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Title: Belhar Confession and liturgy. A hymnological study

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Declaration

I hereby declare that 'Belhar Confession and liturgy. A hymnological study' is my own work and that all sources that I have used have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Mr E.M. Mofokeng

This mini-dissertation is dedicated to my late father who passed on 2012 due to a short illness, and to the Glory of God and also the love of music.

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Key words

Belhar Confession, liturgical ritual, hymnology, music, Dutch Reformed Church.
Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa, Unity, justice and reconciliation

Abstract

Much study regarding the Belhar Confession has been conducted already such as: The Belhar Confession in its historical context Plaatjies-van Huffel (2014), Chronicle of Conference Barman/ Belhar Consultation 18 and 19 October 2004 Hansen (2005), A gift from heaven-the receptions in the Belhar Confession in the period 1982-2000 and its ecumenical significance today Naudè (2003) and On violence, the Belhar Confession and human dignity Koopman (2008) to mention but a few. From preliminary observations and some initial research, it seems that there is still a need to do an in-depth study on the liturgical function of the Belhar Confession in Music. The working hypothesis of this study is if the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa URCSA uses Belhar more in the liturgy, especially in singing it will have an impact on the congregations and members. In other words the working hypothesis is that there is a link between liturgy, here specifically hymn singing, and the formation of worshippers. If URCSA is expecting others to adopt this confession it is its responsibility to embrace it during worship in church and to the rest of the society outside church vicinities. The literature survey that will be carried out later in this study confirms this state of affairs and that there is thus indeed a huge research gap in this regard. The researcher did a literature study, conducted semi-structured group interviews, as well as the some empirical research in order to explore the basic research question.

Chapter 1

Methodology and theory

1.1 Introduction

This mini-dissertation is focusing on possible ways in which the Belhar Confession (sometimes called Belhar) can be used in music as a liturgical ritual (cf. Barnard, Cilliers & Wepener, 2014) in the church. The aim of this research is to study the current use of the Belhar Confession in churches of URCSA and how best it can be developed and be used in music so that other churches can also find it useful to incorporate it in their liturgy. As Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) and URCSA are still in the process of reunification, the study will try to find pieces of the puzzle from Practical Theology and the way in which liturgy can make a contribution towards the larger process of hymnological contribution. The history of music will be traced from both the New and Old Testament. Guidance will also develop through research on how some of the churches in URCSA managed to recite the Belhar Confession from their hearts.

This mini-dissertation can be situated in Practical Theology in general and in particular Liturgical Studies and Hymnology, given the fact that the church has used musical texts to carry belief and teaching. In the literature study and course work the researcher conducted at Oslo in Norway, it will come to light that a fresh perspective is indeed vital and deliberation on the function of music in a different contemporary context will improve knowledge in this regard. According to Ferguson (1994: 253), “a wide variety of music instruments can be used effectively in accompanying hymns and anthems”. Different churches use various instrument when singing during worship service and other instruments are even forbidden depending on the context. The role of instruments in the church will also be discussed briefly in this study.

1.2 Problem Formulation

The problem is now that the URCSA and DRC are in a comfort zone and the leaders don't realise the importance of being united for the sake of the whole nation and the kingdom of God. This argument is also well supported by Wepener (2009: 05), "part of this South African need for reconciliation can also be understood in a broader sense and related to the concept of the church reunification. It is true that this necessity for church reunification in DRC family has its origins partially in a ritual that was, among other things, intended to bind Christians closer together, but exactly the opposite effect." However even if church leaders do not take unification into consideration the fact is that South Africa needs a united church because of the system in which political leaders are used to doing things, it is by a united church that politicians can be guided to respect the law of the country, to respect the constitution and obey the Word of God.

For example, in this country, the president, and his or her cabinet have the right to decide on behalf of the country but in the Reformed church, the moderator and his or her modaramen must listen to the church leaders at the branch level and then approve what is recommended by the congregations. The issue of the Belhar Confession is not accepted by other Reformed churches like DRC because it is a document that was introduced at the synod level and then taken down to the congregations to decide and vote on it whether they accept or reject it as their confession. But one of the themes about this confession is unity as both a gift and obligation for the church. Therefore Wepener (2009: 07) "recommend that every Christian church in South Africa should make its own unique contributions which no other institution in South Africa can make towards the process of reconciliation." This unity originally referred to non-segregation between Christians of different races, this mini-dissertation is motivated by music as part of the solution.

1.3 Motivation for the study

This study precipitates questions such as how can singing the Belhar Confession serve an on-going journey towards reunification between the URCSA and DRC. The main question this study is trying to answer is how can singing the Belhar Confession best become a facilitator in the process of reunification between those churches. The study will be dealing with the purpose of music in a worship service, as well as the role of the Belhar Confession in a liturgy for Sunday service in different congregations. It is important to also look into the division of those churches and what guidance does the scripture provide for this challenge. Some church historical background is thus also necessary as well as theological reflection regarding church unity. However, throughout, the focus will be on liturgy and hymnology. Theologically one may argue that it is Jesus's prayer that we should be one from the gospel of John 17.

1.4 Research process

The study will be based on both empirical work and a literature study. The empirical work consists of fieldwork by means of focus group interviews. The involvement of this research as a participant observer will form a major part of the fieldwork. As a regular worshipper at URCSA Melodi ya Tshwane Congregation, the first-hand experience of the music employed in the service will be reflected on and the way in which the Belhar Confession is used in the liturgy during Sunday worship.

1.5 Method and theory of the study

There are four tasks of Practical Theology which are provided by Osmer (2008:11) namely: "Descriptive empirical, interpretive, normative and pragmatic. The four outlined above takes place in preaching, pastoral care, evangelism, spirituality, Christian education, singing and other ministerial practices. But this is not to say that they form part of ministry identical." Osmer (2008:13) also writes that "it is very clear each focuses on a particular task of ministry, which involves specific practices, skills, and concepts.

But it is to say, ‘they overlap in a significant ways and share a common structure of practical theological interpretation’”

- **Descriptive empirical task**

This kind of a task is about priestly listening according to Osmer (2008: 34) “the key term for this task is “attending,” relating to others with openness, attentiveness, and prayerfulness.” It is true that attending opens up the possibility of a good relationship and in liturgy there is a drama that is acted out by the liturgist and the congregation which can create a good presence of the Holy Spirit if it is done well with one common goal. Since the Belhar Confession is serving a purpose of reconciling churches good music composed in the form of a prayer using the main contents of this creed can help in rebuilding a relationship between DRC and URCSA. Osmer also alludes to a continuum of attendance which is helpful to conceptualise the relationship between a spirituality of presence and the descriptive empirical task of practical theological interpretation along the lines of a continuum. One cannot omit the fact that at one end of the continuum is informal attending. That has to do with the quality of attending in everyday life. The study is attempting to find ways in which the Belhar Confession can be used in music so that at the end it becomes part of people’s daily life.

- **Interpretive task**

The more interesting part of this task is theoretical interpretation according to Osmer (2008: 83), “this is the ability to draw on theories of the arts and sciences to understand and respond to particular episodes, situations, or contexts.” In liturgy it is often a need for one to be able to draw suitable theories that can work best for the members who are taking part in a worship service.

- **Normative task**

This kind of task according to Osmer (2008: 132) is described in terms of prophetic discernment. [...] And Levenson, Sinai and Zion cited by Osmer (2008: 133) “the theological dimension of prophetic discernment becomes clear if we

recall two understandings of the covenant that were present in Israel during the period of classical prophecy” When one looks into the Belhar Confession there is a prophecy that the church will take its journey slowly to unity and ultimately it will be one.

- **Pragmatic task**

This is a good task that is required for this study as Osmer writes (2008:176), “it provides strategies of action that influence events in ways that are desirable.” It is clear that the unity of the church is a need therefore for all strategies that may possibly help in this regard are important hence singing the Belhar Confession as intended by this study can be one of the approaches.

1.6 Literature review

The question for this research project will provide a wider discussion on liturgical text by the churches (denominational, national, or local) Hymn books, commentary on the liturgy, denominational reports, which often show some of the principles incorporated in the liturgy, articles, on results of liturgical research, church service, Records of synod debates, synod papers, reports from revision committees, online and web-based data. The study will use primary liturgical texts as well as academic sources. For example the liturgical book of URCSA and other books published by the authority of the church body that contains a text about liturgy.

1.7 Objectives

In general the objective is to develop a hymnological theory for praxis and the aim of this study is to establish a way of training and developing skills which will help the people to learn to make the Belhar Confession part of their daily life and include it in their liturgy at every Sunday service. There is a need for skills and training for their benefit. Singing the Belhar Confession can be a helpful space for reunification between DRC and URCSA.

- (i) Create a possible way in which the Belhar Confession can be part of the liturgy in every Sunday worship service and the air we breathe in our daily Christian life. Inside and outside the church
- (ii) The role of the Belhar Confession in illuminating the ethical challenges facing South Africans in the post- apartheid era, some of the possible suggestions in which URCSA can respond to them so that others like DRC may also join this strategy. For example, Landman asks a question (2004: 283), “can justice be embodied in sexist language?” and this is a critical question when considering language in the contents of the Belhar Confession.
- (iii) The study will also briefly look into the cause of division between churches.
- (iv) The way in which music can help to facilitate the process of reunification and examine aspects of music pertaining to didactic, apotropaic and ecstatic issues by taking in different expressions accompanying music like dancing and clapping of hands using music instruments in worship services.
- (v) An empirical study in an attempt to better understand the problem.

1.8 Research Method

The research will consist primarily of a literature study. Traditional views about music in URCSA and DRC. Data collection from sources will be analysed. The comparison will be completed and assessed. After processing data it will finally be synthesised and conclusions will be drawn. In order to achieve the purpose of this study, a general overview of the role of the Belhar Confession, music in URCSA, the Old, and New Testaments will be conducted. The hermeneutical and exegetical assessment of the relevant references will be demonstrated. The results will be interpreted in the light of the music and liturgy tradition of the URCSA. The appreciation of the Belhar Confession and music will be seen within this background. From history, music has played a vital role in the church during worship its importance now and then will also be emphasised.

In order to appreciate the use of musical instruments, there will be a comparison in the use of the instruments in churches.

1.9 The hypothesis for this study is as follows:

The history and role of the Belhar Confession in URCSA, the function of music as a tool in which the Belhar Confession can be incorporated in order to influence other churches such as the DRC to use it as part of the liturgy during a process of reunification.

1.10 Chapter division and orthographical remarks.

The structure of the study will be developed as follows:

Chapter 1 constitutes of the introduction. It outlines the study by stating the actuality, problem, objectives, method, and working hypothesis of the study.

Chapter 2 A closer look at the Belhar Confession its historical background, contents and the way it is currently used in URCSA congregations

Chapter 3 Deals with liturgical ritual and liturgy after liturgy which incorporates principles of the Belhar Confession.

Chapter 4 The role of music as a liturgical ritual that can be used in the liturgy during a church worship.

Chapter 5 the way in which the Belhar Confession can be incorporated into the liturgy of URCSA in order to inspire other churches to find the impetus of using the Belhar Confession.

Chapter 6 it is consist of the synthesis and conclusion. The issues raised will be brought to conclusion after comparing the findings from the given information.

The adjusted Harvard reference system will be followed in this study. Unless otherwise indicated the translation of Bible choice is the English Standard Version (ESV) for comparison The New King James Version (NKJV) will be utilised.

Chapter 2

History of the Belhar Confession and its significance to URCSA

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the focus will be on the historical meaning of the Belhar Confession and its significance for the URCSA. It will also trace the origin of the Belhar Confession and describe the event that leads up to the authorship. In this regard, references will be made to the important role played by students, various churches, leaders, church communities and church meetings. This chapter will also attempt to answer the following question: What does the Belhar Confession say about violence and human dignity? How the Belhar Confession relates to ecumenical creeds. Since the story of the Belhar Confession is also placed within the context of the broader challenge of church unity and reunification. This chapter will also outline the current status of the Belhar Confession. It is also important to look at the feminist theological perspective when embarking on a journey to reunification it can be helpful in providing the correct use of language. The best way that the Belhar Confession can be used in liturgical ritual and hymnological theory so that the DRC will realise the importance of this confession together with its contents.

2.2 What is a Confession of faith?

Before getting to the history of the Belhar Confession, maybe it is best to define the term 'confession' within a context of a Belhar confession. The easy and brief way of defining a confession is to call it a formal statement of doctrinal belief intended for public declaration by individuals or congregations. Apartheid was a public issue that is why the Belhar Confession was born as a statement, declaring apartheid as a heresy. According to Naudè (1997: 156)

A confession of faith cannot be carefully planned like a systematic theology or a catechism. The very nature of a confession as a moment of truth when the

church is hit on the mouth to proclaim credo (Barth), renders it highly contextual and time bound, though obviously not without wider and further significance beyond its own time. This Kairos-character does nevertheless not detract from the fact that a confession does not “fall from the sky” without significant antecedent developments.

Often people involved in writing and accepting a confession bring with them their own histories and shared beliefs. A confession is what it is because it aims at a renewed interpretation of what is known but presently lost visibility. The social, economic and political developments that lead and ‘informs’ confession are mostly not neutral, and due to their theological interpretation, the confessions themselves are at stake in the act of confession. Therefore it is important for the confessing church to understand the act of confessing. Congregants should confess the truth and what they believe

2.3 Belhar Confession and the confessing church?

The Belhar Confession’s power also lies in constantly keeping the context and preaching preceding tradition from which it grew in mind. Like a responsible hermeneutic of the Bible requires some understanding of the world behind the text as well as the possible layers in the text and its formation, it would be wise to investigate some of the important texts historical core of the Belhar Confession. In Naudè’s work (1997: 156), “it is noted that a confession is not a report. Neither should one look for mere verbal agreements or corresponding phrases that might be important like in ancient text comparisons and text-critical work on the Bible.” It is vital to find some theological coherence among a selection of documents critical of apartheid preceding the Belhar Confession and see how best it can be used in liturgy in a form of hymnology. The historical gathering cry of Reformed Christian is *“ecclesia reformata, Semper reformanda”* (the church reform and must always be reforming). Some add the words *“secundum verbum Dei”* (according to the Word of God) (Damon 2010:21), and the church confesses because there is a need to address something

2.4 Confession address both outsiders and insiders

Most of the confessions are born because there is a need to be addressed and the church will be identified in the confession. One can easily understand the faith of a particular congregation through its confession. Naudè writes (2010: 99), “Barth makes it clear that the creed defines the character of the Christian community to outsiders and gives guidance for the community’s own doctrine and life.” The implied “method” here is that a confession exerts pressure on the rest of the church, and through the church, in the world. Let us start with these “outsiders.” The Belhar Confession was drafted to give a true reflection of Christians who do not compromise on any policy or doctrine which is contrary to the Word of God. (Barth) suggests that the creed “addresses itself to the widest possible public.” If one considers Naudè (2010: 81), for him this is the reason open letters often accompany creeds and at the outside of the Reformation, it requires major theological work. A creed is not a religious in-house document but a public witness, speaking to whoever is in reach and will listen. The seeking of an “outside” public is no cheap media event to draw attention to the confessing church. The requirement of “publicity” stems from both the basis and the purpose of the confession. Its basis is divine revelation, to which the church is called to witness in the world. Confession’s purpose is replying to a counter-doctrine that already has a public status. However, the idea of a private confession makes no theological or practical sense.

In the context of concrete history, the public audience is probably restricted to those within the concrete history; the public audience is probably restricted to those within the country or to the churches (both for and against) for within the creed implicitly or explicitly speaks. The truth of the creed, though spoken under specific circumstance, is not mere contextual truth limited by time and space. Even if it deals with an aspect of the gospel most urgent in the situation, the idea is now given to the entire Christian church by the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. The apartheid years was a very painful period for the oppressed and after that oppression, a creed had to be drafted for the transformation of a better life with democracy in South Africa. The URCSA took a lead

by producing a gift by the name of Belhar Confession which is a historical document for the church to break the silence against oppression. The Belhar Confession also has an accompanying letter like other creeds.

2.5 Accompanying letter

A letter helps to give clarity to a confession; therefore an accompanying letter is always present in the Reformed tradition when there is a new confession. Naudè (2010: 98)

The accompanying letter speaks clearly in its third and fourth paragraphs, stating that there is attitudes and conduct, that work against the gospel and that require continuous, collective soul-searching. In a prefiguring of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which came more than a decade later, the letter says that the confession which comes more than a decade later, demands the pain of repentance, renewal and a changed way of life

The prayer is a new beginning as we walk together on, “the road of reconciliation and justice.” As Wepener (2009: 52) writes, “the Christian church has a treasure at its disposal with regard to reconciliation rituals...” and indeed we are on a journey to discover the treasure and it is not an easy one considering where we came from, some of the people were comfortable enjoying the privileges now it’s time to share, where does one start? Because it is one of the key issues in unity. When people are united they help one another, they carry each other’s burdens, when one thinks of a unity that person must be willing to sacrifice something voluble, be prepared to swallow their pride for the sake of peace and unity. Drafting of the Belhar Confession is challenging the church to also swallow its pride and reconcile.

2.6 History of Belhar Confession

The birth of the Belhar Confession is from the roots of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. As Damon (2010:03) writes, “it was drafted in 1982 by the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC). Which took the lead in declaring a status confessionis concerning apartheid stating that, the truth of the gospel was at stake.” The interesting thing about the Belhar Confession is even though it was drafted against apartheid there is no direct mention of the word apartheid and that means it is open for acceptance and adoption by any churches in this democratic era. The confession was produced to fight against the decision of the synod during the eighteenth century.

2.7 Important dates in history of Belhar Confession

For one to be engaged in the history of the Belhar Confession it is crucial to note some important dates. Damon has written a very helpful study guide about the Belhar Confession where she articulates the essential dates about the Belhar Confession.

Damon (2010: 04)

1652 The Dutch form a station at the Cape of South Africa and introduce slavery.

1857 The Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa decides to have a separate service for “coloured” members (though discrimination at the Lord’s Supper is already occurring).

1881 The Dutch Reformed Mission Church is established by the white Dutch Reformed Church for people of colour.

1951 The Dutch Reformed Church in Africa is established for “blacks.”

1978 The Dutch Reformed Mission Church and Dutch Reformed Church in Africa decided to work for unity, a goal that took sixteen years to fulfil.

1982 The World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) declares a status confession concerning apartheid. (Status confession is a Latin term meaning “that which is foundational for belief and behaviour” and must be affirmed by professing members of the church.) WARC calls apartheid a heresy and suspends the white Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa later that same year; the synod of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (meeting in Belhar) declares a status confessionis regarding apartheid and drafts that become known as the Belhar Confession.

1986 The Dutch Reformed Mission Church formally adopts the Belhar Confession as its fourth standard of unity, alongside the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, and the Canons of Dort. Belhar’s theological confrontation of the sin of racism has made possible reconciliation among Reformed churches in Southern Africa and has aided the process of reconciliation within the nation of South Africa. The DRMC took the lead in declaring that apartheid constituted as a status confessionis in which the truth of the gospel was at stake.

1994 When the DRMC and the DRCA (Dutch Reformed Church in Africa unified) forming the new church, the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA), the Belhar Confession becomes part of the confessional basis of URCSA.

2009 The Christian Reformed Church’s (CRC) synod proposes to Synod 2012 the adoption of the Belhar Confession as a fourth confession of the CRC.

2010 The General Synod of the Reformed Church in America (RCA) officially adopts the Belhar Confession as its fourth confession.

2012 The Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) adopts “the Belhar Confession and its accompanying documents (the Accompanying Letter from the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa and the joint statement of

the RCA and CRC) as an Ecumenical Faith Declaration,” recommending it “to the churches for study and for incorporation of its themes into their discipline and liturgical ministries” (Acts of Synod 2012, p. 767). The CRCNA is currently in conversation with churches in ecclesiastical fellowship regarding the definition of “Ecumenical Faith Declaration.” The Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa has offered the Belhar Confession as a gift to the entire family of Reformed churches worldwide.

2011 The meeting of the General Assembly of the DRC decides that processes to make the Belhar Confession part of the confessional base of the DRC should be initiated by its leadership. The DRC opinion of the Belhar Confession had varied over the years. Initially, they rejected the confession as being a political document or as a statement of liberation theology, but sometime later the DRC acknowledged that the document’s contents were true, with the stipulation that references in the Belhar Confession. This history should also say something about the historical location.

After knowing the history of the dates one still has to understand the context in which the Belhar Confession was written, the reasons behind the authorship and also the audience or recipient of this wonderful creed.

2.8 Geographical and historical location of Belhar Confession

This is where one asks the following questions: Where, why and when was the Belhar Confession written? Does the geographical location influence the content? Was it where targeted audiences were located and what was their situation? Hence Plaatjies-van Huffel (2014:304) notes that, “if the situation and the location of the audience are misunderstood, the principles in the Belhar Confession, namely unity, reconciliation, and justice, can easily be misapplied.” This document like any other classical confession, originated in a specific historical context, the name *Belhar* in the Confession refers to a township in Cape Town, Constituted by the apartheid government for the so-called

coloured people in which to reside. According to Plaatjies-van Huffel (2014:305), “the apartheid government had set up semi-urban townships for black, Indian and coloured population groups, of which the Belhar Confession is merely one of them.”

The Belhar Confession has its own history and confession relating specifically to the sacramental issues in the BEM (Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry) process. According to Thompsoi (2006), the division at the table of the Lord twice emerged, “officially as a painful sign of sin and disunity: when converts from indigenous peoples were in some instances served the Lords’ Supper separately, the Cape Synod of 1857 opened the possibility to sanction this practice which in turn contributed to the founding of a separate “Mission Church” in 1881. And 1982 at the WARC meeting in Ottawa, the delegation of the DRMC did not see its way open to sharing the table with those who were supporting the doctrinal view just declared a *status confessionis*. Although the division pertaining to the Holy Communion in the DRC family is not at the same level as those among the main church traditions, it has served as both a painful sign of separation and at many local occasions as a joyful sign of growth related to the vision emerging later from the BEM process, and which, needless to say, remains a continual gift and task to the church. Therefore it is important to talk and understand its origin”.

2.9 The origins of Belhar Confession

Belhar Confession was formally written and introduced to the church just like any other creed. The Belhar Confession also had an accompanying letter as Adonis (2006:234) writes:

In 1950 a certain Mr. J Abraham sent a letter on behalf of 116 church members belonging to 27 congregations of the former DR Mission Church to its model ramen in which it was declared that the apartheid policy was unchristian and therefore, it must be rejected and not be applied in the church nor in the rest of the country. The leadership of both the DRC and DMC (Dutch Mission Church) did not deem fit to support these members. At their 1950 synod, the former

DRMC had already decided that they would neither reject nor approve a political policy. It appears, therefore as if this decision of the DRMC synod was not consistently followed.

In the course of time, the former DRMC would condemn more and more aspects of the apartheid policy. In the 1970's it was requested to evaluate it theologically. This request came from the Theological School of the DRMC, which already was at the time a Faculty of the University of the Western Cape. Prof JJF Durand and the theological students played an important role in this theological evaluation of apartheid. The students came to the conclusion that the forced separation of people contradicts the gospel of reconciliation. They expressed the wish that the DR Mission Church should officially endorse this position Adonis (2006: 251- 252). Three ministers, Revs JJF Mettler, IJ Mentor and RJ Stevens, presented this position to the synod of the DRMC. From this initiative it is so impressive that even theological students took part, because in most cases theological students are not given the opportunity of have a say in documents of the church and they become reluctant to practise what they don't understand after their ordination. The central aspect this position was that the apartheid policy of the government was contradictory to the gospel of Jesus Christ Adonis (2006: 252):

This position was discussed by the synod and after several amendments, it was accepted. This decision was an important milestone for the synod since the policy of apartheid was seen as contradicting the gospel and therefore it should be rejected. At the same time, the mission policy of the DR Church was also rejected. With its rejection of the policy of apartheid, the DRMC made a very clear decision in favor of the (re-) unification of the family of DR Churches. The decision that the policy of apartheid is contrary to the gospel also strengthened the desire for structural church unification

In the words of Plaatjies-van Huffel (2014:303)

The World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) general assembly declared that the situation in South Africa constituted a status confessionis. According to Smit, one of the co-drafters of the Belhar Confession, the expression status confessionis means “that a Christian, a group of Christians, a church, or a group of churches are of the opinion that a situation has developed, a moment of truth has dawned, in Which nothing less than the gospel itself, their most fundamental confession concerning the Christian gospel, is at stake, so that they feel compelled to witness and act over against this threat”.

Apartheid constituted a status confessionis in which the truth of the gospel and the Reformed faith was at stake. Status confessionis, therefore, means that it was impossible to disagree on the issue of apartheid without the integrity of the common confession of the Reformed church being seriously endangered. The question is what is the Belhar Confession saying about the apartheid policy?

2.10 Belhar Confession and apartheid policy

It goes without saying that the apartheid policy gave birth to the Belhar Confession. The origins of Belhar Confession are in a certain sense very closely connected to the apartheid policy of the National Party. Already in 1950 the former Presbytery of Wynberg of the DRMC became directly involved with the policies of apartheid according to Loff (1998:248), “by then the National Party of Doctor Malan had already won its political victory and implemented its apartheid policy. Already in the Kerkbode of 22 September 1948, the policy of apartheid was called a “church policy” Loff (1998:233).” At this point, the method to be used in order for Christians to use this confession was not yet discussed but the assumption was that it will be used as part of the liturgy just like any other confession. However, the aim of this mini-dissertation is to create a space in the liturgy for this confession to be used and because of its value the Belhar Confession has continually challenged us to live out that which is believed and confess not only by the family of the DRC.

If the message of this confession is understood correctly, then it is for the church in its broadest sense, as well as for society and the world in which we live. A Christians confess in the words of the Belhar Confession indeed has to mean something for this world, and the Belhar Confession for years has inspired many Christians. It can also be interesting to know the meaning behind the authorship

2.11 The authorship of Belhar Confession

The authorship of the Belhar Confession was not penned by one person alone. According to Plaatjies-van Huffel (2014: 312)

The synod appointed a committee, consisting of Rev. Isak Mentor, moderator of the DRMC, Rev. Dr. Allan Boesak, vice-moderator of the DRMC, and three lecturers from the University of the Western Cape (UWC) namely, Dr. Dirkie Smit, Prof. Jaap Durand and Prof. Gustav Bam, to draw up a draft confession of faith, known today as the Belhar Confession. Dirkie Smit, Jaap Durand, and Gustav Bam had been lecturing at UWC, at the time a racially segregated tertiary institution. The drafters of the Belhar Confession were all people who were held in high regard in the DRMC.

All those people who were involved in the authorship of the Belhar Confession were well experienced in church issues as well as in academic writing. The committee consists of people who were capable of fighting apartheid and while being sensitive towards both victims and perpetrators. Plaatjies-van Huffel also concurs with Kritzinger (2014:312)

Confessions are formally approved in the Reformed tradition by a specific church; on the basis of a well establish procedure involving local (church council), regional (presbytery) and national (synod) bodies. If a confession has been formally approved by a Reformed church, that church “speaks” or “confesses” that particular confession, not the individual authors who formulated it or the committee which proposed it to the church. Communal authorship and

ownership are therefore operative in the Belhar Confession. One should always remember that any text, once written, has little to do with the author.

It is pertinent that there was not a hymnologist in the commission to suggest the best hymns to complement this beautiful creed; it does not only require a church that can sing it, but a melody which will go with words. But it is an on-going project to create a hymn and melody in order to keep it alive in the life of Christians. It should be part of the liturgy used in church because the confession has great significance since its origin was drafted in different colours. This study finds it important to talk about the significance of those colours.

2.12 Significant of colours used when drafting Belhar Confession.

Since the first handwritten document of the Belhar Confession was green and red due to the fact that this study is about liturgy, it is proper to give the liturgical meaning of those colours and one may even see the prophetic meaning of the confession itself. There is a season after Pentecost it is the longest season of the liturgical year it is a continuation of the “time of the church” that began on the Sunday after Epiphany. Du Toit (2015), “it explores the mission of the church and uses the colour of Green, symbolizing growth.” According to de Toit (2015:44), “it is at the beginning Sunday of apocalyptic actuation.” Pentecostal red is also the traditional colour for Reformation Day on October 31st. During other observances, the tradition is to use red on the commemoration of martyrs and other saints. As the colour of the Holy Spirit, it is appropriate for ordination. From this colour one can clearly see the prophecy from the Belhar Confession. It is clear that prophecy during the time of the drafting of the Belhar Confession was abundant, it was simply a way of saying to all the Reformed churches there is a need to grow in unison. The church must always be Reformed and it can be Reformed effectively when it is united. What happened during the time of the first drafting of Belhar Confession?

2.13 First drafted of Belhar Confession

One can note from the works of Plaatjies-van Huffel (2014:301)

After she held in her hand the first time the original text of the Belhar Confession it was handwritten in green and red ink by Prof. Dirkie Smit, one of the co-drafters of the Belhar Confession. Until recently, the original documents were never disclosed. Smith kept the original draft of the Belhar Confession in a drawer in his study for more than thirty years.

Perhaps he kept the original draft for all those years so that they can be used in the future for further academic research. Plaatjies-van Huffel (2014:301) goes on and say:

The file which Dirkie Smit handed to her consists of the early handwritten notes, the first draft, and the first English and German translations of the Belhar Confession as well as the accompanying letter. Much had changed in the final draft before it was tabled at the synod. The insertions, changes, deletions and even omission by the commission can easily be seen in the original handwritten documents. The handwritten text was typed by Ms. Pontac, the administrative clerk in Prof. Jaap Durand's office at UWC. After all this hard work the drafted document still had to be presented by the commission as the formal draft of Belhar Confession and it still has to go for evaluation at the congregations.

