

**A CASE STUDY IN MISSIONAL PRAXIS -
BEACH MISSION PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

By

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SUMMARY

This study looked at the journey towards becoming a missional church, using Beach Mission Presbyterian Church as a case study and explores the question of the missiological praxis of Beach Mission and UPCSA. Despite the fact that the church is not fundamentally the keeper of mission, it is however the sign, instrument, means of expression, and foretaste of God's mission to the troubled, broken and traumatised world. I can affirm with equal validity that, mission belongs to God. Mission was not made for the church; the church was made for mission – God's mission.

The UPCSA must give careful attention to the processes by which it governs itself but the biblical and theological foundations will always be crucial than the specific structures implemented. These foundations will allow authentic relationships to develop simply because they assure people that they will be valued as those created in the image of God. Their wisdom and participation will be noticed and honoured. The church structures will give credence to God's work of reconciliation. When church structures allow the biblical and theological foundations to order its life, the church will bring glory, praise and honour to God.

Gibbs (2005:20) asserts that, the church of the twenty-first century needs missional thinkers and apostolic leadership. By missional leadership I mean leaders who can read the Scriptures with fresh eyes, relating the

story of redemption to the human condition in its present cultural context – contexts that are increasingly multicultural and influenced by global trends. This poses a challenge to UPCSA.

It was apparent that the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church approaches missional church conversation with a sense of hopefulness, and this was motivated by the strong belief that God is present and up to something wonderful.

The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church's case in point is heartening other congregations who intend in embarking on a journey towards becoming a missional church. The focus has been about God and his mission. The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church ought to comprehend the indisputable fact that it is just an instrument for *missio Dei* or to put it simply it is nothing more than a delivery means for the gospel. Wright (2010:31) asserts that, but at the end of the day, mission is a matter of loyalty. The ambassador must have complete loyalty to the government he or she represents. A trusted messenger will faithfully deliver what his sender said, not his own opinions. The church is a rejected community sent out to the world with a product (Jesus), to bring about transformation to the world. In essence, one wonders if the church does comprehend the world in which it is sent out to? Does it comprehend God, who has sent it?

In the missional church, the theology is more than the self-serving what do you get mentality. Members comprehend that they are called to be the church rather than be served by it.

KEY TERMS

- 1. Ecclesiology**
- 2. Dwelling in the Word**
- 3. Missional**
- 4. Missio Dei**
- 5. Missional Church**
- 6. Polity**
- 7. Worship**
- 8. Leadership**
- 9. Discernment**
- 10. Inspirational Leadership**

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to

The Rev Ndoda Ambrose Mbuyisa

And to

Lonathemba Oyama Zungu

You are the motive I feel exceedingly honoured and blessed.

And in loving memory of

Zama Milton Zungu, my father,

Vusumuzi Elias Zungu, my brother and

Flora Mbuyisa, my grandmother

STATEMENT OF OWN WORK

I, **Sibusiso Zungu**, declare that this dissertation is my own work. It is submitted in fulfilment for the degree of Master of Art in Theology at the Faculty of Theology, Department of Science of Religion and Missiology, University of Pretoria, Gauteng Province in South Africa.

I certify that the dissertation is my own work and all references used are accurately reported.

Signed:



25 April 2013

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Date

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ABBREVIATIONS

CWME : Commission on World Mission and Evangelism

DNA : Deoxyribonucleic-acid

GA : General Assembly

IMC : International Missionary Council

IMER : Institute for Missiological and Ecumenical
Research

UPCSA : Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa

WARC : World Alliance of Reformed Churches

WWC : World Council of Churches

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

The church of the 21st century is gearing itself up and having conversations about becoming missional, which constitutes the background of this dissertation. This has made it more difficult if not impossible to open a book on ministry or attend a church conference and not be confronted by the word missional. The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church is embarking on journey towards becoming a missional church, it has acknowledged that as a faithful congregation, it is called, gathered, and centred in Word and sacraments, and sent into the mission of God in daily life. Hirsch (2006:152) argues that, "If we really want missional church, then we must have a missional leadership to drive it – it's that simple." In support of that motive, an assessment of the role played by the leadership is reviewed in this dissertation.

The reality is, postmodernism is not a fad... Whether or not you realize it, you live in a postmodern world... There's no point pretending you're not – or wishing that things would go back to the way they were thirty years ago. They can't; you can't... The challenge, of course, is determining what all this means for the church and knowing how to move forward. (Burke 2003:26)

Sikhumbuzo Kesa and Louisa Lotriet were riding home together after a meeting of church's leadership. Louisa uttered, "I am getting discouraged". "We spend most of our time in these meetings dealing with the concerns of

our own congregation, and I think mission means more than that. I know there must be needs in our community that the church should be meeting, but we can't seem to find out what they are." (Interview B,2011:1)

This chapter provides a general overview of the study, including an introduction and rationale for the study. This chapter will also contain the research problem, research questions, purpose of the research, and a definition of concepts and describe the research process in depth, including the research design and methodology that was followed in this study.

1.2 Research Problem

James Cone (1986:viii) argues that preaching a spirited sermon and singing beautiful hymns are not enough to assure faith's authenticity. He further argues that without a practical commitment to validate faith's claim, what we say about our Trinitarian God becomes nothing but pious talk that elicits excitement. In favour of him, theology is the church applying a critical self evaluation of what it says and does on behalf of the one who defines the church's identity, Jesus Christ. The time we are living in, demands that a minister interprets the Word of God in the light of today's perspective. Beach Mission Presbyterian Church is not a missional

church and needs to transform to become a missional church through its leadership.

1.3 Research Questions

Entering into contemplation for a new missional epoch, the study will be focused by the following primary question: In view of the existing Missional church and Missional leadership discussions, how can Beach Mission Presbyterian Church embark on a journey towards becoming a missional church. Further question are as follows:

1. How can discussions around missional expressions encourage Beach Mission Presbyterian Church to live up to its identity, God's preferred and promised future and reinvigorate its missionary commitment?
2. What part does leadership play in the missionary reanimation of the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church?

1.4 Position as Researcher

I am an ordained Minister of the Word and Sacraments of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa (hereafter referred to as UPCSA). I am a South African, young, black, male, and it is my heartfelt aspiration to see the church moving from the theology of maintenance to that one of mission. I have for the few of years of my ministry spent my prime life

labouring in black congregations and have found it difficult if not impossible to separate my theological development from this experience. People often say that a person is a child of his or her time. This means that a person is linked to a way of thinking that is distinctive of an assured place at an assured time or an epoch in history. I am indebted to the UPCSA for my tradition of faith and the opportunities of service provided to me within the UPCSA over the years as a young minister and scholar. As much as the purpose of my studies is to accumulate knowledge on the subject, but far more than that is to participate in God's mission in making his Kingdom visible. I strongly believe that the time has passed where ministry could only be restricted to the preaching of the Word and administering of Sacraments. By journeying with Beach Mission Presbyterian Church as a congregation of the UPCSA, towards becoming a missional church could be used as a model for the denomination at large.

1.5 Goal of Study

From the perspective of a minister in the UPCSA, this study aims to contribute to the present discussion on a missional church. Therefore the rationale of the study is to describe and aid the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church to be faithful to God's preferred and promised future and in addition promoting positive and hopeful church involvement in a journey of spiritual discernment, also helping Beach Mission Presbyterian

Church to develop leadership capacity, to move from where they are presently to where God is calling them. It is also a goal of this study to extend the conversation about a missional church in relation to its leadership development.

1.6 Conceptual Clarification

1.6.1 Missional Ecclesiology – is a church that defines itself, and organises its life around its real purpose as an agent of God’s mission to the world. In other words, the church’s true and authentic organising principle is mission, it is the true church. The church itself is not only a product of that mission but is obligated and destined to extend it by whatever means possible. The mission of God flows directly through every community of faith that adheres to Jesus. To obstruct this is to block God’s purposes in and through his people. It is the area of study that explores the nature of the Christian movement, and therefore the church, as they are shaped by Jesus and his mission. The attention is chiefly on how the church organises and expresses itself when mission is the central focus. (Hirsch 2006:285).

Dan Kimball in “The Emerging Church” (2003) describes the missional church “as a body of people sent on a mission who gather in community for worship, encouragement, and teaching from the Word that supplements what they are feeding themselves throughout the week.”

Both Hirsch and Kimball confine much of the fundamental nature and core of what it means to be missional, hence I strongly believe that it is a full expression of who the church of Christ is and what it is called to be and do.

Missional ecclesiology invites us to see the Church differently, beginning not with the Church as we see it, but through the lens of the Triune God's mission in the world. A Missional view of the Church would remind us that whatever is true of the Church is true because it is first and foremost true of God in Christ, who through the work of the Spirit calls the Church into being. God's act of self sending into the world defines the Church. As the Father sends the Son into the world, so the Church also is sent into the world to be the community of witness to God's gracious action.

Hendriks (2004:21) defines missional as the term that refers to a way of understanding theology as being inherently focused on God's purpose with humans and creation. God as our creator, redeemer and sanctifier is a purpose-driven God and as such theology and the church should reflect it, it should be part of our identity. A stagnant or inward focused church dies because it loses its identity. In his frame of enquiry (2004:21) sees the term ecclesiology to mean, theological doctrine relating to the church.

Hooker, in his 2009 online report "What Is Missional Ecclesiology", asserts that Missional Ecclesiology demands more of the church than deciding which community service projects to undertake or setting congregational priorities for the coming years. Missional ecclesiology is a way of

understanding the church. It begins with the *missio Dei*, God's own "self sending" in Christ by the Spirit to redeem and transform creation. In a Missional ecclesiology, the Church is not a building or an institution but a community of witness, called into being and equipped by God and sent into the world to testify to and participate in Christ' work.

Niemandt (2012:1) asserts that a study in missional ecclesiology has emerged as one of the most significant trends in mission studies in the last number of years. Ecclesiology is a theological discipline that seeks to understand and define the church, and missional ecclesiology does this from a missional point of view where the Church is understood as a community of witness, called into being and equipped by God, and sent into the world to testify to and participate in Christ's work. It is the discussion of what the church is called to be and to do – its nature, its purpose, its hopes, its structures and practices.

1.6.2 Missional Polity – is the structural design of mission. It involves a description of the structure of church government and the processes by which the church makes decisions. But before it can establish structures and processes, the church must comprehend its basic calling. Missional polity begins with the appreciation that the church is called to bear witness to the ongoing engagement of God with the world to make a new creation, and to play a part in that engagement in its local context

through acts of compassion, faithfulness, justice, and love. Polity certainly shapes leadership.

Koffeman (2009:191-192) asserts that, church polity serves the church and must reflect the identity, calling, life and order of the church. It is the architecture of the life of the church. It is one of the challenges facing the church – how can the missional character of the church be expressed in its polity?

1.6.3 Ecclesiology and Polity – Open public assembly and conciliar decision making borne out of Christianity were crucial for the development of modern polities, particularly the traditions of republicanism and federalism. Those are concepts and practices that have reinforced federalism in our modern times. Everett (1997:5) asserts that European and American thinkers generated the belief that public life requires a basic constitution that articulates the relationship between independently legitimate polities, and this is rooted in the Bible. In Everett's frame of inquiry (1997:7), which views ecclesiology as the study of any form of religious assembly, be it a synagogue, mosque, temple or kraal (in the case of Africa), a germane connection between ecclesiology, religion and polity (politics and power) is attained. The word 'popular' now means something that is fashionable or liked by many people. But it first meant something to do with ordinary people. The word 'populous' is a Latin word meaning the ordinary people of the city, people who were not

in a position of power. Ecclesiology helps us discern a practical expression of religious beliefs, values and orientation for public life. The term *ecclesia* means assembly but has now come to designate the church in our time. Semantically, it vivifies the political roots of *ecclesia*. The “open assembly” points to a deep symbiosis of the religious symbols and the political.

Everett (1997:12) asserts that the Latin term *res publica* meaning public affairs is closely linked to *ecclesia*. Following this, *res publica* constitutes the root of our modern conception of a republic which means governance conducted in an open assembly by citizens. Republic means “re-making” of assemblies for open governance by the citizens of the city.

1.6.4 UPCSA - The Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa is a multinational, multiracial and multilingual Church formed and constituted on 26th September 1999, at Dower College of Education in Port Elizabeth. The two churches that came together to form the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa were the Reformed Presbyterian Church in South Africa (RPCSA) and the Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa (PCSA). The Oxford Dictionary endows us with the following definition of Presbyterian: “a member of a Church that is governed by people called elders or presbyters who are chosen by the congregation”. The UPCSA is governed by the General Assembly as its highest court, which is constituted by several Presbyteries (the second highest court). Presbyteries are composed of session members i.e. ministers and elders

of congregations. In dealing with issues in the UPCSA, matters are discussed at General Assembly which then forwards them to the Presbyteries, to be implemented in various congregations. The UPCSA has 580 congregations in South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, 19 Presbyteries and 02 Synods. There is a total membership of approximately 150 000 confirmed members, of whom about 139 000 are in South Africa, 5000 in Zimbabwe and 6000 in Zambia (2009/2010 UPCSA Yearbook).

1.6.5 Presbytery of eThekwini – is a Council of the Church which is called “the Presbytery” which has oversight, discipline and jurisdiction over the Ministers and Congregations within its boundaries. (see The Manual of Faith and Order of UPCSA, 2007, Chapter 10 para 10:1). It has an oversight of 34 congregations within its bounds.

1.6.6 Beach Mission Presbyterian Church – a congregation of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa, within the bounds of the Presbytery of eThekwini. It is the family-sized congregation which has a worship attendance of 65 to 100 members and functions under the oversight of an Interim Moderator. It is situated at number 22 Anton Lembede Street, Durban.

1.7 Methodology

As per Christensen (1985:155) research design refers to the outline, plan, or strategy specifying the procedure to be used in seeking an answer to research question(s). It specifies such things as how to collect and analyse data.

My research design for this study is primarily from a literature study involving existing literature on the subject of missional church and missional leadership. I intend to draw extensively on the missional church literature that has been generated to date. However, in the midst of drawing on these resources, I will also give some fresh insight and new research into advance thinking about a missional church in relation to leadership development.

Case study methodology is a very valuable tool in theological education, congregation planning and conflict management (Evans et al 1996; Babbie & Mouton 2001: 280-283). A case study was used for the purpose of this study. It seeks to explain or describe a current phenomenon in a real-life situation.

Qualitative research techniques have been used due to the nature of the study. Data was collected from participants through structured interviews.

Structured interviews were held with the founder and leadership of Beach Mission Presbyterian Church to ascertain the missional culture of the congregation. I had prepared questions for these interviews guided by the

topic of the study. Appointments were made with interviewees at a time and venue that was convenient for them. The main objective was to get detailed information in the form of narratives or true accounts of people's experiences. I think it was likely that the information derived from qualitative interviews was, an in-depth description that explains and gives meaning to people's lives as they embark on a journey towards becoming a missional church. I thanked the leadership of the congregation for their time and contribution. These interviews also gave me information about current leadership attitudes and perceptions about becoming a missional church.

For the understanding of the concept of the term Missional, primary and secondary sources in life of Mission and Missiology were used. There are considerable resources available from the form of journal articles and books.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

This is a missiology study. The study is limited to Beach Mission Presbyterian Church. The other congregations in the UPCSA are not studied. As a result, the study will be focused on this particular congregation, although some of the results will apply to other congregations within the bounds of eThekweni Presbytery and other congregations in the UPCSA. The research will discover the features of a

missional church, an appreciation of mission and leadership and to describe what would be an appropriate form of leadership for the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church. Also we will discuss the importance of discernment. Discernment is at the heart and practice of the missional church.

The WCC report on mission 'Spiritual gifts and discernment':

The need for discernment is also a reminder that in our spiritual life we are sometimes bereft of the Holy Spirit. We cannot predict or demand the Spirit's presence, but live in constant and eschatological hope that freedom of the Spirit is manifest and active in mission. The church, as a community that discerns together, needs to be open to the diverse voices within and beyond it. The church is equally "in need of continuing renewal by the Spirit to be able to discern the mind of Christ as well as be convicted by the spirit of division and sin within (John 16:8-11)" (WCC 2012:28).

1.9 Chapter Outline

Chapter 1 provides a general overview of the study, including an introduction and rationale for the study. This chapter also contains the research problem, research questions, purpose of the research, definition of concepts and describes the research process in depth, including the research design and methodology to be followed in the study.

Chapter 2 defines the terms of the study using up to date scholarship and outlines approaches to mission in the Old and New Testaments. It concludes with a section on mission in the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa (UPCSA), the denomination of the congregation under detailed study.

Chapter 3 introduces the concept of missional church and missional polity and engages with the links between the two in a Presbyterian context.

Chapter 4 places the UPCSA in a historical context and its missional identity.

Chapter 5 turns to the specific case study at the Beach Mission.

Chapter 6 forms conclusions and offers a number of recommendations.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1. Introduction

In this chapter it is essential to outline the conceptual framework for the study by providing an exploration of literature with regard to data for mission thinking. This chapter seeks to provide a framework that is being used currently by authors in the field of missiology and also provides biblical roots of mission and theological backgrounds used by such authors to construct their missional arguments.

2. Defining Frameworks

In response to the question what are frameworks, Roxburgh (2005:46) asserts that, they are powerful conceptual maps – or lenses – that we have developed inside our relational networks and through our training that determine how we see the world and thus shape our decisions about how to act and respond to what is happening around us.

He further bestows us with a profound four piece analogy, where constructions workers have been digging huge holes for foundations. Once those foundations are laid, large wood frame houses began to take shape upon them. The houses were *framed* – the surrounding support structures for the house were put into place. This *framework* would define

the house – or more literally, the framework would determine what was inside the house and what was outside. Once the houses are completed, we won't see this framework anymore – they will be covered with insulation, plasterboard, siding, paint or wallpaper, doors, windows, curtains, and all the elements that make our home comfortable and attractive.

Roxburgh (2005:46) concludes his analogy by defining framework by saying: "*A framework is the underlying structure upon which we build everything else.*"

3. THE LIFE OF MISSION.

Attempts to define Christian mission have resulted in prolonged and relentless debates. Even more difficult is the task of determining the aims of mission. If we attempt a more specifically theological synopsis of "mission" as the concept has traditionally been used, we note that it has been paraphrased as (a) propagation of the faith, (b) expansion of the reign of God, (c) conversion of the heathen, and (d) the founding of new churches. Lesslie Newbigin has narrowed these into two terms described as Mission and Missions, He states that:

The Mission of the church is everything that the church is sent into the world to do: preaching the gospel, healing the sick, caring for the poor, teaching the children, improving international and

interracial relations, attacking injustice. The Missions of the church is the concern that in places where there are no Christians there should be Christians, In other words, Missions means to plant churches through evangelism.[Newbigin 1960:23]

Newbigin adds that the aim of missions should be the establishment of a new Christian community that is as broad as society and is as true to the national situation. He has in mind here the idea of Christianisation that is highly questionable today in a world that is characterised by religious pluralism and democracy. Moreover, Christianity has lost its position of privilege. In many parts of the world, even in regions where the Church had been established as a powerful factor for more than a millennium, it is today regarded as a liability rather than an asset to be a Christian. The encouragement of inter-faith dialogue and cooperation today also draws the goal of mission as Christianisation into question.

Jerald D. Gort [1980: 568] argues that such a Christian community is not only characterised by reconciliation and peace but also by justice. This new redeemed community is then equipped for their mission, their life assignment which is to teach, preach, heal, care for the poor and attack injustice. Karl Barth [in Bosch 1983: 50], however, warns us against the dangers of establishing such an exclusive Christian community. He points out that the people's chief concern then is with the saving of their souls, or their experiences of grace and salvation; in short, with establishing their personal relationship with God. Barth regards this whole

understanding of becoming and being a Christian as thoroughly unbiblical and ego-centric [Bosch 1983:51]. What makes someone a Christian is not primarily his or her personal experiences of grace and redemption, but his or her ministry. Indeed, the Christian receives forgiveness, justification and sanctification in order to become a servant of God in the world.

