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**Holistic Theological Education in the Formation of
Missional Leaders in the Dutch Reformed Church**

by

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Plagiarism declaration

I, Doret Niemandt with student number u04411595, hereby declare that this thesis with the title *Holistic Theological Education in the Formation of Missional Leaders in the Dutch Reformed Church* is my own original work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution. All consulted sources of information – whether printed, by e-mail or on the internet – were properly acknowledged and referenced according to the plagiarism prevention policy of the University of Pretoria.



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Ethics statement

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this thesis, has obtained, for the research described in this work, the applicable research ethics approval. The author declares that he/she has observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's Code of ethics for researchers and the Policy guidelines for responsible research.

Summary

The Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) has embraced a missional ecclesiology and is in the process of missional transformation. Missional transformation is a comprehensive process that profoundly affects the DRC and requires deep change. The DRC as a denomination is not prepared for this challenge. The DRC's leadership is not equipped for this challenge. And the changes made to the DRC Church Order and theological education seem to have little effect in addressing this challenge. Leadership plays a pivotal role in the process of transformation and the DRC's Curatorium is faced with the challenge of implementing a theological education programme that forms leaders with the necessary capacities.

This research aimed to develop a prototype to assist in forming missional leaders in the DRC. Missional transformation requires innovation. The research utilised a dynamic research methodology designed for the process of missional transformation to develop a prototype to assist in forming missional leaders in the DRC. The researcher implemented the methodology's missional research cycle and acknowledged and described the pain of the problem-owner, the DRC Curatorium at the University of Pretoria (phase 1). The researcher then explored the pain further by attempting to discern what is going on 'underneath the surface' of the DRC's theological education and clarified the question (phase 2). After gaining important insights and realising the nature of the challenge, the researcher developed a prototype to address the adaptive challenge facing the DRC's Curatorium (phase 3).

The prototype comprises a new programme for spiritual formation, a new way of life, as part of holistic theological education that will ultimately serve the DRC's process of missional transformation. Missional transformation is not about *knowing* or *doing*, but about *being*. Fundamental to the formation of missional leaders is thus the formation of a missional spirituality.

The research used the *Twelve Steps* programme of Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) as a model to develop a prototype for spiritual transformation. The *Twelve Steps programme* is a programme focused on spiritual transformation, a new way of life, and not mere sobriety. The prototype is thus a programme focused on forming a missional spirituality. The programme is a lifelong process of becoming, wholly dependent on the Spirit and focused on creating the right context for transformation to take place. This programme of spiritual transformation, a missional *metanoia*, can assist in forming missional leaders in the DRC. The programme is grounded in a missional spirituality – formed *in* community and *for* the community, formed holistically and shaping all aspects of life and living, formed by embracing vulnerability, and the prerequisite and means of participating in the *missio Dei*.

List of key terms

Missional transformation

Missional leadership

Theological education

Adaptive change

Innovation

Holistic formation

Missional spirituality

Missional *metanoia*

Spiritual formation programme

Powerless

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Chapter 1

Introduction

There we go! These are three powerful words for the future of theological education, congregational leaders and the church. With three powerful words, Martin Luther sparked the Reformation and the modern era and everything changed: *Here I stand!* However profound these words were, Leonard Sweet notes that they are the wrong words for the 21st century. And they are the wrong words for the missional church. “It is no longer ‘Here’ but ‘There’. It is no longer ‘I’ but ‘we’. It is no longer ‘stand’ but ‘go’. It is time to less ‘take a stand’ than to ‘take a hike’ and walk together into the future” (Sweet, 2019:252). God’s preferred future. Discerning together what God is up to in this world and *there we go!*

This chapter will introduce the missional church with a brief description of missional church, the call for a transformed ecclesiology and a transformed theological education. The focus will then shift to missional developments in the DRC with a brief description of the DRC as a missional church, her missional ecclesiology and her theological education. The researcher will then move on to describe the research methodology, a research strategy specifically designed for missional transformation.

1.1 Introducing the missional church

Reggie McNeal (2009:xiii) declares that the rise of the missional church is the single biggest development in Christianity since the Reformation. The phrase ‘missional church’ has become a buzzword in theological circles worldwide and various denominations are adding it to their repertoire. Goheen (2016a:ix) notes that the term ‘missional’ has become so prevalent, that it has lost its meaning. Even so, Darell Guder considers the term ‘missional’ to be important as it functions as a type of scaffolding. It holds up our ecclesiology, theology, interpretation of Scripture and theological education. “We would not need the scaffolding if those things were shaped as they should be by the *missio Dei* and by a robust understanding of the church’s missional nature” (Goheen, 2016a:ix). This notion of a missional church is not meant to be the newest theological trend – it is about rediscovering the nature and calling of the church. And once it is rediscovered, the scaffolding will not be needed anymore.

What follows is a brief overview of the missional church and indications of why it is important for this research.

1.1.1 A brief description of the missional church

The church *is* missional – numerous theologians have concluded that the church is and has always been inherently missional (see Newbigin, 1987; Bosch, 1991; Guder, 1998; Gibbs, 2000; Hirsch, 2006; Roxburgh & Romanuk, 2006; Van Gelder, 2007; Wright, 2010; Bevans *et al.*, 2015). This missional nature and calling stems from the very nature of God – how we understand the church, as God's unique community, is directly dependant on how we understand God. God is a loving God and wants to redeem the broken world. God, the Father, sends his Son to the world. And subsequently, God, the Father and the Son, sends the Holy Spirit to the world. This sending love of God is termed the *missio Dei*. It was in 1934 that Karl Hartenstein coined this term, *missio Dei* while explaining mission as belonging to the essence of the church (Flett, 2010:131). Hartenstein was greatly influenced by Karl Barth who played a significant role in the formation of missional theology. Barth gave a lecture at the Brandenburg Missionary Conference in 1932, entitled, '*Die Theologie and die Mission in der Gegenwart*' where he stressed the important connection between mission and the Trinity (Guder, 2015:8). At the 1952 Willingen Conference of the International Missionary Council (IMC), it was also stated that the missionary obligation of the church is grounded in the outgoing activity of God (Flett, 2010:137-138). This line of thought was further developed and mission was ultimately understood as primarily the work of the Trinity for the sake of the world (see Bosch, 1991:392; Hooker, 2008:2; Van Gelder, 2007:18).

Mission is thus first and foremost understood as God's mission and the church merely participates in God's mission. The church's only prerogative is to participate in the *missio Dei*. Throughout the Bible, God sends his people to take part in his mission in various ways (Wright, 2010:23). And the mission of the early church, the essence of the early church, became evident after Jesus' final words to the disciples. They were to spread the good news – teaching all nations, and baptising them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). Jesus sends them to the world, like His Father had sent Him (John 20:21). The church is the sent community, not the sending community. Being sent to the world and participating in God's mission entails discerning where and how God is working in the world and to join in. The mission of the church, *missio ecclesiae*, is thus wholly dependent on the *missio Dei*. David Bosch, the distinguished South African theologian, has written extensively on the missional essence of the church in *Transforming Mission, Paradigm Shifts*

in *Theology of Mission* (1991). “Missionary activity is not so much the work of the church as simply the Church at work” (Bosch, 1991:372). The church does not have a missional task or obligation, the church is missional by nature (Kreamer, 1960:126). *Missio* (being sent) is not an activity of a certain group or a certain ministry within a congregation, it is a description of who the congregation *is* as a religious community and includes all ministries (Cordier, 2014:44-45). The missional church is thus not a new or the most recent model for being church, the missional church seeks to rediscover the nature and calling of God’s unique community, a sent community.¹

1.1.2 The missional church calls for a transformed ecclesiology

The church is missional. This being said, the church has managed to exist where mission was a secondary expression and the missional nature of the church did not prevail. Throughout the ages, the church has taken on many forms and our theology of the church has influenced these forms and vice versa. The church is always caught in the liminality of how it is and how it should be. However, the Reformed tradition calls for a continued strive to re-examine and rediscover the nature and calling of the church, *ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda*, to maintain and to realign the form the church takes on. The essence and form of the church cannot be separated (Küng, 1968:5). The missional church thus calls for a transformed ecclesiology.

There is a worldwide renewed interest in and reassessment of the nature and calling of the church. Kärkkäinen (2002:7) calls this phenomenon an ecclesiological renaissance and deems the ecumenical movement as the main catalyst for the rapidly growing ecclesiological interest. Three significant ecumenical gatherings of 2010 can be highlighted:

The *Centennial World Missionary Conference* in Edinburgh (2-6 June, 2010) stated that the nature and calling of the church is missional. The emphasis of the conference was on mission as God’s mission (*missio Dei*) in which Christians participate and there was an evident move from a church-centred mission to a mission-centred church (eds. Balia & Kim, 2010:11).

The second gathering was the *Uniting General Council of the World Communion of Reformed Churches* (WCRC) in Grand Rapids (18-28 June, 2010), the largest

¹ The researcher is aware of the critique on the missional church movement, see ‘*Filosofies-teologiese uitgangspunte van “missionale” kerkwees: ’n kritiese evaluering*’ (Kruger, 2013).

association of Reformed churches with 233 member denominations in 110 countries. The WCRC, formed when the *World Alliance of Reformed Churches* (WARC) and *Reformed Ecumenical Council* (REC) united in 2010 in Grand Rapids, Michigan (USA), also acknowledged at their General Council that the church has to participate in the mission of the Triune God. “We are sent into the world by God. We are sent out in peace, ordained and non-ordained alike, equals in the priesthood of Christ and in the unity of the Spirit, to love and serve the Lord, called to communion and committed to justice” (WCRC, 2010:62). The missional identity of the church must be reflected in its structures, use of resources and programmatic actions (WCRC, 2010:164).

The third gathering was the Third Lausanne Congress (Lausanne III) on World Evangelisation in Cape Town (16-25 October 2010) that brought together over 4000 Christian leaders from 198 countries. The congress declared that “the mission of the Church on earth is to serve the mission of God...” (Lausanne III, 2011:45).

The focus on the missional nature and calling of the church is also evident from two reports presented at the *World Council of Churches* (WCC) in Busan, South Korea, in 2013: *Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes* (2013); and *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* (2013).

The aim of the first report is discerning and seeking vision, concepts and direction for a renewed understanding of practice of mission and evangelism in changing landscapes. The report states that we are invited to participate in the Triune God’s life-giving mission (WCC, 2013:51). “The church is a gift of God to the world for its transformation towards the kingdom of God” (WCC, 2013:53).

The second report was developed by the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC and aims to determine an ecumenical understanding on the nature and calling of the church. The document states that God’s plan to save the world, the *missio Dei*, is carried out through the sending of the Son and the Holy Spirit and this saving activity is essential to an adequate understanding of the church (WCC, 2013:9). The church is sent by the Trinity to the world. “The Holy Spirit came upon the disciples on the morning of Pentecost for the purpose of equipping them to begin the mission entrusted to them (cf. Acts 2:1-41)” (WCC, 2013:9).

The missional church calls for a transformed ecclesiology and these ecumenical gatherings and reports show an evident ecumenical consensus regarding a missional ecclesiology. The church is missional by nature and should take on this form. Van Gelder (2007:18) explains it as follows: “The church is. The church does what it is. The church organises what it does.” The correct order of these concepts are important. “Failing to understand the nature of the church can lead to a number of problems. Defining the church functionally – in terms of what it does – can shift our perspective away from understanding the church as a unique community of God’s people” (Van Gelder, 2000:23). Therefore, identifying the church as missional (the church is) and realising the church should take on this form (the church does what it is) has profound implications for how the church is giving structure to a missional ministry (the church organises what it does).

One of the important aspects of how a missional church organises what it does, and the focus of this research, is the church’s theological education model. Theological education is not an end in itself but serves the church. A missional ecclesiology calls for a transformed theological education.

1.1.3 The missional church calls for a transformed theological education

Theology is about studying the nature of God (*missio Dei*) and the nature of the church and presumably for the advancement of the *missio ecclesiae*. Theology is not an end in itself and began as an “accompanying manifestation of the Christian mission” (Kähler in Bosch, 1991:16). Theology was thus first shaped by the praxis of the early church. The early church formed the identity of the church and inspired its theology (Bevans, 2015:94). However, Christian mission and the expansion of the church reached a culmination when Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire. Constantine declared this with the Edict of Milan in 313 AD which gave official recognition to the Christian faith. This irrevocably changed the character of the church. The church went from being a marginalised minority group to the central majority (Dreyer, 2011:53). And this had significant consequences for theology. Bevans (2015:94) stated:

...theology was gradually transformed into reflection on Christian life and Christian faith, not so much its dissemination... Focus shifted from reflecting on the problems and challenges of proclaiming and witnessing to the faith as a minority group, to

explaining and defending formulas of faith that were connected with upholding the political unity of the Empire. (Bevans, 2015:94)

In this era of Christendom, theology focused on Christian doctrines and knowledge about God. It happened to the extent that the missional dimension of theology was eventually lost (Bosch, 1991:489). This theological paradigm formed the basis of the current traditional theological curriculum. In the seventeenth and eighteenth-century theology was once again influenced by the *zeitgeist* – the reason and individualism of the Enlightenment. The missional dimension of theology was further isolated and the generally accepted fourfold curriculum, Biblical Studies, Church History, Systematic Theology and Practical Theology, was the result. This curriculum was distributed to the rest of the world, uncritically adopted and locally implemented with the nineteenth and early twentieth-century missionary movement (McCoy, 2013:523). The missionary movement was about the expansion of the western religion and culture, with a meagre view of the church's missional nature and calling. On the one hand, Western Christians did not take into account that their theology was formed by their culture – the assumption was that it was supra-cultural and universally valid (Bosch, 1991:448). And on the other hand, their way of implementing this theology revealed how they understood the church – this affected their understanding and form of mission. Mission was only associated with cross-cultural missionary work, missionary societies, evangelism and church planting missions (Wright, 2010:23). Mission was thus eventually confined to a certain and separate aspect of being church. The missionary movement did lead to the development of a theology of mission, but missiology was at most a subdivision of practical theology (Bosch, 1991:490). Being missional was concerned with a single and optional aspect of being church. When the independent discipline of missiology does emerge, it functions as a discrete and largely marginal discipline within the theological canon (Guder, 2010:52). Over the years mission had gone from the matrix to the margins (Bevans, 2015:96).

However, recent studies show a renewed focus on mission in theological education (see Bosch, 1991:15; Guder, 2016:285-298; Keifert, 2009:27-47; Wright, 2015:141-153; Goheen, 2016c:299-329; De Gruchy, 2010:46-50). Not only as an independent discipline but as a point of departure for all theological disciplines. This started with the renewed interest and reassessment of the nature and calling of the church as stated above. Ecclesiology is paramount when it comes to theological education. How the church is understood, the body where congregational leaders practice places great emphasis on the type of theological education needed to form these congregational leaders for the church. If theology, then, is a reflection on the Christian mission, theological education should focus on the training for this

Christian mission (Bevans, 2015:93). A missional ecclesiology calls for a transformed theological education.

1.2 Missional developments in the DRC

The broader missional movement led to conversations in South Africa about the missional nature and calling of the church. The missional movement is only ten plus years old in South Africa (Marais, 2017:65). However, Pillay (2017:38) remarks that the missional renaissance has hit South Africa. Pastors and church leaders from almost all denominations in South Africa are talking about becoming missional, missional theology is being studied at universities and theological seminaries and the Fresh Expressions movement made its way into Africa (Pillay, 2017:36). What follows is a brief description of the influence this had on the DRC, her current ecclesiological understanding and the consequences for theological education.

1.2.1 The DRC as missional church

For the purpose and scope of this research, only developments in the DRC and her two sister churches, the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (NHKA)² and the Reformed Churches in South Africa (GKSA)³ will be pointed out. The DRC and her two sister churches have a shared background and face similar challenges today.

Developments in the NHKA

Conversations about a missional ecclesiology in the NHKA were fuelled by the notions of the ecumenical movement. These notions challenged the traditional understanding of the church. Apart from discussions about the apostolate and calling of the church, there was also a decline in church members and the churches in South Africa were losing their influential role in the community (Dreyer, 2011, 128-129). This situation led to a quest for the rediscovery of the true nature and calling of the church and several research papers were produced. Velthuysen (1988), *'Die wese van die kerk: 'n Teologiese antwoord op 'n filosofiese vraag'*, was one of the first and attempted to define the essence of the church. Other leading theologians that conducted research include, Steenkamp (1995), Buitendag (2008), T.J.F. Dreyer (2009), W.A. Dreyer (2011), and Van Aarde (2013). A whole edition of the church's official theological publication, *Hervormde Teologiese Studies (HTS)*, was dedicated to

² *'Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk van Afrika (NHKA)'*

³ *'Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika (GKSA)'*

ecclesiology (HTS 51/3, 1995). This focal point also leads to the NHKA's first National Colloquium and a multitude of reports during the 68th to 72nd General Church Meetings. The colloquium shows a shift from a church that has an inward focus to a church that is focused on the world. The 68th General Church Meeting encouraged congregations to embark on a process of congregational development with a missional focus (NHKA, 2007:37). The 69th General Church Meeting states that a church that neglects the apostolate cannot be called a church (NHKA, 2010:248). The 70th General Church Meeting starts to articulate what it means by a missional ecclesiology – a missional ecclesiology emphasises the church's obedience to God's call to be a part of the *missio Dei* (NHKA, 2013:313-314). The 71st General Church Meeting affirms that the Triune God wants to use the NHKA in the world, the church's identity should not be determined by any other factors than their unity in Christ (NHKA, 2016:112-113). The 72nd General Church Meeting rescinds a previous decision about training and employing evangelists as this counters the understanding of the church as missional, every member of the church should be seen as a 'missionary' in their community (NHKA, 2019:157). These gatherings show the collective understanding of the church in the NHKA and how it is changing.

Developments in the GKSA

The GKSA opted for a process of reassessing their understanding of being the church at their 2012 synod (Niemandt, 2014:10). A point of discussion on theological education touched on the importance of equipping congregations, members and leaders, to be missional. God did not give his church a mission, He gave his mission (*missio Dei*) a church (GKSA, 2012:506). The 2015 GKSA synod deliberates the decline in church members and presents a report with a turnaround strategy. The report states that being missional is not the sole purpose of the church, but it is an important aspect of the church that has been neglected and could lead to church growth (GKSA, 2015:495). The report also states that this turnaround strategy is a refocus on the church's mission. The *missio Dei* is not an academic concept, God is a sending God who dynamically controls the world and expects his church to participate in his mission (GKSA, 2015:497). The 2018 GKSA synod discussed the importance of church planting for the church to be able to grow. There was an emphasis on the necessity of the local church to make disciples (GKSA, 2018:1086). The great commission is given by a God that first sent his Son and the Holy Spirit and now sends the church (GKSA, 2018:1086-1087). The GKSA official website states that mission is God's mission (*missio Dei*) and all of God's children should participate with their unique talents (GKSA, n.d.).

Developments in the DRC

The DRC as a denomination had a strong missional focus from the beginning, but it should be noted that what was understood as missional changed over time and took on different forms. Saayman (2007) refers to different missional focus areas in different stages of South Africa's history and political circumstances and divides it into four waves.

During the first wave (1779-1834), the early Dutch Reformed mission, Van Lier and De Vos started the first organised mission work within the DRC. Mission was mainly understood as evangelistic and it was done by white people (subjects) to black people (objects) (Saayman, 2007:7). The second wave (1867-1939) focused on crossing borders and within this time the DRC officially started with organised missionary work. Saayman (2007:50) notes that the Cape Synod of 1857 appointed a mission committee to organise missionary work inside and outside the borders of the Colony. The third wave (1954-1976) was about crossing inner boundaries. The missionary movement in central Africa started to weaken with the ending of colonial rule in many countries and there was a shift in the focus of the DRC's mission work – from crossing international borders to crossing internal boundaries in South Africa. Several congregations were planted for Christians from an Indian background and mission work was done among Muslim and Hindu communities (Van der Watt, 2003:217). During the fourth wave (1990 onwards) the focus shifted “to the ends of the earth”. It was the end of apartheid and considered as a time of confusion, vulnerability and adjustment for the DRC. Saayman (2007:109) insists that the first waves were prompted by a colonial mindset – bringing faith and civilisation to Africa. The new, democratic South Africa brought an end to this mindset, the reality set in that they were a minority group within the African context and their focus turned inwards and to self-preservation (Benadé & Niemandt, 2019:6). There was thus a loss of missional interest in Africa and the missional focus shifted to places far and wide, countries that were now again open to South Africans. The need for a new understanding of mission became apparent. A workshop held in 1986 at the University of the Western Cape and attended by DRC representatives played an important role in this process of formulating a new understanding. David Bosch, in his keynote speech, described the church's mission as flowing forth from and as partaking in the *missio Dei*. The workshop participants then, in due course, came to a working definition of mission (Van der Watt, 2010:167):

The church's mission (*missio ecclesiae*) flows from the realisation that mission is first and foremost God's mission (*missio Dei*) and that the churches' calling to a holistic witness (*marturia*) should include the following dimensions: proclaiming the Word (*kerugma*), acts/service of love (*diakonia*), the forming of a new community of love

and unity (*koinonia*), the zeal for a just society (*dikaïoma*) and worship (*leitourgia*).
(Van der Watt, 2010:167)

Benadé and Niemandt (2019:6) point out that the concept of *missio Dei* now started to take form and give shape and guidance to discussions about the church's nature and calling. Benadé and Niemandt (2019), Van der Watt (2010), and Van Niekerk (2014) all used this framework of Saayman and proposed the possibility of a fifth wave. The fifth wave as a result of the current missional upsurge. The development of a missional ecclesiology in the DRC is an important advancement and the reason behind the proposal of this fifth wave (Benadé & Niemandt, 2019). In the last 20 years, three prominent movements within the DRC have helped congregations discover their calling, i.e *Gemeentebou*⁴, the Congregational Studies movement, and the missional church movement (Benadé & Niemandt, 2019:7).

Gemeentebou, or congregational development, altered the DRC's ecclesiology in the sense that it helped church members realise that they are called to bring the gospel to the world, it is not reserved for the ordained. It is the task of every believer, not only a select few.

Congregational Studies programmes helped to shift the focus towards the Kingdom. "...There was a growing realisation within the DRC that the integrity of the witness of the church was dependent on the church's involvement in poverty relief and service to the community" (Benadé & Niemandt, 2019:7).

David Bosch played an important role in the third movement, the missional church movement, in the DRC. Bosch's theology focused on the missionary nature of the church, the Trinity and the *missio Dei* (see Bosch, 1991:389-393). The *Gospel and Our Culture Network* (GOCN), built on the work of Lesslie Newbigin, also influenced the DRC, especially with the important work of Darrell Guder (1998), *Missional Church: A vision for the sending of the missional church in North America*. In 2004 ten DRC congregations started the *South African Partnership for Missional Churches* (SAPMC). The SAPMC was initiated as a partnership between these ten congregations and the Bureau for Continued Theological Education and Research (BUVTON - later *Ekklesia* and *Communitas*) in Stellenbosch and the *Partnership for Missional Churches* (PMC) in the United States (Marais, 2017:65). Patrick Keifert introduced the PMC to South Africa focusing on missional transformation through spiritual discernment. "Spiritual discernment is done through dwelling on the Word, as well as in the world, and listening to where God is sending the church to become part of his mission" (Benadé & Niemandt, 2019:8). The PMC promoted the important development of a missional

⁴ Translated as 'Congregational Development'.

ecclesiology within the DRC. The missional church movement is also evident in the decisions of the General Synod of the DRC (Benadé & Niemandt, 2019:8):

1998 – The DRC adopted an official mission policy reflecting their understanding that everything the church does should be determined by the *missio Dei*.

2002 – The General Synod’s Statement of Calling⁵ (2002) laid the foundation for the development of a missional theology within the DRC.

2004 – The General Synods’ commitment to calling⁶ also emphasised that the DRC is called to join in God’s mission.

2005 – The Season of Listening⁷ is launched to support and encourage the DRC to be more discerning.

2007 – The General Synod reconfirmed the Statement of Calling, the DRC’s calling is to focus on the local community, bringing healing and building the Kingdom of God.

2013 – The General Synod continued on the journey of developing a missional ecclesiology for the DRC. An important milestone was when a new policy document, *Framework Document on the Missional Nature and Calling of the DRC*⁸ (2013), was unanimously adopted.

Since 2013, every General Synod gathering affirmed missional transformation as the highest priority of the Synod (Marais, 2017:65).

While many denominations in South Africa are engaged with a missional ecclesiology, there is still a lot of work to be done when it comes to shaping their DNA from a missional perspective (Pillay, 2017:39). Yet, these local developments not only shows awareness of the missional movement but important first steps and an intentional shift in ecclesiological understanding. As seen above, the DRC, as well as her two sister churches, is gradually developing a missional ecclesiology.

1.2.2 The missional ecclesiology of the DRC

The missional movement has to a great extent contributed to the DRC understanding of her missional ecclesiology. Burger (2017:24-32) points out how the missional conversation has helped and can help the DRC:

⁵ ‘Roepingsverklaring’

⁶ ‘Roepingsverbintenís’

⁷ ‘Seisoen van Luister’

⁸ ‘Raamwerkdokument oor die missionale aard en roeping van die NGK’

- The missional movement has challenged us to direct the focus of our church life and congregational life on service outside the congregation.
- The missional movement can help us to broaden our understanding of mission and ministry to be much more inclusive than in the past.
- The rootedness of the missional movement in the *missio Dei* has helped us to rediscover the reality of a living, active God in our midst.
- The focus on the *missio Dei* has forced us to pay more attention to our confession of God as the Triune God of Jesus Christ.
- The missional movement has convinced us that we will have to rethink our ecclesiology (understanding of the church) in the light of our faith in the Trinitarian God and his mission in the world.
- The missional movement can bring new energy into the ecumenical movement.
- We have become convinced that the missional direction of the church's life should function as a framework within which other questions should be approached and discussed.

The DRC's missional transformation still has a long way to go and have to take these notions into account to move forward. The policy document adopted in 2013, *Framework Document on the Missional Nature and Calling of the DCR*, already reflects these notions and provides a comprehensive framework of new insights regarding the DRC's ecclesiology. However, the policy document does not reflect the DRC's current ministry, the policy document delineates what the DRC aspires to be. Niemandt (2017:202) remarks that official policy decisions and vision statements, like this framework document on the Missional Nature and Calling of the DRC, can be seen as an indicator of missional transformation in a denominational structure. The policy document shows a realignment with what the church *is* and paves the way for transformation and a realignment of what the church *does*. "The policy document can be summarised as a comprehensive recalibration of the self-understanding of the DRC in terms of a missional church perspective" (Niemandt, 2015:2). This document consists of new insights regarding various aspects of the church that can help with shaping a missional denomination. What follows is a brief overview of these insights.

The identity of the DRC

The policy document shows that the DRC attaches great importance to her Reformed identity. “Becoming more missional does not in any way indicate a departure from the church’s professed theological roots” (Burger, 2017:22). In contrary, it is because of the Reformed identity that the DRC is compelled to reform again. The framework document states that the DRC’s identity is ultimately rooted in the life of the Trinity. “At its very heart, the identity of the DRC is embedded in our understanding of God Himself” (DRC, 2013:3).

Understanding of God

The Bible portrays God as a sending God, God is missional by nature (DRC, 2013:4). God is a loving God and wants to save the broken world. God, the Father, sends his Son to the world. And subsequently, God, the Father and the Son, sends the Holy Spirit to the world. This sending love of God is termed the *missio Dei*.

The church

Burger (2017:23) indicates that the framework document portrays a traditional understanding of the church, but strives for an embodiment of the church in a new and fresh way. The embodiment of the church is dependent on the *missio Dei* – the *missio Dei* is the source of the church’s life. The mission of the church (*missio ecclesiae*) is embedded in the mission of God (DRC, 2013:4). The missional nature and calling stems from the very nature of God – how we understand the church, as God’s unique community, is directly dependant on how we understand God. The church is first and foremost a result of the *missio Dei* and then participates in the *missio Dei* (DRC, 2013:4).

The Kingdom of God

“A congregational ecclesiology is expanded when understanding it within the framework of the Kingdom of God” (DRC, 2013:7). The church is not an end in itself. God reigns over the whole cosmos, the church is the sign of the Kingdom of God and believers are called to establish the signs of God’s Kingdom in all the aspects of their lives (DRC, 2013:7).

