodology section. Both TOR-A and VAN-A are large churches, with pre-pandemic attendance estimated at 1,000 for TOR-A and 1,250 for VAN-A. Public-facing documents such as annual reports were requested, but were unavailable to access. Pastors at respective churches provided me with their best

¹¹ This information is from the 2006 census, not the 2016 census.

estimates. It is important to distinguish church attendance and membership, with the former having no formal commitment to the church, while the latter usually involves a ‘membership inauguration’ process and prerequisites such as number of years attended, baptismal status, etc. For the purpose of this study, attendance numbers will be the preferred metric for number of participating individuals because it includes everyone who interacts with church leadership and congregants.

Table 4.2. Summary of TOR-A and VAN-A Document Analysis

	TOR-A	VAN-A
Estimated attendance	1,000	1,250
Sunday ministries	Early childhood SK – Grade 6 KM high school (Grade 7-12) EM high school Korean language school	Toddlers – kindergarten KM Grade 1-3 KM Grade 4-6 EM Grade 1-6 KM high school (Grade 7-12) EM high school (Grade 7-12) KM university students EM young adult and adult KM persons with disabilities Korean language school
Types of weekly gatherings	Sunday worship Early morning prayer Wednesday worship Small group	Sunday worship Early morning prayer Wednesday worship Small group Friday prayer gatherings
Christian education	Stephen Care (Leadership) Evangelism training Bible studies Evangelism training	Newcomers course One-on-one discipleship Bible studies Prayer study courses Home education Evangelism training Church history Leadership
Internal volunteerism	Spring concert planning Media ministry Choir (men’s/women’s) Mission Café Intercessory prayer Congregational support	Choir (men’s/women’s) Intercessory prayer Congregational support
Outreach volunteerism	World Vision Sponsorship Out of the Cold Seniors University Refugee family sponsorship Korean community service	Korean community service

Both churches have websites in the Korean language, which I have translated for this study.¹² They both have sections outlining the times and staff for worship gatherings, various Sunday ministries, outreach ministries, and ways to get involved in church life. Both churches have a division between KM and EM, starting at middle school for TOR-A, and elementary school for VAN-A. The KM congregation is much larger, and therefore require multiple services to accommodate the volume of attendees in proportion to the seating capacity of chapels. TOR-A and VAN-A both have three Sunday services at three separate times, approximately 8am, 10am, and 12pm. TOR-A divides KM and EM into the same age ranges; both have dedicated ministries for early childhood, senior kindergarten to Grade 6, and Grade 7-12. While KM has their own separate university-aged ministry, EM is university age and older. VAN-A has similar age range divisions, with slight variances. KM has separate ministries for toddlers (14-30mo), kindergarten (31mo-3yo), Grade 1-6, Grade 7-12, university ministry, and then the adult ministry. EM is divided into Grade 1-3, 4-6, 7-12, and their young adult and adult ministry is university-aged and older. Both TOR-A and VAN-A have significantly smaller EM ministries in comparison to their KM congregation. In TOR-A, about 15 percent of the total congregation attends EM services, while in VAN-A the figure is closer to eight percent. Both churches provide Korean language school on Sundays, available for children up to Grade 6.

Both churches offer many different ways to be involved in church life through volunteerism or participating in gatherings, classes, seminars, or trainings. A majority of the programming is spiritually focused, which I will discuss for the purpose of illustrating the frequency of gatherings, and also discuss the socially driven ones for the purpose of operationalizing bonding and bridging social capital. In TOR-A, the KM website displays their numerous gatherings in addition to Sunday service: there are services on Wednesday and Saturday evenings and daily early morning prayer. There are prayer teams designated for various purposes such as intercession and 'relay prayer,' where one congregant calls another to pray for them, and that person calls another, and the 'relay' continues on. Congregants are also put into small groups that gather on Sundays before or after service, as well as during weekdays at each other's homes. As for social programming, they have a dedicated community service ministry aimed to help with

¹² Church websites have not been cited in order to retain confidentiality of identity.

needs of the local Korean community, and fulfill requests from local Korean community organizations. They also have an internal course called “Stephen Care,” in which individuals receive 50 hours of training on how to serve with Christian care, intended on caring for those facing challenges, crises, and difficulties. This can include, but is not limited to, those who are ill or hospitalized, in financial difficulty, experiencing separation or divorce, the elderly living alone, those having difficulty with immigration settlement, and for exchange students. They also have a “Seniors University,” which is a program open to any Korean seniors in Toronto; they offer activities such as dance and music lessons, as well as ‘classes’ for practical skills.

TOR-A’s EM website provides information about their Sunday services, which occur concurrently to KM. They also have small groups, called home groups, that meet during the week. During COVID, they have launched a link so congregants can meet on Zoom for daily morning prayer. There are links to various initiatives that congregants can support, whether financially, in kind, or by prayer, such as the sponsorship of a Syrian refugee family. There are requests for monetary and home settlement donations to help cover the cost of furnishing their home and other related expenses. They also host a program called Out of the Cold, which is normally hosted at the church building. They partner with a local non-profit organization called Mosaic Interfaith to serve as an emergency shelter during the winter months, while also providing basic necessities for visitors. Lastly, they have a partnership with World Vision to sponsor a community in Bolivia.

VAN-A’s KM webpage is similar to TOR-A, providing information on the various Sunday worship services, Wednesday worship, Friday prayer gathering, home groups, and opportunities to join the four different choirs for each service time. They articulate the seven different departments: worship, mission, education, musical worship, social services, administrative management, and finance. In the social services department, they specify visitations, congratulations and condolences, parking information, small group and course support. VAN-A’s KM has an extensive discipleship ministry, which includes explicitly faith-based courses such as Bible study, prayer, evangelism and missions, church history, and diasporas. There are also relationally based courses, such as those for newcomers, one-on-one discipleship meetings, home education, and leadership. Within home education, there are specific courses such as parenting school, marital counselling, and family seminars. Within leadership training, there are formal

programming to be a church elder or small group leader. Unlike TOR-A, VAN-A does not have any public-facing material on ministries that serve the community-at-large, nor does it have a dedicated website for the EM.

TOR-B's website is relatively simple compared to TOR-A and VAN-A, with limited information about its program offerings. It shows service times and location, and a general contact email address. Given the size of the congregation, it is likely that they do not have sufficient resources to create and maintain a comprehensive website.

In conclusion, primarily from screening TOR-A and VAN-A's websites, it appears that even prior to COVID, both churches were very active in providing an array of programs for its congregants and the wider community. The programs that provide volunteer opportunities for congregants and small groups of social and spiritual connection promote bonding social capital, while the programs that are aimed to be services such as Korean language school, parenting classes, seniors outreach, and external non-profit sponsorship promote bridging social capital. These Korean churches have broad and complex operations catered for the demonstrated needs within their community and in the communities outside the church.

Chapter 5. Leadership Perspectives

The objective of this chapter is to provide an analysis of the seven pastor interviews I conducted. Due to the commitment to confidentiality given to the research participants, they will only be referred to as their job titles, followed by the codename designation for their church. Refer to Table 3.1 for a summary of the seven individuals referenced in this chapter. This chapter has been divided into seven thematic subsections.

5.1. Church Life Before COVID

Life within the Korean church in Toronto and Vancouver before COVID was full of activities. All the pastors interviewed expressed they engaged in various commitments, meetings, preparations, and ministerial responsibilities throughout the week. Even though the primary gathering was on Sunday, the case study churches had additional gatherings during the week. The children's pastor at VAN-A remarked how pastors needed to participate in Wednesday and Friday services, while the associate minister at TOR-A led evening Bible studies throughout the week. Moreover, the youth pastor at TOR-A helped with the Friday early morning prayer service, as well as a Friday evening youth fellowship gathering with "about 40 to 50 students... we had the music, worship, Bible study, and some pizza at dinner time." Sundays were busy days, considering pastors needed to prepare for the service, lead it, and participate in additional programming or meetings. Both TOR-A and VAN-A had multiple worship service times to accommodate congregant schedules and chapel capacity, so there was a constant flow of people coming in and out of the buildings. Taking advantage of the fact that people were already present on Sunday for service, there were other programs such as an English Bible study or "*sung gyo hae*" – a group gathering of adults in the Korean ministry. Pastors also conducted visitations during the week, whether for individuals they were concerned about, or for those in the hospital or other extenuating circumstances.

Throughout the year, there were also large gatherings beyond the typically scheduled weekly services, such as retreats and celebrations following the Christian calendar. The youth pastor typically led a two-night retreat during March Break, and both EM pastors at TOR-A and VAN-A said they led annual summer and winter retreats. For

the children, the pastor at VAN-A said the two largest annual programs were Vacation Bible School (VBS) and Hallelujah Night. VBS spanned the last week of July to the first week of August, and was intended to be a type of summer day camp for children. At TOR-A, VBS spanned the entire month of August, with children being provided educational classes and lunches from 9am-4pm. This program was available to anyone who registers, and was therefore not restricted to congregants of the church. Hallelujah Night occurred on Halloween Night, intended to be a parallel event that happened at the church for children. Furthermore, the churches also hosted large events for major holidays such as Easter, Christmas, and New Year's day. VAN-A held an annual "Easter Cantata," and on the evening of Easter Sunday, orchestras would perform and the offering funds from the event was donated to a non-profit organization that assists in humanitarian efforts in North Korea. In sum, the social life of the church extended beyond Sunday worship services, meaning congregants had the opportunity to participate in numerous activities during the week and seasonally over the year. Depending on the availability of congregants, they could theoretically engage in a church-related activity nearly every day of the week. This is significant because the frequency of interactions can help foster breadth and depth of relationship amongst congregants, as well as cohesion as a group.

In addition to gatherings, there were also services and programs with varying purposes. Some of these services met practical needs within the church community, while others help those in their municipality, and at times even internationally. In each of these examples, they all functioned with the support of the congregation's volunteer hours and monetary resources. Both TOR-A and VAN-A provided Korean language school for children and youth; Korean adult congregation members volunteered to be teachers, and were supported by either a separate Educational Department or Children's Ministry Department. At TOR-A, it occurred during the adult service, which meant "it almost doubles as babysitting," as the associate minister explained, "but more importantly, I think a lot of Korean families value that their children are learning the Korean culture and language." There is a strong sense of retaining ethnic identity within the Korean community, which permeates the Korean church as well. One of TOR-A's largest programs was Seniors University, which happened twice a year for any Korean senior in Toronto. It was hosted through governmental funding, and the associate pastor described it like this:

Each week they come, they have song and worship together, they eat lunch together, a really well prepared lunch, and then they go off into their little workshops like Zumba, or how to use your Samsung phone, or ping pong or how to play the ocarina, or how to play Korean drums. There's so many options so it's really fun to be at church on those days because it's so lively with like, I would say over 100 seniors. And then they take them on field trips to apple picking and things like that so it's just a really wonderful community.

This is an example of how the Korean church provided services to people outside of the church, meeting a community need and providing an opportunity for seniors to build bridging social capital amongst themselves. Another example comes from the EM of TOR-A, called Out of the Cold. This was a program provided jointly with a poverty reduction non-profit organization in Toronto that happened annually from November to January. TOR-A converted their gymnasium into an emergency winter shelter, and the partner organization assisted in the logistical end of bringing people experiencing homelessness in for a warm place to spend the night. They also provided dinner, and volunteers socialized with the visitors. They also held essential personal item drives, soliciting donations from the congregation for new undergarments, winter clothing, and hygiene products for the visitors. VAN-A has committed to a similar program in partnership with a non-profit organization in Vancouver: congregants volunteer to assist in meal preparations and socializing with visitors once a month. Both churches also routinely hold fundraisers and special offering funds for non-profit organizations that they support internationally, such as World Vision. Some of these outreach services can be considered bridging social capital, interacting and sharing resources across ethnic, socioeconomic, and cultural boundaries. Some services are catered towards Koreans, but those who do not regularly attend church; this can be considered an in-between of bonding and bridging social capital, since connections are made outside of the church, but still within the Korean community. The existence of bridging social capital is significant because it demonstrates involvement in a broader community, and opportunities to either receive or provide support across external networks.

Both TOR-A and VAN-A are able to provide a plethora of programs and social services due to the economic and human resources available due to their scale. TOR-B, on the other hand, had much simpler operations. This is partly due to their available economic and human resources, but also the pastoral leadership's preferences. The assistant pastor at TOR-B said their regular operations were their Sunday service, Bible

study, discipleship, and early morning prayer. They do not provide Korean language school, family counselling, parental training, or other social services. The assistant pastor mentioned that part of the reason is because the senior pastor is very academic, and prefers to focus on theology rather than “everyday life issues or topics.” In this sense, TOR-B differs in the scale and type of church compared to TOR-A and VAN-A. This highlights some observable difference between churches regarding the level of available resources directed at social capital building activities. Although congregation size may have an impact on the capacity of churches to engage in bonding and bridging social capital, pastoral leadership can also influence priorities. Senior pastors who emphasize the importance of spiritual practices, such as in TOR-B, may provide less support for social services, while senior pastors who emphasize the importance of ‘loving your neighbour’ (*New International Version Bible*, 2011, Mark 12:30-31) may provide more support for social services within and outside of the church.