Newbigin, however, is not unaware of such criticism. His immediate focus with regards to mission seems to be ecclesiocentric but he carefully points out that this is not the only goal of mission. He states that in the past we have largely limited the goal of missions to the conversion of unbelievers and the planting of churches. This, he asserts, must remain the first objective. The trouble comes when this becomes the sum and substance of our missionary endeavour [Schrotenboer 1972: 7]. He thus indicates that fighting against injustices in the world should also be the task of mission.

Writing in a similar vein the Danish theologian, Johannes Aagaard, states that God works through one extraordinary mission and many ordinary missions [Castro 1985:61]. *The extraordinary mission* is the mission of Jesus Christ, the mission of the church - manifested in the sending of Jesus Christ and in the calling of the church to its particular vocation of witnessing to the reign of God. The *ordinary missions* are the missions of the nations, the missions of all historical agents that co-operate in the building up of human community [Castro 1985:51]. Through all aspects of human history, political, economic, cultural, and social human beings are

called, as communities and individuals, to participate in God's providential care for the world. This is a useful distinction, but it cannot be absolutised because Christians and churches are also necessarily involved in the so-called ordinary missions through diaconal (service) ministries by virtue of the fact that the church is a social institution and has in itself socio-political consequences.

Mission is thus not limited to the 'mere saving of souls', or the 'planting of churches', Hoekendijk [1952: 332] criticised the 'church-centric' view of mission pointing out that it does not fully correspond with the biblical view of mission. Such a view of mission, though still prevalent, has lost its relevance in the present century. This shift can be seen in the emerging views of the church and its mission. In the emerging ecclesiology, the church is seen as essentially missionary in its nature. The church is not the sender but the one *sent* (1 Peter 2: 9). Its mission ("being sent") is not secondary to its being; the church exists in being sent and in building up itself for the sake of its mission. Missionary work is not so much the work of the church as simply the Church at work. More so, it is the church at work in the world. This missionary dimension evokes intentional, that is, direct involvement, in society; it actually moves beyond the walls of the church and engages in missionary work such as evangelism and work for justice and peace [Bosch 1991: 409-420].

Mission has often been understood and practised as a current flowing only in a single direction: from north to south, from rich to poor, from powerful to the powerless, from male to female, from white to black, from 'Christian' civilization to godless culture. This reduces mission to something that some people do to others, rather than a common sharing in God's mission of love to the whole world (WARC 2004:7).

The word "mission" has been so abused that it is difficult if not impossible to appreciate its profound meaning. I grew up associating mission primarily with efforts to carry the gospel to other foreign lands. Yet the term "home mission" usually referred to efforts in places far removed from where we are. The term mission for countless people means, giving to the yearly offering to support the church's work in a particular place. Attie van Niekerk (2002:119) argues that mission in poor communities is not in the first instance the service (*diakonia*), but the building of relationships (*koinonia*).

Mission has been understood as a movement taking place from the centre to the periphery, and from the privileged to the marginalized of society. Now people at the margins are claiming their key role as agents of mission and affirming mission as transformation. This reversal of roles in terms of envisioning mission has strong biblical foundations because God chose the poor, the foolish and the powerless (1 Corinthians 1:18-31) to further God's mission of justice and peace so that life may flourish. If there is a shift of the mission concept from "mission *to* the margin" to "mission *from* the margins", what then is the distinctive contribution of

the people from the margins? Any why are their experiences and visions crucial for re-imagining mission and evangelism today? (WCC 2012:6)

An attentive reading of the Bible, on the other hand, gives us a much diverse understanding of mission in the church. Repeatedly the Scripture points out that God's people are chosen, not simply for their own benefit, however that they might be instruments of blessing to the world. God promised Abraham that "and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Gen 12:3). Isaiah prophesied:

"It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and to bring back those of Israel I have kept.

I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you will bring my salvation to the ends of the earth." (Isa.49:6)

Wright (2010:73) asserts that, the skeleton message of Genesis 12:1-3 is this:

"Go....

and be a blessing...

and all nations will be blessed through you."

He further asks the question, is that not a "great commission"? Is it not, in fact, the foundation on which the whole thrust of God's mission, including what is usually referred to as "The Great Commission" in Matthew 28, is based? And if so, this has serious consequences for our understanding of the church as well as of mission.

1 Peter 2:9 declares: “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God.....” Why? So, “that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” Paul declares that not only has Christ reconciled us to God, the message of reconciliation – that is preaching the gospel, inviting others to become Disciples of Christ but also that he has given us “the ministry of reconciliation.” (2 Cor. 5:18), that is, on a life given to serving others, making peace, offering a place of acceptance and a space for dialogue. Shortly before he died, Jesus prayed for his chosen ones and said, “As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.” (John 17:18). According to Matthew’s Gospel, his last words before ascending into heaven were, “Therefore go and make disciple of all nations,...” (Matt. 28:19). As the *UPCSA Manual of Faith and Order* puts it:

The Church has been called into being by the will of God, who gathers all people into a fellowship in Christ, which is created and sustained by the power of the Holy Spirit. Its purposes and function is to bear witness to the saying Gospel of Jesus Christ to all who do not yet believe in him, to build up in faith, hope and love those who already believe, and to proclaim his sovereignty over the world. The Church is holy because it is of God, and not of human creation. It is catholic in that God of his love calls all people to share in its membership. It is apostolic in that it is built upon the foundation of the apostolic teaching. (*UPCSA Manual of Faith and Order*, Chapter 1, 1:1)

Mission is not an aspect of the church's work or an attachment of the church. It is not a function to be carried out by special individuals or supported by certain auxiliary groups. Neither is mission primarily something that takes place in distant lands. Instead, mission is the purpose for which the church exists. The church's mission is carried out when, as a body and as individuals, it seeks to know and do the will of God in its own community as well as throughout the world. Bosch (1991:391) asserts that, the *missio Dei* is God's activity, which embraces both the church and the world, and in which the church may be privileged to participate.

Wright (2006:62) argues that it is not so much the case that God has a mission for his church in the world, as that God has a church for his mission in the world. Mission was not made for the church; the church was made for mission – God's mission.

Mission is God's work in reconciling the whole of the created order in love, justice and integrity (Eph 1:10) to God in which human beings are called and invited to participate by being sent through the love of Christ (Matt 5:43-45) that all might attain life in all its fullness (John 10:10). It is worldwide oriented and involves a partnership between the triune God and humans who constitute the Church, of sharing of the Word that is love in a practical way and the resources of the universe which ultimately belong to God who created it (Psalm 24:1).

We affirm that mission of God's Spirit is to renew the whole creation. "The earth is the Lord's and everything in it" (Psalm 24:1 NIV). The God of life protects, loves and cares for nature. Humanity is not the master of the earth but is responsible to care for the integrity of creation. Excessive greed and unlimited consumption which lead to continuous destruction of nature must end. God's love does not proclaim a human salvation separate from the renewal of the whole creation. We are called to participate in God's mission beyond our human-centred goals. God's mission is to all life and we have to acknowledge it and serve it in new ways of mission. We pray for repentance and forgiveness, but we also call for action now. Mission has creation at its heart (WCC 2012:125).

This observation of mission has implications for mission practice for 'the truth that God-given resources must be used to realise God's purpose of reconciling all things through Jesus Christ (CWM 1996:293).

We affirm that the purpose of God's mission is fullness of life (John 10:10) and this is the criterion for discernment in mission. Therefore, we are called to discern the Spirit of God wherever there is life in its fullness, particularly in terms of the liberation of the oppressed people, the healing and reconciliation of broken communities and the restoration of the whole creation. We are challenged to appreciate the life-affirming spirits present in different cultures and to be in solidarity with all those who are involved in the mission of affirming and preserving life. We also discern and

confront evil spirits wherever forces of death and negation of life are experienced (WCC 2012:122).

Historically, the word *missio* was used only when referring to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. It was the “mission” of God the Father, sending the Son in the incarnation and sending the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

This was its meaning until the 16th century, when Jesuits, a Catholic monastic order, began to use it to mean the spread of the Christian faith among non-Catholics (Bosch 1991:1). For the most part through the growth of the Protestant missionary movement in the 18th and 19th centuries, “mission” took on its more familiar meaning: sending people from “Christian” countries to “heathen” lands to convert them and to bring the alleged benefits of “Christian civilisation”. In the process, the original vision of God the Trinity being the sender was lost. Now the church was the sender.

This changed the meaning of “mission” that is the one that most people think of today when they hear it. And, quite rightly, we have serious doubts about whether that kind of mission has any place in contemporary Christian life.

But mission is at the heart of the life of the Godhead, in the love and community of God the Sender, God the Sent One, and God the Strengtheners of those who go.

We ought to comprehend mission in a Trinitarian sense of mission as God's act of sending – sending Jesus, sending the Spirit, and sending the church – I strongly believe that it would be then that the word “mission” can be rescued from much of the terrible and bad publicity it has earned.

It is by imitating Jesus, seeking and obeying God's will that the church finds its identity. It could be said that the church is most truly itself when it is engaged in mission. This is not by any means to deny the magnitude of other aspects of a congregation's life, such as worship or fellowship. Rather, a church that is busy reaching out to the world will find its worship improved and its fellowship strengthened. An introverted, self-centred congregation falls short of Christ's intention for his church and cannot long grow. Mission is the “salt” that keeps faith from becoming stale or rancid. Mission is not a sideline. It is the lifeline of the church.

The Church does not have missions instead, the mission of God creates the church. The church serves God's call to mission through its work in three broadly defined categories: the proclamation of the Word of God, the administration of the Sacrament of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the nurture of the covenant community of disciples. It undertakes this mission without regard for its own agenda or survival.

Mission in the Old Testament

Some scholars have argued that the Old Testament hardly provides a basis for Christian mission, particularly if we adhere to the traditional understanding of mission as the sending of preachers to distant places, a view which is seriously challenged today. There is, in the Old Testament, no indication of the believers of the old covenant being sent by God to cross geographical, religious, and social frontiers in order to win others to faith in Yahweh. The primary focus is on God's relationship with and activity among the people of Israel who are considered as those elected by God. However, we see in here also the fact that God is as concerned with other nations as he is with Israel. But this is not Israel's concern. If there is a missionary in the Old Testament, it is God himself who will bring the nations to Jerusalem to worship him there together with his covenant people. So essentially it is God who is on a mission to bring the world unto God-self and he invites us to be a part of his missionary movement. The concept of *Missio Dei*, or "God's mission," is a crucial principle surrounding our understanding of mission. This theological concept points us to the Triune God as the one who owns and orchestrates all mission work. A theology of God's sovereignty thus provides a key impetus for mission.

Presler (2001:30) asserts that God is the missionary at the heart of Christian mission – that is a central insight of scripture...Mission is not fundamentally something we do as Christians, but a quality of God's own

being. It is not a program of ours but the path of God's action in the world.

In the Old Testament mission is seen in the many themes that are found in the actions of God which form the indispensable basis for the New Testament call to the church to engage in worldwide mission work. Verkuyl refers to these as: (1) the *universal motif* which points to the fact that in choosing Israel God never took his eyes off the other nations; Israel was the *pars pro toto*, a minority called to serve the majority, (2) the *motif of Rescue and Liberation* which is the soteriological theme of the Bible, that is God's work of rescuing and saving both Israel and the other nations, (3) the *missionary motif* in which the prophets constantly remind Israel that her election is a call to service. Israel must be a sign to the other nations that Yahweh is both Creator and Liberator (Isa. 49:6), (4) *the motif of antagonism*. The entire Old Testament is filled with descriptions of how Yahweh-Adonai, the covenant God of Israel, is powerfully wrestling against powers and forces which oppose his liberating and gracious authority. This motif is closely linked to the doxological theme: the glory of Yahweh-Adonai shall be revealed among all peoples. Then they will all come to know him as "the gracious and merciful God, slow to get angry, full of kindness, and always willing to turn back from meting out disaster" (Jon. 4:1-2). The book of Jonah is also significant for a biblical mandate for mission because it sheds light on God's leading of the Gentiles.

Mission in the New Testament

Whilst the Old Testament may provide the basis for mission it is in the New Testament that the worldwide call to mission becomes really alive. In fact it is fundamental to the Christian faith. There is no participation in Christ without participation in his mission and Jesus makes this explicit to his disciples. His ministry, teaching and example all provide the basis for Christian mission in the world today. In this section I will attempt to do only a very brief look at the ministry of Jesus therefore I will not put them into separate headings. Also, it is not within the scope of this dissertation to do an examination of the entire New Testament, I shall therefore restrict my discussion to the Gospels and mention Paul's letters.

The Ministry of Jesus

In my view, the best approach is to base our definition of mission on the example of Jesus himself. Based on Jesus' example, Kirk (1999:53) asserts that,

Christian mission today requires communicating the good news of Jesus and his kingdom (Acts 28:30) (evangelism), insisting on the full participation of all people in God's gifts of life and wellbeing (justice), providing the resources to meet people's needs (compassion) and never

using lethal violence as a means of doing God's will (the practise of non-violence as a means of change).

Jesus' life and ministry stands in the historical context and tradition of the prophets. Like them and John the Baptist his concern is repentance and the salvation of Israel. In him salvation has arrived, and therefore the good news which Jesus proclaims describes a kingdom which had both already come and is yet coming. It is fairly apparent in the ministry of Jesus that the proclamation of the kingdom of God becomes a central priority. Jesus' miracles and parables provide special aid in understanding how the kingdom is revealed in this world. John's Gospel calls the miracles signs which point to the approaching kingdom and the majestic character of the Messiah. These miracles address every human need: poverty, sickness, hunger, sin, demonic temptation, and the threat of death. If we are to share in God's mission in the world today then we have to do it the Jesus way pointing to the kingdom of God. Bultmann claims that the dominant concept of Jesus' message, in keeping with Jewish apocalyptic expectations, is the reign of God. This message concerning the kingdom of God, according to Bultmann, is central to Jesus' call to decision.

God's mission is motivated by his loving will for the entire world, grounded in the atoning work of Jesus Christ and carried out by the Holy Spirit through the means of grace. Through the doctrine of justification we

understand that everything God does, as far as we know from his revelation to us and the Bible is done for our benefit, so that we might be saved. God sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to rescue lost and condemned people. This is the *Missio Dei*. This is where mission work finds its centre-in God's desire to save all people. Jesus left no doubt about the purpose of his mission when he told Zacchaeus, "The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." (Luke 19:10). The *Missio Dei* has always been a mission of salvation for Humankind. Through the revelation of God's Word we have the knowledge that he wants "all to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth." Applying the doctrine of salvation to our lives and to our mission continually reminds us that we ourselves have been rescued as a result of the *Missio Dei*; therefore all glory belongs to God, not us. We do not describe mission in terms of our own work but with reference to the healing, salvation, and restoration that God accomplishes through Christ.

The death of Jesus on the cross was the place where Jesus endured God's judgement which was properly due to Israel and the Gentiles. The Cross and the Resurrection becomes the pivotal foundation for world mission. It is therefore not surprising that interspersed with reports of his cross and resurrection, are the mandates to carry the message to all people.

This is clearly illustrated in the fact that Jesus opened his ministry on earth to Gentiles as well. He did not see his ministry as exclusive to Israel

and on occasions rebuked Israel for her lack of faith and continued disobedience at the same time acknowledging the faith seen in Gentiles (Matt. 8:10, 15:28). He also opened the “eschatological banquet” to the Gentiles with the indication that “those who were born to the kingdom” will be thrown out (Matt. 8:11-13, Luke 13:28-30). Such Gentiles are perhaps prefigured in the tax collectors and prostitutes who “go into the kingdom of God” ahead of the religious establishment (Matt. 21:31).

The Gospel of Matthew carries this particular mandate to the Gentiles. New Testament scholars claim that this Gospel is organised to instruct recent converts about Jesus’ work, person, and coming kingdom but also to assist them in spreading the message to others. Although Matthew 10 records Jesus’ instruction to his disciples (to) “Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of Israel”. Scholars generally do not see this as contradictory to the Great Commission to go to all peoples recorded in the 28th chapter of the very same book. The event which opened the way to the Gentiles was the resurrection. The Resurrected and Exalted Lord is the one who issues the mandate for the disciples and the church today to go and make disciples of all nations. Three terms in the Great Commission summarise the essence of mission for Matthew: *make disciples, baptise and teach*. The ultimate purpose of all these is to submit to the will of God as revealed in Jesus’ ministry and teaching.

Similarly, Mark's Gospel carries a missionary mandate inviting human beings over to Jesus and his kingdom. Even though Mark's Gospel should lack an explicit missionary mandate, its whole tone is missionary. By interpreting the facts about Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, he wished to call people to a faith decision for Jesus Christ. There is an explicit command to mission in verses 15 and 16 of Chapter 16: *"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He who believes and is baptised shall be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."* Although scholars generally view the concluding section as an addition to Mark's Gospel it does not take from the rest of the writing about the missionary intent. This missionary mandate is no less different in John's Gospel: to bring people to faith in Jesus Christ (John 20:31). John goes a step further to orient the call of mission not only around the person of Jesus Christ and his work, but around God himself. Is God or Jesus the central figure in John's mission theology? Generally, it is not the message of God's existence or of God's love that is offensive, but whether God's love has found its decisive and ultimate expression in Jesus. Any ecumenism that is achieved at the expense of lessening the centrality of Jesus' work, claims, and requirements is not of little value but is actually misleading and deceptive. The church's (missionary) proclamation must be theocentric by being Christocentric, since according to scripture; God's revelation and redemption were ultimately and finally accomplished in Jesus.

Jesus sent out his disciples with the actual command to engage in mission with these words in John 20:21-22: "*As the Father has sent me, so I send you*". It is perhaps worth mentioning that this text is today sometimes used to advocate for an "incarnational model" (to emulate Jesus' example and become like those we seek to serve) for the church's mission. However, there are others who dispute this stating that Jesus' love for his disciples is presented by John as a model for relationships of believers with one another, not as a model for their mission to the world.

Now it would have been far less complicated if the worldwide mission mandate was left at making converts and disciples. However, that is not the case since the books of the New Testament seem to emphasise other aspects of mission as well. For example, in Luke the disciples are mandated to go with a specific message; they are to proclaim the events of Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection as decisive for every person. The aim and significance of mission for Luke is established on Isaiah 61 which Luke mentions in chapter 4: 16-21. Applying the words of Isaiah 61 to himself, Jesus says the Spirit of the Lord is on him. He takes it further with this daring claim: "*He has sent me to bring good news to the afflicted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty the oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*" For all practical purposes this text has replaced Matthews Great Commission as the key text not only for understanding Christ's own mission but also that of the church (Bosch 1991:84). It also indicates how

mission must be done in the world today. To follow the way of Jesus is to choose “suffering love”.

As Luke retells the story of Jesus and the early church there are certain themes to which he returns again and again: the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the centrality of repentance and forgiveness, of prayer, of love and acceptance of enemies, of justice and fairness in inter-human relationships. Luke also pays particular attention to certain categories of people and of Jesus’ ministry to them: the poor, women, tax-collectors, and Samaritans. The entire ministry of Jesus and his relationships with all these and other marginalised people witness, in Luke’s writings, to Jesus’ practice of boundary-breaking compassion. It is therefore appropriate that Bosch refers to the significance of Luke-Acts as “Practicing Forgiveness and Solidarity with the poor” and sees in this another theological foundation for mission, which the church is called to emulate. Unfortunately, it also continues to impact on the definition of mission with which the Christian church wrestles. Is it the “saving of souls” or the “transforming of society”?