Incarnation

The church should live an incarnational lifestyle, the church exists for the sake of others. “Incarnation is to be with people, whoever and wherever they may be” (DRC, 2013:7). Jesus sets the example through his incarnation.

Our context

The world in which the church finds itself is the world to which God has sent the church (DRC, 2013:8). The church's mission is to participate in the *mission Dei* in the world. Discerning where God is already at work, in each concrete context, and to join in.

Congregations

Congregations are the basis of the church, the emphasis does not fall on the institution but rather on the local congregation, the local expression of the body of Christ (DRC, 2013:9). Each local missional congregation has to discern where God is working among them. A missional congregation is thus a congregation that is focused on the world and is formed through its participation in the *missio Dei* (DRC, 2013:10).

Servants to the community

The church's mission is grounded in God's mission, but more so grounded in God Himself: God's love, mercy, justice, reconciliation, and peace (DRC, 2013:10). The church is to be servants to the community. "The kenotic existence of Christ and the sacrifice of the Son by the Father form the basis of the church's service" (DRC, 2013:10).

Faith formation within the church

A missional ecclesiology underlines faith formation and spiritual development in the church (DRC, 2013:11). Being missional means being aware of God's living presence and cultivating a missional spirituality. At the centre of missional faith formation is discernment, listening to the Word and listening to the world (context) (DRC, 2013:11).

Offices of the church

A missional perspective points out that every member is called to be a witness and that the focus must stay on the office of the ordinary believer or layperson, the other offices are only there to assist believers to be able to live their calling (DRC, 2013:12). Although Reformed theology has always understood the importance of the office of the ordinary believer, it has functioned differently.

Church planting

A missional understanding of the church implies the formation of new communities of faith. Within the DRC there is an emphasis on developing new ministries and congregations

to reach out to those outside of the traditional church, but also to create more space within the church for society's growing diversity (DRC, 2013:13).

Liturgy of a missional church

The characteristics of a missional liturgy include the following (DRC, 2013:14): Focused on God; supporting discernment to encounter God in worship; a liturgy of life beyond the worship service; and bridging the gap between liturgy and life.

Church as missional community

"The church lives in the Trinity and is therefore, *imago Trinitatis*. This means that the church is a community of deep and self-sacrificial community in its following after the Father, Son and Holy Spirit" (DRC, 2013:14). A missional community exists to participate in God's mission and for the sake of others.

Youth ministry and catechism in a missional church

All believers being called and sent by God includes the youth. "Part of the church's calling is the formation of the right values in young people, as well as then helping these young people to discover their ways to participate in God's mission" (DRC, 2013:15).

Public witness of the missional church

The church is called to participate in and transform the world. "The church's public witness finds expression first and foremost in the participation of members in the public dialogue about all issues central to society, and on all the different levels of society. Because the church has as its priority the transformation of the world it cannot be understood in isolation from its relationship to the world" (DRC, 2013:15).

Theological training

Missional leadership is about the transformation of people and institutions and equipping of people and communities to be able to join God's mission to the world (DRC, 2013:16). Theological training is key in developing this type of missional leadership. Theological training should, at the very least, focus on the following aspects of missional leadership (DRC, 2013:16):

- Discernment, not only as a theological concept but in practice. Assisting students in their spiritual formation.

- Development of knowledge and skills with the capacity to cultivate a culture that allows God's work to be discerned.
- Discernment within the faith community, an understanding of the functioning of networks.
- Equipping with the skills to be able to understand and lead the process of transformation.
- Eschatology, understanding and describing God's preferred future.
- The formation of a missional spirituality.
- Innovation, training that encourages creativity and imagination.

In essence, these new insights come down to important guiding principles. First, *doing* missional church means focusing outward, God sends his church to the world. This means the DRC should focus on the communities beyond their congregations. Second, *doing* missional church means that every member of a local congregation takes part in the *missio Dei*. Equipping DRC members is essential. Thus, third, *doing* missional church requires missional leadership. The DRC needs theological education or training for the formation of missional leaders. Missional leaders play a key role in the transformation of members and equipping them to join in God's mission.

1.2.3 Theological education and the DRC

Theological education has become a focal point of theological discussions and research amidst the current missional upsurge. There is concern among theologians that the theological educational paradigm is not sufficient for addressing the opportunities and challenges that it holds as will be described below. The current mainstream theological education falls short and Bevans (2015:105) points out that although this is a pressing matter, it is something that has long been neglected. Theological institutions and lectures that are aware of the missional imperative are unable to successfully revise their curricula and programmes in the direction of missional formation. According to Du Preez, Hendrik and Carl (2012:3) institutions throughout Africa are in favour of a holistic missional approach as an integral part of their curricula, however, they admit that their curricula cannot be described as missionally oriented, institutions do not regard their campuses as centres for reaching the community, and not enough is done to include studies on the unreached people groups. This is also the case with the DRC's theological education. Even though the DRC has committed herself to a process of missional transformation, the institutions and curriculum of the DRC do

not reflect this paradigm shift. Missional transformation can only occur if theological institutions and curriculums commit to this imperative change.

The DRC's General Curatorium⁹, the committee responsible for theological education in the DRC, has already done a lot of work and research to create new possibilities for theological education in the DRC. New possibilities that could contribute to the DRC's process of missional transformation. The main development thus far is a model of theological education that is accessible to more people. Theological education that is not reserved for full-time residential students at one of the three universities in Pretoria, Stellenbosch or Bloemfontein, but open to those who want to study part-time or as a second career. There is also an important new approach that considers certain capacities that a graduate student should have obtained during his or her studies, these capacities are described in a living document – *Profile of the Graduate Student*¹⁰. These capacities go beyond the current curriculum and the General Curatorium applied missional outcomes to this document in an attempt to align it with the DRC's process of missional transformation.

These changes are important first steps in the development of theological education that can be missional formation. However, there is still much to be done. The traditional theological education curriculum has strong roots and it seems to be challenging to divert from it. That being said, the missional ecclesiology of the DRC demands a transformed theological education. Theological education has to be re-imagined with new competences and priorities. This requires addressing important questions like (Guder, 2010:53-54):

- How does theological formation equip churches to engage critically the Christendom legacy which so profoundly shapes western Christianity?
- How does theological formation take seriously the broad consensus that the gathered community (or "local congregation") is the primary agent of God's mission in the world?
- How will theological institutions equip congregations, through the ministry of their graduates, to lead their lives "worthy of the calling to which they have been called"?
- How does the witness of particular congregations testify to the global scope of God's love and the global calling of his gathered and sent people?

⁹ 'Algemene Kuratorium vir Teologiese Opleiding (AKTO)'

¹⁰ 'Profiel van die afgestudeerde student'

Re-imagining theological education then also needs to address specific questions arising from our context and time-period in South Africa:

- How does theological formation prepare missional leaders for a changing demography and crossing cultural boundaries in a diverse country?
- How does theological formation engage with our technological advancement and how can it be utilised as a tool for theological formation?
- How does theological formation shape leaders holistically to address consumerism shaping our lives
- How does theological formation take place within the communities where we study, work and play?

These questions will be implicitly addressed throughout the research. Adequately addressing these questions places a lot of emphasis on theological education that is holistic, contextual and adaptable. There is an urgent need for the DRC to re-imagine theological education and to create or design a new model for holistic theological education in the formation of missional leaders in the DRC – the focus of this research.

1.3 Research methodology

The introduction indicated that the DRC is in a process of missional transformation. Missional transformation is a comprehensive process that profoundly affects and shapes the self-understanding, theological praxis, theological education and faith formation of a denomination (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:1). The policy document, *Framework Document on the Missional Nature and Calling of the DRC*, accepted by the General Synod in 2013 is an important exposition on the DRC's understanding of her missional ecclesiology and an important first step in her process of missional transformation. This also stressed the need for a proper research methodology – a responsible method that studies the missional transformation process, reflects on the progress, records the narratives and creates innovative interventions (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:1). A group of five DRC congregation leaders and academics created such a research methodology.

The research methodology, *Research Strategy for Missional Transformation*¹¹ was created in 2018 by academics from all three universities where the DRC's theological education takes place:

Cornelius J.P. Niemandt (University of Pretoria)
Jacobus F. Marais (Stellenbosch University)
Willem J. Schoeman (University of the Free State)
Pieter van der Walt (Stellenbosch University)
Nico Simpson (Bible Media)

This research methodology is based on a research approach specifically designed for missional transformation and has the following objectives (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:2):

- To support missional transformation – research promotes ownership of missional challenges, research supports congregations and empowers and protects them when they embark on innovative risks in the process of missional transformation.
- To explain missional transformation.
- To support a well-grounded process of planning. It is a total-system-strategy aimed at unlocking research, design, training and formational capacities within the denomination and seeks to achieve synergy.
- To empower congregations by developing new insights, beliefs, processes and plans, and enables them to implement innovations.
- To guide a process of contextualisation and responsible reaction to contextual change. The strategy targets missional challenges requiring adaptive intervention (see Keifert, 2006:88-92).
- To ensure that faith communities, as the owners of the challenges, remain in control throughout the process, thus keeping the strategy focused.

This research methodology, designed for missional transformation, is thus an appropriate methodology for the proposed research. What follows is a detailed description of this methodology and how it will be applied in the research. This includes a description of the research approach, the research as practice-oriented, and the missional research cycle.

¹¹ 'n Navorsingstrategie vir Missionale Transformasie'

1.3.1 Research approach

Establishing a proper research methodology necessitates clarity on the research approach. The research approach is a set of key assumptions from which other assumptions will follow (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010:156). These assumptions thus guide the research process. This research approach has the following notable assumptions and points of departure.

1.3.1.1 Research as a process of discernment

According to the DRC, discernment is the first and most decisive step for missional transformation (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:2). Discernment is thus the first step, but also continuously part of, this research methodology. Keifert (2009:21) describes the act of discernment as attending to three sources, Scripture, culture and society, and the experience of the faithful, with the same basic questions in mind: “What is God up to here?” and “What is the Word of God for us in this place and time?” Consequently, the research approach emphasises the role of Scripture and the Spirit.

1.3.1.2 Scripture and Spirit

Research, seen as a process of discernment, emphasises the importance of the Spirit’s guidance through Scripture (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:2). This research will also use mission as a hermeneutic for scriptural interpretation. Missional hermeneutic has three dimensions: (i) reading Scripture with mission as the central theme, (ii) reading Scripture to understand mission, and (iii) reading Scripture to equip the church for its missional task (Goheen, 2016b:15).

1.3.1.3 Dialogue between theory and praxis

Confessions of faith and the embodiment of faith are in a reciprocal relationship (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:2). The dialogue between theory and praxis is therefore indispensable. Text and context stay separate but in a dynamic relationship with equal emphasis (Bosch, 1991:497). Scripture and tradition together form a ‘language house’ that shape the realities and imagination of congregational life (Roxburgh, 2011:61). Language is an important part of missional transformation. Language is what opens the world and renders it accessible (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:2).

1.3.1.4 Adaptive change

A distinction is made between technical and adaptive change. Technical change can be described as a process of gradual improvement with no sudden changes. Any changes are brought about step by step to ease the process of change, solutions are already within reach, and important for the maintenance of the system (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:4). Adaptive change, on the other hand, cannot be predicted, it is disruptive. Handling adaptive change is outside the skill set or abilities of the organisation, it requires courage, and involves a change in the values and attitudes of the organisation (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:4). It affects the whole system (Niemandt, 2013:64). Missional transformation is characterised by adaptive change and the concept of adaptive change is thus an important point of departure for this research.

1.3.1.5 Serving the church

The research approach is designed to serve the church. The faith community with their missional challenges is the basis of this research approach (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:2). These faith communities are then referred to as the problem-owners and an important part of the research process. The problem-owner is seen as a vital source of knowledge and collaborator and the researcher takes on the role of facilitator rather than an expert presenting conclusions at the end of the process (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:3).

1.3.1.6 Promoting ownership

The research strategy is practice-oriented and designed as a research cycle that promotes the increment of ownership when it comes to the challenge (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:3).

1.3.1.7 Unfolding strategy

The research approach uses an innovating cycle that functions as an unfolding strategy. Insights arise out of the process and they can eventually be aligned institutionally (Rogers, 1983:161-201 in Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:3). An unfolding strategy, as mentioned above, implies that the problem-owner plays a key role as a partner in the research process, there is a continuous dialogue between the problem-owner and researcher. This research approach is more than the design of solutions on behalf of a system, it is about collaboration.

1.3.1.8 Research values

These values guide the research process (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:3):

- Academically accountable

- Teamwork
- Utilising diverse methodologies
- Sound ethical code
- Serves the interests of the church
- Supporting and empowering leadership

This concludes the description of the research approach. These assumptions – research as a process of discernment; the importance of Scripture and Spirit; the dialogue between theory and practice; adaptive change; serving the church; promoting ownership; an unfolding strategy and certain research values – thus guide the researcher and research process.

1.3.2 Practice-oriented research

As mentioned above, this research methodology is practice-oriented to contribute to missional transformation in some way. What follows is a brief description of the theoretical insights on the strategy of this research which will later be applied to this study. The focus is on a conceptual research design rather than a technical research design, the key research decisions are made in the conceptual design (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015:28). A conceptual research design determines *what, why* and *how much* is going to be studied – what wants to be achieved with the research (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010:16). The implementation stage of the project will require a technical research design and can then be based on the conceptual design (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015:28). The conceptual design can be described with the following theoretical insights.

1.3.2.1 In partnership with the problem-owner

Practice-oriented research starts with a mandate given by the problem-owner. A problem-owner can be an individual (a minister or the head of a church body), a group (a policy body within congregations) or an organisation (an organised faith community) (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015:28). The problem-owner gives the mandate to research a specific need or problem and the aim is to evaluate or improve ministry in some way. The researcher is responsible for the study but reports back to the problem-owner and the final responsibility for the implementation lies with the problem-owner. A partnership between the researcher, problem-owner and other individuals or groups involved, is essential for developing strategies and generating knowledge regarding the practice (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:3).

1.3.2.2 The action problem

In most practice-oriented research a problem can be defined as the tension between the actual situation and the desired situation (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010:49). The action problem is the gap that emerged or was realised. Action problems express that things are not what it should be, there is a discrepancy between the actual (A_component) and the desired (D_component) situation (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015:30). There is a gap when what we are doing, practically, differs from what we think and believe should be, theologically.

The A_component of the action problem describes the actual situation and leads with the following questions (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015:30-31):

- What are the facts?
- Which part of the situation is most problematic for the problem-owner(s)?
- How does the problem manifest itself?
- What is the extent of the problem that is reported?

The D_component of the action problem expresses what is desired and leads with the following questions (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015:31):

- What is our dream of the future of our congregation?
- What do we want to do (practice) to be able to shape this future?
- What would be the nature of this desired (future) practice?

These questions will guide the problem-owner and researcher. The problem-owner, having the primary responsibility, works with the researcher to describe this gap and the desired outcome (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:3).

1.3.2.3 The role and place of intervention

The purpose of an intervention is to improve the actual situation and to move toward the desired situation. “All practice-oriented research originates from an action problem with the goal to build knowledge about interventions that aims to improve this problem” (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015:32-33). Intervention is not limited and can make use of products, processes, programmes, strategies or policy (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:3-4).

There are two ways of doing practice-oriented research. The first is with the focus on building knowledge *about* intervention and improving a certain practice, and the second with the focus on building knowledge *through* an intervention where the intervention itself is the

goal of the research (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015:33). Although there is a different focus, these two ways of doing practice-oriented research are connected. Both have to design an intervention, although one will not focus on knowledge about the design, and both have to implement the intervention, even if the focus is on the design it still has to be tested.

1.3.2.4 The distinction between knowledge and practice streams

Practice-oriented research is scientific research generating new knowledge on a specific practice and aiming to contribute toward improving the practice (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:4). Hermans and Schoeman (2015:34) note that the focus is not merely improvement through interventions, but also a theoretical understanding of interventions. Thus the distinction between knowledge and practice streams. The knowledge stream is aimed at utilising existing, generic knowledge and then developing new knowledge, whereas the practice stream is focused on concrete practice in which generic knowledge is utilised (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015:35-36). Though the two streams are connected, they are different. The following table illustrates the difference (Figure 1.1):

	Knowledge stream	Practice stream
Function	Mobilising and developing knowledge	Problem-solving and learning knowledge
Nature	In search of the general	Connected to the specific
Activities	Research and analysis	Advising and intervening
Attitude	Objective and independent	Convincing and dependent
Aim	Advancing theory	Supporting practice

Figure 1.1: Differences between the knowledge and practice stream (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015:36)

1.3.2.5 The contribution of research to practice

The primary intention of the research is to contribute to what is going on in concrete situations. It is not about gaining knowledge for theory development (expanding scientific knowledge), but generic (scientific) knowledge about interventions that aim to transform an actual situation into the desired outcome (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:4). This contribution therefore, has to be identified in terms of actions, practices, settings and contexts and the 4 P's model is a helpful resource to specify the type of intervention (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015:38-39):

- *Products* include resources that support learning and instruction, guidance and support such as an order of liturgy, a protocol for collective discernment, schemes of biblical text reading, catechetical guides, learning software, or hymn books.
- *Processes* are strategies, tactics, or sequences that support teaching and learning; these can include instructional approaches, hermeneutical strategies for text interpretation, conflict-management repertoires, or spiritual exercises.
- *Programmes* often combine products and processes to meet an intended (pastoral) goal, in the form of a seminar series, learning units of catechesis, a meditation course, or a professional development programme.
- *Policies* indicate a commitment of intent to act in a certain way in the process of decision-making. Policies can, to a certain extent, be strict (for example, some are guidelines, others are rules). Examples of policies are protocols of conflict mediation between pastor and congregations, support structures for congregational members without jobs, and performance review structures.

1.3.2.6 Identifying and describing the focus of practice-oriented research

The research can consist of either a comprehensive intervention cycle or the design of only a specific intervention. The focus of the research on either one is determined by two questions (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:4):

1. What contribution is being delivered to the action problem?
2. What are the limits in terms of time and resources?

The response to these questions then determine the extent of the research and if the intervention cycle or the design cycle will be followed to address the action problem as an improvement problem or a construction problem (see Figure 1.2). The design cycle is directly related to the intervention plan and concerns the development of new material (for example, a project or programme) (Verschuren 2009:33). The researcher's preconception is that the design cycle will be of importance to this research.

Intervention cycle	Design cycle
1. Problem analysis	1. Goal
2. Diagnosis	2. Design demands/assumptions
3. Conditions of the solution	3. Structural specifications
4. Intervention plan	4. Prototype construction
5. Implementation	5. Prototype implementation
6. Evaluation	6. Evaluation

Figure 1.2: The intervention and design cycle (Verschuren, 2009:31)

1.3.2.7 A clear formulation of the research questions

When formulating research question there has to be distinguished between improvement problems, a practice stream that follows the intervention cycle, and construction problems, a practice stream that follows the design cycle (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015:40).

Intervention cycle research questions

Comprehensive research in the intervention cycle draws a comparison between the actual situation (pre-intervention) and the outcome after the intervention (post-intervention) and research questions should reflect this (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:4).

Design cycle research questions

Research in the design cycle has research questions that focus on the requirements of the problem-owner and the context and not so much on theoretical and external criteria (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:4).

1.3.2.8 Defining the concepts

There can again be distinguished between the knowledge stream and practice stream. In the knowledge stream in practice-oriented research concepts are defined by drawing on existing knowledge, the most accurate descriptions available in the literature, and locating it within a theoretical frame (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:4). In the practice stream in practice-oriented research, concepts are defined based on existing knowledge as well as new knowledge acquired and with the desired outcome in mind (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:4).

This concludes the description of practice-oriented research and the theoretical insights of conceptual research design. As this research will be practice-oriented to contribute to practice, these theoretical insights and aspects, concerning the problem-owner, action

problem, intervention, the focus of the research, research questions and aims, and defining concepts, will be utilised in the research design.

1.3.3 Missional research cycle

This research methodology follows a missional research cycle (see Figure 1.3). It is a broad research design with three cycles, each consisting of different phases (numbered 1 to 12). The three cycles interact on four facets, described as *Guidance*, *Research*, *Design*, and *Training* (see four quadrants in Figure 1.3). The missional research cycle is designed to be a total-system-strategy (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:5). Missional transformation, entailing adaptive change and affecting the whole system, calls for a total-system-strategy.



Figure 1.3 Missional Research Cycle (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:5)

The first cycle of the missional research cycle will, for the purpose and scope of this research, be described in more detail. The first cycle, consisting of the first four phases, includes (1) articulating the pain, (2) clarifying the question, (3) developing a prototype and (4) testing the prototype. Each of these phases focuses on a specific part of the issue and the various phases can be distinguished by a handover question or moment. The resources and frameworks used to assist with the process are specified throughout the cycle. Each of these four phases will constitute a chapter in the research design.

1.3.3.1 Phase 1: Articulate the pain (*Guidance* quadrant)

The first phase can be regarded as the action problem and starts before a clear statement of the problem being researched. This phase starts with an innovative researcher acknowledging pain or disruption that appeared in daily ecclesial life. The researcher addresses the pain with hope and as an opportunity with new possibilities. Articulating the pain or disruption accurately not only leads to a proper formulation of the problem but also relieves the sufferer from the pain having shared their experience. This is an important task of the researcher, describing the 'pain' in a way that the sufferer experiences that his/her pain has been heard (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:5).

The resource that can be used in this phase is Hermans and Schoeman's (2015) questions regarding the A_component (actual situation) and D_component (desired situation) seen above. These questions guide the problem-owner and researcher in the proper formulation of the action problem.

The handover moment is when the problem-owner and researcher agree on: What is the specific nature of the impasse? Once the problem-owner and researcher agree with the formulation of the action problem, the second phase can start.

1.3.3.2 Phase 2: Clarify the question (*Research* quadrant)

The second phase involves clarifying and expanding on action problem as determined in phase 1. The researcher is required to explore the situation further and to determine what is going on 'underneath the surface'. Possible solutions can only emerge when the deeper levels in the culture of the faith community have been thoroughly examined (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:5).

This phase has a theoretical focus and the challenge of the pain or disruption, as described in phase 1, is tested against theoretical frameworks (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:6). The focus is thus on existent literature. The theoretical framework and resources used in this

phase are Richard Osmer's questions used for practical theological interpretation and guidance. These four questions include (Osmer, 2008:4):

Question 1: What is going on?

Answering this question is a descriptive-empirical task with a focus on gathering information that helps to discern patterns and dynamics in particular episodes, situations, or contexts.

Question 2: Why is this going on?

Answering this question is an interpretive task with a focus on drawing on theories of the arts and sciences to better understand and explain why these patterns and dynamics are occurring.

Question 3: What ought to be going on?

Answering this question is a normative task with a focus on using theological concepts to interpret particular episodes, situations, or contexts, constructing ethical norms to guide our responses, and learning from "good practice."

Question 4: How might we respond?

Answering this question is a pragmatic task with a focus on determining strategies of action that will influence situations in ways that are desirable and entering into a reflective conversation with the "talk back" emerging when they are enacted.

The answers to these questions will point towards the type of research to be conducted further and if the preferred methodology will take place within the knowledge stream or practice stream (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:6).

Niemandt *et al.* (2018:6) also state that the systematic nature of challenges should be noted – a challenge will never emerge in isolation, but as part of a greater system. Peter Senge's *The Fifth Discipline* (1990) denotes that problem-solving needs systems thinking. Challenges of all disciplines are "concerned with a shift of mind from seeing parts to seeing wholes, from seeing people as helpless reactors to seeing them as active participants in shaping their reality, from reacting to the present to creating the future" (Senge 1990: 69).

Systematic questions should therefore also receive attention to discern if the question might be the symptom of another challenge. This helps the problem-owner to focus on the cause, where the solution might lie, and not the result (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:6). This approach

attempts to discern what the root of the challenge is and to address that. The deeper the intervention delves into the system, the larger its impact will be (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:6).

The handover moment can be approached by asking the following question: Which (theoretical) framework(s) can be used for the design of a pilot study or prototype? Once this is determined, the third phase can start.

1.3.3.3 Phase 3: Develop prototype (*Design* quadrant)

The third phase is focused on developing a pilot study or prototype. Developing a prototype is practice-oriented, an important part of this research methodology, but uncharacteristic of theology. Creating new practices is not traditionally part of theological research (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:6). However, missional transformation calls for innovative practices. And the dialogue between theory and practice contributes to the success or failure of missional theology and ministry. Missional challenges are adaptive challenges and existing knowledge, techniques and skills are thus incapable of addressing these challenges – new knowledge, techniques and skills have to be designed and tested (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:6). The design of a pilot study or prototype uses the theoretical framework, determined in phase 2, as a basis. This design can either present something new or it can improve existing practice. An evaluation can determine if an existent practice has shortcomings and needs change (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:6).

There are various resources and techniques available for the design of a pilot study or prototype. Two can be named (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:7):

1. *Design Thinking* (developed by SAP) functions as a ‘sandbox’ where innovators have the opportunity to construct solutions to challenges (see <https://experience.sap.com/>)
2. The *Presencing Institute* designed a process for the construction of prototypes (see <https://www.presencing.org/>).

The handover moment has arrived and the process is ready for phase 4 when the ‘sandbox’ ideas can be experimented with in practice.

1.3.3.4 Phase 4: Test (*Training* quadrant)

The fourth phase will be described herein the interest of completing the first cycle, but will not be part of the research. The fourth phase is focused on testing and evaluating the prototype. When testing the prototype for the first time a few aspects have to be considered.

First, not everyone is ready for the type of disruption that a prototype can cause. Everett Rogers' theory on the diffusion of innovations indicates that innovation should not be revealed to 'late majority' or the 'sceptical' too rapidly, they cannot deal with the uncertainty of a new idea (Rogers, 1983:250). It should rather be tested by the 'early adopter' or the 'respectable' who will decrease uncertainty and convey this innovation to peers (Rogers, 1983:249). Innovation is therefore revealed to selected leaders. This way the prototype will not be disregarded immediately and learning about the modifications needed and the formulation of a theoretical basis can take place. Second, innovation is expected to be disruptive and should be tested on a small scale and not in mainstream systems (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:7). Third, innovation is about taking calculated risks, being open and willing to fail. "Fail early to learn quickly" (Scharmer, 2009:417). A prototype is only an example of what can be and is not ready for permanent use or implementation. This phase is about making mistakes and learning.

By using the insights generated during the experimentation, the capacities which are required for the prototype to be useful can be determined. This is the handover moment.

The first cycle of the missional research cycle is completed with phase 4. With the first cycle, the pain of the problem-owner will be acknowledged and formulated as an action problem (phase 1), the disruption will be thoroughly examined and the question clarified (phase 2), there will be an innovation to address the disruption (phase 3), and the innovation will be tested (phase 4). For the scope and purpose of this research, only the first cycle will be described and only the first three phases (phase 1-3) of the first cycle will be employed. This concludes the description of the research methodology. A research methodology that supports a missional ecclesiology and to inform and serve the process of missional transformation (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:1). What follows is the research design.

1.4 Research design

This research utilises the missional research cycle and the research will be designed accordingly. The first cycle's first three phases form the core of this research and will each constitute a chapter. The application of the different aspects of practice-oriented research, as described above, will also be explained here as part of the research design.

1.4.1 The problem-owner

The problem-owner of this research is a church body, the DRC Curatorium responsible for the theological education of DRC students at the University of Pretoria. The DRC's process of missional transformation has implications for theological education and the DRC's General Curatorium, of which Curatorium members at the University of Pretoria is a part, is currently in a process of developing strategies for missional ministry development (see *Framework for Missional Ministry Development in the DRC* (2019))¹². This research intends to contribute to missional ministry development.

The General Curatorium is responsible for the theological education of DRC students and consist of representatives from all the theological education institutions. Although the General Curatorium plays an important role in the formation of congregation leaders, the theological education approach and curriculum at each university is adapted to university guidelines and resources available. Thus, to limit the scope of this research it will specifically be focusing on the theological education of DRC students at the University of Pretoria and the problem-owner will not be the General Curatorium, but the Curatorium at the University of Pretoria. The research will also take place in close contact with current students and lecturers at the University of Pretoria – they can be seen as partners in the research process.