2.14 Evaluation of Belhar Confession

After drafting a confession, it is not the end of the process, only the beginning, congregations then have to evaluate and voice their views on the draft of the Belhar Confession. That is why Plaatjies-van Huffel (2014: 265, 175) writes, "it was also decided that lesser church bodies would also be given the opportunity to evaluate the confession". After this preceding process was completed, the drafted confession was accepted by the synod. The draft confession was also sent to the congregations and presbyteries of the church with the intention that these lesser bodies should also

express their opinion on the matter. Dr. Loff mentions in his outstanding study that by 26 November 1985 only 161 of the 267 congregations had not yet reported back. Of the 32 presbyteries, only eleven did not respond Plaatjies-van Huffel (2014:265). During the synod of 1986, it was clear that since 1982 there was no objection against the formulation in paragraph 4 of the draft- confession, namely the God is “ in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged” (ibid: 266,183).

2.15 Table drafted by Damon (2010:20):

Ecumenical Faith Declaration	Birthplace/ Date	Context	Purpose
Belhar Confession	Cape Town, South Africa, in the suburb of Belhar, 1982, 1986	Unjust, racist system of government in South Africa called apartheid	In opposition to apartheid, to affirm the unity of the church, reconciliation between peoples, and God’s justice for the poor and destitute.

2.16 The status confessions

Adonis (2006:235) writes: “The WARC also declared that the political policy of apartheid was considered a sin and that its moral and theological justification was a travesty of the gospel, and its persistent disobedience to the Word of God, a theological heresy” (ibid, 261). The result of all of this was that the World Alliance took action against the two offending South African churches by deciding to suspend their membership in the organisation until they distance themselves from the ideology and policy of apartheid.

The action by the World Alliance against the two Reformed churches came before the DRMC Synod in 1982 via its Commission for Ecumenical Matters (Acta Synodi, 1982). The above table has demonstrated the close comparison between the Belhar Confession and other creeds and it looks like there is a closer link between the Belhar Confession and the Barmen Declaration.

2.17 Belhar and Barmen Declaration

With the historical overview of the Belhar Confession and the Barmen Declaration in mind, “the on-going ecumenical conversation in the tradition of Barmen and Belhar can indeed help us to find a common language, a language of freedom, unity, reconciliation, justice and responsibility, a language of discipleship and hope, that could help us better to see and recognize, to understand and describe, better to respond together to the new challenges of our common and radically changing world, today” if indeed Belhar is closer to the Barmen Declaration, it will be proper to look at the articles of the Belhar Confession.

2.18 Articles of Belhar Confession

Due to the fact that the confession addresses a certain situation to the church the Belhar Confession also, “addressed three key issues of concern to all churches: (a) unity of the church and unity among all people, (b) reconciliation within church and society, and (c) God’s justice.” Those issues are critical to healing the wounds of broken hearts and if the church confesses to stand together strive to achieve those important matters then it will truly be regarded as a true church for society. A church that is worshipping one true and caring God

2.19 The trinity and care of God

When dealing with the contents and articles of Belhar Confession one can also find the expression of a caring God. The definition of five statements of the Belhar Confession according to Naudè (2012:148):

The first article confesses the Trinity and the belief that the church came into existence is under the care of God, through the word and the spirit. The church owes its existence and calling in the word to the gracious election by God is further emphasized with reference to the church and the new covenant through the miracle of re-creation. The essence of the church is therefore determined by the Triune God. The church is above all- God's people.

This statement acknowledges that God is three persons distinct but one in substance and that is how the church in its liturgy should always portray God. There is no other God above our God it is strongly confessed in the Belhar Confession that the church should not create its own god or even worship idolatry. This expression is also emphasised in other confessions such as the Nicaea Creed used by the apostles.

2.20 Repetition of Nicaea and Apostolicum

The Belhar Confession also takes into consideration other creeds it is not a new document that consists of its own contents without other confessions, Naudè (2012:148) writes that, “Belhar Confession’s second article repeats the creedal formulation from Nicaea and the Apostolicum, namely a confession of one, holy, catholic, church, and places emphasis on both the spiritual and visible unity of the church. This may be because those are distinctively reformed and shared by a number of Reformed denominations.” It should not be only one church serving the world but all churches as one in the name of one God, a single church can only do a little whereas a united church can do more, therefore, unity is important and it must be visible.

2.21 Unity

The unity of the church is also a core theme, according to Naudè (2012:149), “the church is from its inception one in the Triune God, but must seek, serve and make this unity visible in the midst of the diversity in God’s creation and amongst God’s people in this torn-apart reality.” Since the aim of this study is to look into possible ways in which the Belhar Confession can be used as a liturgical ritual since churches are on a journey to reunification, one may expand very little commitment and action from the congregants regarding this article. According to Doman (2010:30), “the Belhar Confession asserts that unity is both a gift and also an obligation.” It is a gift because God has given us the Spirit of Unity and reconciliation for both human and the rest of creation. However one may ask in which ways are unity an obligation? The concept of Ubuntu is the answer to this question.

2.22 Ubuntu

From creation God noticed that man cannot live alone that is why God realised that there should be a helper and then Eve came to being in order for creation to be harmonious and with the same spirit which Africans call, ‘Ubuntu’ Doman (2010: 30) this is an African word meaning; “I am who I am because of who we all are.” It describes a sense of community that shapes all that are part of the community or society: the concept of Ubuntu includes helpfulness, care, respect, sharing, trust, accountability, unselfishness, and more to enable and build up the community around you. The Belhar Confession states that unity is a reality, “which the people of God must be continually built up to attain.” Naudè goes on (2012:149) to say:

It is important to note that on the unity question, church Synod indeed corrects the tradition views of the DRC up to a point in two ways: diversity in creation is no longer used as an argument for human and church divisions on the principle of uniformity, and, whilst acknowledging the theological (spiritual) origin and eschatological fulfilment of this unity, Church synod clearly calls for visible unity,

realized here and now. The notion of “unity in freedom” (Belhar Confession, article 2) finds expression in the statement that visible unity must not be forced upon people for the mere sake of outward demonstration of unity amongst the people.

2.23 Reconciliation

The Belhar Confession’s third article focuses on the conviction that the message of reconciliation has been entrusted to the church and that the church should embody this reconciliation among its own members and in society. Reconciliation here is in two perspectives: the priestly task of the church requires it to proclaim in word and deed the love and reconciliation among people. Second, it makes particular mention of the church as a “reconciled community” in the Belhar Confession reconciliation is fundamentally seen as a gracious gift from God through the blood of Christ. According to Naudè (2012:150)

once the church understands its own reconciliation and peace with God, part of its thankfulness is to take up the ministry of reconciliation, noted for its love and peace amongst people; erecting visible signs of God’s Kingdom amidst the divisions of society. Racism is hence declared “a serious sin which no person or church may defend or practice”.

2.24 Justice and peace

The Belhar Confession’s fourth article confesses that God is a God of justice and peace God is in a special way the God of the suffering, the poor and oppressed also that the church is called to stand with God to ensure that justice and peace are established among members of society.

2.25 Embodiment of the confession

The Belhar Confession's last article is a call to an embodiment of the confession, despite the actions of governments or the ordination of men and women, it recalls the early church's confession that Jesus is Lord, and ends with a doxology to the Father, Son, and Spirit. According to Naudè (2012: 151)

In the context of South Africa in the early and mid-1980s, the issue was indeed living the faith in the face of strong and sometimes violent state action. Readers are reminded of the controversial movement that played for the fall of the government in 1985. How does one embody one's deepest confession if the state legalizes injustice and upholds unjust laws in the name of the very Christ whom one confesses?

It is indeed a challenge but this study is taking up a challenge by using a different approach of music. It worked before and during the time when people were saying enough is enough with inequality and injustice during the time of oppression. By embodying the Belhar Confession in liturgy and music this will motivate Christian members to behave according to its principles just as it did during the 80's when people sang songs of struggle and behaved like people who are fighting to liberate themselves.

2.26 Belhar Confession and Black theology

In the works of Tshaka (2007: 254),

A number of theologies were designed to dispute the theological and biblical underpinnings that were given to the ideology of apartheid. Among them must be counted Black theology. Black theology emerged in South Africa during the late 1960s. As a project, the civil right movement in the USA, the prophetic voice of Martin Luther King Jr. as well as the pioneering work of James Cone inspired it. Black theology was expressed under the banner of the Black Consciousness Movement of South Africa owes its being to students such as Steve Biko. Barney

Pityana, Harry Nengwenkulu and others who were galvanized by the then political situation into organizing themselves into being a vanguard for the black people' total emancipation from the political pangs into which they were plunged by white racism in South Africa.

The question still remains what role did music play during that time? If there were so many initiatives taken by different theologians to fight against the apartheid policy. But one hardly hears a hymnologist composing songs about the struggle or a hymn that speaks to God about the situation. One South African comedian Trevor Noah once made a joke about the situation saying, 'For apartheid to last so long and for other nations not to help in the situation it's because media was televising and broadcasting pictures of people singing and dancing'. It's funny but true in a sense that Africans sing in all kinds of situations, when things go well there is music, when there is sadness Africans will sing to express their emotions, during the time of battle, and even when going to sleep an African will sing their children to sleep and there are different songs for different situations. Music helps people to express their feelings better and black theologians should have also thought about hymns that can best help during the apartheid situation. But Black theologians, unapologetic as unusual, never stopped to comment on the situation. Perhaps one might assume that there were very few hymnologist in black theology or the black consciousness movement that is why there is this gap in music

2.27 Black theologians on Belhar confession

When one looks at the conditions in which the Belhar Confessions was born it is clear that black theologians will also contribute a great deal as they did with other creeds, according to Tshaka (2007: 253)

Although Black theology propagated itself chiefly by means of seminars and ministers' caucuses; it produced some significant publications and continued into

the Kairos period. A number of the first-generation black theologians endeavored to develop Black theology in relation to their confessional traditions.

The Belhar Confession is accommodating different cultures to be practised freely without discrimination. Most black theologians will argue that they are first Africans then Christian, therefore, their African traditions are still important and they deserve to have their confessional tradition. Tshaka (2007: 253)

Among these theologians were Manas Buthelezi, Desmond Tutu, and Allan Boesak. This project was carried on by theologians such as Buti Tlhagale, Takatso Mofokeng, Bongajalo Goba and Itumeleng Mosala, to mention but a few. While many theologians who were on the receiving end of apartheid were greatly influenced by black theology, it must be pointed out that the different ecclesiastical background that informed their theologizing rendered black theology in South Africa a divided front.

It is true that those who aligned themselves with it did more than enough to register the fallacies of a theology that supported apartheid. The South Africa Council of Churches (SACC) produced numerous statements that questioned the theological and biblical legitimacy of apartheid. Theologians who propagated Black theology from within the confines of the Reformed church also challenged the theological legitimacy of apartheid theology. It is within Black theology where apartheid was declared heretical by the Belhar Confession and created a number of challenges for this confession in church.

2.28 Challenges of Belhar Confession

Most confessions have their own challenges and there is no creed that is perfect. That is why most of them need to be debated and voted at the synods before they can be adopted as part of a church document. One of the challenges with the Belhar Confession is a question that Landman asks (2004: 283),

Can justice be embodied in sexist language? And why the Confession of Belhar was not written in the inclusive language since it was accepted at the 1986 synod of the Dutch Reformed Mission church, which succeeded the 1982 synod where women were restored to the office of ministers. It is true one of the challenges in our society is our language not only with regard to women but in other things as well during the liturgy when most of the preacher delivers sermon the use of “I” or “we” or “you” or “us” is often used incorrectly.

Inclusive language is important when one is drafting a declaration like the Belhar Confession. Landman (2004: 284) further writes that, “justice is also embodied in languages, which constitute our experience. Language not only shows us how we are perceived; language does not only enable us to hear each other speak. Language does not only break the silence.” But language according to Isherwood & McEwan (2001:118), “indeed creates us; language makes us who we are. It embodies us. Language is the flesh made a word. [...]” In short, women need a language that embodies the justice towards women that is still sorely lacking in the ecclesiastical arena. If the Belhar Confession did not observe language then it stands for correction because language play’s a very important role in valuable documents of the church it should be carefully considered in the authorship of creeds like the Belhar Confession to avoid problems with the confession. However, the inclusive language is not currently the main problem for adoption of Belhar Confession by other churches like the DRC.

2.29 Empowering language which embodies women

In the works of Landman (2004: 286), “one may find a solution to this language challenge as it is suggested that since the concepts of justice in Belhar Confession are strong and healthy, only a few changes in language are necessary to achieve the aim of inclusive”. Reference to believers should be inclusive. In the English text, only one case of exclusivity appears that is in Article 4, which confesses that God wishes to bring peace “among men”. In the Afrikaans, text reference is here made to “sense” (people),

the usage of which may solve the problem in the English. Reference to the maleness of God should be excluded. Pronouns that make God male can be replaced by the repetition of “God”. Although this may appear clumsy at first sight, it reflects a sound theology of interconnectedness. The first part of Article 4 then, may read as follows:

We believe that God has revealed God self as the one who wishes to bring about justice and true peace among people, that in a world full of injustice and enmity God is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged and that God calls God’s Church to follow God in this...

Even though the understanding of the Belhar Confession was not intending to address the oppression of women or the hierarchy of men over women, the confession obviously needs to change this image to one of inclusive and interconnectedness. If the Belhar Confession is part of the liturgy for every Sunday and it is also used in music as part of our daily worship then, “we cannot talk about God as a God of justice while describing God as a patriarchal Lord and judge. God is not a patriarchal Lord but power in relation” Landman (2004:287). “Therefore, in Article 1 of the Confession of Belhar, I would suggest that be confessed not as “Father, Son”, but as “Caretaker, Saviour” since that is how God is already described and confessed in the rest of the sentence. Article 1 will then read:

“We believe in the Triune God, Caretaker, Saviour, and Holy Spirit, who gathers, protects and cares for God’s Church by God’s Word and God’s Spirit, as has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end.” It is worth noting that those images are not foreign to either the Reformed faith or the confession itself, both which express their belief in God’s care of the world and God’s saving activity throughout. In most Reformed churches during the liturgy, it is now common that those images are used effectively.

When one deals with hymnological praxis theory these comments of Landman will definitely be taken into consideration. It will also be picked up again in the conclusion of

this study when a demonstration of a sinning Belhar Confession is given. The issue of inclusive language is important Ramshaw (2016) in his eBook called Liturgical Language he writes:

Liturgical language is often metaphoric, as metaphors help us explain the unexplainable they help the human mind contemplate the divine. The problem with liturgical language occurs when these metaphors exclude some Christians when their aim should instead be to bring all Christians into communion with God. Recognizing that both metaphoric and language are necessary in Christian worship

2.30 Belhar Confession and the subordination of women

It is important to look at this confession holistically so that when hymns are created all challenges are addressed in order to avoid creating a problem on top of a problem. According to Landman (2006: 311),

When speaking of the subordination of women which has resulted in oppression and discrimination, it remains to me a profound unanswered question, that church still has done so little to stand up for women and to lay bare how the mechanism of subordination operates and anchors themselves within churches and theology. This issue I will like South African Christians as well as others to take on, in a global effort to renew and reform Christianity, to prove that the image of God in all human beings is at the core of the Christian faith, in dogma and practice, to do this (to do justice), and so to contribute to wholeness and true unity confessed and embodied!.

The relevant space to empower women is in the church. Most church choirs have a bigger number of women participating than men and it will not be fair that they are singing songs which are only embracing men or songs which are portraying God as a father all the time. The apartheid policy was strongly promoting the violence and

oppression of another human being. From the above argument Landman is correct there is a lack of a feminine voice in the Belhar Confession and that is one of the critical social issues in our society. The other social issue is violence and human dignity; does the Belhar Confession address any of them? Perhaps the URCSA needs to demonstrate more in its liturgy that language is still considered as a priority. Using inclusive language may also help for the adoption of the Belhar Confession.

2.31 Adoption of Belhar confession

The problem is two-fold, the first the adoption of the Belhar Confession by other DRC's and a better appropriation of Belhar Confession in URCSA. Also living according to its principles, it is important to act according to its teaching so that both of these churches can influence others to adopt the Belhar Confession as part of their confession. According to Henriksson (2010: 02),

The (white) DRC in South Africa had been suspended in the early eighties from the fellowship with the other Reformed churches in the WARC and the question was whether it could be re-instated into the fellowship again after these years in the cold. At the time of the suspension, some requirements had been established that the DRC had to comply with before any change in relations could take place.

From this statement, one can clearly sense that there was a problem between theory and praxis. Hans Hendriksson (2010:02) continues to say:

Among the non-white churches belonging to the same family of churches which were some of the main proponents of the suspension- the theological reflection around apartheid had deepened and a major outflow of that theological reflection was the confessional statement called Belhar Confession. This statement provided a theological ground for a new united Reformed church to sort out the apartheid legacy.

Due to clear contents of the Belhar Confession, it was not difficult to be adopted by the rest of delegates. According to Plaatjies-van Huffel (2014:305),

The adoption of the Belhar Confession, therefore, did not take place in a political vacuum. It was adopted in a so-called coloured township, in a Reformed church especially constituted for the mixed descent. The delegates at the DRMC synod of 1982 in Belhar were members of a racially segregated church which had been constituted by the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa (DRC).

In the work of Naudè (2012: 147), “it is hoped that the DRC’s decision in 2011 to start a process of adopting the Belhar Confession represents a return to its Reformed roots in the confessing church tradition.” This leads to one problematic question which is; what the WARC could demand from the DRC, as a requirement for being reinstated, to incorporate the confession into their constitution or not. When talking about Churches in South Africa, their ecumenical relations and their dealings during and soon after the abolishment of apartheid. It could be comprehended as foolish of the church’s bold initiative. One cannot only talk about Belhar Confession as a document that affects the church only but is it important to check if it is relevant to the South African context.

2.32 Belhar Confession’s relevance in South Africa

The relevance of Belhar Confession is not confined to Southern Africa. It addresses three key issues of concern to all the churches: Unity of the church and unity among all people, reconciliation within church and society, and God’s justice. The challenge is still to find a way in which this confession can be part of the daily life of those who are confessing it first then for the rest of the community. This study is attempting to create a way through the ritual of a liturgical praxis in hymnology.

Before the Belhar Confession, the DRC has been welcomed as a member of the WARC because their theology was never a problem together with its apartheid policy; the challenge was when their theory was compared with practice. The DRC always

presented a good Reformed theology to the WARC but the praxis was not so good due to the practice of apartheid. After the introduction of democracy, there was a need for a personal confession to be drafted and that is when the Belhar Confession was introduced as a personal confession which speaks to individual Christians who have experienced the struggle of the apartheid system. In Germany, they drafted the Barmen Declaration. The Belhar Confession speaks of God as a God of Justice a God who is present to those who suffer as a result of poverty and injustice. In this part, the study will briefly explore the biblical grounds for the Belhar confession assertions and what God's concern for justice might mean for us. In the works of Damon (2010: 33)

The Confession of Belhar closes a loop in Reformed confession by coming to terms with the revelation of God in relation to the realities of social justice. In this context, it confesses that God is revealed as the God of those who suffer in general and also of those who suffer as a result of poverty and injustices. In this addition to the standards of faith, the confession of Belhar has made a significant contribution to the content of faith in the Reformed community at large.

When one studies the life of Jesus, it can be seen that he was always on the side of the poor and those who are oppressed. From the New Testament it is written that Jesus will eat with the poor and give food to those who are hungry Matthew 14 verses 13-21. Jesus was also protecting those who were abused by the community, for example, the woman who was caught in the act of adultery in the gospel of John 8 verses 1-11.

2.32.1 Belhar confession and social issues

This is where one will have to look at the challenging issues in society to see if the Belhar Confession can be part of the solution? Because liturgy has to be contextual, one cannot talk about liturgy in church without considering the challenges affecting community whether direct or indirect. Church members are first members of the community. Hence it is always advisable for liturgists to read newspapers, listen to the

radio and know about different issues affecting society and to use the correct language to address those challenges.

2.33 Violence, Belhar Confession, and human dignity

Currently, media is still exposing some acts of violence which clearly decreases the dignity of humans due to apartheid. Koopman (2006:159) writes about his experience saying:

An elder of the DRC in my town was very sympathetic to my studies and always ensured that I received a scholarship from his congregation. I, however, could not reconcile this caring attitude with his shocking remark during the heart of the struggle against apartheid that Allan Boesak should taste lead (Boesak Moet good price) – that means Boesak should be shot to death – because his theologically-informed struggle against apartheid implies that he is a communist, traitor, and threat to a safe and secure South Africa.

From this experience, it is clear that racism is the source of violence; some white people were even thinking of killing those who were vocal and were against apartheid. Koopman (2006: 159-160) mentioned that,

In my ethics courses at the University of the Western Cape, I learned a definition of racism that I find helpful and illuminating (and even full of redemptive and healing potential) till today. This definition was proposed by two Dutch scholars, Hans Opschoor and Theo Witvliet: Racism is: ... the specific ideology that organizes and regulates the exploitation and dependence of a specific 'race' on the basis of the assumed cultural/ and or logical inferiority of the 'race'.

In this way, actual differences in power are maintained and intensified. This definition of racism is ideologically helpful. Although ideology is an inflated concept, a concept with a variety of meanings, in this definition it indicates that the phenomenon of racism consists of three important elements: first the picture that we have of the other race,

second the embodiment of this picture and corresponding structuring of society. Often an ideology functions with a religious foundation. The picture of the other races entails categorisation in terms of inferiority and superiority. The structures that are based on racial prejudice reinforce the picture of superiority and inferiority. One other social issue that is critical is the HIV/AIDS pandemic; the Belhar Confession surely has to have a way of addressing this issue.

2.34 Confession of Belhar and the HIV/AIDS

The confession is motivating congregates on issues that are affecting society directly in order to build unity between members of the community. In the works of Lange (2006: 255)

Belhar Confession powerfully confessed a God “of the destitute, the poor and the wronged”, a God who helps orphans and widows and calls his church to follow him by doing the same, “For him pure and undefiled religion is to visit the orphans and the widows in their words would become within twenty years”. More than 14 million children under the age of 15 have lost one or both parents to HIV/AIDS [...]

The challenge of HIV/AIDS is serious in society but the church that is called by God to follow Him is only talking a lot about this challenge in pulpits during Sunday service but very little action is taken regarding this issue. For example, in a church choir it is often the parents who are paying for the children’s transport and other logistics when there are choir competitions but when both parents die due to AIDS children are no longer accommodated at church choirs because there is no one to pay the costs. But the church should help that particular child and be more supportive rather than to criticise and give names. Lange (2006: 255) Stigmatised as an “AIDS orphan”, the impact of their destiny even becomes more traumatising. A vicious circle begins, of depression, anger, guilt and fear of the future. When they grow up, they are easily led to alcohol and drug abuse, aggression, even suicide. “Poverty and social dislocation also add to an

orphaned child's emotional distress. A parent's death also deprives them of the learning and value they need to become socially knowledgeable and economically productive adults." The Belhar Confession clearly challenges the church to act in such situations and it can start from liturgy not just as wonderful words recited every Sunday but as an action which is breaking the silence of those voices that cannot talk.

2.34.1 Belhar Confession in liturgy should break the silence

In a situation such as the global AIDS pandemic, liturgy should play a pastoral role for all those who are affected and infected by this disease. During the offering in a church service while the choir is singing the Belhar Confession there should be a part where the church members give anything they can for orphans, widows and those who are poor. It is in a church where those who are destitute can feel safe and have hope for a better life; it is the responsibility of every confessing church to create a space in its liturgy for all those who are wronged by the world to have a safe environment when they get to church. Lange (2006: 256) also noted,

By 2012 AIDS will be killing 5 million people a year. In the worst case scenario, the toll could be 12 million. The pandemic is not going to peak until about 2050, 2060. Seventy percent of adults and 80 percent of children infected with HIV/AIDS in the world live in Africa. Three-fourths of those who have died, died in Africa, South Africa in particular, immensely suffers.

The Belhar Confession is a document that can be used to break the silence about such diseases, it can also help in other kinds of social challenges that our country is facing today such as the abuse of women and children, crime and so on.

2.34.2 Moral judgements

Often people who are infected by HIV/AIDS can hardly talk because they are perceived as immoral because the belief is that they became infected during an act of adultery, according to De Lange (2006: 259)

Once a church member becomes infected with HIV and suffers from AIDS the silence has to be broken and they run a risk of being subject to condemnation and Isolation. If churches talk about sexuality publicly at all, it is mostly in a judgemental way. In the church sexuality still seems to be a matter of Law, and not of Gospel, Sex is rarely accepted as a joyful gift from God, but mostly feared as a seduction to sin. In politics, radical Christian ethicist may consult the Sermon on the Mount, in sexual affairs they may often stick to Leviticus.

However, the understanding of this study is to create a space where the Belhar Confession can be used in liturgy to address the issue of sexuality as well. But AIDS is a disease. It is not a sin. As long as churches don't create a space to communicate this message clearly in their liturgy and in a straightforward way, they frustrate the prevention of HIV/AIDS. People living and dying with it are left to do so alone when the Belhar Confession talks about unity which is dealing with social issues affecting everyone including members of the church. However reconciling the dignity of people is required in society and the principles of the Belhar Confession can drive people towards this aim only if it is well used starting from church vicinities to different houses.

2.34.3 Exclusion and Belhar Confession

The Belhar Confession speaks vividly about the exclusion, but the fact is this term 'exclusion' is still applicable to our churches when it comes to those who are infected with HIV/AIDS, De Lange (2006:259) writes:

The hardest part of having the disease is not the illness itself or facing the prospect of death and dying, but experiencing the fear and the reality of rejection from friends, family, church members, medical professionals, and even strangers'. [...] De Lange goes on to say many congregations have developed networks of dedicated volunteers who care for people living with HIV/AIDS. There are indeed new saints among us, who follow Jesus in their compassion with the sick and the dying. But, theologically churches often speak with a double

tongue. In some churches, the first question that is asked is: how did you get infected? What should be asked is: how can I help and comfort you? People with HIV/AIDS are not only treated as sexual deviants but also as religious sinners.

The Belhar Confession is talking directly to members of the confessing church to encourage reflection regarding their own infected members because according to the Belhar Confession those who are living with a disease like HIV/ AIDS should be taken care of by the church and not be rejected and judged for been sick. The Christian thinking about this disease should be different from the ideology of the world.

2.34.4 Christian thinking on HIV/AIDS

It is always amazing how people throughout the world can react based on speculation forgetting their faith. A creed like the Belhar Confession exists to remind Christians to stick to their faith even if the world is pulling in the opposite direction. Christians should always be on the side of the oppressed and downtrodden. De Lange (2006: 260) writes:

AIDS was interpreted as a punishment from God for the sin of homosexuality and promiscuity.” Da Lange further mentions that “the prophetic passages of unity in Belhar Confession should be read and reinterpreted again in the church ‘hypothetically’ during the liturgy in the light of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. HIV/AIDS threatens the unity of the church by dividing the world in tow –both in local congregations where members are stigmatized and excluded, as well as on an ecumenical level, where Western churches ignore the urgency of the situation and fail to respond to the call of their sister churches in the high prevalence parts of the world.

From the theory of De Lange one can come to the conclusion that HIV/AIDS is mostly only for poor people in poor countries. Therefore Western churches are also too slow to respond directly to the sister churches about this issue. Instead they focus more on

helping to eradicate poverty. As it has been mentioned previously the church has to use liturgy to break the silence. It will not help to just talk about issues during the liturgy at church but the best is thing to do is to be involved in helping members to declare their status.

2.34.5 Liturgical involvement in declaring the HIV/AIDS status

In the works of de Klerk (2013: 142-143), “reading of Scripture in many cases structures the liturgy of the church. It is, therefore, important that different relevant parts of scripture must be read during all the phases of the illness. Listening to the Word plays a major role to comfort and strengthen a sick person.” It also gives the minister, elders, and some members the confidence to be tested and to declare their status. The sermon is, in short, the interaction between the preacher and the congregation, and the expectation is that it will also be an interaction between God and the congregation. It is important that the preacher becomes sensitive when preaching about this subject; the focus should be to encourage the infected and the affected member of the church and to give hope during the funerals of those who died as a result of AIDS. Perhaps when other churches realise that the Belhar Confession is also addressing current issues. It will be easy to accept that Belhar is also relevant to issues affecting society. The reason this research is deliberating the issue of HIV/AIDS is because this affects the whole community and also creates division between community members both in and outside the church. In the journey to reunification as we all sing the Belhar Confession everyone should be touched by the same kind of music regardless of their health status. All members will be keen to approve of the Belhar Confession.

2.35 Approval of Belhar Confession

The Belhar Confession is a controversial document and such confessions cannot always be easily approved by everyone or all delegates. Approval is not the same as acceptance. At the synod the Belhar Confession had to be approved formally by the majority. Adonis (2006:237) gives us the context of what really transpired during the synod of the DRMC on 26 September 1986, the moment arrived when the new confession would be accepted. These events took place amidst great public interest. The report on the draft confession was discussed. Professors Bam and Smith strongly argued for the approval of the confession. It was a remarkable moment when 400 delegates gave their approval of the confession while 71 gave notice that they could not accept it [...] Thus the Confession of Belhar was accepted with great joy and gratitude by the majority of delegates. However, the objective can only be achieved if all the churches that have adopted this confession can live it out and make use of it effectively and prove to others the importance of confessing and living what one confesses. Adonis (2006: 237). One day after its acceptance great interest was demonstrated from various delegates who originally opposed the confession, afterwards they did sign it. After this, the synod took a number of decisions to help people in the practical implementation of the Belhar Confession. The synod continually emphasised that the motive of unity in the confession ought to receive priority. This idea became a very important objective in the period that followed. Therefore it is also the aim of this study to provide ways in which this mandate from a synod can be carried out in a liturgical ritual and hymnological way. The good news is already other churches are responding to this Confession in neighbouring countries of South Africa.