Luke took pains to tie the call to mission not only to Christ’s resurrection but also to the promise of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 1 there is an immediate charge to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit. God’s mission of salvation in Jesus Christ would remain a hidden treasure without the work of the Holy Spirit. Schultz 1997:102 calls the Holy Spirit “the dynamic force in

the divine salvation plan,” and describes three aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit within the *Missio Dei*:

- 1) He mediates the gift of salvation through the forgiveness of sins;
- 2) He builds and gathers the church on earth; and
- 3) He equips her for the continual proclamation of the Word.

Turning to Paul’s letters I note that the aim of mission seems to focus on the invitation to join the eschatological community. The following is the summary of Paul’s perspective on Mission:

1. There can be no doubt that Paul the theologian cannot be understood unless he is seen primarily as Paul the missionary; any attempt at interpreting Paul must aim at regaining “the unity of theology and evangelism, and justification by faith and world mission.”
2. Though Paul is aware of his calling to the Jews, his own people (Rom. 10:1), he sees himself called especially to be an apostle to the Gentiles but included in this is the mandate to reach out to all nations (Gal. 1:15-16, 2:7-8 and Rom 1:5). His missionary vision is worldwide.
3. His main focus is on the new life given to all who would believe and what they have now become in Jesus Christ. He expresses what this new life nature would mean for the believer (Eph. 4-5).

4. His missionary endeavour is directed by an apostolic and apocalyptic nature. He believes that he is sent by God with an obligation and urgency (1Cor.1:17; Gal. 2:7; Rom. 1:14f) to “preach” the Gospel preparing the world for its coming destiny, which the Christ-event has inaugurated. Hence apocalyptic fervour and missionary strategy go hand in hand. They do not contradict each other.
5. Paul sees the Church as the interim eschatological community. In his understanding, the church is the “world in obedience to God”, the redeemed creation and its primary mission in the world is to be this *new* creation. The church is missionary by its very nature, through its unity, mutual love, exemplary conduct, and radiant joy.
6. The church is not other-worldly. It is involved with the world, which means that it is missionary. Paul places the human being in the context of the world and its power structures and emphasises a profound solidarity and interdependence between the church and the world which marks the church as a community of hope while it groans and labours for the redemption of the world. The church is the church in the world and for the world which means that it is involved in creating new relationships among itself and in society at large and, in doing this, bearing witness to the lordship of Christ who is both Lord of the church and of the world (Bosch 1991:169).

The church is *now* the eschatological people of God and a living witness of the ratification of God's promises to his people Israel, precisely in its having a membership wider than the people of the old covenant. In spite of its theological importance, however, the church is always and only a preliminary community, en route to itself-surrender unto the kingdom of God.

It is apparent that the mission of Jesus was to fulfil the mission of God. The only response that people needed to make to his announcement of good news was to repent and believe (Mark 1:15) and to follow him (Mark 1:17)

The WCC report on mission "Transformative spirituality" asserts that:

Mission spirituality resists and seeks to transform all life-destroying values and systems. "Our faithfulness to God and God's free gift of life compels us to confront idolatrous assumptions, unjust systems, politics of domination and exploitation in our current world economic order. Economics and economic justice are always matters of faith as they touch the very core of God's will for creation". Mission spirituality enables us to re-connect ourselves with others. The African concept of *Ubuntu*, "I am because we are, and we are because I am", and the Korean concept of *Sansaeng*, "life together", are powerful examples of the cosmic vision in God's mission. Mission spirituality is faith that God will transform the whole world through our participation in God's life-giving mission. It motives us to serve God's economy of life, not mammon, to share life at

God's table rather than satisfy individual greed, to pursue change to a better world instead of keeping the status quo for own self-interest. (WCC 2012:34)

Mission is constantly the initiative of our creating, loving, forgiving, reconciling, healing, life-giving God. Only when we do the kind of mission that reflects that kind of God, are we truly doing the mission of God.

Many churches and ecumenical groups have indeed defined mission. Johnson & Clark (2000:20) assert that, the Anglican Communion defined "five marks of mission":

The mission of the church and mission of Christ:

To proclaim the good news of the Kingdom of God. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers. To respond to human need by loving service. To seek to transform the unjust structures of society. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

McCoy (1998:22-33) argues that in his view, the Five Marks need to be rewritten to reflect a better theology of mission. He suggests that in mission, we serve the good news of the reign of God as we:

- 1) witness to Christ's forgiving, saving, reconciling love for all;
- 2) build welcoming, transforming communities of faith;
- 3) stand in solidarity with the poor and needy;
- 4) challenged injustice and oppression; and
- 5) protect, care for and renew life on our planet.

Having looked at the life of mission, then what is the relationship of the church and mission?

Gibbs (2005:75-77) looked at major contributions made by Darrel Guder, Craig Van Van Gelder, George Hunsburger, Alan Roxburgh, Wilbert Shenk, George Hunter and Charles Van Engen to literature, and summarised their insights as follows:

The church is shaped by mission of God rather than by self-serving agenda of numerical growth or defensive isolation. In other words growth is a by-product and should not be the primary focus. At the same time non-growth raises legitimate questions regarding the church's faithfulness to its calling. The church defines its mission in relation to the Trinity. It recognises the interrelationship of the Persons in the working of salvation, and in its life it embraces the community and diversity expressed in the Godhead. Mission cannot be privatised or individualised.

The church establishes the inseparable connection between worship and witness. The praise that the church addresses to God leads to proclamation and communication of the gospel to the world. The church recognises the rich and colourful diversity in God's creation. It must itself demonstrate both diversity and reconciliation.

The church is challenged to take up an incarnational approach. The church must reach out in an attitude of unconditional love. It must not only reach people where they are but also accept them as they are.

The church's commitment to transformation is not limited to individuals but extends to the geographic communities in which the church is located and non-geographical networks in which it is engaged. Missional churches recognize that they are signs and servants of the reign of God, but because they themselves are in the process of becoming, they are ambiguous signs and unworthy servants. When drawing people to it, the missional church must always point beyond itself. The church must give high priority to the Great Commission.

It is apparent that there is no single way of describing mission. The study of mission seeks to interpret the relationship that exists between God and the world and the role that human beings play in this process.

From the interviews conducted, following are assorted descriptions of mission:

- proclaiming the gospel;
- giving service to the community;
- the ability to change society for Christ;
- doing social work amongst people;
- converting people for Christ;
- healing and power;
- attracting people to our hospitality;
- planting churches in new areas;
- empowering other people through education;
- serving souls;

- transforming society by living gospel values;
- using our skills to aid other people;
- working for political liberation;
- working for Church unity among Christians;
- and sharing God's work.

Bosch (1993:180-187) picks out four themes that run through scripture, and that together make up biblical basis for mission:

1. Compassion
2. Martyria (witness)
3. God's mission (missio Dei)
4. History

Bosch (1991:494) has brilliantly written that mission means serving, healing, and reconciling a divided, wounded humanity.

African scholars argue that "Mission" has a universal definition and includes the work of:

- Proclaiming the Gospel
- Saving souls
- Conversion to Christ
- Political, social and religious liberation
- Social work
- Caring for God's people / creation

And more – all of which are correct but the truth is that over the years, “Mission” has taken on the mantle of “taking Christianity into other countries” and in Africa particularly it is often said missionaries “...had come to “civilise” the “uncivilised” pagans of Africa, teaching “Blacks to think, act, speak and dress like whites...a case of black people wearing white masks” (Ngada N.H and Mofokeng K 2001:1).

4. Mission in the Cape Colony

John Philip (1775-1851) was a Scotsman. After working in the weaving industry for some years, he felt a call to the ordained ministry of the Congregational Church. While ministering in Aberdeen, he felt another call – to go to “the mission field”.

Influenced by the an evangelical revival taking place in Scotland at that time, Philip had a particular desire to evangelise others. He was accepted by the London Missionary Society (LMS), a voluntary body created in 1795 by Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Anglicans, and Wesleyans to “convert the heathen”. He was sent to the Cape Colony in South Africa, arriving in 1819.

Although the desire to evangelise was his priority, John Philip was also concerned about the well-being and development of people. As a person of his time, this meant bringing the “benefits” of European civilisation to the heathens.

John Philip soon become involved in race relations in the Cape. Saayman (1991: 39) describes him as “an outstanding champion of the rights of the Black colonial peoples”.

Slavery was alive and well in the Cape Colony. Largely through Philip’s effort on behalf of the Khoisan people, the colonial government passed Ordinance 50 of 1828, establishing the equality of all people, regardless of race, before the law, and cancelling the requirement that Khoisan people carry passes (a pre-apartheid version of the dompas!) Philip wrote at the time:

Let the advocates of religion and humanity use their efforts to put a period (stop) to the slavery of the Aborigines (the indigenous people) within the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, and they will, by that single act, do more for the promulgation of the gospel in South Africa, than all the funds of the London Missionary Society could effect while things continue in that colony as they are now.

Five years later slavery itself was abolished in the colony, to the disgust of most white settlers, who denounced Philip and others like him as “traitors”. This was a significant factor that led the Dutch boers to trek inland from the Cape from 1838 onwards.

John Philip was simply being true to his evangelical convictions. He was acutely aware of the oppression and injustice suffered by the Khoisan in he Cape, and so he acted on it.

Yet Philip was not the revolutionary political activists the white settlers made him out to be. He shared most of the attitudes that were common in the period of imperialism and colonialism. This is how he saw mission in the colony at the same time that he was lobbying for all people to be declared equal (Ordinance 50):

While our missionaries, beyond the borders of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, are everywhere scattering the seeds of civilisation, social order, and happiness, they are, by the most unexceptionable means, extending British interests, British influence, and the British empire. Whenever the missionary places his standard among a savage tribe, their prejudice against the colonial government give way; their dependence upon the colony is increased by the creation of artificial wants; confidence is restored; intercourse [a good relationship] with the colony is established; industry, trade, and agriculture spring up; and every genuine convert from among them made to the Christian religion becomes the ally and friend of the colonial government.

Philip was always loyal to the colonial government, urging people in the LMS congregations to support it, and even to join its army, in the Frontier War with the Xhosa people in 1834. He even advocated a form of “separate development” for blacks and whites, because he believed it would help to protect black people from white settlers. He recognised that land was the key to race relations, especially in the Eastern Cape where Xhosa and settlers often clashed. He urged the colonial government to control the amount of land white settlers took from indigenous people. He

did not, however, object to the fact that they were taking it. [Bakare 1993:1]

Philip was a firm believer “in the typical nineteenth-century coupling of commerce and Christianity” (Saayman 1991: 40). He promoted the capitalism of his fellow Scot, the economist Adam Smith, as the way to draw indigenous people into the colony’s economy as consumers, and so improve their lot.

Philip firmly believed in the civilising and Christianising mission of the British empire by means of colonialismPhilip did not realise the strong interrelation between colonialism, capitalism and racism; in the nineteenth century they always came together, a kind of imperialistic “package deal” (Saayman 1991: 40,42).

So, although Philip’s commitment to the gospel led him to play an important role in exposing racism in the Cape Colony, it did not lead further, into seeing how racism was only one element in the potent forces of oppression and injustice of that time.

5. Mission in the UPCSA

In the UPCSA history, Presbyterians initially favoured the high quality of educational mission station, like Lovedale College and its method overflow into places like Gloag Ranch and the Zimbabwean schools. Missionaries controlled the mission station, leading new believers and pupils to Christ

and into education; from there the new Christians were meant to return and Christianise their communities, forming and running their own churches. Conversely, division in the sending Church of Scotland was carried over as a method change in missionary work, the mission station method losing priority to missionary church planting (as against modern church planting). This allowed missionaries direct influence in the church and community at local community level – which was much more useful in competition between different denominations or missionary societies.

The modern UPCSAs have practitioners from all parts of the mission spectrum. The current Church Planting priority across the denomination is essential for balance in an increasingly jargonised and politicised and globalised mission scenario, bringing both our history and sound mission theory together in a relevant way for the local, Presbytery and General Assembly level mission practice. This is meant to, and most often does, facilitate proper mission, evangelism and church growth practice where it counts in the denomination – implementation at local level, with oversight by the local Session or the Presbytery, and the General Assembly.

There are a few Presbyterian super-churches, but generally the ‘church growth’ school has been used to advance local congregation self-sufficiency in a positive way, and not to grow super-churches. It is also at local congregation level that evangelistic campaigning is used or linked to; as campaigners (of widely differing quality) go through our towns or suburbs, local congregations usually mount a congregational drive to take

friends and associate along in order that they might be met by Jesus Christ in the campaigns' ministry. Many UPCSA members have met Christ and joined the Church through this. Denominationally the UPCSA is also linked to ecumenical mission, 'sending and receiving' practice through membership of the Council for World Mission (CWM), to ecumenical 'super – "Council"ing' like the World Council of Churches (WCC), and to 'lobby groups' as the General Assembly by Committee or other structure allows them direct access and not local congregation or Presbytery access.

6. Conclusion

The Bible is the foundation of our understanding and practice of mission. It's incredible but factual: the *missio Dei* has been left in the hands of the church. The church has been given the colossal responsibility of continuing the mission of Jesus until it has been complete. Certainly there is no backup plan.

I have alluded in this chapter that the ministry and mission of Jesus was completely focused on proclaiming the good news of God's kingdom.

One of the purposes of the study of mission is to aid us to appraise how well, or how badly, we are serving God's mission in the world.

Mission then is not just the "saving souls" but also the transformation of the world in which we live.

CHAPTER 3: MISSIONAL CHURCH AND MISSIONAL POLITY

1. Introduction

In this chapter it is essential to provide an exploration of literature with regard to data for missiological thinking. My understanding of missional church and church polity will also be discussed. Missional is explicitly the word that many Christian authors seek to write about. Conversely, this chapter seeks to provide a framework that is being used currently by authors in the field of missiology and also provides biblical and theological backgrounds used by such authors to construct their missional arguments.

2. The Concept of Missional Church

It is worth noting that most recently, it has become gradually more difficult if not impossible to open a ministry book or attend a church conference and not be confronted by the word missional. At present, one and all desire to be missional. I am failing to think of a minister, let alone a congregation, who is pompously opposed to be missional. The current discussions on a missional church leave no room to reflect on other matters, other than being missional.

But one might wonder, what is the true implication of the word? Is it simply an updated classification for being purpose-driven or seeker-sensitive? Is missional an innovative, more established twist of the emerging church? This chapter aims to expose the origin and gist of the word, which might be getting buried under a pile of conjectures.

Roxburgh and Boren (2009:30) asserts that the words *mission* and *church* are, therefore, used together to define the church that attracts, worships, equips, and then sends. And of course the sending has the purpose of bringing back more people to the attractional event. Because of this, people conclude that being missional is not much different from what they have been doing. The majority of people attend church, and a few individuals participate in mission. They become confused and jump to the questions about these definitions, such as the following:

- Is *missional church* different from *missions*? If so, how is it different?
- Is *missional church* different from *evangelism*? In what way is it different?
- Is missional church some new fad like so many others that pass through the church?
- Do we really need a new set of words that no one understands?

The word *missional* was introduced in 1998 because the definitions of *mission* and *church* presented above are misleading and wrong. Adding

the *al* to the end of *mission*, however, creates a new meaning we don't immediately see or understand. The word invites us to stop, check our assumptions, and ask if there might be a different way of being a church.

Prof. Shenk, in his paper titled: *New Wineskins for New Wines: Toward a Post-Christendom Ecclesiology*, gives at least five things that characterise a missional church:

The missional church is intensely aware that its priority is to witness to the kingdom of God so that people are being liberated from the oppressive power of idols. The church is consciously discerning and naming the idols.

The church is deeply committed to the world but is not controlled by the world. In other words, the church knows that it has been placed in the world but never to be subservient to the world. The absence of this tension indicates that the church has made its peace with the world.

Mission is patterned after the example of Jesus the Messiah; that is, mission is cruciform. The vision of Isaiah 53 is being fulfilled as God's people serve and witness. The cross is central.

The missional church has a keen awareness of the eschaton. In Jesus Christ the kingdom has been inaugurated, but the people of God eagerly await the consummation of the kingdom.

Church structures will serve and support its mission to the world. Human cultures inevitably change over time. The church must stay abreast of its

changing cultural context, which will require the dismantling of archaic forms that impede missionary witness and the devising of new structures that support the mission.

A solid and strong approach to understanding missional is found in Stetzer (2008:10,14,19-20). He argues that missional is an important word because it doesn't describe what we do as Christ-followers; it describes who we are as Christ-followers... [sent] into the world for the sake of the kingdom...Our mission is not our mission at all. It's God's. So if we don't understand his purpose, we can do all things right and still miss the point. According to God's will, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to empower those he would be sending into the world...Our sending God sends the church – the body of Christ – as his missionary into the world... God doesn't limit himself to working only through the church. Though the church is God's plan for reaching the world, He isn't limited for us to build His kingdom on the earth... So what we're doing isn't "taking God to others" by any stretch. We're really simply pointing out to people the presence of God who is already among them.

Missional refers to a way of understanding theology as being inherently focused on God's purpose with humans and creation. God as our creator-redeemer-sanctifier is a purpose driven God and as such theology and the church should reflect it, it should be part of our identity. A stagnant or inward focused church dies because it loses its identity (Hendriks 2004:21).

Interestingly, Frost and Hirsch (2009:29-30) state evidently a comprehensive consideration of mission. God's mission in this world is his and his alone. The glory of God, not the church, is the ultimate goal of mission. Our role as the church, however, is a humble participation in his grand scheme – the Kingdom of God. They further argued that, it is one of our greatest mistakes to equate the church with the kingdom of God. The kingdom is much broader than the church – it is cosmic in scope.

Darrell L Guder (1998:4) in *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the church in North America* locates it pleasingly. "Mission is not just a program of the church. It defines the church as God's sent people. Either we are defined by mission, or we reduce the scope of the gospel and the mandate of the church. Thus our challenge is to move from church with mission to missional church."

As such Guder (1998:4) asserts that a faith community cannot really understand God in a personal way without participating in his missional praxis.

Hirsch one of the leading voices in the present discussion on the missional church, endows us with a concise definition of the all-pervading term. Hirsch (2006:285) asserts that, "A missional church is a church that defines itself, and organises its life around, its real purpose as an agent of God's mission to the world. In other words, it's the church's true and authentic organising principle for mission. When the church is in mission, it is the true church. The church itself is not only a product of that mission

but it is obligated and destined to extend it by whatever means possible. The mission of God flows directly through every believer and every community of faith that adheres to Jesus. To obstruct this is to block God's purposes in and through his people."

Keifert (2006:37) provides an original summary of a biblical and theological framework that reflects the logic and development of the original missional church conversation. This is God's mission not ours...For it is the reign of God that is near, not just the church. The reign of God is far more than the church, though of course the church continuously experiences the breaking in of the reign of God... In this New Missional Era, this time of the missional church, those congregations that are faithful, effective, and efficient will be part of transforming mission. They will be transformed by the mission – called, gathered, and centred in Word and sacrament, and sent into the mission of God in daily life.

As such Keifert develops the phases of transformation and renewal as discovering, experimenting, visioning for embodiment, learning and growing, and sharing and mentoring.

Roxburgh (2005:12) asserts that missional also expresses that God's mission is that which shapes and defines all that the church is and does, as opposed to expecting the church to be the ultimate self-help group for meeting our own needs and finding fulfilment in our individual lives.

Roxburgh and Boren (2009:31-33) begin by clarifying what a missional church understanding is not:

Missional church is not a label to describe churches that emphasize cross-cultural missions....

Missional church is not a label used to describe churches that are using outreach programs to be externally focused....

Missional church is not another label for church growth and church effectiveness....

Missional church is not a label for churches that are effective at evangelism....

Missional church is not a label to describe churches that have developed a clear mission statement with a vision and purpose for their existence....

Missional church is not a way of turning around ineffective and outdated church forms so that they can display relevance in the wider culture....