1.4.2 The action problem

The action problem of this research can be determined by discerning how things are and how things should be. The action problem, as stated above, expresses that there is a discrepancy between the actual (A_component) and the desired (D_component) situation. The researcher will give a preliminary description of the A_component and the D_component here.

A_component

The DRC is in the process of missional transformation. One of the key factors in this process is missional leadership. Missional leadership requires a process of formation (or transformation). The formation of congregational leaders in the DRC takes place through theological education. The DRC's current theological education is not appropriate for the formation of missional leadership.

¹² 'Raamwerk vir Missionale Bedieningsontwikkeling in die NG Kerk'

D_component

The DRC realised that being church means being missional. The DRC desires to be a church that does not exist for itself, but (i) is focused on the community, (ii) inspires all members to take part in the *missio Dei*, and (iii) has missional leaders to equip members to live missional lives. Thus, theological education plays a crucial role in the formation of congregational leaders, requires a curriculum and methodology that is missional formation.

The preliminary action problem can then be stated as: *How can theological education form missional leaders in the DRC?*

1.4.3 Intervention and hypothesis

The purpose of an intervention is to improve the actual situation and to move toward the desired situation. The intervention can also be seen as the hypothesis for this research design as the intervention is the proposal made to address the action problem. The addition of a hypothesis will be superfluous for the missional research cycle.

This research will focus on building knowledge *through* an intervention where the intervention itself is the goal of the research. The research will thus take place in the practice stream, focused on a concrete practice in which generic knowledge is utilised.

The research will contribute to practice, the DRC's theological education, by intervening with a programme aimed at formation that can serve a theological education curriculum and form missional leaders in the DRC.

1.4.4 Focus of the research

The focus of the research, as mentioned above, is determined by two questions. The first concerning the contribution being delivered to the action problem. The second concerns the limits of the research in terms of time frame and resources.

The focus of the research will be on developing a new programme to address the action problem. The presumed action problem – theological education that can form missional leaders in the DRC – calls for innovation. A new programme will thus be developed to serve the DRC's theological education and ultimately the DRC process of missional transformation. The development of a new programme will be done by using the design cycle. However, since this is a doctoral study and there is a fixed time frame, only the first part of the design cycle will be completed and described as part of this research (1. Goal; 2. Design

demands/assumptions; 3. Structural specifications; 4. Prototype construction). The first part of the design cycle is linked to phase 3 of the missional research cycle. The second part of the design cycle will be completed together with the problem-owner (5. Prototype implementation; 6. Evaluation) with a more flexible time frame and is thus an area of future research flowing from this particular research. The second part of the design cycle is linked to phase 4 of the missional research cycle.

Therefore, with the allocated time and resources, the focus of this research will be the first three phases (phase 1-3) of the missional research cycle and will attempt to design an innovation that can serve the church.

1.4.5 Research questions

The research questions, as part of research in the design cycle, will focus on the requirements of the problem-owner and the context, rather than on theoretical and external criteria. The research questions, formulated below, will be answered as part of the phases of the missional research cycle and as findings and conclusions of these phases of the missional research cycle.

1. What are the DRC's theological education impasse and the disruption experienced by the problem-owner?
2. What is going on 'underneath the surface' of the DRC's theological education?
3. What innovation can be designed to address the DRC's theological education impasse?
4. What will change in the DRC's theological education when this innovation is implemented?
5. Can this innovation help to re-imagine theological education in the formation of missional leaders in the DRC?

1.4.6 Research aims

The research aims, formulated below, expresses the intentions and aspirations of this research. The research aims can also be seen as the steps that will be followed to address the presumed action problem of this research: How can theological education form missional leaders in the DRC?

1. To acknowledge the DRC's theological education impasse and the disruption experienced by the problem-owner with a denomination in the process of transforming its ecclesiology.
2. To describe, interpret, propose, and respond to what is going on 'underneath the surface' of the DRC's theological education.
3. To explore, decide, plan and create an innovation to address the DRC's theological education impasse.
4. To envisage the preferred future of the DRC's theological education with the implementation of the innovation.
5. To formulate expectations of the innovation to help re-imagine theological education in the formation of missional leaders in the DRC.

1.4.7 Defining concepts

In the practice stream in practice-oriented research, as seen above, concepts are defined based on existing knowledge as well as new knowledge acquired and with the desired outcome in mind. The concepts used in this research will thus be defined below.

- *Theological education*
'Theological education' refers to formal, informal and non-formal learning contexts and all aspects of intentional formation or training. 'Theological training' or 'theological formation' is therefore interchangeable with 'theological education'.
- *Congregation leader*
In this research, there will be referred to a 'congregation leader' as the general term for any ordained clergy. This includes a pastor, reverend, minister or any other church leader.
- *Transformation*
'Transformation' is a process of becoming, being shaped, formed and developed in the desired way. 'Transformation' is therefore related to spiritual formation. These concepts, 'transformation' and 'formation', can be distinguished, but are interrelated.

- *Missional leadership*
‘Missional leadership’ refers to congregational leaders that can bring about missional formation and/or transformation.
- *Spirituality*
‘Spirituality’, as will be described in more detail in this research, does not refer to the mystical or abstract, but refers to identity and ‘a way of life’.

1.4.8 Chapter outline

This section of the research design will give an outline of the chapters and a brief description of each.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The first chapter will set the stage for the research by giving a brief overview of the background and rationale of the study. The DRC’s process of missional transformation has profound implications for all aspects of the denomination, including theological education. This chapter will also focus on the research methodology and how it will be applied. The research methodology is based on a research approach specifically designed for missional transformation: *Research Strategy for Missional Transformation* (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018).

Chapter 2: Articulate the Pain

The second chapter will focus on the first phase of the research cycle and can be regarded as an action problem. The researcher will acknowledge and carefully articulate the pain and experience of the problem-owner. The main resource used in this chapter will be Hermans and Schoemans’s (2015) questions regarding the A_component and D_component. This chapter will thus attempt to answer the first research question: *What is the DRC’s theological education impasse and the disruption experienced by the problem-owner?* and address the first research aim: *To acknowledge the DRC’s theological education impasse and the disruption experienced by the problem-owner with a denomination in the process of transforming its ecclesiology.* The next phase (and next chapter) can start when the problem-owner and researcher agree on the specific nature of the impasse and the formulation of the action problem.

Chapter 3: Clarify the Question

The third chapter will focus on the second phase of the research cycle and expanding on the action problem by determining what is going on ‘underneath the surface’ of the DRC’s theological education. This chapter has a theoretical focus and the main resource that will be used is Richard Osmer’s questions for practical theological interpretation and guidance (Osmer, 2008:3):

Question 1: What is going on?

Question 2: Why is this going on?

Question 3: What ought to be going on?

Question 4: How might we respond?

Keeping in mind the systematic nature of challenges as described by Peter Senge, this chapter will thus attempt to answer the second research question: *What is going on ‘underneath the surface’ of the DRC’s theological education?* and address the second research aim: *To describe, interpret, propose, and respond to what is going on ‘underneath the surface’ of the DRC’s theological education.* The handover moment is when the (theoretical) framework(s) that can be used for the design of a prototype is determined.

Chapter 4: Develop Prototype

The fourth chapter will focus on the third phase of the research cycle, developing a prototype. The theoretical framework from phase two will be used as the basis of this design. The main resource that will be used in this chapter is the process for construction of prototypes designed by the *Presencing Institute*. This chapter will thus attempt to answer the third research question: *What innovation can be designed to address the DRC’s theological education impasse?* and address the third research aim: *To explore, decide, plan and create an innovation to address the DRC’s theological education impasse.* The handover moment is when ‘sandbox’ ideas are ready for experimentation in practice. For this research, there will not be proceeded to phase 4 – testing and evaluating the prototype – with the handover moment.

Chapter 5: Findings & Conclusion

The last chapter will focus on pointing out the research findings and draw conclusions. This chapter will thus attempt to answer the fourth research question: *What will change in the DRC's theological education when this innovation is implemented?* and address the fourth research aim: *To envisage the preferred future of the DRC's theological education with the implementation of the innovation.* The second part of this chapter will make suggestions for the implementation of the prototype and attempt to answer the fifth research question: *Can this innovation help to re-imagine theological education in the formation of missional leaders in the DRC?* and address the fifth research aim: *To formulate expectations of the innovation to help re-imagine theological education in the formation of missional leaders in the DRC.*

1.5 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the missional church, the single biggest development in Christianity since the Reformation. The missional church is not a new or the most recent model for being church, the missional church seeks to rediscover the nature and calling of God's unique community, a sent community. This calls for a transformed ecclesiology.

The missional movement has influenced the DRC and the DRC has embraced a missional ecclesiology. The DRC desires to be a church that does not exist for itself, but (i) is focused on the community, (ii) inspires all members to take part in the *missio Dei*, and (iii) has missional leaders to equip members to live missional lives. Missional leadership calls for a transformed theological education. Theological education playing a crucial role in the formation of congregational leaders requires a curriculum and methodology that is missional formation. The DRC's missional transformation depends on the formation of missional leaders.

The intended research methodology, a research strategy for missional transformation, will be implemented and the researcher will attempt to contribute to holistic theological education in the formation of missional leaders in the DRC. The methodology will now be applied. *There we go!*

Chapter 2

Articulate the Pain

Chapter 2 will focus on the first phase of the research cycle (see Figure 1.3, p. 27), articulating the pain of the problem-owner, and can be regarded as the action problem. The action problem can be described by discerning how things are (A_component) and how things should be (D_component). The researcher will acknowledge and attempt to carefully articulate the pain and experience of the problem-owner.

In chapter 2 the researcher will therefore attempt to answer the first research question: *What is the DRC's theological education impasse and the disruption experienced by the problem-owner?* and address the first research aim: *To acknowledge the DRC's theological education impasse and the disruption experienced by the problem-owner with a denomination in the process of transforming its ecclesiology.*

The first phase starts before a clear statement of the problem being researched, it starts with an innovative researcher realising a disruption and receiving a mandate from a problem-owner. The problem-owner of this research is the DRC Curatorium responsible for the theological education of the DRC students at the University of Pretoria. The research will also take place in close contact with current students and lecturers at the University of Pretoria – they can be seen as partners in the research process. The mandate received from the problem-owner pertains to the DRC's theological education and the disruption caused by the change in the DRC's ecclesiology. There will be elaborated on this mandate in the last part of this chapter.

In the first phase of the research cycle, the main resource used is Hermans and Schoeman's (2015) questions regarding the A_component (actual situation) and D_component (desired situation). These questions guide the problem-owner and researcher in the proper formulation of the action problem. In most practice-oriented research a problem can be defined as the tension between the actual situation and the desired situation (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010:49).

What follows, then, is a description of the A_component and D_component, and the chapter will be concluded with a description of the pain of the problem-owner.

2.1 A_component

The first section deals with the actual situation in the DRC – the current theological education. This is the A_component of the action problem. In this section the actual situation will be described by using Hermans and Schoeman's (2015:30-31) guiding questions:

- What are the facts?
- Which part of the situation is most problematic for the problem-owner(s)?
- How does the problem manifest itself?
- What is the extent of the problem that is reported?

The DRC is in the process of missional transformation. One of the key factors in this process is missional leadership. Missional leadership requires a process of formation (or transformation). The formation of congregational leaders in the DRC takes place through theological education. The DRC's current theological education is not appropriate for the formation of missional leadership.

Although the congregational leaders in the DRC go through an extensive programme of theological education to prepare them for ministry, they are not equipped for a missional ministry. The programme consists of at least six years studying theology at a university, six years of church specific education and continued ministry development after the completion of formal studies. Yet this seemingly comprehensive programme is not sufficient or effective in training DRC congregational leaders for missional transformation.

In this section, the current theological education of the DRC will be described by reflecting on the guiding questions mentioned above. It is also important to take into account the context of theological education in South Africa. This is a rather broad issue and only a few pressing matters will be addressed. Finally, the implications of the changes in the ecclesiology of the DRC for theological education will be pointed out. What follows then, is an overall description of the theological education of the DRC and a few preliminary comments.

2.1.1 The current theological education of the DRC

The Church Order of the DRC, Regulation 11, stipulates how theological education is structured.¹³ The Church Order has a substantial influence on theological training as it

¹³ See 'KERKORDE VAN DIE NEDERDUITSE GEREFORMEERDE KERK Artikels, Reglemente en Aanvullende/ Toeliggende Besluite soos vasgestel deur die Algemene Sinode in Oktober 2019' available at: https://kerkargief.co.za/doks/acta/AS_KO_2019.pdf

provides the structure and rules that shape and determine theological training and leadership formation. Regulation 11 of the Church Order will thus be scrutinised.

Because the focus of this study is on theological education of the DRC at the University of Pretoria, the different divisions and partners involved will also receive further attention below, i.e. the Faculty of Theology and Religion; church specific education¹⁴; and continued ministry development¹⁵.

2.1.1.1 DRC Church Order

Place of education

Regulation 11 of the DRC Church Order describes all the different aspects regarding the education and legitimation of a congregational leader. The regulation starts by pointing out the place of education and the agreement with the respective universities. Theological education in the DRC only takes place at theological faculties and ministry development centres at Stellenbosch University, the University of Pretoria, the University of the Free State, at Huguenote Kollege and the Namibian Theological Seminary (DRC Church Order, 2019:54).¹⁶

While arguments have been made in the DRC for theological education at a seminary, studying at a state university bodes well for exposure to various disciplines and people from different cultures, backgrounds and faith orientations. An apt environment for theological education that can be engaging and formative and an environment that can also be seen as a 'mission field'. David Ford, in his address at the Centenary Celebration of the Faculty of Theology (2017, University of Pretoria), highlights the importance of theology for a public university and what the university setting can offer the study of theology and religion. He notes that thoughtful, intelligent, well-educated faith and belief, is one of the great needs of our world, and also thoughtful, intelligent, well-educated understanding of faith and belief (Ford, 2017:2). Universities should take religions seriously. Ford (2017:3) comments that universities should engage academically with religion and belief and that universities have the opportunity to sponsor engagements across differences that can help our diverse, plural societies flourish. He ends his address by calling on the faculty to be a blessing to the university, the country and to the diverse, plural rainbow world, attending theologically to the depths of wisdom in each tradition of study (Ford, 2017:9). His address emphasises the advantages and

¹⁴ 'Kerkeie Opleiding'

¹⁵ 'Voortgesette bedieningsontwikkeling (VBO)'

¹⁶ Huguenote Kollege and the Namibian Theological Seminary are only recently added as a places of education and theological education was previously limited to the three universities.

opportunities of studying theology at a public university. Not only for theology to be relevant, but also for theology that is missional.

However, while studying theology at a public university implies contestation, interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and even trans-disciplinary research and wants to contribute to humanity's search for understanding and meaning, it is important to distinguish between a seminary, Christian universities and theological inquiry (ed. Human, 2017:4). "It is not essentially ecclesiastical, perhaps not even ecumenical, but scientific in nature" (Buitendag, 2016:5). It is critical to take the focus of a university into account when deliberating about theological education at a university.

It should also be mentioned that studying at a university is inaccessible to several people, a matter that has already received attention (chapter 1). Many who do get the opportunity and "who subsequently enter pastoral ministry and thus rarely command a high salary, finish their degrees with crippling debt" (Goheen, 2016c:300). And for many of the new generation of theology students, the traditional concept of a full-time minister called by a resourced congregation to serve in pastoral ministry is almost non-existent (ed. Human, 2017:221). This is a pressing matter and one that the General Curatorium intends to address. This will be discussed further in chapter 3.

Local curatorium

The second point of the regulation concerns the local curatorium that is responsible for the selection; supervision and pastoral care; disciplinary action; and examination and recommendation for admission to ministry in the DRC. The process of selection is explained in detail (see DRC Church Order, 2019:54-57). A congregation or presbytery gives a written report to the curatorium regarding prospective students. The curatorium considers this report together with a personality report of each student. A meeting is then set up where the curatorium and prospective students can talk about understanding calling, spiritual growth, church involvement, etc. The curatorium then gives an annual report and permission for students to continue with studies. The final selection takes place with a licensing exam before legitimization. The supervision and pastoral care of theological students are the responsibility of the congregation, presbytery and curatorium (DRC Church Order, 2019:56). Each theological student has a mentor within their congregation or presbytery that submits a written recommendation for the continuation of his or her theological studies. The student's congregation is responsible for the pastoral care of the student. The curatorium takes responsibility for academic development, spiritual formation and personal development to prepare students for ministry. This includes a practical year in a congregation. The curatorium

also develops a code of conduct for theological students to uphold and guides or disciplines students accordingly. There are certain guidelines for the curatorium's disciplinary action (see DRC Church Order, 2019:56-57). For the duration of his or her theological studies, the student is under the supervision of the curatorium and the church council, and thus the Church Order. The examination and recommendation for admission to ministry in the DRC is done by the licensing committee appointed by the curatorium (DRC Church Order, 2019:57). The licensing committee will after successful examination, recommend the candidate for legitimation.

The curatorium plays a great role when it comes to the holistic formation of theological students and should therefore be the leading promoters of a theological education that is missional formation.

Theological lecturers

The third point gives an overview of the appointment of theological lecturers (see DRC Church Order, 2019:57-59). Appointment can happen in two ways, (1) the university appoints a lecturer with input from the DRC and the curatorium confirms this lecturer as a lecturer of the DRC, or (2) the curatorium, after consulting with the university, appoints a lecturer for a ministry development centre and the university is requested to accredit this lecturer to also be a lecturer at the Faculty of Theology. It is important to note that only lecturers appointed or accredited by the curatorium are allowed to lecture students of the DRC on church specific education. Lecturers of the DRC have to meet certain key requirements. He or she has to be a congregational leader in the DRC; possess the required academic and job qualifications; have sufficient church experience and involvement, and be an advocate for the Reformed doctrine.

It is important to restate that theological education is a means to an end, the objective being the formation of leaders for the ministry of the church. This raises several questions, as is it possible for a lecturer to train missional leaders without first acquiring these skills? Key requirements for lecturers might have to be specified to include missional leadership skills and a missional lifestyle.

Theological education requirements

The fourth point describes the specific theological education requirements (see DRC Church Order, 2019:59-61). It is pointed out that theological education is first and foremost focused on the education and formation of congregational leaders for the ministry of the church. Additionally, theological education can train lecturers, researchers and people with specific tasks, for example, Bible translation. Theological education has an integrated

approach and gives attention to the formation of knowledge (*logos*), character (*ethos*), and skills and attitude (*pathos*). This supposes a regular emphasis on a student's spiritual life and disciplines; vocation; mental health and personal growth; Biblical and theological knowledge and insight; contextual insight; understanding the Church and the calling and operation of congregations; and formation of specific skills needed for ministry (DRC Church Order, 2019:60). Continuous ministry development is also a priority after formal studies have concluded. The academic requirements for DRC students are at least six years studying Reformed theology including, but not limited to, the successful completion of Greek II and Hebrew II. Courses, modules and/or programmes are divided into these disciplines: Old Testament Studies; New Testament Studies; Church History and Polity; Science of Religion and Missiology; Dogmatics and Christian Ethics; and Practical Theology. Although, it should be noted that the Faculty of Theology and Religion at the University of Pretoria is in the process of making changes to this structure and merging some of the disciplines (see below). Specialising in one of these disciplines, including a dissertation on a specific subject, is also part of the academic requirements for theological students. Apart from academic requirements, students are also expected to comply with these additional requirements: the successful examination of the candidate's knowledge of the Bible and the Confessions; the successful evaluation of the candidate's language and communication skills; the regular attendance of courses, modules and programmes offered by the university and the ministry development centre; the successful completion of ministry formation and the compulsory church year; and the successful delivery of a sermon for examination in the final year of study.

These theological education requirements have to be re-imagined to align the content and methodology with an educational experience that is missional formation. The current curriculum was divided into six disciplines, is still based on the old European theological curriculum and the current requirements still hold the framework of the DRC of decades ago.

Students' practical year

The fifth point of the regulation gives guidelines for a students' practical year in a congregation (see DRC Church Order, 2019:61-62). Practical training takes place throughout a student's studies, but particularly during a student's final year. During this year a student will work and serve under the supervision of a congregational leader. The congregational leader is expected to support and mentor the student.

While there is much to learn from a congregational leader with ministry experience, it should also be considered that there are other possible mentors 'outside' the church that can share their faith experience and guide young congregational leaders to work and serve

focused on the world 'outside' the church. Missional theology does not use a top-down approach and relies on vulnerability and being open to where and through whom God is working in the world.

Licensing exam

The sixth point explains what the licensing exam, at the end of a student's final year, is about (see DRC Church Order, 2019:62-63). The exam focuses on the candidate's calling and reasons for becoming a congregational leader; the candidate's testimony and experience of the grace of God; the candidate's life story, which includes mental, physical and emotional health; the candidate's understanding of the content of a congregational leader's work, which includes awareness of gifts and growth opportunities; the candidate's ability to serve and readiness to serve; the candidate's spiritual formation and personal development; the report of the congregation where the candidate concludes his or her practical training; the report of the ministry development centre; the report of the candidate's final year sermon for examination; and the report of the candidate's academic knowledge, devotion to the doctrine of the Church, application of theoretical academic knowledge in the practice of ministry and the successful completion of the required university courses, modules and programmes. Following this exam, the curatorium decides if the candidate is ready to be recommended for legitimation.

It is essential to create a sound framework or matrix to determine a student's readiness for missional leadership, as this is a different form of leadership.

Colloquium doctum

The seventh point describes all the aspects of *colloquium doctum* (see DRC Church Order, 2019:63-65). *Colloquium doctum* is a special admission procedure for someone who wants to return to ministry or for someone who received theological education at another institution not designated by the DRC and wants to become a congregational leader in the DRC.

The *colloquium doctum* might be an opportunity to re-educate or train congregational leaders from a missional church perspective.

Legitimation

The eight-point is about the completion of formal theological education and legitimation (see DRC Church Order, 2019:65-66). Approved candidates are permitted to ministry at a

special occasion with a declaration¹⁷ and the presentation of a certificate¹⁸. The candidate answers and accepts by undersigning the declaration (DRC Church Order, 2019:65):

I, the undersigned,, convinced of my calling by the Lord and admitted to the ministry in the Dutch Reformed Church, hereby declare before the Lord

1. that I believe that the doctrine as contained in the three general creeds and the Three Formularies of Unity namely, the Belgic Confession, Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dordt, correspond to the Word of God;
2. that I will faithfully live and proclaim this doctrine;
3. that I will refute all heresies which contradict this doctrine and do everything in my power to remove them from the Church;
4. that if I later develop any objection or other insight into the doctrine, I will not teach or promote it until I submit it to an appropriate church meeting for a decision;
5. that I will keep myself to the order of the Dutch Reformed Church;
6. that I, to be called, shall act according to the Church Order and decisions of the Dutch Reformed Church;
7. that I will focus on the expansion of the Kingdom of God through the promotion of the knowledge of, trust in, and obedience to the Triune God;
8. that I commit myself to continuous ministry development.

I commit myself through my signature to all of the above.

It should be considered to emphasise the missional nature and calling of the church in the current declaration that candidates undersign. To imply that congregational leaders' ministry should be missional is not sufficient. Language shapes the understanding, mindset and gives focus to ministry.

Synods

The last point in the regulation states that synods responsible for theological education can, according to their local context and the university they have a relationship with, have additional terms as long as it is not in conflict with this regulation (see DRC Church Order, 2019:66).

¹⁷ 'Plegtige Legitimasieverklaring'

¹⁸ 'Akte van Legitimasie'

Regulation 11 of the DRC Church Order thus gives a comprehensive description of all the different aspects regarding the education and legitimation of a congregational leader. While these nine points specify how theological education is structured in the DRC, it does not pay specific attention to the training of DRC congregational leaders for missional transformation. Let us now turn to the different divisions and partners involved in theological education at the University of Pretoria with a more in-depth look at the content and design of theological education.

2.1.1.2 Faculty of Theology and Religion (University of Pretoria)

The Faculty was founded in 1917 when the NHKA began training their congregational leaders at the University of Pretoria. The DRC joined the Faculty in 1937, but the DRC and NHKA functioned as two independent sections, A and B (Ungerer, 2015:1). The Faculty comprised of only these two denominations up until 2000 when they merged and the Faculty became multi-ecclesial. Before the amalgamation, the Faculty was only for white students from these two denominations studying Reformed theology (ed. Human, 2017:218). Today the Faculty of Theology and Religion has students from various cultures and at least 33 different denominations. The formal partner churches include the DRC, the NHKA, the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa and the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa and students from other traditions, from Roman Catholic to African Initiated Churches to independent Pentecostal and Charismatic groups also study at the Faculty (ed. Human, 2017:218-219).

This significant change presents both the Faculty and the DRC with challenges and opportunities and a new way of working together has to be perceived. “The legacy of the first 100 years cannot simply be erased without a very deliberate and deep transformation process, undoing the wrongs of the past systematically, maintaining what is still valuable and boldly constructing new futures” (ed. Human, 2017:220). The Faculty of Theology and Religion, although now a separate entity, still works closely with the DRC when it comes to theological education. What follows is a description of the current situation in the Faculty, what the Faculty is planning and a few of the implications for the DRC.

The Faculty of Theology and Religion offers the following programmes:

Undergraduate

Bachelor of Divinity (BDiv)

Bachelor of Theology (BTh)

Diploma in Theology (DipTh)

Postgraduate

Bachelor of Theology Honours (BThHons)

Postgraduate Diploma in Theology and Ministry

Postgraduate Diploma in Theology

Master of Divinity (MDiv)

Master of Theology (MTh)

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

The BDiv programme is for admission to MDiv studies. The MDiv builds on the BDiv programme (or the previous four-year BTh programme) and is a coursework master's degree with a focus on advanced theological knowledge and practical skills (Faculty of Theology and Religion, 2020:4). To become a congregational leader in the DRC, a student is required to obtain at least the following qualifications: BDiv (4 years including Greek II and Hebrew II); MDiv (one year including a mini-dissertation); and a Postgraduate Diploma in Theology and Ministry (during a students' practical year in a congregation). The diploma is presented by the DRC's church specific education and the NHKA's Reformed Theological College (RTC) and will be discussed later on.

According to the dean, Prof Jerry Pillay, the Faculty of Theology and Religion at the University of Pretoria offers teaching that is relevant, critical and contextual through these programmes, prides itself on quality research and encourages community engagement (Faculty of Theology and Religion, 2020:ii). These remarks will now be explored.

Teaching

As far as relevant, critical and contextual teaching is concerned, the Faculty is said to aspire to address relevant matters, for example, decolonisation and Africanisation (with a process of transformation) and to use different methods of instruction. The *Faculty of Theology and Religion Faculty Plan (2019)* states that the goal of teaching and learning in 2019 was to improve the students' success rate, implement the Faculty's Language Plan, and the transformation of the curriculum.

Looking at the improvement of students' success rate, the Faculty managed to increase its overall pass rate from 81.0% in 2012 to 84.4% in 2018, but it wants to address the problem areas remaining with the implementation of various interventions. Prof Norman Duncan (Faculty Theology Annual Lekgotla, 2019:2) states that pass rates are of utmost importance

to the University of Pretoria. This is also the main reason behind the reappointment of a Faculty Student Adviser (FSA). An FSA is vital for student wellness and one of the important contributing factors to the student success rate (Faculty of Theology and Religion Faculty Plan, 2019:6). The curatorium of the DRC also plays an advisory role, as seen above, and the DRC also places a high premium on the success rate of her students. It might be valuable for the Faculty and the DRC to specify their respective criteria for determining a student's success. Student success can be about a student's pass rate, about job security, about qualifying for further studies, or about the overall formation of a student for ministry. The latter is important for the DRC's process of missional transformation.

The implementing of the Faculty's Language Plan, in line with the University's Language Policy, started in 2019. The Faculty's Language Plan states that Afrikaans lectures will be phased out (Faculty of Theology and Religion Faculty Plan, 2019:6). The BTh degree is not considered "profession-specific" and will eventually only be lectured in English. The BDiv is in part "profession-specific", but lecturing in Afrikaans is not practically feasible and academically justifiable as the intake of Afrikaans speaking students are dramatically decreasing. This has implications for the DRC, the fact that there are very few students enrolling to become DRC congregational leaders (see Figure 2.1) and also the fact that the DRC is at the moment still mainly an Afrikaans speaking church.