2.36 Belhar confession as a gift

Despite that this confession deals with a specific context, time in history with reference to a specific land, I ironically give it greater significance for the world- wide church. The song regarding this confession must reflect the context, the hymns about unity, liberation and should be composed so that in different churches we all sing joyfully about, justice reconciliation and unity. From the words of Damon (2010:52),

Like the confessions that preceded it, the Belhar Confession becomes a gift from a particular expression of the church to Christians in other parts of the world – a testimony for all of God’s people in our time. South Africa is not alone in its journey with conflict, injustice, racism, poverty, and the subjugation of the disenfranchised. The history of oppression in our own time calls for the voice of the Christian church to be heard with unmistakable clarity – to confess that the Lord of life, who entrusted to us the message of reconciliation’ (2 Cor.5: 19), is the Lord of our hopes and aspirations for a just and reconciled people.

2.37 Belhar Confession in relation to the scripture

Scripture is the core of church therefore the Belhar Confession one way or another will rely on scripture. Cloete writes (2013: 93), “The issue of justification in Galatians 2: 15-21 forms the focus of this study. Paul counters justification by the works of the law with justification by faith. The passage is also read in dialogue with the Belhar Confession (1986). Analogously, this confession stands antithetical to the theological justification of apartheid.” This New Testament Professor further says, “characteristics of the apartheid policy was not only that it wanted to draw geographical boundaries as expressed in the Homelands and Group Areas Acts, but in doing so, it also wanted to create separation along racial, social and religious lines, even amongst Christians, these boundaries were symbolic and caused mental and spiritual alienation amongst people, focusing not on what people had in common but on what separated them”.

2.38 Conclusion

This chapter was mainly focusing on the Belhar Confession, its history and significance. It also gives a brief discussion concerning the contents, the way in which it can best be used in liturgy in order to influence those who are still in the process of adopting it as part of their confession. The study dealt closer with the authorship and the drafting of the Belhar Confession also challenges about this confession. The study also linked the Belhar Confessions to social issues in order to determine if it addresses all the issues affecting society. One cannot talk about the Belhar Confession being a gift from South Africa without asking if it is relevant for its context and the study noted areas where this creed was relevant to the South African context. All creeds have something in common and Belhar is similar to the Barmen Declaration and some of the contents in the Belhar Confession are also found in other creeds. This chapter has discussed and demonstrated how it is similar to other creeds. The study also briefly looked at Belhar in relation to biblical scripture. The findings of this chapter show that there is a lack of activity that includes the Belhar Confession in the liturgy of URCSA, but there is much opportunity for the confession to be practised in church. The finding of this chapter provides possible ways of incorporating the Belhar Confession in music.

- The findings of this chapter indicate some challenges in the Belhar Confession: inclusive language is important when one has to embody a creed like the Belhar Confession in hymnology.
- The adoption of the Belhar Confession by other churches such as the DRC is still a challenge.
- The study has established that the Belhar Confession was relevant and is still relevant to South Africa.

It has been demonstrated that when the principles of Belhar are used carefully in liturgy they can restore human dignity and help in social issues like HIV/AIDS.

MTH Chapter 3

Title: Belhar confession, music, liturgical and Society

3. 1 Introduction

In this chapter the study will focus on the role of liturgy in society, and in particular, article three of the Belhar Confession. As the journey to reunification continues where God is working on reconciling everything to Him and the church through its liturgy, at the same time is reconciling the community. The working hypothesis of this chapter is the Belhar Confession and music can play a crucial role as part of the liturgy in a community of faith, particularly in URCSA congregations. But the question is what happens after liturgy in a church building? Is it the end of service? Do people only serve each other in church and stop after the benediction? This chapter will look closely at the role of liturgy in URCSA as a ritual that can be used to help in practising Diakonia for the implementation of reconciliation as articulated in the Belhar Confession. The chapter is attempting to prove that liturgy is a drama not only limited to a church but it is beyond the pulpit and church premises because this ritual is not strictly religious in origin. The study will look into one example of how the URCSA has attempted to use its liturgy from church to community. This connection in the Reformed tradition is also known as the connection between liturgy and life. Also as the liturgy after the liturgy, for the purpose of this study, the liturgy of URCSA will be a tool used in this chapter, together with other church's liturgical experience such as the International Methodist Church Oslo to demonstrate a better understanding of this ritual.

3.2 The meaning of liturgy

There are lots of different understanding about the meaning of liturgy and the people who qualify to participate in it. There is a working definition given by Wepener (2009:21)

Liturgy is the encounter between God and man in which God and man move out towards one another, a movement in which God's action has primacy, so that in a theonomic reciprocal fashion a dialogical communication in and through rituals and symbols is established in which man participates in a bodily way and can in this way reach his highest goal in life, namely to praise God and enjoy Him forever.

Liturgy is not subjective to gender or profession. Everyone can take part in liturgy because it is a communal ritual where all members of society can be involved, those who are educated and illiterate people who are willing to serve God. There is definitely a role for everyone in liturgical performance as long as it is for the glory of God. According to de Klerk (2013: VI),

Liturgy can restore human dignity and bring about reconciliation. Believers can gain confidence to co-operate in the healing process of the continent. Aspects of African culture displaying a close resemblance to the Bible should develop. For example celebrating the presence of God, Utilizing the power of Scripture reading in the liturgy, delivering sermons abundant in imagery, establishing an Ubuntu of faith, using symbols inherent to both the Gospel and African culture, creating space for movement, Communion, and festivity, as well as developing songs, music, and dances in a creative way.

The presence of God should not only be in a church building, but it has to be seen all over the world from church members who are reaching out to those who are not part of the same church or the same religion. The above definition of liturgy clearly does not

limit the concept to a specific church or religion; therefore, one can freely go to the rest of the world to enact the liturgy.

3.2.1 Meaning of liturgy from a biblical perspective

In scripture, there is no direct prescribed form for a public religious service set forth. However de Klerk (2013:05) states, “Paul uses the term liturgy in 2 Corinthians 9: 12 as a designated voluntary effort at gathering an offering from his congregation in Macedonia and Greece for the poor in Jerusalem. It was his public – work project.” Since liturgy is a service rendered, the English word service can be equivalent to “liturgy” clearly there is a perfect link between liturgy and “Diakonia” both terms are defined from the New Testament. (In Acts 2:42; 1 Timothy 4:13- 16; 2 Timothy 4:2) They are about the teaching or preaching of God’s Word, not only for a particular time or at a certain place but all over the world even in the ghettos. However, the worship in early Christian communities was not always being conducted decently and in order (1 Cor.14:40). In those days worship lacked theological integrity and was spiritually disordered. Now the question is what does it mean manage liturgy indecently and disorderly?

3.2.2 Understanding of doing liturgy decently and orderly

Currently, there is a big debate about the way liturgy is conducted in churches; young people want things to go faster and more freely. But in URCSA older people who are still liturgical Reformers want things to go back to the early church because they feel like liturgy has lost its decency and there is a lack of order in the church. The question will be how do we know when the liturgy is decent and orderly when considering the difference between the young and older people understands of liturgy? De Klerk (2013: 07) says, “Liturgy must be theologically grounded and communally sensitive. Our public work before God and the world expresses meaning. Done in the name of God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), liturgy says something about the God who is the object of our worship.” It is not about who is wrong and right but about theology and praxis, the way

in which people express theory with action will always differ in context. The bottom line is to make sure that there is equal opportunity for all gifted and talented members to excel in a worship service. According to Hegstad (2009: 02):

Christian worship must be understood as an expression of God's encounter with people, while also being people's encounter with God. In worship, both God and people are interacting, even if theologically speaking God's interaction is always understood as the basis. The duality of divine and human interaction in worship has often been interpreted by the distinction between the sacramental and the sacrificial dimension of worship. While the sacramental dimension is God giving us his gifts, the sacrificial dimension is what we bring God in prayer, praise, and confession.

3.2.3 Liturgy as a ritual performed in church

It is worth noting that liturgy and ritual are not the same because liturgy consists of various liturgical rituals. During the time of worship, liturgy is the most important ritual because it is a procedure used by the church on Sunday and it involves people and God in daily life. I concur with de Klerk (2013: 86-87)

True significance and meaning of the worship service revealed when the worship service on Sunday verified by the worship service of everyday life. When the worship service separated from life, it loses its character as a true worship service. Then it becomes a mystic cult in a heathenish sense. On the other hand, there are also those who profess that religion can practice without the worship service. The worship service is then regarded as a waste of time and an act of hypocrites. This kind of religious practice is individualist and refuses to meet God together with other believers and to have communion with Him and each other. This kind of religion, therefore, severed from its source of life.

Liturgy has to be right and meaningful, because all actors do not just come to act but they have different expectations, and the church building is the perfect place where they can achieve their motives. In church, people can hide their pain and forget about difficult situations in society. If the liturgy is not going outside the church vicinity, it also runs a risk of omitting the core of real challenges which people are facing all the time at home. This ritual should be taken out of the building and exposed to all those who are looking for real worship of God in a peaceful environment. There should be a close connection between cults and culture, between liturgy and context. If liturgy ends only at the church building on Sunday, then a solution is only on the surface, and it can resume anytime during the week. From a worship book of URCSA (2015: 16), “liturgy should ideally not be a one man show” is featuring only the minister or church council members leading the worship service. Instead, worship should involve and mobilise the whole congregation and the community.

3.3 Church building

There are several ways of defining a church the author of this study perceives church as a group of people who are called by God to worship or to practice liturgical - rituals in a particular building and even outside a building, the argument for outside the building will follow when dealing with liturgy after the liturgy. It is critically argued in the Worship book of URCSA (2015:150) that,

The building in which a congregation worships forms an important part of its identity. It creates an atmosphere and allows people to meet one another. In that sense, it becomes “a space of grace” where God transforms and renews us in faith, hope, and love. It is important to realise that a church building is not a “holy place” in the sense that God’s presence is limited or confined to it. Hence this study recommends that liturgy should be taken to the rest of society

A church is just a building that can be used as a start to liturgy because it is a space for renewal when we feel old and tired, we gather at the church to regain strength. To some

people, it is a holy place because they feel more connected to God in the church than at their homes. Therefore, liturgy should be a key education of how people can make their homes holy. Some people have large houses and beautiful building just like churches, but there is no peace love or protection. Liturgy in churches should be used to address such issues. In certain circumstances it is hard for the liturgy to be influential because same people have two characters, in the church, they are very holy, but at home, they are very evil. If the church with its skilled leadership can spend more time determining about what is happening in people's real life and start acting by using the liturgy after the liturgy then, the church will be appreciated. For example, Wepener & Cilliers cited by de Klerk (2013: 110) say:

A hungry cloth is a fairly common phenomenon in churches worldwide and consists of cloth or board to which members can fasten descriptions of famine before or during the worship service. Within the liturgical space, something like this could provide an image of the conditions in which many people live. In this way, the connection can be made visually between the daily reality of society and the acts of liturgy.

3.4 Liturgy as a drama

In this study, liturgy is classified as a drama and the moral of the story in this drama is to reconcile all those who are participating back to God. To be more specific God is given an opportunity to reconcile with everyone who is participating in truth and spirit. During this ritual, the whole family can reconcile through different rites which are taking place during the liturgy in and outside of the church. Each phase of the liturgy is equally important, and this openness is crucial in establishing the unity and identity of URCSA congregation as an African Christian household. As de Klerk (20013:13) writes, "the approach is made through the eyes and with the love of Christ. Using the results of the interaction observed between God and His words in the worship service participants these presuppositions can be depended on and broadened." This drama is acted out as

a sign of showing the love of God whom all the actors love and left their work at home gathered together in one house on Sunday to worship Him. Not only because they love God but because God has shown His love first (1 John 4:7).

3.4.1 Liturgy must involve more people

In the words of de Klerk (2013: 33), “One of the most important liturgical principles is the participation of the congregation in the liturgy.” There is a Sesotho proverb saying *letswele le beta poho* meaning a crowd can defeat an Ox. The words of the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:12-28 describes the congregation as a “Body of Christ.” The body is one but with many parts working together for its benefit. Christians should be united in their diversity to praise God. For liturgy to be effective, it has to involve as many people as possible. If we all want reconciliation and justice, it is everybody’s’ responsibility to be involved in the process. De Klerk (2013::32) states, “The liturgy of the assembly also takes place in the presence of believers, and therefore this action concerns the people in the assembly, as well as those outside.” if liturgy involves other people they all have to be prepared and determined to work together. For example in most of the townships people who are singing in church choirs are also singing for community choirs. The church must be prepared to accommodate all members of society. Churches should not regard themselves as best but as an integral part of the universal body of Christ.

3.4.2 The importance of preparation

URCSA worship book (2015: 13) has this to say, “The whole worship service should form a carefully planned unity. To lead worship in a congregation is a priestly task and we need to remember what the Lord said to the people of Israel through the prophet Malachi 1:6-8).” In the drama of liturgy, preparation is essential because it has to be the best act which is executed in the name of God who always expects and deserves the best from His creation. Therefore it is important that we don’t render a second class service. Preparation should be completed earlier by a liturgist or a worship commission

so that leaders may know what to do and how to include other members. As Gordon cited by Senn (2012: 182) says:

Whether in liturgical or free-church traditions, there needs to be planning for the music team and the pastor so that the service has a unified character, there are some principles that apply to all worship situations. [...] all music chosen for the assembly or choir should be within the capability of the group that is singing. When preparing hymns liturgist should know their people.

Every liturgy has to have a focus. For example, when the service is taking place at Lent, it is appropriate that the whole service focuses on the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus. The scripture and passages that are read and the songs that are selected all need to fit in with the particular liturgical season. Observing a liturgical calendar helps the church to be exciting and not boring for all the participants.

3.4.3 Neither boring nor sensational

Good preparation will avoid creating a bad impression for the congregants. In most URCSA congregations, there is a complaint about losing members to other churches, and one of the reasons is how the liturgy is performed, and the worship book is giving advice on how the preparation should be to avoid this problem Tom Drive cited by URCSA (2015: 13),

If you are boring you bear false witness; if you are sensational you bear no witness at all. A boring “business as usual” liturgy that uses the same Scripture passages and the same songs week after week can become boring, especially to young people. On the other hand, a constant desire to do “something new and special” in the liturgy every Sunday can lead to the accusation of trying to be sensational. Both extremes miss the point since a witness is someone who speaks about (and points to) the amazing good news of Scripture.

Youth in the URCSA still feel liturgy lacks entertainment, particularly when they have to sing hymns from Hosanna without instruments. They prefer to make the same song faster than its recommended tempo. Young people can easily become so enthusiastic by the joyful spirit of worship they often forget that there are older people in the church who are not that fast. Young people are now looking for more entertainment in the church. I partly agree with de Klerk (2013:29), “Beautiful music, social interaction, and excitement is not necessarily liturgy or worship.” But if they are performed in truth for the glory of God that gives value and meaning to worship. Exciting and true worship gives more reasons for youth to spend time and participate in church rather than social clubs. Liturgists should bear in mind that there are young people when preparing liturgy and not forgetting children as well as older people, a good liturgist can excel in accommodating everybody in the church.

3.4.4 The personality of the liturgist

Liturgist has to have knowledge about church tradition; some ministers teach church council members how to lead liturgy and others just learn by observing those who are trained or experienced in URCSA church tradition. The church council has a responsibility of ensuring that the doctrine is observed and to oversight over the worship service every Sunday. The liturgist will then be doing a priestly task. Therefore he or she need to be spiritually mature when preparing scripture readings, songs and giving out orders to those who are involved in performing this drama. A liturgist is a person who is carrying a big responsibility in the drama (ibid p14)

In the stipulations of URCSA regional synods, the task of leading public worship is listed as one of the responsibilities of an ordained minister. This underlines the strategic importance of leading the liturgy. In most congregations, it will, in fact, be the minister (s) who exercises this responsibility, but in congregations with many wards, where the minister leads the service only a few times a year, elders will take this responsibility.

A liturgist preferably should be a humble person who will let God use them as a servant. The person who is responsible for this task should let the Holy Spirit be the main facilitator of this role. For most young people who enjoy fast and loud music, they may think that the liturgists are shy or uncertain while he or she is just humble and becoming an instrument which God should use for the drama to be effective. That is why it is advisable for the church to appoint a responsible person for this role. The conductor of the liturgist is not just important in a church building, but his or her life is also observed by the rest of the community beyond the pulpit as well. Hence the liturgist should be able to control his or her life very well and use the pulpit in a responsible manner.

3.5 The use of the pulpit

URCSA worship book (2015:14), “In the same congregation, the pulpit is exclusively reserved for an ordained minister. Other congregations allow members authorized by the church council to lead (a part of) the liturgy to use the pulpit. However, the church council has full responsibility on who should use a pulpit”. When a liturgist ascends the pulpit unprepared or with a bad motive, he or she stands a chance of offending fellow congregants while conducting liturgical rituals. For example if a person leading liturgy has to preach but has a lot of baggage from his or her personal experience there is a high risk of expressing those emotions from the pulpit especially if liturgist is not professional. It is also important how the liturgist addresses a congregation there are few recommendations in URCSA worship book (2015:17):

Dear Congregation

Congregation of the Lord

Brothers and Sisters

Sisters and brothers

People of God Friends

The expressions can be helpful for members to understand the identity of the congregation as a household of faith, hope, and love, called together by God. In the

URCSA it is important for a liturgist to dress in a presentable manner when they are in the pulpit, ordained ministers will wear a toga when leading liturgy, and for someone who is not an ordained liturgist, they are recommended to dress in black and white or their ministry uniform. It is always hard to identify the church choir members and the conductor because during ordinary church services they don't wear their uniform unless it is a special occasion or during choir competitions and this has a negative impact on the identity of the church choir.

3.6 Structure of liturgy in URCSA

This study will use the URCSA liturgy as an example which is directly connected to music and the Belhar Confession. It is worth noting that the sequence of this liturgy is not fixed. Some elements (marked with an asterisk*) can be used at different places in the service. The structure is also noting each phase on a particular Sunday. It is important to have this as a church so that the URCSA can share the same identity and deepen the unity within the same church. This ritual is a drama in which members of the URCSA are acting out during their Sunday worship service, and the drama's destination is towards reconciliation and an eschatology which is still a mystery. This is expressed by (Jasper and Jasper 1990:196):

At the heart of the matter lies the idea that the liturgy must contain an element of mystery; that is, that which cannot be expressed precisely in verbal prose, but not, of course, that which we cannot comprehend at all. That is one of many aspects of the close connection between musical and liturgical thinking.

During this drama of liturgy, we all go to God with respect and holiness because the understanding is that God is the one who can do mysterious things in our lives during the performance. But in reality, there is no amount of words or actions that can explain God's mystery during Sunday worship. But because God is a God of order, it is important to have a structure that helps in attempting to provide a great performance for

His Glory and the structure helps every actor to know where they fit in this drama as an individual and also give everyone an opportunity to use their talents.

3.7 Example of URCSA liturgy

All the characters in this drama are working towards a common goal. However, it is not easy to understand the ideas of eschatology in the liturgy because it is like the presence of God where people are getting judged saved and experiences the love of a forgiving God. The URCSA liturgy will be used as the theory of study for this chapter and some elements which affect the Belhar Confession and hymnology will be discussed. Hymns are selected in Sesotho and others in Afrikaans but also translated to English. Here is the picture of URCSA liturgy from the worship book (2015:08):

Phase 1 Entry and incorporation
Congregational singing
Vestry prayer
Votum
Liturgical greeting
Praise
Psalm
*Greeting one another
Affirmation of dignity
*Law of God
Confession of sin

Proclamation of forgiveness
Commitment to new obedience
*Creed
Acknowledging visitors
Baptism
Public profession of faith (“Confirmation”)
Welcoming of new members
Phase2 Ministry of the Word
Prayer for illumination
Scripture reading
Sermon
Prayer (*intercession)
Phase 3 Ministry of the table
Formulary
Self-examination
Sharing the peace
Eucharist prayer
Words of institution

Distribution of the elements
Thanksgiving prayer
Phase 4 Sending and Blessing
Induction of church council members
Robing of new ministry members
Offerings
Announcements
*Intercession
Closing song
Benediction

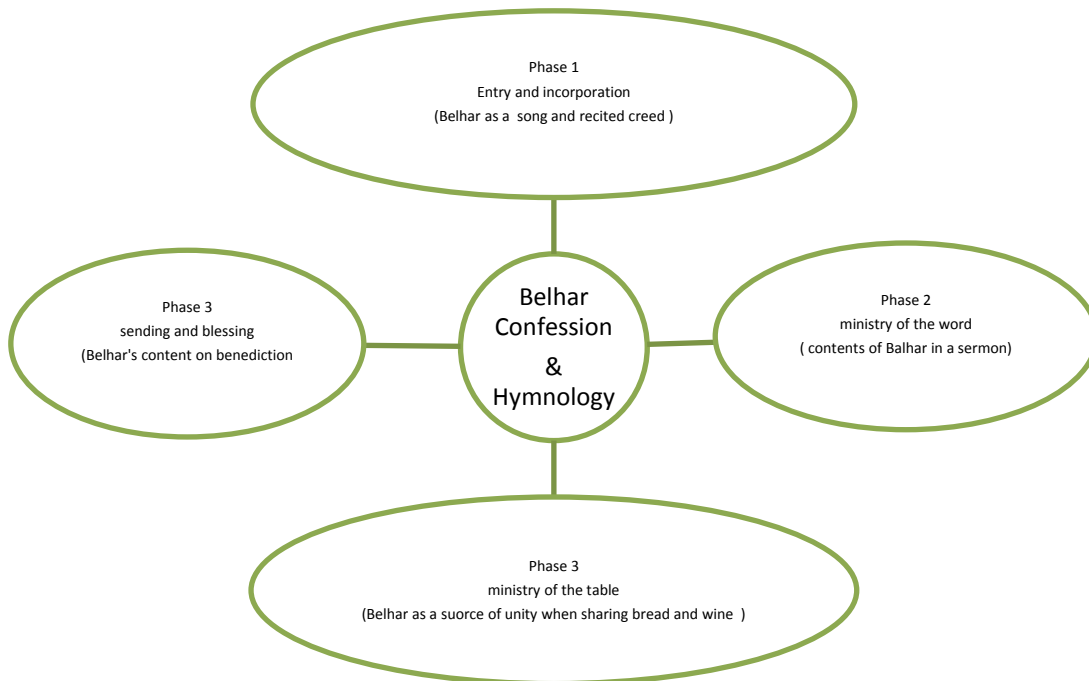
3.8 A brief discussion of the four phases

The aim of discussing all these elements is to better show how Belhar can be used in liturgy and to explore various options as a demonstration that the Belhar Confession can be used in almost all instances if carefully considered. In some instances the author will just point out the role of music in each element so that when the Belhar Confession is in the form of a song then it can be used in those elements. Since the picture has revealed different phases in this drama one can see a communication between God and His people; the performance has different characters, there are those who act without focusing on the producer of this marvellous ritual which is God the creator. But they are looking at their fellows. In this drama, others act so well, but they want to be applauded by those who appreciate their good act and lose focus of the purpose of the drama. Others perform very well and take over the roles of others because they are trying to

impress God, as they are working their way to salvation. As Cooke and Macy (2005:243) say:

Christian ministry is fundamentally the attempt by Christians to get things done that are worth doing: proclaiming the Word of God, performing Christian rituals, managing the finances, providing education for those interested in joining the community and for the young, as well as for the continuing education of the membership. Someone also has to have some means to decide who is living the Christian life and who is not.

Most church members have the impression that God will forgive their sins when they do good things for others, and they believe it is a ticket to see the kingdom of God after judgement day. The perception should be performing Christian rituals because it is a good thing to do not for any benefit or expectation from anyone. It is worth learning from the four phases how different characters perform. A diagram below is a summary of how the Belhar Confession and hymnology can work in all four phases



3.8.1 Entry and incorporation

In this phrase, one can clearly observe a community of faith entering the worship space to encounter the living God. But they don't just come into the church building for a worship service; it is God who calls the congregants to participate in this drama through the Holy Spirit and His words to partake in a service with Him. The reason for coming to participate in this ritual called liturgy is to reflect on the work of the Triune God. Everyone is invited to this drama even though cultural habits prohibits specific performances for other people, same roles in this drama cannot be given to a specific individual to act because of cultural beliefs. The study will mention the few according to their context and their hypothesis. However according to the URSA worship book (2015: 16), "Every single member of the congregation is important for the healthy functioning of the Body especially when it worships." In this drama it is certainly at home, one can find mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, even children and not forgetting grandparents. They all enter the building called the church to encounter the presence of God, it is not all of them who believe that God is present every day of the week, wherever they are. God is working every day on His creation even though people remember only on Sunday in church during liturgy as they are singing along worshipping God.

3.8.2 Congregation singing

Music is one of the crucial factors in this drama because it is attracting more ordains to pay attention to their roles as the episode is about to start. Music is a large contribution to liturgy, according to Long (2001: 53), "music is the nuclear reactor of congregational worship. It is where much of the radioactive material is stored, where a good bit of the energy is generated, and alas, where congregational meltdown is most likely to occur. Change the order of worship, and you may set off a debate. Change the style of music, and you may split the congregation." This concept will be further discussed in the next chapter because in most congregations there is a serious conflict about music Long (2001: 53) points out a possible reason that; "some argue that our tension over music is

just one more manifestation of battle lines. Each generation has its own musical preferences.” The question is who will be playing the musical role during liturgy? In most churches of the URCSA, there are church choirs and music leaders who often announce a hymn number from Hosanna frequently it is musicians who can read music notes and they know how the melody of a selected song is supposed to sound. In the URCSA the service does not start exactly at the recommended time, it is always about plus or minus ten minutes late and it is called ‘African time’. This is just a bad habit which is not promoted but it happens almost every Sunday. The argument is, “when precisely does the service start? Is it when the congregation is singing or in the vestry when the church council members are praying?” The worship book of the URCSA highlights that it is just the preparation of announcements in the vestry and the prayer by church council members before they go into the church building. The congregation may sing *HOSANNA 176: Kenang bohle, baka se sa le teng; (Enter all of you, there is still space)*

3.8.3 Vestry prayer

Since this chapter perceives liturgy as a drama, there should be a director, in this case a liturgist will direct the event. Therefore church services will only start when the liturgist ascends the pulpit. The norm in many URCSA congregations is when the church council members enter the church building everybody stands up and continues singing while members of the church council take their seats. During the entrance of the council members, the church choir or music leader will immediately start a song. The types of songs which are sung before the liturgist comes in are often not part of the sermon and it is advisable for the liturgist to select songs which are relevant to the message of the day suggested by the lectionary. Meditation for that particular Sunday will be on the same theme prescribed by prayers and songs. URCSA (2015:22), “ the vestry prayer should not become a mere formality, it should be an honest and sincere intercessory prayer, asking God to bless the whole service and to equip those taking the lead to be instruments of the Holy Spirit in building up the congregation’.” Then the real service will

start when everyone is the same building. Vestry prayer is just for the leaders to ask for strength from God as it is time to start with the drama of a worshipping service.

3.8.4 Votum or call to worship

Votum in this part of liturgy is using a short passage from URCSA worship book (2015:24)

Usually is read directly from Scripture, in which the meeting is constituted as gathering God's covenant community. There are three basic votum in URCSA: An expression of trust that God is present; an invitation to God, asking God to be present and to bless the congregation; a call on the congregation to worship God.

In this drama the Word of God or scripture is the manual in which all the characters are paying more critical attention to, the use of scripture as the primary authority in this drama. Hence when everything has been set up, and the liturgist is settled on stage the first person to speak is God through His words, there are different scriptures recommended for use, one of the scriptures which corresponds very well with this study is Psalm 95:6-7. However, the other option will be Article 1 of the Belhar Confession which can also serve the purpose. The URCSA worship book (2015:24), "The living God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit- gathers, protects and cares for the church through his Word and Spirit from the beginning of the world to the end. Amen." After the Votum it will then be a time for greeting.

3.8.5 Liturgical greetings

In this part a liturgist should be very careful because he/she has a big responsibility. He or she speaks to the congregation on behalf of God, the liturgist is not expected to close eyes when greeting the congregation even if it is on behalf of God, it is expected that everyone will look at how others are greeting their fellow congregants. From the Worship book of the URCSA (2015:25), “Ordained ministers traditionally will raise their right hand when they pronounce words of greeting.” But this symbol is one of the reasons used against lay people leading liturgy. Congregants feel like they are not connected to God when the liturgist is not competent to raise a right hand on behalf of God and the congregation as he/she is giving a word of welcome and the pronouncement of grace and peace. This part really needs to be carefully applied for the people to feel equality and justice with the rest of the congregation; it should not discriminate against the liturgist. After the talking, the singing part begins and everyone is involved.

3.8.6 Praise

After receiving grace and peace from the greetings, the congregation has to praise God as a response to the gracious greeting. The liturgist will mainly announce the hymn from Hosanna or Sionsgesange. According to Jasper D. and Jasper R.C.D (1990: 210), “The first hymn will set the tone for the whole service, but after that, the natural *modus operandi* of such an ordering is that a hymn is taken to relate to what precedes it.” In the URCSA there is still a challenge with regard to the correct method of singing a praise hymn, others will say there shouldn’t be any musical instrument because the hymn is sung directly from a hymn book and it has its recommend melody and shouldn’t require any accompaniment. But the voice should be clear so that God can hear the individual voices praising not through the noise created by instruments.