Missional church is not a label that points to a primitive or ancient way of being the church....

Missional church is not a label describing new formats of church that reach people who have no interest in traditional churches.

The co-authors Roxburgh and Boren (2009:37-39) proceed to structure their approach to an understanding of missional church, one that is best conceived of as a journey:

In the biblical imagination, dictionary definitions as we know them are not the norm.... The implication for missional conversations are clear. We have to become willing (like little children) to enter the strange world of the Bible....The thing about definitions is that we use them to provide clarity that, in turn, has the potential of giving us control over our world....

Scripture does not so much define reality as invite us onto journey in which we discover the world God is creatingIf we persist on this journey into the strange world of the Bible, it will form our imaginations in radically new ways; it will change how we see the world....

It's as though missional life is discovered out of a wide, wild river....It has been shaped by the confluence of three powerful currents we call *mystery*, *memory* and *mission*. Entering the missional waters is not about strategies or models; it is about working with the currents that shape our imagination of what God is doing in the world.

Niemandt (2012:1) asserts that a study in missional ecclesiology has emerged as one of the most significant trends in mission studies in the last number of years. Ecclesiology is a theological discipline that seeks to understand and define the church, and missional ecclesiology does this from a missional point of view where the Church is understood as a community of witness, called into being and equipped by God, and sent

into the world to testify to and participate in Christ's work. It is the discussion of what the church is called to be and to do – its nature, its purpose, its hopes, its structures and practices.

My appreciation of missional instigates with improving a missionary understanding of God. By his very nature God is a "sent one" who takes the initiative to redeem his creation. This principle is known as *missio Dei* (the mission of God). For the reason that we are the "sent" people of God, the church is the instrument of God's mission in the world. As things stand, many people see it the other way around. They believe mission is an instrument of the church; a means by which the church is developed. Although I habitually hear people declare that "the church has a mission," an accurate statement would be "the mission has a church."

Mission is derived from the very nature of God. As the Father sent the Son into the world and the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit into the world, so the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit send the church into the world. Mission is seen as the church's participation in the sending of God. Because mission is God's priority, it is not the church's initiative. The church is working with the sending God to bring God's love to the world. Bosch (1991:392) writes: "Mission has its origin in the heart of God. God is a fountain of sending love. This is the deepest source of mission. It is impossible to penetrate deeper still; there is mission because God loves people." John the apostle states that: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish

but have eternal life.” [John3:16]. The entire gospel comes to a focus in this verse. God’s love is not static or self centred; it reaches out and draws others in.

Guder (1998:4-5) connects our belief about God with our belief about church, he states that: we have learned to speak of God as a “missionary God.” Thus we have learned to understand the church as “sent people”. As the Father has sent me, so I send you” (John 20:21). This missional reorientation of our theology is the result of a broad biblical and theological awakening that has begun to hear the gospel in fresh ways. God redefines our understanding of Trinity ... This Trinitarian point of entry into our theology of the church necessarily shifts all the accents in our ecclesiology.

In the precedent years there has been a new emphasis on the truth that mission is not a primary activity of the church, but of God Himself. The mission with which God occupies himself includes the church. The *missio Dei* is the mission of God; it includes both church and the world and is an activity in which the church has the honour of taking part (Bosch 1991:391).

As such Flett (2010:36-37) argues that treatment of the “missionary God” focus on his “sending” (*missio*) nature: the Father sends his Son, the Father and the Son sends the Spirit. That is, the phrase “God is a missionary God” reduces to “God is a sending God.” He further argues that, only as God uses the church as an instrument of his own missionary

activity can the church's act be properly considered mission. A focus on "sending" both critically distances the human act from alternate authorities and affords it an inviolate authority.

Bosch (1991:389) asserts that, Karl Barth was one of the first theologians to articulate mission as an activity of God himself, not in the context of ecclesiology or soteriology, but in the context of the doctrine of the Trinity.

The relationship between *missio Dei* and *missio ecclesiae* is to be one of intimacy. The nearest human analogy is that of children in the closest possible relationship of confidence, reliance and safety with their parents. The church is itself an object of the *missio Dei*.

The Father sent the Son; the Father and Son sent the Holy Spirit, and the Father, Son and Holy Spirit sent the church, and they still send it, into the world. The Church as a part of the Catholic Church has the honour of taking part in this mission of God. The church changes from the one who sends into the one who is sent. Bosch (1991:372) asserts that, these perspectives have implications for our understanding of church's catholicity. Without mission, the church cannot be called catholic. The church's apostolicity is more than a mere aspect of, or even the result of being a church, but also the condition of it. The mission itself is as comprehensive as the involvement of the triune God with his world. Indeed it can be no different. The church is not occupied with its own idea of mission. The church partakes in God's mission. This participation brings

the total involvement of Christ with the world to the fore. It is therefore God's mission that brought the church into being. To put it another way: the church exists because God is and has always been saving His world. The church that has come into being through these acts of God's salvation now has the honour of being involved in and taking part in God's ongoing acts of saving deliverance with His church and with His world.

Missio Dei, as I comprehend it, means that God is reaching out to the world, "not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" [2 Peter 3:9], although God could have used other methods to proclaim the message of salvation to the world. He chose to use the church. God needs the church as instrument of mission, not because he is incapable of reaching the people in other ways, but because he chose to use the church. And for this motive, the church is not unnecessary in mission. The church is the pivotal part of God's plan to reach the world. And where the church refuses to take up this task, God's work is being hindered.

Newbigin (1995:56) argues that *missio Dei* is made known in God's world via multiple methods at the same time: proclamation of the Word, presence of God, and provenience of the Spirit. Bosch (1991:370) argues that mission is not something that the church does but *missio Dei* institutes *missio Ecclesiae*. There is church because there is mission not vice versa. Bosch (1991:372) further argues that, it has become impossible to talk about church without at the same time talking about

mission. The church must not therefore suppose its role is identical to the *missio Dei*; the church is participating in the mission of God. The church's mission is a compartment of a generously proportioned whole mission. That is, it is part of God's mission to the world and not the entirety of God's work in the world. Hirsch (2006: 142) asserts that Christology determines missiology, and missiology determine ecclesiology. It is Jesus who determines the church's mission in the world, and therefore our sense of purpose and mission comes from being sent by him into the world. The church is a dynamic cultural expression of the people of God in any given place. Worship style, social dynamics, liturgical expressions must result from the process of contextualising the gospel in any given culture. Church must follow mission. I value his view greatly but I prefer the more Trinitarian approach of Bosch and others. Mission ought to be understood in the context of the doctrine of the Trinity since it is an activity of God himself.

It is my submission that mission is the motive for the existence of the Church and for that reason to separate the two is to fall short of any comprehension. Wright (2010:73) asserts that, all this talk of 'missional church' sounds to me like talking about a 'female women'. If it's not missional, it's not church. To use the words of Van Engen (1991:27):

If we are to build missionary congregations in the world we must first carefully consider the relationship between the Church and mission. The Church of Jesus Christ may find its fullest expression

in relation to the world from within the Kingdom of God only if it lives out its nature as a missionary people.

That reflects the Trinitarian nature of God, as Newbigin (1995:27-28) asserts that, the ordinary Christian in the Western world who hears or reads the word 'God' does not immediately and inevitably think of the Triune Being – Father, Son, and Spirit... The working concept of God for most ordinary Christians is – if one may venture a bold guess – shaped more by the combination of Greek philosophy and Islamic theology that was powerfully injected into the thought of Christendom at the beginning of the High Middle Ages than by the thought of the fathers of the first four centuries.

In Guder's frame of inquiry (1998:82), which seeks to develop missional ecclesiology, asserts that, what is not yet fully developed in these fresh approaches to trinitarian doctrines is the missional implication for ecclesiology. What does it mean that the church bears the stamp of the 'eternal community' that God is and reflects the eternal mutual 'sending' that characterises that divine communion?.

A missional church ought to appreciate and value that it is God's sent people. Consequently, my appreciative and definition of a missional church is: A church that is rooted on an understanding that by its nature is a congregation of God's sent people, authorised to carry on with *missio Dei* in relation to the Sovereignty and Kingdom of God. The missional church will not lose sight of the fact that mission does not belong to the

church. In terms of Romans 12:1-2, there can be no renewal by the transformation of our minds until we are willing to recognise the urgent necessity that we be no longer conformed to this world.

A missional church is one that has mission as its core with its uniqueness and activity. The most important focal point of a missional church is far beyond itself; its life and ardour goes outward to the world that God loves, not inward to the fellowship and institution that we treasure so much.

The Anglican Consultative Council (2004:81-82) has identified the following five values for missional churches:

- A missional church is focused on God the Trinity.
- A missional church is incarnational.
- A missional church is transformational.
- A missional church makes disciples.
- A missional church is relational.

The missional church models itself after Jesus' mission to restore the poor, the unclean, and the wounded to the community of God's people.

1Corinthians 11: 23-26 (Narrative of the Institute) gives the base of being a missional church (Calling/ Mission, Celebration/Remembrance, Suffering/Struggles and Sent out):

"He took.....": Calling

"He gave thanks....": Celebration

"He Broke.....": Suffering/ Struggles

“He gave...”: Sent out

This is the core characteristics of a missional church: being, not just doing, mission. Having said that, the question is: How do we intend to live it out?

Roxburgh and Boren (2009:34) conclude by articulating that in many cases *missional* is misunderstood to be simply a new language to describe things church leaders have already been saying and the church has been doing for quite a while. This makes people suspicious of missional language, causing them to assume it’s just another trendy word. So even with clear and precise definitions, we are still seeing missional conversation misused and turned into new language for existing forms of church. This can result in people investing lots of energy into missional models only to be disappointed not too far down the road because they have been taken on a path that holds little promise of joining with the Spirit who makes all things new.

3. MISSIONAL POLITY

Hooker, in his 2009 online report “What Is Missional Ecclesiology” gives the following points about what missional polity might look like:

A missional polity starts by understanding that the mission of the Church is grounded in God’s self sending into the world. The affirmation that God

enters the world to redeem and transform the world is the starting point for thinking about the Church. It should be the first word said in a missional polity.

A missional polity clarifies that the calling of the Church is to witness to and to participate in the work of Jesus Christ in the world. The Church follows Jesus Christ into the world. Wherever Christ is, there is the Church. The Church is not the purveyor of salvation, only God saves. But the Church is the community of people called and set apart by God's grace to live out before the world the values of that new reality. A missional polity should make that clear.

A missional polity locates the congregation, not the individual believer, as the basic form of the Church. Just as the being of the Triune God is communal in nature, with the Father, Son and Spirit distinct yet bound forever as one, so also is the basic nature of Christian life communal. A missional polity recognises this by speaking of the congregation as the basic form of the Church, the Church engaged in ministry in its particular context.

In the congregation believers are bound together in covenant relations and the ministry of individual believers is nourished, guided and given meaning. Just as Jesus sent the Spirit upon the community of his disciples to equip them with the gifts necessary to be his witnesses (Acts 1:8), so the Spirit continues to bestow on the congregation the gifts necessary for the ministry of witness. Individual believers are called in their Baptism to

share in these gifts, and through the gifts of the Spirit to the Church they are sustained in their individual ministries.

A missional polity defines the ministry of the councils of the Church as shaped around the calling of the Church. The definition of the work of Councils, Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods and the General Assembly reflects the central calling of the Church as a whole: that the Church is sent into the world to bear witness to the new reality God is creating.

The mutual interconnection of the Church through its Councils is a sign of the unity of the Church, bound together for the work of witness. The Church bears its witness through its core ministries, that of the proclamation of the Word, administration of the sacraments and building of the congregations, as Presbyteries nurture, guide and govern the work of Sessions and as Synods and the General Assembly support and govern the work of Presbyteries, they do so under the rubric of these essential tasks.

A missional polity provides flexibility for mission. The contexts into which Congregations and Councils are sent differ. Such differences mean that a “one size fits all” approach to governance and mission structure is no longer workable if, indeed, it ever was. Rather, the various parts of the Church need flexibility to accomplish the mission of becoming effective witness and participating in the work of Christ in their context.

A missional polity must identify the essential functions and define the standards of the Church, but it must also provide maximum flexibility to

fulfil those functions within the limits imposed by the standards. So, for instance, a missional polity might define the basic educational, behavioural and competence standards for those seeking ordination to the ministry of the teaching Elder, but permit Presbyteries to devise their own process for determining whether those standards have been satisfactorily met by a given candidate.

A missional polity encourages accountability on the part of its covenanted partners to one another. A missional polity understands the life of the Church as a covenanted life, wherein members live in relationship with one another under the architecture of the polity. Members of the covenant are accountable to one another, so that change and adjustment in communal life are negotiated under the broad guidance of the covenant agreements of the polity.

Accountability and trust go hand in hand. We trust one another within the networks of relationships in which we are also accountable to one another. Only in the context of such mutually accountable relationships will trust among the covenanted partners flourish. Rather than using the rules as a club to enforce compliance, a missional polity calls the Church toward deeper relationship with one another and greater openness to the world, grounded in our common commitment to being a witness to Christ.

The German theologian Moltmann, in his book, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, asserts that theology has changed and further challenged the Western churches to discover that:

.....is not that the church 'has' a mission, but the very reverse: that the mission of Christ creates its own church. Mission does not come from the church; it is from mission and in the light of mission that the church has to be understood. (Moltmann 1993:10)

He ends this segment of his argument by saying:

Modern Catholic and Protestant missional theology is ... right when it talks about the *missio Dei*, a movement from God in which the church has its origin and arrives at its own movement, but which goes beyond the church, finding its goal in the consummation of all creation in God. It follows from this that the church understands its world-wide mission in the Trinitarian history of God's dealings with the world. With all its activities and suffering, it is an element in the history of the kingdom of God. The real point is not to spread the church but to spread the kingdom. (Moltmann 1993:11)

Guder (1998:11-12), described missional ecclesiology in five adjectives: biblical, historical, contextual, eschatological, and practicable. Missional polity should indeed be branded by identical description.

- a) It should be biblical, meaning there should be explicit biblical foundations for what we believe about the church.
- b) It should be historical; meaning that, polity must acknowledge the fact that we do not come to task for being the church *de nova*, but rather as the latest in a long tradition of Christians who have struggled with what it means to be faithful and from whose struggles we can learn.

- c) It should be contextual; meaning, polity must recognise that the church is not an abstraction, but exists in particular incarnations and in specific settings, and it must provide the flexibility to enable the church to adapt the proclamation of the gospel to those settings.
- d) It should be eschatological; meaning, polity must have at its core the conviction that the church is moving towards God's promised future and should bear witness to that future in all it does.
- e) And it should be practicable; meaning, what polity envisions can be put into regular and effective practice by the church.

Biblical

The foundation of Presbyterian polity begins with a declaration of the *missio Dei* by depiction from the story of the Bible a description of the threefold work of the triune God. UPCSA Manual of Faith and Order, Chapter 2 pg.7 para 5.3 – God is one and the same being, yet threefold: one in three and three in one. The one indivisible God who said, 'I am who I am,' has always existed and will always exist in three distinct and different but inseparable ways of being, which we call Persons. Each is wholly and fully God, the same in majesty, glory and power, but distinguished by a different relation to the others. They exist externally with, for, and in one another; yet all retain the identities in personal relationship with one another. They constitute a living communion of

mutual self-giving, so that God's being is essentially relational and there is no solitude or self-centredness in the eternal Trinity; instead holy love is, and always has been, at the very heart of the Godhead. The statement makes reference to the two most important sources of the content of our faith: the biblical witness and the received tradition captured in the confession of faith of the church. The statement is a declaration that the life of the church is grounded in the call to bear witness that God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – has been, is, and will be engaged in creating, forgiving, liberating, and calling people to live faithfully.

Seeing that God is engaged in this work, so the church is fashioned by it and called to participate in it. The biblical call of the church is to be the body of Christ (Romans 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:27) and the mark for the world that God is at work to transform the said world. The biblical calling of the church is most clearly in evidence whenever the church commits itself to be a community where sin is forgiven, reconciliation is accomplished, and the dividing walls of enmity are torn down (John 20:23, 2 Cor. 5: 16-21 and Eph. 2:14).

Historical

Polity avows with Christians of earliest times the classical four "marks" of the church's identity from the Nicene Creed – the church is "one, holy, catholic and apostolic" However, the church does not comprehend these descriptions as statements true of the church as a human institution;

indeed, the history and condition of the Christian Church in the world is anything but unified, holy, and catholic. Seeing that the calling of the church is grounded in the apostolicity or “sent-ness” of the it, the polity then reflects first on the church’s apostolicity, and then briefly on the remaining Nicene marks in reverse order and as expressions of apostolicity. As it lives out its mission in the world into which God has sent it, the church does three mostly defined tasks common to churches of the Reformed tradition: preaching the Word, administering the Sacraments, and living a disciplined life together. The truth and power of witness is based on unique and particular events that have universal importance as history continues.

Contextual

Polity recognises that the social, political, economic, and geographical contexts in which congregations and church council carry on ministry are not identical. No single set of practices and structure will suit all purposes. Having said that the unified witness to Jesus Christ necessitates a fundamental uniformity of structure and function for all the parts of the church. The polity described then seeks to live within this contextual tension by mandating the functions of the various parts of the church, while leaving to the discretion of the church councils the structures by which those functions are accomplished. As a result, the form of government does not mention a Ministry Committee or a General

Assembly Council as required parts of the church's structure. This does not imply that a Presbytery for instance may not create a Ministry Committee, or that the General Assembly will not have a council; relatively, it implies that such structures are discretionary, and the needs that contribute to their formation may differ according to time and place. What is vital is the mandate to the church at every level to demonstrate to the world the new reality of God and the love and justice of Jesus Christ.

Eschatological

Eschatology is not per se and solely about the end of the world. It is about the future breaking in today with an alternative order known as the reign of God. Therefore polity needs to drive the church not to look backwards into its past but anticipates eagerly the future God is building. Fundamental to the calling of the church is the commitment that the church is called to be "Christian faith looks beyond the present to the future. To live by faith in the crucified and risen Christ means to hope in his coming and universal rule." (The Confession of faith of UPCSA 30.1). This call does not mean that the church represents that new reality, as though the new reality God is bringing into being in Jesus Christ were somehow identical with the church. It simply means that the calling of the church is to bear steady and powerful witness to the coming of God into the world. General Assembly, Presbyteries and Sessions are therefore

charged to oversee and lead the ministry of the church. John Calvin regarded meditation on the future life as an essential part of Christian life. Christians are travellers and foreigners in this world and should be eager to enter heaven. At death, Christians go to be with God, although they will share fully in the glory of God only after the Last Judgement. The faithful, when they die, rest and wait joyfully for the fulfilment of their promised glory. The unredeemed await judgement in hell. The Last Judgement will be for all of us, and immediately before it, all will be raised: the faithful for heaven and the unredeemed for punishment. The missionary message is that the kingdom of God is near, breaking in, present and active in Jesus Christ, and yet to come in all its fullness. It is crucial for mission that the reality of the kingdom becomes tangible in the church, not that the church is the kingdom, but that the church demonstrates the nearness of the kingdom, the first fruits of its coming.

Practicable

Polity begins with the definition of the church, the membership of the church, the sacraments and the form of Government (Chapter 1). It is then followed by a chapter on The Faith of the Church (Chapter 2). It then defines the congregation and the meaning of membership (Chapter 6). It then is followed by the chapters which focus on the work of the various bodies charged with the care and governance of the church, called councils of the church: The Session, The Presbytery, The Synod and

General Assembly (Chapter 7, 10, 11 & 12 respectively). It is then followed by a chapter on Ministry (Chapter 16) and on Discipline (Chapter 18).

Structure adopted by the church should recognise that the relationships are the witness. Van Gelder (2000:157) asserts that in dealing with matters of the church structure, processes, and leadership, the key is to start by considering the nature of the church, proceed to understanding the ministry of the church, and then move to the development of organisation in the church.