Number of enrolled DRC students	2010	2020
First-year	40	14
Second-year	28	13
Third-year	38	7
Fourth-year	33	6
Fifth-year	28	5
Final year	17	10
Total students	184	55

Figure 2.1: Number of enrolled DRC students in 2010 and 2020.

However, apart from the practical considerations, the phasing out of Afrikaans will enable the faculty to advocate transformation and inclusiveness. "The faculty also wants to promote inclusiveness and social cohesion, while guarding against exclusivity and marginalisation, and in this way contribute to creating an environment where all students and staff feel confident

and comfortable and can enjoy a sense of belonging” (Faculty of Theology and Religion Faculty Plan, 2019:6-7).

This can be a great opportunity for the DRC in her process of missional transformation. Implementing the Faculty’s Language Plan will result in DRC theology students receiving lectures in a more diverse environment, with students from different denominations, languages, cultures, and learning more about the world outside of their homogeneous church environments. This is especially important in the diverse South African context and facilitates the missional posture of crossing borders.

Aside from the Faculty’s Language Plan, as part of the transformation process, the Faculty is also paying particular attention to the transformation of the curriculum. The first stage was the merging of two departments in 2018, the Departments of Dogmatics and Christian Ethics and Church History and Church Polity. The merging of the two departments led to a new proposed curriculum and a name change, the department is now known as the Department of Systematic and Historical Theology. “This amalgamation of the two Departments, when it comes to content, made the Faculty realise the importance of epistemological diversity, and that the curricula of the Faculty *in toto* has to be revisited” (Faculty of Theology and Religion Faculty Plan, 2019:7). Other possible changes in the structure include Religion becoming a department on its own and Old and New Testament becoming one department (Faculty Theology Annual Lekgotla, 2019:4-5). Furthermore, the Faculty plans to look into the curricula of the three programmes with the following matters in mind (Faculty of Theology and Religion Faculty Plan, 2019:7): (1) optimising the first-year of the BDiv programme; (2) addressing the complication of students of the three different undergraduate programmes currently in the same lectures, but not in the same year of study; (3) the Faculty considers moving in the direction of one language of tuition in all programmes (as mentioned above); (4) the Faculty wants to open up the possibility for students to prepare themselves for a second career; (5) the sequential order of modules have to be addressed.

This transformation of the curriculum seems to amount to the restructuring of theological disciplines and modules. Apart from these changes, transformation in other areas is also still required. Human (ed. 2017:220-221) states:

This would include a fresh imagination for both curricular transformation and the kind of institutional culture required for hosting a transforming curriculum... Transforming curricula would need to ask much deeper and more foundational questions of both the content, structure and methodology of the current curricula than simply making cosmetic changes.

Duncan (Faculty Theology Annual Lekgotla, 2019:2) points out that when it comes to diversity, the composition of students is sufficient, but not the staff, and new appointments will have to take this into account. The Faculty wants to adhere to the university plan by making employment equity (EE) appointments. This has implications for the DRC as fewer DRC lectures will be appointed to comply with this process of transformation.

Besides, Duncan (Faculty Theology Annual Lekgotla, 2019:2) points out the matter of technological advancement: “Predictions show that students of the future will learn primarily through technology and not through a person. Technology not only impacts on the teaching environment but also the employability of young people... The key question is whether we are sufficiently agile in adapting to the teaching and learning needs of students.” The Faculty is already using a blended learning model by also making use of its online learning platform, clickUP, but the accelerating rate of technological advancement has various implications for the Faculty and the DRC and their capacity to keep up.

Teaching at the Faculty is thus in a process of considerable transformation, concerning its language, curriculum, staff, and technology. This has several implications for the DRC, as mentioned above. The Faculty and the DRC have to navigate their relationship with these implications in mind and attempt to develop new methods of working together.

Research

The high quality of the research at the University of Pretoria is evident. The *Faculty Plan* affirms that the number of postgraduate students far exceeds the number of undergraduate students and that the Faculty is essentially a postgraduate school. Insofar that the focus of retaining undergraduates is their potential postgraduate studies. The *Faculty Plan* (2019:1) lists what has been done and what is intended to increase postgraduate studies:

1. Appointed Marketing, Communication and Fundraising Committee.
2. Established a recruiting strategy for postgraduate students in particular.
3. Actively recruit M and D students.
4. Increase our graduation levels of our M and D students.
5. Provide bursaries as a leverage to attract top-quality students.
6. Increase our intake of international postgraduate students.
7. Increase our pool of church partners.
8. Enhance the stream of Pentecostals in particular.
9. Enhance the brand value of the faculty and UP.

10. Develop the website to attract students.
11. List on website honorary professors and reputable scholars associated with the faculty.
12. Start the DMin programme (Professional Doctorates).
13. Branding, marketing and international liaison should be with an admin person.

The output of high quality research is a high priority at the University of Pretoria. Pillay points out that the Faculty has more scholars who have received National Research Foundation (NRF) ratings that any other Faculty of Theology in South Africa and publishes hundreds of peer-reviewed articles in highly accredited national and international journals every year (Faculty of Theology and Religion, 2020:ii). That being said, the *Faculty Plan* gives extensive attention to the possibility of further improving research quality and output and to becoming a top postgraduate Faculty. The Faculty is expected to be a research-intensive Faculty in compliance with the university's vision. The following areas are of importance for this advancement (Faculty of Theology and Religion Faculty Plan, 2019:2): increase the postgraduate student numbers; decrease the delivery period of masters and doctoral degrees; enhance the Faculty's research quality and impact (employee and academic) and engage in more inter- and trans-disciplinary research projects to change the publication culture of the Faculty. The Faculty's main focus is thus quality research output. This causes an immense postgraduate workload that requires substantial amounts of time to be spent on supervising postgraduate students (Faculty of Theology and Religion Faculty Plan, 2019:7).

Research and postgraduate studies are the Faculty's main concern, whereas theological education, for the DRC, is not primarily about research, but about the formation of leaders for the ministry of the church. This causes a conflict of interest and limited resources, like lecturers' time and energy, may perhaps be inappropriately distributed. The DRC has to make sure that the pressure of research output does not have a distortive result on theological students' formation.

Community

The Faculty also seeks to work together with various partners towards a better community – an inclusive one, which embraces diversity and promotes equity. This is done in two ways, by engaging in more inter- and trans-disciplinary research projects and by being inclusive when it comes to different religions.

First, the *Faculty Plan* states that the objective is to participate in research projects in fields outside of theology and at the same time linking with the university's "Future Africa"

vision and aims. Interdisciplinary research is vital and requires urgent attention (Faculty Theology Annual Lekgotla, 2019:3). At the moment the Faculty's *Centre for Contextual Ministries* (CCM) is doing its part and actively working across the Faculties at the University of Pretoria and also at UNISA, the following projects can be referred to (Faculty of Theology and Religion Faculty Plan, 2019:3):

Humanities (social work; anthropology; visual arts; sociology, Centre for Sexuality, AIDS and Gender)

Health Sciences (family medicine; nursing sciences)

Law (Jurisprudence)

EBIT (Town and Regional Planning; Architecture)

Education (Centre for Study of Resilience)

It is also worth mentioning that the CMM's homelessness research has led to both the adoption of a new policy and strategy on homelessness in the City of Tshwane (Faculty of Theology and Religion Faculty Plan, 2019:3). These innovations have led the way for the Faculty to embark on a more established programme of collaborating with other Faculties. The Faculty will also start to integrate its research to focus on the United Nation's *Sustainable Development Goals* (i.e. poverty; good health and well-being; quality education; gender equality; decent work and economic growth; reduction of inequality; sustainable cities and communities; peace, justice and strong institutions), national agendas and specific UP research areas of interest (i.e. malaria; Smart Cities; food security (and water); land, poverty and (in)justice; humanities; theology) (Faculty of Theology and Religion Faculty Plan, 2019:3-4).

Second, the Faculty plans to work with other religions to address key issues in South Africa, Africa and globally. In the light of this, the Faculty was renamed in 2018 to the Faculty of Theology and Religion (formerly only the Faculty of Theology). Even though the Faculty is still primarily Christian in its theological orientation, this was an attempt to include people from other faiths and to create an environment for important dialogue.

The Faculty's focus on community engagement and these potential dialogues, between different faculties and disciplines and also between different religions, can contribute to a theological education that is missional formation. Shifting the focus from theological education as training for a congregation to theological education as training for ministry 'outside' the church. It will be important for the DRC to discern what their involvement and agenda consist of when participating in these community projects.

By using the subdivisions of teaching, research and community, it was attempted to give an overview of the current theological education at the University of Pretoria and a few of the implications for the DRC. Together with the theological education at a university as offered by the Faculty of Theology and Religion, DRC students also receive church specific education. This is spread over the six years of a student's formal studies and is presented by the DRC. The detail of what church specific education entails will be described in what follows.

2.1.1.3 Church specific education (*Kerkeie Opleiding*)

The purpose of church specific education is the spiritual formation of students and to acquire practical skills, some of which are denomination specific. These courses are presented by lecturers appointed or accredited by the curatorium. Church specific education is compulsory for DRC students throughout their studies with emphasis on the sixth and final year of studies when students complete a Diploma in Theology and Ministry. While the theological education curriculum at the University of Pretoria is designed by various lecturers from various denominations and has to comply with university regulations, the church specific education curriculum is determined by the DRC and the DRC's specific requirements. What follows is more detail on what each year entails and a few comments on the curriculum's design and content.

First-year

First-year students have three church specific lectures per week. Two of the lectures focus on Bible knowledge, Old Testament knowledge and New Testament knowledge respectively, and the third lecture is alternately about spiritual development, the Reformed tradition, and an introduction to philosophy.

Second-year

Second-year students only have one church specific lecture per week where the focus is alternately on spiritual development, the Reformed tradition, and an introduction to philosophy.

Third and fourth-year

Third and fourth-year students attend the same church specific programme spread over two years. The programme consists of lectures one day per week. The lectures start with a worship service led by one of the students followed by a discussion and evaluation of the sermon and liturgy. The next lecture concentrates on the practical formation of students and

includes themes like liturgy, presentation skills, catechetics, eco-theology, hospital pastoral care, ministry capacities, marriage counselling, trauma and finances. The last two lectures consist of reading the Bible in its original languages, one lecture of reading Old Testament texts and one lecture of reading New Testament texts. The purpose of these lectures is to study Ancient Greek and Hebrew and to use linguistic skills in exegesis.

Fifth-year

Fifth-year students do not attend weekly church specific lectures, but they have a monthly meeting with the head of the curatorium. Apart from this meeting, fifth-year students are expected to be involved in congregational activities and to give at least three sermons throughout the year. These sermons are evaluated by the congregational leader and congregants.

Each of the first five years of church specific education is focused on the spiritual formation of students. Students also expected to complete a one year course, the *Viam Dei* spiritual formation course, during their studies. The first and second-year also focuses on Biblical knowledge, Reformed identity and philosophical knowledge. The third, fourth and fifth-year concentrates on delivering sermons - presentation skills, liturgy, exegesis, and reading Bible texts in their original language. Apart from this, there is also an aspect of practical formation for other congregational work. While the DRC is in a process of missional transformation, minimal attention is paid, in the content and design of church specific education, to the missional formation of students. Whereas church specific education, supporting the requirements of and specifically designed for the DRC, is an apt opportunity to initiate the missional formation of congregational leaders. The next section will describe the design, content and assessment of the sixth and final year of church specific education.

Sixth year

A Postgraduate Diploma in Theology and Ministry is completed during a student's final and practical year in a congregation. This diploma is a prerequisite for students of the DRC and the NHKA and students of both denominations take this course together. The purpose of this programme is to obtain advanced theological knowledge and practical skills for ministry (Faculty of Theology and Religion, 2018:3). The course spans over a year with an orientation session and five contact sessions. Each of the six disciplines are represented and are an integral part of these contact sessions. This is one part of the diploma, the second part is practical training obtained at a student's congregation. The practical training also forms an integral part of the course.

The course uses appreciative inquiry as an educational approach, an approach which focuses on strengths rather than on weakness, directed by Richard Osmer's four questions of Practical Theology. It is also said that the course will pay attention to the missional transformation of congregations, the development of missional leadership and the spiritual formation of students (Faculty of Theology and Religion, 2018:3-4). Each contact session takes place for a week and has a specific theme. The themes and content are as follows:

Contact week 1: Congregation and community

The first contact week is focused on being missional and faithfully present. Each student has to prepare a complete congregation analysis, from a missional ecclesiology perspective, that will be presented and discussed in class. The discussions of the congregational analysis will deal with the following topics (Faculty of Theology and Religion, 2018:3-4):

- How does our Reformed identity help us to understand a congregation?
- Missional ecclesiology and the denomination's policy.
- Faithful presence.
- Appreciative enquiry – where is the congregation functioning at its best in the community?
- Listening to the congregation's and congregational leader' "language" and evaluating it from a missional church perspective.
- What is the attitude, vision and dreams of the leaders in the congregation regarding the future of the congregation?
- What role does leadership play when it comes to the future of the congregation?
- How does the Bible function in the congregation?
- How do the confessions function in the congregation?

Contact week 2: Preaching and pastoral care

The second contact week consists of an appreciative enquiry on pastoral care, liturgy and preaching – discussing the best practices of congregations where students are involved. It also concentrates on dwelling in the world by looking at what is going on in the media, sport, religious rituals in society, communication media, and the lives of youth in a family setting.

Contact week 3: Integration and dream

The third week starts by each student giving a presentation of an experience they had in their congregations with one of the following ministry opportunities: outreach projects, community projects, evangelism, or interfaith dialogue. Other themes include the following (Faculty of Theology and Religion, 2018:3-4): decolonised congregations and church planting; *Semper Reformanda*; job opportunities and calling. Practical skills like ministering baptism and serving communion are rehearsed through role-playing and there is also a discussion on the different aspects of a funeral service and a marriage ceremony.

Contact week 4: Outstanding issues

The fourth week is focused on outstanding issues from previous sessions and themes that will be addressed, include (Faculty of Theology and Religion, 2018:16–17): suffering and theodicy (Job, Lamentations, and lament Psalms); social justice and Africanisation (Prophets); gender and sexuality (Wisdom literature); justice and the justice of God; being church with integrity (Jesus and discipleship).

Contact week 5: Spirituality

The purpose and focus of contact week five is the embodiment of authentic life-giving spirituality. Students are encouraged to discover their faith journey, in the past and the present. The first two days are spent in contact sessions and the last three days are spent on a retreat. What follows is a brief description and outline of this week's programme (Faculty of Theology and Religion, 2018:18–20):

- Day 1 – What is spirituality?

The first day is focused on the nature of spirituality and different types of spirituality. With each session, the discussion is brought closer to the personal experience of students and their congregational contexts. Themes that also receive attention include the image of God, Reformed spirituality, and stages of growth in faith.

- Day 2 – Spirituality and ministry

Students receive an introduction and overview of various habits of faith for faith formation. These habits are practised and discussed, with an emphasis on their influence on ministry. Themes that receive attention include contemplative

spirituality, the spirituality of congregational leader, ego and ministry, habits of faith, and transforming or sacramental reading.

- Day 3 – Retreat

The first day of the retreat is focused on theory and practising habits of faith. The programme offers free time and open space as an invitation for students to meet God in Word, nature, people and literature. Being present, attentive and mindful, is a core concept of the retreat.

- Day 4 – Retreat

The second day of the retreat is focused on the practising of silence and contemplative habits of faith. There is an opportunity for a prayer walk in a labyrinth and also a *Taize* experience in the evening. Time is set out for reflecting on students' experiences.

- Day 5 – Retreat

The third and last day of the retreat is focused on habits of faith with art, journaling and poetry. The retreat ends with a reflection on students faith journey over the last six years (their theological studies) – sharing their experience, views and giving feedback.

This concludes the overview of the five contact weeks students attend. The student's final mark is made up of a year mark for each of the six disciplines. Students have to complete assignments for each contact week and compile it into a portfolio. The assignments and criteria for the six disciplines are as follows (Faculty of Theology and Religion, 2018:21–22):

Old Testament:

Prepare a Bible study of an Old Testament text in which *Dark God* (Römer, 2013) is used as the primary resource. The criteria are that students have to indicate in their reflection on the book whether and to what extent it changed their view on suffering.

New Testament:

Prepare a Bible study on one or more prayers of the Lord's Prayer in which *The Greatest Prayer: Rediscovering the Revolutionary Message of the Lord's Prayer* (Crossan, 2010) is used as the primary resource. The criteria are that students have

to indicate in their reflection on the book whether and to what extent it changed their view on the Lord's Prayer.

Church History and Polity:

Write a critical reflection on the congregation and ministry visits during the tour of North West. The criteria are that students can evaluate different models of ministry and ways of rejuvenation.

Dogmatics and Christian Ethics:

Write a report on how an authentic life-giving spirituality can be embodied in ministry. The criteria are that students can utilise insights gained during the contact week on habits of faith and also the retreat.

Science of Religion and Missiology:

Prepare a complete congregation analysis. The criteria are that students have to analyse from a missional ecclesiology perspective.

Practical Theology:

Prepare a CV and submit questionnaires from the student's congregation on his/her performance. These questionnaires bring us to the second part of the diploma.

The questionnaires are used to evaluate students' practical work in their congregations. There are four questionnaires, the first two are specifically designed to evaluate a student's performance when leading a worship service and the last two are about a student's performance in other congregational work. These questionnaires are seemingly able to indicate if a student has acquired all the necessary skills and if a student is prepared to become a congregational leader. More detail on the four questionnaires hereinafter.

Questionnaire 1

The first questionnaire is an evaluation of a worship service by church council members and congregants. The group that evaluates the sermon after the service has to be representative of the different age groups and genders in the congregation. The sermon is evaluated according to the following aspects (on a scale of 1 to 5) and comments may be added (Faculty of Theology and Religion, 2018:23-26):

- *Preacher:*
 - Pulpit demeanour
 - Voice usage
 - Gestures
 - Language use
 - Eye contact
- *Sermon:*
 - Contents
 - Clarity
 - Message
 - Language usage
 - Presentation of prayers
 - Choice of songs
 - Sermon and worship as a whole
 - What was the core message of the sermon?
- *General:*
 - What aspect of the worship service did you experience as positive?
 - What was disturbing?

Questionnaire 2

The second questionnaire has to be completed by the congregational leader acting as the student's mentor. The sermon is evaluated according to the following aspects (on a scale of 1 to 5) and comments may be added (Faculty of Theology and Religion, 2018:27-32):

1. Liturgical skills

- 1.1 Does the service form a coherent whole?
- 1.2 Was the choice of songs appropriate?
- 1.3 How did the prayers function?

2. Exegetical competence

- 2.1 Does the sermon give proof that the student carefully listened to and interacted with the passage?
- 2.2 Does the uniqueness of the passage come to the fore?
- 2.3 Does the exegesis come alive in the sermon?
- 2.4 Was there continuity and unity in the sermon?

3. *Dogmatic competence*

- 3.1 Does the student realise the dogmatic themes in the passage and does the student respond responsibly?
- 3.2 Did the student give thought to the questions that these themes can evoke from hearers?
- 3.3 Was the message in line with the confessions?
- 3.4 Did the sermon succeed to convey the message within a Christological framework?
- 3.5 Where there any theological distortions or imbalance in the sermon?

4. *Hermeneutic competence*

- 4.1 What was the message and what was the purpose of the message?
- 4.2 Is there a living connection between 'then' and 'now'?
- 4.3 Is there a tendency to moralism in the sermon?

5. *Communication competence*

- 5.1 Does the sermon have a good structure?
- 5.2 Is the usage of metaphors, examples and illustrations adequate and appropriate?
- 5.3 Is the hearer's 'world' acknowledged?
- 5.4 How is the congregation addressed?

6. *Pastoral competence*

- 6.1 How is joy and sadness, longing and care expressed? Does this happen in an authentic way that communicates closeness and empathy?
- 6.2 Does the preacher appear to know what is going on in people's hearts and is he/she dealing with the listeners' experience with due respect?

Questionnaire 3

The third questionnaire is about practical work in the congregation and also has to be completed by the congregational leader acting as the student's mentor. The following areas of ministry are evaluated (Faculty of Theology and Religion, 2018:32-37):

1. *Worship service and sermon*

The evaluation takes place on the grounds of the student's physical appearance, communication skills, liturgical planning, thorough preparation,

theological depth, contextualisation, authentic and convincing preaching, and how the student handles criticism.

2. *House visits*

The evaluation takes place on the grounds of the student being able to engage with the family, the content of the conversations, interpersonal relationships and social skills.

3. *Youth ministry and catechesis*

The evaluation takes place on the grounds of the student planning youth events, interacting with young people, and observing and presenting catechesis.

4. *Church meetings*

The evaluation takes place on the grounds of the student attending all the various meetings of a congregation and being interested in the functioning of these meetings.

5. *Planning*

The evaluation takes place on the grounds of the student being able to plan a year programme and a budget and showing competence to plan and manage congregational activities.

6. *Special worship services*

The evaluation takes place on the grounds of the student attending and observing a marriage ceremony and a funeral service and being able to compose the liturgy for one of these special worship services.

7. *Special pastoral care*

The evaluation takes place on the grounds of the student visiting the sick and the elderly and appropriately engaging with them.

8. *Bible study*

The evaluation takes place on the grounds of the student attending and leading Bible study groups, and attending and being able to lead marriage, baptism and church council catechesis.

9. *General*

This evaluation is about the student's general appearance and the student's behaviour and attitude demonstrating respect, modesty, kindness and interest, and authenticity and also the student's awareness of calling, spiritual maturity and enthusiasm.

Questionnaire 4

The last questionnaire is also about practical work in the congregation but has to be completed by the student. The fourth questionnaire is an opportunity for the student to critically reflect on his/her experience in the congregation. The following questions guide the student's reflection (Faculty of Theology and Religion, 2018:38-41):

1. *Which aspect of the practical work was most satisfying?*
2. *Which aspect of the practical work was most frustrating?*
3. *Which aspects of preaching should you pay more attention to?*
4. *Which aspects of your role as liturgist should you pay more attention to?*
5. *In your opinion, what are your strengths and weaknesses when it comes to home visits and pastoral conversations?*
6. *Evaluate your behaviour during youth events, what should you pay attention to?*
7. *In your opinion, what are your shortcomings when it comes to leading the various church meetings?*
8. *What did you learn about planning congregational activities?*
9. *In your opinion, what role should the congregational leader play when it comes to the financial planning and management of a congregation?*
10. *In your opinion, are you sufficiently equipped to lead special worship services? What aspects require further attention?*
11. *Which aspects of equipping congregants do you lack?*
12. *Which aspects of interpersonal relationships and social skills should you develop?*
13. *In your opinion, have you processed the feedback and criticism you received and did you experience it as positive?*
14. *Briefly describe your experience of, and relationship with, the congregational leader who mentored you.*
15. *Briefly describe your experience of, and your relationship with, the church council and congregants.*
16. *Are you still, after this experience, (i) convinced that you want to be a congregational leader and (ii) enthusiastic about the prospect?*
17. *Briefly summarise the strengths and weaknesses of your character and personality.*

The portfolio together with the four questionnaires, then, comprises the assessment for the Diploma in Theology and Ministry and will form a part of student's licensing exam at the end of a student's final year. The expected outcomes of the programme include (Faculty of Theology and Religion, 2018:9):

1. To be able to holistically apply the knowledge acquired and integrate it with the practical aspects of the profession.
2. To demonstrate the appropriate skills to deal with conflict and social cohesion in any circumstance that the profession requires.
3. To be able to act ethically within the profession (professional and work ethic).
4. To demonstrate the ability to be involved with, and responsibly to deal with, a complex society and/or environment.
5. To cultivate intellectual curiosity and to be able to communicate new knowledge effectively.
6. To facilitate pastoral, liturgical and preaching spaces in a contextually relevant and responsible way.
7. To demonstrate insight into and to demonstrate the ability to be involved in the ethos of your faith community.

These outcomes conclude the description of the sixth year of church specific education entails. Apart from the outcomes stated above, it is also previously said that the programme will pay attention to the missional transformation of congregations, the development of missional leadership and the spiritual formation of students. Unfortunately, it seems the programme falls short.

The first contact week is focused on being missional and faithfully present, but the next three contact weeks' main focus is skills for congregational activities like pastoral care, liturgy planning, preaching, outreach projects, community projects, baptism, funeral services, marriage ceremonies, etc. The fifth week is about students' spirituality, but there is no indication of the formation of a missional spirituality.

The portfolio assessment also shows an inwards and congregational focus with the preparation of two Bible studies for a congregation and the evaluation of different models of ministry and ways to rejuvenate it. As for the congregational assessment, the first two questionnaires are about the skill of leading a worship service, the third one is about traditional congregational activities like house visits, youth ministry and catechesis, church meetings, planning, special worship services, special pastoral care and Bible study and the last

questionnaire is about a students' experience of his/her practical year and which congregational skills they need to work on.

The content, design and especially the assessment of the sixth year of church specific education does not attest to an attempt to develop missional leaders, the formation of a missional spirituality or give sufficient attention to the missional transformation of congregations.

The DRC, in her process of missional transformation, requires church specific education to intentionally develop and form students, from the first-year of their studies, to be missional leaders. After students have completed their studies, it is expected of them to continue their training. This can be done in various ways and every DRC congregational leader is required and encouraged to participate in these ministry development opportunities. The next section will explore these continued ministry development opportunities.

2.1.1.4 Continued ministry development (Voorgesette Bedieningsontwikkeling)

Continued ministry development (VBO) is an important part of theological education. Regulation 11 of the DRC Church Order states that all congregational leaders are required to participate in the VBO programme. The declaration, undersigned by all DRC congregational leaders, obliges them to undergo continued ministry development (see DRC Church Order, 2019:65).

There are three ministry development centres, one at each of the three universities where DRC theological education takes place, namely *Communitas* (Stellenbosch), *Shepherd* (Bloemfontein) and *Excelsus* (Pretoria). Because the focus of this study is on theological education of the DRC at the University of Pretoria, more attention will be paid to *Excelsus*.

This ministry development centre plays an important role as a link between DRC congregations and the Faculty of Theology. In an interview with Dr André Bartlett, the head of *Excelsus*, on 22 April 2020 he states that the benefit of being seated in the Faculty is the opportunity for *Excelsus* to be, while still a separate entity, involved in what is going on in the Faculty, to stay up to date and to give some input in the conversations on theological education.

Excelsus initiates and organises programmes, courses, and conferences to develop the ministry skills of congregational leaders. Bartlett states that the managing board of *Excelsus* determines which courses will be presented each year, but *Excelsus* also supports new and exciting learning opportunities that contribute to ministry development and anyone can present a course after it has been accredited as VBO. Full-time congregational leaders have to

complete 50 hours of VBO every year (1 hour = 1 VBO point). The prospectus for 2020 can serve as an example of the type of ministry development opportunities presented (Excelsus, 2020):

1. *Spring Conference*¹⁹

The Spring Conference has a central theme and this theme is attended to by the different disciplines of theology. Attendees thus have a range of presentations to choose from. The theme for 2020 is “A Roadmap – From Wound to Wonder” (Excelsus, n.d.). This conference is open to anyone.

(30 VBO points)

2. *Certificate in Ministry Development*

This certificate programme takes place for three years with three modules each year, focused on congregational leaders in the first phase (the first five years) of their ministry. Bartlett states that the *Framework Document on the Missional Nature and Calling of the DRC* (2013) is the point of departure of this programme. In 2020 the modules include: What to do with the Bible? (New Testament); How does a congregation become missional?; How to handle difficult pastoral situations?

(30 VBO points per module)

3. *Certificate in Ministry Renewal*

This certificate programme also takes place for three years with three modules each year but is focused on congregational leaders in the middle phase of their ministry. Bartlett states that the *Framework Document on the Missional Nature and Calling of the DRC* (2013) is also the point of departure of this programme. In 2020 the modules include: Context - where are we now?; How do we read the Bible?; Who is God?; Ministry and Spiritual Formation – formation for discipleship and serving; Missional Congregations – hope and energy for vocation; Sunday Worship and Preaching – how we believe, celebrate and share the story of the gospel.