Other congregants will argue that the Bible say ‘praise Him with everything you have’ and since South African’s have lots of rhythm and traditional instruments like bells and

what is called a clock (steel instrument made out of a school siren bell) which are mostly used in the URCSA congregations. As Senn (2012: 183) writes: “Bells have played a varied and important liturgical role. Used in liturgical music, bells can be a powerful musical support.” The Youth will insist that those music instruments should be used during this praise time. However, the point is to create a worship service that is more African for the people to feel at home (*ekhaya or lapeng*) not in a strange house where members cannot relate to what is happening in their own father’s house. There are a few things that are happening during this time of praise and since this is a hymnological study it is important to note some of them in order to clarify the role of music during praise time in the liturgy of the URCSA. As Wepener (2015:8, 9) states:

African political traditional and Christian practices is a way to foster group cohesion amidst complex tensions in South African society, which include tensions between rural and urban and tradition and modernity to name only a few. And in essence this has to do with maintaining a kind of equilibrium.

For a church building to feel like home during liturgy, all members should create that kind of atmosphere, there should be a good balance in terms of activities or rituals that are performed during Sunday worship and all those activities should be performed in an understandable language.

3.8.7 Music as a form of Praise in liturgy

Music during praise as Roach (1997: 96) writes, “Music becomes a vehicle to expose the reservoir of caring deep within.” It is during this time in the liturgy where the congregants are expressing deep appreciation to God for caring and protecting them for the whole week from all kinds of trials and tribulations. Praising is an opportunity for everyone to shout out and sing to God for different reasons. Most of the time it is during praising where one can sense the emotions of church members when they are going through something that is affecting the whole of society. The spirit of singing a song of praise will express their deep feelings. Music can uplift the spirit for those who come to

a church service with burdens; music can also help congregants to express themselves to God by means of relating the liturgy to the totality of life. As White (2006: 41) says, “it is almost impossible to imagine worship without music, which has enriched the experience of Christian public prayer through the centuries in many ways the history of Christian worship directly parallels the history of the music written to be performed in a church.” Music should be part of the praise in the liturgy because it also makes liturgy flow better when praising God.

3.8.8 Music as symbol of church identity in liturgy

It is also worth noting that music can be part of the identity of different churches, as Burns (2006:75) says:

Congregations can define themselves by the songs they sing or don't sing, just as they do by making conscious choices about the extent of their embrace of symbolism and gesture. Choice of the song can be extremely telling, sometimes revealing either an inclusive or partisan approach to the community's identity.

In some churches just by entering the building one can tell the kind of a denomination just by the type of hymns, musical instrument or music that is sung during the liturgy. But music should not be a reason for division in the church as White (2006: 43) says:

At first, there seems to have been a wide variety of melodies for the various hymns used in Christian worship in the early centuries, and it is very likely that every Christian community had its own musical settings. But with the quest for unity- “one Empire, one religion”

The world can praise God in many ways and for many reasons, because He is the creator, praising God does not only mean for the good things that are happening in our lives but also for the bad things also for the creation that is providing different needs of our daily lives. During praise the mood is created, if the congregation sings vibrantly with more joy and happiness then the preacher is also getting a relevant feeling of how

he or she has to deliver the sermon. Most of the time it is during the praise time where preachers evaluate their preparation. A good praising spirit often helps the preacher to be in a good mood when serving the Word to the congregation. The liturgists may announce Hosanna 20 *Re ya o boka morena, (we praise you, king)*

3.8.9 Psalm

The URCSA Worship book (2015: 27), “By reading a Psalm each Sunday, the members are given spiritual resources to praise God from day to day and to face their daily difficulties and challenges.” The Psalms are the most readable book in the Bible because they have everything that people need to hear during the liturgy. In the Psalms, one can find hymns which can help the believers to deepen their praise to God. Hymns from the Psalm have lots of meaning because they were written by different authors who were on a pilgrimage and along the way they encountered certain things which made them end up thinking of writing hymns from the Psalms. The psalmists themselves were going through challenges and inspired by the Holy Spirit to write different Psalms in the Bible. Hence John Calvin (1509-1564) composed music for the Psalms and he encouraged the congregations of his time to sing the Psalm only in worship. Martin Luther (1483-1546) who was born in a musical family also composed songs and published hymns from the Psalms. Psalms are the most used sources in composing music for liturgy.

Vos (2009: 05) writes, “the psalms cannot simply be clothed in liturgical vestments. To distinguish the liturgical character of the psalms, different liturgical aspects should be considered.” John Calvin used Psalms with music when praising God but they are also just part of the scripture not more important than the rest of the writing. Therefore there are lots of hymns which are composed from the Psalms of lamentation and others are from thanksgiving. In a drama, members need to greet each other as a sign of recognising fellow participants.

3.8.10. Greeting one another

The liturgist will welcome the visitors and recommend a hymn or just a vibrant chorus that is common for everyone, as the members are shaking hands and hugging each other with gladness while celebrating the joy of meeting again in the house of God. Often the congregation will sing a chorus because they are increasingly popular and visitors can sing along. In this moment of creating a community's *koinonia*, one may find a friend during this time in the liturgy because there is such a thing as love at first sight. During liturgy it is not only family time but also a ritual of friendship, after creating friendship it is easy to do other things as Cooke & Macy (2005: 56) write:

When we relate to some as a friend, we do such things as share meals or drink together; we go hiking together or to a movie or just hang out. We may shake hands when we meet. A very special friend, particularly a "significant" others," we kiss or hug. Such gestures symbolize the relationship we share and cherish, and repeating them confirms and deepens the bond.

Greeting in African culture demonstrates the spirit of Ubuntu and because liturgy is a drama that is acted out in the house of God it is important that before the action goes further to recognise all the members present at the event. It's vital to create a good first impression according to the URCSA worship book (2015:28), "in order to give a practical expression to the saying (*motho ke motho ka batho*) 'a human is a human because of another human', it makes good sense to let members welcome one another in the service of brothers and sisters." the Bible highly recommends it, as Abraham did so in the Old Testament (Gen 18) Jesus also in the New Testament is preached and embodied this (Matthew 25: 35) also the apostle Paul urged congregations to do the same (Rom 12:13, Heb 13:2). In this part of liturgy, it is where everybody humbles themselves and swallows their pride to touch their fellow brothers and sister regardless of their differences. Liturgists will let the congregation sing a song of their choice or ask for this chorus:

Dumelang ban aba ntate, (greetings children of father)
ba keneng tempelong; (who entered the temple)
modimo o leruise, (May God provide)
molemo o sa foeleng (Everlasting mercy)

3.8.11 *Celebration of birthdays

Often this is placed at the end with an announcement that someone from the congregation is celebrating the creation and life, the URCSA worship book (2015:28), “Members who are celebrating their birthdays in the previous week to come forward and give a Thanksgiving [...] to God and to be prayed for.” The congregation will sing joyfully a commonly known birthday song for example, the URCSA worship book (2015:29):

Happy birthday to you! (2x) Happy Birthday to all of you! Happy birthday to you!
May God bless you now! (2x) God bless you and keep you- the whole of this
year!

L; *Hall* (3)

C: *Yah* (3x)

3.8.12 Confession of sin

It is customary for URCSA congregations to confess their sin to God by standing and singing a song, but it can also be done by reciting a litany together. In this part, a liturgist will announce Hosanna 114 verse 1 and 4. Afrikaans speaking congregations use *NuweSionsgesange*, often use 59-61

- *Dibe di teng, reya di bona (sins are there, we can see them)*
Dibe di reja dipela (sins are eating our hearts)
Dintho tse mpe keya di ila (bad things I am sacrificing)
A ko di lahlele ka ntle (throw them out)

Verse 4

Tlosa dibe, tlosa di tshila (remove sins, remove dirt)

Moya waka o be motle. (My soul be beautiful)

Dintho tse mpe ke ya di ila (bad things I am sacrificing them)

A ko di lahlele ka ntle. (throw them out)

Or (ibid p30)

Kyrie eleison! (3x) (Lord have mercy)

Lord, have mercy)! (3x) (Lord have mercy)

Heer, weesonsgenadig (3x) (Lord have mercy)

Modimo eba mohau (3x) (Lord have mercy)

Nkosiyibanenceba (3x) (Lord have mercy)

The reason behind this custom of singing when confessing is because in the church everybody has different sins which people wish to confess and it can take the whole day for everyone to do this. But music is a great tool to be used for people to voice out their feelings and singing a song of confession is helpful. While singing a confession song people can reflect on their personal conduct and admit that they are not perfect. Therefore congregants will ask God to remove their sins so that their souls can be cleansed and beautiful again.

3.8.13 Proclamation of forgiveness

After confessing, it is in human nature to feel relieved and expect to hear positive words from God. Liturgists will proclaim words of forgiveness URCSA worship book (2015:34) by saying:

L: *Brothers and sisters,
if you confessed your sins,
Hear this good news from 1 John 1:8-9*

3.8.14 Commitment to new obedience

After been forgiven through the grace of God, it is important for the congregation to take this grace seriously because now the congregants have seen a new life. It is time for them to prepare themselves and make it an on-going sanctification of their lives with guidance from the Holy Spirit; liturgists will say: “Sisters and brothers, God’s salvation means that God not only forgives us but transforms us into new people; Let us open our hearts to God and ask God’s Spirit to transform us, by singing Hosanna 123 and praying together.” URCSA worship book (2015:36-37)

3.8.15 *Creed

URCSA worship (2015: 37), “the reciting of a creed has always been a fixed part of Reformed worship. [...] The first purpose of this liturgical act is to enable the members of the congregation to state publicly what they believe and to affirm Christian truth as the foundation of the congregation’s unity.” It is a custom of the URCSA to recite a liturgical summary of the Belhar Confession and also the Apostle’s Creed. However not all the URCSA congregations recite the Belhar Confession, and there are a number of reasons, one of which is the way in which the Belhar Confession was introduced to different churches, and it is hard for some members to tolerate and recite. Other congregants still cannot relate or even understand the Belhar Confession. Preferably the creed should have been introduced in the vernacular so that it will be easier for members to recite the words meaningfully and act according to the principles of the Belhar Confession.

3.8.15.1 Music on Creed

This study is suggesting music as a different approach of using the Belhar Confession in the worship service. From the liturgy of John Colvin (1509-1564), the Apostle's Creed was also sung by the congregation during the worship service. The same method can apply in the URCSA. Church members can be taught how to sing the Belhar Confession, and this will enable others to recognise the creed and possibly use it daily. This point will be more articulated in the next chapter. Here is a liturgical vision of the Confession of Belhar that is easy to recite the from URCSA worship book (2015:39-40):

L: We believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who gathers, protects and nourished the church from the beginning of the world to the end.

C: The church is one; the church is holy; the church is universal. It is the community of God's children, called together from the whole of humanity.

L: We believe that the reconciling work of Christ gives birth to a uniting church because church unity is a gift from God and a goal we need to strive for.

C: The unity of the church must become visible so that the people around us can see how separation and hatred are overcome in Christ.

L: We believe the genuine faith in Jesus Christ is the only condition for membership in this Christian church.

C: So we praise God, that neither colour, class, gender nor culture determines who may belong to this church.

L: We believe that God has entrusted to the church the message of reconciliation, that we are called to be peacemakers: the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

C: We celebrate God's victory in the cross of Christ over all the forces of division and bitterness. This makes us a community of hope, working for peace and unity.

L: We believe that God wants to bring about true justice and lasting peace on earth. We believe that God is, in a special sense, the God of the suffering, the poor and the downtrodden.

C: God gives justice to the oppressed and bread to the hungry; God sets captives free and makes the blind to see; God protects strange, orphans and widows and obstructs the plans of the wicked.

L: We are called to confess- and to do- all this in obedience to Jesus Christ, our only Lord; even if authorities or laws oppose this; even if punishment and suffering are the result.

C: Jesus is Lord! We will follow him! To the one, God - Father Son and Holy Spirit - be honour and glory, forever and ever! Amen.

3.8.15.2 Hymn after the Creed

In all the URCSA congregations it is customary to sing a hymn after the recitation of the creed. Many congregations if the liturgist has not specified the congregants will Hosanna 122; *Atamelang ho Jehova (Get closer to Jehovah)* or Hosanna 238 *Ke dumentse ho morena (I believe in the King)* verses one and two only.

3.8.16 Baptism

Liturgy incorporates the sacrament, even though during this ritual, there is a small liturgical rite that will be performed, but it is still part of the liturgical ritual and music is also part of the process. URCSA worship book (2015: 41):

Baptism is the sacrament of incorporation into the church. In URCSA congregations it is predominantly infants who are baptized, but occasionally there are unbaptized who become members of the congregation. [...] Before baptizing

the candidates, the minister will read a form (formullier) to the congregation that explains the meaning of baptism. Just to make sure that baptismal parents have a clear understanding of what baptism means and the responsibilities that it places on them.

As the minister comes down from the pulpit to perform the baptismal ritual, the congregation may also participate by singing *Hosanna 250: Ke ngwana wa hao (I am your child)* it is very important for one to be baptised as follows in the name of

The Father who is the creator

The son who is the Saviour, who died and rose to set us free from the power of evil. The Holy Spirit is our comforter, who lives in us and transforms us from within.

The minister will use water when baptising not because there is anything magical in the water but because water brings life to the earth and plants. Water is a symbol of giving life to someone who is baptised because before the baptism the person is dead in sin; water is a sign that he/she is washed and clean water can be used in different ways, in the URCSA the person will be baptised with water. The congregation may continue singing the next verses from Hosanna 250. But there should be a clear cooperation between the minister performing the ritual and the congregation singing for example when he or she is receiving the words of baptism the whole church should be quiet and continue with the next verse after the name of the person baptised and the three words are pronounced.

In the words of de Klerk (2013:20), "it is an appeal to worship God for his baptismal grace, to be obedient to Him by obeying the demands of baptism and continue this obedience in the liturgy of life and the events of every day." The URCSA's worship suggests a renewal of baptismal promises once a year during the worship service. But it is important not to use water during that ritual because it will create the impression that

members are being re-baptised. While this ritual is in process, the congregation will recite the liturgical words.

3.8.17 Welcoming of new members

According to the URCSA worship book (2015:54, 55) when a new member moves to another URCSA congregation, the church council, will arrange for him or her to be welcomed, and the members will have to confer their faith publicly and they will be prayed for, after prayer the church council members will come forward to greet the new members while the rest of the congregation will sing a common chorus:

Re ya o leboha (3x) (we thank you)

Modimo wa rona (3x) (our God)

This element is the proper way of acting out the principles of the Belhar Confession, reunion of members after the week and now meeting again to hear God talking to them in the form of preaching.

3.9 Phase 2 Ministry of the Word

The foregoing phases of the liturgy should prepare the congregation (and the minister!) to hear the message of God. The hymn here will relate to the sermon. The preacher should feel welcome to present the bread of life to the children of God. Using the correct hymn will encourage the congregants to listen to the message because a particular hymn creates the relevant mood. (Ibid p57) A clear and well prepared public reading of scripture is in itself already a form of proclamation, before the preacher starts explaining it to the congregation. I concur with Karecki cited de Klerk (2013:35):

Preaching will be more effective and touch the hearts of the audience if it uses images and idioms of the indigenous culture. Therefore, a narrative sermon that describes the Bible truth in simple stories and images has a strong effect. It is important to break from the prescriptive rules frequently found in the sermon for

Africans and to concentrate on the message of grace and the service of reconciliation.

It's important for the preacher to deliver a sermon that will challenge the congregants to be better people in society and to inspire others in the community to act according to the message of the day. The sermon should not end at the pulpit but flow to the rest of the world. Many sermons talk a lot about forgiveness and reconciliation between God and people also among members. Well prepared sermons will always include principles of Belhar and this is an opportunity where preachers should really emphasise the importance of living according to the Belhar Confession. However de Kerk (2013:57) writes:

The sermon is not the "heart" of the liturgy, but it is obviously important for the preacher to prepare and deliver it well. It is also crucial that the preparation of the foregoing phases fit in with the sermon preparation so that the whole service forms a coherent unity and "flows" neatly from the one phase to the next.

3.9.1 Preacher in liturgy

For some people, the preacher does not have to say anything just good music can be the best sermon for the day in that particular worship service. Some preachers will co-opt some words from the hymn when preaching and others will even sing one verse or hymn relating to the message. Others will sing a chorus which gives more resonance to the sermon. A good song with content from the Belhar Confession can be used at this stage as well. After the sermon the liturgists, may announce *Hosanna 144: Lentswe la hao ke lebone (your word is light)*. After preaching, will be the time for Holy Communion as a symbol of remembering Christ's death and resurrection

3.9.2 Phase 3 Ministry of the table

This ritual is called the Lord's Supper and it is celebrated at least four times per year in URCSA congregations, but congregations are encouraged to celebrate Holy Communion much more frequently. Due to the lack of ordained ministers in certain areas, it is hard for other congregations to celebrate it more regularly. In some areas one minister is presiding over (*konsulent*) plus/minus five congregations without any assistance, this part of the drama cause the liturgy to suffer in the URCSA. (ibid p09)

The view of John Calvin of Christ's presence in the Eucharist through the Holy Spirit and his insistence is that it should be celebrated as frequently as possible has often been forgotten or ignored in the worship of URCSA congregations. The Lord's Supper is an instrument of the Holy Spirit to broaden and deepen the unity of the church, to provide a platform for on-going reconciliation with God and one another, and a school where we learn how to embody the equality, justice, and compassion that God requires of us. It is a talent that we should not bury but utilize and mobilize for the glory of God and the coming of God's kingdom.

3.10 What is happening in this table?

It is at this table in 1857 that marked the beginning of conflict, the apartheid policy and segregation in the church as well as the rest of South Africa. Prior to that there was no segregation everybody sat at the table. In this part of the liturgy, the three themes of the Belhar Confession are used most. The Belhar Confession was produced to try and correct what happened at the table. Currently what is happening at the table is a lesson that teaches us to be reconciled, united and to fight for justice. In the New Testament, the drama at the table was very clear, that no one is better or more important because Jesus and his disciples were drinking from the same cup and eating the same bread. (Matthew. 26:17-30, Mark. 14:12-26, Luke. 22:7-39 and John. 13:1-17:26). Therefore we are also called to do the same in remembrance of Jesus. The liturgist might use the following words for reconciliation taken from the Belhar Confession:

This table is a sign and seal of reconciliation through the Lord Jesus Christ and event of healing in a broken world. At this table, we celebrate the fact that in Christ God has conquered the powers of sin and death, reconciliation, and hatred, bitterness, and enmity, opening to us the way to make peace. So this table challenges us to admit the guilt of our words and deeds that have harmed others, our silence, and neglect that have exposed them to harm. This table helps us to acknowledge the guilt and fear, grudges and hatred that we harbor within us, and gives us the humility and courage to approach one another to try and find each other.

3.10.1 Who can take part at the table?

The other negative part is that those who are under discipline and often it is women who have had children out of wedlock whereas men are not so often disciplined unless they report themselves. Once the pregnancy is visible women are told to report themselves to the church council for discipline and are sometimes automatically excluded from the table. The hypothesis is that they have committed adultery, therefore, they are sinners. This is contrary to the Belhar Confession that the church must, therefore, stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies that the church must strive against any form of injustice. Liturgists may use the following words about justice taken from the Belhar Confession:

This table is a sign and seal of God's justice. Here we remember the Passover, how God led the people of Israel out of slavery because God has always hated inductive and exploitation. We receive justice as a gift at this table, because God levels us with one another, accepts each one of us as created in God's image and as equally precious members of the Body of Christ. We joyfully share God's abundance, so that no one has too much and no one goes hungry. No one is a second class citizen who comes afterward to pick up the crumbs that have fallen from this table; there is enough for all of us. Therefore, we receive Justice as an

obligation at this table: God sends us into our broken and unequal society to go and stand where God stands: with those who are poor and excluded and wronged. God sends us to go and change every table where we seek to become one; a space inclusion, justice, dignity, equality, and sharing.

3.10.2 The table is a celebration of liturgy

Cooke and Macy (2005: 86) says, “Many scripture scholars think that these accounts of Jesus’ last meal also reflect the community celebrations of that meal, as does the account of Jesus’ appearance to followers at Emmaus while at dinner with them (Luke 24:13-33).” At the table, we are celebrating Christ who suffers died and who rose for us all because we all sinned and were found guilty in the eye of God. Traditionally Jesus is like a friend in this drama who died on behalf of a friend but legally we were all found guilty and could not afford to pay the price that Jesus paid by His life for us all. Therefore the whole of creation needs to celebrate this grace every time we remember Christ. Everyone has to take part, children, women, men and those who are oppressed; it is a table of reconciliation for everyone because we are all created in the image of God. The URCSA has a communion song that is not found in any hymn books:

God has made me, yes I know

for the Bible tells me so;

we are precious in God’s sight;

We live together in the light.

Yes, God has made me (3x);

The table shows me so.

The study suggests that the table also signifies unity, the liturgist says the following words about justice taken from the Belhar Confession: The church must therefore stand by people in any form of suffering and need, the church must witness against and strive

against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

3.10.3 Unity

The table set before us is a sign and seal of unity in the Lord Jesus Christ. The dividing walls of fear and hostility between us have been broken down through his death and resurrection. We are members of one body, called together from the whole of humanity. We are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses who has gone before us and by those who are still to be born, the one body of Christ across all time and space, language and race, gender and age. At this table, the Holy Spirit opens our hearts to God and each other, so that we may embrace as sisters and brothers of one family. The Belhar Confession states, “it clear that this unity of the people of God must be manifested and be active in a variety of ways: in that we love one another; that we experience, practice and pursue community with one another”.

3.10.4 Self-examination

Therefore during the drama of liturgy, we should do as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11:27–31. We should check if everybody is at the table for introspection and don't leave others out of the table but make sure that everyone is part of this celebration. The table should reconcile us; we should look for those who have wronged us and find a way of forgiving them so that it will be a proper communion of united people at the table. There are people who are still seeking, and it is the church that should encourage people to find the kingdom of God to feel welcome in the assembly. In every liturgy of the URCSA, there is an empty chair which signifies the absence of the DRC at the Lord's Table. It is also a symbol of all those who are still coming to the table.

Empty chair



3.10.5 Sharing the peace

It is important to reconcile so that it becomes easy to share as a selfless church. The ministers should be united at all times so that members can share not just bad things but also good things. As Jabilin 2010 cited by Lemvik (2016: 166) says,

When one of our members is sick, it means that we are all sick. We have to visit her [him]. We have to take care of her/his needs. And when a woman [man] is grieving... we have to be there. We have to embrace her/him. We have to comfort her/him. We have to remember her/him in our prayers and give her /him some help. [...] we defend ourselves with our small business. [...] to help our sisters [brothers] who are sick or who are in need because of illness and grief.”

If truly the church is the body of Christ it has to look after other parts of the body, by not just focusing on the spiritual part of the body but be concerned about the environment where the body belongs. The church should create a comfortable place for the congregants to enjoy their stay in the midst of the community share knowledge about caring for ecology so that we stand together against challenges as the climate changes; after all, sharing is caring. This sharing is accomplished just before the real sharing of Holy Communion at the table where we remember our Lord Jesus Christ who shared his blood for us at the cross. The Belhar Confession is giving a clear guide that ‘we are obligated to give ourselves willingly and joyfully to be of benefit and blessing to one

another; that we share one faith.’ The liturgist will announce Hosanna 295 *Bohle re baena, bohle re baena, (we are all brethren, we are all brethren)*

3.10.6 Preparation of the table

This time in the liturgy is when one asks questions like who is worthy to come to this table? Because there is still a contradiction between praxis and theology, at this part of the liturgy from the URCSA worship book (2015: 62), “The minister stands at the table and invites the congregation to come to the table of the Lord. This can be done in different words.” URCSA worship book (2015:63) saying, “all who are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and who have expressed their love for Jesus within the fellowship of the church are welcome at the Lord’s Table. Come, for things are now ready.” In the International Methodist Church Oslo (IMCO) the liturgist will say the following words of invitation; ‘The Lord’s Supper is open to everyone, no matter what denomination we belong. God’s grace in the Eucharist gives strength to the believer’. The Belhar Confession reminds us that we eat of one bread and drink of one cup, and even confess one Name. Holy Communion is also for anyone, even those who are unsure of their faith. The whole of creation has received grace from God. In the Eucharist, we encounter the grace of God and not God’s judgement. The Lord’s Supper is about grace. God gives his gifts in Christ. Belhar Confession is very clear that there should be no discrimination. In most cases in the URCSA girls and sometimes men who have had a child out of wedlock will be denied the privilege of partaking in the Lord’s Supper and this is clearly against the Belhar Confession when there is discrimination of any kind. This element should be looked at very carefully through the lens of the Belhar Confession

3.10.7 Distribution of the elements

From the words of Senn (2012:182): “If there is a hymn during communion, it might be quiet and meditative, but also express joyful thanks for the gift of communion. While the elements are distributed the congregation may sing as they are meditating about the suffering of Jesus on the cross”. The Belhar Confession reminds us that during this stage, both are a gift and an obligation for the church of Jesus Christ; that through the working of God’s Spirit it is a binding force, yet simultaneously a reality which must be earnestly pursued and sought, one which the people of God must continually be built up to attain. The congregation may sing Hosanna 163: *Bona, ho fehwa sefaten? (Look what hung on the cross?)*. The Liturgist can also request the congregation to say the Lord’s Prayer in any language of his or her choice after the Eucharist or let the church sing the Lord’s Prayer from Hosanna 337: *Ntata rona mahodimong, (our father in heaven)*

3.11. Phase 4 sending and blessing

The last hymn should be able to give a summary of everything that happened during the worship service. Senn (2012: 18) writes, “Likewise, the sending hymn should be one that gives praise to God, or reinforces the themes in the readings and sermon or encourages people to go out into the world as Christ’s disciples it should be easy to proceed with teaching the rest of society as they sing *Hosanna 383 Mabitso ha a balwa ke tla ba teng (When names are read I will be present)*”

3.11.1 Robing of new ministry members

During the robing of members, music plays a significant role because the congregation with joy and happiness invite the new members to be fully involved in different ministries and use their talents. The hymn sung at this time has an inspirational message and the same hymn will be sung during the induction of new church council members or a new

minister, but verse 5 will be sung over and over again. Hosanna 153: *Lona, ba ratang ho phela mohlaping wa Jesu (you who like to live amongst the flock of Jesus)*

Verse 5

Ba inkele sefapano (Let them take their cross)

mahetleng a bona; (on their shoulders)

Ba tle ba shwele dikano (so that they die for vows)

Tse ba leng ho tsona (that they are in)

3.11.2 Offerings

To change the tradition of circulating money around the church will not be easy. But for the purpose of taking the liturgy to the community, it is the time for all believers' lives to become an offering to God. If believers want to practice a real offering they need to sacrifice their lives and spend most of their lives contributing to the community. Perhaps that action can be a very good offering to God. *De Klerk (2013: 90) writes:*

The act of handing over the thank-offering (not taking up the collection) has the underlying message that the life of the believer must be an offering to God, for continuing his honor as more and more people glorify Him, but also for the sake of all people. A guideline that may be seen as flowing forth from the thank-offering is that members must not only dedicate their time and energy to carrying out the gospel, but they must also make other sacrifices.

In worship services, the offerings, people are giving for the church, is not enough for work in the community. The giving for the church is to cover the pastor's honorarium, renovating and maintenance of church buildings and for travel to other congregations with different ministries. The same money will circulate throughout the presbytery again being devoted to church purposes until it is finished. For example, about ten ministers

from different congregations will visit one particular church where money is offered to be used for travel back to all those ten ministries where that money will be used up; then the process will begin over again. This money could be used for community outreach projects. This tradition has been going on for a long time in different ministries of URCSA and does not serve any purpose because money is just circulating around the church? It will be better as a confessing church; the congregation may start a project outside the church as a demonstration to society that God is a God of the poor and the downtrodden. It is a symbol of living according to the Belhar Confession. What is the point of offering if the money is not useful to other members of society? But circulating only within the vicinity of the church? Perhaps as the URCSA worship book (2015:67) says:

It is just a response of the congregation to hearing God's Word (and partaking of the Lord's Supper) by giving their money for God's work. [...] but in most congregations, they take up the second offering on a particular Sunday for a special purpose. One such offering is tebogo ya selaelo thanks for Holy Communion.

Different songs and hymns are sung by the choir and music plays a big role during the offering. When the singing is not good, the contributions become very little.

3.11.3 Role of music in offering

From the URCSA worship book (2015:67), "The whole congregation comes forward to give their offerings at a table while singing hymns; during this time of liturgy ministries are called separately to come forward and give their offerings at a table, each ministry singing a different hymn or song." During this part of the liturgy the music is very loud in most URCSA churches, because everybody is now singing as they give what they have to God, when the congregation sings joyfully they are giving their offering with joy. In addition, they dance in front of a pulpit and in most cases will offer a lot of money if they have received a good and motivating sermon. When it is time for a special offering, not

everybody will offer, the reason is not clear, the hypothesis is that Holy Communion should not be paid. In congregations where there are no ordained ministers members often give more money because the offering pays travelling costs of the *Konsulent*. If the URCSA is really motivated by the Belhar Confession at this part of the liturgy the leadership of the church should think carefully how this money that is collected can help the poor.