Guder (2000:185) asserts that there is no continuation of the Christian movement within history without institutional forms and patterns. The church must be developed from deep philosophical and theological convictions which will respond to ever-changing culture scenes in which missional church must minister.

4. CONCLUSION

Having outlined the concept of the missional church, I concur with van Van Gelder and Zscheile (2011:149) as they assert that there is no model for what a missional church looks like. Rather, missional church needs to be defined by the church's dynamic participation in the Triune God's movement in the world. Missional church is a habit of mind and heart, a

posture of openness and discernment, and a faithful attentiveness both to the Spirit's presence and to the world that God so loves.

When considering all the sources read on "missional", I have come to a conclusion that, to be missional does not engage changing structures and programmes or reorganising the roles of leadership. It begins by helping the congregation to listen in fresh ways to one another and to the Scriptures (dwelling on the Word) before inviting them to listen to what is happening among people of the neighbourhoods where they live. It engages learning to ask different questions. Rather than asking, "How do we attract people to what we are doing?" it would ask, "What is God up to in this neighbourhood, and how do we need to change in order to engage the people who no longer consider church a part of their lives?" Indeed, this is a deep-seated shift in focus; it is a different way of thinking about being the church in a community.

CHAPTER 4: UPCSА MISSIONAL IDENTITY

1. Introduction

This chapter provides a missional identity of UPCSА. In the preceding chapter much detail was paid on the concept of missional church and polity. The current chapter seeks to evaluate the UPCSА on the basis of the concept of missional church.

According to the UPCSА, the Church is called into being by the will of God, who gathers all people into a fellowship in Christ, and is created and sustained by the power of the Holy Spirit. Its purpose and function is to bear witness to the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ to all who do not yet believe in him, to build up faith, hope and love those who already believe, and to proclaim his sovereignty over the world so that his rule may be extended. The Church is holy because it is of God, and not of man's creation. It is catholic in that God in his love calls all people to share in its membership. It is apostolic in that it remains faithful to the apostolic teaching.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the King and Head of the Church. Under his authority, and with the Holy Scriptures as its supreme rule, its laws are framed and administered and its functions exercised with the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa is a branch of the holy Catholic Church, and maintains the liberty of

all members of the holy Catholic Church to worship as and where their conscience directs (<http://www.upcsa.org.za>).

2. Formation of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa.

The Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa (UPCSA) was formed through the union of The Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa (PCSA) and The Reformed Presbyterian Church in South Africa (RPC). The origins of these two churches date back to the 19th century when Britain took over the Cape Colony. The PCSA characteristically, was a “settler” or colonial church made up of a nucleus of soldiers and settlers who arrived at least since 1820 who professed Presbyterianism as their faith. On the other hand, the RPCSA was a mission church, with its roots or beginnings associated with the famous Lovedale Institution in Alice in the present Eastern Cape Province. These two divergent origins of the PCSA and the RPCSA obviously gave the two churches even though they both originate from Scotland distinct characteristics on the South African soil. The PCSA was preponderantly white and the RPCSA was preponderantly black and indigenous.

To be precise, the efforts to bring the two churches into one church i.e. one Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa began around the 1890s. In 1897, when the PCSA declared itself as a Church independent of the

mother church in Scotland, the missionary church did not join. Rather in 1923, congregations that were formed out of the missions were instituted as the Bantu Presbyterian Church which later became the RPCSA I have already introduced as one of the two churches that came into union to form the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa. As early as the 1800's racial conflict in South Africa had become the fulcrum of church division and could not be an exception in the failure of the efforts that were made to bring the two Presbyterian churches together.

In the 1950s union talks began once more but after almost fifteen years – the late sixties to early seventies, it became clear that the two churches were not as yet ready to come to union mainly due to social factors chief among them, racism that had torn our society apart. The link of the ultimate success of union to the dawn of democracy in South Africa is symbolic and some deeper work in this regard is needed. In 1999, the PCSA and the RPCSA finally came together and united to form the present Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa. The Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa is a multinational, multiracial and multilingual Church formed and constituted on **26th September 1999**, at Dower College of Education in Port Elizabeth.

Perception about union

Clearly the transition to **democracy** gave momentum to the two churches. In fact, democracy in South Africa is victory over racism and

the process of building and reconstruction was ushered in by democracy. Certainly all of us rejoice at this achievement as our hopes are rekindled by this landmark achievement.

To some large extent, the history of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa is a microcosm of the macrocosmic socio-political challenges that faces South Africa today. Equally important will be the striking irony about the “lateness” of the Church in doing what is right namely, uniting sections of our society once fragmented by the racist political scenario. Our union came into existence at least five years into our democracy. Does this become a bad premonition for the work of building that lies ahead of us in the UPCSA that it will not run faster than the pragmatic political programmes we have now witnessed in our South Africa? The place of South Africa in Southern Africa and the trans-nationality of our denomination is equally a vital point that needs a quick response, what does our trans-national character suggest to us in the long run?

One cannot aid but ask these questions, as the process of union has not been a smooth navigation. A deeper theological fact is the inextricable connection between processes that take place in the Church and those that take place in society if we consider the dawn of democracy in South Africa as a factor that gave momentum to the union of the two Churches. Our openness beyond our borders as a transnational Church could be both a challenge and an opportunity.

Let me list some of the perceptions that were looming around this youthful achievement of our union:

The two churches that came into union are not materially, equally endowed. A once largely black Church (RPCSA) is poorer than a once largely white Church (PCSA).

- Related to this point, there are those who feel that they have simply been absorbed into union and they have lost sense of pride and history of 75 years of existence. The extremes in this line of thinking are manifest in murmurings and yearning to revert “back home”. This thinking must be challenged as false. Union is a product of agreement and an ethical response to the demands of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There will be no theological justification for either church to remain apart more so that they have on their own started a process of union which is certainly good in the eyes of our Lord.
- Related to the same point there is a different perception also that some have simply come into this union to take away the wealth that was accrued through hard work by others. Union was therefore for wrong motives as it became an escape from virtual collapse of the other section of the Church before it came to union. This view might be saying “our peace is being disturbed,” “we now have to carry a burden that suddenly comes from nowhere.” Well to this we should simply

remember that in South Africa some were made poor while others were made to be rich. There is no shame in poverty but perhaps poverty is a blessing to the rich. Nothing is more precious than a human being in the eyes of the Lord.

I have used the word **perception** advisedly in this section. Perception can be real for other people this is the motive why we need to deal with them.

The document titled, Basis of Union, accepted by both churches, assert that the Churches proposing to unite do so in the belief that it is God's will for them: that this union of Churches holding the Christian Faith and practising the Presbyterian Order in Southern Africa will be a strengthening of their witness to the Word of God and also a material contribution to the cause of wider Church union in Africa and in the world.

a. Mission Statement (as cited in their website:
<http://www.upcsa.org.za>)

The Mission of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa is to:

1. **Bear Witness** to the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ to all who do not now believe in Him;
2. **Build Up** the believers in faith, hope and love through the ministry of the Holy Spirit;

3. **Be Faithful** through our teaching and practice in proclaiming the sovereign rule of God in all social, economic, political and ecological relationships.

b. Denominational Priorities

1. In **bearing witness** to this saving Gospel, our current priorities are:
 - a) The Development of youth and children's ministries;
 - b) Training in evangelism

2. In **building up** believers, our current priorities are:
 - a) Ministerial training;
 - b) Maintenance of ministry;
 - c) Education from early childhood development of tertiary;
 - d) Lay and Elder training programmes;
 - e) Training in stewardship and administration;
 - f) Discipleship training through in-depth Biblical teaching and its application to personal and corporate spiritual growth in one's relationship with God and One's neighbour.

3. In **being faithful** in proclaiming His sovereign rule, our current priorities are:

- a) Building bridges of reconciliation across races and cultures;
- b) Skills development and uplifting of women;
- c) HIV/AIDS education, care and counselling;
- d) Addressing social needs e.g. unemployment, homelessness and abuse.

c. Vision Statement

Its vision statement, the UPCSA asserts that it is a church which is One:

- in obedience to its Sovereign Lord
- in celebrating its living heritage as a Reformed Church in Southern Africa
- in celebrating its cultural diversity
- in addressing injustices and poverty in church and society
- in providing a model of reconciliation

d. The Great Ends of the Church.

Why do we have a church? It may be that we don't ask that question enough. It's not that I question the existence of the institution, but it's worth remembering why the church was called into existence. The church believes the purposes or "great ends" of the Church are:

- the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind;

- the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God;
- the maintenance of divine worship;
- the preservation of the truth;
- the promotion of social righteousness; and
- the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

Every congregation would be wise to regularly consider all the actions it takes from worship through Sunday school classes to advertising and make sure those actions fit into the Great Ends of the Church.

We need to comprehend that the purpose of the church is to be

- an instrument for preaching the Gospel;
- a vehicle for equipping Christians for service and sanctification.

Like Martin Luther, John Calvin distinguishes between the visible and the invisible Church.

- The invisible Church consists of all the elect, living or dead, and is the perfect body of Christ.
- The visible Church is the local parish, the perfect body of Christ, with Christians and non-Christians in the fellowship.

The true Church is therefore characterised by:

- the Word of God 'purely preached and listened to;
- the Sacraments rightly administered;
- discipleship.

The UPCSA to a certain extent has realised its denominational priorities through its level of contribution and involvement in the social order. I, conversely, argue that it has not done any convincing fair dealing to what it stands for. It is my assessment and submission that it has not adequately addressed inequalities and poverty in the church and has not provided a model of racial reconciliation and that one of a missional church. It is worth mentioning that it has conversely responded to situations that have surfaced as a result of such inequalities, racial discrimination and poverty. It is also gearing towards becoming missional.

Although the church emerges only at Pentecost, its roots can be traced to the calling of the people of God in the Old Testament. The basic pattern is set in Genesis 12:1-3, when God enters into covenant with Abraham and his descendants. The Abrahamic covenant has been called the original Great Commission.

Gibbs (2005:78) asserts that the church must re-establish the priority of the Great Commission. It is the Lord's mandate that defines the church as people who follow Christ in every area of life with a local and global vision for Christ's reign on earth. It also drives the church to turn from an inward focus that invites the world to come enjoy its benefits to a church that disperses and infiltrates every power centre and every segment of culture.

The Great Commission is given by the highest authority in the universe, and it is binding for all disciples for all time. To go into the world and make disciples of all nations is the most exciting, most necessary task in the world. The church must be found faithful in advancing the frontiers of mission for the honour and glory of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Having looked at the Papers of the General Assembly from 2002-2010, I have noted that the list of contents which reflect what mostly been the areas of discussion to be the same, varying from annual reports and contributions in those matters. Most of the matters discussed have more to do with the life and running of the UPCSA i.e. ministry, the structures, offices and policy documents.

When churches unite they tend to spend most of their time on getting the union to work. I have seen this in my church, the UPCSA. Now that in itself is not a wrong focus. If we are to present a united witness to the world it is of course imperative that we first get our own house in order. However, this cannot, and must not, be the sum total of our church's mission: if this is the case, then we have lost the purpose of union. The problem is that we often lose the purpose as we concentrate on the problems faced in making the union work. Unfortunately, in the process of making union work our focus changes from mission to maintenance.

Some of the reasons that prevent church in mission have nothing to do with mission in the first place. They are usually related to issues of: 1)

power and personalities: people with influence can either encourage or discourage the union; 2) preservation of certain things from the past: for example, the women's and men's organizations cannot reach consensus on issues of the uniform to be worn; 3) provisions and sustenance of the clergy that is through pensions stipends and medical aid; 4) practises and procedures — cases of divorce, assessments, the use of the church manual, and so on; 5) politics — a politically divided church is sensitive to being "politically correct", sometimes at the expense of genuine Christian spirituality.

The question is: Who ought to be the beneficiaries of union? Is it the partner churches? Is it the new denomination? Is it individuals (the clergy)? Often the focus is on these things.

The clergy are afraid about provisions for such matters as pensions, medical aid and other pragmatic concerns. While these may be very necessary things, they are not the mission of the church. They are not focused on kingdom ideals, yet we seek to give them value beyond their level of deserving. This poses the question yet again: Who should be the real beneficiaries of union?

The answer to this question is not difficult to find in my view. Jesus' prayer in John 17 sheds light on this question. The real beneficiary should be God: "It is to the Father's glory that we be one." It is in response to this that Moltmann states: "The church's final word is not 'church' but the

glory of the Father and the Son in the Spirit of liberty.”[Moltmann 1977: 19] Another beneficiary should be the world: “May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me” (cf. John 17:23). We gather from this that mission is the comprehensive term for all the conceivable ways in which people may cooperate with God in respect of this world. Barth puts it more clearly: “The church is the community for the world.” The church exists not for itself but for its Lord and for others, in the sense that its mission is to be the visible presence of God's love in a hurting and sin-sick world. Mission is summed up in the church's identity: Who are we, and for what are we here?

For me that's the problem with the church: it does not know whose it is, and what it is called to be. Our identity is in *Christ*. Perhaps we are too focused on what we are supposed to *do* rather than on what we are called to *be*. We are called to be a unity. Our unity is centred on what Christ has called us to be, for him, in the world. The church, then, is challenged not so much to provide a unity but to be a unity in a world divided by colour, creed, race, culture and other factors. It does this as it seeks to be more Christ-like; and when it seeks this, it lives not in competition but in contradiction to the world and to worldly values. How the church needs to learn this today!

UPCSA, it seems, has failed to foster mission because it has tended to

focus on one aspect of their mission —namely, a mission of unity. UPCSA needs to return to its source, to appreciate fully and to implement its original focus on the kingdom ideals. Our problem is that while we tend to think kingdom, we often act church. The result is that we become more ecclesiocentric (wanting to protect our vested interests in the church), rather than being kingdom oriented (praying that God’s will, and not ours, be done).

As UPCSA, we have so much more to offer towards effective Christian mission: (1) we embrace great diversity and seek human community; (2) we have combined resources; (3) we offer a united witness in a divided world; (4) we can show that union works and that the biblical call for church unity is obtainable; (5) we can encourage other churches to seek union; and (6) we can offer a witness to people of other faiths, who usually question the fragmentation of denominationalism. But the question is: Are we succeeding in using our strengths? It is my view that we are not, because we are failing to be a united witness in the world. We need to come back to a *theologia crucis*, a theology of the cross of Christ. We need to learn afresh what it means to die to self so that Christ may live. Only when we seek that life as a church will we have true church in mission; and only then can we have real church mission. Somehow, using all our clever methods, we continue to define and ensure the outcome of our endeavours. But only through the pain of letting go can there be resurrection.

In my view, much effort has been made to “make the union work” and mission agenda has suffered greatly. In the process, the UPCSA has lost credibility as well as its focus on the calling of Christ. My conviction is that we now have to change focus. For the past eight years focus was on creating and building the structures of the UPCSA. We might have been building “shacks” too. I have argued elsewhere that had it been otherwise, this union would have not taken place given the history of these churches.

In fact, those of us who have had the first experience of “homelessness” by actually living in and building shacks know that every space matters no matter how small. There is always urgency in identifying a spot and take it! This is the craft of building *imikhukhu* (shacks) otherwise the same space will be nowhere to be found within a twinkle of an eye! I am using this image to show how fast we had to take the space that God afforded us in creating this new Church and how fast we should carve out a home within this space and turn the dross of the ghetto into home! Our focus then is to build a home: people and not structures after this eight-year period of structure creation.

Moving beyond union negotiations implies a common vision spelt out in our church Vision Statement. The implementation of that vision is through a three-pronged Mission Strategy of Evangelism, Stewardship and

HIV/AIDS. I am afraid time is against us. This leads me to the conclusion that, the church is still on a maintenance mode.

As an act of renewal our union is a clarion call for a missional church. It is a call for a Church that departs from modes of maintenance to mission. The renaissance prompted by union can only be feasible in our unity in mission. I take my cue from Kritzinger (2002:18) who says,

The understanding of "mission" in the paper is not confined to projects involving (overseas) travel or directed exclusively at "saving souls" or "planting churches." I understand Christian mission to be an inclusive complex of activities aimed at the anticipation and provisional realization of God's reign in history. It includes evangelism but much wider. Mission is the "cutting edge" of the Christian movement, embodying a way of life that refuses to accept the status quo and keeps on trying to change it, being pushed and pulled by the Spirit of God towards the final dawning of God's reign.

The enfeeblement of our union vision. I defining "enfeeblement" I think that this bad spirit finds expression in this scenario of "dichotomies":

"I do not agree with you." And the response is,

"Similarly, I do not agree with you."

Now the question we must ask is who has the last word? If I do not agree and you do not agree, who must have the last word? How we have

responded to this question in the actions and inter-subjective relations we have forged has determined our success or failure in becoming a missional transformative agents.

The second issue is the Western ideas of ministry training that I am challenging:

- a) The professionalization of ministry (which separates 'clergy' and 'laity');
- b) The cognitive (as opposed to practical) focus;
- c) The one minister per congregation; and
- d) The 'schooling' model which separates theory from praxis.

The great African scholar John Mbiti tells the following anecdote about the return of an African theology graduate to Africa after many years of study in Europe:

He learned Germany, Greek, French, Latin and Hebrew, in addition to English, as one part of the requirements for his degree. The other part, the dissertation, he wrote on some obscure theologian of the Middle Ages. Finally, he got what he wanted: A doctorate in Theology.... He was anxious to reach home as soon as possible, so he flew, he was glad to pay excess baggage, which, after all, consisted only of the Bible in the various languages he had learned, plus Bultmann, Barth, Bonhoeffer, Bruner, Buber, Cone, Kung, Moltmann, Niebuhr and Tillich. Mbiti (1974:7)

At home, relatives, neighbours, old friends, dancers, musicians, drums, dogs, cats, all gathered to welcome him back. People bear with him patiently as he struggles to speak his own home language, as occasionally he seeks the help of an interpreter from English.

Suddenly there is a shriek. Someone has fallen on to the ground. It is his older sister. He rushes to her. People make room for him, and watch him. 'Let's take her to a hospital,' he calls urgently. They are stunned. He becomes quiet. They all look at him bending over her. Why does not somebody respond to his advice? Finally a schoolboy says: 'Doctor, the nearest hospital is 100 kilometres away, and there are few buses that go there.' Someone else says, 'She is possessed. Hospitals won't cure her!' The chief says to him, 'You have been studying theology overseas for ten years. Now help your sister. She is troubled by the spirit of her aunt.'

He looks around. Slowly he goes to get Bultmann and reads again about spirit possession in the New Testament. Of course he gets his answer: Bultmann has demythologized it (that is, according to Bultmann such things do not exist in reality). He insists that his sister is not possessed. The people shouts back, 'Help your sister; she is possessed!' He shout back, 'But Bultmann has demythologized demon possession' (it does not exist).

This story reflects the basic stance of the African Christian church, its ministers and laity. African Christians theology, and African Christian healing and counselling. On a topic such as Christian healing, we have to

speak from the inside, speaking to meet real needs in our churches, if we are to be relevant to our own situations.

We need to allow this anecdote to speak to us. If we want to talk about Christian healing and counselling, we have to practise such healing counselling ministries in our own context. We have to know who we are! In the story, our African student has only books by European theologians such as Bultmann, Tillich and Moltmann. Sadly, he doesn't have a single book by an African theologian and only one by an African-American theologian, James Cone. These books are of no aid when an ancestral spirit is believed to have struck down the sister of the African theologian. How can he be of aid to her? How can he be an effective pastor to her? How can he carry out his pastoral healing ministry? Bultmann offers no answers. Other Western theologians would advise him to cast out the spirit. But in the African context, where the spirit of the dead are believed to visit the living, they are not meant to be cast out; they are meant to be spoken to, reasoned with and bargained with. The theology of Bultmann cannot accommodate this. Bultmann encourages the African theologians to deny the African reality that is staring him in the face. But Jesus spoke with demons, reasoned with and 'bargained' with them [Luke 8:30-32]. Yet he did not treat them as equals, but as beings that were subject to him. Like him, we are to exercise authority over them and must not seek their aid or consult them, as is done in African traditional religion [Deut 18: 9-13; Isa 8:19].