(30 VBO points per module)

¹⁹ ‘Lentekonferensie’

4. *There is Life Before and After Retirement*

This workshop is aimed at congregational leaders in the finishing phase of their ministry. During this course, there is reflected on the implications of ageing, how to stay meaningful after retirement and post-retirement opportunities.

(25 VBO points)

5. *Young Adults Learning Community – Church of the Future*

This course is presented as a series of workshops and aimed at young congregational leaders and other young adults. The workshops function as a learning community to discern and dream about the future of the church.

(10 VBO points per workshop)

6. *The Year of God's Grace*

A series of workshops on liturgy looking at the ecclesiastical year.

(25 VBO points per workshop)

7. *Let's read the Old and New Testament*

Bartlett notes that this course is focused on a missional hermeneutic and a missional reading of the text.

(25 VBO points per module)

8. *Training of Counsellors of a Ministry Diagnosis in Congregations*

This course is presented as a series of workshops.

(10 VBO points per workshop)

9. *Soul Coaching*

This course is presented by Dr Henry Eagleton, a Life Strategist. He helps people to optimise their potential in the spheres of their life that they deem most important (Henry Eagleton, n.d.).

(10 VBO points)

10. *Youth Workshop*

A workshop on youth ministry.

(6 VBO points)

11. Bible Translation Conference

Bartlett states that the main focus of *Excelsus* at the moment is the *certificate in ministry development* and the *certificate in ministry renewal*. These two courses are aimed at helping the congregational leader to evaluate and transform their ministry from a missional church perspective. He also states that the DRC's policy document on missional ecclesiology is the point of departure at *Excelsus* and they intend to incorporate these new insights into their courses.

Because the VBO programme is compulsory for all congregational leaders, it might be a suitable starting point to prepare congregational leaders for a long journey on the road to missional transformation, but it might also be possible to more effectively utilise VBO for the advancement of missional leadership.

2.1.1.5 Preliminary conclusions

This brings the overview of the theological education of the DRC, and specifically at the University of Pretoria, to an end. A few preliminary conclusion can be made in the course of articulating the pain:

1. Regulation 11 of the DRC Church Order gives a comprehensive description of all the different aspects regarding the theological education and preparation of congregational leader for ministry, but it does not pay any specific attention to the training of DRC congregational leaders as missional leaders for missional transformation. Goheen (2016c:299-300) points out that one of the crises of theological education is the professionalisation of ministry – inexperienced young people become leaders of congregations because of their academic qualifications. With the rigorous prerequisites, as seen in Regulation 11 of the DRC Church Order, to become a congregational leader – this can easily be the case. Training congregational leaders with all the correct boxes ticked, but not equipped for missional transformation.
2. The Faculty of Theology and Religion at the University of Pretoria, although in various processes of transformation, is not in a process of missional transformation – and thus not specifically focused on training DRC congregational leaders for missional transformation. The faculty's main focus is quality research output. As stated above, "It is not essentially ecclesiastical, perhaps not even ecumenical, but scientific in

nature” (Buitendag, 2016:5). Goheen (2016c:299-300) points out the following problems regarding theological education: Subjects that are taught are highly theoretical, causing detached theological reflection that can alienate students from ministry; studying at an academic institution means there is often little connection to local congregations they serve; students are also separated from their churches and required to be residents in academic institutions for many years; faculties are chosen based on their academic record and professors thus have little or no ministry experience; the primary pedagogical mode is still lectures and transfer of information and a final exam or research paper the primary way of assessing whether the students have mastered the information presented in the course. This indicates that students at the Faculty of Theology and Religion at the University of Pretoria are trained to be academics, maybe even theologians, but are not equipped for ministry and not for missional transformation. That being said, the changes in the Faculty may be towards a better environment for the equipping of congregational leader for missional transformation. A diverse environment with students and lecturers from different denominations, languages, cultures and even different faiths that holds the opportunity to learn about the world and ministry outside of homogeneous church environments. This is especially important in a diverse country like South Africa.

3. Church specific education claims to be focused on spiritual formation and the acquiring of practical skills for ministry, but the content and design does not show intentionality when it comes to a missional spirituality or practical skills for missional transformation. The sixth and final year of church specific education is said to pay attention to the missional formation of congregations, but as can be seen, by the design of the programme and the assessment criteria, the focus primarily falls on knowledge and practical skills for traditional congregational work. Goheen (2016c:299) underlines that “seminaries by their very nature are primarily interested in the cognitive side of training, the intellectual mastery of information, and so are unable to nurture, oversee or even assess the spiritual growth of students”. Church specific education seems to also have neglected this significant task it has undertaken. Spiritual growth and spiritual formation are especially important for the missional formation and transformation of congregational leaders.
4. *Excelsus* continued ministry development, creates their courses from a missional ecclesiology perspective and the two recent certificate courses are explicitly focused on equipping congregational leaders for missional transformation of congregations.

However, it might be possible to more effectively utilise VBO for the advancement of missional leadership seeing as it is compulsory for a congregational leader in the DRC.

The current theological education of the DRC to a great extent still reflects the needs of the church decades ago and thus a church that does not exist anymore. Re-imagining theological education that is missional formation is about more than simply making a few adjustments and renewing the current curriculum and education programme. The DRC's missional ecclesiology demands an alternative theological education model. While deliberating the theological education of the DRC, it is also important to take into account the context of theological education in South Africa. This is a rather broad issue, as stated above, and only a few pressing matters will be addressed.

2.1.2 The context of theological education in South Africa

The world in which we live today and the world where the classic fourfold theological education curriculum was instituted, are two different worlds. The world has gone through dramatic shifts and changes, and still is, and this has definite repercussions for theological education. “One of the challenges in training leaders in today’s church is that the church and world that we have known is rapidly changing, indeed disappearing” (Baker, 2015:238-239). The world has profoundly changed over the last century: two world wars later; the demise of the Communist vision; the ecological crisis, globalisation; world poverty; human trafficking; and Islam as the world’s fastest-growing religion (Bevans, 2015:99). The world is not only changing, it is changing at an accelerating pace. “The three largest forces on the planet” – technology, globalisation and climate change – are all accelerating at once (Friedman, 2016:8). Sweet (2019:172) also remarks that technology is accelerating at the pace of change “into exponential dimensions never seen before. The onset of change, or more accurately the onslaught of accelerating change, throws commonly held notions and time frames out the window”. Looking ahead, our generation will experience more change at a quicker pace than any previous generation (Schmidt & Cohen, 2013:253). Although most of this research has been completed before the onset and impact of the Covid-19 pandemic became clear, it is already apparent that Covid-19 impacted on every aspect of human life and forced many social institutions, including churches in South Africa, into rapid adaptive change. Taleb (2007:10) argued that ‘history does not crawl, it jumps’ and is determined by ‘black swans’. Covid-19 represents a typical ‘black swan’ event. “In spite of our best efforts, the church is unprepared for the future...” (Sweet, 2019:viii).

The acceleration of change implies that the context of theological education in South Africa today, will likely be different tomorrow. The impact of Covid-19 made this evident and there is a 'new normal' already emerging. All the more reason to discern the trends and developments in the South African context for theological education to be contextually relevant. Against this backdrop, Chammah Kaunda (2016) points out a few contextual changes that shape Sub-Saharan Africa today and its implications for theological education, i.e. worldview shift, demographic shift in Christianity, socio-political and economic pressure, globalisation, and pluralism.

Worldview shift

The worldview shift refers to a new generation of young Africans that are not bound to their cultural heritage and traditions and would rather form their own unique identities. "This generation is searching for new African communities that celebrate diversity, complexity, richness, ambiguity, emergency identities, and new socio-cultural life" (Kaunda, 2016:115). This is also a trend in the DRC. The youth of DRC congregations are not bound to their denomination's traditions and, after the completion of catechesis, they form their own unique identities in an 'open' world where they are exposed to its diversity. Theological education and the formation of young Africans in a continent with such rich and diverse cultural heritages will have to make this shift and new open worldview into account.

Demographic shift

The demographic shift in Christianity in Africa prompts challenges pertaining to Western cultural values. According to Kaunda (2016:116), sub-Saharan African Christianity has gone through a period of remarkable growth and "it is estimated that one in four Christians live in this part of the world." Unfortunately, African Christianity is still inextricable from Western cultural values and its Christian beliefs and practices are based on these models. The challenges that arise with this demographic shift is crucial for theological education and theological institutions, also based on these Western models. Theological education also has to go through a process of decolonisation.

Socio-political and economic pressure

World economics and financial survey reports that the economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa remains fragile – 2016 marked the region's worst performance in more than two decades and growth will most likely continue to fall short and barely exceed population

growth.²⁰ In addition to economic instability, there is also postcolonial political insurgence and social unrest in various parts of the continent. Kaunda (2016:119) asks:

The situation reflects a variety of factors, such as poverty, human right abuse, unemployment, ethnicity, corruption, and all forms of social injustice. Is Christianity a failed project in Africa? Or is something missing in the way Africans have appropriated Christianity? (Kaunda, 2016:119)

Referring to Christianity as a ‘failed project’ reveals how it might have been understood and how it was appropriated, not as a community deeply rooted in faith, but as a religious project. Theological education has a role to play in rectifying this understanding and the implications it has on the continent’s socio-political and economic situation. Covid-19 accelerated economic decline in South Africa and projections (at the stage of completion of this research) painted a stark picture of the South African economy. “The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has spread quickly across the globe with devastating effects on the global economy as well as the regional and societies’ socio-economic fabrics and the way of life for vast populations” (Renzaho, 2020:2).

Globalisation

With the dawn of globalisation, the world is rapidly becoming smaller. The technology at our disposal makes communication effortless and immediate. “Anyone can virtually be in any place at any time” (Bevans, 2015:99). Hendriks (2013:820) states that globalisation causes a world characterised by a networked society and this requires a new paradigm in theological education. It leaves theological education with numerous opportunities, but also challenges. Kaunda (2016:120) refers to the way globalisation can improve the quality of theological education in Africa, but can also cause theological crises and dependency. Kaunda (2016:121) asks:

Should theological education in Africa continue to trail behind Europeans and North Americans and their theological values? These challenges to African Christianity demand a critical assessment of the viability of theological education in Africa today. (Kaunda, 2016:121)

²⁰ See <https://www.imf.org/~media/Files/Publications/REO/AFR/2017/May/pdf/sreo0517.ashx>

There is much to learn from European and North American theology, but it cannot be replicated or uncritically adopted and implemented. The unique African context has to determine and shape its theological education. African theologians have much to offer and have introduced and developed their theological trends (for example Thinandavha Mashau, see pp. 99-100).

Pluralism

Kaunda (2016:118) emphasises the need for a sensitive awareness of pluralism as it can be either a blessing or a curse. Pluralism and the challenges it poses is especially important in a diverse country like South Africa. South Africa has eleven official languages and because of its rich ethnic diversity, holds no single South African culture. This ethnic diversity can be seen as a curse amidst racial tension in South Africa, but it can also be a blessing if it is embraced and instead exhibits a 'rainbow nation'. Desmond Tutu writes about a diverse South Africa and coined the term 'rainbow nation' or 'rainbow people of God'. He states (Tutu, 2004:47):

The rainbow in the Bible is a sign of peace. The rainbow is the sign of prosperity and justice, and we can have it, when all the people of God, the rainbow people of God, work together. (Tutu, 2004:47)

Theology and theological education have to recognise pluralism and the influence it has on a community. "Christianity in Africa has become a complex part of the web or fabric of society and contributes to its life, wellness, and the shaping of African humanity" (Kaunda, 2016:127). And although South Africa is a predominantly Christian country, ethnic and cultural diversity results in various expressions of this religion.

These are some of the main contextual changes that shape Sub-Saharan Africa today. Because this is a broad issue, only a few pressing matters were addressed. These matters are not an exact representation of the situation in South Africa but are useful when looking at how the context has changed over the last 30 years. The changes listed makes it plain that theological education cannot stay the same and needs some sort of transformation. Fortunately, the changes listed also indicate that the South African context is inclined to a new way of education or training congregational leaders.

The world we live in, a world characterised by accelerating transition, defies contemporary wisdom and current theological praxis. Friedman (2016:8) infers that many aspects of our world – our societies, workplaces, and geopolitics – are being reshaped and thus need to be re-imagined. Theological education and theological institutions have to be susceptible to change and transformation. “Transformation is never easy, but it is inevitable and crucial for the adaptability of an institution in an ever-shifting world” (Kaunda, 2016:127). The current theological education of the DRC does not reflect the changes in the South African context. The church is thus again challenged by Luther’s call for discernment and Reformation, *ecclesia semper reformanda est*, echoing 500 years later. Without knowing what the future holds, the church has to navigate this fast-paced world, discerning where God is working and joining in. Motivated and compelled by the *missio Dei*. The mere fact that the world is changing is a compelling motive for the re-imagination of theological education. And although this is not the main reason behind the call for a re-imagination of theological education, it has to be taken into account. The main reason lies with the DRC’s current understanding of her ecclesiology.

2.1.3 Transforming the theological education of the DRC

The DRC adopted a policy document, *Framework Document on the Missional Nature and Calling of the DRC* (2013), affirming her missional ecclesiology – what the church *is*. As indicated in the first chapter, the church *is*, the church *does* what it is, the church *organises* what it does. Identifying the church as missional and realising the church should take on this form, has profound implications for how the church is giving structure to a missional ministry. When there is a change in our understanding of what the church *is*, it changes what the church *does* and how the church *organises* what it does and thus how *leadership* is understood (Niemandt, 2013:47).

The DRC took a first step in the process of missional transformation by accepting this guiding policy document, but the DRC now needs to transform theological education. Re-imagine theological education or training for the formation of a different type of leader, a missional leader. The policy document describes new insights into theological training. Transformation and equipping people is central to missional leadership (DRC, 2013:16):

Missional leadership is all about the transformation of people and institutions who have been called by God to join His mission to the world. It is the church’s responsibility and task to create an environment where the people of God can

flourish. Missional leadership has also been charged with equipping the whole of the faith community to live all facets of life according to the gospel of Jesus Christ, reaching out to one another AND to the whole world. (DRC, 2013:16)

The question then being asked is, “In what way is the church’s theological training assisting the development and nourishment of this type of missional leadership?” (DRC, 2013:16). The current theological education of the DRC has already been discussed and in what way the church’s theological training can assist in the formation of this type of leadership will be discussed in chapter 3. The policy document states that theological training has to pay attention to the following aspects of missional leadership (DRC, 2013:16):

- **Discernment:** A theological understanding of discernment and assisting of students in their spiritual development. This includes training regarding processes surrounding listening. Discernment is at the very heart of Christian leadership, as leadership has everything to do with a communal discernment of the future that the Spirit is inviting the faith community into. This also implies teaching students to understand the Scriptures from within a consistent/logical missional hermeneutic.
- **Cultivating culture:** The development of knowledge and skills that have to do with cultivating culture – especially the cultivation of a culture where God’s work in the congregation and in the context of the congregation is discerned. Knowledge and skills regarding the nature of cultural change is also a necessity.
- **Communal discernment:** Discernment takes place within the context of the faith community. It is for this reason that things like insight into the functioning of networks and the process of communal discernment need to receive special attention. Seeing as this also affects things such as teamwork, insight into the dynamics and synergy of teams, and synergogy (where knowledge is attained in a group through working together in teams).
- **Leading transformation:** Leadership development implies that leaders are being equipped with skills with which to both understand and lead the process of transformation.
- **Discerning God’s preferred future:** Missional leadership is all about understanding and describing God’s preferred future. A missional leader accompanies and encourages the congregation in their active striving towards

becoming a dedicated part of God's mission in the world, on the way to His future. Leadership development will thus need to give special attention to eschatology.

- Missional spirituality: One of the most important aspects is the formation of missional spirituality.
- Innovation: Leadership development for missional churches emphasises innovation – i.e. training that encourages creativity and imagination. This also has to do with the power of metaphors, narratives, and the ability to ask open-ended, creative questions.

According to the DRC, these are significant aspects of theological training for missional leadership. Suffice to say, although the DRC intends to reshape theological education, the current theological education of the DRC does not yet reflect the changes in the DRC's ecclesiology and is not sufficient for training missional leaders. The DRC's theological education needs to be transformed.

This concludes the first section. The first section dealt with the actual situation in the DRC, the current theological education, by using the guiding questions of Hermans and Schoeman (2015). The facts were pointed out by describing the DRC's current theological education, specifically at the University of Pretoria, by looking at the DRC Church Order, the Faculty of Theology and Religion, church specific education, and continued ministry development. A few preliminary conclusions were made to indicate what is most problematic for the problem-owner and there was also referred to the context of theological education in South Africa that should be taken into account. Last, the change in the DRC's ecclesiology and the consequences for theological education was noted. This made the problem, and the extent of the problem, evident. The process of missional transformation still has a long way to go and while one of the key factors to make missional transformation possible, is missional leadership, missional leadership requires some sort of equipping, training or education. This is thus one of the main areas that need attention for this process of missional transformation. Cultivating leaders to guide, transform and equip the church in these unique times. This brings us to the second section of this chapter – the desired situation.

2.2 D_component

The second section deals with the desired situation in the DRC – theological education that serves the church by forming missional leaders. This is the D_component of the action problem. In this section the desired situation will be described by using Hermans and Schoeman's (2015:30-31) guiding questions:

- What is our dream of the future of our congregation?
- What do we want to do (practise) to be able to shape this future?
- What would be the nature of this desired (future) practise?

The DRC realised that being church means being missional. A missional ecclesiology implies missional DRC congregations. The DRC desires to be a church that does not exist for itself, but (i) is focused on the community, (ii) inspires all members to take part in the *missio Dei*, and (iii) has missional leaders to equip members to live missional lives. Thus, theological education plays a crucial role in the formation of congregational leaders, requires a curriculum and methodology that is missional formation.

In this section, theological education as the formation of missional leaders will be described by reflecting on the guiding questions mentioned above. What follows then, is a description of missional DRC congregations, missional leadership as crucial for the formation of missional congregations and theological education as the formation of missional leaders.

2.2.1 Missional DRC congregations

The DRC's policy document, affirming her missional ecclesiology, describes new insights on congregations. The document states the importance of the local congregation when it comes to a missional understanding of the church, where God is engaging with the local community. The policy document maintains (DRC, 2013:9):

God is present and is at work in His world. One of the ways in which God works is through his congregation. Any reflection on God, the Kingdom and context draws the attention to congregations. Congregations are God's instrumental gifts in helping the world reach God's final destination and fulfilment. Congregations are the first frontier of the gospel. (DRC, 2013:9)

The local congregation is more than an assembly point once a week and a space for personal growth and strengthening of one's faith. The policy document establishes that the emphasis is not on the institutional church, but on the local expression of the body of Christ (DRC, 2013:9). This means that the church can be found wherever there is a community of faith that lives out their faith in concrete ways. According to Cordier (2014:55), God has a unique calling for each congregation in their local setting, the focus is not on a congregation that sends missionaries out into the world, but on God's mission in the immediate, local context of the congregation. The vital distinction the policy document makes is between the church as a formal structure or organisation and the church as an organism. "The church is not its formal structure, offices, buildings, orders or activities – the church is a movement" (DRC, 2013:10). Newbigin (1989:227) asserts that Jesus did not write a book, Jesus formed a community. For the church to be understood as a community and a movement, there cannot be a separation between the sacred and secular. The policy document indicates that all believers are full-time representatives of Christ in all aspects of their lives and everywhere they find themselves and the formal church gatherings are not holy gatherings, but merely an opportunity to train together, to be empowered and equipped to be full-time witnesses (DRC, 2013:10). This means that local congregations should reject "an introverted concern for their own life, and recognise that they exist for the sake of those who are not members, as sign and instrument, and foretaste of God's redeeming grace for the whole life of society" (Newbigin, 1989:233).

The policy document thus describes congregations as missional from within their very being and nature. This identity determines everything a congregation does. Niemandt (2019:12) also stresses the importance of starting with the character of the church and only when nature and character are established can the purpose and the scope of its ministries be attended to. As stated above, the church *is*, the church *does* what it is, the church *organises* what it does. The development of a missional ecclesiology in the DRC then calls for the transformation of congregations. This is an immense task and not possible without the right impetus or driving force. This is where leadership comes in. Leadership flows from how the church is organised and also attends to the nature and character or calling of the church. Niemandt (2019:12) illustrates the flow of the argument with a diagram (see Figure 2.2).

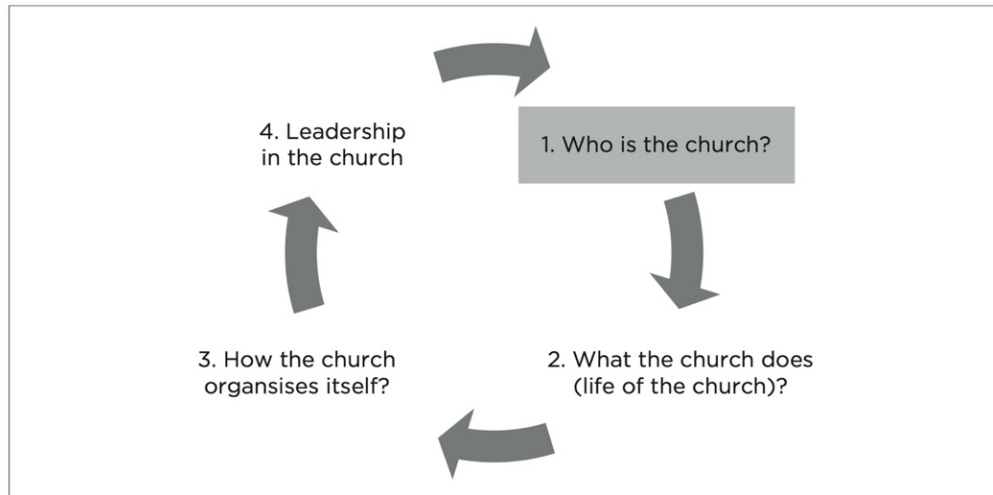


Figure 2.2: From identity to leadership (Niemandt, 2019:12)

As shown by this diagram, leadership plays a critical role in the process of missional transformation. When it comes to discerning who the church is, but also when it comes to the life of the church and how the church organises itself within a local community.

Unfortunately, current congregational leaders lack the right skills and capacities to bring about this transformation. “The key to the formation of missional communities is their leadership... Leadership is a critical gift, provided by the Spirit because, as the Scriptures demonstrate, fundamental change in any body of people requires leaders capable of transforming its life and being transformed themselves” (Guder 1998:183). Leadership is the most significant contributing factor when it comes to the formation of a missional congregational culture (Cordier, 2014:186). Niemandt (2015:3) states that there is no missional transformation without missional leadership. “If we really want missional church, then we must have a missional leadership system to drive it – it’s that simple” (Hirsch, 2006:152). And opposed to the necessity of missional leadership, the problem with traditional leadership is not only that it will not contribute, but that it can hinder and obstruct the process of missional transformation. Leadership is the determining factor when it comes to how a congregation functions, the priorities and focus areas and ultimately how a congregation sees herself, her identity.

To achieve this desired situation, missional congregations in the DRC, the significance of missional congregational leaders cannot be denied. What follows is a description of missional leadership.

2.2.2 Missional leadership

It has been made clear that missional leadership in the process of missional transformation is indispensable. There are various definitions of what this type of leadership entails. Cordier & Niemandt (2015:5) describes the essence of a missional leader as a cultivator of congregational culture. Doornenbal (2012:200) gives a more comprehensive definition of missional leadership:

Missional leadership as the conversational processes of envisioning, cultural and spiritual formation, and structuring within a Christian community that enable individual participants, groups, and the community as a whole to respond to challenging situations and engage in transformative changes that are necessary to become, or remain, oriented to God's mission in the local context. (Doornenbal, 2012:200)

Guder (2015:142) defines missional leadership as equipping people for God's mission, "the formation of the community's worthy walk." According to Newbigin (1989:238), this task of missional leadership is about "leading the congregation as a whole in a mission to the community as a whole... It means equipping all the members of the congregation to understand and fulfil their several roles in this mission through their faithfulness in their daily work".

These definitions help to understand the role of missional leadership, but more important for this research is the capacities of missional leadership. This section will therefore not attempt to provide an ultimate or new definition of missional leadership but will focus on the capacities of missional leadership and how it can be acquired. To understand these capacities, it is particularly important to reflect on the authority of missional leadership as it differs from the traditional understanding of leadership.

2.2.2.1 Authority and missional leadership

The critical role of leadership in the process of missional transformation is not seated in the leader's authority. Van Saane (2012:32) remarks that leaders are always in a position of power: "*Macht en invloed horen onlosmakelijk bij leiders.*" But this power has to do with the influence leaders have, not with authority. Current congregational leaders in the DRC play a central role in congregational ministry and as such will play a central role in the process of transformation of these congregations. Congregational leaders are a determining factor because of the position granted to them, culturally and historically, and if a congregational leader for some or other reason does not buy into the theology of the process, or is not actively

involved in it, or unwilling to change, or does not have the necessary capacities for the complex and demanding process of transformation, the process is doomed in advance (Cordier, 2014:103). The transformation of a congregation starts with the transformation of the congregational leader (Cordier, 2014:103). They have *influence*. But this influence has more to do with being an example than with being a power figure. This is where missional leadership comes in.

Missional leadership should rather be understood as leaders being ‘first followers’. Jesus says ‘follow me’ more than twenty times and in all four gospels. “First followers feel the Jesus way, share the Jesus truth, and live the Jesus life” (Sweet 2012:3). Sweet (2012:20) explains that the fundamental identity is not about being a leader, but being a follower of Jesus. Within a missional ecclesiology, this description highlights the importance of discerning where God is working in the world and to follow Him and to participate in what He is doing. With this in mind, authority first has to be understood as *derived* authority, and second as a *shared* authority.

The way the church is organised has never been without persons in positions of authority and this necessitates a reflection on the way authority and power relate to leadership in the organisation of the church (Niemandt, 2019:56). What authority does missional leadership have when it comes to the missional transformation of congregations? The fundamental starting point is the *missio Dei*. The mission is God’s – authority comes from God. Mission is defined by the authority of Jesus, and Christian mission is to act out this authoritative confession that Jesus is Lord of all in the whole life of the whole world (Niemandt, 2019:60). Newbigin writes about the question of authority raised at the very onset of the ministry of Jesus (Matthew 7:29). “The authority of Jesus is not derived authority; it is the authority of God himself present in the midst of human history” (Newbigin, 1995:14). The church has authority to execute the commandments of Jesus (Viljoen, 2012:1). Christ extends his authority to the church. “Jesus’ authority comes from God, and the church’s authority comes from Jesus...” (Van Kooten & Barrett, 2004:141). Niemandt (2019:63) also states that the extended authority is not intended to give power to the agents of authority in the church, “authority must be understood in terms of service and the beneficial application of power. Leaders receive authority as a gift, and exercise the gift through worship, submission, trust and dependence on the Lord.” The authority of missional leaders is thus *derived* from the authority of Jesus and for the mission of God.

How missional leadership functions should then be understood as *derived* authority that is *shared*. Missional authority does not reside in an individual or office but in God Himself who gives the faith community a community of leaders to exercise in a variety of positions and

offices the missionary authority needed for the faith-discerning journey (Cordier, 2014:93). Missional authority is seated and shared in the faith community. Doornenbal (2012:177) also reflects on power and authority and points out the division of the ordained and laity in faith communities: “Ideally, authority and power are not institutional, positional or based on academic credentials. This means that authority and power are not vested in an ordained clergy, denominational staff, self-proclaimed ‘experts’ or an intellectual elite.” Cole (2009:180) puts it simply by stating that distributed (or shared) authority is when power is given to others without regard to their position. This is an unusual way of understanding authority. Cordier (2014:92) points out that leadership within a missional ecclesiology fulfils a function radically different from that of the traditional definition of leadership. “The chasm between the church’s understanding of authority and that of the dominant culture is much wider than we realised” (Van Kooten & Barrett, 2004:139). When it comes to missional leadership the emphasis should fall on sharing and distribution (Doornenbal, 2012:179). And because missional authority does not reside in an individual or office, Cordier (2014:93) stresses the important focus missional leadership should have on the broadening and deepening of leadership in the faith community.