3.11.4. Announcement

Intimations can be very important as it shows congregants where they can be involved in the life of the congregation and thus linking liturgy and life. Intimations also give direction as to how members can still act out the liturgy in the community. In the case where a funeral is announced, the person who is making the announcement will request a hymn and often it will be a hymn that has a sad mood. Then a request that any member would share a short prayer after the hymn is sung with heads bowed. The liturgist may announce Hosanna 225 *Ke se ke utlwile, Jesu ha o mpitsa (I have heard you Jesus calling me)*.

After the intimations the music is also an opportunity to give people something to go home with that is why there is a closing hymn for people to sing as they get ready to receive the grace.

3.11.5 Closing hymn

The last hymn is, “the Gloria returns to the first section’s general theme of praise, a common theme which may well suggest a musical correspondence between the two sections” (Jasper & R.C.D. Jasper 1990: 200) This is a hymn that will be announced by the liturgist as a sign of giving glory to God for all that He has done to all the actors in the drama of liturgy. The glory is given to God for being present in the worship service of that particular Sunday; the congregation sings the last hymn with the understanding that they have finished worshipping. Possible choice is Hosanna 391(1) *Jehova a be le*

wena, ho fihlela re bonana hape. (Jehovah be with you until we meet again). The reality is that they just received strength to go and perform the real work outside the church vicinities. The Belhar Confession challenges members to go and serve God in the world and together fight against everything that may threaten or hinder this unity. This is clear evidence for this from Jasper & R.C.D. Jasper (1990: 201):

Music has a tendency to impose structural patterns on the small scale of the short Gloria setting, it will also do so on the larger scale of the whole act of worship; and where that act has itself a clear form, as in the Mass, it is important that the music should underline it.

But the process should not end at Mass but rather move to the rest of the community in their cocoons. The closing hymn can open the eyes of congregants in a supernatural way to be obedient witnesses and to make disciples all over the world. It is interesting to see from this liturgy that music is very important. It is a ritual that is used from the beginning of the liturgy, taken at the end of the liturgy, when the liturgists will give the benediction.

3.11.6 Benediction

This study will propose words from the Belhar Confession for this part of the liturgy:

May the Triune God bless you and keep you, may the face of the Lord shine upon you as you are going to strive for reconciling with others. May the love of God be with you as you show love and compassion to humankind and the rest of creation? May the good Lord protect you as you fight for justice and everlasting peace on earth, Amen!

After this benediction, the congregation will sing as the liturgist and the church council members return to the vestry where they will share a last prayer for the day. Hosanna 125 *Atisa, Morena, Mosebetsi wa hao. (Intensify Lord your work)*

3.11.7 After standing and blessing

Following the church liturgy the drama still continues into the community in order to support each other; when there are wedding ceremonies for instance, people will gather together to celebrate, help with the arrangements for the event, men will help with the slaughtering of a cow and women will help with cooking food or baking. It is not only during good times, they also support each other during funerals with prayer, donating money and food parcels to the poor families who cannot afford to pay for funeral arrangements.

This happens at home in a tent or sometimes at the church building if a deceased was an active member of the congregation. Members don't only support each other at painful situations, but also during the celebration of unveiling a tombstone months after the funeral. At the unveiling of a tombstone following the church liturgy, family and friends will celebrate with music, dancing, eating and drinking together and the celebration is called, 'after tears'. This demonstrates that the liturgy does not end with Sunday worship but there is liturgy after the liturgy in the community.

3.12 Liturgy after the Liturgy

Everybody has to work in this drama and not just the minister or the church council but the whole church from Sunday school children to the leaders of the liturgy and it has to spread to the rest of society. A Sunday worship service of a congregation – lasting for one or two hours (maybe three in some congregations) is not the sum total of Christian worship. As important as it is in the life of a congregation, it is not the main performance of worship. That can be described as a rehearsal for the real worship performance, which takes place in public life from Monday to Saturday. After all that was said and done within the church vicinity, all members should have more courage to start performing calling, not as just a drama but following the blessing. It is time to face real challenges and everybody's hands should be hard working. All members should be witnessing the life of the true church within the community.

In Liturgy within the Liturgy, Is essential for the church, but it has to be understood in all its dimensions. There is a double movement in the Liturgy, on the one hand, the assembling of the people of God to perform the memorial of the death and resurrection of our Lord “until He comes again.” It also manifests and realizes the process by which “the cosmos is becoming ecclesia”. (Bria Viewed 31 October 2016. https://www.iocc.org/orthodoxdiakonia/index.php?id=7_1 pdf)

(ibid 2016) “There is a big challenge now about the ethical implication of faith amongst people’s lifestyle, social ethics, and human behavior.” Extending and making sure that liturgy is flowing into the worship of God’s people during the week in the community, particularly by working for compassion, justice, reconciliation and unity among societies. Those are the real principles of the Belhar Confession which is recited in church during the liturgy but still a challenge to practice or to live according to its ethos. The question is: Where do we start if we want to take liturgy out of the church? This study will propose some suggestions which are currently proven to be working.

3.12.1 Fellowship as the first step

Just after a church service, it can be very nice to have a light meal together as we talk to each other and connect with visitors. The author concurs with Wepener (2012) who suggests, “The participation in Christian liturgical ritual could contribute to the formation of social capital and, as a consequence, eventually and indirectly in poverty alleviation.” In some poor congregations, a meal may be too expensive, but perhaps drinks, coffee or tea can be affordable. During this time of fellowship, members can reflect on the different roles which they played in the liturgy during the church service. Members will be able to suggest how they are going to carry the liturgy to the rest of society. For example, if music was not good during worship on that particular Sunday suggestions can be made to develop their singing talents. Fellowship can help people talk about their different challenges; members can also talk about the sermon of the day, ask a question and give feedback to the preacher and the liturgist. Due to a lack of ordained

ministers in the URCSA this initiative can help because often it is church council members who are leading the liturgy and preaching but they are often not trained. Fellowship time can be helpful for feedback on their performance so that they keep growing and developing they're God- given talents. It is the first step of taking liturgy out of the church to individual members of both church and community.

The International Methodist Church Oslo (IMCO) every Sunday after the church service they have fellowship. This fellowship consists of free food which is served not only to members of the congregation but to homeless people who often come to church just to eat. Most of those members are immigrants who cannot speak Norwegian or English and cannot attend church because they don't hear anything that is said during the liturgy. Therefore they choose to wait for the moment of fellowship where they would come in eat and then go. Others are a just atheist, but they still believe that life is about sharing and it is the responsibility of the church to look after the poor. Hence they come into the church during this part of the liturgy.

3.12.2 Taking liturgy outside the church vicinity

In order to respond to this question, the study looked closer at service delivery in the form of Diakonia which is a term used for service. Nordstokke (2011: 100) writes: "The Church has been empowered by God's Spirit to be the salt of the earth and light of the world. This pampering can simply empower for diaconal action." It is the duty of the church to empower and train its members and the rest of the world so that the whole earth can have a flavour and move from the darkness to the light of helping others. If the church is empowered by God's Spirit already, it has to go out with the same spirit and do the same to the rest of society including creation by diaconal action. While not referring to the Holy Spirit in the world but using that power as a true reflection of God, who is caring and loving. The Christian Men's Ministry (CMM) of the Northern Synod has done this by donating a house to a needy family who had nowhere to live in Oukasie near Brits in the Northwest Province.



This picture was taken on the road where different Congregations of the Northern Synod were gathered together by (CMM) to conduct a worship service at the house which they built for a needy family.

The CMM Northern Synod invited ministers from different URCSA congregations in the same region, some members of Northern Synod Moderamen and congregants in their URCSA uniforms to gather together in a church in Oukasie. The liturgy was conducted differently because it started with a prayer and greetings then taken to the street with ministers in front and the leadership of CMM. As displayed in the picture, the singing was very loud and vibrant as the congregants were walking towards the new house. Members of the community in Oukasie came out of their houses to see this amazing act, others looked from their windows, and children who were playing in the street joined behind church members as they marched along, to see where this group of people dressed in black and white was going?

3.12.3 God, church and society

God speaks to the congregants through the sermon in the church, and after empowerment from God during the liturgy; it is the responsibility of the church to respond by acting according to the words of God to the rest of society. In the words of the URCSA worship book (URCSA 2015:10):

The Bible emphasizes God's gracious initiative in making this covenant, but also that God is faithful in keeping God's own promises, even when people becomes faithless and disobedient. God's covenant with us has two sides:

I will be your God- you shall be my people

*God speaks –we respond God promises –we trust and obey God calls us we follow
God saves us – we believe, love and hope.*

Furthermore, we also serve each other and the creation of God. When people are serving each other and creation, this has to go beyond the drama that is taking place during the liturgy in church since it challenges the church to practice Diakonia. To engage in liberating practice in the world by looking after the poor and those who are oppressed, and to be the voice of those who cannot talk for themselves, In the liturgy people, are given the opportunity to talk and to cry out to God for love, peace, justice, and reconciliation. But the microphone that is moving around the church while people are talking is limited to the vicinity of the church. With the liturgy after the liturgy, the performance is carried out through a cordless microphone. It is not only limited to the church building, but it is taken out to society where the reality of communication is taking place. As much as in church poor people can talk and be listened to during the liturgy the same thing can be achieved with the rest of society. All the voices ought to be heard regardless of the person's status.

3.12.4 Diakonia and liturgy after the liturgy

Diakonia is all about service which is currently a problem in South African post-apartheid because most people are complaining about service delivery. The church has to look into the needs of community members when extending liturgy out of the church. As pointed out, prior to preaching is not the most important part of the liturgy, meaning the preacher is not the most important character in this drama. After the message has been delivered, the next step is to deal deeply with theory and praxis. Dowsett (2016: 62) writes:

Convictions and praxis concerning the relationship between evangelism and diakonia may vary widely among evangelicals. Additionally, there are some parts of the whole that focus primarily on evangelism, and others that focus primarily on diakonia, whose ministries are complementary, and none complete alone.

CMM has combined the concept very well by building a house for a poor family and the liturgy still continued. The congregation still receives the sermon as the bread of life for their every Sunday worship, and they still sing to God as always. It is truly liturgy beyond the pulpit and the church building but in another building which is the fruits of diaconal.



In this picture, it is Rev. M.S Maponya with members of URCSA at the house built by (CMM) of the Northern Synod for a needy family of Oukasie in Northwest province. He is giving a passionate sermon about 'restoring dignity.'

It is in this context that one can really see the effect of taking liturgy out of a church building. This family had no dignified house, but they always attended church and felt the warmth of being in a home. But during the week they didn't even feel the presence of God because they did not see anything good that God was doing with the situation they were in. In church, it is on everybody's lips to talk about Diakonia but the real praxis is not in the church building it is where the Holy Spirit is invited to refill empty souls for the real practice of Diakonia. Nordstokke (2011: 56) asks, "Is it possible to develop a diaconal praxis that is liberating, in this sense that is really making a difference to people affected by suffering, need and injustice"?

What is happening in the picture is an attempt to respond to this question; there is not sufficient room for the praxis of Diakonia in the vicinity of the church, but going into the community can really restore the dignity of the same members who come to church with broken hearts because they don't have dignified houses to create a living home. It was even more interesting when the Rev. M.S. Maponya referred to Matthew 25 which is, "the mission statement of the International Orthodox Christian [...] this is a fundamental

text for understanding Diakonia from an Orthodox perspective” (Dowsett 2016: 99). When practising Diakonia we can learn from others to reach out to the rest of society. The church can use the concept of Diakonia in its outreach to the rest of the community. The Belhar Confession talks about God of the poor and the downtrodden it is the responsibility of the church that is confessing this creed to visit and help those who cannot help themselves. To give others hope so that they can truly feel that God is also with them in all their circumstances.

3.12.5 Diakonia as an outreach programme

Among the members of the church, the focus should be outside their environment to reach beyond their limitations. The interest should be on getting more people to join the drama that is glorifying God and serving God’s purpose. There should be no distinction between the individual and the community. In the words of Lemvik (2016:166):

Members belong to one another in an intimate relationship. When one person suffers, the community responds by reaching out in support. [...] While listing what happens during a visit, [...] the everyday condition of struggle is common to all of them. The context yearns for a mutual diaconal practice.

Whenever God’s creatures’ gets hurt, He always has a way of showing His mercy. That is why when the earth was in deep sin God sacrificed His only begotten son Jesus Christ to redeem the world. God does not do things by Himself but always sends servants to do what He wants to be done. The church is also a like a *servant* of God it is important that its liturgy is not limited to certain buildings, but it should flow to all corners of the earth until the end of time.

3.12.6 Church and eschatology

According to WCC (2014: 21), “the church is an eschatological reality, already anticipating the kingdom, but not yet its full realization.” The church is not yet in full reality of eschatology but still on the journey of becoming an eschatological reality because during the drama of liturgy not every character in the drama is anticipating this kind of kingdom. Most members of the URCSA still strongly feel they need to act out their characters very well in church so that they will go to heaven when they die. But about creation and the rest of society, it is a different story. The church had experienced a taste of eschatological reality when Jesus was still on earth; there was a bit of eschatology when Jesus commanded His disciples to take this kingdom and spread it to the rest of the world (Mark 16: 15, Luke 14: 21). However when Christ ascended He made the promise of coming back and filling the church with the power of the Holy Spirit which was given as a comforter and guide as they continue working for the salvation of the world until the *Parousia*.

3.12.7 The church on an eschatology journey

The church is still on a pilgrimage to do as Jesus commanded and when the church only focuses on its internal affairs it will be convinced that it is an eschatological reality, but the real obligation is to go out to the world to tell the rest of creation that God wants to reconcile everything to Him. The church is still not anticipating the kingdom if the poor are still ignored by the very same church because it is looking after its needs first. Sick members of society are misled by the church which promises to heal but causing more harm to those who are vulnerable. The kingdom of God will be realised when the whole of creation is educated by the church about the real meaning of this, the kingdom of God, what I look like and how it becomes a reality. The answer to these questions will be a clear demonstration that the church has not yet arrived at its eschatological destination but still on its way towards it.

3.12.8 Church is anticipation of the Kingdom of God

The anticipation of the kingdom that is not yet realised in its fullness shows that the church is still between the times, it is like the early dawn when some part of the creation has woken up to start a new day but it is still too early for others, and they are still sleeping. During the liturgy Sunday in church, people who are participating are like those who have seen the light of a new dawn and start working for the kingdom. Those who wake up later should not be left behind they also need to be given time and space to start their daily work so that everyone can enjoy the rest of the Day when the sun rises. McGrath (2011:383) writes: “Calvin stresses that all believers are obliged to honor and to remain committed to the visible church, despite its weaknesses, on account of the invisible church, the true body of Christ”.

The point here is that the church should listen to the community, to those who are talking but no one is listening to them; those who are regarded useless should find their role in this drama of liturgy. So that they can also show their God-given talents because every creature has a purpose for living (ibid p21): “The Holy Spirit is the principal agent in establishing the kingdom and in guiding the church so that it can be a servant of God’s work in this process.” If the church is truly the body of Christ, it has to show the world the wounds of the cross, just like the body of Christ which was wounded for the whole of creation. The church should stand where God stands in solidarity with the poor and those who are oppressed so that the eschatological reality can be visible. It is clear that the Belhar Confession can work with all elements but this illustration can indicate that incorporating the Belhar Confession in hymnology can work much better in liturgy.

3.13 Conclusion

This chapter looked at the liturgy of the URCSA as a ritual that can be used to mend a broken society. Its main focus was to look into possibilities of taking liturgy out of the church vicinity into the community where the real worship has to take place. The chapter dealt with existing issues in the church during the performance of this drama called liturgy. A strong emphasis of this chapter was the possibility of practising liturgy after the liturgy; a few examples were provided where the URCSA is practising Diakonia on its journey of becoming an eschatological reality. The Belhar Confession was the main principle for this chapter in dealing with the way in which a church can be an instrument of reconciliation, unity and justice including the whole creation of God. This description and exploration was necessary, so that it we can better work out where and how in the liturgy, also in which liturgical elements, the Belhar Confession can best be used. The findings of this chapter where as follows:

- The meaning of liturgy was expressed in two ways as the ritual that is performed in church and as a drama that is acted by different congregants and members of the community starting from vestry prayer at church to the closing hymn.
- This chapter focused on the four phases found in the liturgy of URCSA and to see if the Belhar Confession can work and the findings indicate that it is possible to use Belhar in those four phases as indicated in the above.
- Last the study discovered a possibility of taking liturgy outside the church in a form of Diakonia, as the church is anticipating the kingdom of God it is its duty to also give hope to rest of the community.

Chapter 4

Title: Music, liturgy and Belhar confession

4. Introduction

This chapter will be focusing mostly on the role of music as a ritual that can be used to incorporate the Belhar Confession so that it can assist the URCSA with the appropriation of Belhar and also help with a wider acceptance of Belhar, in for example, the DRC by giving a closer connection between liturgy and life. Here the argument will be on liturgy and also music as a potential area where Belhar can be sung. The chapter will also expand on the role of music and the transformative power of ritual. Due to this being a hymnological study, the kind of music will be based on church music. According to Calitz (2011: IV), “The study of music illustrates the important role music and singing within the dialogue of the liturgy. Recent studies emphasize that church music could function as a ritual symbol within a specific cultural or sub-cultural community.” This study does not intend to go that far, however, it is true that church music is closely related to the culture (or sub-culture) of a given community and can never be evaluated apart from that culture. Calitz (2011: iv) is correct within a postmodern culture, church music will be greatly influenced and coloured by the values and attitude of people

4.1 What is music?

The common meaning of the word music is an art of sound in time that expresses ideas and emotions in significant forms through the elements of rhythm, melody, harmony, and colour. This meaning will be discussed in the context of hymnology and this chapter will be dealing mostly with the kind of music which hypothetically stands a chance of being used in the church or to fulfil the purpose of the study.

The tone or sounds employed, occurring in a single line (melody) or multiple lines (harmony) and sounded or to be sounded by one or more voices or instruments, or both. The art of arranging sound in time in order to produce a continuous, unified, and

evocative composition through melody, harmony, rhythm, and timbre. From this definition one can clearly see that with music there is a lot that people can do, because music is a form of articulating ideas and emotions it is one of the best tools to be used in order to communicate effectively with one another, between the two churches the URCSA and DRC there are lots of emotions which still need to be dealt with and in most cases where there is a broken relationship narrative therapy can be a great help. There is no doubt as Long (2001: 53) says:

Music is the nuclear reactor of congregational worship. It is where much of the radioactive material is stored, where a good bit of the energy is generated, and, alas, where a congregational meltdown is most likely to occur. [...] Some argue that our tension over music is just one more manifestation of the broader culture wars, especially those fought along generational battle lines.

The two churches have their own music preferences and language therefore if the music committees of the two churches can meet and talk about the melody that can accommodate, then it will not be such a big challenge to insert lyrics which contain the words of the Belhar Confession. Music gives more room for one to express their emotions so that at the end they are able to retell their stories differently.

4.2. Reaction of the people towards music

The reaction of the people to music is well expressed by Mtshiselwa (2014: 57), “in spite of the historical narrative that articulates the demise of apartheid in South Africa, the most recent rhetoric of the ANC (African National Congress), *Yinde lendlela esiyihambayo* (The walk we have embarked on is long), which is borrowed from Nelson Mandela’s Long Walk to Freedom, points in a different direction. It implies that the ordinary citizens of South Africa, who are the members of the ANC as well as ANC politicians, recognise that South Africa is not completely free”. That recognition is online with the second narrative of the history of South Africa. Jacob Zuma, the president of the ANC and of the Republic, often chants the song:

Yinde lendlela esiyihambayo

(The work we have embarked on is long) (4x)

Wa sho uMandela kubalandeli bakhe,

Wathi yinde lendlela esiyihambayo

(Mandela told his followers that the walk we have embarked on is long) (2X)

As people chant and dance to a certain kind of music they end up feeling happy and free from all kinds of pain because music cares for the heart

4.3 Music cares for the heart

It is important to look at music as a caring initiative because the Belhar Confession talks about caring for the poor and those who are marginalised Roach (1997:89) writes,

Ritual and task of care situate professionals in compelling intimacies with people at vulnerable times. Caring is qualitatively different than caregiving although the two can be one. Caring involves the sensitive exchange between person manifested in a touch, a look, or the tone of voice.

Sometimes the only thing that the family can do in the case of a sick person who is at the stage of dying is just to be there and sing as he or she dies peacefully when there is no cure for the sickness. Roach (ibid p93) uses another method to achieve illumination of caring from the heart, which draws on the power of music.

By relaxing the tight controls that the mind imposes on itself and the heart, music can enable people to re-experience forgotten caring moments and animate this foundational source for growth. Music helps the human brain to become more integrated by facilitating right and left brain connections; it may activate the transfer of stored memories across the corpus collosum.

This struggle song, which was used when the ANC was campaigning for the 2014 elections, presupposes that complete freedom has not yet been achieved in South Africa. Therefore, in view of the tenor of liberation yet to be realised that the struggle songs suggest, the author is understandably sceptical about the argument that 20 years after the 1994 independence, South Africa has attained freedom in a holistic sense. However, such scepticism cannot be validated without evidence of oppressive socio-economic injustice(s), which will be human emotion. Music also has a certain impact on human emotion.

Music has a great impact on all human emotion According to Kamuwanga (2003: 95), “human emotions are an elemental aspect of life. We go through life and are faced with a variety of situations some good and others unhappy ones. The author of Ecclesiastes 3 puts it rightly by saying there is a time for everything.” Music gives hope, joy; it helps one to be calm which is therapy to lots of people and songs play a significant role in expressing a personal and communal view on how life affects those born into it. Different people love different kinds of music but the most commonly loved music in South Africa is gospel.

4.4 Music as a ritual in liturgy

It is still a challenge for one to find a better or more adequate ritual when it comes to music, when looking at music as a ritual, according to some scholars the hypothesis is that music is a ritual in from an African perspective and that is not always a case, there are different views on the issue from different contexts. Long (2001) does give a warning about the music in worship saying, “change the style of music, and you may split the congregation.” Music can easily divide the church but at the same time, it can also unite the people.

From the previous chapter the study alluded to what is called liturgy after liturgy to show that liturgical ritual does not just end at church during liturgy but it goes beyond the church vicinity. According to Grimes (2014: 217)

Religious traditions vary in their carrying capacity for music. Every tradition has its tacit and explicit canons, rendering some style of music worthy and others unworthy of inclusion in worship. Few, if any traditions exclude all forms of music. In some, there is a religion/music divide. In others, there is a little or no separation. In early Christianity, for example, vocal music, or song, was praised as spiritual, while instrumental music was excluded as pagan. In some periods of its history the Christian church feared the emotional power of music almost as much as it did that of theatre.

Music plays a very important role in liturgy. Various scholars, preachers and liturgists have pointed out the fundamental role of music in worship, but ritual music was hardly theorised.

The study concurs with Grimes (2014: 217), that “one reason ritual of music has hardly been theorized is that many who write about ritual lack a theoretical and historical knowledge of music.” But this is not the only reason; another reason is because music originated from oral history. If we take for example in Basotho culture, when a boy goes to initiation school in the mountains, there is particular music/songs that he has been taught for manhood which is called (*mangae*). These are songs that express their emotions regarding their learning process. When they return home after the ritual performance, they will sing for the people at home during their welcoming party. An older man of the house during this party will walk up and down reciting a poem about the family also mentioning the clan of the boy who is now a man. This act is a symbol of welcoming back the boy who has now become a man. All these songs and poems are not written down; they are taught from generation to generation orally. This can be another reason why music was not theorised especially among the Black nation.

Grime helped by tracing one of the few scholars who has theorised the ritual dimensions of music by the name of Christopher Small. Grimes (2014: 217) writes that this scholar, “spent much of his scholarly career arguing that a classical European

symphony concert is a musical ceremony. For him, a classical music performance is a ritual, and the history of European music is a “mythological landscape”. In the Euro-American West, masterpieces are “immortal,” and the lives of composers, like the lives of characters in operatic works, are the centres of mythmaking activity. The makers of music are themselves both heroes and priests in the magical-ceremonial activity of preserving and transmitting masterpieces.” Christopher Small’s argument vividly shows that music is not just a ritual because of the environment where it plays. If one looks at the ceremony of a classical concert it is almost the same as most church atmospheres the only difference is there is no liturgist or preacher only the conductor is the one who is taking that role. By his or her gestures they control the musicians and even the ordinance. From the theory discussed above, it is worth following up this discussion about music as a ritual.

4.5. A discussions about music as ritual

Small takes us in a different direction of understanding rituals; African music on the one hand has always been perceived as a ritual. It is not even clear how African music became considered ritualistic; perhaps it is because many songs in Africa originate from certain ritual praxis. However, Small cited by Grimes (2014:17)

The European musical performance tradition is no less ritualistic. The difference is not between ritual and non-ritual. Rather, it is between the values each tradition ritualizes. Like Durkheim, Small treats ritual as an organized group activity in which a society reflects on, performs and venerates itself. Ritual is not only a mirror of how things are but also how they ought to be. To some extent a musical performance reflects the world, but more importantly, it articulates an ideal, longed-for cosmos where proper relationships are affirmed, explored, and celebrated.

In the works of Grimes (2014: 218) we find four variants of the definition of ritual by Small:

- *“The acting out of desired relationships and thus of identity.”*

It is important to note that this definition, considering the role played by the struggle songs in South Africa, that the majority of these songs were sung with a longing emotion for a better future of a life with freedom and peace in the rainbow nation.

- *“[An] activity, in which the identity and the values of the members of a group are explored, affirmed and celebrated.”*

This definition is a true reflection of what was happening during the ritual in different people’s lives for one to be considered a Mosotho in the Free State where I was born. One has to know that certain songs sung during the welcoming ceremony of a child are identity. Moving to Johannesburg and interacting with different people has been a very interesting experience. When I meet different men from different cultures who have been to initiation school, they confess that there is a certain special act which a Mosotho man will perform and others will automatically know his identity just by the kind of songs he learned for rituals in his own culture.

- *“An action which dramatizes and re-enacts the shared mythology of a social group.”*

It goes without saying that there are lots of myths in different tribes, for example in Basotho culture there is a belief that when there is no rain all the girls who are still virgins should take the spoon that is used to stir porridge *lesokwana* and run up and down throwing that spoon to each other and singing *Pula e ya tla* (rain is coming) eventually the understanding is that *modimo le badimo* (gods and gods) will hear the girls and it will rain.

- *a form of organized behaviour in which humans use the language of gesture, or paralanguage, to affirm, to explore and to celebrate their ideas of how the relationship of the cosmos (or a part of it), operates, and thus of how they themselves should relate to it and to one another. Through their gestures, those taking part in the ritual act articulate relationships among themselves that model*

the relationships of their world as they imagine them to be and as they think (or feel) that they ought to be.

Small does not omit the creation in the definition of a ritual and it has always been a question to many people as to why Africa funerals seem to create too much waste like; the killing of innocent cattle, sheep or goat? The understanding is that a human is part of creation and when a person dies there should be another creature that will die also to accompany the deceased and the cattle skin is used to cover the body. During the time when this ritual of covering a dried body of a loved one there is a song that is sung in Basotho tribes which is called *kodu ya malla* (mourning song). They believe that a dead person can also hear their cry. With this definition, it is clear that Small is observing the whole meaning of what is a ritual in terms of music and giving a broad perspective. The focus of Small's definition was not just to point out that classical music is a ritual which is performed in concert and ends there. But he goes further as Grimes (2014:222) notes,

The musical world is not only inside the concert hall but also outside, in the world that surrounds the concert hall. Traffic across the threshold separating made-up and real runs both ways, and the threshold is permeable. The social world of aficionados penetrates the sonic world of the concert hall, and the sonic world reverberates into the sonic world of the concert hall, and the sonic world reverberates into the social world of the musicians and the audience.

4.6. Worship in Reformed church

This point will be deliberated in two different ways there will be a discussion about the music as a ritual and its complexity. But this music and worship will be mostly focusing on the Reformed tradition; we shall only look at areas that support the argument. Other churches will be involved especially from the experience of the course work of this study which was completed in Norway. The study will consider a particular church which was

more frequently visited; International Methodist Church IMCO in Oslo where music is also a ritual in that congregation to be specific.

One of the fathers of the Reformation John Calvin had a list of the basic principles of worshipping, the Word of God was his first principle, and the Word not only directs worship but is also very largely the content of worship. The Word is read and preached, and the Word is also sung and seen (in communion). The worshipper meets God through the Word. According to Osei-Bonsu (2013: 83), “Worship is the principle act in the life of the Christian church, and it is the church’s response to God’s gift of Christ. Therefore, the kind of music used in worship is very important”. He goes on to say, “the reformation, therefore, called for some changes in the way the church was run and administered by the medieval church”. The Reformers were concerned with, “discovering the *essential ecclesiae*: what makes the church the church”?

4.7 Different views by the Reformers on worship

It has been a wonderful experience to be a member of the Reformed church and its way of worshipping because in this church the way of worshipping is always reforming depending on the context Osei-Bonsu (2013: 84) writes:

The reformers rejected some aspects of medieval worship, such as the Gregorian chant, the use of elaborate vocal and instrumental music of overly theatric performances, the unwarranted expense of elaborate ceremonies and enormous pipe organs and the uselessness of text unintelligible to the common man.