As demonstrated above, prior to the pandemic, the Korean church was an active institution with numerous gatherings for its congregants, as well as programs and services to meet community needs locally, nationally, and even globally. The multitude of activities provided an array of opportunities for congregants to connect with one another, provide social and emotional support, and share resources such as knowledge or personal finances. These facets of social capital (social and emotional support, sharing of knowledge, sharing of financial resources) will be discussed in the next section. However, depending on the scale of the church and the philosophical approach of the senior pastor, how many types of services and activities offered may vary. TOR-A and VAN-A are able to provide these services and programs because they have the economic and human capacity to do so, and the senior pastor advocates for them. Smaller churches such as TOR-B, with a senior pastor focused on the congregation’s spiritual health, are not in a position to offer as extensive a list of programs as the former two.

5.2. Physical and Digital Locus of Social Capital

Even prior to COVID, the Korean church had extensive networks for bonding social capital through both formal and informal channels. In TOR-A, the youth pastor mentioned that the KM side hired three pastors specifically to provide knowledge, resources, and advocacy to those who need it:

The seniors who need to apply for those social services or all kinds of needs, to go to the hospital, need to apply for grandchildren's school or their children's school or immigration, whatever the social or spiritual need they mentioned, we provide it... On our church website there are announcements all the time, 24/7 banner is rotating. If you need help, call anybody, any pastors, and whether it's financial or whatever need, we'll send somebody to meet their needs. We're always ready to provide the help.

As the TOR-A youth pastor mentioned, the church website is a well-used formal platform for information dissemination, and both the youth pastor and associate minister at TOR-A reported congregants check it regularly for updates. There were also examples of practical information dissemination, such as a job seminar for Canada Post jobs that was organized and held at TOR-A church. While these formal structures that are set up for congregants to access are helpful and necessary, they are supported by two interrelated informal communication networks that connect people to these structures, and each other: the small group and KakaoTalk group chat.¹³

Both TOR-A and VAN-A pastors indicated that the main social circle in which people would share information is through the small group. Both churches have created a "small group" or "cell group" system to which every congregant belongs. In both churches, they have a "newcomers team," who welcomes people new to the church, collects their contact information, and becomes the point person for becoming acquainted with the church. Within those informal conversations, if particular needs come up, or if individuals/families are found out to be new to Vancouver or Canada, the newcomer team member will relay that information to other leaders and deacons in the church who can provide assistance. As the EM pastor at VAN-A expressed it:

People get to know people and you get to ask questions that you want to ask, especially if that person who's newly joining the church is new to the city. And obviously they can benefit from that small group.

With every congregant in a small group, these groups meet at least once a week on Sundays, with occasional gatherings during the week. In TOR-A, every small group rotates a household that hosts a dinner gathering on a monthly basis. In large churches such as TOR-A and VAN-A, these small groups are important in fostering a sense of

¹³ KakaoTalk is a digital messaging platform akin to WhatsApp, used almost exclusively by Koreans.

belonging and social interaction; they are intentional structures that have been set up to help people connect.

The additional layer of social connection and communication comes from KakaoTalk group chats; KakaoTalk is a Korean mobile and desktop messaging application, similar to WhatsApp. While not all Koreans may have WhatsApp on their phones, they will most likely have KakaoTalk. When small groups are not physically together, they use KakaoTalk to communicate important information. The associate minister at TOR-A explained it this way:

Every small group definitely has their own chat rooms and so the information goes from whoever's in leadership to all the leaders of each group and then the leaders of each group, which I think there's over 100 groups that then share it with their groups... the information that goes out through all their Kakao chat rooms are very much like this is how to get this funding and don't forget to sign up for this and did you know about this from the government.

Pastors at both churches emphasized the importance of the KakaoTalk group chat rooms as a crucial communication network that congregants and leaders alike use to keep each other updated on relevant information. Sometimes, formal structures were communicated via KakaoTalk, such as a weekly newsletter with updates on church life, volunteer opportunities, and practical governmental funding or employment opportunities. The KakaoTalk network allows for very fast distribution of important information; the associate minister at TOR-A gave an example of how within one day, a notice of a funeral for a church member who passed away reached the whole congregation. This is important because it extends the boundaries of social connection outside of the physical church walls. Even from their respective homes, congregants can communicate important information and coordinate resource-sharing. Due to the physical distancing restrictions during the pandemic, this communications infrastructure became a very important digital space where social capital could continue to be accrued and used.

Much of the motivation for providing support and assistance to fellow Koreans entering the church comes from a mutual assumption between the giver and receiver that Christians are more likely to provide help than non-religious co-ethnics, and as the children's pastor at VAN-A put it, the church "wants to support their own." A sense bounded solidarity as a result of similarities in faith, nationality, and immigrant

experience, as well as a moral duty as Christians, all merge together in motivating Korean churches and churchgoers to maintain these structures of social capital. The EM youth pastor at VAN-A put it this way:

That's why many people in Korea who weren't churchgoers, when they come to Canada, they do go to church... because they have easier access to this information, and [churchgoers] tend to have a more open heart to come and help them out... there's a sense of it's a church community, but it's also an immigrant community.

In addition, children's pastor at VAN-A provided two examples of the bounded solidarity in action, that are not formally endorsed by the church, but done through the congregants' own volition:

I don't know if you've heard this, but people say if you're Korean and you want to start a business in Vancouver, then you have to go to church. The church wants to support the people within their church, so people would deliberately go to a restaurant if they know that it's one of their church members.

The other example relates to "*yoo hak umma*," which means mother of international students. In academic literature, these are known as *kirogi* mothers, which means wild goose in Korean. A *kirogi* family refers to a "multinational household in which the mother has moved overseas for the children's education while the father lives alone in Korea to support his family economically" (Lee, 2010, p. 250). The children's pastor at VAN-A estimated that approximately 10-15 percent of the children in her ministry belong to a *kirogi* family, and the mothers form social networks to provide support for one another:

Like if their kid is sick and they don't know, like medication is different here. In Korea, you can just go to a pharmacy and get whatever you need, but here it's just harder. So the moms help each other out in that sense. And there are a lot of like cafes, "mom cafes," where initially they would meet at church... and then they would spend time together and relieve stress and bond over the difficulties they go through.

These informal support networks form as people gather and share life together, recognizing that even within the immigrant experience, there are further niche experiences with which to bond over. These networks not only serve as social connection points, but also as a way to increase social capital by collectively sharing knowledge and resources.

Much of the above discussion focuses on the KM side of the Korean church, and it is important to note differences for the EM. Congregants in EM are typically the children of KM first-generation immigrants, who were either born in Canada or arrived in Canada as a child. As a result, they are proficient in English, have completed their education in Canada, and have decades worth of knowledge and social capital outside of the church setting. The EM lead pastor at TOR-A explained how the informal channels of communication still exist, but are used to achieve different aims:

In our English speaking ministry context, I think that's a little bit different in that being a commuter church in the suburbs, people are well resourced and they know quite a bit. But there is a good amount of 'trying to keep up'... not just within the church but in whatever circles... I think there's a recognition of, whereas we're not scrambling to try to find resources, we're scrambling to try to keep up with the stream, where our kids find themselves or where we find ourselves in a particular stage of life, and so I think those conversations are happening all the time.

Therefore, for the EM second-generation immigrant population, the sharing of information and resources are less tied to the purpose of surviving in a new country, but to keep on pace to the perceived trajectory of life stages according to their peers. These peers may include fellow congregants, but may also include non-Korean friends, acquaintances, and/or coworkers.

TOR-B is again an anomaly in this case study due to their smaller size, and presumably the priorities of the senior pastor. They do not have any formal structures set up to provide assistance to those who need it, and though there are informal communication networks, they are not as expansive as in TOR-A or VAN-A. They do not have the financial capacity to set up formal structures, and the informal structures are not well developed because they are not necessary at such a small scale. This is not to say informal conversations and support among the congregation does not happen. However, the capacity to which the church can provide congregants with necessary information or resources is far more limited than in the larger churches. Since these activities may not be encouraged by the senior pastor, formal structures may not receive support, but informal networks may exist.

In each of the Korean churches, both formal and informal structures existed prior to COVID in order to meet the needs of the community within and outside the church, even though they vary in complexity based on congregation size. In cases like TOR-A,

staff were hired specifically for the purpose of providing necessary assistance for congregants. Bounded solidarity among congregants, especially those in very specific circumstances such as the *kirogi* mothers, also contributes to the willingness for reciprocal support. Moreover, the existing communication networks in the digital sphere enable information to flow quickly and effectively in both directions, from leadership to congregation and vice versa. This means that although there are various programs and events in which people can have in-person informal conversations, those conversations can happen regardless of the physical location. However, due to the reduction of liminal spaces, i.e. conversations while passing someone by in the hallway, or just before the service starts, congregants need to be more intentional about initiating those conversations online.

5.3. Adapting and Adjusting to the Pandemic

In Ontario, the provincial government recommended the closure of most gathering spaces such as recreation centres, libraries, daycares, dine-in restaurants, and faith settings including churches on March 16, 2020 (Nielsen, 2020). In British Columbia, gatherings of more than 50 people were banned, and businesses that could not avoid large gatherings of people were ordered to shut down on the same day as Ontario (CBC News, 2020). For all churches in this study, they experienced growing pains adapting to online services and being unable to gather in person. However, the range and types of difficulty varied depending on a couple of factors such as church size and generation status. In general, each of the churches were able to “reorganize itself to maintain essential structure and process,” which is one of the definitions of resilience in the community disaster resilience literature (Mayunga, 2007, p. 4). Moreover, they were able to “bounce back or respond positively to adversity” with “resistance, recovery, and creativity,” which is one definition of community resilience (Koliou et al., 2020, p. 133).

An overall sentiment among all pastors was a very quick and drastic transition into digital platforms and a scrambling to try and deal with all of the technical difficulties. The EM youth pastor at VAN-A explained how they had to purchase new programs and tools to get their services online, and create social media platforms such as Instagram in order to keep connected with their congregants. Pastors from both TOR-A and VAN-A described the steep learning curve at the onset of the pandemic. According to the EM youth pastor at VAN-A:

I had to edit videos so that it could be transmitted to the congregation, so that was the first thing we did: build a studio at the church office... we spent hours and hours getting to know different things to set up this studio, and in the beginning it was not easy because we were making so many mistakes...as we've got used to it, now we understand better.

The youth pastor at TOR-A had similar remarks:

We barely set up cameras for YouTube to worship so it was like three pastors standing together to set up the camera, it was out of focus so many times, and the sound was from the camera 10 meters away... and we didn't know how to use the software at the beginning.

However, these difficulties were short-lived, and both TOR-A and VAN-A expressed they were heading in a direction of putting more resources towards digital media, but the COVID restrictions sped up that process. The EM youth pastor at VAN-A mentioned that it is common for churches of their size to have digital platforms for worship, and though they had intentions to follow suit, the restrictions provided an opportunity to speed up the process. In TOR-A, the associate minister explained that they were already recording their services and putting them online, so they had some technology and experience, but the challenge was communicating to congregants about the shift and where to find the online link. Church size and capacity is a contributing factor to the speed and effectiveness of adapting to COVID restrictions. For TOR-B, the roll out was slower and less advanced. The assistant pastor at TOR-B remarked that at first, they pre-recorded videos on their phones and sent it to congregants via KakaoTalk. Once they realized COVID was going to be a long-term reality, they then purchased video and audio technology to host livestreams.

The degree of change in program offerings varied widely: for some programs, they transitioned online in creative ways; there were also new programs in order to address shortcomings due to the lack of in-person interactions; and others were put on hold altogether. Both KM and EM exemplified a reorganization to maintain their essential structure (Mayunga, 2007), redirecting their decreased resources into the most crucial programs; the definition of 'crucial' varied depending on the church. For VAN-A's children's ministry, nothing was cancelled; everything was done online, from the VBS to the Hallelujah Night on Halloween. The pastor pre-recorded all the sessions for VBS, and made packages for the children that included arts and crafts supplies and snacks. Due to the church not having to rent a facility to host the program, they were able to

provide the VBS at no fee to the families. Some existing programs, such as TOR-A's 'home group,' where congregants gather in smaller groups of people, was adapted to be more effective during COVID. They scaled down the sizes of the small groups to just four to five people, resourced them well, and the small group leaders were instructed to hold meetings from 60 to 90 minutes at maximum. In other instances, additional virtual gatherings were launched to help people feel more connected. The EM pastor at VAN-A mentioned a new Wednesday Bible reading session and Friday prayer meeting for their congregation, which did not occur before COVID. In some senses, it was easier to launch new gatherings because they became more accessible for those who lived far from the church building.

There were various creative ways the pastoral teams engaged with their congregants. For example, the pastoral team for EM youth at TOR-A hosted online trivia nights with the teens, and whichever team won would receive bubble tea at their homes:

It was a team competition so there were like seven kids we had to drop off at, so three pastors divided up the task and we would drop it off, ring the doorbell, and tell them we dropped something off as a prize... the kids were so happy, the parents were so happy that we brought something to their homes to their kids on Friday night.