The authority of missional leadership derived and shared, infers that the church is organised by communal discernment. The organisation of the church is thus not dependent on the guidance of ordained leaders but rather guided by missional values. The church can be described as a value-based community of disciples (Gibbs, 2005:39). Niemandt (2019:58) points out the following values of a missional church as described in *Mission-shaped Church* (The Archbishops’ Council 2004):

- A missionary church is focused on God the Trinity. Such a church worships and serves a missionary God, and understands itself to share in the divine mission.
- A missionary church is incarnational. It seeks to shape itself in relation to the culture in which it is located or to which it is called.
- A missionary church is transformational. A missionary church exists for the transformation of the community that it serves, through the power of the gospel and the Holy Spirit. It is not self-serving, self-seeking or self-focused.
- A missionary church makes disciples. It is active in calling people to faith in Jesus Christ, and it is equally committed to the development of a consistent Christian lifestyle appropriate to, but not withdrawn from, the culture or cultures in which it operates.

- A missionary church is relational. In a missionary church, a community of faith is being formed. It is characterised by welcome and hospitality.

Niemandt (2019:59) also points out the values added by the DRC in the 2013 policy document:

- The church's primary focus is on the world, not on the church and the survival of the church.
- The church practices a *kenotic* existence, a self-emptying life. Although this may demand much, it is understood as a solemn duty and privilege.
- A missional church accepts responsibility towards the whole of God's creation.
- To understand these capacities, it is particularly important to reflect on the authority of missional leadership as it differs from the traditional understanding of leadership.

Authority understood as derived and with these values as guidance, the critical role of missional leadership lies in a leader being the first person to be transformed and to live out this Jesus life. Discerning where God is working in the world and helping others to discern. And by doing this cultivating an environment where others can be transformed. "Authority and values interact to create a social community. The values not only legitimate authority but also guide how the community live together" (Niemandt, 2019:59). Leaders cultivate an environment where a community can live together in this way. These guiding values for the organisation of a missional church require leadership with certain capacities, different from the capacities leaders currently acquire through theological education.

2.2.2.2 The capacities of missional leadership

Capacities of missional leadership refer to the capability of a congregational leader to bring about missional transformation. Capacities can refer to knowledge, skills, attitudes and/or habits. Cordier (2014) identifies four core capacities in his thesis *Core capacities of the reverend as missional leader in the formation of a missional congregation culture*.²¹ Cordier makes it clear that these capacities are radically different from the capacities

²¹ 'Kernkapasitete van die predikant as missionale leier in die vorming van 'n missionale gemeentekultuur'

congregational leaders are traditionally trained for. Cordier's capacities will now be discussed and applied in this research.

Cordier, as a congregational leader, searched for the essence of missional leadership against the *South African Partnership of Missional Churches* (SAPMC) background. Ten DRC congregations, the Bureau for Continued Theological Education and Research (BUVTON – later *Ekklesia* and *Communitas*) and the *Partnership for Missional Churches* (PMC) in the United States started this partnership. The SAPMC started in 2004, six years after Guder's book, *Missional Church* (1998), and within nine years the policy document on missional ecclesiology was unanimously adopted by the General Synod of the DRC (Marias, 2017:65). The SAPMC had a significant influence on the DRC's resolve to make missional transformation a high priority. "The growth of re-envisioned missional congregations and governance structures is closely linked to the work of the Southern African Partnership for Missional Churches (SAPMC)" (Mouton, 2017:158). The partnership, focused on finding practical ways to expose congregations to the missional vision, used four phases that build different capacities (Marias, 2017:66):

Phase 1: Discovery – building the capacity to listen

Phase 2: Engagement – building the capacity to take risks

Phase 3: Visioning – building the capacity to focus, and

Phase 4: Practice and growth – building the capacity to learn and grow

The goal of these four phases was to equip congregational leaders with the capacities needed for the missional transformation of congregations. A fifth capacity was also built throughout the process – sharing and mentoring (Mouton, 2017:166). These capacities are interdependent and necessary for discernment and discerning leadership (Cordier, 2014:71-72).

Most of the current DRC congregational leaders are not equipped with these skills and capacities and thus are not able to bring about transformation. The main reason might be that the role of congregational leadership and ecclesiology, over the years, did not require these skills and capacities. Cordier (2014:97-99) points out the paradigm shifts in congregational leadership and where we are now. According to him, the biblical understanding of congregational leadership falls on being an apostle. Leadership in the Christendom era shifted from apostle to priest and the missional identity of the church drifted into the background. During the Reformation, it shifted from priest to pedagogue. This educational identity was built around congregational leaders seen as custodians and protectors of the

Word. The Enlightenment caused a shift from pedagogue to professional. Posing new challenges regarding the church's place in society and causing congregational leaders to react to the new status of reason – religious leaders as a professional among others and theological faculties as equals to the other empirical sciences.

New shifts in this professional paradigm include urbanisation, globalisation and demographic diversity. This caused the church to shift from the public to the private and individual spheres. Cordier (2014:99-100) explains that the current role of congregational leadership is now seated in (1) the congregational leader as a counsellor, a shift from the theocentric to anthropocentric where the ecclesiology is determined by human distress, (2) the congregational leader as a manager, focused on maximising organisational effectiveness in attending to the spiritual needs of consumers and the main goal being numerical growth, and (3) the congregational leader as a technician, with the idea that the right tools and skills make it possible to achieve desired results and finding the right technique will realise the missional vision or strategic goals. The idea is that this type of congregational leadership will be effective in helping the church to regain her central role in the culture of the day.

Missional ecclesiology should shift the understanding of congregational leadership from this professional paradigm to congregational leadership that is missional. And this type of leadership requires certain core capacities outside of the current skill set of these professional congregational leaders. In his research, Cordier identified four core capacities that a missional leader needs for the transformation of congregational culture. These core capacities can serve as guiding capacities that theological education needs to address and will now be described.

(1) A congregational leader as apostle

Being a missional leader starts with being an apostle. This is the first core capacity and the foundation of the other capacities. "The congregational minister first and foremost lives and modulates the spirituality, values, practices, and habits of a missional lifestyle" (Cordier & Niemandt, 2015:6). This first capacity is about spirituality. Spirituality does not refer to the 'spiritual' part of life, but an orientation towards life. Venter (2020:167) states that the spirituality formed as a disciple of Jesus "lays claim on your whole life and develops emotional maturity, wisdom, a new lifestyle, and a Kingdom-oriented attitude." A missional congregational leader, as stated above, leads by being the first to follow Jesus. And it comes down to a way of life, a lived experience, a mode of being. Being an apostle is not an aspect of a congregational leader's life, but determines the congregational leader's life.

This means that the subsequent is crucial for a congregational leader, as an individual and as part of a ministry team (Cordier & Niemandt, 2015:6):

- Undergoing a ‘missional conversion’;
- That they are carried by a missional calling and vision;
- Discerning their missional vocation and living a life in the presence of God;
- Practising spiritual disciplines; and
- Being formed in totality through Scripture as disciples of Jesus Christ.

The ‘missional conversion’ can also be described as missional transformation. This once again underlines that if a congregational leader wants to bring about transformation, he or she first has to be transformed. To be transformed and to live in a ‘new’ way. “The place of leadership is to be at the front of the community, living out the implications and actions of the missional church of God, so all can see what it looks like to be the people of God” (Van Kooten & Barrett, 2004:148). Venter (2020:166-167) explains that it is not about having a set of beliefs, it is about a missional spirituality, and this capacity found, precedes and feeds all other capacities of missional leadership.

The first core capacity makes all the other capacities possible. Being a missional leader means being an apostle and living a missional lifestyle.

(2) A congregational leader as theologian and cultivator of language

The congregational leader is responsible for cultivating missional language. “We attempt to make sense of ultimate reality by way of narrative” (Niemandt, 2019:141). Language and stories give shape and meaning to our world. “Storytelling – both fiction and nonfiction, for good and for ill – will continue to define the world” (Murdoch, 2015:n.p.). It does not only define our world, narratives have the power to be transformative. Stories challenge our preconceptions and change how we view the world.

Niemandt (2019:142) points out that the primary *genre* of biblical witness is narrative and refers to Conradie (2015:113) explaining that the actions of the Trinity in history has a narrative structure – the observation that God creates history implies that God’s mission, God’s engagement in history, has a narrative structure. Stories, not theological concepts, are at the heart of what God did and is doing in the world. Niemandt (2019:143) remarks that Christian theology is all about storytelling. Conradie (2015:111) states:

Theology can be described as a retelling, retrieving, reinterpreting and re-enacting the integral story of God's creative, nourishing, hurt, enduring, salvific, innovating and consummating love for the world which God has brought into being. (Conradie, 2015:111)

The congregational leader is responsible for this retelling, retrieving, reinterpreting and re-enacting. The congregational leader gives shape to the narrative and this is especially important at the beginning of the process of missional transformation. Cordier & Niemandt (2015:7) notes that the first stage is about cultivating the concepts and language of missional church and providing the theological foundation of missional church. And when it comes to transformation, these powerful narratives play a fundamental role. "Deep change in the culture of these systems demands powerful narratives and imaginative language" (Niemandt, 2019:142). Missional transformation is not possible without missional language. The missional leader must cultivate an environment that helps people to connect their experience with and ground their lives in the bigger story they are a part of (Roxburgh & Romanuk, 2006:69). Helping God's people to see the overarching narrative. Niemandt (2019:145) states:

Missional leaders are the first followers who understood the gospel story and are able to re-tell it in a new context. They live in the biblical narratives and shape their lives and the community of disciples in terms of these stories to construct new language houses. (Niemandt, 2019:145)

This capacity emphasises not only the importance of missional language and narratives but of metaphors, imagination and creativity. Missional leaders are formed by the gospel story and able to cultivate this missional language house.

Venter (2020:169-170) also refers to the importance of missional language and describes it as sensemaking:

Sensemaking is the hermeneutical ability or skill of a transformative leader(s) to present clear links between the gospel of Jesus Christ (Bible text) and the local context in which the faith community finds themselves. The hermeneutical skill of 'sensemaking' connects the biblical insights that are discovered in discernment with other believers in the work and presence of God in the daily real world of the faith community. (Venter, 2020:169-170)

Sensemaking is thus twofold. It is about faith-discernment, interpreting the Word of God, on the one hand, and considering everything that is going on in the world and a congregation's community and context on the other (Venter, 2020:170). Discernment is a vital part of sensemaking. "Discernment takes place in the territory of 'in-between' our physical, rational experience of our reality in the world and our belief in the presence and mission of the Trinitarian God in the whole world" (Venter, 2020:170). Discernment and sensemaking then guide the congregational leader in decisions, actions, habits and culture-making (Venter, 2020:170).

The second core capacity is about the process of sensemaking and cultivating missional language. Being a missional leader means being a storyteller that inspires and connects us to the bigger story we are a part of.

(3) A congregational leader as a facilitator of the process of adaptive cultural change

The congregational leader is a facilitator, a role very different from the traditional role congregational leaders played. As a facilitator of a process of missional transformation, a process of adaptive cultural change, a congregational leader will have the following functions (Cordier & Niemandt, 2015:7-8):

- Commits to missional church himself and sets the challenge;
- Builds and empowers a coalition of leaders to take joint responsibility for the process;
- Cultivates the practices and habits necessary for the formation of a missional culture, such as dwelling in the Word, dwelling in the world, crossing boundaries, taking risks, welcoming strangers, and cultivating an environment for listening to others in free speech and discussion;
- Keeps the leadership in the process of spiritual discernment; and
- Sees that the different congregational ministries and goals are integrated towards achieving the missional vocation, while at the same time ensuring that balance is maintained and current traditions and expectations are respected.

Missional leadership as a facilitator means making way for the Spirit to take the lead and to also be immersed in the process of missional transformation and cultural change. To be changed first and to be changed alongside your faith community. Venter (2020:173) explains

that the congregational leader should seek God's guidance and follow God's lead rather than focus on a rational plan and that the congregational leader should listen and be aware of people's needs and the community around the church. The process is not about getting a new system in place, but rather returning to the simple ways of being church or being a faith community. "Formation of a missional mindset is not primarily a matter of technique or programme. It is formation of a people in the habits and practices of Christian life" (Roxburgh & Romanuk, 2006:34). Niemandt (2019:200) also states that it is more about formation than control, more directing than organising. It is not about thorough and rigid planning that has to be carried out, but rather to discern and to be open to what God is doing and to cultivate an environment for others to join in. Missional leadership is about cultivating transformation – to mobilise energy, loyalty and commitment in the community of disciples to serve God's Kingdom and participate in God's mission (Niemandt, 2019:205). This core capacity once again stipulates that missional leaders first have to be transformed to be able to facilitate the adaptive change of missional transformation.

The third core capacity is about the process of discerning and facilitating the process of adaptive cultural change. Being a missional leader means being open to the Spirit's guidance and transformation.

(4) A congregational leader as spiritual director and mentor

There is an important shift from congregational leaders as an organiser and manager to a congregational leader as a spiritual leader responsible for spiritual formation (Cordier & Niemandt, 2015:8). The former focused on maintenance and effectiveness and the latter focused on discernment and discipleship. The second type of leadership thus involves these two aspects, closely related (Cordier & Niemandt, 2015:8):

- Spiritual discernment – The minister as a spiritual leader himself possesses the ability to discern and to establish spiritual discernment as a practice amongst the leadership team and the congregation; and
- Faith formation and discipleship – The minister as a spiritual leader himself lives a lifestyle of discipleship and focuses on the spiritual coaching and formation of members within the congregation towards Biblical formation and discipleship.

Becoming this type of leader is not about following a programme teaching useful technical skills, this process is a life journey that considers the basic nature of the person as a leader

(Roxburgh & Romanuk, 2006:141). That means that who the leader is, is more important than what the leader can do. Who the leader is, has an ongoing influence on the faith community and the leader in this sense serves as a spiritual director and mentor.

Although all these capacities are significant and demanding, Cordier & Niemandt (2015:9) states that it is clear the shift towards 'spiritual leadership' is the most challenging for the current congregational leader. They identified the challenge as twofold. First, spiritual leadership requires capacities which historically were not part and parcel of the formation and training of the congregational leader. Second, congregational leaders experience huge resistance from congregants because they expect the traditional way of being church, established through the ages, to be kept intact by the congregational leader.

The first challenge brings us to the interest of this study, the congregational leader is not trained or formed to be spiritual leaders, a capacity necessary for missional transformation. This is not something that can be acquired overnight or by attending an extra course. And this challenge is not only about learning and training in a new way, but it is also about unlearning and un-training – not falling back on old ways of doing that is irrelevant for today and detrimental for being missional. Training and being formed in a new way that helps congregational leaders to acquire these capacities, they might then also be better equipped to address the second challenge posed.

The fourth core capacity is about the shift from manager and organiser to spiritual director and mentor. Being a missional leader means being a guide in the process of transformation.

This concludes the description of the four core capacities, identified by Cordier, for missional congregational leadership that is transformational. Cordier made it clear that congregational leaders are not traditionally trained for these capacities and that these capacities are necessary for congregational leaders to be able to bring about the formation and transformation of missional congregations. Cordier also made it clear that the capacities are not focused on doing, but on being. Being missional leaders means living a missional lifestyle, inspiring others to live a missional lifestyle, being open to the Spirit's guidance and transformation, and being a guide in the process of transformation. *Being* a missional leader requires a missional spirituality as fundamental to these missional capacities.

2.2.3 Theological education as the formation of missional leaders

Equipping congregational leaders and forming missional leaders for the transformation of local congregations is key if the DRC wants to be true to her missional ecclesiology. Goheen

(2016c:303-304) states that if the church is missional, then theology has to equip the church for its vocation – this should *inform the content* and *shape the goal* of theology. Theological education can and should result in the formation of missional leaders. As stated above, theological training or education for missional leadership implies that leaders should be equipped with the skills to understand and lead transformation, should understand and be able to describe God’s preferred future (discernment), and one of the most important aspects should be the formation of a missional spirituality. This also became evident in Cordier’s four core capacities. This is the desired situation.

Unfortunately, the actual situation for the current theological education programme and curriculum, is not sufficient and not up to the task. What follows is a preliminary description of theological education that is focused on the formation of missional congregational leaders. First, with regard to a missionally oriented curriculum and second, with regard to the appropriate methodology.

2.2.3.1 Missionally oriented curriculum

The missional nature and calling of the church should inform the content of theological education. Theological education that is missional formation needs a curriculum with content that has an overall missional point of departure. Missional content alone is not enough for the formation of missional leaders, but theological disciplines without this missional dimension has lost its purpose.

As seen in chapter 1, during the Christendom era the focus of theology shifted to Christian doctrines and knowledge about God and the missional dimension of theology was eventually lost. This theological paradigm formed the basis of the current traditional theological curriculum. The fourfold curriculum, developed by Protestants in the European context after the Reformation, still serves as the standard curriculum today and breaks theological education into these disciplines: Biblical Studies, Church History, Systematic Theology and Practical Theology (Van Gelder, 2009:35). This curriculum was distributed to the rest of the world, uncritically adopted and locally implemented and, except for changes regarding new resources and the eventual addition of the discipline of Missiology, this is what we have at the Faculty of Theology and Religion at the University of Pretoria today (as seen above in the DRC Church Order Regulation 11). Goheen (2016c:306) explains that while the gospel has universal validity, theology is not supra-cultural. “Missional theology rejects the notion of a *theologia perennis* – a timeless theology valid for all times and places – and is alert to all theology taking place in particular historical and cultural contexts” (Goheen, 2016c:306).

Guder (2016:291) states that these inherited forms of theological education call for reorienting ways of learning and interpreting history.

It can be perilous to try and preserve the theological curriculum simply because it is the established and the conventional curriculum. When this curriculum was founded the goal of theological education was more mastery than missional service and today we are still educating “masters” of divinity (Guder, 2016:293). The aim of theological education is not delivering qualified graduates, professional clergy, or experts in the organisation and maintenance of congregations. The aim of theological education and doing theology needs to be re-evaluated. Guder (2016:290) argues that the missional calling of congregations, the place where these graduates will serve, need to guide the educational goals and the design of the curriculum. If God is a sending God, and the purpose of the church is to take part in the *missio Dei*, then theology and theological education as a whole should support and advance the church’s mission.

Mission is the heart of theology. Missiology as an appendage to the theological curriculum or simply studying missiology as a sub-discipline of theology is insufficient. The theological education curriculum should have an overall missional point of departure. Goheen (2016c:304-305) asserts that theological education should move beyond a theology of mission to a missional theology – not a sub-discipline of theological reflection but defining all theological reflection that is faithful to Scripture. This thus impacts all theological reflection and the whole theological education curriculum.

The first task of a missional curriculum is to define a unifying and directing core (Goheen, 2016c:310). Bringing all the disciplines, which can so easily function in isolation, together with one goal or purpose. For Goheen (2016c:310) this core consists of four threads woven together in a single cord, a dynamic between the (i) gospel, (ii) biblical story, (ii) mission, and (iii) missionary encounter with culture. A missional curriculum does not imply abandoning the traditional curriculum but concerns the reframing of current courses and disciplines. With this reframing and unifying and directing core, an important distinction has to be made. Goheen (2016c:314) applies Newbigin’s distinction between missional dimension and missional intention to theological education: “Some – but not all – subjects in the curriculum *intentionally* deal with various issues of mission. Yet all theological subjects should have a missional *dimension*.” Another important distinction for him is between the *goal* and *content* of theology. The goal is to equip the church for its missional calling and the formation of missional congregational leaders, but theological education must also be formed in its content by the central theme of mission (Goheen, 2016c:314-315).

The *content* of theological education, being formed by the gospel, denotes the importance of a missional hermeneutic. “It is the power and purpose of the word of God to guide and shape the community’s life, its practices, and its thinking so that it can be faithful to its calling” (Guder, 2016:296). This means that Scripture has formative power. How we read, interpret and study Scripture has significant consequences for our understanding of the church’s mission and formation of missional leaders. Guder (2016:297) expounds on the implications of a missional hermeneutic for theological education: “The missional reading and interpretation of Scripture must reshape theological education so that the community of saints may be equipped through their encounter with the written word of God.” It is important to develop and teach a missional hermeneutic that informs the foundation of our theological education. Scripture has formative power in the way the Spirit works through them to continue the apostolic mission (Guder, 2016:286).

The *goal* of theological education, for the sake of the world, means the emphasis should shift from knowledge about the Bible and Christian doctrines to a focus on the world, the missionary field, and the integration of this knowledge. Knowledge is not negligible, but a means to an end. “All these disciplines come together in field education that connect what is learned in the classroom with what goes on in concrete congregations and concrete circumstances” (Bevans, 2015:105). A dialogue between theory and practice plays an important role in this regard. And it means that in a missional curriculum there cannot be a distinction between theoretical and practical subjects. This dualism is deeply problematic because it does severe damage to the preparation of congregational leaders. “When theoretical reflection is lifted out of its living context and given a life of its own, knowledge becomes abstract, divorced from its contextual source” (Goheen, 2016c:325). Theological education is the reflection on missional practice that gives meaning to the agenda; theological education helps to keep the focus on God as the primary agent; theological education helps to deconstruct the colonial missionary legacy; and theological education is (or should be) missional practice (de Gruchy, 2010:46-50). Guder (2016:288) states:

The purpose of apostolic mission was not to generate professional apostles or ordained ministers; nor was it the purpose of their proclamation merely to save souls. The apostolic mission was to form gathered and sent communities who would continue the witness to God’s salvation in Christ that had brought them into existence in the first place. (Guder, 2016:288)

With all of this in mind, theological education with a missional curriculum – being formed by the gospel and for the sake of the world – requires the addition of two sections or components. Goheen (2016c:327) reasons that the current curriculum has neglected areas of theological education that is indispensable when it comes to the formation of congregational leaders, namely cultural studies and spiritual formation. The acquirement of the core capacities that missional leadership entails, as shown by Cordier, can perhaps be addressed by the addition of these two sections or components.

Theology is about a specific time and place, theology has a contextual nature. “In every new situation, our faith seeks to comprehend what the living God requires of us” (Hendriks, 2004:27). The gospel is not an abstract concept. “The gospel is always embodied and expressed in some cultural context... A study of culture, therefore, cannot be an optional extra in theological education” (Goheen, 2016c:328). Theological education should be context-driven. “The focus from the first moment of training being on equipping and enabling the local Christian community in mission” (Harrison, 2017:347). The second core capacity that Cordier points out, *a congregational leader as theologian and cultivator of language*, implies that a congregational leader needs to be deeply aware of the local culture and context. Cultivating missional language is about retelling the gospel in a new context. The third core capacity that Cordier points out, *the congregational leader as a facilitator of the process of adaptive cultural change*, also implies that congregational leaders should be aware of the local culture and context as this capacity has to do with transforming culture. Cultural studies are significant for the formation of missional congregational leaders. Cultural studies need to equip students in the following ways (Goheen, 2016c:328-329):

- Deepening insight into the cultural story that shaped the worldview at work today.
- Carefully noting the way a religious vision unifies and shapes the various elements of a culture.
- Examining the current spiritual currents of culture.
- Noting how these currents shape the institutions and structures of the culture.
- Asking how cultural worldview is shaping church life.
- Probing pastoral ways of dealing with church members whose lives are woven into these idolatrous patterns.

The other section or component is spiritual formation. Spirituality is vital to the formation of missional congregational leaders. If congregational leaders must be examples in the way

they live, then the emphasis placed on the intellectual formation of students is inadequate (Goheen, 2016c:329):

Dealing with prayer and family life, for example, within the curriculum will be important. But the importance of spiritual formation arises at other points in the curriculum. For example, we often reduce hermeneutics to a methodological analysis of text. However, if interpreting Scripture is a matter of listening to God's address in Scripture, and if the various hermeneutical techniques are part of hearing God, then our hermeneutics courses must do more than simply teach a theological dimension of the text. Many good seminary graduates master hermeneutical methods, yet never acquire the spiritual disposition to hear God speak. (Goheen, 2016c:329)

Spirituality is not the mystical or religious aspects of one's life, it is a way of life. Niemandt (2019:86) states that spirituality is about life and its deepest values and meaning. Spirituality is thus not confined to a student's private life, but central to a student's life. Students, becoming congregational leaders, have to be formed so that they can embody the gospel, be first followers and model a missional life. The significance of the formation of a missional spirituality as an integral part of the formation of a missional congregational leader can be seen in the core capacities pointed out by Cordier. The first capacity Cordier points out, *a congregational leader as an apostle*, indicates that if a congregational leader is to bring about transformation, he or she must first be transformed, living a missional lifestyle in spirituality, values, practices, and habits. The fourth capacity Cordier points out, *the congregational leader as spiritual director and mentor*, shifts the emphasis from organiser and manager to a spiritual leader responsible for spiritual formation. The importance of spiritual formation in the formation of missional leaders cannot be stressed enough. This brings us to the next section, the methodology of theological education.

2.2.3.2 Appropriate methodology

Theological education as the formation of missional leaders should be a process of holistic cultivation. Taking the core capacities of missional leadership into account, with spirituality as the central theme and a reconditioned emphasis on the local culture and context, the methodology of theological education is extremely important.

The current accepted methodology mainly focuses on the transfer and memorisation of information, which is then presented by the student for evaluation. Although this method encourages critical thinking, the emphasis remains on information rather than formation. A

methodological shortfall is created, wherein the educational formation is supplanted with the recitation of information. “Such an intellectualist model of the human person – one that reduces us to mere intellect – assumes that learning (and hence discipleship) is primarily a matter of depositing ideas and beliefs into mind-containers (Smith, 2016:3).” This reductionist style approaches the individual learner simply as a countenance of cognition. A student can therefore know all there is to know about the Christian religion, without being a Christian. A student can, after six years of studying theology, following the DRC’s curriculum, graduate *cum laude*, without being formed as a disciple or missional leader. Guder (2016:297) believes that the inherited tension in theological education that tends to separate intellectual discipline from personal spiritual formation, needs to be addressed. The shared life of the person who leads faith communities, the instrument of the apostolic mission, should receive as much attention as the seminary curriculum. “When students carry out their theological formation in intentional communities that integrate academic discipline with the corporate practices of spiritual growth, then their capacity truly to be equippers of the saints for the work of service is greatly enhanced” (Guder, 2016:297). As stated above, there is a void in theological education when it comes to the spiritual formation (the congregational leader as an apostle) and cultural studies (the local context where congregational leaders will serve their calling). The current methodological approach is limiting as it does not address the student holistically.