Their aim was to stick to the principle of Calvin and that is to make the Word of God the centre of worship and to introduce simple forms of worship and music in the church. (ibid p84) Says: “the aspiration of the Reformers is to restore the true worship of God” This was accomplished through the introduction of congregational singing and lay

participation in worship which prior to this time was the lot of only the clergy” In a study made by Osei-Bonsu (2013: 84)

The Gregorian chant is the plainsong liturgical music of the Roman Catholic Church, Pope Gregory is the one who gave his name to the musical repertory and may himself have been a composer, is usually claimed to be the originator of the musical portion of the liturgy in its present form, though the sources giving details on his contribution date from more than a hundred years after his death. Many scholars believe that his reputation has been exaggerated by legend. Most of the chant repertory was composed anonymously in the centuries between the time of Gregory and Charlemagne

Furthermore, Osei-Bonsu (2013: 84) noted that Martin Luther, who was a singer and a composer, continued much of the Catholic Church’s liturgy and retained Latin as the language of worship. He was interested in the strophic congregational style of singing (German choral of English chorale), which was monophonic with two elements, text and a tune. Luther considered music as an exceptional gift of God second to theology. He indicated, “I would not give up my slight knowledge of music for a great consideration. And youth should be taught this art; for it makes fine skilful people.” In the introduction to this study, it clearly indicated that other preachers find it hard to deliver a message when the congregation is not singing in a vibrant way and Luther was also attached to music. Osei-Bonsu (2013: 84) further alludes,

The power and influence of music in the life of Luther often moved him to preach the Word. He also employed his skill in music in the service of his Creator. Luther favored the use of icons in the church and would not overthrow them for the Gospel. He held that music must be simple, direct, accessible, and an aid to piety. Contrary to the Catholic elaborate forms of worship. Luther and other Reformers emphasized a simple form of church music...

From the works of Grimes (2014: 217)

The Swiss church Reformer Ulrich Zwingli allowed simple chanting but worried about congregational singing. He achieved considerable notoriety for wanting to get rid of Geneva's organs. In Burmese Buddhism music is disallowed, but chant, because it is defined as prayer rather than music, is allowed. The distinction is similar to that made in some African American Baptist churches, where dancing is prohibited while movement in the spirit is actively fostered.

It is worth noting that even in the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa (DRCSA) that was changed to the URCSA many years ago, the only music that was allowed was to sing from the hymn book and it was prohibited to chant or clap hands for a very long time but changed after the introduction of democracy and freedom. Calvin's view on worship is different because unlike Luther he spoke against the use of icons in worship. He was of the view that worship should be devoid of icons, which were used as a way of attracting human attention to God through meditating on them. Osei-Bonsu (2013:84) points out that: "Calvin alludes clearly that, it is true that God ought to heartily praise, both by a musical instrument and by mouth. But it is another matter when we conduct the worship of God in the church".

From Calvin's suggested way of worship the church can learn quite a lot Osei-Bonsu (2013: 87) writes:

John Calvin introduced a new liturgy in all the churches in Geneva which included the signing of a Psalm or the Decalogue immediately after the confession of sins, the Long prayer, the Apostles' Creed, a Psalm during the distribution of the emblem of the Lord's Supper, and a Psalm or the Song of Simeon before the Aaronic Benediction.

He further intimated the use of vernacular in worship, "to make the worship meaningful to parishioners." From an interview during field work, it was strongly argued that the Belhar Confession was not introduced in the vernacular which is part of the reason some members of the URCSA don't recite the confession during the liturgy and that is a

learning curve. When composing songs about this confession, the language should be considered. According to Osei- Bonsu (2013: 87),

John Calvin taught that a church worship service should end with the Lord's Supper. He encouraged weekly participation in the Lord's Supper because he considered the service as a summary of the whole Gospel. While humanity is saved by hearing the Word preached, the Gospel is confirmed by partaking in the Sacraments.

During this ritual in the URCSA the congregation does not sing Psalms as Calvin recommend but there is a song from a hymn book called Hosanna. The challenge here is children don't know or understand these songs because they are difficult, long and even the melody is not easy for children. The synod of the URCSA has just recently adopted a motion that children should also partake in Holy Communion considering the content of the Belhar Confession that there should not be any discrimination on age. But before that can be applauded during the discussion of this resolution none of the synod members ask then what kind of hymns should these children sing during this ritual? Because any hymn that they will song should also portray how children view this and also teach them about the dynamics of this ritual

When one looks at these different views from the reforming church fathers, it is easy to conclude that churches will never have the same kind of worship. The only thing that the church can do is just to worship God purely from our hearts and faithfully according to the appointment of his Word. There are so many conflicts in our churches today and lots of anger from Christians but people still sense there is a need to worship. Long (2001:15) phrases this question in even more detail by saying, "Given the lures and distractions of a leisure culture, what motivates some people to choose worship over a round of golf, a couple of hours in the garden, or a casual morning lingering over bagels and the Sunday paper?" Long does not only ask the question but he also responds by saying, "People come to worship for many reasons. Some come from habit, some from

gratitude, some from guilt, and some from loyalty, some show up because they have a spouse who coaxes or coerces them to come; others come because they have a spouse who “needs to be brought up right.” Some come out of deep conviction, and still others come for reasons of the heart they cannot quite name. But underneath it all, what beckons them to close their ears to the siren songs of our culture and to make their way to the Sunday worship”?

4.8 What do people need in worship?

Calvin has a point by emphasising the fact that the focus should be about God in worship. Long (2001: 21) notes, “People are not hungry for more worship services, for more hymns, sermons, and anthems. They are hungry for experiences of God, which can come through worship; in the most primal sense, this hunger is what beckons people to worship. He goes on to say obviously an encounter with God is not something that human beings control or arrange. No worship planning team could or should sit around a table brainstorming ways for holiness to erupt in the order of worship.” However, while we certainly do not have the power to make God appear, a service of worship is a somewhat fragile medium, and we do have, it seems, the negative capacity to create static, to sabotage people’s perception of God’s presence. God is present in worship; our job is to clear the clutter and get out of the way of people’s sight lines.

People need different things in worship, lately, the news has been crammed with stories about pastors making congregants eat snakes, paper, rocks, and dirt, spraying insecticide over them and making them drink engine lubricant- all in the name of healing and blessing. One can easily conclude that perhaps that is what people need in worship. In most townships it is very embarrassing when a person is dead and there is no minister to conduct a funeral service, therefore, some people go to church because they want a minister of the Word to conduct their funeral service. Others go to church because they want to hear a good sermon, and some for good gospel music.

4.9 Historical overview of church music

It has always been a question for many as to where music originates. From the works of Kamuwange (2003:11)

The Bible records Gods creation activities, for instance, were graced with rejoicing and music (Pr 8: 31; Jb 38: 7). Music goes way back in the history of man. It is as old as communication and human expression. It is also assumed that music could actually predate human language. Before the production and developments of instruments, beating parts of the human body could have been used to produce sound. The common method was clapping of hands just to keep the singer in tempo and unison and possibly this had nothing to do with melody at all.

However the different sounds and melodies produced were not really church music in the African context. People will gather together in one place to celebrate God's creation by dancing to the different sounds which they have created using different instruments like animal horns. Until the arrival of the missionaries who introduced hymns and called the singing in those different gatherings church music, was the Bible clear about the role of music in ancient times? Kamuwanga (2003: 14) attempts to clarify this by saying, "In the Bible, we know that people were singing for different reasons. In (Exodus 15) the Bible records that, after crossing the Red Sea Moses and the children of Israel sang a song of thanksgiving to the Lord and Miriam led the women with timbres and sang. They were celebrating that God has delivered them from their enemies." Werner (1962: 457) concludes: "Thus it becomes clear that the descendants of Abraham were musical people, and this expression found its outlet in all the circumstance of human existence, including celebration and merrymaking, war cries, worship, and magic."

In the work of Calitz (2011: iv), "The Bible does not support a blueprint for church music". There is no biblical music, mainly because no 'melodies' could be preserved. Mowinckel (2004:9), "The hypothesis is to look into oral history because probably there

was a demonstration of musical form in which the ancient people used to read the scroll in the synagogue”. In (Luke 4) according to Kamuwanga (2003: 38), “it is suggested that the reader was usually a kind of singer, as there was no form of public address system therefore, reading of the scripture would need to be sung or chanted in a kind of simple melody in order to facilitate the hearing of the text”. This can be applied when using the Belhar Confession in liturgy if church choirs and conductors can come up with a simple melody to enable this idea in such a way that everyone who is taking part in a worship service can hear and understand the meaning of the Belhar Confession.

In the New Testament I concur with Kamuwanga (2003:37), “Jesus practiced singing in worship as plausible. When one considers that He sang together with his disciples on the occasion of the last supper before setting out for the Mount of Olives then it becomes even more likely” (Matthew 26:30). According to custom, a hymn was sung at the Passover. This follows the suggestion that Jesus and his disciples were quite familiar and consistent with the worship practice of their day.

This chapter is trying to respond to the same question which Calitz (2011: 04) asked, “Why did the topic of music become such an issue in the DRC and many other churches?” This study is concentrating on the DRC and the URCSA in South Africa. However the experience from coursework which was completed in Europe at Oslo University in Norway illustrated through visiting different congregations, particularly the Methodists, which was regularly visited because it was closer to the University, it must be admitted that this phenomenon became an issue in many churches in Norway. Therefore, it is not a problem in South Africa only but also in Europe the recommendation will be to find a common way of using music in different contexts.

If the whole country is still in the proses of reunification what kind of songs should we sing considering all the eleven official languages that we have in South Africa? Calitz (2011: 06). In South Africa we are still on the road to reunification where everything is moving towards a reuniting of the member churches of the DRC (the DRC, the

Reformed Church in Africa (RCA) and the *Verenigende Gerefomeerde Kerk* (VGK)), what would the situation be concerning singing in a uniting or united church? Will there be room for only one official songbook with a different language? Would those songs consist of the same melodies and variation of music with different translations of the words to that, or would it contain different melodies for different languages and cultures? Would it be one songbook published separately in a different language? Will there be any room for the local culture and even the local spirituality of a given denomination or congregation? How much this would be taken into account in the practice of singing in church? If it will be taken into account with a uniting church, then surely it must be taken seriously in the current debate about church music. Can one (still) think about the members of the DRC as a homorganic group of people with a homorganic culture and a homorganic, leading to a homorganic practice of church music?

4.10 The role of music in worship service of DRC and URCSA

A worship service without music is not complete because music is like a cable that connects the church with God during the liturgy. Kamuwanga (2003: 88) says, “In the church, music is not sung for the sake of just getting a form of entertainment. As we have already established music serves a number of functions. Corresponding music and content assists in executing any particular function.” But the style of music played in the church, in general, is normally a contentious subject particularly where decision ought to be made regarding traditional or modern trends.

4.10.1 The gap created by music in DRC

Botha cited by Calitz (2011:7), “remarks that the gap between the music of the youth and traditional church music is so wide that more and more youth find it difficult to associate with traditional forms and styles.” He goes on by giving the reaction of this gap by quoting Routley (1978:164.cf Long 2001:2), who saw this tension as early as 1978 when writing, “we now have the shocking spectacle of churches feeling obliged to run two services on a Sunday morning, one popular or modern, the other traditional, thus effectively dividing their congregation into two parties which find it convenient not to meet”. This is a demonstration that music plays a big role in worship and it is powerful to such an extent that it can divide one church. To avoid creating two kinds of liturgy in a congregation it is important to be careful how music is used and the problem is not always about the lyrics but the style which often doesn't serve the interest of everyone. .

4.10.2 Music in worship service of DRC

It is clear that music created a big difference in the worship of the DRC according to Calitz (2001: 07), “In the DRC in South Africa; it has become general church practice (especially in larger and macro congregations) to present different kinds of worship services for different generations or even different groups of people. Often the greatest difference between these different forms of worship service is the music” (Long 2001: 57). In some congregations this tension is ignored or just denied, in others, it is suppressed while in some congregations, the whole programme of the congregation is shaped around this tension.

4.10.3 Worship war in DRC on music

The use of this term worship war is very interesting because of the time it is used to illustrate and emphasises the intensity of the differences with regard to church music in liturgy. According to Calitz (2001:10),

Within this movement, organs are replaced by keyboards and other instruments. The organist is replaced by music a director and band. Printed hymnals are replaced by overhead projectors and data projectors. Usually, there is more time for 'praise and worship' and more body language could often be observed. This movement is often named with terms like 'charismatic' contemporary'. 'Renewed', et cetera.

In a charismatic context, there is no formal hymn which is sung but there is an implementation of free hymns or choruses that is out of the official hymn book of other Reformed churches. That is the time when one will always see an emotional expiration during worship also speaking in tongues is experienced during this emotional singing of free hymns.

4.10.4 Discussions about music in meetings

Calitz (2001:13) writes that Barnard (1981), completed an extensive study on liturgy with many references to church singing and liturgy singing. From the beginning there were great differences as to what form of singing and music there should be in the church. These differences were often discussed at synods and larger meetings of the church. These differences also led to many conflicts in the church: not only in one congregation but also among different churches. Barnard (1994:335) refers to, "*groot verskille en heftige stryd*" (great differences and fierce fighting).

I concur with Calitz (2001:13), "This conflict is not limited to or located in a specific church, but is found in all churches and denominations across the world. On the one side one finds the defenders of the 'older' and more 'classical' kind of music and singing

(often associated with the church organ); on the other side the defenders of the new trends in worship (often associated with a band).”

It is always very brief in our synod meetings to have a music discussion about developing hymns or creating better methods of singing in our church. What is currently happening is music committees report about choir competitions and announces the results of the choir competition. It’s very clear there are those who wish to hear a report which gives more detail regarding the kind of music or hymns that are used in church. If music can be part of the agenda in our synod meetings surely the role of the Belhar Confession could be considered as part of a useful creed which needs to be incorporated with music as a ritual used for worship. In different churches music is not something that is always a discussion but when the consequences of music appear, it becomes the responsibility of someone. In the case of the DRC where you find a church having two services as a result of music, the older people want to keep their old traditional way of singing and the young people, on the other hand, want to sing modern hymns in a new style. Calitz (2001: 14) writes that, “it is argued that most Scholars and ministers agree that church music is already in a process of change in a way that will benefit the church; not only the local church at present but also the universal church and the future church.”

Initially, the purpose of music is to unite the church and stop too many negative words being used during discussions when they are dissatisfied with particular resolutions. The General synod of the URCSA held its meeting on the 9th October 2016 in Kopanong, Benoni. During the worship service, lots of vibrant hymns related to a theme ‘celebrating 30 years of the Belhar Confession’ were sung. Most of the hymns were taken from Hosanna, projected and sung in the different official South African languages, but there was no discussion about when the church will produce and publish its own hymn book which is a very critical issue when it comes to music. During a tea break it was even posted on social media that delegates and members of the synod were singing a chorus: *Noyana?* (3x) (are you going? are you going?). The chorus is

not even part of any hymn book but everybody was dancing to the song even those who don't understand isiZulu they were clapping hands and shaking their bodies in such a way that one can really say they were feeling the presence of the Holy Spirit. One can sense a war between traditional music and hymns

4.11 The music war in worship

The word 'war' is well articulated and explained in the work of Calitz (2001: 14), " in the last couple of years the word "war" (Drane 2001:100) has become synonymous with the word "worship", indicating how great the differences grew when talking about church songs or singing in church". Kloppers (1997:172) wrote an article with the title, "Liturgical music: Worship or war". Long (2001) named his book "Beyond the worship wars". When typing the words "worship war" into Google (Internet search engine), one finds 26 300 articles containing the phrase "worship war". That there are major differences concerning the concept of worship is obvious. And it's even more obvious that the worship war is not limited to any denomination or country. Long (2001: 3-9) identifies two major forces behind the worship war and suggests a "third war" He visualises a "vital and faithful congregation" if the Belhar Confession is written into music, perhaps it will become a solution to this war.

4.11.1 Can Belhar confession resolve music war?

According to (Olivier 1997: 95), "Sometimes with just a new melody or harmonisation, for others, renewal is often a large basket where everything that is new and 'popular'. For others, renewal is often a large basket where everything (old and new) could be thrown in." That is part of resolving this war in worship by using an old melody and putting the words of the Belhar Confession to it. For those who know and understand the Belhar Confession as a new document may still argue that it has to have its own new melody, however, this takes us back to what was discussed in the previous chapter about the adoption of the Belhar Confession by the DRC. 5/07/2016(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belhar_Confession), "The DRC had offered to

compel only new members to submit to the confession, and for existing members to submit to it voluntarily, but this offer was rejected by the URCSA because its position was that all the members of the DRC should be required to swear that the Belhar Confession is true.”

This will be the same war when it comes to music, the new members may not have a problem in singing a new Belhar Confession hymn, but the old existing people in the DRC will have a different reaction. However, this study proposes that the old melody can be used with the words of the Belhar Confession perhaps that can be helpful as the church is embarking on a journey to unity. Vos (1990) wrote an article in *Skrif en Kerk* with the title “*Op Hom die groot Hosannas- perspektiewe oo die bewaring en vernuwing van die kerklied*”- emphasising the double challenge of church music; that is to preserve as well as to renew. This can lead us towards the solution if the old melody is preserved and the new lyrics are introduced.

4.11.2 Current situation about the music war

The current situation is that music has been part of culture Calitz (2001: 15) writes “Music studies have been done on the topic of culture, spirituality and church song separately.” Kloppers (2002) completed an excellent study on the influence of postmodern culture on hymns and hymnals, emphasising the challenge of the church song in a time of postmodern culture and thinking. He goes on to say, “In the DRC in South Africa, the worship war is not yet over. And even if it was over, the church has not arrived at a new model for church music yet.” The challenge is those church members who are still stuck with the old hymns which they believe is the only way that they can connect to God, be that the church has Reformed so much that those hymns will still be applicable but it will be hard to sing them, using modern music instruments. Despite that there is now some relaxation in terms of composing a new hymn which will help to produce and publish new hymn books the war will still continue. The best suggestion

which this study can recommend is a healthy war. That is a war with rules and understanding such as can be found in the coral choir music competitions.

4.12. Choral choir music competitions

It is in the choral choir competitions where each choir practices and rehearses a recommended song and the best choir will win. If they apply the correct music techniques, good vocal quality, the quantity or number of choristers is also taken into consideration because that will have an effect on the balancing of voices, tonal pitch is important and when the choir is singing at the correct pitch the sound becomes wonderful to the ear of the audience. One other vital element considered in this kind of competition is the articulation of the song by the choir, when the choir has learned the song thoroughly it will show on stage by the facial expression of the chorister. Choral musicians will say a bright and smiling face will release a light and joyful sound. A texture in terms of variation techniques, it is like changing from homogeneous tutties to accompanied solo, which features different parts of the choral tessitura. Harmony is also an important element when choirs are in a competition because it can add colours in music. When it comes to rhythm a good choir will be able to express rhythmic layers in a song. Last, listening carefully and complimenting the accompaniment if the song that is composed is to be sung along with a piano, chamber ensemble, and orchestra or with a cappella.

4.13 Worshipping in URCSA

URCSA has just produced its own worship book from the Northern Synod; this book was approved by the General synod in October 2012 at Okahanja, Namibia. It articulates clearly the URCSA way of worshipping. On page seven it alludes to the way in which this church is striving to be a Reformed church, standing consciously in the tradition that started in Geneva with John Calvin and his colleagues. The book gives a clear picture of what it means for the URCSA to be Reformed: “Being Reformed does

not mean in the first place how members dress (black and white uniform) or what our ministers wear (togas). For us being Reformed means

- To confess that God is the creator of the universe and the Lord of history;
- To acknowledge that God graciously makes the first move to save and restore fallen humanity and gather together a covenant community based on God's promises;
- To give glory to God in everything we do, as our creator, preserver, Saviour, comforter and coming judge;
- To strive to be a just and compassionate covenant community that is worthy of God;
- To accept the authority of God over every aspect of our lives: family, church, school, university, market, parliament, courtroom, police, defence force, sport, recreation, hospital, and everything else;
- To affirm the three functions of the Law of God: as the mirror that exposes our sins and leads us to the Saviour, as God's blueprint for a just society to restrain sinners, and as the window through which we as forgiven sinners see the way of grateful obedience to God';
- To give careful attention to the Bible as our primary source of guidance for what we believe, how we live, and how we worship;
- To celebrate two Sacraments (baptism and the Lord's Supper) as visible signs and seals of God covenant with humanity;
- To stand in a living tradition and therefore to keep on reforming the church- never finally satisfied with our doctrines, church orders, liturgies, policies, structures or processes- but constantly re-examining them in the light of the Bible and the challenges of our African context.”

There is still a war in the worship of URCSA. Just like in any other Reformed church the worship also talks about, “African – Uniting - Reformed. These three streams flow together to shape our identity as a church and therefore the way we worship. Sometimes these three streams are in tension with each other, but we do not give up

any of these commitments. As the URCSA we have committed ourselves to his “hybrid” identity and we strive to transform these tensions into creative energy to take us forward. We will not allow such tensions to divide us but will keep on thinking, praying and talking together to find better ways to be an African, Reformed and uniting church in our worship of the living God. In this book, the General synod gives guidelines to the congregation on how to discern the will of God on this exciting journey.”

4.13.1 The role of music in URCSA

Music plays a very important part of worship in the URCSA. From the liturgy that was presented in this study in the previous chapter each and every item is performed with music accompanying almost every activity. Due to the fact that the URCSA is still a new church, it does not have its own hymn book as yet but the church is using *Hosanna or Sionsgesange*, until such time as the URCSA has compiled its own hymn book. However, a church council may approve the singing of Christian hymns used by other churches, in as many languages of South Africa as possible.

The URCSA worship book (2015:26) notes that, “care should be taken, however not to sing words that contradict sound biblical doctrine. Is it possible for a congregation to sing more than one song at this point in the service and to have a whole period of “praise and worship” to glorify God? That is a good idea because African Christianity is singing and celebrating Christianity. The only issue to guard against is that the time allocated to praise and worship pushes out the other elements of Reformed liturgy so that the service moves directly from praise to preaching, that would be a totally unacceptable development”. Another issue to watch out for is that the service as a whole becomes too long and it starts having a negative effect on church attendance.

4.13.2 Music instrument in a Reformed worship

“The earliest forms of music were probably drum-based, percussion instruments being the most readily available at the time (i.e. rocks, sticks). These simplest of simple instruments are thought to have been used in religious ceremonies as representations of animals. There was no notation or writing of this kind of "music" and its sounds can only be extrapolated from the music of (South) American Indians and African natives who still adhere to some of the ancient religious practices. As for the more advanced instruments, their evolution was slow and steady. It is known that by 4000 BCE the Egyptians had created harps and flutes, and by 3500 BCE lyres and double-reeded clarinets had been developed.” <https://method-behind-the-music.com/history/history>

4.13.3 The use of musical instrument In URCSA

The use of musical instruments in worship is a matter that is left to the discretion of the local church council. There is a tendency for the congregation to move away from choral singing and employ a keyboard or a whole band with a keyboard, guitars, and drums. The decision to do that is not only a theological question but also cultural, in principle there can be no objection against using a musical instrument in worship since the Psalms give ample evidence of instruments being used in worship. Hence there are now traditional instruments which are often played by young people especially during their fundraising and spiritual revivals



Above are pictures of two dominating traditional instruments that are used in URCSA now. On the left picture there is a red and silver steel instrument which are called *clocks*, they are made out of school bells, the silver one is an old school bell that is rung by hand holding its handle and swinging it so that it gives a sound. It was previously used as an indication of the school changing its activities. The red one is a modern school bell and it is also used in different industries such as big firms, and even in the case of a fire. This bell is used to alert people about danger that is taking place in the building. In URCSA it is used to make a sound the goes with the rhythm of a song that is sung at that time. During a revival you will find lots of different congregations using these instruments and even from churches, different places and even different denominations, when they play their clock the sound becomes the same as if précised together, but it's an amazing musical gift from God.

The other two instruments are called *beats*, this is a small pillow that fits on one hand and a person will beat it according to the rhythm of the hymn and it will give a deep sound which is different from clapping hands. Often the person who is hitting the beat may determine the timing of a hymn. The two instruments make the worshipping experience to be more African. The worship book of URCSA (2015: 26) states:

There is a danger in becoming so influenced by North American evangelists and musicians that we gradually lose our African Reformed identity in our worship. But, on the other hand, we could remain stuck in traditional forms of congregational singing that is experienced as boring and irrelevant by a younger

generation. Much more discussion is needed to find a good way forward, including the consideration of using distinctly African musical instruments like marimbas, etc. Instead of electrical guitars or Keyboards to enhance our praise of God

There are still people in the URCSA who believe that an instrument can only be used at a certain time during liturgy and not in a formal service during the time when the Lord's Holy Communion is served. They believe that is the time when they are connecting to God and those instruments should not be heard because it is a moment of connection to God, the only thing that should be heard during this time is human voices and they should only sing from Hosanna, not any hymn. This creates a lot of tension particularly for young people who feel more connected to God when those instruments are played while singing. They also feel that during Holy Communion is a relevant time to celebrate this symbol of remembrance of Christ not to mourn the death of Jesus who is resurrected. One church cannot do all things, write music on its own but learning from other churches can also help to develop a worship service.

4.14 Lessons from other churches

In IMCO things are done in a very spontaneous way, the liturgy in this church is formal but it has a lot of flexibility to accommodate almost everyone, the singing is a balance both from the hymn book and common songs which are just ordinary and popular gospel songs from all over the world because it is an international church. This church has two services the first service is in the morning where the whole liturgy is conducted in Norwegian and later on, they will have an afternoon service where the liturgy is in English. What is more interesting here is that the sound of music is the same it is only the lyrics which are sung in two different languages but very easy to follow once a person has heard the sound before. This may be because of what the founder of this church said when giving directions for using a hymn book. John Wesley's' select hymns:

- *Learn these tunes before you learn any others; afterward, learn as many as you please.*
- *Sing them exactly as they are printed here, without altering or mending them at all; and if you have learned to sing them otherwise, unlearn it as soon as you can.*
- *Sing all; see that you join with the congregation as frequently as you can. Let not a slight degree of weakness or weariness hinder you. If it is a cross to you, take it up and you will find it a blessing.*
- *Sing lustily and with a good course, Beware of singing as if you were half dead, or half asleep; but lift up your voice with strength. Be no more afraid of your voice now, nor more ashamed of its being heard, than when you sing the song of Satan.*
- *Sing modestly. Do not bawl, so as to be heard above or distinct from the rest of the congregation, that you may not destroy the harmony; but strive to unite your voices together, so as to make one clear melodious sound.*
- *Sing in time. Whatever time is sung be sure to keep with it. Do not run before nor stay behind it, but attend close to the leading voices, and move therewith as exactly as you can, and take care not to sing too slowly. This drawling way naturally steals on all who are lazy, and it is high time to drive it out from us, and sing all our tunes just as quick as we did at first.*
- *Above all sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing him more than yourself, or any other creature. In order to do this attend strictly to the sense of what you sing, and see that your heart is not carried away with the sound, but offered to God continually; so shall your singing be such as the Lord will approve here, and reward you when he cometh in the clouds of heaven.”*

It is important to underline the fact that all church activities have a religious connotation. Music should be a platform where the good news is spread. Music can even turn a shower into an existential experience, but most of us can and do enjoy songs. Similar to

caring, songs belong to all of us. There is always a kind of music loved by certain people and it can be used to incorporate confession of it is wisely composed.

4.15 Type of music that can embody Belhar Confession

Most of the churches are using choirs to sing and they are categorised by the type of music they perform, such as; *barbershop music*, gospel choirs, choral music, symphonic choirs, vocal jazz choirs, just to mention but the few and this kind of music can help in taking the Belhar Confession to people's daily lives.

4.15.1 Barbershop music

This is a style of cappella close harmony, or unaccompanied vocal music, characterised by consonant four-part chords for every melody note in a predominantly homophonic texture. Each of the four parts has its own role generally, the lead sings the melody, the tenor harmonises above the melody, the bass singing the lowest harmonising note, and the baritone completes the chord, usually below the lead. The melody is not usually sung by the tenor or baritone, except for an infrequent note or two, to avoid an awkward voice leading, in tags or codas, or when some appropriate embellishment can be created. Occasional passages may be sung by fewer than four voice parts. Barbershop music is generally performed by either a barbershop quartet, a group of four singers with one on each vocal part or a barbershop chorus. Which closely resembles a choir with the notable exception of the genre of music?

4.15.2 There two kinds of Barbershop

Female barbershop quartets are often referred to as "Sweet Adelines quartets" while male barbershop quartets are generally simply referred to as "barbershop quartets" according to the Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS). "Barbershop music features songs with understandable lyrics and easy melodies. Whose tones clearly define a tonal centre and imply major and minor chords and barbershop (dominant and secondary dominant) seventh chords that resolve primarily around the circle of fifths, while making

frequent use of other resolutions” Slow barbershop songs, especially ballads, often eschew a continuous beat, and notes are often held (or speeded up)

4.15.3 Voices of Barbershop music

Except for the bass, the voice parts in barbershop singing do not correspond closely to their classic music counterparts, the tenor range and tessitura are similar to those of the classical counterparts, the tenor and range and tessitura are similar to those of the classical countertenor, the baritone resembles the Heldentenor or lyric baritone in range and a tenor in tessitura, and the lead generally corresponds to the tenor of classical repertoire, with some singers possessing a tessitura more similar to that of a high baritone. Barbershop singing is performed both by men’s and women’s groups; the element the barbershop style and the names of the voice parts are the same for both (although women’s groups generally have a different standing arrangement than their male counterparts).