Today, we need a paradigm shift in the healing and counselling ministries of the church. We have to learn the art of hearing the questions being asked 'on the ground'. Only then can we start to answer them and to develop a practical theology that is suitable for Africa and Africans.

To crown it: During my theological studies I was taught that a proper pastoral counselling takes place in the office, to guarantee privacy and quietness and a suitable atmosphere. We were advised that the office should contain a table and at least two chairs. But when I started my pastoral duties at Khayelihle Presbyterian Church, uMlazi, I found that many people talked to me about their burdens in public places or in the streets, and even request me to pray with them on the street corners or in the place where they worked. Mindful of my pastoral counselling education, I was always telling them to come to my office for pastoral counselling. However, the majority of them never came. They wanted to consult me about their problems and burdens wherever we met, whether in an office, on the street or in the church. The point is that the deep needs of the people may come in various forms and we should be prepared to accommodate them all. But at the same time, we never forget that our ministry should always be God-centred, for it is only by God's grace that we are able to do such ministries.

The current ministry training is meant to maintain the existing congregations not to start new ones. Such training has not realised that the society has changed, and it is no longer contextual and relevant.

The UPCSA can remedy the situation mentioned above by doing justice to its mission priorities. I am for that reason, calling it to revisit its vision and mission statement and put strategies in place so that it can fulfil its commission as the church. The UPCSA must recognise that it is both the product of and agent for mission. I strongly believe that the church must from time to time keep in touch with its vision and mission and must ask itself now and again whether it is in birth, infancy, adolescence, prime, maturity, aristocracy, bureaucracy or death phase. By so doing the church can identify whether it has deviated from its set priorities and find a way to reformulate and implement them.

At the beginning of 2012 a volunteer from UK, Brendon Hill met with over 600 UPCSA members from 15 different Presbyteries to consult with them on the future Vision, Mission, Mission Priorities and values of the denomination.

Suffice it to say that the UPCSA at its General Assembly held on 14th – 20th July 2012, at Stellenbosch University, within the bounds of Western Cape Presbytery, agreed to a new vision and mission statement.

Who is the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa?

We are a diverse community of reformed Christians led by the Word of God and Holy Spirit, prayerfully seeking the will of God for our lives together and the world.

The Vision of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa is:

- To be a reconciled community of Christians exercising a prophetic witness to Christ.

The Mission of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa is:

We will proclaim our Triune God in Southern Africa through:

- Bearing witness to the saving love of Jesus Christ
- Building vital, reforming congregations for worship, ministry and discipleship
- Visibly proclaiming the Kingdom of God through unity, justice, peace and love.

The Mission Priorities of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa are:

We will adopt specific and measurable targets for the denomination against the following priorities and report on progress against these targets to the denomination through the General Assembly:

- 1) Evangelism
- 2) Supporting the development of missional congregations
- 3) Health, wellbeing and securing justice
- 4) Engaging in reconciliation and unity
- 5) Stewardship

The Values of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa are:

Together we have ascertained the following values to guide our behaviour to each other and the world.

- Love
- Holiness
- Scriptural
- Integrity
- Spiritual Growth
- Servanthood

At the General Assembly in 2010, a new Committee structure was adopted for the UPCSA. Hirsch (2006:152) asserts that, "If we really want missional church, then we must have a missional leadership system to drive it – it's that simple". This new structure, which saw the number of standing committees reduced from 60 to 15, was implemented at the General Assembly – in July 2012.

A new “Mission and Discipleship” was formed at the brief of this committee includes the work of the former Church Development and Planning, Mission and Evangelism, Maintenance of the Ministry and Congregational Integration Committees.

Mission and Discipleship has set the following objectives:

- to Inspire the UPCSA to think in terms of growth and mission.
- to Mobilise members of UPCSA for mission – lay people and clergy.
- to Resource endeavours aimed at Mission and Evangelism.
- to Invest Assessment money in the growth of the UPCSA.
- to Reach unchurched communities and the “mission field” for Christ.

In my view, this is the only committee that is thinking missional.

The UPCSA is governed by the General Assembly as its highest court, which is by several Presbyteries (the second highest court). Presbyteries are composed of session members i.e. ministers and various congregations. In dealing with the issues in the UPCSA, matters are discussed at the General Assembly which then forwards them to the Presbyteries, to be implemented in various congregations.

3. Polity of UPCSA

1. What is polity?

I comprehend polity as the study of how the Church is governed and administered. It concerns the offices of people who are given responsibilities, the structures they establish to govern and decide on things and the mechanisms they use to make decisions.

2. What is the polity of UPCSA?

According to the UPCSA document "Basis of Union" clause 4 (The polity of the Church) (1997:1), assert that the Presbyterian form of Church government is held to be founded upon, and agreeable to, the Word of God. The form of government of the Uniting Church shall be determined in all matters by a book to be named "The Manual of Law and Procedure of The Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa".

The Manual of Faith and Orders of the UPCSA (2007:2-3) asserts that the Church's system of government is Presbyterian. This form of government is held to be in accordance with scripture. In this form of government, Congregations, while organised for the orderly administration of their own affairs, are not separate Churches independent of each other, but are integral parts of one and the same Church, having a common doctrine and being subject to a common government. This common government is

exercised through Councils of the Church, which link together the several Congregations as organic members of one body for the glory of God.

The Councils of this Church are Session, the Presbytery, the Synod and the General Assembly. Each consists of Ministers and Elders. They ascend in order of authority from Session through the Presbytery to the General Assembly, which is the supreme Council of this Church.

In the Presbyterian form of government the people are invited to choose elders and ministers to whom they give the authority to rule or govern the Church. These elders and ministers, though, have little, if any, personal authority and are required to word together in the courts of the Church (Session, Presbytery, and General Assembly). All ministers and elders have the same status when together in a meeting of any of the courts, i.e. nobody has more authority in the meeting than anybody else, except the Moderator, who has the usual authority granted to a chairperson. No one has any authority over anybody else outside the meeting.

The objectives of this system of government are the manifestation of the unity of the Church, the maintenance of a united testimony to the truth, mutual counsel and support, the faithful exercise of discipline, and combined effort in the furtherance of those ends for which the Church of Christ exists.

The name of this church denotes from polity (system of governance). "Presbyterian" refers not to an origin (like Anglican or Roman Catholic), or

a theological perspective / point of view (like Methodist or Baptist) nor a style of worship or practice (like Charismatic or Pentecostal). “Presbyterian” from the Greek word “*presbuteros*” which simply means “elder” denotes polity. We are the church governed by elders.

The details of how this polity works in practice are set out in the Church’s Manual of Faith and Order. The intention of this government is that there should be a chosen and set apart (ordained) leadership in the Church, which is exercised in a corporate (shared) way (Manual, Section 4 Chapter 1).

In the Session, the elders share responsibility for the pastoral oversight (care and discipline) of the congregation. This has been a particularly distinctive feature of Presbyterianism since the Reformation (Manual. par. 7.3)

3. The Conciliar principle

The Conciliar principle (from the word council) applies at every level. This means that Presbyterians lead and governs always communally (in a group).

Consequently, our government consists of an inter-relating series of Councils. Each Council leads, administers, disciplines and governs as a community, the greater community under its care and discipline.

The Session leads, governs, disciplines and administers in matters relating to the congregation.

The Presbytery leads, governs, disciplines and administers in matters relating to the community of the congregations and ministers within its bounds.

The Synod handles, orders and correct matters relating to the Presbyteries within its bounds.

The General Assembly leads, governs, disciplines and administers in matters relating to the whole denomination.

Constantly, it is a community that acts. The Moderator or Clerk or any other office bearer serves the Council which elected them. Their personal leadership is for facilitation. Authority remains in the Council acting as a community.

Consequently, the ecclesiastical equivalent of a Diocesan Bishop (Anglican) or a District Bishop (Methodist) is not the Moderator of the Presbytery but the Presbytery as a whole and the equivalent of an Archbishop (Anglican) or a Presiding Bishop (Methodist) is not the Moderator of the General Assembly but rather the General Assembly as a whole. Presbyterians govern together, in community.

A positive consequence of this conciliar structure is a form of representative government for the Church. Each Council is constituted by

a wider body (such as the local congregation) choosing ministers and elders to provide just representation for the Church. Leith believes this to be one of the principles of Presbyterianism: “The right of the people to choose their own leaders” (Leith 1981:163). In a process of representative democracy, the congregation chooses its Session and the Sessions choose their Presbytery and the Presbyteries, their General Assembly. We must, however, not take this matter of representative democracy too far. Each Elder elected to a Council becomes a Commissioner, called to listen to the voice of the Lord of the Church and not to represent views of a particular constituency (Gray & Tucker 1986:6).

In the end, the conciliar principle applied results in a connectional Church. As such, (Leith 1981:157 and 163) puts it, “unity is realized by representative assemblies”. Authority to determine correct doctrine, admission to the ministry and all other great decisions was vested not individuals or in the whole congregation but in representative Assemblies. These Assemblies (local and national) formed a network of belonging for the Church which was built up by cooperative deliberation and the construction of joint confessions of faith.

4. All officers are equal in the Presbyterian Church

Another appealing feature of Presbyterian polity is that its ministers are considered of equal ecclesiastical rank. No minister can be senior to

another nor can ministers be considered senior to elders in the Church. Calvin was opposed to any hierarchy among office bearers in the Church (Hesselink 1988:16). In the Councils of the Church, ministers and elders are equal and there is no seniority among ministers. The Moderator, elected in the Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly to a limited term, is referred to as *primus inter pares* (the first among equals). This is a significant departure from the polity of the Church of Rome and other Episcopal polities in which individuals are appointed to ever more senior position in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The second Helvetic Confession puts it thus:

Now the power, or function, that is given to the minister of the Church is the same and alike in all. Certainly, in the beginning, the bishops or elders did, with a common consent and labour, govern the Church; no man lifted up himself above another, none usurped greater power or authority over his fellow-bishops. For they remembered the words of the Lord, "Let the leader among you become as one who serves." (Luke xxii.26); they kept themselves by humility, and did mutually aid one another in the government and preservation of the Church... Notwithstanding for order's sake, some one of the ministers called the assembly together, propounded unto the assembly the matters to be consulted of, gathered together the voices or sentences of the rest, and, to be brief, as much as lay in him, provided that there might arise no confusion. (Leith 1983: 157-158).

5. The Presbyterian Church is Constitutional

In their discussion on Presbyterian polity, Joan Gray and Joyce Tucker state that one of the fundamentals of Presbyterian polity is that it is Constitutional (Gray and Tucker 1986:6). They are correct. From the time of the publication of Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion, Presbyterians have been 'rule people'. Calvin published his Ecclesiastical Ordinances in 1561, the Dutch published the Church Order of Dort in 1619, the Scots published their first book of Discipline in 1560 and the second in 1578 and the Westminster Assembly had their directory for Church Government (1645). Following this, every Reformed denomination I know about has published and lives by its own Book of Order.

As such, (Gray and Tucker 1986:6), point out, each of these Orders has, as its foundation, the beliefs of the Church. Hall (1994:26) puts it this way:

Theology is the foundation for polity. To the extent that a Christian works out salvation in fear and trembling (Phil 2:12), theology will expand into polity.... Church government is organically connected to the theology that bears it.

The Confessional beliefs are then interpreted in the rules and regulations that express the Church's polity. In the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa, the Manual of Faith and Order begins with five chapters

on the faith of the Church. Only thereafter come the chapters which describe the Church's Order. There are chapters on the congregation, the Session, the Presbytery and so on. Each chapter describes the particular facet of the Church's life and outlines the regulations pertaining to it.

In Presbyterian Churches, our books of Order fulfil at least two very crucial functions. First, they carry the principles of our Reformed heritage, moulded by our history. Second, they regulate our ecclesiastical relationships by providing structure for the roles we have. This is especially necessary because of the representative nature of our polity (Gray and Tucker 1986:8). Roles and powers are clearly defined so as to avoid abuse and to help those who are new to these roles to comprehend their responsibilities.

4. Conclusion

I was pleased to hear from UPCSA General Assembly that one of its new denominational Mission Priorities is "Supporting the development of missional congregations". Hoping that the understanding behind it is that of:

- a Church which recognises the primacy of God's mission in the world, without abdicating its own calling to participate in God's mission. (as Bosch assert it)

- a Church which recognises that ministry and mission takes place in and through congregation and not by committees of Presbytery and/or General Assembly. (Church of Scotland document “Church without Walls” expressed it)
- 1Corinthians 11: 23-26 (Narrative of the Institute) gives the base of being a missional church (Calling/ Mission, Celebration/Remembrance, Suffering/Struggles and Sent out):
 - “He took.....”: Calling
 - “He gave thanks....”: Celebration
 - “He Broke.....”: Suffering/ Struggles
 - “He gave...”: Sent out

In my view, a common understanding of the concept of missional church within the denomination, will aid it to achieve the above mentioned priority.

Polity is a guiding tool, and need not be a stumbling block towards being a missional church. Just as biology has discovered that the DNA print in the macrocosm is also found in the microcosm, the nature of the church as institution must have the biblical and theological DNA imprimatur in its structures.

After reading so many treatises on Presbyterianism by champions throughout the ages, I am inclined to feel a little incredulous about whether Presbyterianism truly is as wonderful as they make it out to be.

Presbyterianism's greatest strength, its communal government, can also be its greatest source of frustration. It protects the Church from domination of individuals but it also can make decision making laboriously time consuming and pastoral intervention ineffective. It is hard to creatively attend to a complex human problem in an open public forum. It is here that the gentle hand of Episcopal authority is often longed for.

An order which has held dear the mutual parity among ministers often breeds a generation of ministers who are reluctant to take constructive criticism from their equals who are often more experienced and longer serving. Humble seniority can be a helpful thing for the health of the body, providing corrective and redemptive intervention.

There is much beauty in our polity but sadly much distrust of personal leadership. We may do well to look around at brothers and sisters among our ecumenical partners for ideas so that we may continue to reform even our sacred polity.

Consequently, the UPCSA must give careful attention to the processes by which it governs itself but the biblical and theological foundations will always be crucial than the specific structures implemented. These foundations will allow authentic relationships to develop simply because they assure people that they will be valued as those created in the image of God. Their wisdom and participation will be noticed and honoured. The church structures will give credence to God's work of reconciliation. When

church structures allow the biblical and theological foundations to order its life, the church will bring glory, praise and honour to God.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

1. Introduction

In this Chapter I present and discuss the congregation I am studying and the findings of the study. The results are presented in accordance with both the literature study and qualitative interviews. I collected four sources of information: a congregation profile, five interview participants, and a walk-in visit from time to time in addition to my own research journal. All the information gathered served to create a narrative finding on the congregation and points toward a missional church. The aim of this case study is to indicate that the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church, despite its nature (unemployment, poverty and lack of resources) and size can make a difference and impact in society. The typology of Hendriks has been used in describing the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church. In the previous chapters I looked at the life of mission and the concept of missional church and polity that would be the base for the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church, in its journey towards becoming missional. The following is the brief introduction of the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church.

2. Beach Mission Presbyterian Church

2.1 Where it is now?

The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church regards itself as a church with others, fuelled by the Great Commission [Mat. 28:19], that motivates it to proclaim the Gospel to all nations and sincerely pray that God, in his grace, will lead them into conversion. It is situated at Durban Central, within the Municipality of eThekweni. It is in the red-light and drug district of Durban Central. It is my view that, it is situated in a strategic area to advance this mission as the name is Beach Mission.

2.1.1 The size of the church

Beach Mission Presbyterian Church is a family-sized congregation which has a worship attendance of 65 to 100 members and functions under the oversight of an Interim Moderator. It is situated at number 22 Anton Lembede Street, Durban.

The congregational composition and statistics are:

- Adult and pensioners 29.4%
- Youth 25.9%
- Women 21.2%

- Men 9.4%
- Children 14.1%

2.1.2 Theological model

The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church is characterised by the proclamation model. Avery Dulles (in Hendriks 2004:46) asserts that this type of ecclesiology that developed centred upon Jesus Christ and on the Bible, as the primary witness about him. He further argues that neither the Church nor the sacraments can save a person; sinners can only be saved by the grace of God and by faith in Jesus Christ. At the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church, the Word is rightfully proclaimed according to Scripture, the sacraments are ministered in accordance with Scripture and the church law and discipline maintained the integrity of the Word. The Lordship of Christ is proclaimed.

Hendriks (2004:47) asserts that the primary bond of communion is faith and the proclamation of Christ-events. The sacraments are secondary to this; they are visible signs of the Word. The beneficiaries of the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church are those who hear the Word and put their trust and faith in Jesus Christ, as Lord and Saviour, while its goal is to herald the Gospel.

The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church inspiration is taken from Matthew 9:35-38. This Scripture passage plays a crucial in the life and work of the congregation. It helps the congregation to dwell in the word.

In dwelling in the Word, a short passage of Scripture is read aloud, while people are encouraged to listen to where their imagination was *caught* in the text. Participants then pair up and listen to each other by attending carefully to what the other person heard and thus allowing them to speak freely. In a larger group sharing, people are invited to share not what they heard but what their partner heard.

"Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their Synagogues, preaching the good news of the Kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'"(Matthew 9:35-38).

Green (2000:134) asserts that the above portion of Scripture is considered to be, "the supreme motivation for mission, to see the need of those who are perishing outside the Kingdom. Motivation comes when you see people harassed by pressure, exhausted by the pace of life, going nowhere, and being led astray by many false ideologies. It comes when we see the church weak, out to entertain, self-related, untrained,

unwilling to sacrifice, powerless to witness, short of conviction, and prayer less.”

Before embarking on his teaching about mission, Jesus explained why it is needed. He summoned disciples to pray to God for more people who could do what he was doing.

“We are desperately of people to follow in the footsteps of Jesus in order to bring much relief to others.” (Louisa 2011:1)

Indeed Beach Mission Presbyterian Church members appeared as vulnerable as sheep without a shepherd.

Mission commitment requires not only assessment of needs, but also a compassionate response in spiritual and material terms.

“We need an integrated approach that fully meets our needs. But this work is spiritual and needs prayer, so that God can send those he chooses into his harvest field.” (Sikhumbuzo 2011:2)

Van Gelder and Zscheile (2011:151) assert that, this process does several key things. First, it avoids the expert-driving approach to Scripture that prevails in many congregations, where the pastor or some other person with formal theological training is expected to interpret on behalf of the people. Instead, it is assumed in dwelling in the Word that God speaks through the Word to each and every one. Second, it focuses on the imagination, recognising the power of the Word to inform, enliven, and renew our vision for God’s activity in the bible narrative and in our world.

The bible is treated not as a rule book or a tool box but as a living story. Third, it develops the capacity of congregations to listen to one another attentively while listening to the Word, which is foundational for learning to listen to the neighbour in mission.

2.1.3 System function

Hendriks (2004:55) provides a definition of system as a regularly interacting or interdependent group of items forming a unified whole, whereas system theory refers to a form of social, economic, or political organisation or practice based on a shared worldview and mindset. It is always based on shared values shared by individuals and groups. The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church, functions through system four (timeless principles and eternal absolutes governs the world). There is a profound respect for Scripture (Word). Hendriks (2004:61) asserts that such system is characterised by its devotion to ideals, strong moral codes and faithful covenanting. It demands hard work, truthfulness, integrity, and civilised behaviour. It makes long-term investments and sacrifices and defends the status quo once it is founded on a set of principles.