For larger, annual gatherings such as Christmas, VAN-A got creative in figuring out how to host the event while everyone stayed in their respective homes. Though they typically had various ministries prepare songs or skits, in 2020 they had everyone film from their homes and they were edited together by staff. They were able to synchronize the singing and dancing, and put multiple videos side by side to create the impression that they were doing it together in unison. On the interpersonal level, there was a unanimous focus in all three churches to keep connected, both between pastors and congregants, and congregants to each other. All pastors expressed that they checked in with their congregants much more frequently. At TOR-A's EM, they set up a systematic approach to checking in, with the five elders splitting a list of all the congregants evenly and contacting them each individually. In addition, the EM pastor at VAN-A began monthly coffee meetings with people who were more withdrawn as the pandemic grew worse. The pastor messaged a few people and sent them gift cards so they could order a coffee for themselves, and then they would have a check-in via Zoom.

The main reason why some programs were cancelled was because of lack of capacity, on both the leadership and congregation levels. Pastors at VAN-A expressed that due to the transition online, preparing for weekly gatherings and programs took much longer, given the time required to record the videos, edit when necessary, and upload it onto the Web. Particularly for TOR-B, with less pastors on staff, they downscaled many of their auxiliary programs such as Wednesday and Saturday services and focused solely on Sunday worship. On the congregation side, as the pandemic continued on for months and months, their capacity to attend online gatherings grew thin. The associate minister at TOR-A explained that they tried launching new programs and gatherings, but some had no attendees. In the beginning, most congregants were eager to gather online to mitigate the distress of social isolation, but approximately a year in, pastors are recognizing the importance of a select few essential gatherings and cancelling the rest:

We find we have to be really strategic with what we put out there and ask people to do. Before we would just try everything and anything, and people were so gracious and totally open and they're like "yeah, let's just try it!" Now they're just as gracious, they're just as kind, they just don't have the energy to try it.

In other cases, some programs simply could not proceed at all due to the nature of the program, such as TOR-A's Out of the Cold. Since they could not host people experiencing homelessness in their building, instead they have been fundraising and doing supply drives to pass onto their partner organization for disbursement.

In sum, the Korean church has adapted to the COVID restriction mandates reasonably well, transitioning their core programs online, adapting existing programs in creative ways, or cancelling them altogether. In each of the decisions made, there was an intentionality of retaining the most essential parts of church life. The pastoral staff at each church were able to demonstrate resilience in a way that made it possible for the community to continue functioning and fulfilling its fundamental mandate as a spiritual, emotional, and social refuge for its immigrant congregation. However, despite best efforts to adapt to changing circumstances, all pastors reported a significant decline in participation in church services and activities. Though the leadership "reorganize[d] itself to maintain essential structure and process" (Mayunga, 2007, p. 4), there were factors outside of their control that prevented the congregation from engaging with the revised structure and process.

5.4. Impacts of COVID on the Congregation

The economic, emotional, and mental impacts of COVID physical distancing restrictions on Korean churchgoers vary by generation status, family status, and immigration status. In general, pastors from all three churches indicated a more significant economic impact on the KM side – the first-generation immigrants, and less so for the EM side. They also reported more significant difficulties for families with young children, many of whom had to both work and take care of their children at home. For the first-generation immigrants, those who only recently arrived in Canada faced insurmountable difficulties compared to those who have been living in Canada for many years.

A large proportion of the Korean ministry, who are first-generation immigrants, are self-employed. They are typically small businessowners, and the COVID restrictions took a much heavier toll on them than the second-generation immigrants in the EM, many of whom are salaried employees and were able to continue working from home. The lead EM pastor at TOR-A remarked:

I think a big difference between the English ministry and Korean ministry is so many of the Korean ministry congregation is self-employed, so they're running businesses. They got their own shop and so with the shutdown, there was immediate impact on people's livelihoods. And so there was a huge gap between the degree to which people were struggling.

The EM youth pastor at TOR-A said some people from the KM congregation had to close down their businesses, but it varied depending on the type of business. The assistant pastor at TOR-B said some businesses, such as private academies, saw improvements in their revenue because transitioning online made the platform more accessible – parents no longer had to drive their kids to the physical locations. However, for many service-oriented businesses such as restaurants, there were noticeable drops in people's incomes, indicated by the weekly offering totals. One noticeable trend in TOR-B and VAN-A was the return of recently immigrated individuals and families back to Korea. Both the assistant pastor at TOR-B and EM youth pastor at VAN-A said those who had not fully settled down in Canada opted to return to Korea due to the uncertainty and instability. Typically, those with at least permanent resident status and Canadian citizens stayed to weather the storm, but others without any residential status decided to move back to Korea.

It was a much different situation for the second-generation congregants, where pastors of EM congregations reported minimal changes in people's incomes, which were reflected in the weekly offering totals. According to the pastors, there were some small businessowners in the EM, who were hardest hit by the COVID restrictions, but the majority were able to work from home. The young adults also experienced unemployment or underemployment, due to lack of seniority in their respective workplaces. New career people in their early to late 20s were most susceptible to being laid off, but as the EM pastor at VAN-A explained, many still lived with their families and therefore did not have to shoulder too great of a financial burden. In all three churches, the English ministry side were relatively young, and did not have any seniors in their congregation. The associate pastor at TOR-A mentioned that most of the difficulties in their congregation were spiritual and emotional, rather than economic. The two main impacts reported were the lack of human contact and community was taking an emotional and mental toll on congregants, and the distress of "losing power on being able to choose and do what they normally would do." Moreover, individuals in the EM have parents in KM, whose businesses were hard hit by the pandemic, and therefore the distress of trying to care for their parents contributed to the emotional toll.

Families on both KM and EM sides faced challenges as a result of physical distancing restrictions. The EM associate and lead pastors at TOR-A both remarked that the young families are nowhere to be seen because of how intensely busy they have become. There were also mentions of family dynamic tensions, where families were not used to spending this much time together in the same space. The EM youth pastor at VAN-A said "many times, families didn't really know how to be together, and it's building up stress." The children's pastor at VAN-A summarized the tensions:

I know that the moms are struggling with the fact these kids are eating three meals every day at home, and they have to cook three meals a day... and I feel like a lot of the dads, they've lost their jobs – they've been laid off due to COVID. And so the whole family's at home, and the moms, they don't want to stress out the dads, but then the dads, because they're not working, they just feel down. So I think that there's that dynamic in a lot of families where people are sort of tiptoeing around each other.

According to the youth pastor at TOR-A, many of the youth who did not have good relationships with their parents to begin with were silently suffering because they were stuck at home. At times, these tensions have been more dangerous, particularly for

youth and young adults. The EM associate pastor at TOR-A mentioned that there were some instances where it was not safe for people to be at home, due to breakdowns in mental health of the parents. Some congregants are experiencing depression and other mental health complications, but the details are not clear, as the associate pastor at TOR-A explained:

That was always concerning – I think we always hear stats on it and in the Korean community, it's often hushed and shameful to talk about it, but there were some families who were really finding it difficult mental health wise for those people who were already vulnerable... Families having family members with mental health issues were kind of at a loss at times, and didn't know how to support their family members... I don't know how many people are sharing, but I'm pretty sure there are more.

Lastly, there were examples of parents being concerned about their children. The children's ministry pastor at VAN-A noticed some of her students developed habitual tics, and believes it's from the stress of being home all the time and not being able to run around and socialize with other children.

Many of the national-scale statistics on impacts of COVID on Canadians are represented here in the experiences of first and second-generation Korean immigrants. Small businessowners faced the steepest economic impact, while salaried employees saw only minor impacts to their income. Young families struggled to balance both work and child care, and emotional and mental health related concerns arose due to isolation, unemployment, and other factors related to COVID restrictions. Children and youth struggled to stay at home, and family dynamics were tense for some if their home situations were already problematic prior to COVID restrictions.

5.5. COVID Relief and Resilience through Social Capital

In operationalizing how social capital functions within the Korean church, there are two different categories that will be discussed in this section: how the church leadership (pastoral staff) engaged in formal and informal activities that connected congregants to knowledge and resources, and how church congregants engaged in informal activities without pastoral directives. On the leadership side, the support can be further categorized as bonding and bridging social capital – some assistance was provided to churchgoers, while other forms of assistance were provided to organizations outside of the church.

5.5.1. Pastoral Leadership to Congregation Support

The pastoral staff provided primarily five types of support – financial, basic needs, emotional, acts of kindness, and COVID-related information; the beneficiaries included both congregants and those outside of the church. At times, certain activities were a combination of several types at once. At the onset of the pandemic, TOR-A held a fundraiser to support families within the congregation as well as organizations outside of the congregation that needed support. It was held as a drive-thru at the church, and congregation responded extremely well. The EM youth pastor at TOR-A recalled:

When we said we are raising funds, there was a lineup of cars who were willing to donate and it was such a beautiful sight... We collected so much money, I think it was over \$100,000 or something that they were bringing to help those who lost jobs or who lost their business... It's not like we gave [struggling] families like \$100 or something, we gave \$2,000 per family, which I thought was a good gesture.

The EM side at TOR-A held their own fundraiser at the same time and put together a COVID relief fund for their congregation as well. The EM youth pastor at TOR-A said everyone who contacted received help, though due to the high-shame culture among Koreans, not many people came forward to admit they needed help. In VAN-A, they introduced a COVID-specific offering fund that was used to provide financial assistance to families who were hardest hit, as well as other organizations locally and internationally. The EM youth pastor at VAN-A estimated about 10-20 church members who received direct financial aid, while donations were made to hospitals in Metro Vancouver and a non-profit organization in Korea. They also financially sponsored smaller Korean churches in Metro Vancouver, recognizing that they were more vulnerable due to their size. TOR-A held various drives for the community, depending on the need. For example, they did a cell phone drive because a doctor mentioned some patients without homes or mobile devices needed a way to be contacted, whether after a COVID test or for contact tracing purposes. As a result, they collected used cell phones and dropped them off at the University Health Network. In addition, they held winter clothing drives and fundraisers for Out of the Cold as a way to support their partner organization because they could not have people stay at the church overnight anymore.

Both churches also provided basic needs, particularly for the elderly and young families. In TOR-A, they launched a weekly lunch and grocery drop off open to any

senior who registered with them. The associate minister at TOR-A said they bought an advertisement in a local Korean newspaper, and anyone who called in received these weekly packages. For the lunches, they catered them from local restaurants to help small businesses, and then personally drove and dropped them off at seniors' homes. VAN-A did something similar, though mostly within their own congregation: the pastors facilitated assembling groups of people to help bring seniors prepared food and groceries, dropping them off at their front doors. In TOR-A, the EM decided to do something similar for parents of young children, recognizing how much busier they became as a result of the pandemic. The pastoral staff recruited volunteers to prepare Korean food, and any family who registered could come and pick up meals. Again, due to the high-shame culture among Koreans, staff and congregants had to be very sensitive about asking if families require support and use indirect communication to figure out who needs help. The EM lead pastor at TOR-A explained the dynamic well:

Important to note, the shame factor in Asian communities as well and knowing that there is access to help and support is one thing, accessing the support is another thing as you have to overcome the shame part. And so I think what the pastoral staff found was just like, you have to learn the story, dig around a little bit and probe, and just kind of be a presence and then make the offer, as opposed to people coming to accept the offer. So that was a real challenge.

This kind of cultural sensitivity is best understood within a co-ethnic context, and the Korean churches have been able to discreetly identify those in need. Often times, small group leaders will be the ones in most contact with congregants, and they use the KakaoTalk platform to relay messages to the leadership, who then disburse the provision (whether financial or basic necessities) back to the congregant. However, even with the cultural sensitivity, there were probably many people who were unable to access these resources because they were unwilling to disclose their need.

Pastors also provided emotional support, whether by dropping by homes or checking in virtually. As mentioned before, pastors and elders checked on their congregants much more frequently during the pandemic. In addition, they used deliveries to safely check-in on people at their homes. The assistant pastor at TOR-B said the staff would drop off groceries for some elderly congregants and use it as an opportunity to do a visitation. The EM pastor at VAN-A said in May or June, the church

decided to send gifts to everyone as an act of kindness, and also to remind people that the pastoral staff care about them. The VAN-A EM pastor described the situation:

Each pastor for every department was responsible for sending gifts to our group, and what happened was I ended up driving around the whole city, delivering 40 to 50 packages of gifts door-to-door.

There were also new spiritual activities, which served to meet both spiritual and emotional needs. VAN-A began a “relay prayer,” whereby church leaders began calling to pray a blessing over an individual, who would then choose another person to call and do the same thing. VAN-A’s EM youth pastor said “it’s a short prayer but it’s just to make each other feel that we’re caring for each other and you’re not alone over there.” Particularly in the EM, the pastors remarked that the congregation’s needs were more emotional than financial, and so their resources were directed there. The EM associate minister at TOR-A said they helped form a check-in group for the small businessowners in their congregation so they could emotionally support each other. They were constantly making phone calls, providing pastoral care and praying for those in need.

The aforementioned KakaoTalk group chats played an integral part in the pastoral staff’s ability to disseminate pertinent information related to COVID, particularly in governmental support. The associate minister at TOR-A said any time one of the leaders found out about a new funding opportunity, it would be shared with the rest of the small groups. The weekly newsletters turned into daily newsletters, with information on how to apply to the (CERB) and Canada Workers Benefit (CWB). These were also posted on the church website for anyone to access at all times. In light of struggling small businesses during the pandemic, pastors also used their positions and platforms to encourage congregants to buy products or services from businessowners within the congregation, whether they were restaurants or publishing companies.