This is a kind of music which can be used to sing the Belhar Confession even outside the church because in most townships due to lack of jobs many people have small businesses at the corners of the street where they are selling fruit, vegetables and others have opened hair salons with barbershops inside. Many people gather at these premises and if a member of the church is passionate about this confession they can also sing the Belhar Confession. In most of these corners you find a group of people who go to these places either singing or listening to the music performed there. This will be for the purpose of demonstrating a liquid church and liturgy that goes beyond the vicinity of the church. There is a group which is very popular at the present which is singing this kind of music but they have mixed it with acapella style. The name of this group is called the Soil and they are the bestselling music group and are often imitated by young people in the townships. According to Ward (200: 57)

The liquid church takes as its starting point the change in Western religious life, a change that Grace Davies describes as believing without belonging. In her study

of religion in Britain since 1945, she observes that most people appear to express their religious preference by staying away from church rather than by attending. At the same time, remarkably few people have turned away from the belief by adopting atheism or abandoning spirituality.

This kind of a church is the church that takes liturgy beyond a building, from the community of faith to the community of different faith including the people who do not have faith at all.

4.16. The role of music in church discussion

From the previous chapters, it is clear that there were lots of initiatives taken in order to talk about reconciliation and unity. However, there is still a challenge even today for the two churches to unite after all those discussions. What is more interesting is there is not one recorded meeting where there was a singing moment either before or after a meeting. Clearly, this is a very big mistake which needs to be rectified because music can do miracles in people's life. In sports and other recreational events where different teams from different nations come together to play sports they always sing their own national anthem in order to express themselves and their emotion about how they view life in their different countries. The question is why churches can't do the same in their meeting? Let all the delegate sing songs that express their emotions about a particular meet and what do they wish to achieve at the end of the meeting, so that this can be a constant reminder that during those events they created a harmonious sound that helps to deal with their emotions. Music also soothes anger, so if music can be part of the agenda it could probably limit many harsh feelings in church discussions.

4.17 Conclusion

Music should not create war or bring conflict in worship services but it must be embraced in human life and in our different fashion. Music is a universal language it is easy to talk together through music and all the voices will be heard. The previous

chapter was focusing on the role of music in the liturgy, the meaning of music, the history of South African music and other kinds of music. The study also pointed out the reaction of people towards music and what music can do for people and what it does to their hearts. To incorporate the Belhar Confession in music the study had to look at the role of music in Reformed worship particularly in both churches mainly the DRC and the URCSA. The study managed to find out that there is a gap and war in worship services. Therefore the study through the experience of the author involved other churches from Europe to discern the reason why there is conflict with music during worship. The author feels the conflict needs to be further interrogated so that there is no conflict when the Belhar Confession is ready to be sung. The researcher is also certain that barbershop music can also be used in order to motivate people to sing the contents of the Belhar Confession even at their homes and within the rest of the community. Last, the study briefly made a few suggestions about the role of music in church meetings which may help in making the Belhar Confession part of the church's life. The following were discovered in this chapter:

- Music is an important ritual in liturgy because it motivates people to react.
- In this chapter the way of worship in the Reformed churches was discovered and for example in the DRC and in URCSA there is a conflict between young and old people with regard to music styles.
- There is a great lack of music in the discussions of the church at the synods and other church meetings.
- Last the use of instruments and the methods of singing are still a challenge however, all kinds of worshipping styles should be respected and the Belhar Confession also needs to be respected in singing the same way as other songs and hymns.

Chapter 5

Title: Empirical study of Belhar Confession, liturgy and music

5. Introduction

The focus of the empirical research for this mini-dissertation was at three different congregations of URCSA from two different synods in Gauteng namely (Southern and Northern Synod) which are already reciting the Belhar Confession and using it in their liturgy during worship. The two congregations where the interviews were conducted are based on the townships which are: URCSA Springs in Kwa-Tema East, URCSA Mabopane West in Pretoria and URCSA Melody ya Tshwane in central town of Pretoria, Melodi ya Tshwane will be used as a form of experience through the involvement of the author as a member who is participating regularly in liturgy and as a chorister in the church choir.

5.1 The following questions were asked:

- *Do you know what the Belhar Confessions is and how did you know about Belhar Confession?*
- *In the life of the congregation, where will you find the Belhar Confession? For example is it part of your life or is it something that you recite during liturgy?*
- *Do you also sing the Belhar Confession during your worship service or do you ever think of singing it?*
- *Do you incorporate the Belhar Confession in your sermons when preaching?*
- *How can you advise someone who is doing a research about the Belhar Confession in order to make sure it is used effectively in the liturgy of URCSA?*

5.2 Empirical data

As Merriam cited by de Klerk (2013:80) says, “A synoptic qualitative/ quantitative empirical work method was followed. Respondents were selected on the assumption that they were the person from whom the most could probably be learned about the specific topic.” The Belhar Confession and liturgy in music is the focus of this study, therefore, the interviews were conducted with members of the congregation who have been recently reciting this confession during their liturgy. But the study will first deal with data collected via the personal participatory observation of the researcher in Melodi ya Tshwane. To stress this point Lloyd, Steven and Tovey (2010: 06) says, “from its historical and pastoral roots liturgical studies has developed to include research of a more social scientific nature, partially to examine current phenomena and also to look at traditions that are ‘free’ with no set written texts.”

5.3 Data collected at Melodi ya Tshwane

In URCSA Melodi ya Tshwane is where some of the data were collected in the form of direct experience in the congregation. The Belhar Confession has always been actively used in this church. In annexure A of the study, there is a copy of one song composed and written by David Alexander /Arnsberg. A copy of a score and lyrics’ is attached in appendix A The song was practised by the church choir together with the accompaniment of a piano the melody was sung according to the score noted by a composer.

During a rehearsal of the song all members seemed to relate well to the words and the composer did not use too much music dynamics in the song, therefore, it was easy to sing as the whole choir consists of four different voices namely; soprano, alto, tenor, bass. It is worth noting that the song was also sung without the accompaniment of piano by both male and female voices and the aim was to hear if it will be possible to also sing the song without accompaniment, in order to accommodate poor congregations in the rural areas which cannot afford a piano. The Belhar Confession is also used in other

ways during a liturgical ritual in this congregation. In Melodi Ya Tswane the congregation is reciting a liturgical statement that embodies the Belhar Confession before reading the law Kritzinger (2014: 06):

I stand tall and dignified before God

and among my sisters and brothers.

I accept myself as a precious and unique person

because I am created in the image of the living God.

Together we discover who we are, as a family:

Motho ke motho ka batho. (A person is a person by other persons)

This stand of Confession was taken from the first version of the affirmation and the reason for this statement is (ibid p06) to overcome the negative anthropology of much traditional Reformed worship that starts (like the Heidelberg Catechism) by emphasising the knowledge of one's own sin and misery.

There were sixteen congregants participating at the interview, eight from each congregation. The members from different ministries in each congregation knew and have opinions, experiences, and ideas related to the Belhar Confession. However, it is worth noting that not all members managed to talk during the interview because of personal reasons.

At the end of the interviews data needed to be analysed and according to Leedy & Ormrod, cited by de Klerk (2013: 81) "In analyzing the data a large amount of information was processed by inductive reasoning, sorting out and categorizing into smaller sets of abstracted and underlying themes."

5.4 Other Congregations that are involved in interview

The first interview was in South Synod from the congregation of URCSA Kwa-thema east at springs, a translated transcription is attached as: Appendix B

There were five questions which were planned and handed over with a letter requesting the interviews from the leadership of the church. The following questions were asked during the interview and the summary of the answers are provided.

The first question: *“Do you know what the Belhar Confessions is and how did you know about Belhar Confession”?*

The following answers were obtained: about half of the participants do know the Belhar Confession as a new confession of faith for the Uniting Reformed Church (nine persons) from the two congregations indicated the meaning of the Belhar Confession as something that is the same as the Apostle’s Creed, as the church was moving from the DRCSA to URCSA.

All the participants from the two congregations agreed that their ministers of the Word taught them and they were learning about the Belhar Confession after it was introduced at the synod of the Cape. At Springs congregation there is a student minister who is helping to educate the congregants and the youth at the Catechism Class about the Belhar Confession.

Other (four members) said: it was imposed on them as a new creed which they had to learn in English because now the church is reforming. One member was very critical of the fact that they are reciting the Belhar Confession in English and not in the vernacular. She said I hope we can do it in other languages as well so that we can accommodate elderly people. It was clear that reciting in English encouraged the congregants to recite without understanding what they are saying. (2 members) shared what they have experienced since the introduction of the Belhar Confession in their congregation, she said people were used to the Apostle’s Creed and if they come to church and they did

not recite the Apostle's Creed they felt like they were never in church. The other one said some people are no longer coming to church because they feel the Belhar Confession is political and since the ANC are now in power they also have to do things in English. In conclusion to this question, one member recommended strongly that more education is needed by the church in general not only in certain congregations or presbytery or synod but the whole URCSA.

The second question: *in the life of the congregation, where will you find the Belhar Confession? For example is it part of your life or is it something that you recite during liturgy?*

The responses were different to this question, one member indicated that it was not easy to get used to the Belhar Confession compared to the Apostle's Creed. At the time when the church was still DRCSA it affected some of the members' faith. But their reverend kept on introducing it to them until they got used to it.

Other members pointed out the things that they learned from the Belhar Confession: It is teaching us about forgiveness and reconciliation; it takes us out of the mentality of apartheid and teaches us to take care of the poor not to oppress others, it motivated them to start a women's ministry called (*kultwelo bohloko*) benevolence ministry. They are practising the contents of the Belhar Confession even though they are not 100% convinced so they say.

One member added that there is a lot of gold in the Belhar Confession in every sentence and he began to quote some of the contents until he noticed words which he thought were not relevant for the church namely (*reject*) he argued that this word is used three times in the confession and the church should not just *reject* but the church has to encourage a person to repent. However, he went further and said if you read the Belhar Confession deeper you will realise that we *reject* what needs to be rejected meaning the word is used correctly in this context.

The other respondent referred to Belhar as the product of URCSA which is trying to correct the mistake of the previous apartheid regime that used the Bible to achieve their evil goals. He said Belhar is trying to repair all those damages. That the church is the property of God therefore people should not just recite but also have an understanding.

The third question: *Do you also sing the Belhar Confession during your worship service or do you ever think of singing it?*

The entire respondents said no and they never even thought about singing the Belhar Confession. At the same time, everybody agrees that it can be a very good idea to sing the Belhar Confession. However, one other respondent asked how it can be sung?

Other respondents proposed that it has to have a notation (in music terms it is called a staff notation which is a way of writing music, for example notes that create a melody and the keys for different instruments like piano and so on). The other suggestion was to have a soloist who will lead and then the congregation will follow.

The fourth question: *Do you incorporate the Belhar Confession in your sermons when preaching?*

The respondents all agreed that some of the content of the Belhar Confession are always mentioned by the preacher in their sermon.

The last question: *How can you advise someone who is doing research about the Belhar Confession in order to make sure it is used effectively in the liturgy of URCSA?*

The response was the researcher should give feedback from the research and it will help to take it to the youth as well for them to learn more about our church.

5.5 The second semi-structured group interview

This interview took place in URCSA Mabopane West Congregation. A translated transcription is attached as: Appendix C

The first question: *“Do you know what the Belhar Confessions is and How did you know about Belhar Confession”?*

The same response was given for the first question that the minister of the congregation is the one who introduced the Belhar Confession but education on the contents and history is not well articulated, one of the respondent mentioned that they were just given a paper and started reciting. It is only the church council members who have more understanding of the Belhar Confession’s History because they were taught by the minister who presented it through the minutes and reports of the synod.

The second question: *In the life of the congregation, where will you find the Belhar Confession? For example is it part of your life or is it something that you recite during liturgy?*

Respondents agreed that the Belhar Confession is not only for the church but it also addresses issues in other areas of life. One respondent argues that Belhar Confession is related to her pledge of nursing service. The Belhar Confession also taught some members of the church to stop discriminating against other people. One member confessed that he used to treat foreign people very badly and even calling then names like *amakwerekwere (foreigners)* but now he has stopped because Belhar is talking to his conscience

The third question: *Do you also sing the Belhar Confession during your worship service or do you ever think of singing it?*

Almost all members are looking forward to singing the Belhar Confession only one member was not sure how because the confession has two parts namely; the liturgist

and the congregation, her concern was how will the minister or liturgist sing the first part, in soprano or how? But other respondents think it is better if everybody sings without anyone leading or saying the first part. If everybody is singing then the confession will also not be as long as it is today and she went further to say it will also not be as confusing as it is currently because the liturgist is saying it which is confusing according to the respondents. During preaching respondents agreed that some contents of the Belhar Confession are always mentioned together with some verses from the Bible. One respondent from the church council confidently noted that he can even preach using the Belhar Confession only, without reading the Bible.

The fourth question: *Do you incorporate the Belhar Confession in your sermons when preaching?* The respondents strongly believe that the Belhar Confession is relevant to their context because the church has to change as it is reforming. However young people will only accept it if they understand it and they are taught about the Belhar Confession, it should also be provided in English because in Mabopane congregation they only know the Belhar Confession in Setswana. One respondent from the youth pointed out that it is a challenge for young people to read the Belhar Confession because they don't know Setswana and some of their parents also don't know Setswana. When they have questions to ask there is no one to respond because of a language issue. Young people now want to learn things in English she says.

The last question: *How can you advise someone who is doing research about the Belhar Confession in order to make sure it is used effectively in the liturgy of URCSA?*

Respondents noted that the title 'the Belhar Confession' is creating a problem because it sounds like when they are talking about the Belhar Confession they are talking about a person not a confession. They requested assistance from the researcher to find out if it is possible to change the name or the title so that they can also feel they are part of the confession.

From this outline of the results of the interviews with members of URCSA, it is clear that further research will not only have academic value but that it may also be of service to church practice. It may contribute to greater church involvement in making the Belhar Confession part of the congregation's life.

5.6 Data analysis and action research

According to Bradbury cited by Lloyd, Steven and Tovey (2010:37) action research is an “interactive inquiry process that balances problem-solving actions implemented in a collaborative context with data –driven collaborative analysis or research to understand underlying causes enabling future prediction about personal and organizational change. From the respondents one can notice that the ministers of these congregations are trying to do something about the Belhar Confession by teaching and instilling it in the liturgy. However, there are challenges that the church as a whole need to work on so that the Belhar Confession is taken forward. The manner in which the Belhar Confession was introduced creates challenges, for example, there is no mention of an accompanying letter to this confession hence there are so many questions and the historical background was also lacking. This may be why some of the members ended up thinking that Belhar is the name of a person. The leadership of a church should not keep information and knowledge from the congregants. In both congregations one can notice that church council members have more knowledge than the rest of the church members. That is why one respondent advised that the study should give back a report and provide ways in which young people can also gain better knowledge about the Belhar Confession.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter started with data that was collected through experiences in Melodi ya Tshwane Congregation where there are number of activities which are already incorporating the Belhar Confession. In other two congregations, the Belhar Confession is now a norm but members still feel there is a need for educating the new generations. Unlike in Melody ya Tshwane where there are a few other means in which the Belhar Confession is used there is still a need to think of projects that will incorporate this confession so that at the end it will be like the air which people breathe and the songs which everyone sings with understanding. The empirical study has been a great help in terms of how one should use the Belhar Confession and incorporate it in music during liturgy. From the response of the interviewees it is possible to use the Belhar Confession in all elements of the liturgy of the URCSA. The findings were as follows in this chapter:

- In the first question ministers played a very big role in introducing the Belhar Confession to the congregation and they worked together with members who were delegates at the synods during the introduction of the Belhar Confession. However there is a need for further research with the congregations that are without ministers.
- The second question indicated that members do understand the importance of the Belhar Confession because they can even relate it to their lives. Some members find it a document that teaches them forgiveness and reconciliation. But there is still a need for educating congregants to live out the values of the Belhar Confession.
- This third question opened the eyes of most of the members because they had never considered Belhar to music, however it really made sense to them and they feel singing Belhar will help them understand it more and even children would be able to sing the song and never forget the words.

- The fourth question indicated that members used Belhar in their sermons but not intentionally it just happens because the scriptures talk about love, forgiveness and reconciliation. Therefore there is a need for members to learn more about the historical background of the Belhar Confession and its contents.
- This last question revealed a serious lack of communication between congregations and synod. Respondents alluded to the fact that they don't get full information from their delegates. Information is not revealed to them and they requested that the researcher should give clear feedback about this finding so that they can find better ways of using the Belhar Confession. The synod should also produce documents which are easily accessible to all members.

Chapter 6

Synthesis and the preliminary for praxis

6. Introduction

Research concerning the role of music and the function of the Belhar Confession in church, in this study the liturgical ritual has proven that music is working as a means to assist the congregation in praising God and because the Belhar Confession is also an important creed for URCSA the study looked for a way in which it can be used in liturgy incorporating it into music so that other churches can realise that it is important to adopt the Belhar Confession and make use of it in their daily worship. Music is really contributing to the identity of the church and any given congregation is always known by its kind of music. Therefore if URCSA uses the Belhar Confession then it means there should be songs and hymns that include this confession.

In church music, the understanding is that musical text carries messages that glorify God and offers teaching to the people who are listening and those singers themselves. Therefore the Belhar Confession can also be incorporated into music so that its message can be spread to the rest of society in order to heal broken communities. Lyrics composed with the aim of evangelising this beautiful gift could be employed to reinforce truths about motivating people to place their hope in God and the policy of apartheid is declared heresy. As much as music played a role in motivating people who were involved in the struggle now it should also be used to celebrate and mobilise this creed.

The use of music has been valued since ancient times Kamuwanga (2003: 103), "Music forms were transformed as the cult became centralized at the Jerusalem Temple. Guilds of musicians were organised, a formal liturgical system evolved, and the use of the Psalm and musical instruments came to the fore in Temple worship." Not everyone loves the same kind of music therefore when music is composed for the Belhar Confession it should be in different languages and styles just like the ancient

times, early Christian churches organised its music in a way that accommodates everyone. In the end all churches will love and adopt the Belhar Confession as part of their confession.

6.1 Summary

An investigation into the Belhar Confession and its history was carried out, the aim was to see how it is currently used in liturgy so that it can be incorporated into music. It has been a great journey discovering what is happening with the Belhar Confession, why is it happening, what ought to be going on and how the congregants are responding. This objective was successfully achieved; the findings are tabled in the conclusion of this study. The hypothesis was also established and this mini-dissertation confirms the initial hypothesis of this study namely that: *The function of music as a tool in which the Belhar Confession can be incorporated in order to influence other churches like the DRC to use it as part of the liturgy during a process of reunification.*

Music now forms an important component of worship and other religious meetings in the church. In all the activities that are taking place in the URCSA during liturgy, the Belhar Confession is given a very limited space, but it is considered the most important confession that is leading the church to reunification, therefore, it should be incorporated into music, hymns, and liturgical ritual in order to influence other churches to do the same with Belhar. Due to the fact that the church is still on its journey to reunification music was also used by the early church when it was embarking on pilgrimages and Temple worship, therefore it is now the time to compose songs and hymns about the Belhar Confession while the negotiations are in process.

6.2 Conclusion

The study has dealt with the Belhar Confession as one of the creeds that has to be embodied in liturgical ritual and also incorporated into music. The study was looking at the possible ways in which one can use the Belhar Confession in hymnology. The big question for this dissertation was how the URCSA using the Belhar Confession in its liturgy in order to influence other churches to do the same. The study worked on what is going on in churches with regard to the Belhar Confession, music and liturgical ritual.

There are a few findings in response to this question one of which is that many congregation are not using the Belhar Confession consistently during Sunday worship. Only a few congregations of URCSA are reciting the Belhar Confession as part of their liturgy. The study also discovered that members of the URCSA don't have enough knowledge about the history of the Belhar Confession. From interviews, the study discovered that the Belhar Confession was introduced in a language that is not accommodating most members of the congregation. This dissertation attempted to answer Osmer's Question why is this going on with the Belhar Confession?

This research discovered that there is a war in music in both churches the URCSA and the DRC due to different interests among young people, older people, traditional music and hymns. The study spoke of the role of music in life and what music can do to people when they are facing bad situations in life. Music can help people to deliver a message that is why there is a need for hymns that include the Belhar Confession so the message of the church through this confession can be visible. It was discovered in this study that most members of the URCSA would love to sing hymns about the Belhar Confession but no one had ever considered it. This is a positive approach that can help people to understand and know the Belhar Confession better in other words that is what ought to be going on. The findings point out clearly that there is no use in just reciting the Belhar Confession and not understanding the real meaning. Hence, this study used the URCSA liturgy and even went further to liturgy after the liturgy in order to

demonstrate the way it can be used diagonally. The study also recommended another kind of music to be used in order to make the Belhar Confession part of our lives and the air we breathe.

6.3 suggestions for further research

There is still a need for further research on the following issues:

- How can the Belhar Confession be sung in different languages to accommodate different cultures and nations as the process of reunification is still taking place?
- Further study is needed for youth and Sunday school to grow up understanding what is the Belhar Confession and how can they live according to its principles from an early age.
- There is still a need for research after the DRC accepted and adopted the Belhar Confession to find out if there has been any benefit from it?
- Last the author suggests further research in terms of where can the Belhar Confession be sung after the process of reunification?

Chapter 7

New theory for praxis

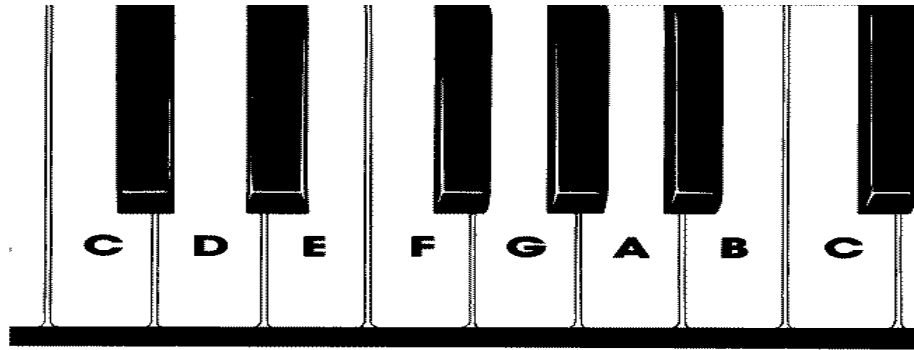
7. Introduction

This section will give a new preliminary theory for praxis and work on the main aspects that came to the fore of this research. The churches were by means of ritual-liturgical inquiry in qualitative research of semi-structured interviews in order to identify the role of the Belhar Confession in hymnology. In this chapter the researcher opted to use a piano as a visual picture of how one can see these aspects connecting. And also steps used by Osmer (2008:04)

1. A descriptive – empirical task: what is going on?
2. An interpretative task: why is it going on?
3. A normative task: what ought to be going on
4. And a pragmatic task: how might we respond?

Those steps were used to answer the following questions

- *Do you know what the Belhar Confessions is and how did you know about the Belhar Confession?*
- *In the life of the congregation, where will you find the Belhar Confession? For example is it part of your life or is it something that you recite during liturgy?*
- *Do you also sing the Belhar Confession during your worship service or do you ever think of singing it?*
- *Do you incorporate the Belhar Confession in your sermons when preaching?*
- *How can you advise someone who is doing research about the Belhar Confession in order to make sure it is used effectively in the liturgy of URCSA?*



“In general piano notes are the basics of all music notations for the piano. They are not different from any music notes, but of piano. They differ in two things: Pitch of tone and duration of a tone.” Visited on 09/05/2017 <http://www.playpiano.com/pianonotes.htm>

The same thing applies to the Belhar Confession, it is not very different from other confessions despite the fact that it was born out of apartheid and it is a product of the URCSA. This makes it different in certain aspects. The pitch of time on this Belhar Confession needs to be monitored so that it is raised higher by the URCSA in their liturgy so that for the duration of this tone other churches like the DRC may also join the tone.

7.1 Descriptive Empirical task

This is a method in which the information about the knowledge of the Belhar Confession was gathered from congregants. In chapter two the study has shown that the Belhar Confession was relevant and is still relevant to South Africa. Therefore according to the respondents’ ministers have taught congregants about the Belhar Confession and they still need to educate more so that everyone in church knows everything about this creed. The study has shown that when the principles of Belhar are used carefully in liturgy they can restore human dignity and help in social issues like HIV/AIDS.

The question of whether people sing the Belhar Confession in church during liturgy is an eye opener because respondents hardly considered the Belhar Confession in the form of music. It is just like the tones of a piano they differ in two ways but it’s not easy to

notice if there is no guidance from a musician who understands the piano. The question of Osmer is partly answered that people know what the Belhar Confession is? But they are practising it only in one method which is reciting it during Sunday worship service.

7.2 Interpretative task:

The question was asked where people find the Belhar Confession in the life of the congregation. From chapter three the study discovered the meaning of liturgy in two ways as the ritual that is performed in church and as a drama that is acted by different congregants and members of the community, starting from vestry prayer into church building up to a closing hymn. The study also worked on four phases found in the liturgy of URCSA to see if the Belhar Confession can work and the findings indicated that it is possible to use Belhar in those four phases. Last the study discovered a possibility of taking liturgy outside the church in a form of Diakonia, as the church is anticipating the kingdom of God it is its duty to also give hope to the rest of the community and it is one of the Belhar Confession principles to give hope to the hopeless.

Just like playing a piano it all starts as practice in private then slowly when the beginner gains confidence and is able to find the correct melody they gradually want to perform for others until they go out in public to perform for big crowds and not just in church but also at other big events in the community. The study managed to partly cover the question of Osmer's why is it going on, from the interviews the Belhar Confession is part of the liturgy in some URCSA congregations. However respondents were clear that they never thought of using the Belhar Confession in liturgy as hymnology. Therefore the study discovers that there is no singing of the Belhar Confession, congregants are only reciting this creed.

7.3 A normative task

Music is an important ritual in liturgy because it motivates people to react. In chapter 4 the way of worship in the Reformed churches was studied, for example in the DRC and in the URSCA there is a conflict between young and old people with regard to music styles. There is a great lack of music in the discussions of the church at the synods and other church meetings. Last the use of instruments and the methods of singing is still a challenge. However, all kinds of worship styles should be respected and the Belhar Confession also needs to be respected in singing the same way as other songs and hymns. Visited on 09/05/2017 <http://www.playpiano.com/pianonotes.htm>

On the piano notes are arranged from A to G. The seven letter names then repeat up the piano keyboard 7 times in a normal piano keyboard for a total 88 notes, though many electronic keyboards have less notes some as few as 64.

One may argue after the discovery of the conflict in music from both churches that they are both Reformed churches just like the arrangement of the piano notes. But because of the context and cultural difference there is a difference just as an electric keyboard that has fewer notes. In the URCSA there is also a lack of good pianos due to poor backgrounds. With regard to the response of Osmer's what ought to be going on? From the interviews respondents were very specific that on the advice that they were asked to give. The recommendation is that there should be feedback on the findings of this study which is a challenge to their delegates who are sent to the synods. Further, it was discovered that delegates don't give all the information as they are ought to. The last question was more of an open question as Lloyd, Steven and Tovey (2010: 14) will say in paraphrasing, the aim was for respondents to put in their own words, their view on a particular topic. In this study respondents will really appreciate feedback that can help to develop the Belhar Confession forward.

When one looks at the keys of a piano the keys as Cited by (09/05/2017
<http://www.playpiano.com/pianonotes.htm>)

Between the seven white keys are the sharp and flats all of the black keys are used two ways: as sharp and as flats. For example, the black key between C and D is known as both C# and Db. The black key between F and G is known as both F# and Gb. Notes are arranged in ascending and descending patterns known as scales. Major scales, the most used type of scale at least in the western world,

The Belhar Confession can be used as a black and white key as sharp and flats the church can recite the Belhar Confession and also sing it in order to create a melody known as C# and Db. Unity and reconciliation. Due to the fact that notes are arranged in ascending and descending patterns known as scales, it is possible that everyone can sing the Belhar Confession if it is carefully composed in that fashion because major scales are mostly used in the Western world that means the DRC can still sing the Belhar and the URCSA will use the minor scales and the two can also create a very beautiful sound when they are combined together at the time of reunification. This responds to the last question of Osmer how might we respond? For further study themes may be: the Belhar Confession, liturgy and music after the reunification. A Hymnological study.

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Appendix A

Manifesting Jesus

David Alexander / Arnsberg

We be - lieve the Fath - er, Son and Ho - ly Spi - rit
 Gift and ob - li - ga - tion, un - i - ty in ac - tion,
 Rec - on - cil - i - a - tion, ev' - ry land and na - tion,
 Stand a - gainst in - just - ice, fol - low Christ in mis - sion,
 Fear no per - se - cu - tion for the Lord is with you,

gath - er and pro - tect the one that church
 vis - i - ble as wit - ness that Christ
 ev - 'ry race and kin - dred and op - pressed.
 feed the hun - gry lift the op - - - - -
 though the pow'rs of law you op - - - - - pose.

from the hu - man fam - 'ly, un - i - ver - sal, ho - ly,
 ban - ished sep - a - ra - tion, con - quered sin and ha - tred,
 through God's word and Spi - rit, peo - ple all in he - rit
 Seek the poor and or - phan, feed the hun - gry and strang - er,
 Je - sus, too was slan - dered, scorned and mocked and beat - en,

in - to the com - mu - nion of saints.
 made us the one in spi - rit and new mind.
 pos - si - ble in i - ty for and life.
 hung the up - fast on that the God says is his blest. - - - - -
 foes.

From of old, to drink the one end,
 Eat - ish bread, God greed the one cup,
 Ban - ish fear, pose we is here,
 Stand, op the law and o - woes,
 God's the law we o - bey,

man - i - fest - ing Je - sus, who for - ev - er frees us.
 man - i - fest - ing Je - sus, who for free - dom frees us.
 man - i - fest - ing Je - sus, who from ter - ror frees us.
 man - i - fest - ing Je - sus, who for jus - tice frees us.
 man - i - fest - ing Je - sus, who for ser - vice frees us.