2.1.4 Ecology of the congregation

2.1.4.1 Which macro-factors impact the congregation?

The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church forms part of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa (UPCSA). The UPCSA has 580 congregations, 19 Presbyteries and 02 Synods. (2009/2010 UPCSA Yearbook)

The membership profile has the following features:

- Members have a low-income.
- Maintenance of the status quo.
- Centred on an Interim Moderator, who spends most of his time with his full-time employment, and has very little time for the congregation.
- Lack of resources.
- High unemployment rate amongst young people, men and women.

There's an unqualified perception that such a small, poor congregation can't make a difference, because of dependence mindset.

2.1.4.2 Which meso-factors impact the congregation?

Durban Central is a community of about 200 000 people. They come from all-over South Africa and some parts of Southern Africa, specifically Lesotho, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. They are strangers who are striving to change their circumstances. More than 60% of them are displaced, desperate and vulnerable to all forms of abuse. They appear neglected and nobody seems to care. They live in horrible conditions.

They look wounded like sheep without a shepherd. This community is faced with the challenges of unemployment, high rate of HIV infection, extreme poverty, health (lack of proper facilities), vulnerable children, orphans, child headed families, alcohol and drug abuse. There is a serious challenge of children who have no opportunity to go to pre-school.

2.1.4.3 Which micro-aspects functions

Beach Mission Presbyterian Church is the family-sized congregation which has a worship attendance of 65 to 100 members and functions under the oversight of an Interim Moderator. It is a small congregation.

The congregational composition and statistics are:

- Adult and pensioners 29.4%
- Youth 25.9%
- Women 21.2%
- Men 9.4%
- Children 14.1%

The majority of the members are poor and struggle daily to survive, since the many are migrants. There is a dramatic rise in the standard of living. This has led to consumerism and increasing financial pressure, with most families in need of supplementing incomes to augment their standard of living. The average income of the congregation is R5000.00 per month.

2.2 Identity Analysis

2.2.1 Demography and social context

In terms of demographics, the populations around Beach Mission Presbyterian Church are migrants and aging. The congregation is growing older. This has two connotations for ministry: (1) the minister must meet the needs of aging members and (2) older people want their church to remain unchanged. That results in a rigorous disconnection in relating to those under the age of forty years.

The ethnic makeup of the society is changing. The waves of migrants create new permanent citizens and seasonal workers, and that results in a formation cross-cultural ministry. Consequently, the minister at the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church needs to be sensitive to the prospective cultural misapprehensions and tensions within the surroundings.

2.2.2 History of the congregation

The Presbytery of eThekweni endorsed the existence of this congregation after a request came from the missionary work led and driven by elder Peter Benson in 1997. In the establishment of this congregation there was great joy and happiness because they saw the extension and development of the Kingdom of God. That hope they still wish to see it

guiding this congregation from its present place in the wilderness into the promise land of the church's true mission.

Mr. Peter Benson felt that as a lay person, he could take ministry to where the church would normally not be able to financially provide ministry and provide ministry to the destitute and those most in need. Using all of the experience acquired as a shipyard worker, a salesman and a surfer, he started to invite local beachfront residents to mission, through letters of invitation and through street evangelism. And so the flotsam and jetsam of life that mixes with the retired, the tourist and the refugees started to come together.

After ten years of existence they realised that they needed a full time minister and so in 2007 full time Minister was called. It is a known fact that in most cases, when the founder moves on, the operation starts to disintegrate. The congregation moved from mission to Presbyterian maintenance of ministry – law and procedure approach.

Like any other congregation, the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church anticipated eagerly for a full time minister, who would uplift their spiritual life and co-operation, so that the money could flow in. In 2007, they called a young and vibrant minister, who had just completed his probation for ministry. They placed their hopes on him, a stranger to the location. Preaching, celebrating Holy Communion, baptising and burying the loved ones, pastoral care, fundraising and to ensure that membership increases,

was their expectation from the minister. According to them, to be a good minister, he had to meet such needs.

2.2.3 Symbols and the impact on the ethos

At the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church, the Calvinist stream of Reformed Christianity is highly maintained. There is a great emphasis on the ministry of Word: hearing the Bible read, listening to inspiring sermons, singing the hymns based on scripture, and so on. The procession for worship service is led by an elder seriously carrying in the bible and putting it on the lectern, which symbolises the centrality of Scripture (Word) and centrality of Christ and salvation by His grace alone. Thus, the pulpit is central, viewed as a holy place, only to be used by a licensed or an ordained preacher. The minister enters and begins the call to worship. The Word is before all and above all.

2.2.4 The core features of the congregation

The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church has the following core features:

- This congregation is Christian first and Presbyterian second: meaning, they are Christians in a sense that Christ is their centre, and they are Presbyterian in polity. Their vision is: **“Bringing the love of God *through* Jesus Christ to the people of the Durban Beachfront.”**

- Service is customary among the ministry of this congregation and among its people, and it is more than a charity vocation.
- This congregation has a story to tell, a story that is continuous and is being added to as the congregation moves into the future. People know the story, share the story, and humbled by the story, and desire to continue the story.
- Leadership is centred on the Interim Moderator and the Council, as they position the direction, but also decentralised as participants become involved, and take up ownership of the ministry.
- This congregation has a ministry to “street boys” who are homeless.

2.2.5 The values of the congregation.

According the congregation profile, the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church has the following core values:

- Love
- Scriptural
- Servanthood
- Spiritual growth

3. Research Question and Hypothesis

The key question in this research was to comprehend how can discussions around missional expressions encourage Beach Mission Presbyterian Church to live up to its identity, God's preferred and promised future and reinvigorate its missionary commitment. The following are three hypotheses that shaped this study:

- 1) To contribute to the present discussion on a missional church.
- 2) To describe and help the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church to be faithful to God's preferred and promised future.
- 3) To help Beach Mission Presbyterian Church to develop leadership capacity.

These hypotheses will be tested by research.

4. Research Method

This research was based on a qualitative approach by means of case study methodology to examine the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church in hopes of shedding light on the problem statement of this research. The couple of dissimilar research instruments were used to aid gather data and the process the findings. The interview schedules in a discussion format was developed for the leadership and congregants.

An additional form of information gathering came through on-site observations, whereby face-to-face aided to gain insight of the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church in its context. Notes were made based on the subjective perspective. The leadership gave me unrestricted access. Leadership meetings and worships services were attended. One-on-one interviews with leadership members were conducted. Congregants were spoken to as well.

5. Procedure for Collecting Data

I met with the founder and leadership to start with. It appeared that the founder was the strongest carrier of the desired missional culture for the congregation to effectively grasp it. An in-depth look at the membership was an important part of determining how deep the missional culture filtered down to congregants. The following were the questions developed for the leadership at the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church in a form of discussion:

1. In few words how would you describe Beach Mission Presbyterian Church?
2. How has the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church shaped how you live out your faith?
3. What are the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church greatest strengths / weaknesses and contributions to the society?

The second group was the members who had been with the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church for less than a year. The following were the questions asked in a discussion format:

1. How did you learn about Beach Mission Presbyterian Church?
2. Did you attend another church in the area prior joining Beach Mission Presbyterian Church, and how dissimilar is it?

This group gave a “grass roots view” and aided in showing how broad, deep and wide the missional culture ran into the congregation.

6. Data Analysis and Findings

Just about twenty plus hours of interviews were recorded from the key members of the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church. The amount of information collected became a overwhelming task to plot a course quickly.

As per Beck (1995) social scientists ponder possible explanations for the events observed and offer hypothesis. Explanations for these hypotheses are explained through data analysis, a process that has been described by some researchers (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993, in Katsande, 2009), as a process aimed at testing hypotheses, achieve research objectives and

provide answers to research questions. I analysed information collected from interviews to draw inferences.

It is worth noting that the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church has a distinctive expression of ministry and different character altogether. Following are the findings from the research.

6.1 A dynamic Presbyterian uniqueness and engagement.

Presbyterian uniqueness is crucial. The word Presbyterian is derived from a Greek word '**Presbuteros**' that refers to elders and indicates that the governance of the Church is the responsibility of elders elected by members, rather than by a hierarchy of clergy, where ordinary members have a very little input. This means that the equality of all members, elders and minister is important to them. Participants declared this notion explicitly, while others just lived it.

*But it is much more than that...*they are certain that they are a reformed church, which means that they believe and worship according to the tradition of the Reformers that renewed the church during the 17th century according to what they learned in the Bible. Some of the best known leaders were John Calvin in Geneva and John Knox in Scotland, who planted the Church of Scotland.

Presbyterians hold the following values close to their hearts:

- The centrality of Scripture.
- The centrality of Christ and salvation by His grace alone.
- The Sovereignty of God.
- A form of church government that is representative of the people.

At Beach Mission Presbyterian Church, they are overly concerned about core Presbyterian theological obligations rather than about dependability on Presbyterian traditions. The prime focal point is to aid people in their midst grow in their discipleship journey.

Sikhumbuzo summed the spirit of Beach Mission Presbyterian in the following manner:

“The Presbyterian theology keeps our focus on the centre, which is the Word and Christ, and seeking first the kingdom and all else will follow...That is what drew us to Beach Mission Presbyterian Church, the focus on the centre. There one thing in our life that’s rock solid, and that is Beach Mission Presbyterian Church. It’s the most humble group of people.” (Interview C, 2011:2)

6.2 A view of world as the prospect.

A view of the world is the overall framework, belief system and a way of making sense of life in a typical context. The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church has an external focus, an eye to the future, and comprehends the

fact that it exist for the sake of the world. It has a distinctiveness that is shaped around reaching out to 'street kids', receiving them both inside and outside the church. Hendriks (2004:133) asserts that "worldview" describes the overall framework that we use to interpret life, our perspective that gives meaning to our total life. It is a type of coping mechanism that a society develops and shares over time, a consensus about what is good and bad, about values, attitudes, beliefs, the way of doing things, etc. He further argues that the Gospel has a very definite influence on one's worldview, because it explains so much about the origin, purpose and destiny life. A worldview always shapes the character of the congregation. The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church appreciates itself as diverse from the world because of its participation in the life, death, and resurrection of its Lord. In its public witness, the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church is consciously seeking to discern and do the accepted thing to its Lord instead of the multitudes of cultures in which it find itself.

It is crucial to note two significant reflections on how this system see Beach Mission Presbyterian Church in relationship to the world. First, being the church with the world as the prospect is one of the critical elements of what it means to be a missional church; yet the language of "missional church" was not prevalent among the people at Beach Mission Presbyterian Church. Some of the leadership used missional language when they articulated what they were about, but most of the people at Beach Mission Presbyterian Church used other language, such as,

“neighbour, inviting others, serving the needs of people, or living for the sake of the world.” This is worth noting simply because the people are not consistent or clear about this aspect of their life together. That leads me to believe that they are in the early stages of their missional understanding.

Second, the majority of the language that is used to articulate this aspect was about doing rather than being missional. From my perspective, it seemed that doing of acts of mission was the first part of transformation of Beach Mission Presbyterian Church towards being missional. People were able to get their minds around helping others, serving tangible needs, and inviting their neighbours. Conversely, a shift in attitude – that the church exists not to add more members to its roster but to share the good news of Jesus Christ with others through one’s world, actions and attitude – is a deeper shift.

6.3 The tension of Mission and Ministry

Peter Benson said: “Our church is situated in the midst of marginalised and under-privileged people, we often put on events for them. We really get fulfilled by seeing them coming to enjoy what we provide. However, what hassled me most is that: we can provide forever, but these people are not going to be part of our church. I can’t put a finger on a problem.” (Interview A, 2011:1)

Ministry and mission exists in a tension and moves people back and forth between their internal, communal life together and their encounter with their world. Beach Mission Presbyterian Church now describes as “mission” their ministries to homeless and hungry people, their work with disadvantaged youth, their efforts to provide a soup kitchen and a host of other such endeavours. At the same time, Session regularly seeks to clarify the direction and purpose of their common life by conducting “mission studies”. And by “ministry” it refers mainly to attending to the discipleship journey of the people of God.

The question that arose was, is there something that is primary that makes everything else secondary? Worship takes priority and ministry and mission serve as a secondary focus, simply because it provides a place for people to exercise leadership, grow in their faith and connect people with the world. Worship is a dramatic act – no doubt about that. Sunday by Sunday the redemptive drama of the Gospel is re-enacted in the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of the Sacraments. What missionality should cause the congregation to question however this is: Who are the actors and who is the audience? As things stand the band is on stage, along with worship leaders and preacher. The congregation is the audience.

As such, there is an argument to be made for God being the only actor in worship and the congregation being the audience. If the congregation under study is to take the mission of God seriously, it is bound to

comprehend the undisputable fact that God is the primary actor and director of worship, the congregation is the supporting cast and the world is its audience. Of course such a view suggests that worship goes far beyond Sunday morning service – but it must at least begin there. Conversely, it was evident from my study that missions their activities and ministries were not ends in themselves.

Sikhumbuzo said: “Our choir serves as an outreach ministry even while its primary role is to lead worship.” (Interview C.2011:1)

According to Hirsch (2006:236) mission is being used in a narrow sense to suggest the church’s orientation to the “outsider” and ministry as the orientation to the “insider”. Experience tells us that a church that aims at ministry seldom gets to mission even if it sincerely intends to do so. But the church that aims at mission will have to do ministry, because ministry is the means to do mission.

6.4 Leadership

The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church has a formal leadership role, centred on the Interim Moderator and the Council. The leadership is communal in nature. The Interim Moderator has a crucial responsibility in forming the character of the congregation, is expected to proclaim God’s Word and guidance. However, in addition it has a strong lay leadership, both in an official capacity and among the people in general. The prime

objective of the said leadership is to set the communal character, articulate the vision and mission and far more that create a conducive atmosphere that sets people free to lead and serve.

It is worth noting that, the leadership in the said congregation is more about planting the DNA within people and forming an atmosphere in which that DNA could be lived out. The Interim Moderator and lay leadership each have their own role and eventually what will emerge is formed by and attributed to God.

7. How can Beach Mission Presbyterian Church embark on a journey towards becoming a missional church?

The research question says, in view of the existing Missional church and Missional leadership discussions, how can Beach Mission Presbyterian Church embark on a journey towards becoming a missional church? This section seeks to map a way forward. I am, consequently, inviting Beach Mission Presbyterian Church to have a theology of service – not survival, a theology of mission – not maintenance. My premise is that the journey is by no means long when to be missional is the destination. It's my certainty that the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church needs pointers and markers to guide its journey towards becoming a missional church.

Conversely, the first step in mapping such a journey is to first figure out where you are at the moment.

Keifert (2006:21) asserts that, An old Irish tale goes, "A man decides he wants to go to a very special place in the west of Ireland. Being a total stranger to Ireland, he decides to ask for directions. He asks the first knowledgeable looking stranger, someone who looks local, 'Can you tell me how to get to this place?' The local responds, 'Never heard of it. But if I were going there, I wouldn't start from here.'"

The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church needs to start where they are in time, in life, location and leadership of the church. It would certainly be imprudent to start where there are not. Equally so, if one is at the shopping mall, one finds the map with the dot that marks the spot where one is standing, and reads: "You are here".

The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church is coming to comprehend the undisputable fact that they do not without human intervention know the answers to the questions that needs to asked. It is in the process of discovering. It is figuring out that they have to do this work for themselves in their own context. It is learning to experiment, by trying new things, failing, and trying again. It does not look like it has everything together. The congregants are discovering it is their stories that offer the clues to what the Spirit might be up to among them. By being called to live into their stories and listen to the stories of others,

they are learning how to sit with friends and neighbours to listen them into free speech. All of these processes are cluttered and experimental.

The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church knows that it is on the journey in a new space where it will continually be learning rather than simply improving on what it has always done.

Instituting radical change at the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church in order for it to become missional will result to committing ministerial suicide. At the similar instance, I truly suppose it is possible for it to embark on the journey of “becoming missional.” Whether it can ever be actually a “missional church” is dubious, but becoming one is a commendable goal and one that Beach Mission Presbyterian Church can work toward, as it begins the journey. Hendriks (2004:40) asserts that family-sized churches may find it very difficult to become missional in character, simply because they are usually focused on survival or the needs of their extended family; thus they find it difficult to be open and inviting to “outsiders”. Consequently, leaders must set aside such fears and learn to look to the future with faith-generated hope, firmly convinced that the church will survive in its up-and-coming context, but will be able to thrive.

In order to discover what becoming a missional church looks like, maybe a helpful way to move forward would be to better understand how people in their context relate to God. That means being in a relationship with God, with one another, and with God’s creation.

The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church needs to ask itself the following questions:

- Who are we as Beach Mission Presbyterian Church?
- Where do we come from?
- Where are we now?
- Where are we going?
- What do we care about?
- What are we called to do?

That would lead a congregation to severe theological discernment process and help it to grow into a congregation whose members take ownership of the ministry, involved in community, serve and care for one another and are committed to God.

The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church by this time has developed critical practises of spiritual discernment including: Using the words of Keifert (2006:96),

- Dwelling in the Word.
- Listening one another into free speech.
- Praying together to discern God's preferred and promised future rather than asking God to bless anticipated outcomes.
- Recognising the anxieties, fears, and memories that prevents trusting God's faithfulness.

Roxburgh (2011:181-190) proposes the following steps to be taken: prepare the local church, develop a new eye for your neighbourhood, teach radical neighbourliness, map the neighbourhood, listen to neighbourhood stories, discern what God is up to in the neighbourhood, get involved, report - what we are learning and commit – what do we do next?

Coupled what is mentioned above with what Everett Rogers (in Keifert 2006:51) refers to as the stages of diffusion of innovation, which are, awareness, interest, evaluation, trial and adoption. While these stages appear on a line of movement they do not take place in a purely linear manner; indeed, they proceed in a diversity of movement.

Everett Rogers not only names five stages of response to a change; he also delineates five stages of decision making in his model of diffusing innovation in a culture. The stages fit along the same curve. Awareness moves interest through knowledge and understanding of a new thing. Interest moves to evaluation through a process of persuasion, either a favourable or unfavourable attitude towards a new thing. The stage of persuasion makes possible the decision to try out some things and experiment with possibilities within the new innovation. The decision for trial of some new ideas, to try out some new practices, some new ways of doing church, ways that reflects a new basic understanding of the culture of the congregation, follows. It leads to a period of implementation. Implementation usually requires some strategic planning and

reorganisation of the congregation on the basis of the new innovation and the experience of trial practices. Implementation leads to either the confirmation of the new innovation or the rejection of it. When the new innovation is confirmed, the innovation has been diffused and translated into a new moment of the culture of the congregation; it has been adopted.

Following carefully what is proposed above will help the congregation to stay contextually and missionally relevant, in fulfilling God's mission.

I would encourage the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church to engage in strategic thinking about what it means to be Church in their context in our time. Maintenance is a natural hiding place for the Church but being Missional takes faithful courage.

Roxburgh and Boren (2009:155) provide an explanation of the why and what of each step entails in the process of missional change in a congregation.

The Missional Change Timeline

STAGE	TIME	DESCRIPTION
Deciding	3-6 months prior	Workshops: What is Missional Church?
Awareness	Months 1-2	Listening teams

		Listening team report
Understanding	Month 3-5	Mission-shaped church questionnaire
		Feedback seminar
Evaluating	Month 6-8	Dialogue groups
		Naming missional challenges
		Leaders identify primary challenges and teams
Experimenting	Month 9-14	Missional action groups
		“Practicing Hospitality” small groups
Commitment	Month 15	Action team reports
		Hospitality reports
	Month 16	Initiate new missional experiments
	Month 17-18	Next steps

The time-line method is applied for a better understanding of the identity of a congregation. This is one of the easiest, most rewarding ways of aiding the congregation to tell, and also reflect on, its history. On the other hand, it needs excellent preparation and reliable factual information and the history of congregation and events that have influenced the congregation. (Hendriks 2004:81).