5.5.2. Congregant to Congregant Support

Independent of church leadership facilitation, the Korean church exhibited strong bounded solidarity, which took form in congregants taking initiative to help one another out. Many of these initiatives were on a case-by-case basis, often times very practical support, but also including emotional support and small gestures of kindness. During the onset of the pandemic, the TOR-A associate minister said there were church members

who would drop off masks and sanitizers for anyone who needed them, particularly when it was difficult to purchase at stores. Many Korean churchgoers received shipments from family in Korea, and they shared their supplies openly. Other times, congregants dropped off meals or gifts to the staff, thanking them for their work. VAN-A's EM youth pastor said there were many instances of congregants delivering bags of rice, prepared meals, and other gifts to fellow congregants who needed it. The children's pastor at VAN-A mentioned that during Christmas, she heard of families dropping off Christmas gifts at each other's homes, sending meals, Korean side dishes, and gift cards. Also, as mentioned before, there were some recent immigrants who opted to return to Korea. Due to the abruptness of their departure, or for those who expected to come back to Canada but did not, there were matters still needing attention. Fellow churchgoers helped clean up their Canadian residences, helped with logistics for their departure, and dealt with other miscellaneous errands.

To highlight the bonding within church small groups, there was a story from TOR-A where a small group decided to go above and beyond in helping one of their fellow members in a time of need. The EM youth pastor at TOR-A said:

Recently a jipsanim [deacon]... he was not doing well but he has three young children, and they needed someone to take care of them at home in order for him to be able to go to work, but his wife passed away with cancer. So our church members, everyday, especially the small group members, rotated and did the babysitting and took them to their new school to register... and they cooked meals for them... I thought that was amazing how the small group was taking care of this family need.

In addition, there were a number of deaths in the congregation during the pandemic, and the small groups mobilized each time to provide practical, tangible support for those who needed it:

Usually people will go to a funeral home to comfort the families, but they opened up a Zoom funeral service, and opened up a small donation site so that donations could happen for the families, and making meals, providing financial help and babysitting, you know, taking care of the children while the parents are away.

The church as a whole, but especially the small groups, are very well bonded individuals and families that are able to provide help when needed. Because they had the social capital from church, they were able to have the "psychological strength [that] enables them to handle extreme events and stress" (Schlor, Venghaus & Hake, 2018, p. 384).

The social connections formed and social capital accumulated within the Korean church provides the basis for individual resilience in extreme stress events such as a global pandemic, the death of a family member, or in this instance, both.

5.6. One Year In: New Challenges and Readjustments

Typically, when resilience literature refers to shock events, they are temporary disturbances that require recovery. In the conceptual framework chapter, social resilience was defined as the capacity of a social entity, such as a group or community, to bounce back or respond actively to adversity (Maguire and Hagan, 2007). However, what happens when the shock event goes on for over a year? Many Canadians have reported a feeling of ‘pandemic fatigue’ due to the prolonged nature of COVID restrictions. In an October 2020 article by Global News, it referenced an Ipsos poll that found “nearly half of Canadians [were] getting tired of following public health recommendations,” and a separate poll found that “25 percent of Canadians said their stress level is higher than during the first COVID-19 wave” (D’Amore, 2020). These sentiments were present in the Korean church as well, although it varied between KM and EM. Particularly EM pastors have had to adapt once more to the changing circumstances.

A year into the pandemic, the KM side in both adult and children’s ministry have been continuing forward without a noticeable decline in morale or participation. The EM youth pastor at TOR-A said that the KM is just as active, if not more, than in the first wave:

I think it’s different culture, but I think EM and Hi-C [high school ministry] are a little slower; they’re not as aggressive and active in involvement and participation as KM immigrants... When I look at KM attendance for cell group leadership training and all that, it’s almost like 100 per cent attendance, and there’s still new members joining the church.

Similar sentiments were shared in TOR-B, where the majority of the adults participate in the KM services, that there has not been a significant difference in morale or decline in participation since the beginning of the pandemic. As of February 2021, when the interviews were conducted, VAN-A reported that almost all of their regular programming are functioning online, whether for Korean language school, Sunday school, Sunday and other weekly worship services, small group meetings, lectures and seminars. The level

of continuity and participation in KM indicates that both structural leadership and individual congregants are demonstrating resilience despite the ongoing global pandemic.

On the other side, the EM congregations appear to be struggling with the longevity of COVID restrictions. Participation is in decline, and congregants' ability to provide volunteer hours, financial aid, and emotional support to the overall community has been faltering. The EM pastor at VAN-A shared this, a sentiment shared by the children's pastor as well:

It's tough. So, on a good day, before COVID we had 40 people gathering. But now, on a good day we have 10 people gathering. In the beginning, I was texting and encouraging them to come to the service, but that gets repetitive. I imagine if I'm the one person who's not coming to church right now, and a pastor sends me pretty much the same text every week, I'm going to get tired of it.

The EM pastors at TOR-A also observed a shift in people's willingness to engage. The associate minister remarked that though the congregation was enthusiastic at first, they are now quieter, less active, and likely to participate in activities that require very little energy. Though many of their fundraisers were very successful in 2020, they are not seeing the same kind of eagerness to help in 2021. There are concerns of burnout among small group leaders, "because it's hard to even take care of myself and lead myself, let alone lead other people." As a result, the EM pastors at TOR-A have made decisions to reassess their regular programming. The associate minister said:

In some ways, we're just doing the things that we normally would do, and in other ways we're cancelling the things that we would normally do. Things we think are absolutely necessary, come rain or shine... Let's say yes to the things that are really important, but let's reassess the things that take a lot of energy in this season. At the beginning, we were doing the exciting things and now we're just doing the steady things, and trusting it's the steady, regular, meaningful things that will continue to anchor us to go through.

Despite declining morale and participation, EM pastors have been trying to adapt to the changing reality of their congregations' capacities to continue fostering connections, support, and resilience. Although engagement has been lower compared to KM, there are still examples of how the EM side is willing to innovate and be a hub for emotional, spiritual, and mental health. However, despite best efforts, results have been less than

ideal; this may be due to declining mental health, which could make it difficult for congregants to continue engaging.

5.7. The Future of the Korean Church

The Korean church is not only a place of worship, but a place where people can connect for information, resources, practical help, emotional support, and more. It also partners with organizations outside the church to meet the needs of the community-at-large, whether local hospitals, poverty reduction organizations, or Korean associations. However, the degree to which congregants find the Korean church an integral place for these connections and support varies between KM and EM. Especially for KM first-generation immigrants, the Korean church plays numerous roles in their day-to-day lives, often times being the central hub for all of their social, emotional, and spiritual needs. It is important to emphasize the significance of the immigrant church as an 'Urban Service Hub' (Ley, 2008). According to Ley, service hubs offer a range of services, programs, and supports for immigrants in addition to spiritual services. Moreover, they serve the community-at-large, supporting local organizations and charities, donating volunteer hours, hosting fundraisers and drives, and more. Thus, not only does the Korean church provide support and social capital within their congregation, but in their local and sometimes international contexts as well. However, equally as important, they exist in urban settings such as the GTA or Metro Vancouver, and therefore are exposed to the same affordability challenges that residents, companies, and organizations face in finding suitable spaces to gather. Control over dedicated space proved a challenge during the pandemic, and will continue to be a challenge in the future. The roles that the Korean church plays, both as urban service hub and community benevolent association, prove the enduring value of protecting spaces for gathering.

5.7.1. Future Urban Challenges

There are two overlapping challenges identified by pastors from both the GTA and Metro Vancouver related to having their own church building. The first is related to the difficulties of renting a space, as opposed to owning it. The second was challenges in procuring an appropriate location and going through the municipal approvals process to build one. In the midst of these difficulties, churches that have their own building, such

as TOR-A, have been demonstrating bridging social capital by providing affordable spaces of worship for other ethnic churches. These are challenges not unique to the Korean church, but to ethnic churches in general, and especially racialized minorities.

Churches that rent spaces are at a disadvantage because they cannot ensure stability of tenure. The EM pastor at VAN-A reflected on how difficult it was to continue operations during the pandemic, given they have been renting public school space to conduct church services:

We don't have a building, right, so it was extremely difficult. Having a church building [would have made it] easier because, for example, if we wanted to support a community by giving out gifts, there's a drop-off center. For broadcasting services, we had to do it at our office, and the office was not designed for it.

In other cases, such as in the GTA, measures were put in place that prevented ethnic churches from retaining affordable spaces to gather. Reiterated from Chapter 1.4, in 2012, the TDSB hiked rental fees for faith communities between 43 to 400 percent (McNaughton, 2012; Burton, 2012), while the City of Toronto amended zoning bylaws to prevent faith communities from renting spaces in industrial zones, which were more affordable due to their location (Moussaoui, 2012). This tends to push out smaller, predominantly non-White congregations that do not have the resources to purchase or build their own churches. The associate minister at TOR-A said these churches were more vulnerable to begin with, and since they don't have their own building, it put a strain on them to find comparable options within the city. Recognizing these dynamics, TOR-A has opened their doors to numerous small congregations, such as an Iranian church, a Lebanese church, and Vietnamese church to hold services at their church building either for free or a nominal fee. For some churches like VAN-A, though they may have the financial and human resources to build their own church, they have come up against other barriers – in neighbourhoods and local governments. The EM pastor at VAN-A expressed some of the challenges at their church:

It's getting more difficult for churches to have a building, to buy, even if they have the money and all the things because a lot of people don't want churches around their neighbourhood – more traffic, it's loud on Sunday morning... it's getting more difficult for churches to have a building because that's not from our end, but from the government not allowing it.

While it is not clear whether or not local governments are overtly preventing churches from acquiring or building physical buildings, the perception is that barriers exist that are outside of their control. TOR-B is currently amid some regulatory difficulties: they purchased a building to gather in, but due to some unspecified rules, they have been prohibited from using it for religious purposes. As a result, they now have to sell the building, and are currently renting a school to have worship services. In sum, small congregations, but even large ones, are finding it increasingly difficult to find stable, affordable spaces to gather. However, there is a strong case in favour of protecting these gatherings of racialized immigrants; the immigrant church is beneficial for both those affiliated and not affiliated with the community.

5.7.2. The Enduring Value of the Korean Church

In light of these current and ongoing challenges for the Korean church, and more widely the ethnic immigrant church, it is helpful to be reminded of the multipurpose functions that these organizations provide in both bonding and bridging social capital. When pastors at the three case study churches reflected on the significance of the Korean church for first-generation immigrants, they explained how the church may be the only community outside of their family. The EM associate minister at TOR-A said:

A lot of them are small business owners, so they don't have a whole lot of co-workers, and even if they do, it's a totally different language and culture, so I would say probably almost solely the church community is their main contact.

Additionally, the assistant pastor at TOR-B reflected on past experiences growing up in the Korean church:

I've always thought of church as this little Korea, a group of Koreans like a small Koreatown. It's where we would have our Korean meals... that's how it was in the church I grew up in – there would be language schools, every worship service would be in Korean, and every youth member was proud to have at least a general knowledge of their Korean identity in them.

The VAN-A children's pastor likened the Korean church to an extended family of sorts, which means relationships are not always positive, but are necessary:

It's like any love-hate relationship in families. Sometimes you really don't like your family, but that's all you have. I think having people who eat the same food, and who have similar ideologies, mindsets, and the language.

I think the language is the biggest thing; it's what bonds a Korean church. They love-hate each other, but it's important because they need each other.

Amidst the harsh realities of living in a new country with a different language, culture, food, and customs, where they may experience a range from microaggressions to overt racism, the Korean church serves as a refuge, a safer place, where the general assumption is that people will support each other and contribute to one another's success. Despite the physical locations being shut down for the duration of the pandemic, pastors have reported that social capital is still being maintained virtually. Admittedly, people miss being able to socialize in the 'soft' parts of church, as the lead pastor at TOR-A described it – seeing each other before and after service, in the unprogrammed time shared in the same location. However, the church is far from a utopian community. As with any community, there are interpersonal conflicts that push people away from their church community despite being among co-ethnics. The VAN-A children's pastor alludes to this in the above quotation, and additionally mentioned issues of "gossip" amongst congregants. While these were not the stories of focus in the interviews, it is worth noting these are general observations of a community of support – not everyone sees it as such, and they are the missing perspectives in this study.

For the EM, second-generation immigrants do not rely as heavily on the church as the sole place that meets all of their social needs, but there are still those who choose to engage heavily in church life. The TOR-A EM lead pastor described church as being "so optional" for second-generation immigrants, and therefore in the absence of being present in-person, about one third of the regular attendees have decided to no longer show up. However, those who did show up relied more heavily on their church community than prior to COVID, as the TOR-A associate minister described it:

I think we've kept on saying COVID has been an accelerator of what was already happening... so for those who are already involved in community at church, it became more important, and for those who weren't really that involved, it became a lot less important. And so I've definitely seen the polarizing effect on both groups.

Therefore, for the EM, reliance on the community for social capital and resilience was more dependent on individual congregants' positionality prior to the pandemic. Moreover, given their English proficiency, second-generation immigrants have more options outside of the church, and are more likely to see the church as a "faith

community, which is just another part of their plurality of communities,” as the assistant pastor at TOR-B explained it. There is still a purpose to the Korean church for EM congregants, albeit less crucial and for more specific functions. In contrast, the church is like a ‘one-stop-shop’ for KM congregants, meeting numerous intersecting and overlapping needs. Since the second-generation is less functionally dependent on their church, it is also easier for EM congregants to decide to leave if interpersonal conflict arises.