The formation of a missional spirituality, a missional way of life, means educating students holistically. Even though it is an improbable challenge for theological education to address all of the different aspects, a more integrated holistic approach under the hypernyms of mind, heart and practice are possible. Wall (2015:185-186) has a missional training approach that focuses on these three categories: head (cognitive, thinking, knowing and doing); heart (emotion, feeling and attitudes) and hands (relating, social). These broad categories take into account the person as a whole. Learning or formation is then understood as a combination of the cognitive, emotional and social dimensions through a process of acquisition that is interactive with others (Wall, 2015:185). We can no longer assume that learning or formation can take place in fragments. According to Harrison (2017:349):

Formation involves cultivating wisdom as well as providing information, shaping character as well as conveying content and ways of thinking, nurturing holiness as well as equipping with skills. It calls for educational goals that develop habits, perceptions, a way of being in the world, a kind of theological *habitus*, combined with a sense of personal wellness and growing spiritual maturity. Christian character and spirituality are integrated with intellectual learning here. (Harrison, 2017:349)

All learning and formation are interdependent. “In the dynamic relationship between love and knowledge, head and heart, the Scriptures paint a holistic picture of the human person. It is not only our minds that God redeems but the whole person: head, heart, hands” (Smith, 2016:9). Theological education for the formation of missional leaders ought to take a holistic approach to personal and spiritual formation. Following a holistic approach to formation, there is the possibility of missional formation that is rooted in the practice of habits. “We need an embodied missional spirituality expressed in rich liturgies, practices and life-giving disciplines. Discipleship is to carry the gospel into our lifestyle and our collective liturgies” (Niemandt, 2019:101). Kreider (2016) writes about the improbable rise of Christianity in the Roman Empire and the reason behind this. According to him, it was not a case of effective evangelisation, but the way people were formed as Christians. Being missional was second nature. “It was rooted in the habitus of the communities – their reflexive behaviour” (Kreider, 2016:126). Smith’s holistic approach to formation is also based on habitual practices of faith. Formation of the head, heart and hands, takes place through habits and rituals performed daily, the routines which unconsciously shapes consciousness. The brain prefers to take the easy route and any action or thought that is repeated, or tagged as important in any way, is hardcoded (Rock, 2006:12). These are the neurological pathways which are shaped and reshaped thousands of times by daily habits and these habits reinforce cognitive paradigms. Formation takes place to the extent that it is “inscribed in your very character” (Smith, 2016:17). These habits are formed through imitation and practice. Smith (2016:19) explains it as follows:

Such moral, kingdom-reflecting dispositions are inscribed into your character through rhythms and routines and rituals, enacted over and over again, that implant in you a disposition to an end (*telos*) that becomes a character trait – a sort of learned, second nature default orientation that you tend toward ‘without thinking about it’. (Smith, 2016:19)

These habits are formed in the real world. Therefore, the place and community where theological education is imparted are also of considerable importance. De Beer (2016:2) writes about doing theology in community and the questions and opportunities arising from this:

...how important is social location in determining the shape of our consciousness? Or at least having different locations, studios for action-reflection, where we consider our socio-theological constructs in conversation with local communities of struggle and transition. If we had to do theology on the Mamelodi Campus surrounded by the city's largest informal settlements, would the theologies we practice be different; the questions we raise; the epistemologies we embrace; the interpreters we invite; the eyes through which we look at the world. Or not? (De Beer, 2016:2)

A holistic approach has to take into account *where* theological education takes place. Education generally focuses on a curriculum and the content of its modules, instead of the learning community where just as much formation and learning is taking place (Baker, 2015:240). Theological education that mainly consists of lectures and formal classes at an isolated university or seminary tend to leave a gap between theory and practice. "Learning does not take place in a vacuum. Therefore, in designing and delivering training, educators must understand and engage with the context in which the training is taking place" (Wall, 2015:191). Theological education that is missional formation should shift its focus from the safe perimeter of the institution and congregation to the outside world. "It seems obvious that to prepare leaders for missional congregations, the curricula should be missional by nature, dedicating ample time to the witnessing task of the church and involvement in other spheres outside of the comfortable borders of the congregation or institution" (Du Preez, Hendriks & Carl, 2014:1). When it comes to theological education that is missionary formation, theory and practice are inseparable. De Gruchy (2010:42-46) once again calls for a dialogue between theological education and missional practice – missional practice orients theological education towards the world rather than the academy; missiological reflection and practice gives theological education purpose and direction; theology itself then emerges from the ground up; missiological practice mandates an adequate understanding of the world and its context. Naidoo (2010:347) states that "intentionality about formation and contextualisation can provide the integration of learning that can narrow the gap between theological education and Christian practice". Theological education that is missional formation is more than applied theology, it takes place within the community. The context is understood as the primary locus of theological education, not just as an add on to classroom learning (Harrison, 2017:347). "Learning theology, then, will have its starting point in the life of the Christian community as it strives to discern what God is doing in human history and how the church might be a sign and instrument of that saving presence" (Bevans, 2015:100). For this vital dialogue to take place

and for a holistic missional formation, the methodology of theological education, formed over years and captured by modernity and Christendom, needs to change.

We need new methods of theological education and cannot rely on the concept of simply repackaging old content in an endless cycle of revision. “It then calls on theological institutions to redesign their curricula to be more missional” (Lausanne III, 2011:52). Theological education that is missional formation is much more than missional content, it is about a methodology lending itself to formation rather than the mere transference of information. Theological education that is missional formation should have a holistic approach and should take the significance of spiritual formation and cultural studies into account.

According to Harrison (2017:347), there are significant shifts needed for developing theological education that is missional formation:

- Shifting the focus from theological education as training ministers to serve the church to training minister to enable the church to engage in the world.
- Training focused on equipping and enabling the local Christian community in mission.
- A syllabus that includes pass-on-able habits, skills, minimum knowledge base, and attitudes and beliefs as the core components – cultivating skills for life-long learning.
- Training and formation to equip the local church, and equipping the church to join in partnership in such training.

Mashau (2012:7-8) gives practical suggestions on how to place mission at the heart of theological training. These suggestions pertain to an appropriate methodology and a missionally oriented curriculum and can be taken into consideration when theological education is re-imagined.

- A paradigm shift concerning the purpose of doing theology is needed – It should be realised that the marginalising of missions and missiology is a symptom of a blurred focus on God and that there is a need for a reorientation of missiology as a theological discipline, but more so, the goal and purpose of all theological disciplines will have to be refocused on God and what God is doing in the world.
- A paradigm shift concerning God’s missional character is needed – The supremacy of God needs to be rediscovered in the practice of theology. The

doctrine of God should be taught with explicit reference to God's missional character.

- A paradigm shift concerning our understanding and our concept of the church – The church is missional by nature as a community participating in the mission of God. A missional ecclesiology grounded in the *missio Dei*.
- A paradigm shift is needed when it comes to the part the church plays in theological training – All theological training and ministerial formation must take place within the context of the local church, not in isolation. Theology is not an end in itself. And as such, all teaching staff must be ministers of the Word and actively involved in ministry.
- A paradigm shift with regard to student formation is needed – Student formation should take place with a discipleship model of training. This is a model of training that is holistic formation. A model informed by the priority of shaping the *head, heart and hands* of a student and enabling them to be a faithful witness of Christ. Local churches have to play a central role as a place where students can learn through field experience.
- A paradigm shift with regard to local context is needed – Internships should therefore be an integral part of theological training. Apart from this, more case studies considering the context of the day should also be an integral part of the curriculum. What is going on in the world, the mission field needs to be explored and discerned as part of theological education.
- A paradigm shift regarding the curriculum is needed – There should be a realignment of the curriculum of theological education or training with an overall missional point of departure. The reorientation of the theological curricula is critical – being intentional and orienting all modules to the biblical truth of the mission of God.

This concludes the preliminary description of theological education that is focused on the formation of missional congregational leaders. The formation of missional congregational leaders requires a missionally oriented curriculum and the appropriate methodology. It requires an academic programme with the necessary content and point of departure (curriculum) but also with the applicable presentation and practices (methodology).

This concludes the second section. The second section dealt with the desired situation in the DRC, theological education that serves the church by forming missional leaders, by

using the guiding questions of Hermans and Schoeman. The dream of the future, or desired situation, was described as missional DRC congregations. To achieve this end and to shape this future the significance of missional leadership was indicated. And to form missional leaders, the importance of theological education with a missionally oriented curriculum and the appropriate methodology for holistic formation was pointed out.

The A_component and the D_component mainly focused on gathering information and stating central concepts to be able to accurately describe the actual and desired situation. However, this detached approach is not enough to accurately articulate the pain of the problem-owner. Before formulating the action problem, the tension between the actual situation and the desired situation, there will be attended to the pain of the problem-owner as a result of this tension.

2.3 The pain of the problem-owner

The problem-owner of this research is the DRC Curatorium responsible for the theological education of DRC students at the University of Pretoria. The researcher will address the pain with hope and as an opportunity with new possibilities. The notion is that articulating the pain accurately, not only leads to a proper formulation of the action problem but also relieves the sufferer from the pain having shared their experience. What follows then is an attempt to articulate the pain of the problem-owner.

Dr Kobus Myburgh is the head of the curatorium at the University of Pretoria and the mandate received from him concerns the DRC's theological education and the disruption caused by the change in the DRC's ecclesiology. In an interview with Myburgh on 8 June 2020, he expressed that while the General Synod accepted the policy document, *Framework Document on the Missional Nature and Calling of the DRC*, in 2013, it feels out of touch with what is going on in congregations and at the university among lecturers. He realised that not everyone is convinced that a missional ecclesiology is a way forward for the DRC and that the policy document is experienced as a top-down approach to changing a denomination's ecclesiology. Myburgh also conveyed that there is a lot of confusion among congregational leaders and lecturers about what exactly the missional church entails. 'Missional' seems to be a buzzword and with the confusion and the lack of a clear understanding or definition of 'missional', everything that is new or contemporary is deemed 'missional'. Myburgh's experience makes it apparent that there is yet to be a consensus among lecturers on a definition of missional church and what it means for the Faculty. Without any consensus, lecturers are struggling on their own and moving in different directions.

As seen above, the research takes place in close contact with current students and lecturers at the University of Pretoria and they can be seen as partners in the research process. Myburgh's experience was tested against the experience of other lecturers at the Faculty. The researcher attempted to approach at least one lecturer from each department to ascertain if the 'missional church' is part of, or will be part of, the formal curriculum at the University of Pretoria.

Prof Ernst van Eck, deputy dean and head of the Department New Testament and Related Literature, states that in his experience there is not consensus about what exactly being a missional church entails. He also states that in the Faculty, missional ecclesiology is not considered the theological discipline under which all the other disciplines should be merged. Missional church is also not a part of the curriculum in his department and will not become part of the curriculum in the future. At most, missional ecclesiology is implicitly discussed in a final year module on the 'historical Jesus'. This module is about the early church and focused on inclusivity and following Jesus, and not merely confessing Jesus. The main focus in the New Testament department is to equip students for responsible exegesis and to be able to work and preach in their congregations.

Dr Hanré Janse van Rensburg²², senior lecturer in New Testament and Related Literature, indicates that missional church is implicitly part of the modules she is responsible for. According to Janse van Rensburg the Kingdom of God, proclaimed in all four gospels, is foundational to the missional church. She intends to cultivate an awareness of the Kingdom of God and the practical implications for then and for now. These practical implications and values form the basis of being missional church.

Prof Dirk Human²³, head of Old Testament and Hebrew Scriptures, states that in his opinion being a missional church is more an attitude with which you as a lecturer approach the work and direct your students, namely to focus your academic disadvantage on a focus in the community where they will work. Even though there is not a module dedicated to the missional church, the missional church is thus inherently present and part of the modules he is responsible for. He states that it is 'part of the DNA' of Old Testament studies.

Prof Stephan de Beer, director of the Centre for Contextual Ministry and professor in Practical Theology, states that all his modules and responsibilities concerns participating in the *missio Dei*. He is responsible for a second-year module about unlearning stereotypes, in this module students are involved in eighteen different places in the city and the focus is cultivating spirituality. The third-year students have a module on missional diaconate. The

²² Dr Hanré Janse van Rensburg is a DRC appointed lecturer.

²³ Prof Dirk Human is a DRC appointed lecturer.

fifth-year students have a module on the church in the city, in this module, they visit six different contexts in the city where they reflect. Although de Beer's modules are focused on missional ecclesiology, he is uneasy about what is going on in the Faculty. He states that the pedagogy has to change, the transformation of the Faculty and the church cannot rely on 'shifting the blocks around'. He suggests that, seeing as the Faculty is focused on research, maybe research should be done differently. Research should not be abstract but address the pressing matters in the world around us. He also suggests that lecturers have to be transformed. Lectures are extremely skilled and professional and they 'know all there is to know' and de Beer realised that they are no longer surprised and excited about things. This denotes that lecturers, in their profession, are not open to the Spirit and need to be transformed. He believes we should be open to being surprised by the Spirit and this implies vulnerability. Last, de Beer suggests that being vulnerable means being open to being changed by others. De Beer notes that in a diverse faculty with students and lecturers from various denominations, we should be open to being changed by each other.

Prof Yolanda Dreyer, a professor in Practical Theology, indicated that her modules do not have anything to do with missional church and she could not contribute to the conversation.

Dr Jacques Beukes, senior lecturer in Practical Theology, notes that missional church is not a central theme in the Faculty as the Faculty is ecumenical and not all denominations consider this to be a burning topic. He presents a third-year module on the church and social transformation and a fifth-year module on church and community development and in these two modules the missional church is mentioned.

Prof Danie Veldsman²⁴, head of Department Systematic and Historical Theology, states that the one part of the curriculum he is responsible for is an introduction to systematic theology focused on the Trinity and Christology and the other part is focused on contemporary theologians. The missional church does not feature in either and is only mentioned in passing. According to Veldsman, the missional church movement is a unilateral understanding of being church.

Dr Tanya van Wyk, senior lecturer in Systematic and Historical Theology, indicated that missional church is not explicitly part of the modules she is responsible for. There is a fourth-year semester module focused on ecclesiology and the calling of the church, but the church is not defined as 'missional'. There is a module on anthropology, focused on the church and integrity, and the church's integrity is connected to being missional, but it is not explicitly stated. Even though it is not explicitly part of the modules van Wyk is responsible for, she

²⁴ Prof Danie Veldsman is a DRC appointed lecturer.

believes it is strongly connected to a life of integrity and thus implicitly part of her modules. Van Wyk also notes that there is confusion among lecturers and students on the definition of a missional church. Students are both tired of hearing about the concept of missional church and uncertain what is meant by it, or they think it is about being a contemporary church. She states that the terminology has to be deconstructed.

Prof Johan van der Merwe²⁵, associate professor in Systematic and Historical Theology, states that the missional church is discussed in two modules. The one module is a third-year module on the history of Christianity and the second module is a fifth-year module on the DRC's church history and polity. He believes the missional church should be the main focus in both these modules. Although Van der Merwe's modules address the missional church, he notes that it is a difficult topic to address together with other denominations. Due to the 1935 mission policy that opted for a separate church for each population group and inherently supported apartheid, the definition of mission is tainted. There has to be distinguished between the previous understanding of mission or missionary work and what is meant by missional church today. Other denominations, now part of the faculty, are likely to feel like victims of the former.

Prof Jaco Beyers, associate professor in Religion Studies, indicates that the missional church is the underlying theory and model for missiology at the faculty. This is in line with the world trend in missiology and also the preferred model for the lecturers in missiology for the last decade. Beyers asserts that this is, however, a model and not a method, so there is no explanation in the curriculum of how it should be done, but only that it should be done. Numerous examples of how the model is applied can be found in the study material, e.g. Fresh Expressions. The model also resulted in the development of a module, thus the formal part of the curriculum, where church planting is the focus. This is a practical module but also pays close attention to the theoretical foundation. Beyers also indicates that the missional church is part of church specific education, especially in the Postgraduate Diploma course that serves as a finishing touch to theology students of the DRC and NHKA. The missional church model places particular emphasis on leadership development and Beyers noted that it seems that missional church sometimes displaces the other disciplines and characteristics of being a church, such as *diakonia*, *leitourgia* and *koinonia*.

It has to be noted that although both the DRC and NHKA have officially opted for a process of missional transformation, the DRC and NHKA lecturers at the Faculty of Theology and Religion are not all in agreement. Missional church does not seem to be explicitly part of the

²⁵ Prof Johan van der Merwe is a DRC appointed lecturer.

formal curriculum and it is not planned to be in the future. The views and experiences of these lecturers confirm Myburgh's experience, there is yet to be consensus on not only a definition but the place of the missional church in the faculty. This uncertainty is passed on to students. Myburgh states that students are unsure of what it means to be missional. He approaches the church specific curriculum planning from a missional point of view, but it is not pertinently stated as being missional, as one way to avoid confusion. He states that the mantra that students hear in church specific education is: "Not for the sake of your congregation, for the sake of your community." The church specific education also attempts to form students' spirituality. Myburgh notes that spirituality, spirituality types and the importance of spiritual practices are explained to students, however, students do not seem to respond well to this part of the curriculum. Students want to be taught something concrete that can be assessed. Students care about marks and passing grades, they want to know exactly how much each module counts towards their final grade. Spirituality, being difficult to measure and assess, results in students not taking it seriously or considering it a priority. Myburgh attempts to 'assess' students' spirituality by reflecting on what happened or changed in them, but students are still not satisfied and do not seem to understand why it is important. Naidoo (2010:185) states that theology has expanded to include practical ministry skills, but all the disciplines of theological education tend to emphasize the cognitive over the spiritual. This is now also true of theology students, they emphasize the cognitive over the spiritual is seen as an optional extra.

Linda Cannell offers four factors that threaten theological education: (1) the rise of institutions; (2) the rise of academic theology and academic rationalism; (3) the rise of professionalism in higher education; and (4) how the church and academy have understood and fostered the desire to know God (see Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 2250-2252). These factors are also evident above. Theological education seems to be captured by the professionalism and has forgotten its role in serving the church and equipping servant-leaders. Volf & Croasmun (2019:11) believes the ultimate purpose of theology is to "discern, articulate, and commend visions of flourishing life in light of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ".

Myburgh, also part of the General Curatorium and its strategies for missional ministry development, is attempting to design a new church specific education curriculum for DRC students at the University of Pretoria. This design is taking place amid the current theological education (A_component), the aspiration to form missional leaders (D_component), and the complexity added by lecturers' and students' views and experiences. The problem-owner is uncertain how to navigate these components and experimenting with various possibilities,

wanting to make every effort to provide an appropriate curriculum to form students. The problem-owner can therefore benefit from this research.

2.4 Conclusion

The first research question can now be answered: *What is the DRC's theological education impasse and the disruption experienced by the problem-owner?*

The DRC is currently training congregational leaders for a church that does not exist anymore, but the church for which they should be trained does not yet exist in the DRC praxis, at least not in the sense that all congregations that form part of the DRC pursue this kind of praxis. The A_component and D_component can be summarised as follows. In 2013 the DRC adopted a policy document affirming her missional ecclesiology. Since then, the DRC took first steps in the process of missional transformation, but still has a long way to go. A key factor in this process is missional leadership, the DRC needs missional leaders to guide, transform and equip the church in these unique times. This is where theological education comes in. The current theological education is not sufficient for the formation of missional leaders. Theological education that is missional formation, requires a missionally oriented curriculum and the appropriate methodology.

These changes in the DRC therefore, places a great responsibility on the curatorium and calls for a re-evaluation of theological education to align with a missional ecclesiology. And as with all change, there comes discomfort and disruption. With this research, there will be an attempt to address this discomfort and disruption and to contribute to the re-evaluation of and possibilities for theological education.

The adoption of the policy document was significant for the DRC. However, policy documents can easily come down to only words on paper if congregational leaders fail to embrace and implement what is written on that paper. This may simply be a matter of time, as Everett Rogers diffusion of innovations theory suggests. Nonetheless, make the transformation of the DRC's ecclesiology a complex process.

The DRC's transformation does not merely depend on the buy-in of lecturers and congregational leaders, it is a radical commitment that calls on them to also transform – in the truest sense a missional *metanoia*. Apart from this, there is the challenge of lecturers and congregational leaders who do not buy into a missional ecclesiology. These sentiments spill over to the DRC's theological education. A few observations can be made on the response of congregational leaders and lecturers to a missional ecclesiology and the influence it has on theological education.

- Some congregational leaders do not support a missional ecclesiology and the DRC's process of transformation and theological education does effectively not have to be missional formation.
- Some congregational leaders support a missional ecclesiology but do not know what to do next because they are not trained or equipped for the process of missional transformation.
- Some congregational leaders support a missional ecclesiology, but are misinformed or unaware of the implications, because they are not trained or equipped, and reverts to making technical and/or theoretical changes in the congregations they serve.
- Some lecturers do not support a missional ecclesiology and are not willing to re-orient or re-imagine their curricula to form a missional perspective.
- Some lecturers support a missional ecclesiology but do not know what to do next because they are not trained or equipped, the established theological education is resilient when changes are made and lectures have to abide by university regulations that can hinder the formation of missional leaders.
- Some lecturers support a missional ecclesiology in theory but are not involved in local congregations which is an important part of the process of missional formation and transformation.

This observation underlines some of the challenges pertaining to congregational leaders and lecturers concerning theological education being a missional formation. The main challenge seems to lie in the fundamental understanding of and consensus on missional ecclesiology. This challenge will be kept in mind throughout the research. It is not a matter of first convincing congregational leaders and lecturers and gaining consensus. That is an improbable task. It is a matter of transformation. Let me explain.

Being missional is not the latest trend or a new movement in the church that requires buy-in. It is about rediscovering the nature and calling of the church. And being a missional congregational leader or missional lecturer is not a new skill set, but rather about the person's nature and calling. Being missional is a way of life rather than just a set of beliefs or a state of mind. It is existential, not theoretical or technical. Niemandt (2019:116) affirms that "there can be no sending without calling (vocation)". This means that it is not as simple as *deciding* to become missional or simply *learning* to be missional. It is a process of holistic formation that takes place over time. A process of transformation. A process that is wholly dependent

on the Spirit. This applies to students, current congregational leaders and lecturers. Theological education is thus not about passing grades or gaining a degree, it is about being part of a holistic process of formation, cultivating a missional spirituality and being equipped to serve God's mission. The preliminary action problem can thus be adjusted and the action problem can be stated as:

How can theological education assist in forming missional leaders in the DRC?

Theological education that intends this type of formation will be a challenge for the curatorium. Given that the curatorium consists of congregational leaders that have not been formed as missional leaders, they will have to design and implement a theological education programme that they will have to go through. This programme will require the curatorium to act as a pioneer to be a part of this holistic process of formation. However vast this challenge, it poses the opportunities for the curatorium to also be transformed.

With this chapter the first research aim was addressed: *To acknowledge the DRC's theological education impasse and the disruption experienced by the problem-owner with a denomination in the process of transforming its ecclesiology.* This is the handover moment and the next phase can now start, as the problem-owner and researcher agree on the specific nature of the impasse and the action problem is formulated. The next phase is about clarifying the question.

Chapter 3

Clarify the Question

Chapter 3 will focus on the second phase of the research cycle (see Figure 1.3, p. 27), clarifying the research question, and expanding on the action problem as determined in phase 1 (chapter 2): *How can theological education assist in forming missional leaders in the DRC?* The situation will be explored further by examining the deeper levels of the DRC's theological education. In chapter 3 the researcher will therefore attempt to answer the second research question: *What is going on 'underneath the surface' of the DRC's theological education?* and address the second research aim: *To describe, interpret, propose, and respond to what is going on 'underneath the surface' of the DRC's theological education.*

In the second phase of the research cycle the pain or disruption, as described in phase 1 (chapter 2), is tested against theoretical frameworks. The focus is thus on existent literature and the main theoretical framework and resource used in this phase is Richard Osmer's (2008) practical theological questions. Although this research is a missiology study and attends to a missional ecclesiology, the research is practice-orientated. The research contributes to practice and is designed to serve the church. The theory of Osmer, presented as a practical theological foundational work, is thus significant for this research. His contribution acknowledges the importance of the church's mission (Osmer, 2008:27, 29, 183).

The four core tasks of practical theological interpretation – the descriptive-empirical task; the interpretive task; the normative task; and the pragmatic task – resides in answering four questions. These questions are (Osmer, 2008:4):

Question 1: What is going on?

Question 2: Why is this going on?

Question 3: What ought to be going on?

Question 4: How might we respond?

There are similar approaches available in practical theology, but what sets Osmer's practical theological interpretation apart is that he also developed a theology of congregational leadership with a specific focus on the spirituality of leaders. "Leadership in the Christian community is inherently a spiritual matter" (Osmer, 2008:26). Osmer's (2008:27) definition of

spirituality can be described as “leaders' openness to the guidance of the Holy Spirit as she forms and transforms them toward the image of Christ in his body and in the service of the church's mission”. The four core tasks of practical theological interpretation are thus not merely theory application but require a congregational leader's or researcher's openness to the guidance of the Spirit.

Osmer builds on the threefold office of Christ to develop a practical theology of leadership. The four tasks of practical theological interpretation are then seen as congregational leaders implementing the tasks to guide their congregation in participating in the priestly, royal and prophetic office of Christ (Osmer, 2008:28). These tasks, grounded in spirituality, can then be described as (Osmer, 2008:28-29):

The descriptive-empirical task: This task is a form of priestly listening, grounded in a spirituality of presence: attending to others in their particularity within the presence of God.

The interpretive task: This task is a form of wise judgement, grounded in a spirituality of sagely wisdom: guiding others in how to live within God's royal rule.

The normative task: This task is a form of prophetic discernment, grounded in a spirituality of discernment: helping others hear and heed God's Word in the particular circumstances of their lives and world.

The pragmatic task: This task is a form of transforming leadership, grounded in a spirituality of servant leadership: taking risks on behalf of the congregation to help it better embody its mission as a sign and witness of God's self-giving love.

The implementation of these tasks requires knowledge and skills, but more so, dependence on the Spirit's guidance, rooted in spirituality. A congregational leader's “being and becoming in the Spirit are integrally related to their doing and leading in Christ's body and this body's service of the world” (Osmer, 2008:29).

Osmer's emphasis on the spirituality of leaders makes this practical theological interpretation even more appropriate. The importance of spirituality in the process of missional transformation has already been pointed out in chapter 2 and Osmer acknowledges the importance of spirituality in the process of practice-orientated research. The researcher's

spirituality should therefore be taken into account and the researcher should be open to the guidance of the Spirit throughout the research process.

With this in mind, the core tasks can now be implemented. Each section in this chapter will address one of the four core tasks, i.e. the descriptive-empirical task; the interpretive task; the normative task; and the pragmatic task. The sections will start with a short description of what the core task entails before proceeding with the task.

3.1 Question 1: What is going on?

Answering the question, ‘what is going on?’, is a descriptive-empirical task with a focus on gathering information that helps to discern patterns and dynamics in particular episodes, situations, or contexts. Osmer (2008:33) notes that the task is broader than merely gathering information in a crisis or when a problem arises, it is about overall attentiveness. He defines this overall attentiveness as a spirituality of presence – a spiritual orientation of attending to others in all their uniqueness and otherness, a relationship depending on the communion-creating presence of the Holy Spirit. Shifting the focus from tasks to attending to what is going on in the lives of individuals, families, and communities. “Unless we first learn to attend, we cannot really lead” (Osmer, 2008:34).

A theological starting point for attending is priestly listening. The aim is to listen to the extent that you feel what they feel and to then, through intercessory prayer, place this before God. Keck (1978:62) describes it as a twofold movement that reflects the pattern of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. Forming a critical identity by entering into their situation through personal contact, listening, and empathetic imagination, and then moving to God, placing their needs and concerns before God in prayer on their behalf.

Osmer (2008:37) states that even though the descriptive-empirical task is about attending to others in personal relationships, it also includes investigating and researching the circumstances and cultural contexts of others more formally and systematically. He divides this task into informal, semiformal and formal attending, the latter focusing on empirical research. Attending to others through empirical research might seem to turn people into “objects” and thus in contrast with a spirituality of presence, but empirical research only refers to a disciplined way of attending to other in their particularity. “It allows leaders to deepen their understanding of what is going on in particular episodes, situations, and contexts and is a genuine expression of a spirituality of presence” (Osmer, 2008:39). The importance of presence is also recognised by theologians interested in missional theology and ecclesiology. Hirsch (2006:133-134) describes the incarnation in terms of presence, proximity,

powerlessness and proclamation. Niemandt (2019:35) describes presence as becoming part of the community and to engage in the humanity of it all and proximity as beyond presence, being genuinely available.

The first task, being a descriptive-empirical task, will focus on gathering information on how the DRC is responding to the change in ecclesiology and the implications it has for theological education. Answering the first question, *what is going on* with the DRC's theological education, can be done by focusing on the DRC's *Framework for Missional Ministry Development (2019)*. This document gives an overall description of what the General Curatorium is currently proposing for theological education that is aligned with a missional ecclesiology. As seen in chapter 2, there is a chasm between the actual situation and the desired situation and this document describes how the General Curatorium is responding to this chasm.

The *Framework for Missional Ministry Development* will form the basis of this section, but since this task is about being attentive, a spirituality of presence, it means more than merely gathering information. This section will thus also pay attention to the personal insights and concerns of the General Curatorium members at the epicentre of theological education developments. The problem-owner of this research, forming a part of the General Curatorium, has already been attended to in chapter 2, articulating the pain of the problem-owner. Conversations with other General Curatorium members will be an attempt at priestly listening – entering into their situation and placing their concerns before God. These conversations form part of the informal attending of this task and while it has an influence on the research, will not be documented in this section. These conversations are the researcher's attempt at priestly listening and to be open to the Spirit. While attending to the General Curatorium members and gathering information on *what is going on?*, the aim is also to discern patterns or dynamics that will help with answering the next question, *why is this going on?*

What follows then is the formal attending of this task by describing the *Framework for Missional Ministry Development* and any new progress. This section will then be concluded with a description of patterns and dynamics on *what is going on* with the DRC's theological education.