Hendriks (2004:232) asserts that the time-line helps people to discover links between external demographic, cultural and organisational shifts and the internal stresses and historical strains experienced by the congregation. This helps the congregation to understand its own culture and ecology, its traditional/denominational heritage and identity, and this serves to discern twists and turns in its story.

8. What is the role of Leadership?

In this section I will look at different definitions and kinds of leadership and then propose a suitable one for the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church.

Clinton (in Gibbs 2005:20) provides the following definition. A Christian leader is a person with a God-given capacity and God-given responsibility to influence a specific group of God's people toward God's purpose for the group.

Kouzes and Posner (2002:xxiv) emphasise that leadership is not the private reserve of a few charismatic men and women. It is a process ordinary people use when they are bringing forth the best from themselves to others. Leadership is your capacity to guide others to places they have never been before.

Bernstein and Smith (in Gibbs 2005:21) express the same point of view, as they assert that leadership is now understood by many to imply

collective action, orchestrated in such a way as to bring about significant change while raising the competencies and motivation of all those involved – that is, action, where more than one individual influences the process.

Wright (2000:2) assert that if by leader we mean one who holds a position of authority and responsibility, then every Christian is not a leader. Some are – some are not. But if by leader we mean a person who enters into a relationship with another person to influence their behaviour, values or attitude, then I would suggest that all Christians should be leaders. Or perhaps more accurately, all Christians should exercise leadership, attempting to make a difference in the lives of those around them.

Gibbs (2005:22) asserts that Wright's definition of leadership encompasses both narrow and broader understanding. Leadership is a relationship – a relationship in which one seeks to influence the thought, behaviour, beliefs or values of another person.

It is apparent that the role of leadership is to influence not dominate, the people whom they have been entrusted in one's leadership responsibilities.

Hirsch (2006:152) asserts that, "If we really want missional church, then we must have a missional leadership system to drive it – it's that simple". I firmly agree with him, so as the Canadian missiologist Roxburgh (1997:64) asserts that, quite simply, missional church needs missional

leadership, and it is going to take more than the traditional pastor-teacher mode of leadership to pull this off.

In my view, the appropriate leadership for the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church should be inspirational, missional and apostolic leadership. According to Hirsch (2006:117) inspirational leadership can be described as a unique kind of social power that comes from the personal integration and embodiment of great ideas, external and structural authority like that of government, corporation, or religious institution. It involves a relationship between leaders and followers in which each influences the other to pursue common objectives, with the aim of transforming followers into leaders in their own right. It does this by appealing to values and calling without offering material incentives. It is based largely on moral power and is therefore primarily internal. Such leadership requires the reinterpreting of the congregation's foundational values in the light of the demands of its mission today. The critical aspiration of such leaders is to call the congregation away from maintenance, back to mission.

Steve Addison (in Hirsch 2006: 154) asserts that the apostolic role within the established churches and denominations requires the reinterpreting of the denomination's foundational values in the light of the demands of its mission today. The ultimate goal of these apostolic leaders is to call denomination away from maintenance, back to mission. The apostolic denominational leader needs to be a visionary, who can outlast significant

opposition from the denominational structures and can build alliances with those desiring change. Furthermore, the strategy of the apostolic leader could involve casting the vision and winning approval for a shift from maintenance to mission. In addition the leader has to encourage signs of life within the existing structures and rise up a new generation of leaders and churches from the old. The apostolic denominational leader needs to ensure the new generation is not “frozen out” by those who resist change. Finally, such a leader must restructure the denomination’s institutions so that they serve mission purposes.

Hendriks (2004:39) asserts that if the leadership of a congregation focuses on the living God and is missionally active, the presence of the Holy Spirit in worship and relationships makes all the difference.

That calls for the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church to develop leaders who,

- Lead out of spiritual discernment.
- Lead out of personal daily spiritual practices beginning with Dwelling in Word.
- Listen, interpret, and communicate within the biblical narrative.
- Listened to the congregational culture.
- Listened to the culture of those who the congregation believes God is calling them to serve.
- Narrate the numbers of the congregation and persons to be served in mission.

- Create an environment that affirms risk.
- Actively reflect upon their experiments.
- Are able to distinguish adaptive change from technical change.

The leadership needs to comprehend the fact that people differ substantially in their sincerity to a new thing or move. Keifert (2006:55) identifies five different groups of people as: (1) innovators; (2) early adopters; (3) early majority; (4) late majority; (5) laggards.

According to Wagner (1984:88) the gift of leadership is that special ability or skill that God has given to certain members of the body of Christ to point out goals which are in line with God's purpose, and to communicate these to others in such a way that they will work together freely and harmoniously to attain these for the glory of God.

As such Gangel (1981:15) concludes that there are in essence three components in leadership: "ability...working with other people...processing towards some kind of objective". He further defines it as follows, "Leadership is the exercise by a member of a group of certain qualities, character and ability which at a given time will result in his being able to change group behaviour in the direction of mutually accepted objectives".

In his book *Community: the Structure of Belonging*, Block (2008:85) describes one of the primary roles of the leader as that of convening:

This is not an argument against leadership, only a desire to change the nature of our thinking. Communal transformation requires a

certain kind of leadership, one that creates conditions where context shifts:

- From a place of fear and fault to one of gifts, generosity, and abundance
- From a belief in more laws and oversight to a belief in social fabric and chosen accountability
- From the corporation and system as central, to associational life as central
- From a focus on leaders to a focus on citizens
- From problems to possibilities

For this shift in context to occur, we need leadership that supports a restorative path. Restoration calls for us to deglamorise leadership and consider it a quality that exists in all human beings. We need to simplify leadership and construct it so it is infinitely and universally available.

For Block (2008:88), leadership has three tasks:

- Create a context that nurtures an alternative future, one based on gifts, generosity, accountability, and commitment.
- Initiate and convene conversations that shift people's experience, which occurs through the way people are brought together and the nature of the questions used to engage them.
- Listen and pay attention.

Therefore, the means for the shaping of a missional church is its leadership. The aim of leadership is to form and equip people who express and proclaim the intention and direction of God through Jesus Christ.

As such, missional leadership is about persons who understand their calling as disciples of Jesus Christ, see themselves as equipped by God with certain gifts to be shared with a larger body of Christ, and believe that they are empowered by Spirit to engage the world the world by participating in the creative and redemptive mission of God.

The primary role of the leadership starts by helping members of the congregation better understand what it means and requires to live in community, within the divine community of God, and with each other for the sake of the world.

Leadership is defined in the Bible in terms of service. Servant leadership is the uniqueness of a leader in a missional church. Leaders must frequently give strong and purposeful guidance. The uniqueness of missional church leaders lies in service that qualifies them to fulfil their functions. In that, leaders find their fulfilment, in that they are there to serve God and his church. As such Gibbs (1981:378) argues that a Christian's understanding of leadership excludes any thought of personal domination.

Leadership is about shaping backgrounds in which the everyday people of the church find that their own imaginations can be engaged by God's initiatives for them. That background necessary includes words and

actions of support, vision, risk, confession, forgiveness, grief and commemoration.

Paul in his letter to the Romans (Rom. 12:8) asserts that leadership is one of the gifts of the Spirit, but its role is not to control, dictate, and monopolise the ministry of the church. It is relatively to cultivate and steward the faithful contribution of the whole community and its gifts in God's mission.

Leadership guides and leads transformation within an intricate set of systems. Roxburgh and Romanuk (2006:41) identify three zones in the transformation process. These zones are: reactive leadership, performative leadership, and emergent leadership. This point of view presents a framework as Roxburgh and Romanuk (2006:40) asserts "assist leaders in understanding the adaptive shift in leadership style required amid such change; identify the skills and competencies required in each zone; and help congregation understand their own location in massive change".

Roxburgh and Romanuk's emergent zone leadership is expressive of the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church. It is on a journey, with an unforeseeable end, and it allowed for ambiguity and failure.

Roxburgh (in Guder 1998) suggests that missional leadership requires a spirituality that lives in close relationship with and reliance on the directions of the Father through the Spirit.

Vellem in his paper titled *Spirituality and Leadership: A challenge to the UPCSA in the 21st Century*, drawing from Munroe, suggests about five essential ingredients of leadership which are vision, passion, conviction, influence and inspiration. He further argues among others that the underlying assumption in his understanding is that these attributes do not change and can be found in all leaders of integrity from generation to generation. These ingredients radiate from all people who attain iconic stature in their leadership.

I comprehend the fact that any leader must have vision, must influence, must inspire, must have conviction, must have passion, but how does one create vision, derive inspiration, show conviction and enthuse his/ her passions to others? The question is what is the source of vision? How does the leader espouse conviction? Who gives passion but how can one 'manufacture' passion? In which pot therefore, I am struggling, can we cook all these ingredients of good leadership for the church. For if the church does not ask these questions, I am certain that it shall never be in a position to produce leaders.

To imagine therefore that the church shall be able to gain leaders and nurture them while orientation to the theme of leadership is devoid of spirituality as a wasteful exercise. Unfortunately the spirituality of the church is already prescribed. The church can only follow Jesus as its best leader and emulate him in order to produce leaders.

Spiritual leadership demands self-knowledge. No one can ever lead anyone even with vision, passion, conviction and influence if they do not know who they are. Self knowledge is not only psychological rather it is lock stock and barrels a spiritual matter. Self-knowledge is one of the greatest challenges of our time for the production of leaders in the church.

Any vision of leadership must thrive because there is always a deeper spiritual inspiration that underlies it.

Spirituality is the fireplace of leadership. Meditation is like a coal in a fireplace that is inside an individual and in self imposed moments of solitary confinement. Meditation is about being absent from places that have become already synonymous with your name. Albert Nolan (2009:63) eloquently states: "...outer silence or the absence of external noise is not enough. What is really essential is inner silence". Meditation is a spiritual tool to flee inner noises, anxiety and feelings that disturb a leader from attaining a complete picture of the future and a momentous share in that hope that is yet to come in the present moment. Leadership ought to be absent from its own ambitions and desires, and meditate with its own fountain of inspiration and that is Jesus.

The missional church comprehends and believes that its leadership is among the people of God and Roxburgh and Romanuk (2006:20) concurs with this notion, hence stating that "God's future is among the regular, ordinary people of God."

According to Roxburgh and Romanuk (2006:24) this means that, at its core, missional church is how we cultivate a congregational environment where God is the centre of conversation and God shapes the focus and work of the people. We believe this shift in imagination for most congregations; it is a change in the cultural of congregational life. Missional leadership is about shaping cultural imagination within the congregation wherein people discern what God might be about among them and in their community.

The church is called to a mission, to lead and serve. This includes:

- Making our faith more relevant to everyday life, applying it to our decision-making processes and actions;
- Discovering what God might be calling each of us to do and be;
- Exploring our gifts and equipping us to serve God more confidently in daily life and in church;
- Looking at what God wants his Kingdom and Church to be like... and how our mission and ministry in the 21st century should be shaped by that;
- Developing shared ministry and leadership in the church and community.

It is apparent that leadership combines character, charisma and confidence. Therefore, the church must comprehend leadership to be a value that filters through the whole community.

9. Conclusion

This chapter presents the findings of the research. I have tried to give an apparent picture that indicates the fact that leadership exists in order to create space for the missional work of God's people to be done.

Gibbs (2005:20) conversely asserts that, the church of the twenty-first century needs missional thinkers and apostolic leadership. By missional leadership I mean leaders who can read the Scriptures with fresh eyes, relating the story of redemption to the human condition in its present cultural context – contexts that are increasingly multicultural and influenced by global trends.

It is apparent that the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church approaches missional church conversation with a sense of hopefulness, and this is motivated by the strong belief that God is present and up to something wonderful.

The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church's case in point is heartening other congregations who intend in embarking on a journey towards becoming a missional church. Being a small congregation is no excuse for being ineffective. They ought to realise that there is hope for each and every congregation. They need to be Reformed people by engaging their contextual challenges. A faithful church needs far more than a church order; it needs to figure out where it is at the moment.

This chapter presented the case-study results as an attempt to prove the three hypotheses of missional church and proposes that missional church. The supporting information collected through a congregation profile, five interview participants, and a walk-in visit from time to time and my own research journal have yielded proof that all three hypotheses are true and provable traits of missional church in this study.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research has been informative and gratifying, the previous chapters showed that all three hypotheses were tested and proven based on the limitation of the research. Some hypotheses were stronger than others yet all were accurate and attestable.

In chapter two, I have mapped the conceptual framework by bringing forth the life of mission. In chapter three I looked at the recent conversation on the missional church and my understanding of the missional church thereof. In chapter five, the researcher presented research results; I have engaged in the process of research and have proven beyond reasonable doubt that the people from the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church have a passion for what God is up to in the world and how they and their congregation can be a part of it. Even where confusion and frustration existed, hope endures.

In addition, I have looked at the church and its understanding of *being* that leads to *doing*, rather than starting with doing. In order to discover what becoming a missional church looks like for the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church, maybe a helpful way to move forward would be to better comprehend how people in their context relate to God.

Analysing the polity of UPCSAs, Presbyterianism uses a representative eldership model that under pressure from its ethos favours intellectual matters such as knowledge, appreciation and order rather than emotion. UPCSAs are not immune to the polity mentioned above and can not simply become missional by changing the language of the Manual of Faith and Order. The church does not necessitate an amended polity, what is needed is a hypothesis swing in the church's self-awareness: moving away from maintenance (struggle for survival) and toward a vision of the Church that is grounded in spiritual discernment and focuses on cultural change and mission transformation. Missional polity ought to facilitate a commitment from the members of the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church, in order for it to be a different kind of church. Determining a more missional polity will afford the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church the possibility to pose itself some deep-seated questions: What part of God's mission in this community is God calling us for, and are we in essence ready to be sent? Is the structure of the UPCSAs and Beach Mission Presbyterian Church designed in a manner that accommodates mission? What is missional polity? Why do we need a new form of Government? Do the UPCSAs and Beach Mission Presbyterian Church have more important issues than being missional? Doesn't flexibility mean local option? What about property clause? Why Councils and not governing bodies? (Acts 15) Missional polity: Will it really help the Church? Is our current polity a living covenant between people and God?

It is my humble conclusion that the focus of the topic I have been working on, is not first and foremost about the church, its processes and inner functions, or perhaps its model nature and identity. The focus has been about God and his mission. The Beach Mission Presbyterian Church ought to comprehend the indisputable fact that it is just an instrument for *missio Dei* or to put it simply it is nothing more than a delivery means for the gospel. Wright (2010:31) asserts that, but at the end of the day, mission is a matter of loyalty. The ambassador must have complete loyalty to the government he or she represents. A trusted messenger will faithfully deliver what his sender said, not his own opinions. The church is a rejected community sent out to bring about transformation to the world. In essence, one wonders if the church does comprehend the world in which it is sent out to? Does it comprehend God, who has sent it?

The church is expected to be in a firm position for making a remarkable distinction between itself and the world, however not ignoring the fact that it exists in such a world, as it has been cited in scripture that Christians are in the world, but not of this world (John 17:16).

It is my humble submission that in my entire life I have not seen the salt failing to season food and the light failing to remove darkness. Beach Mission Presbyterian Church is called to be the salt for the earth and the light in the world (Mt 5:13-14); as a result it should also influence its context. The context influences the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church too. What a great blessing Beach Mission Presbyterian Church is to the

community of Durban Central. Because the human race lies in ignorance and evil, it is a vast, unsavoury heap that is ready to decay, but God sent the Beach Mission Presbyterian Church to light and season the community of Durban Central, by its teaching with knowledge of grace, so making it acceptable to God.

For much too long we have been recipients of the benefits of the gospel, and with few exceptions most of our church communities do not anticipate, let alone participate in, mission. We do not see it as our duty to go and spread the good news to people within our own communities, or to people far beyond the borders of our own communities. This is disobedience to the words of the Lord of heaven and earth. We must repent of this sin and make up his call to make disciples of all nations. That is as basic as the fact that 'water in a river always runs downstream' (Nyang, Cameroon).

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ADDENDUM A

The Analysis of Interviews.

Participants were not comfortable with request to record discussion on audio and did not mind me taking notes.

1. What part of God's mission in this area/ community is God calling you for, and are you in essence ready to be sent?

Evangelism:

- This church is in the centre of a community characterised by poverty, high crime levels, prostitution and a high proportion of foreign nationals.
- The congregation is situated a few meters away from the beautiful beach of Durban which is a world tourist destination.
- It is again a few meters from Addington hospital which as a public hospital is home to the poor sick members of the community.
- Considering the above stated facts, the church is adequately positioned to pronounce the love, the caring and mercy of God to all His people regardless of the plight they are suffering. In this way hope can be revealed and the community can then change for the better.

Yes we are ready to take on the armour of God and proclaim his word to His people so that Christ can be revealed in them and they may be saved.

2. Where is God intending you to be as a congregation?

- This church has the ability to be a spiritual home to the rich tourists and in addition to that it can provide shelter to the needy in difficult times.
- The church is to be developed to be a multipurpose centre that can take care of various needs in this community.
- Unfortunately the site is not so big but a multi storey building would be the best option in expanding the work of God in this area.

3. How do you intend to get there?

- Believing that God is the provider and that in Him there is no failure will need to be instilled in the minds of every congregant.
- Application to the relevant structure of the UPCSA general assembly in addition to other fundraising activities like imparting skills to the congregants particularly the unemployed. Examples of such projects would be bead making, knitting; musical groups etc and all of these would be beneficial to the tourists and other members of the larger community of Durban.
- The EThekweni Municipality and other stake holders involved with social aspects of the community including the business sector and

the Department of Justice and Social responsibility would need to be approached to afford them an opportunity to be participants in this programme.

4. *1Corinthians 11: 23-26 (Narrative of the Institute) gives the base of being a missional church (Calling/ Mission, Celebration/Remembrance, Suffering/Struggles and Sent out):*

"He took.....": Calling

"He gave thanks....": Celebration

"He Broke.....": Suffering/ Struggles

"He gave...": Sent out

Do you understand this as the core characteristics of a missional church: being, not just doing, mission. How do you intend to live it out?

- Yes this is absolutely this should be the way of life for a mission driven church and the "Word" must be proclaimed on a regular basis whilst celebrating every single achievement. This church must be the home to the destitute and the community at large. Clear large directions caring the UPCS logo to this church must be visible from all routes leading to the Durban beaches. In this way the church will be an excellent spiritual revitalising centre to holiday makers and other members of the community.

5. *Have you discerned to being the church in, with and under the neighbours, co-workers and strangers of people's everyday lives?*

- Yes, as we listen to stories, we are able to discern what God is up to in the neighbourhood. Even though this feels like the most difficult step to take. We practice discernment and naming of what we believe God might be up to in our neighbourhoods. This discernment process comes through our dwelling in the Word together and listening to the stories of people in the neighbourhood.

- Our church is situated in the midst of marginalised and under-privileged people, we often put on events for them. We really get fulfilled by seeing them coming to enjoy what we provide. However, what hassled me most is that: we can provide forever, but these people are not going to be part of our church. I can't put a finger on a problem. (Interview A,2011:1)

Louisa uttered, "I am getting discouraged". "We spend most of our time in these meetings dealing with the concerns of our own congregation, and I think mission means more than that. I know there must be needs in our community that the church should be meeting, but we can't seem to find out what they are." (Interview B,2011:1)

Sikhumbuzo said: "Our choir serves as an outreach ministry even while its primary role is to lead worship." (Interview C,2011:1)

"The Presbyterian theology keeps our focus on the centre, which is the Word and Christ, and seeking first the kingdom and all else will follow...That is what drew us to Beach Mission Presbyterian Church, the focus on the centre. There one thing in our life that's rock solid, and that is Beach Mission Presbyterian Church. It's the most humble group of people." (Interview C, 2011:2)

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