The church is a particularly effective vehicle for social capital and connection because of the scale and frequency of Koreans gathering. When asked why Korean language schools happen at churches rather than other Korean organizations, the children’s pastor at VAN-A said it is because the church hosts “large consistent gatherings of Koreans... we gather religiously once a week at minimum.” As a result, there is a gravitational pull for many social services at churches that would typically be the responsibility of community associations. Particularly for Koreans, 68 percent of whom in Canada identify with a Protestant or Catholic denomination (Statistics Canada, 2013), the church is uniquely positioned to gather co-ethnics on a regular basis. TOR-A’s EM associate minister shared the same sentiment, stating that what other immigrant communities would relate to a community centre or community association, Koreans find in a church setting. Therefore, particularly in the KM, social programs are provided not just for churchgoers, but for the co-ethnic community at large. This is because they have the space, the cultural understanding, and there is no linguistic barrier:

I would say probably Canadian society of all societies, make the most space for minority and marginalized people, but there’s still a lot of work to be done. And so I think that’s the need immigrant churches fill – they’re able to communicate social services and support and care in a way that is needed, within their language and within the culture.

This can be said about the Chinese, Vietnamese, or Iranian church as well – these places of worship are conducive to culturally-appropriate, safe environments where co-ethnics can receive the services they need.

Not only are Korean churches uniquely positioned to provide services to co-ethnics (whether a churchgoer or not), they also contribute to local and international organizations. As the KM is suited to provide services to fellow Korean-speaking immigrants, the EM can diversify to meet other communities’ needs. TOR-A’s EM has

numerous opportunities for congregants to donate volunteer hours and financial aid. They're currently sponsoring a Syrian refugee family, collecting monetary and in-kind donations, they annually host Out of the Cold for people experiencing homelessness during the winter, they provide online tutoring for children and youth in low-income households in the Jane and Finch area, and they partner with World Vision to sponsor a community in Bolivia. Aside from their formal commitments, they host or participate in walkathons, fundraisers, and charity drives throughout the year to support local organizations. Therefore, the Korean church, and most likely other ethnic faith communities, are integral institutions to Canada's multicultural urban metropolises. They are uniquely positioned to do what non-profit organizations, NGOs, and governmental institutions cannot – in general, they can create spaces of belonging that help accumulate social capital, provide necessary social services, connect people for various types of support, and contribute to the community-at-large, but there are caveats and exceptions to this as mentioned earlier. Although ethnic faith communities like the Korean church should not have to justify their value and place in Canada's cities, the competitive reality of urban real estate necessitates such an argument to protect affordable gathering spaces.

Chapter 6. Congregant Perspectives

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an analysis of the survey data collected in order to confirm and add to the accounts provided by the pastors. To reiterate, the survey was administered only to church congregants, and responses were solicited from TOR-A and VAN-A. Please refer to Table 3.3 for an outline of the original sampling targets and the resulting breakdown by location and generation status. Most charts and analysis in this section are separated by generation status, not by location. This is because an initial observation of findings yielded minimal differences for results between TOR-A and VAN-A, and few noticeable patterns or trends could be identified. Generation status yielded more differentiated results, and therefore has been used to demonstrate nuanced responses within the Korean church.

6.1. A Portrait of the Survey Respondents

Of the 123 total respondents, 81 percent identified as first-generation, while 19 percent were either 1.5, second, or third generation, which I have grouped into 'second-generation+'. The 1.5 generation identification is an interesting distinction, because it highlights an in-between generation status identity that is neither first nor second-generation. It represents those who arrived in Canada as young children, who were born in Korea, but spent their formative years in Canada. This is a common generation status identifier in the Korean immigrant community, which is why it was included. However, Statistics Canada does not recognize this as a legitimate generation status. The survey respondent distribution was quite similar to national statistics: of all Koreans in Canada, 79% are first-generation immigrants, while 19% are second-generation, and 2% are third generation (Statistics Canada, 2018).

As expected, there was an almost perfect alignment between generation status and ministry language: 82 percent of all respondents identified with KM, while 18 percent identified with EM. In terms of geographic location, the intention was to recruit more respondents from the GTA than Metro Vancouver, due to the population difference of Koreans living in the respective city regions. However, the results were 47 percent of responses from the GTA, and 53 percent from Metro Vancouver. Regarding age, given the majority of respondents were first-generation, it was not surprising that 74 percent of

respondents were age 45 or older, and 26 percent were age 18-44. Most respondents were 45-54, with 41 percent of total respondents identifying in said category. When separated by generation status, it became clearer the distinction between first and second-generations: there were no first-generation respondents below 35 years old, while 83 percent of second-generation respondents were age 18-34. Refer to Table 6.1 below for a summary of results.

Table 6.1. Age ranges by generation status

Age range	First-generation	Second-generation
18-24	0%	13%
25-34	0%	70%
35-44	12%	4%
45-54	48%	9%
55-64	29%	4%
65+	11%	0%

N=123

In terms of respondents' relationship with their church, the survey attracted long-time and very active congregants (refer to Table 6.2). The majority of respondents attended their church for ten years or more (69 percent), and it translated into very frequent attendance: 59 percent attended church two to three times per week, while 40 percent attended at least once a week. Just one percent of respondents attended church less frequently than that. Between generations, first-generation congregants were more likely to have longer tenure, and they attended church more frequently. Most survey respondents had multiple roles at church too: while the majority identified as congregants, they were also small group leaders (47 percent), teachers for various educational ministries (21 percent) or formal church leaders such as elders or deacons (44 percent).¹⁴ A summary of these results can be found in Table 6.3. Once again, first-generation congregants were more likely to be formal church leaders, but second-generation congregants were just as likely to be small group leaders, and more likely to be teachers within the church. Considering the tenure, frequency of attendance, and formal role in the church of the respondents, the represented congregants are likely to have accumulated significant social capital over the years.

¹⁴ These figures add up to over 100 percent because respondents were given the opportunity to select all the roles that applied to them.

Table 6.2. Church tenure and attendance by generation status

Church tenure	First-generation	Second-generation	Combined
Less than a year	2%	0%	2%
One to five years	8%	22%	11%
Five to ten years	19%	17%	19%
Ten or more years	71%	61%	69%
Church attendance			
2-3 times a week	64%	35%	59%
Once a week	35%	61%	40%

N=123

Table 6.3. Church congregant roles by generation status

Church roles	First-generation	Second-generation	Combined
Congregant	71%	78%	72%
Small group leader	47%	48%	47%
Teacher	18%	35%	21%
Formal church leader	52%	9%	44%

N=123

When asked what the church meant to them, nearly everyone (96 percent) considered it a place of worship and spiritual nourishment, while 41 percent considered it a place where they have significant social connections, 39 percent considered it a place where they feel comfortable with co-ethnics, and 11 percent considered it a place to connect and find practical resources and knowledge. Refer to Table 6.4 for a summary of results.¹⁵ Interestingly enough, there was a significant discrepancy between generations: while both agreed that the church is a place of worship, second-generation congregants were almost twice as likely to consider church a place of significant social connections, and more than 1.5 times as likely to consider it a place where they feel comfortable with co-ethnics. Moreover, second-generation congregants were almost twice as likely to consider church a place to connect over practical resources and knowledge. This is surprising, given the pastor responses indicated first-generation congregants to be more likely to see the church as a place for social capital and a co-ethnic refuge. One plausible explanation may be that first-generation congregants felt internal pressure to present themselves as devout Christians, and therefore denied any

¹⁵ Again, figures add up to over 100 percent due to the ability to select multiple responses.

unspiritual functions. This falls in line with the ‘saving-face’ tendencies as discussed in the methodology section.

Table 6.4. Role of church by generation status

“For me, my church is...”	First-generation	Second-generation	Combined
A place of worship	96%	96%	96%
A place of social connection	35%	65%	41%
A place to be with co-ethnics	35%	57%	39%
A place for practical knowledge and resources	9%	17%	11%

N=123

In summary, when compared to Statistics Canada national figures, first and second-generation Korean immigrants were proportionately represented in the survey responses. In addition, almost all first-generation congregants attended KM, while almost all second-generation congregants attended EM, which means that those categories can be used interchangeably. In other words, KM are first-generation and EM are second-generation. KM congregants tend to be older (45 years and older), while EM congregants are younger. This is because Korean immigration to Canada is still relatively recent, and typically EM congregants are the children of KM congregants. It was anecdotally implied in many interviews that KM congregants are more active and invested in their church, which is now supported by the survey data. KM congregants have longer tenure and participate in church more frequently than their EM counterparts. However, EM and KM congregants hold varying levels of leadership roles, though there is a significant discrepancy in the number of formal church leaders. This can be potentially attributed to the EM congregation viewing formal titles with lesser importance than the KM, where formal titles are held in high esteem. The most unexpected finding is that second-generation congregants are more likely to consider church as more than a place of worship. Although ‘saving-face’ is learned behaviour from parents, second-generation respondents may have not felt the same pressure to see church as strictly a place of worship.

One significant oversight was the omission of gender in the demographic variables. The original rationale was that I did not anticipate it being a relevant or necessary variable, and I wanted to keep the survey as concise as possible. In retrospect, one more multiple-choice question would not have made a significant

difference to the length of the survey. It further revealed to me an unconscious bias of being 'gender-blind,' expecting that gender would not provide notably different outcomes. Moreover, due to the oversight, there may have been significantly more women respondents than men respondents, which could skew certain response aggregates regarding impact of COVID, given traditional gender roles in Korean households.

6.2. Impact of COVID According to the Congregants

Prior to discussing the rest of the survey results, it is important to note that due to the small sample size and the distribution by generation status, only 12 of the 123 respondents identify as second-generation, or participating in the EM. Therefore, when confronted with percentages for second-generation congregants in the following tables, readers should have reservations about the conclusiveness of the figures.

Respondents were asked to quantify how difficult the past year has been on a scale of zero to 100, zero being not at all and 100 being incredibly difficult. The average score for all respondents was 53, representing a moderate difficulty. When separated by generation status, second-generation respondents had a higher average score of 60, compared to 52 for first-generation respondents. Considering it was a self-reported score, and subjective based on individuals' understanding of 'difficulty,' these results were only intended for a temperature read of respondents' reflections of the past year. What is interesting is that despite leadership observations and survey results indicating second-generation congregants were financially more secure, their perception of personal hardship is higher than first-generation congregants. There are two plausible explanations for this: first, this could be another case of 'saving-face,' where first-generation respondents want to downplay their difficulty, both as a way to present themselves as being resilient, but also to affirm themselves and re-shape their memory of the experience. Second, it could be that the first-generation are in fact more resilient to hardship as a result of their immigration experience. The perception of 'difficulty' is subjective and relative to individuals' life experiences.

Respondents were also asked to identify from a list what kind of situation best described their own, or to describe it in their own words (refer to Table 6.5). Of the answer choices I provided, most respondents reported moderate difficulty due to lack of

social interaction (61 percent). Another large group of respondents said COVID has simplified their lives (47 percent). The same percentage of total respondents reported they experienced unemployment for more than three months combined in 2020, or that their workplace shifted online without any impact on their income (20 percent). Just over 16 percent of responses indicated a negative impact on mental health due to the lack of social interaction. When controlled for generation status, there were some expected and unexpected results. The same proportion of respondents reported moderate difficulty due to lack of social interaction (61 percent), but second-generation respondents were almost three times more likely than first-generation respondents to have indicated mental health concerns due to the lack of social interaction (35 percent vs. 12 percent respectively). This is interesting, because as previously mentioned, second-generation congregants were more likely than their first-generation counterparts to view their church as a place of social connection and a place to be with co-ethnics. From the information available, it appears that second-generation congregants rely more heavily on their churches as places of social connection with fellow Koreans. This is surprising, because second-generation Koreans have more social networks available to them to fill this need. It may be that in spite of having numerous social networks, they have more significant social connections within their church than their other social groups. However, this is merely speculation; more information, or a larger sample size, is required to adequately explain this situation.

Additionally, as expected, a much larger proportion of second-generation respondents compared to first-generation respondents saw their workplaces transition online with only minor impacts on their income (48 percent vs. 13 percent respectively). Also, only second-generation respondents selected student or recent graduate related questions, which was to be expected given the age distribution as discussed before. However, unexpectedly, a very similar proportion of first and second-generation respondents reported unemployment or underemployment for more than three months in 2020 (19 percent vs. 22 percent respectively). This may be due to the data's skewing towards a higher proportion of women respondents. Since Korean households typically follow more traditional gender roles, it is the men who are employed, and they are not represented in this answer choice. Another unexpected difference was in the proportion of respondents who indicated COVID has simplified their lives and they have been relatively unfazed by the pandemic. First-generation respondents were 1.7 times more

likely to have selected this option than second-generation respondents (51 percent vs. 30 percent respectively). Given the interviewee responses about impact on first-generation congregants, this response does not seem representative of those observations. There may be two explanations for this: 1) pastor interviewees may have grossly overestimated the economic, social, mental impact of COVID on KM congregants, or 2) respondents answered based on how they felt at the time, not in reflection of the whole year. People may have forgotten or downplayed the hardships of the pandemic, either intentionally or subconsciously. Especially due to the stigma surrounding mental health in the Korean community, which has been well-documented (Park et al., 2015), there may have been a particular aversion to identifying with having such difficulties among the first-generation respondents.