Unknown

Appendix B

Transcription of Belhar confession interviews URCSA springs in Kwa-Thema congregation

Interviewer: The first questions to all of you, what is the Belhar Confession? If someone can ask what is the Belhar Confession how will you respond? Anyone please?

Respondent: I understand that the Belhar Confession are the confessions for someone about their own faith.

Respondent: The Belhar Confession is one of the confessions that we recite in our...? As the Reformed church, like we have the Heidelberg, this is the recent one that belongs to the Uniting Reformed Church.

Interviewer: How did you know about the Belhar Confession because I am sure it is not like a flash that came from nowhere?

Respondent: At the beginning, we were reciting the Apostolic Creed in Sesotho then as time goes by Reverend Taiwe who is no longer in this church came up with this idea of Belhar. Like myself, I am almost 40yrs in this church. But I was never informed that there was another way of confessing other than the Apostolic Creed, so it came by him and probably at the beginning of the Uniting Reformed Church because in the past we were under the NG Kerk in Africa and we thought we could only do this and when we changed from NG Kerk to the URCSA changes occurred. When the representatives return from the Synod they bring with them new things.

Respondent: Yes, it was reinforced by Reverend Taiwe. He received it from the Cape Synod when I was at the Pietermaritzburg General synod and that is when it was introduced to us as church council members so that we can learn the Belhar Confession

Respondent: what was the question again?

Interviewer: How did you know about the Belhar Confession? So who introduced it?

Respondent: Just for us to be relevant, the previous minister presented this even though we are still only reciting it in English we hope we can do it in other languages as well to accommodate even the elderly people. But I think that is the person who introduced this and as time goes on, one of our members who became a student minister also clarified Belhar enabling us to understand it better. Some of the members still do not understand what this confession is about so even today I still think there are people who still need to be educated about the Belhar Confession.

Interviewer: You mention something important; that you would like it in other languages for elderly people. But now what is happening with elderly people when you are reciting it now.

Respondent: When reciting, it is like when we grew up we used to recite, but without understanding, so it is very important to recite and understand what the Belhar Confession is saying to you. Because you are confessing if you are just reciting as we said previously people are just saying it, do they understand? What are they saying? So we need to say it with a clear understanding

Respondent: If I may add there some of the elderly when they come to church and they don't hear the Apostolic Creed it's like they have not been to church, they think it is the only way of connecting to God. Like the Methodist members, if they miss their (*giyakholwa kunkulunkulu o somandla*) Apostolic Creed, they have missed it so much they feel as though they have not been to church. So when we come up with this new thing they are left behind because they don't understand why we are resorting to a new way.

Respondent: One other thing for me I had a scenario not necessarily with the elderly. There are people who are no longer attending our church. They wished to remain with the Apostolic Creed. They feel uncertain about the change and when they discovered

the history of Belhar, they now associate it with politics. Yes, they respond with, “now you are saying this because of this political scenario” and these are well educated people.

Interviewer: You are saying it has chased away some people because it is political?

Respondent: Yes they even said when you are at church it is where you offload your baggage and it’s where you connect to your God.

Interviewer: You are saying when they are in church Belhar is not connecting them to God?

Respondent: Yes, Belhar is sort of political

Respondent: It sounds political now because with the ANC we do things in English and so on...

Respondent: It also goes back to the issue of reciting, whereby some people are reciting this, personally I feel like education is needed so that people can understand what they are saying. This education is the very key here and then our congregation in general, I am not talking about our church as Kwa-Thema East but the whole church and I don’t think they are playing their role adequately. Starting from the presbytery, if you look at here in our presbytery we are seven congregations and out of this seven only one and I think Regeerpark is also trying to use it now. But they are not using it in other presbyteries. Therefore you will find that it’s not a problem of the congregation but a problem of the church, the whole church.

Interviewer: Ok, I think we have exhausted that one now. The second question is regarding the life of your congregation, you spoke well about the church. Where will you find the Confession of Belhar, for example, is it part of your life or is it something that you are just reciting because it is part of the liturgy in the church? How do you find the Belhar Confession in the life of your congregation?

Respondent: In the beginning we were using the Apostolic Creed and you felt what you were saying it was like you are born with what you are saying. At the time when we were the Dutch Reformed Church we were supposed to follow this thing. But when this Belhar Confession came into existence it consumed some other people's faith regarding what they believed and confessed. But Reverend Taiwe as was said introduced it. When he presented it, people started getting used to it like when you read you will start to understand what it is talking about. It is also being recited and many are now reciting it without looking. If you observe it is written leader then congregation and so forth. There are people who can say it without reading. That is the way it is but it looks like gradually people are getting used to it. It's only that we have to teach others so that it will sink in and that people know the words

Interviewer: Let us take a look at it in the life of the congregation. What role does it play?

Respondent: what is the question?

Interviewer: What is the role of the Belhar Confession in the life of the congregation?

Respondent: Mm (all)

Interviewer: You said with the Apostle's Creed people felt a connection when they are in church, so what role does the Belhar Confession play?

Respondent: I can say it teaches us about forgiveness and reconciliation. It takes us out of the mentality of apartheid. Let there be forgiveness and sympathy we need to take care of the needy. That is what it teaches us that God does not want us to oppress people, to just look at those who are poor, but we must take care of the poor and the needy that is what we are doing, that one we do apply it here in church. Because we have a service of weakness, we have the ministry of women (kutlwelo bohleko) benevolence ministry. The things that are here we do practice them even though we have not reached 100% but we are going there.

Respondent: And to add to that if you read Belhar with understanding there is a lot of gold which comes out of it like the very first sentence, I believe or we believe in one God that teaches you that there is only one God. Then what can this God do? He protects gathers and does this and that. Like other people when they preach they are inspired by this. Like when you argue about God and gods you may say I believe in one God. Then the person will understand that there is only one God. As you read on there are words which I can say are contradictory like the word reject normally we don't use words like reject in the church. Here this word is used about three times. You see there we said only one God and now we are saying we reject, in the church, we don't reject we offer repentance. We reject this we reject that. But if we go deeper with this, we don't reject anything we reject what needs to be rejected.

Interviewer: it is very interesting that you say we reject the things that do not belong to the church. You mean rejection if used in an uncomfortable way?

Respondent: Like I say let me explain, so we reject the suggestion that colour, class, we reject that. This reject is used correctly you know, that colour, you cannot reject a person because of colour, but then when you say you reject and you don't follow what it says, you will take it in a wrong way. It gives a wrong what... So we reject the belief that this causes this and that and that, so this reject is correct but when I speak to people and say, "you speak of reject" so when you use the word reject people take it in a wrong way.

Respondent: As I indicated earlier that Belhar is specific to URCSA. The Heidelberg Confession and other confessions are universal so that you can go to any church such as African church and find they will still use the Heidelberg Confession but this one is specific to our church. For example, if you join this church you must believe that Christ is the Lord right? And you look at during apartheid they used the Bible to reach their evil goals that is why this is trying to correct the mistakes which were created by the previous regime, so we are trying to repair all that damage. The church that we attend

to is the property of God therefore to a lot of people reciting is a problem people will just recite right but they don't understand what is contained and they don't use it in a context which is satisfying. People don't know that Belhar is in South Africa.

Interviewer: If Belhar is for the URCSA do you think that the URCSA is behaving according to Belhar, it is acting in a Belhar way.

Respondent: When I look in a way yes, we are going there through an integrated ministry. As we are saying we want reconciliation, so according to the integrated ministries that we practise, that is what I believe, I as a person. Somebody asked me why Mme Mapitsi always when we do liturgy, is reading? When it comes to reciting what Mr. Mabele is talking about that person has memorised it, he or she does not internalise what she is saying it's like a poem it does not mean anything to him/her because one thing is that we can say that although we are reciting it we are not internalising it. For you as a person who is saying these words. What are you talking about?

Interviewer: Thank you this brings us to the third question. Do you also sing Belhar during the worship service or do you think of singing it?

Respondent: No, we never thought of singing it

Respondent: I never thought of singing it and that will be very impressive you know!

Respondent: May I ask. In singing do you mean like the Roman Catholics? Where the person sings first and then the rest of the congregation follows?

Interviewer: I am not sure how can we do it, that is why I am asking if maybe the conductor will get a soloists who will sing first then the congregation follows, I am not sure how to do it.

Respondent: It needs the notation because you see it has the leader and the congregation. The leader can sing first then we follow behind that melody can be very nice

Respondent: It can be nice

Interviewer: Ok do you incorporate it in your sermons when you are preaching?

Respondent: You mean Belhar?

Interviewer: Yes, for example when somebody is preaching can you hear maybe one of the articles here and there?

Respondent: Yes, for instance here where it says, 'the unity of the church must be visible so that hatred can be overcome in Christ'. When you preach obviously you will try to unite everybody so that they can understand, and there should be no hatred because hatred is dividing people.

Respondent: I think, like this separation and hatred overcoming in Christ I should think the problem why the DRC has not latched on to this because they have not yet reached the idea of separating themselves. The separation that we are white and better than blacks who are poor this Belhar has not reached them. You find that when I go to the white congregation, I sometimes have visited there to worship with them. When they sing, because their hymns are in Hosanna, the minute they hear somebody singing in alto or tenor you will see them turning. Who is this one?

Interviewer: Can we go further with acceptance, have you accepted it in your congregation and what are the challenges? Besides the one you mentioned earlier that some people have left because they think it is political. What was it like for you to end up accepting it? Let us hear from those who have not said anything yet?

Respondent: Interpreting, in the beginning, Maskosana how did people take it at first?

Interviewer: Or how did you personally take it?

Respondent: In the beginning, I took it like we are talking English in church and no longer talking the language of Tumelo (Vernacular).

Interviewer: Yes,

Respondent: As they are saying, it is now like a poem, it is not understood, what does it mean, 'the unity of the church must become visible' especially elderly people and there are still young people who are not educated you see, they don't understand they are just saying it.

Interviewer: Yes, now for me, I will be very happy if we can have translations into our African languages like isiZulu and the other languages then it will be very good. Even the song can be very good that is my wish as the leader because we can see where the problem is? As you say some members no longer come to church. This should be fixed; we can no longer remove it because it talks about important issues. But we need to hear them and understand what it means, it will be very joyful.

Respondent: For me, as this thing was introduced, I will be honest I found it very difficult. At times I would keep quiet and say nothing, then later I noticed that here they are talking about the valuable things found in the other and now there is another what is wrong with one I have been reciting for the past 20 years. Then who is this Belhar is it a person or a place? The other one says, "I believe in God" I am fine with that but now there is the word Belhar who is it? What is this Belhar? Then eventually when I read I have realised that there is nothing wrong in this because I still see my God here. What does it say to me this particular thing? Then I realised that there is nothing wrong, so I will not mind if *Moruti* (Reverend) "says the Apostle's Creed or the Belhar Confession".

Interviewer: Mother tell me, how did you discover about this Belhar because papa (*father*) says he was also asking who this Belhar is?

Respondent: In the beginning, she did not know (answering on her behalf)

Interviewer: And now do you understand what Belhar is?

Respondent: Yes, later the way Reverend Taiwe was teaching us every Sunday, and then we got used to it. Even now there are leaders who are still using the Apostle's Creed, but most of the time we are using the Belhar Confession and now we are used to it. As they say, others are now saying it like a poem. We are now saying it without looking. It was not that difficult. For other congregations it is difficult because they are still using the Apostle's Creed. When other congregations visit us we also give them Belhar printed and they are happy with it.

Interviewer: Ok, that is good but do you understand what Belhar is or who is Belhar will you be able to explain? To you the word Belhar, what does it mean?

Respondent: I have not understood it well.

Respondent: Belhar, I have not yet gone too deep into it, but Belhar is from the Synod that was in West, is it West or not I am not sure?

Interviewer: Sir, do you also understand what the Belhar Confession is?

Respondent: For me, as they say it was from the synod of mostly of coloureds which is where they were. In the beginning, I thought Belhar is a person, but we carried out some research and asked each other then we discovered that it is a place this Belhar. It is a town in the Cape where they came from, were you in the Northern Cape or what? (respondent asked 2).

Respondent: I was not at the synod of Belhar, I only heard about it at Maritzburg Synod. This Belhar is a synod.

Respondent: 5. It is a place where they adopted this Belhar Confession and it sounds like it came mostly from the coloureds (I am sorry to point this out) and it was introduced to us.

Interviewer: My last question what can you advise me to do in order to make Belhar part of your life?

Respondent: That is a difficult question because every time you want to teach somebody something you put it on paper, but people are lazy to read. But we do need education maybe the people who will come after you will try to visit the synods and ministers, because they are the people who should make sure that Belhar is used. For instance if we have visitors here let us say we have about seven churches coming here, we have to make copies for all those people, if the liturgist is using Belhar on that particular day, so that they will be able to read it. It is important that since you are doing research you should go for Ph.D. Ministers and during the primary seating should include it so that they will encourage the congregations to take it seriously. Because if you look at it, it talks about South Africa, as I said it is specific to our church it is specific for our context it is specific for South Africa. If you look at our hymns everyone is using them. We don't have any copy write, as you are talking about hymnology, I think we should come up with hymns that complement the Belhar Confession and that are specifically uniting

Respondent: To me, Belhar should be like a national anthem which needs to be sung at the beginning of the service every time. I don't remember hearing people singing Belhar, and for me, if somebody comes up with something that I don't understand I will stand up and go. The other thing is that the Apostle's Creed is mainly known in Sesotho. This one comes in English we only know it in English if we can get it in another language too?

Respondent: We should get feedback from this research so that people can be aware that my church is doing this and that because according to integrated ministries the congregation should be the leader of this. We know that when we start our liturgy we know what we do, even as Mr. Mabele is saying it ends here but it should go to the communities our home and everywhere. Because this catechism should be taught to children, they are the future of the church. So we expect feed- back to say you have walked this far I did this and that. Then we as the congregation we integrate it.

Respond: I agree with Mr. Motshwene, regarding the children and catechism they don't understand what they are learning, but we are insisting that we should go back to our homes, like now if you want to know what nation I am let me feel pain. I am also emphasising that we should get it in our different languages

Respondent: The other thing is that the leasing of book two is based on this Belhar Confession, so when you teach the children you also teach from book two.

Interviewer: How can we advise ministers to carry on with it.

Respondent: We will tell the new minister to take it further

Respondent: I will like the new minister to understand how we are doing things in this church while we are singing Belhar during liturgy we don't want worship songs from anywhere else but we want to sing from Hosanna only during that time.

Interviewer: Thank you very much that brings us to the end of our interview, may the good Lord bless you all.

Appendix C

Transcription and translation of interview at URCSA Mabopane in Mabopane West Congregation

Interviewer: the first question is how did you know about the Belhar Confession?

Respondent: From the synod

Introduction: From the synod and the congregation or as individuals how did you know about it, were you all at the synod or what happened?

Respondent: Actually a group of ministers (pastors) were at the synod then they formed this thing. Because they realised that the Apostle's Creed is from other people and as they were forming another church called the Uniting Reformed Church they decided to start their own confession that will guide them. Now they came up with this Confession of Belhar but not yet removing the Apostle's Creed, but as we are in the new reforming situation how can we move and be able to stand for ourselves as black people not just as black people but as members of the Uniting church.

Interviewer: Ok, let us answer according to individuals forget about him or her just answer according to your individual understanding. Tell me how you knew about this confession and what happened when it was introduced. You said something about synod how did you know about the Belhar Confession?

Respondent: I know about it here in church after a group of people who went to the meeting and when they came back and they said there is a new version called Belhar but they are not cancelling the Apostle's Creed then we can use them both. It was announced by the church council.

Interviewer: Let us hear from the church council, where did you get it church council?

Respondent: Let me answer for myself, when I joined this church in 1990 I found the Belhar Confession used in this church as part of the liturgy.

Interviewer: Anyone else, how can you say you know about Belhar?

Respondent: Let me answer while he is still busy with his phone, this was the use of this Confession and there was a comparison with the Apostle's Creed. Then we said yes we can see the Apostle's Creed is fine but there are lots of other things that are not included but are in Belhar. I also did not understand it because most of the time when I was leading liturgy I was not using the Belhar Confession. The reason I was not using it is because I realised that it was talking to me directly as an individual, when it says I should accept people from outside and so on, I felt it was directed to me because I don't like people from outside. Then after some discussion and our minister explained that this one is not talking about the individual but about our faith, how do you view your faith is there anything that is truthful or there is nothing true about your faith. Then later I also realised that there is truth in Belhar because it is talking about apartheid because during the time of apartheid we were discriminating against each other and Belhar is talking about discrimination.

Interviewer: Ok, you have mentioned something about the minister, was it introduced to you by the minister?

Respondent: The proper understanding was when the minister started teaching us with the minute books, which came from the synod we started to read and see what is happening.

Interviewer: Oh you got it from the minutes?

Respondent: Yes

Interviewer: Ok

Respondent: Yes, then the minister just confirmed it all.

Interviewer: Ok, the other thing that is important is what is the Belhar Confession, if someone from another church can ask you what is the Belhar Confession how will you answer?

Respondent: I will say the Belhar Confession is like the Apostle's Creed, the only thing about the Belhar Confession is we are trying to say, even if people believe that there is Allah and other gods, that there is only one God the one that we believe in is the only one God. That is to say there is one God we may call him by different names but there is only one God.

Interviewer: Anyone else, what is the Belhar Confession?

Respondent: It's a confession

Respondent: I will say Belhar is the name of a place in Cape Town where they had a meeting and agree that from now we will use the following words when we confess, Belhar is a place where they had a meeting and agreed that is why it is called the Belhar Confession.

Interviewer: That is good anyone else?

Respondent: I was saying it's a name of a person because I was just given a paper without explanation

Interviewer: how did you feel when you got a paper without explanation?

Respondent: I heard that this was from the synod and so I took the paper and started reading

Respondent: I can say it's a confession that teaches us about things of faith and the way we should treat other people, mostly the people who are from outside, as well as those that you are living with at that time.

Respondent: Let me not mix up your things, just as you are asking that question, those people as they were there wherever they were they tried to look at the conditions of the confessions and they found that it's a reminder of where are we standing. Are we standing still or how are we standing? And this agreement was reached in Belhar where they had a meeting, as I said it was just a comparison with the Apostle's Creed where people will say I do confess and my confession is this way as a Christian.

Interviewer: The second question that I would like to ask is, in the life of this congregation where will you find the Belhar Confession? For example is it part of your life? In church or even at home or it ends here at the church only? Or how does it work?

Respondent: Oh yes, according to me Belhar is not only for the church, it is for everywhere starting from the church going outside to other people. It is trying to unite us as people and also get to know other people who are living with us. It makes me think that I should accept for example *ntate* (father) here that I am praying for and also an ordinary person on the street to God. That person is important and God needs that person. I should respect a person not just because I am wearing a tie and going to church or think that I am special, no, but that person as well is important and still God loves that person. It also teaches us that if we have neighbours we should look after them and the poor people as well. We also look at how we can make life better for other people.

Interviewer: Anybody, what role does Belhar play in your life?

Respondent: For me, it relates to my work it singles out my service at my workplace, even though the people who were reciting the Belhar Confession are nurses because this is our pledge of service.

Interviewer: In the life of the church?

Respondent: It needs you to look at people equally, not to discriminate against people and know that all the people are of God, there should be respect as well.

Respondent: I like this because the thing is, it's something important, we have different confessions, so the Confession of Belhar say's to us to stop looking at somebody with a different faith in a bad way. The important thing is the person is also praying to God as much as I am praying to God. He/she may be a Rastafarian in their faith and I can be a Christian at the end of the day there is only one God.

Interviewer: Does reciting the Belhar Confession have any impact in your lives or are you just talking about it or has it changed anything in your life in general since you have started reciting it?

Respondent: Yes, it teaches us that we have to treat each other with equality and we have to respect each other, and respect what one believes because we all differ so I have to respect other people's beliefs.

Respondent: No, to be honest for me the Belhar Confession is like a poem, it does not have a pledge of service like at my work; I can feel that I am reciting a pledge of service. But with this Belhar, it is like I am reciting a poem

Respondent: To me, it is not like the Apostle's Creed because when I am reciting the Apostle's Creed I have a connection with God. I can see who I confess to.

Respondent: To support mama on this side, for I have not changed I am still the same, but when I am looking here at church I don't see practice, you know practice is hard then to talk about. We are saying it here in church and then after church, it remains inside the church when we are home we are doing other things.

Respondent: My comment is truly speaking, the Belhar Confession is targeting me because there are lots of challenges that we encounter in life. Sometimes we can have conflicts even if we are praying together, if we had a meeting that did not go well, immediately when they start reciting the Belhar Confession I check myself that we should have fought all those things, even if we fight about the things that will build a

church, I don't have a problem, there are those misunderstandings, for me to be honest it is challenging me and pushes me to think better

Interviewer: Ok, papa (father) since you have been reciting the Belhar Confession what have you changed in your live

Respondent: I will say it has taken a long time to change, there is no progress in what has changed in me. What has changed is how I have been accepting other faiths; I have cleaned the faith now it can be blown by the wind when I am considering Belhar, the reason I am saying this because Belhar as I was saying, it was pointing at me. Belhar is driving me back so that I can remove myself from the things that I am doing and I watch myself in full that I am going to the faith of Jesus Christ, that is my problem it tells me to be certain with my belief.

Interviewer: Mama you said they just gave you a paper.

Respondent: Yes, I am just reading I don't even understand what I am saying. It's not a lesson I was taught, gone are those days where we were taught the Confession of Belhar. Those days when we were taught the confessions someone would stand in front of us and teach us the confessions until we understood them. This one it was just a paper you received to read and the next week you read again. Then it's like a hymn if someone starts a hymn and the following week that person is not there then it is all gone. You see the same things happening with the Belhar Confession there was no one to teach us what is Belhar and what is happening that is why it has not taken like others.

Respondent: For me, this Belhar taught me to treat other people from other countries better because I use to treat them bad. So it has given me a light to treat them good but before I was not treating them well at all. I used to call them *amakwerekwere* (foreigners) but now I have changed.

Respondent: For me there is nothing that has changed, it is just as long as the minister is talking and we are talking it is confusing because when they say you are confessing it should be something that is coming from within like the Apostle's Creed was from within. That is what I believe. Now this Belhar they are talking and we are talking its long and it's not like we are confessing to whom we believe. I am happy for it but they are talking and then we are also talking and so on.

Interviewer: Is it too long according to you?

Respondent: According to me this thing of having two parts if confusing me, because when I confess to God I am not expecting Him to talk, then I talk, but I should confess and finish. Even in other churches, one person is confessing and the other one talking and so on.

Interviewer: Let us go to the third question do you ever sing the Belhar Confession or use it in liturgy?

Respondent: All no!

Interviewer: in preaching?

Respondent: In preaching yes, there are other verses when preaching that are relevant to the Belhar Confession. Especially when we are talking about the poor and the widowers and in confession we also add them there.

Interviewer: Do you think it can be a good idea to incorporate it with music as something that we can sing because now we are just reciting it?

Respondent: Yes, if we can sing it we will be able to hear it because we can hear the message from the music. Unlike when someone is talking and I am talking. Just like in the Anglican church when they sing their confession you can also here that I am confessing at that time if maybe we can all sing it we will hear the message.

Respondent: It will not be the minister who is talking and we follow but we are all going to sing at the same time, then we will start to hear the message because now, we also know where the congregation is talking but the part of the minister (liturgist) I don't know it. But if we sing we will all sing and know all the verses as a congregation.

Respondent: I almost disagreed with singing it because I thought maybe the minister will sing the soprano as the first part.

ALL: Respondents are laughing.

Respondent: (Continues) but if we are all singing then it will make sense, not like the other person singing this part the other one sings something else.

Respondent: Let me ask something, if you are confessing do you understand what you are confessing? Let me say when I read my Bible I also take the confession and read it with it so that I can see if they are going together with the word, that is the way I understand it better and that is when I can see the value of it. There are many different beliefs people have but there is one way of communicating with God although there can be two ways of communicating with God because you are confessing your sins. The sins you have to confess, that you have done this and that and why you did do this and that, you have to come up with a way of doing it.

Interviewer: Ok, let us go to the last question you are saying we should sing it and the congregation should participate; we should not have the part of the minister or liturgist and the part of others. What I want to understand is do you think Belhar is relevant to your context.

Respondent: Yes, I see it as relevant especially the words, they are relevant, it is just the approach we are taking with it. But the content is relevant.

Respondent: According to me it is very much relevant, I am looking at the fact that sometimes there should be change we are a new church and we are reforming. Let us

not focus too much on the way it was introduced, we should talk more about it and do some introspection to see that is it relevant to us. But as for me, it is very much relevant to the churches now. Especially those churches that are practising it.

Interviewer: You said you were never taught about Belhar so do you think the young people and the coming generation will be able to accept it.

Respondent: I think if it can start with the youth and the Catechism Class because we were also not taught the Apostle's Creed when we are old but during the time when we were still young. I think if they can also learn it as youngsters then as they grow they will also be able to understand it better.

Respondent: If they are saying we as youth will accept it and the upcoming generations will accept it? I feel that I cannot accept something that I was not taught. I think if they can teach us from the beginning, starting to form a foundation then we can accept it. But as they have given us the paper in this manner and say we must do it I feel like even the Sunday school children don't understand it. It is only the Apostle's Creed that is understood, but this one I don't think they understand it, maybe in years to come.

Interviewer: let me hear from the youth, do you my sister think that if in the future we sing it and teach children in a music form, they will take it as a relevant document?

Respondent: Yes, I think so, but it's like you give me something that I must do and it's in Setswana. We have to question something, for instance my mother does not know Setswana so she can't explain it. But if we can be taught at a very young age where this confession was formed?

Respond: The children now want to learn it in English.

Respondent: it will be better if it's in English because we don't know how to read Setswana, if we ask for the one in English it's not there.

Interviewer: Ok, you don't have it in English only have it in Setswana?

Respond: The entire respondents said No

Respondent: Let me say it came in an English form and the minister translated it into Setswana because they said we are not using any other language but Setswana. We as the church council members know that for it to be where it is now, is because it was from the English vision to Setswana. That is why when you go to the other churches they are saying different words from ours, because they have translated it in a way that suits them and we also translated it in the way that we find comfortable. The question that you asked if the young children will accept it, I will say to you yes 100% if not 125% why because these children don't know anything bad, they don't have any other confessions to learn but they only have this one. Therefore they will accept it. If a child does not have anything and you give them something, then if the child is refusing what is the child expecting?

Respondent: Ok, let me add on that one, in the Catechism Class these children are taught the introduction of Belhar but they are not taught that Belhar goes like this and like that. There is a history to Belhar they should teach them the history of Belhar. I was saying if they can only teach the Belhar Confession and stop other confessions because this child if you can say let them learn the Apostle's Creed they will do it very well. As for the Belhar Confession it only gets a small opportunity when there is a congregation as if it's only for the congregation and the minister and it does not involve the children. If they can start well and teach the children from Sunday school because children can memorise it very quickly. If it can come as a song then it will be much easier because children will learn it in class as a song. Even the language, this child as they said they don't know Setswana but they prefer English. When teaching them we have to tell them that when you say this and explain. Children can also do it in English then we elderly people can do it in Setswana. At least these children will have something that they are doing in a language that they understand.

Respondent: Change is good but it depends on how this change comes. The way Belhar came was going to be different as if did not come by just papers like this. Let it be emphasised from the Catechism Class as they said, the Apostle's Creed can be the foundation and then Belhar also be the foundation. As for the languages maybe we need to talk about it in the church council as Mabopane West, that there is a mistake that is happening here. I also read it and don't hear it, some days I even feel as if I am not reading the Setswana correctly. When I am the one conducting liturgy I just read so that the service can go on you see. That is why most of the time I will do the Apostle's Creed because it is the same even in different languages. If our children can learn it they will also change us because sometimes we get changed by our children.

Respondent: What I like is that maybe this Belhar Confession is the problem, when there is to be change it cannot all be changed at once. You see the teachings of today are still the teaching of that old time, somewhere they have changed it is fine but somewhere they have not changed here at church. I think there will be somebody who will say let us change and do certain thing like this, there is going to be change even if it is not now there will be somebody who will say this Belhar is not known. Let it be taught from Sunday school and the Catechism Class and go with it deeper and know what it means. Change has come that we are now reciting Belhar but they should check if the change has taken place all over and everybody understands where they are going.

Interviewer: How will you advise someone who is researching about Belhar?

Respondent: I will say let the person find out how they came upon Belhar? When we are reading Belhar we should also link it with some verses in the Bible, because I strongly believe you can conduct the service with Belhar, it can be an outstanding service. For instance in the service you can preach with a certain hymn it is just that we don't preach with hymns. But you can preach using a certain hymn and people be certified until the end of the service. Even with Belhar you can take it and line it with the verses and someone will say ok when I say I believe that God is one I believe that there

is one God. Then what do I mean because there are gods like Buddha and others so what do I mean when I say God is one, it simply means God is above all even if I can slaughter a sheep God is still above all and He is in control of everything.

Respondent: To add on to what he is saying I don't know if I am adding or I am breaking. I almost forgot what I wanted to say but my point is to look at the title and fix that title.

Interviewer: You mean Belhar Confession?

Respondent: Yes, because that is Belhar's confession I also want my Confession not Belhar's confession remembers about that. Listen to what that other one is saying it is a Confession of Christian Faith, it talks about me, what am I confessing, hence mama thinks that Belhar is a human, please find out about this title.

As if we are confessing about a person so that it can accommodate Mabopane and other areas so that it does not only accommodate a place in Cape Town.

Interviewer: Let us close this session on that note. Thank you very much for your time and I hope and pray that God blesses you all.