Table 6.5. Congregant situations during COVID

	First-generation	Second-generation	Combined
I am inconvenienced, but not crippled, by the lack of social interaction	61%	61%	61%
COVID has simplified my life	51%	30%	47%
I was unemployed/underemployed for more than 3 months combined in 2020	19%	22%	20%
My workplace shifted online and there was no impact on my income	13%	48%	20%
My mental health has taken a toll due to lack of social interaction	12%	35%	16%

N=123

There were 16 respondents who wanted to describe their situations in their own words. Of those responses, 11 discussed negative impacts, while five discussed positive or neutral impacts. Three responses were of economic impact: one person faced a room rental vacancy in their home, resulting in temporary loss of income. Another person expressed their parents could not find a new job during the pandemic, which caused financial stress for the family. The final person felt frustrated and invisible as an essential worker that felt unsafe to work, but could not quit or find another job given circumstances and ineligibility for CERB. Three people discussed heightened anxiety and isolation due to COVID itself, whether as a frontline worker being separated from other people, feeling fearful of contracting the virus due to those not adhering to governmental health regulations, or having to quarantine due to having come into contact with someone with a confirmed COVID case. Three other respondents discussed frustrations with social

distancing measures preventing in-person interactions with others. Of the positive or neutral responses, they include sentiments of having more time to focus on themselves or their families, or minimal economic impact and therefore increased savings due to reduced expenses.

In summary, of all the responses to the impact of COVID, it appears there is a whole spectrum of experiences, ranging from positive (more time, more savings) to moderate (frustration, more anxiety) to negative (financial hardship, mental health concerns) among congregants. Despite the small sample size, the surveys were able to capture some nuance of experiences during the pandemic; even in a homogenous group like the Korean church, there were still stark differences in impact depending on the individual or family. There were noticeable (and predictable) differences in the experience of the church and impact of COVID between first and second-generation congregants, such as employment and income situations. At the same time, there were surprising findings that indicated second-generation congregants may rely more on the church for social and emotional support than first-generation congregants. In Table 6.4, second-generation congregants were more likely to see the church as a place of social connection and gather with co-ethnics, and in Table 6.5, they were more likely to respond that their mental health was negatively impacted due to the lack of social interaction. As mentioned, due to the small sample size, it is still worth being cautious making definitive conclusions and determining that these responses are representative of TOR-A and VAN-A congregations in total. Also, despite the survey being anonymous, first-generation respondents may have wanted to save face in their responses, skewing them towards more positive recollections of their experience during the pandemic. Moreover, in difficult times, people tend to try and think positively, which may skew memories and recollection of the past. However, it does appear that some of the survey results confirm pastoral observations in the interviews: second-generation congregants were more likely to experience emotional and mental hardship, as opposed to economic hardship, since many began to work from home instead. Inversely, first-generation congregants were less likely to have seen their workplaces shift online, given higher levels of self-employment and fewer individuals employed in office-related workplaces.

6.3. The Church, Social Capital, and COVID-19

Survey respondents were asked to identify their agreement to statements on a Likert scale regarding their use of social capital for support during the pandemic. They were itemized into seven different statements, and averages were calculated from answer choices ranging from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’. ‘Strongly agree’ scored five points, with each subsequent response scoring one point less until ‘strongly disagree,’ which scored zero. A summary of results is provided in Table 6.6 below.

Table 6.6. Agreement to statements of social capital by generation status

Statement	First-generation*	Second-generation*	Combined*
My church has provided formal assistance (financial, resource, knowledge) to help alleviate my hardships due to COVID.	4.01	3.13	3.85
I have found informal assistance (financial, resource, knowledge) through conversations with friends and acquaintances at my church.	3.52	3.22	3.46
My friends and acquaintances at church have connected me to other individuals who have helped me with specific needs related to COVID.	3.17	2.61	3.07
I have been able to share resources with other individuals and/or families at church to help alleviate my hardships due to COVID.	3.58	2.87	3.45
The relationships I have with people who attend church have helped my emotional and mental health during COVID.	4.00	3.70	3.94
The spiritual support I've received through sermons, small groups, and fellowship have helped my emotional and mental health during COVID.	4.24	3.78	4.15
I find out about important news and governmental assistance related to COVID from friends at church.	3.35	2.57	3.20
Total average index	3.70	3.13	3.59

N=123; *average scores a total out of 5 e.g. 4.01/5. Likert scale: 1 strongly agree, 2 disagree, 3 neutral, 4 agree, 5 strongly agree

In all seven categories, first-generation respondents had higher average scores for agreement than second-generation respondents, which aligns with pastoral observations that the church is a more instrumental part of first-generation congregants’ lives than second-generation congregants. Across both generation statuses, spiritual

support ranked highest on average, which was also expected given the church is a religious organization. The next highest levels of agreement from first-generation respondents come from formal assistance from church leadership and emotional and mental support via relationships in the church, while for second-generation respondents, they are emotional and mental support via relationships in the church and informal assistance from social connections within the church. Given the explanations from pastors about the difference of need for financial assistance in KM and EM, it is plausible that more first-generation congregants accessed formal assistance from the church.

Some of these results add to the complexity of second-generation's experience of the pandemic and their church. In the previous section, the survey answers seemed to indicate that 65 percent of second-generation congregants viewed their church as a place of social connection. However, in Table 6.6, second-generation respondents had a lower average than first-generation respondents for the statement: "The relationships I have with people who attend church have helped my emotional and mental health during COVID." This seems to be inconsistent with previous answers – how can one view the church as a place of social connection, yet report only modest benefit from said connections? One possible explanation is that congregants' overall perspective is that their church is a physical place of social connection, but the pandemic inhibited the effectiveness of those connections. Building upon previous perceived inconsistencies with second-generation responses, more information is required to make grounded conclusions.

As an aggregate index, when averaging all seven agreement statements on social capital, the total combined score is 3.59 out of 5, which falls just over halfway between 'neutral' and 'agree'. Therefore, there is good reason to believe that, to a certain extent, first and second-generation Korean immigrants can rely on the church to accumulate and use social capital during times of distress such as a global pandemic. When controlling for generation status, there is a slight variance, with first-generation respondents falling closer on the 'agree' side, and the second-generation respondents falling closer to the 'neutral' side. As mentioned from the interviews, given a stronger reliance on the church by first-generation immigrants due to language and culture, this data demonstrates that there is a generational difference when it comes to the role of church as a site of social capital. While the church may be one of the only places to go

for practical support for first-generation immigrants, second-generation immigrants have more options outside of the church.

When asked about the different types of COVID relief programs that the congregants were aware of, the responses were congruent to the answers given by pastors. Table 6.7 outlines the responses, arranged by most to least responses combined.

Table 6.7. Types of COVID support programs offered by generation status

Types of programs	First-generation	Second-generation	Combined
Virtual prayer gatherings for intercession	76%	78%	76%
Family and household “visitations” (virtual check-ins)	79%	39%	72%
Small acts of kindness	61%	65%	62%
Groceries and/or meals ministry for elderly and/or sick	62%	26%	55%
Outreach ministries	54%	57%	55%
Emergency financial assistance	44%	48%	45%
Seminars or tutorials on accessing governmental COVID relief funding	15%	4%	13%
Employment opportunity connections	1%	0%	1%

N=123

More than half of respondents reported knowledge of virtual prayer gatherings, virtual visitations, small acts of kindness, groceries and meals ministry for the elderly or sick, and outreach to communities outside of the church as programs offered by the church. This indicates that the majority of respondents were exposed to, or had heard of, these five programs. Just under half of respondents were also aware of emergency financial assistance, which both TOR-A and VAN-A had, according to the pastors. The two programs least reported were seminars or tutorials on accessing governmental COVID relief funding such as CERB, and employment opportunity connections. This is congruent with responses from interviews, where pastors reported those types of information are more likely to be divulged within small groups or informal channels of communication. From a generational standpoint, the area of most notable divergence occurred in family and household visitations and groceries and/or meals for the elderly and/or sick: KM pastoral leadership seems to have engaged with more visitations and groceries and/or meals delivery than the EM. There may have been a higher need for

these programs in the first-generation population, and may be indicative of cultural differences between KM and EM.

This question was also the only one that had noticeable trends between locations. What was interesting was to note what types of programs had the largest divergences. In Table 6.8, it appears that congregants in TOR-A were more likely to be offered financial or material support – responses were substantially higher for small acts of kindness, groceries and/or meals ministry, and emergency financial assistance. On non-material support such as prayer gatherings, visitations, and tutorials, respondents in both churches were close to parity. This highlights differences in pastoral leadership style, as mentioned in the pastor interviews. Pastors at VAN-A and TOR-B both commented that many of the initiatives by the church are decided by the senior pastor. Senior pastors who believe congregants’ spiritual health is the most important often focus on spiritual supports, while those who believe addressing tangible needs are important will encourage ministries that provide tangible goods.

Table 6.8. Types of COVID support programs offered by church location

Types of programs	TOR-A	VAN-A	Combined
Virtual prayer gatherings for intercession	82%	72%	76%
Family and household “visitations” (virtual check-ins)	68%	73%	72%
Small acts of kindness	72%	52%	62%
Groceries and/or meals ministry for elderly and/or sick	63%	47%	55%
Outreach ministries	56%	53%	55%
Emergency financial assistance	63%	28%	45%
Seminars or tutorials on accessing governmental COVID relief funding	12%	14%	13%
Employment opportunity connections	0%	2%	1%

N=123

Respondents were asked to also provide examples outside of the ones I presented where they saw innovative solutions implemented by pastoral staff or congregants. The 18 responses can be grouped into four categories: internal financial and practical support, external financial and practical support, personal emotional and mental support (pastor to congregant), and social connection support (congregant to congregant facilitation). Almost all of them have been mentioned in the pastoral interviews, which indicates the formal and informal ways the Korean church seems to have fostered resilience through social capital.

1. **Internal financial and practical support:** Congregants have seen the sharing of supplies such as masks, sharing of essential necessities to households in need, food and meals to seniors, translation of COVID-related information into Korean, financial aid for families in hardship, and help with employment opportunities.
2. **External financial and practical support:** Congregants have seen support for those experiencing homelessness, support to smaller churches in Vancouver, sponsorship of local charities, and outdoor walkathon fundraisers for local charities and ministries.
3. **Personal emotional and mental support:** Congregants have experienced more direct involvement in terms of check-ins and visitations from pastors in the form of virtual coffee dates, online prayer meetings, and Sunday service on Zoom.
4. **Social connection support:** Congregants have seen or have been part of online community building, virtual small group gatherings, informal gaming ministry, and online trivia nights.

In each of the three survey questions above that operationalized social capital and resilience, responses have been reasonably congruent with the answers provided by pastors. To summarize the survey responses, the church is a place where congregants can access formal and informal channels of support, financially, socially, emotionally, mentally, or spiritually. However, not everyone needed these supports, and not everyone felt comfortable to access some of these supports. In a handful of cases, some respondents were not aware that the church was offering relief programs. Most importantly, there were tangible programs and initiatives facilitated by pastoral staff in order to meet the needs of the community that have been confirmed by congregants. There surely must have been areas of improvement or things that could have been done better, but these were not highlighted in the survey. Respondents may not have felt it was appropriate to criticize their church in the survey, or they may not have felt there was space to provide such input.

Chapter 7. Discussion and Conclusion

7.1. How is the Korean Church a Site of Social Capital and Resilience?

The focus of the research question is to answer *how* Korean church congregants at the case study locations accumulate and use social capital, and *how* church congregants demonstrate community resilience in a stress event. As a researcher, I acknowledge that the answer is nuanced – in some cases and for some people, the Korean church has been a significant site of social capital and resilience, but for others, it may be less so, especially across generation statuses, but also due to the diverse experiences and relationships people have with their churches. In order to identify how social capital and community resilience functions within the churches, I defined indicators. I then took the collected data and categorized them into the indicators – the Community Resilience Dimensions, as explained in Table 2.2 (Magis, 2010).

To reiterate, social capital, in the context of community resilience, can be found in an organization of trust, norms, and networks that facilitate coordination and cooperation, and access to resources (Mayunga, 2007). Congregants from TOR-A and VAN-A were generally in agreement that the church is a place that facilitates coordination and cooperation, and access to resources. Support during the pandemic, whether it was emergency financial aid, small group meetings, or dissemination of translated resources, all required coordination and cooperation on a certain level. Some efforts were coordinated through the pastoral staff on behalf of the congregants, some efforts were coordinated by staff and executed with the cooperation of congregants, and others were coordinated by congregants themselves. There were a number of ways that the church facilitated access to resources, by connecting congregants to external, often governmental, resources, or to each other. At times, congregants took initiative to connect privately for resources without facilitation from leadership. The level of cooperation observed was possible due to strong congregational trust of the leadership and among one another. Generally held assumptions that people ought to help each other out during a time of need as well as spiritual norms that focus on benevolence and generosity contributed to the mobilization of social networks to provide tangible support to the congregants who needed it.

However, as the TOR-A EM associate minister mentioned, there was a polarization in participation: those who were engaged prior to the pandemic became even more engaged, and those who were loosely connected withdrew from church life. Therefore, there may have been a substantial proportion of the congregation at each of the churches that were in great need, but were unable or unwilling to access these services. Also, the survey showed evidence of volunteer bias, which occurs when the volunteers of a study are different in some ways to the general public, and therefore not representative of all people (Salkind, 2010). The survey was completed by mainly long-time members of churches that were highly engaged, and therefore may have benefitted from or were exposed to more church services and programs. Therefore, it is possible that there were churchgoers that did not share as deeply in the trust, norms, and networks of their church community as the participants in this research study.

For the congregants, especially first-generation congregants, the church was a social safety net during a crisis event. There was financial aid available for those who needed cash to stay afloat, emotional and mental support from pastors and peers systematically checking in on individual congregants, and practical help like providing cooked meals for busy young families. Congregants also helped each other out in small ways like dropping off meals or gifts, checking in on each other, and babysitting for single parents who need to go to work. These are all examples of the use of bonding social capital. There were also examples of bridging and linking social capital. Though many of the services and supports were available primarily for churchgoers, there were examples of services that were opened up to the community-at-large, such as grocery and meal drop offs for the elderly. For linking social capital, case study churches hosted outreach ministries such as Out of the Cold, charity fundraisers and drives, volunteerism in partnership with other non-profit organizations, and offering space for smaller churches to gather. These social ties bridged differences in socioeconomic status, power dynamics, and access to resources.

However, the bridging and linking social capital demonstrated in Korean churches are not exactly as Briggs (1998), Putnam (2000), and Szreter (2002) originally envisioned. If bridging social capital refers to interactions that emphasize inclusion and sharing resources across ethnic, social, and economic differences, and if linking social capital refers to inclusion and sharing resources across unequal power dynamics and access to said resources, the Korean church only partially fulfills these definitions. While

the case study churches did engage with the broader community outside of their own organization, they focused primarily on Koreans and Protestant Christians. While examples of grocery or meal drop offs were inclusive of economic differences, they were exclusive to fellow Koreans. Moreover, TOR-A's sharing of church space was inclusive of those with less power or access to resources, but they were exclusive to Protestant Christians. Therefore, while there was strong bonding social capital within the church, the outward-focused bridging and linking social capital was demonstrated with limitations and exceptions.

In the conceptual framework, I included an adaptation of the Community Resilience Dimensions from Magis (2010). Using the same framework, the new table below provides an evaluation of the Korean church in Toronto and Vancouver CMA using the data collected from this study.

Table 7.1. Community Resilience Dimensions for the Korean church during COVID-19

Community Resilience Dimension	Examples of Indicators from the Korean church
Community Resources	No explicit outside connections were mentioned by pastors, but they helped facilitate connection to outside resources such as CERB and CWB. Congregants also informed each other about relevant outside resources and mobilized internal resources.
Resource Development	Case study churches kept some things the same that felt essential to the identity of the community, while being flexible to try new ways of doing things too given the extreme circumstances. However, participation rates still declined despite best efforts.
Resource Engagement	Pastors facilitated engagement of the community's resources, whether monetary, volunteer hours, or social connections. The congregation contributed resources on their own initiative such as PPE and hand sanitizer.
Impact	The pastors and congregation responded promptly, creatively, and addressed needs as they arose. They adapted to changes due to the pandemic and were open about new futures for themselves. However, as the pandemic wore on, willingness to participate and adapt fell.
Equity	Access to financial resources was open to all congregants. However, the Korean church is inherently homogenous and therefore is unlikely to host minority, disenfranchised, or non-mainstream groups.
Strategic Action	Pastoral staff met frequently to discuss strategic visions and objectives in light of the pandemic. Due to the hierarchy of leadership, most congregants did not take part in the planning. It is unknown if there was community-wide commitment on a common future.
Collective Action	Pastors facilitated collaboration between leaders and congregants, and congregants to each other in order to create and sustain a support network.
Active Agents	Community members were active agents in the creation and maintenance of the social safety net. They participated and were very engaged at the onset of the pandemic, but pastors reported slow declines in capacity and willingness to engage as the crisis became prolonged.

Adapted from Magis, 2010

For each of the eight community resilience dimensions, there were examples from interviews and survey results that fit the dimension descriptions, but not all were strong examples. Both pastoral staff and congregants participated in the coordination, development, and engagement of community resources, but they were not well networked with external contacts. They mainly functioned by directing people at available resources within their own congregation. By sharing collective resources, they were able to increase the effectiveness of their impact in addressing community needs, but not all needs could be met. The pastors were able to adapt to the changing circumstances, and made strategic decisions on cancelling programs, continuing others, and creating new ones as they received feedback from congregants. Due to the pre-existing trust between leadership and congregation, pastors also had strong support for new innovations. However, Koreans culturally tend to defer to authority, and therefore there was little collaboration between congregants and leadership. Resources, particularly financial resources, were made available to anyone who inquired, thus maintaining a high degree of equity. However, given the inherent homogenous nature of the Korean church, access for marginalized or minority groups was not applicable. Particularly in the KM, the church services and community life are not accessible to those who do not speak or understand the Korean language. The churches had active agents from both the leadership and congregants with a high degree of participation to collaborate, though capacity has diminished significantly since the onset of the pandemic.

Most of these observations and examples have been extracted from TOR-A and VAN-A, and it is important to disclose differences with TOR-B, which hosted just a tenth of the attendees compared to TOR-A. Due to their size, they did not have access to the same scale of collective resources as the other two churches. This meant they did not have many social programs to begin with, and those that did occur were cancelled due to limited capacity of the pastoral staff. They did not have an emergency financial aid fund, nor did they coordinate or facilitate resource development and engagement. However, due to the demographic makeup of the church, they were less vulnerable to the various impacts of COVID. Compared to TOR-A and VAN-A, which had a substantially larger proportion of KM congregants, TOR-B reported an even distribution of EM and KM congregants. As a result, more congregants were salaried employees who saw little to no impact on their income, had multiple social networks outside of the

church, and therefore did not rely on the church as heavily for support, nor was it necessary. In sum, TOR-B did not demonstrate the community resilience dimensions to the same extent as the other two case study churches, but it was not solely due to their smaller size. This study showed that generation status was a strong determinant for the accumulation and use of social capital and community resilience. The evaluations for the Community Resilience Dimensions were made mainly through observations of the KM; EM congregants simply had less need for the church to be a site of community resilience, both due to their higher job security and accumulation of social capital outside of the church.

7.2. Concluding Remarks and Future Research

Among Korean Americans, there is a popular saying that goes “When two Japanese meet, they set up a business firm; when two Chinese meet, they open a Chinese restaurant; and when two Koreans meet, they establish a church” (Min, 2013, p. 75). According to Statistics Canada, the level of affiliation to a Protestant church among Koreans in 2011 was 47 percent, almost twice as high as the 28 percent for all ethnic origins in Canada. The link between Koreans and church in North America is even portrayed in popular culture, such as the recent film *Minari* (Chung, 2020), which takes place in Arkansas, and CBC’s TV series *Kim’s Convenience* (Choi et al., 2016-2021) in Toronto. It is almost assumed that Koreans in the United States or Canada probably attend a Korean church somewhere. The Korean church is unique among the other faith communities and ethnic churches because such a large proportion of the Korean immigrant community is affiliated with, and participates in, church life (Min, 1992; Statistics Canada, 2013). The strong bounded solidarity among co-ethnics fosters a culture of trust, collective norms, and social networks that help contribute to one another’s success in a new country, and secures a social safety net in crisis situations. This study has provided insight into the operationalization of social capital and resilience in an extended case study using a mixed methods approach. Strong digital communication networks, structured and well-resourced small groups, and committed volunteers willing to contribute to the collective pool of resources, were all key factors in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

7.2.1. Academic and Policy Level Implications

As discussed in my conceptual framework, I have used three bodies of literature to inform my research: social capital, community resilience, and Korean immigrant churches. While these fields of research are robust individually, there are few examples of studies combining all three – examining the intersection of these three concepts is my unique contribution to the academic literature. There are studies on immigrant churches in relation to social capital, but the focus is on how the church encourages civic engagement and participation (Stepick, Mahler, & Rey, 2009). Ley (2008) addresses immigrant churches and social capital, but the connection to community resilience is not made. On community resilience, there are studies on faith-based groups in hazard event response and recovery (Atkinson, 2014), community disaster resilience (Mayunga, 2007), and resilience on a city or region level (Banai, 2020). However, these studies mainly focus on access to critical infrastructure and resources, and less about social infrastructure.¹⁶ This study has brought these three bodies of literature into discussion with each other and demonstrated there is a relationship between them. Another contribution to the literature is the adaptation of Mayunga (2007) and the Community Resilience Dimensions. This was originally intended for community disaster response, but I adapted it for the immigrant church's response during a global pandemic.

As resilience becomes a more oft-discussed topic within the urban planning profession and municipal planning departments, I would argue that faith-based groups such as the Korean church belong in resilience strategies. The City of Toronto and City of Vancouver both recently launched their resilience strategies, providing an in-depth overview into their key objectives over the next few decades. They both focus on an equity framework, or address the relationship between equity and resilience. The City of Toronto identifies nine equity-seeking groups, including immigrants and refugees and racialized groups. They acknowledge that not all communities are affected equally by shock and stress events, such as climate change: "Equity-seeking groups face an unequal distribution of opportunities and resources, and therefore face greater challenges preparing for, responding to, and recovering from climate shocks and stresses" (City of Toronto, 2019, p. 23). The City of Vancouver also identifies nine factors that contribute into differences in lived experience, which could diminish an

¹⁶ Mayunga (2007), however, does address social capital.

individual's ability to withstand and recover from shock events. They identify citizenship status and race as part of this list (City of Vancouver, 2019, p. 32). However, both strategies are vague in identifying actionable items to support racialized immigrants in being well-prepared for shock and stress events such as climate change, a global pandemic, or natural disasters. The City of Toronto (2019) acknowledges that communities with "active local networks of engaged residents, community leaders, community centres, faith-based organizations, libraries, and local not-for-profits and organizations are better prepared to survive, adapt, and thrive in response to a shock (p. 84). However, the action item only speaks of general 'collaboration' with organizations and grassroots leaders in a two-year pilot project in three specific neighbourhoods. Vancouver's resilience strategy has an action item to strengthen social and cultural assets and services, which includes non-profits that provide essential services, but no concrete commitments are disclosed. Moreover, faith-based groups are not mentioned at all. While there are entire sections dedicated to investment for physical infrastructure, it appears investment into social infrastructure has been overlooked.

Faith-based groups such as churches offer the advantage of frequent gatherings among those who share the same (or similar) cultures and languages. Korean churches in this research have well-serviced communications infrastructure, trust in relationships, and the ability to coordinate the sharing of resources, information, and support. However, this does not apply specifically for Protestant churches – similar benefits in social capital and resilience can be found at mosques, temples, gurdwaras, and other faith-based groups. Considering the anecdotes provided by pastors that smaller immigrant churches are having more difficulty finding spaces to gather, local governments may want to consider leveraging their City-owned assets such as libraries, community centres, schools, etc. in order to support racialized immigrant faith-based groups. Given their ability to foster resilience in a culturally and linguistically relevant environment, this recommendation aligns with the City of Toronto's and City of Vancouver's policy objective of providing equitable outcomes for racialized groups and immigrants. Both cities' resilience strategies highlight neighbourhoods as sites of focus for resilience preparedness, and I would argue that providing support to religious institutions such as churches in the form of affordable gathering spaces would help keep these groups within neighbourhoods, so they are not forced to move out to industrial areas or the suburban edges of the city region.

Another consideration is for suburban municipal governments to also dedicate staff and resources to adopting a resilience strategy. I used the City of Toronto and City of Vancouver as examples because they have resilience strategies, but suburban municipal governments lag behind in this regard. Since the Greater Toronto Area and Metro Vancouver are home to several ethnoburbs, suburban planning departments have the opportunity to create culturally appropriate resilience strategies that leverage faith-based groups as sites of social capital. Cities like Coquitlam, Vaughan, and/or Richmond Hill would be well positioned to include partnerships with Korean churches in their resilience strategy to ensure equitable outcomes for their Korean immigrant population. Outside of churches, Surrey could partner with gurdwaras or mosques, and Richmond could partner with churches and temples.

7.2.2. Further Research Considerations

After having completed my research, there are still some unanswered questions that could be addressed in future research. I have four suggestions for further investigation into topics related to this study. First, I would like to see an expansion of sample size for second-generation Korean immigrant respondents, and a revision of the survey for more pointed questions regarding social connection. Second generation Koreans seemed to indicate they were more likely to see their church as a place of social connection and to gather with co-ethnics, but relied less on the support from their church during the pandemic. They also self-reported experiencing a higher degree of difficulty, especially due to lack of social interaction, than their first-generation counterparts. In my results section, I mentioned that more information would be required to make any conclusive statements about the findings, which appear inconsistent and uncharacteristic of second-generation Korean immigrants. Therefore, a study that improves upon this one in terms of sample size and wording of questions would yield more definitive results.

Second, I would like to see a comparison of immigrants who belong to a faith-based group, and those who do not in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The results would provide more definitively the impact of affiliation to a faith-based group in the accumulation and use of social capital and resilience. This would help to further test my hypothesis, and observe if immigrants not belonging to a faith-based group have access to social capital accumulation and resources for resilience elsewhere. Perhaps

there are other social institutions and organizations that can provide the same conducive environment to the use and demonstration of social capital and resilience.

Third, another topic of interest is whether or not these functions of social capital and resilience differ depending on the city. This study has selected churches from the two most popular metropolitan areas in Canada for Koreans, but I am curious about the Korean church (and other ethnic faith-based groups) in Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Montreal, Halifax, Fredericton, etc. Do regional differences affect levels of resilience? Similarly, do the city population size and/or geographic attributes affect levels of resilience? These results would provide additional nuance to my findings, if there were in fact differences depending on geography and city size. Each city would need to consider their local context and adapt accordingly in their resilience strategies, and not assume that replication from other jurisdictions is possible.

Lastly, using the same framework of social capital and resilience in churches or faith-based groups, a study could be conducted on different stress or shock events. For this study, I used the COVID-19 pandemic as the stress event, but there are many more options to consider. There could be an analysis of past events, such as a natural disaster, or one could consider ongoing stress events as mentioned by the Resilient Vancouver document: affordability, debt and low wages, aging population, food insecurity, homelessness, poverty, gender inequity, racism, lack of diversity in decision-making, and social isolation (City of Vancouver, 2019). Others could be future events, such as consequences of the climate change crisis. By applying different scenarios, it would again increase this research topic's nuance on how individuals who belong to faith-based groups respond to stress and shock events. Different scenarios may yield different challenges, and there may be blind spots for both religious institutions and local government. Using research to identify these blind spots could help prepare communities to better respond to future stress and shock events.

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Appendix A.

Interview Questions

1. What is your role at your church?
2. What are the general demographics of your church, i.e. age, socioeconomic status, residential location?
3. What is the proportion of your church population in KM and EM? What is the total population of your church, by average Sunday attendance (prior to COVID)?

Pre-Pandemic

4. What did a typical week at your church look like prior to March 2020? (including Sunday service, Wednesday service, Friday Prayer Gathering, small groups, and other weekly scheduled programs)
5. What are some church-wide annual or semi-annual events that typically take place?
6. Though the church's primary mission is to make disciples of Jesus, there are other programs intended to help people in their personal lives, particularly around the family, such as marriage counselling, mothers' and fathers' school, and Korean language school for children. What is your understanding of the intention of offering these programs? How has the general reception been of those who have taken the courses (if you know)?

During COVID

7. How did church life change once COVID restrictions came into place starting March 2020? What was the transition like, and what were some of the initial problems that you encountered due to COVID restrictions? What are some of the solutions or innovations you implemented to solve those problems?
8. What was your sense of the impact of COVID on congregants? Could you gauge the impact on their emotional, mental, financial, spiritual, and family health? What

were the most difficult things that congregants were going through due to COVID?

9. What were some of the church's official responses to COVID in terms of providing assistance to congregants?
10. Has your church kept a separate offering fund for COVID-19? If so, what was the purpose of that fund and how has it been used so far?
11. What were some unofficial, or informal ways that you witnessed or heard from others, on congregants helping each other out financially, emotionally, socially, or spiritually? Are you aware of any informal ways that people connect in order to find resources or knowledge? (e.g. where best to bank, employment opportunities, housing opportunities, recommendations for services, etc)
12. People have many different social circles – family, work, church. How important do you think congregants see their church community as a place of emotional, spiritual, mental support? How much do they rely on their church contacts in their day-to-day lives?
13. Now almost a year into the pandemic, how is the congregation's morale? What are the challenges you are dealing with now, if they're different from the first wave (March-June 2020)? How is the overall health and attitude of the congregation?
14. Immigrant churches are increasingly having difficulty finding places to worship, especially if they have to rent. Many churches do not have the resources or expertise to build their own church. Considering this, what do you think is the value of the ethnic immigrant church as an urban community hub?

Appendix B

Survey Questions

1. What generation do you identify with? 어떤 세대에 속하십니까?
 - First-generation (Adult immigrant) 1 세 (성인 이민자)
 - 1.5 Generation (Arrived in Canada as young child) 1.5 세 (어릴 때 캐나다에 도착)
 - Second-generation (Born in Canada) 2 세 (캐나다 출생)
 - Third Generation (Parents born in Canada or arrived as young child) 3 세
(캐나다에서 태어나거나 어린 아이로 도착한 부모)

2. What age range do you fall under? 어떤 연령대에 속하십니까?
18-24 세, 25-34 세, 35-44 세, 45-54 세, 55-64 세, 65+ 65 세 이상
3. Where is your church located?
당신은 어느 지역에 있는 교회에 출석하십니까?
 - Metro Vancouver 밴쿠버 지역
 - Greater Toronto Area 토론토 지역

4. How large is your church congregation in total (EM and KM)? 교회 출석 예배인원이 함께 몇명입니까(모두 포함)?
2-49 50-99 100-499 500-999 1000+
5. Which ministry do you identify with? 어떤 사역에 참석하십니까?
 - Korean Ministry 한국 사역
 - English Ministry 영어 사역

6. How long have you been attending your church? 교회에 얼마나 오래 참석했습니까?
 - Less than a year 1 년 미만
 - One to five years 1~5 년
 - Five to ten years 5 ~ 10 년
 - Ten or more years 10 년 이상

7. Select all the roles that apply to you. 귀하에게 적용되는 역할을 모두 선택해 주세요

- Congregant 교인
- Leader (small group, worship, etc) 리더 (소그룹, 예배 등)
- Teacher (youth, children, kindergarten, etc) 교사 (청소년, 어린이, 유치원 등)
- Formal church leader (elder, deacon, etc) 정식 교회 지도자 (장로, 집사 등)
- Other (please specify) 기타 (구체적으로 기재)

8. How often do you attend a regularly programmed church function? (incl. Sunday service, Wednesday/Friday service, prayer meetings, small group, various classes/seminars/lectures) 정기적으로 프로그램되는 교회 행사에 얼마나 자주 참석하십니까? (주일 예배, 수요일예배, 금요기도회, 소그룹, 수업/ 세미나/ 강의 포함)

- 2-3 times a week 주 2~3 회
- Once a week 주 1 회
- Once every two weeks 2 주에 1 회
- Once a month 월 1 회
- Once every other month 격월 1 회
- 3-4 times a year 1 년에 3 ~ 4 회
- Prefer not to disclose
- 공개하지 않음

9. Select all the statements that apply to you. "For me, my church is..." 귀하에게 해당되는 모든 진술을 선택해 주세요 "저에게 제 교회는 ..."

- A place of worship and spiritual nourishment 예배와 영적 공급의 장소
- A place where I have significant social connections i.e. my primary friend circle
중요한 사회적 관계가 있는 곳 (예 : 내 친구 서클)
- A place where I feel comfortable being with fellow Koreans 한국인 동료들과
편하게 지내는 곳

- A place where I can connect with others about practical matters i.e. employment opportunities, housing opportunities, investment opportunities, schools to send kids, where to get insurance, which dentist/doctor to see, etc. 취업 기회, 주거 기회, 투자 기회, 아이를 보낼 학교, 보험을 찾을 수 있는 곳, 치과 의사 / 의사를 찾을 수 있는 곳 등 실질적인 문제에 대해 다른 사람들과 연결할 수 있는 곳
- Other (please specify) 기타 (구체적으로)

10. On a scale of 0-100, how difficult has the past year been due to COVID? 0 = not difficult at all, 50 = moderately difficult, 100 = incredibly difficult 0 ~ 100 점에서 지난해 COVID로 인해 얼마나 어려웠습니까? 0 = 전혀 어렵지 않음, 50 = 중간 정도 어려움, 100 = 매우 어렵다

11. Select all the statements that apply to you. 귀하에게 해당되는 모든 진술을 선택해 주세요.

- I was unemployed/underemployed for more than 3 months combined in 2020. 나는 2020 년에 합쳐서 3 개월 이상 실업자 / 실업 상태였습니다.
- My workplace shifted online and I can work from home with no impact on my income. 직장이 온라인으로 바뀌었고 수입에 영향을 주지 않고 집에서 일할 수 있습니다.
- My mental health has taken a toll due to a lack of social interaction. 사회적 상호 작용이 부족하여 정신 건강이 악화되었습니다.
- I am inconvenienced, but not crippled, by the lack of social interaction. 사회적 상호 작용이 없어 불편하지만 무기력 해지는 않습니다.
- I am a student and my courses have shifted mostly (or all) online. 저는 학생이고 과정이 대부분/모두 온라인으로 이동했습니다.
- I recently graduated from university/college and COVID has made it very difficult for me to find employment. 최근에 대학을 졸업했고 COVID 로 인해 취업이 매우 어려워졌습니다.
- I am exhausted from both working from home and taking care of my children who cannot attend school (or I feel uncomfortable sending them to school). 집에서

일하고 학교에 다닐 수없는 자녀를 돌보는데 지쳤습니다 (또는 자녀를 학교에 보내는 것이 불편함).

- COVID has simplified my life and I have been relatively unfazed by the pandemic. COVID 는 내 삶을 단순화했으며 전염병에 상대적으로 당황하지 않았습니 다 .
- I have lost a loved one to COVID and I am grieving the loss. COVID 로 사랑하는 사람을 잃었고 그로 인해 슬픔을 겪고 있습니다.

12. If the above does not adequately describe your experience during COVID, please provide a short explanation of your situation. 위의 내용이 COVID 동안 귀하의 경험을 적절하게 설명하지 않는 경우 귀하의 상황에 대한 간단한 설명을 제공 해주세요

13. Rate your level of agreement with the following statements: 다음 진술에 대한 귀하의 동의 수준을 평가해 주세요.

Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly disagree 매우 동의함, 동의하다, 중립, 동의하지 않는다, 강하게 동의하지 않음

- My church has provided formal assistance (financial, resource, knowledge) to help alleviate my hardships due to COVID. 우리 교회는 COVID 로 인한 어려움을 덜 어주기 위해 공식적인 지원 (재정, 자원, 지식)을 제공했습니다
 - Any details you'd like to share: 공유하고 싶은 세부 정보:
- I have found informal assistance (financial, resource, knowledge) through conversations with friends and acquaintances at my church. 저는 제 교회에서 친구 및 지인과의 대화를 통해 비공식적인 도움 (재정, 자원, 지식)을 찾았습니다.
 - Any details you'd like to share: 공유하고 싶은 세부 정보:
- My friends and acquaintances at church have connected me to other individuals who have helped me with specific needs related to COVID. 교회의 친구들과 지인들이 저를 COVID 와 관련된 특정 요구 사항을 도와준 다른 사람들과 연결해 주었습니다.
 - Any details you'd like to share: 공유하고 싶은 세부 정보:

- I have been able to share resources with other individuals and/or families at church to help alleviate my hardships due to COVID. COVID 로 인한 어려움을 완화하기 위해 교회의 다른 개인 및 / 또는 가족과 자원을 공유 할 수 있었습니다.
 - Any details you'd like to share: 공유하고 싶은 세부 정보:
- The relationships I have with people who attend church have helped my emotional and mental health during COVID. 교회에 다니는 사람들과의 관계는 COVID 기간 동안 저의 정서적, 정신적 건강에 도움이 되었습니다.
 - Any details you'd like to share: 공유하고 싶은 세부 정보:
- The spiritual support I've received through sermons, small groups, and fellowship have helped my emotional and mental health during COVID. 설교, 소그룹, 교제를 통해받은 영적 지원 은 COVID 기간 동안 저의 정서적, 정신적 건강에 도움이 되었습니다.
 - Any details you'd like to share: 공유하고 싶은 세부 정보:
- I find out about important news and governmental assistance related to COVID from friends at church. 교회 친구들로부터 COVID 와 관련된 중요한뉴스와 정부지원에대해알게되었 습니다.
 - Any details you'd like to share: 공유하고 싶은 세부 정보:

14. Select all the programs below that you're aware of your church running since COVID restrictions have been in place: COVID 제한이 시행된 이후 귀하의 교회에 운영되고 있는 프로그램이 있으면 아래의 프로그램 중에서 모두 선택해 주세요

- Groceries/meals ministry for elderly and sick 노인과 병자를위한 식료품 / 식사 사역
- Emergency financial assistance 긴급 재정 지원
- Seminars or tutorials on accessing governmental COVID relief funding 정부의 COVID 구호 기금에 액세스하는 방법에 대한 세미나 또는 자료제공

- Family and household "visitations" (virtual check-ins) 가족 및 가구 방문(ZOOM 심방, 카톡 심방)
- Virtual prayer gatherings for intercession 중보기도를 위한 가상기도 모임(ZOOM 중보기도회)
- Employment opportunity connections 고용 기회 연결
- Small acts of kindness (delivering gifts or food, sending cards, etc) 작은 선행 (선물이나 음식 배달, 카드 보내기)
- Outreach ministries (e.g. for those experiencing homelessness, supporting missionaries, or any other service to the community outside the church) 아웃리치 사역 (노숙자, 선교사 지원, 교회 외부 지역 사회에 대한 봉사)
- Other (please specify) 기타 (구체적으로)

15. Please share between one to two creative or innovative ways that you've seen church leadership (pastors) or fellow congregants adapt, survive, and thrive during COVID. You can refer to church-specific, community, or personal examples. COVID 기간 동안 교회 리더십 (목사님, 전도사님) 또는 동료 성도들이 적응하고 생존하고 극복하는 것을 본 한 두가지 창의적 또는 혁신적인 방법을 공유해 주세요. 교회 별, 지역 사회 또는 개인적인 예를 참조 할 수 있습니다.