3.1.1 DRC's Framework for Missional Ministry Development

The DRC's *Framework for Missional Ministry Development* is the product of a workgroup formed by members of the General Curatorium. The problem-owner is also a part of this workgroup. This document is the result of discussions taking place for 20 years and can be

seen as a developing document, taking on shape as consensus is reached on important topics. This can be seen as the DRC's response to the change in ecclesiology and the implications it has for theological education. The main topic of this document concerns the broadening of the offices and the purpose is, as the title suggests, developing a framework for ministry that is missional.

The General Synod received a report about the broadening of the offices in 1998, but the discussion only received momentum when the policy document on the DRC's missional ecclesiology was accepted in 2013 and the DRC's ecclesiology was broadened (DRC, 2019:324). The change in the understanding of the DRC's ecclesiology is inextricably linked to the understanding and recovering of the offices (DRC, 2019:325). The theological principles related to the offices thus also imply theological education, the training for these offices.

Practical implications for theological education are also noted in the document. The economic reality we face implies that many called to be congregational leaders, will not be able to receive any theological education or training. Studying full-time at a university, as seen in chapter 2, is only possible for a select few. The enrolled DRC students at the University of Pretoria has declined from a total of 184 students in 2010 to a total of 55 students in 2020. Apart from expensive theological education, there is also the issue of congregations not being able to afford full-time congregational leaders.

Because of these factors, theological and practical, as well as the contextual focus of the church's missional calling, it is imperative to find new ways of theological education and the *Framework for Missional Ministry Development* suggest three important shifts (DRC, 2019:325):

1. The broadening of the offices with a focus on strengthening ministry for a growing diverse context.
2. More affordable theological education and more affordable congregational leaders for congregations.
3. Enabling a presbytery or synod to be a part of ministry development for their specific contexts.

To make these shifts possible, the framework document makes provision for the development of different ministry 'tracks'. The following tracks are included (DRC, 2019:326):

- *Lay ministers* – elders and deacons who receive approved ministry training in a specific field of ministry (track 1).
- *Local ministers* – ministers who receive training for a specific missional context and are licenced to minister to that specific context, e.g. ministers to the hearing handicapped (track 2).
- *Service ministers* – licenced ministers with a specific commission according to their field of training like youth and family, church planting and community work (track 3).
- *Tentmaker ministers* – licenced ministers in part-time positions for an undetermined period (second career, track 4 or full-time training, track 5).
- *Congregational ministers*²⁶ – licenced ministers, ordained in congregations with the full authority of congregational ministry and leadership (second career, track 4 or full-time training, track 5).

The reference to different tracks implies that it will be possible to progress from one track to the next with the *Recognition of Prior Learning* (RPL). The idea is that the respective syllabuses be aligned with the *Framework for Missional Capacities*, as set out in the *Framework for Missional Ministry Development* (see below).

The development of the different tracks will make it possible for more people, to be called to ministry, to receive theological education and to serve in their contexts and according to their circumstances. This is an important shift, as missional ministry is about focusing outward and the particularity of context is crucial. Apart from the importance of acknowledging different contexts, five theological principles form the basis of the *Framework for Missional Ministry Development* (DRC, 2019:326-327):

1. *God calls people to service*: According to the reformed tradition, all are called to serve, but some hold the specific office of equipping others for their task (DRC Church Order Regulation 4, see DRC Church Order, 2019). This document is about the broadening of these offices and theological education possibilities to make it possible for more people, called to serve in this specific way, to receive training and to be equipped for their ministry.
2. *God includes us in His kingdom plan*: The outcome of theological education will thus be aligned with a missional ecclesiology (according to the *Framework*

²⁶ The reference to ‘congregational leaders’ throughout the research, includes all the different tracks described here, not only ordained, full time ministers (track 4 and 5).

Document on the Missional Nature and Calling of the DRC (2013) and DRC Church Order Regulation 2).

3. *God gives and develops gifts*: This document will thus describe the minimum requirements for the initial training and development with the assumption that life-long learning will take place (especially via VBO).
4. *God gives different gifts to build up the body*: Church leaders have limited abilities and gifts and are therefore interdependent, teamwork is important, but basic expectations must also be met.
5. *God forms people to be spiritually and personally mature*: Believers are formed by the Word and Spirit within the faith community in their spiritual and personal maturity. This formation includes some basic capabilities and skills essential for congregational leaders.

These theological principles support the broadening of the offices and what follows is the training and development premises (pedagogy) as set out in the *Framework for Missional Ministry Development*, an overview of the proposed different tracks of theological education and the *Framework for Missional Capacities*.

3.1.1.1 Training and development premises

The missional ecclesiology embraced by the DRC calls for a re-imagination of theological education. A pedagogy of holistic formation – knowledge, but also attitudes, skills and habits should be formed by theological education (DRC, 2019:325). The *Framework for Missional Ministry Development* follows the rhetorical structure of the DRC's document, *Profile of the Graduate Student*.²⁷ The structure aims to equip and empower, those called, to partake in a missional ministry. The rhetorical structure has the following aspects (DRC, 2019:327):

Ethos – Personal development (who I am and become)

Logos – Understanding the message (what and how I believe)

Pathos – Compassion with the context (who and how I serve)

Each of these *ethos-logos-pathos* aspects entails certain capacities. Capacities are knowledge, attitudes and skills that have to be nurtured in a person in preparation for ministry and throughout their ministry (see Ellison, 2009:160).

²⁷ See 'Profiel van pas-gelegetimeerde student' available at:
https://www.kerkargief.co.za/doks/acta/AS_Agenda_2007.pdf

The *Framework for Missional Ministry Development* also acknowledges the complex relationship and interdependence between theory and practice. The premise is thus the integration of knowledge and intellectual capacity, personal growth and skills. Missional ministry development is more than applied theory (see Banks, 1999:164). Dynamic interaction between the following learning contexts is thus required (DRC, 2019:328):

- Mentorship.
- Classroom and studies.
- Peer learning communities, such as friends, study groups and seminary groups.
- Retreats and rhythms of faith.
- Exposure, participation and ministry in congregations.
- Exposure and serving in the community.

The *Framework for Missional Ministry Development* also follows the requirements of the *National Qualifications Framework* (NQF), which helps to describe the level of capacity for various offices according to Bloom's taxonomy (see Bloom, 1984). This is important for the negotiation with training institutions. The NQF levels can be summarised as seen below (Figure 3.1).²⁸

NQF level	Comparable standards	Level in terms of Bloom's taxonomy of skills
NQF 4	Matric	
NQF 5	First-year	Authorised elders/deacons are trained to this level, i.e. they should be able to tell, describe and apply.
NQF 6	Second-year	Original language skills.
NQF 7	Bachelor's degree (3 years)	Service ministers (assistant ministers) are trained to this level, i.e. they should be able to explain, apply, investigate and solve problems.
NQF 8	Honours degree	
NQF 9	Master's degree	Ministers are trained to this level, i.e. they should be able to interpret, integrate and give systematic leadership.
NQF 10	Doctoral degree	

Figure 3.1: NQF levels (DRC, 2019:327)

²⁸ The training requirements of local ministers (with specific authority) do not form part of the NQF as they are context specific. The General Curatorium takes responsibility for the appropriate training of local ministers.

The following diagram illustrates the route to follow, according to the *Framework for Missional Development*, if someone is called to missional ministry (see Figure 3.2).

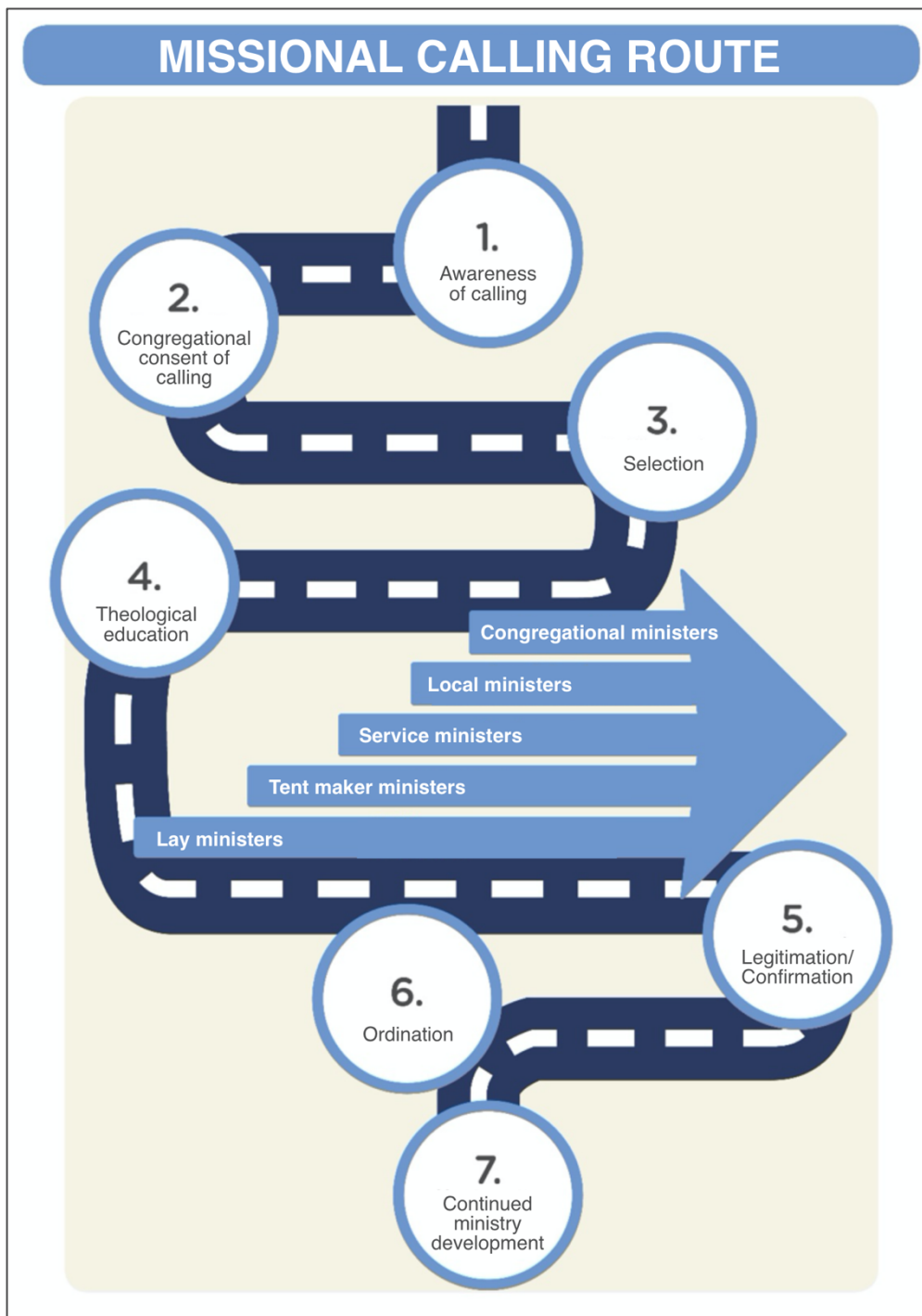


Figure 3.2: Missional Calling Route (DRC, 2019:328)

The missional calling route shows that everyone takes the same route and the different tracks build on one another, you can thus move from the one onto the next. These different tracks will be described next.

3.1.1.2 Tracks of theological education

As mentioned above, the document proposes five different tracks of theological education, making it possible for more people called to ministry to receive training and be equipped for ministry.

Track 1 – Lay minister (authorised elders or deacons)

Elders (and deacons) receive ministry training for a specific area of ministry, such as preaching, pastoral work, youth and family, senior children, junior children, diaconate, faith formation, church planting, worship, etc. These elders are then ordained by the presbytery and mentored by a congregational minister (per DRC Church Order Regulation 4, 10 and 16.1). The church council is responsible for the selection of elders and also determines the term of service (following the DRC Church Order Regulation 3.3). Authorised elders are not necessarily part of the church council, but can be nominated. They have authority to minister the Word, but not to serve the sacraments. This is not a salaried career, but the church council provides an honorarium for expenses incurred.

The training for authorised elders is intended to take place through Hugenote Kollege (Wellington) with the development of a Church Diploma Programme (NQF 5). This diploma will be ecclesiastically accredited and aims to be SAQA accredited (for the sake of articulation) and approved by the General Curatorium (for the sake of standardisation) (DRC, 2019:330). This diploma programme will consist of a basic introduction to missional ministry, with a focus on the capacities of the *Framework for Missional Capacities* and will also focus on equipping authorised elders for the specific ministry area where they will serve. The goal is that Church Diplomas, as developed by Hugenote Kollege, be offered in presbyteries or synods by church leaders accredited by Hugenote Kollege.

Track 2 – Local ministers (with specific authority)

Local ministers receive ministry training for a specific missional context and are licenced to serve only within that specific context, e.g. for the deaf or indigenous ministry. Selection takes place according to the A-Z instructions, the DRC's policy, for congregational leaders.²⁹ Local ministers have authority to minister the Word and serve the sacraments but are not available for ministry outside of the specific context for which they are trained.

²⁹ See 'BYLAAG 3: Bedieningsvreugde A-Z beleid aangaande predikante van die NG Kerk' available at: https://www.kerkargief.co.za/doks/acta/AS_Agenda_2007.pdf

The training for local ministers differs from the normal training to accommodate and adjust to the academic ability and contextual demands of that particular ministry context. The different training courses, developed by various academic partners, are submitted to the respective Curatoria for approval with the *Framework for Missional Ministry Development* as a basis. Currently, hearing impaired congregational leaders are trained by *Deaf Christian Ministry Africa* (DCMA) and Hugenote Kollege under the supervision of the Western Cape Curatorium and the training of congregational leaders for indigenous congregations in Namibia under the direction of DEGNOS and under the supervision of the Namibian Curatorium. DEGNOS is the missional division of the DRC in Namibia working in the north-eastern part of Namibia. Their primary purpose is the development and support of indigenous congregations and equipping believers with the desire to serve God's kingdom.³⁰

Local ministers are also expected to participate in VBO.

Track 3 – Service ministers (assistant ministers)

Service ministers are licenced church leaders with a specific task. They received training for a specific field, the following fields of specialisation are currently supported:

- Pastoral work
- Youth and family
- Diaconate
- Faith formation
- Church planting and evangelism
- Worship
- Other (as needed in the missional context)

Selection takes place according to the A-Z instructions for church leaders. Service ministers can be called like congregational ministers and serve on the church council of the congregation, presbytery and synod. Service ministers have authority to minister the Word and serve the sacraments.

The training of service ministers can take place via two routes. First career students obtain a BTh degree (or the equivalent degree in theology) at one of the training centres accredited by the DRC (NQF 7). If the bachelor's degree is obtained at another institution, it may be necessary to receive additional training according to the *Framework for Missional*

³⁰ See http://www.ecsos.org/programmes/poverty_relief/degno

Capacities. In addition, a specialist course, SAQA level 5 or higher, will be required (Hugenate Kollege), e.g. Certificate in Social Work. Except for the BTh Youth Work degree at Stellenbosch University – with this degree an extra qualification will not be necessary.³¹

The second route is available to those with a previous bachelor's degree, such as teaching, psychology, social work, CA, music, nursing, etc. It then also requires a core theological component on the level of Postgraduate Diploma or Honour's in Theology (NQF 7) and the successful participation in and completion of the DRC's church specific education.

Service ministers are expected to participate in VBO.

Track 4 – Ministers (second career with bachelor's degree)

Second career students are students with an existing career and a bachelor's degree. These students have the conviction that they were called to become ministers. Selection takes place according to the A-Z instructions for church leaders. They have the same authority as current ministers. After training, they will be able to work as full-time ministers or as tent makers. The Curatoria currently receive numerous applications from people in this category (DRC, 2019:332).

The training will be in the form of an RPL colloquium according to the *Framework for Missional Capacities*. Since these students already have a bachelor's degree and often have church experience, after selection, the Curatoria will conduct this colloquium. After the colloquium and according to the outcome, the Curatoria will design a development plan for both the academic and church specific programme for each student, and present it for approval. Depending on the qualifications and the outcomes of the RPL, the following could be included:

- BTh degree part-time or full-time at Hugenate Kollege, or
- Post Graduate Diploma with a core curriculum plus church subjects, following a blended learning model.
- Original languages: Greek and Hebrew II part-time.

What follows is a structured master's degree (NQF 9) that complies with the requirements of the missional development plan and is the equivalent of the MDiv programme. The Curatoria will negotiate this with the various training partners according to the *Framework for*

³¹ See <https://hugenate.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Level-7-Degree.Bachelor-of-Theology-in-Missional-Ministry-2021.pdf> for a detailed description and example of the requirements and learning content of this programme.

Missional Capacities. Finally, this programme will require students to complete a practical year in a congregation. It is important to note that the entry for each student will be different as it depends on prior learning and the aim is that each student completes his or her training with equal training and development (DRC, 2019:332).

These ministers are expected to participate in VBO.

Track 5 – Ministers (full-time training)

The current full-time training of ministers has been discussed in detail in chapter 2. For the sake of comparison, only the outline will be given here.

The full-time training consist of a 4 year BDiv (NQF 7) with Greek and Hebrew II, an MDiv a year and a practical year in a congregation. The full-time training also includes the church specific education programme for six years.

Minister are expected to participate in VBO after completion of studies.

This concludes the description of the different tracks or levels of theological education. What follows is the *Framework for Missional Capacities* which is the guiding framework for the compilation of a theological education syllabus.

3.1.1.3 Framework for Missional Capacities

The different missional capacities will now be described by using the rhetorical structure, mentioned above, set out in the *Profile of the Graduate Student*. These capacities can be seen as the missional outcomes of the different theological education tracks. The capacities will thus be discussed by looking at the *ethos-logos-pathos* aspects. The following diagram gives an overview of the different capacities (Figure 3.3).



Figure 3.3: Framework for Missional Capacities (DRC, 2019:334)

Ethos

The first aspect, *ethos*, is about the development of the person (who I am and become). It is about an awareness of calling, spiritual maturity, and development of character and the outcomes can thus be described as (DRC, 2019:335):

- students understand that they are called;
- their lifestyle demonstrates integration of faith and life;
- they are emotionally healthy and realistic about their growth areas;
- and they can initiate and sustain diverse relationships.

The *ethos* capacities include (E1) dependence on God; (E2) honesty with self; (E3) living anchored in personal calling; and (E4) practising spiritual disciplines. What follows is an outline of each capacity.

Capacity E1 – Dependence on God		
Fundamental to this capacity is acceptance of fragility and dependence on God.		
LAY MINISTERS	SERVICE MINISTERS	MINISTERS
Knowledge: Aware of sinfulness and know the salvation in Christ.	Knowledge: Aware of sinfulness and know the salvation in Christ.	Knowledge: Aware of sinfulness and know the salvation in Christ.
Attitude: Realise dependence on Christ and live in gratitude.	Attitude: Realise dependence on Christ and live in gratitude.	Attitude: Realise dependence on Christ and live in gratitude.
Skill: Can narrate own faith story in a structured manner.	Skill: Can narrate own faith story in a structured manner.	Skill: Can narrate own faith story in a structured manner.
Skill: Recognise and deal with their woundedness in an emotionally mature way.	Skill: Recognise and deal with their woundedness in an emotionally mature way.	Skill: Recognise and deal with their woundedness in an emotionally mature way.

	Skill: Can guide others in this.	Skill: Can guide and interpret within the framework of the reformed tradition.
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Capacity E2 – Honesty with self

Fundamental to this capacity is an honest encounter with self and acceptance of own growth areas.

LAY MINISTERS	SERVICE MINISTERS	MINISTERS
<p>Knowledge: Understand the distinction between identity in Christ, ego and unfulfilled emotional needs.</p> <p>Attitude: Willing to be accountable.</p> <p>Skill: Can participate in a mentorship relationship.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Understand the distinction between identity in Christ, ego and unfulfilled emotional needs.</p> <p>Attitude: Willing to be accountable.</p> <p>Skill: Can distinguish between identity in Christ, ego and unfulfilled emotional needs.</p> <p>Skill: Can function as a mentor and also be mentored.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Understand the distinction between identity in Christ, ego and unfulfilled emotional needs.</p> <p>Attitude: Willing to be accountable.</p> <p>Skill: Can teach others about the distinction between identity in Christ, ego and unfulfilled emotional needs.</p> <p>Skill: Can function as a mentor and also be mentored.</p> <p>Skill: Can develop and lead an accountability system in the congregation.</p>

Capacity E3 – Live anchored in personal calling

Fundamental to this capacity is a clear sense of understanding of own calling.

LAY MINISTERS	SERVICE MINISTERS	MINISTERS
<p>Knowledge: Understand that God calls people to service, and of what I am called to.</p> <p>Attitude: Openness and willingness to wait and listen to the Word and Spirit.</p> <p>Skill: Participation in personal and congregational discernment regarding vocational development.</p> <p>Skill: Can develop a new imagination of the future through habits of discernment.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Understand that God calls people to service, and of what I am called to.</p> <p>Attitude: Openness and willingness to wait and listen to the Word and Spirit.</p> <p>Skill: Participation in personal and congregational discernment regarding vocational development.</p> <p>Skill: Can develop a new imagination of the future through habits of discernment.</p> <p>Skill: Can identify and explain calling in the specific area of ministry.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Understand that God calls people to service, and of what I am called to.</p> <p>Attitude: Openness and willingness to wait and listen to the Word and Spirit.</p> <p>Skill: Participation in personal and congregational discernment regarding vocational development.</p> <p>Skill: Can develop a new imagination of the future through habits of discernment.</p> <p>Skill: Can guide the congregational discernment process regarding vocational development.</p> <p>Skill: Can develop imagination about the congregation’s participation in the <i>missio Dei</i>.</p>

		Skill: Can be the standard-bearer of the congregation's calling.
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Capacity E4 – Practise spiritual disciplines

Fundamental to this capacity is the ability to participate in the intentional cultivation of habits that shape missional faith.

LAY MINISTERS	SERVICE MINISTERS	MINISTERS
<p>Knowledge: Know various spiritual disciplines.</p> <p>Attitude: Willing to be shaped within a structure of accountability.</p> <p>Skill: Can participate in a faith formation process.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Know various spiritual disciplines.</p> <p>Attitude: Willing to be shaped within a structure of accountability.</p> <p>Skill: Can participate in a faith formation process.</p> <p>Skill: Can guide people in their ministry field in their faith formation.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Know various spiritual disciplines.</p> <p>Attitude: Willing to be shaped within a structure of accountability.</p> <p>Skill: Can participate in a faith formation process.</p> <p>Skill: Can guide people in the congregation in their faith formation.</p> <p>Skill: Can develop and guide a faith formation process in the congregation.</p>

Logos

The second aspect, *logos*, is about understanding the message (what and how I believe). It is about Biblical, theological and historical knowledge and exegetical and hermeneutical skills and the outcome can thus be described as (DRC, 2019:339):

- Students can witness coherently about the Triune God that we get to know in the Bible and the tradition.

The *logos* capacities include (L1) examining and interpreting the Bible; (L2) unlocking and proclaiming the gospel; (L3) being anchored in the tradition; (L4) understanding the extent of the gospel; (L5) accepting the reformed confession; and (L6) discerning the reign of God. What follows is an outline of each capacity.

Capacity L1 – Examine and interpret the Bible		
Fundamental to this capacity is Biblical exegetic and hermeneutic skills.		
LAY MINISTERS	SERVICE MINISTERS	MINISTERS
<p>Knowledge: Orientated towards the world behind, in and in front of the text.</p> <p>Knowledge: Have knowledge of a basic corpus of texts and can place them within the Bible as a whole.</p> <p>Attitude: Accept the authority of the Bible as the Word of God.</p> <p>Skill: Can use a one-volume Bible commentary.</p> <p>Skill: Can use a basic exegetic and hermeneutic method.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Know the world behind, in and in front of the text.</p> <p>Knowledge: Can examine texts within the Bible as a whole.</p> <p>Attitude: Accept the authority of the Bible as the Word of God.</p> <p>Skill: Can compare various translations.</p> <p>Skill: Has exegetic and hermeneutic skills.</p> <p>Skill: Can use Bible software responsibly and has access to good commentaries that</p>	<p>Knowledge: Can critically engage with the world behind, in and in front of the text.</p> <p>Knowledge: Can critically engage with texts within the Bible as a whole.</p> <p>Attitude: Accept the authority of the Bible as the Word of God.</p> <p>Skill: Can work with academic literature in the exegetic process.</p> <p>Skill: Can critically evaluate, integrate and apply numerous interpretations, and make connections</p>

	do not assume knowledge of the original languages.	<p>between the text and local and global contexts.</p> <p>Skill: Can grammatically analyse the text in the original language with relevant aids in the exegetic process.</p>
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Capacity L2 – Unlock and proclaim the gospel.

Fundamental to this capacity is homiletic, teaching and evangelising skills.

LAY MINISTERS	SERVICE MINISTERS	MINISTERS
<p>Knowledge: Know basic homiletic methodology.</p> <p>Attitude: Open to be personally addressed by the Word.</p> <p>Skill: Can paraphrase the Bible text or retell it in their own words in a lively manner.</p> <p>Skill: Can apply basic homiletic methodology.</p> <p>Skill: Can share the Gospel with people who hunger and thirst for Christ.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Command basic homiletic and pedagogical theory.</p> <p>Attitude: Open to be personally addressed by the Word.</p> <p>Skill: Can communicate the meaning opened up in the text to a target audience.</p> <p>Skill: Can explain the homiletic methodology.</p> <p>Skill: Can share the Gospel with people who hunger and thirst for Christ.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Command homiletic and pedagogical theory.</p> <p>Attitude: Open to be personally addressed by the Word.</p> <p>Skill: Can communicate the Biblical message in an integrated manner and within reformed hermeneutics.</p> <p>Skill: Can guide the service ministers and lay ministers in their homiletic task.</p> <p>Skill: Can share the Gospel with people who hunger and thirst for Christ.</p>

Capacity L3 – Anchored in the tradition

Fundamental to this capacity is knowledge of church history and tradition.

LAY MINISTERS	SERVICE MINISTERS	MINISTERS
<p>Knowledge: Knowledge about landmarks in church history.</p> <p>Attitude: See myself within the story of the church.</p> <p>Skill: Can understand their place and calling in terms of the history of the church.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Knowledge about broad developments in the tradition.</p> <p>Knowledge: Know the narrative of church history, e.g. Early Church, Reformation and South-African and African church history.</p> <p>Attitude: Appreciation for the advantages of an historic awareness.</p> <p>Skill: Can understand their place and calling in terms of the history of the church.</p> <p>Skill: Can examine and tell the story of the church.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Knowledge of broad developments in the tradition.</p> <p>Knowledge: Know the narrative of church history, e.g. Early Church, Reformation and South-African and African church history.</p> <p>Attitude: Appreciation for the advantages of an historic awareness.</p> <p>Attitude: Understand that church history presupposes a certain interpretation.</p> <p>Skill: Can understand their place and calling in terms of the history of the church.</p> <p>Skill: Can examine the story of the church and tradition and deal with questions in this regard.</p>

Capacity L4 – Understand the extent of the gospel

Fundamental to this capacity is knowledge of the loci of systematic theology.

LAY MINISTERS	SERVICE MINISTERS	MINISTERS
<p>Knowledge: Knowledge about the contents of systematic theology.</p> <p>Knowledge: Introductory knowledge of the <i>Apostolicum</i>, the plot and themes of the Gospel.</p> <p>Attitude: Personally moved by the knowledge of the Gospel themes.</p> <p>Skill: Can tell the salvation history story.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Knowledge of systematic theological contents as described by introductory works.</p> <p>Knowledge: A good understanding of the plot of the Gospel.</p> <p>Attitude: Personally moved by the knowledge of the Gospel themes.</p> <p>Skill: Can orientate the ministry towards the knowledge of the plot and themes of the Gospel.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Thorough knowledge of systematic theological contents.</p> <p>Knowledge: Well orientated about church fathers, reformers and influential theologians in different Christian traditions.</p> <p>Attitude: Personally moved by the knowledge of the Gospel themes.</p> <p>Skill: Can orientate the ministry towards the knowledge of the plot and themes of the Gospel.</p> <p>Skill: Can defend the Christian faith.</p>

Capacity L5 – Accept the reformed confession

Fundamental to this capacity is accepting the reformed confession and to participate ecumenically.

LAY MINISTERS	SERVICE MINISTERS	MINISTERS
<p>Knowledge: Basic knowledge of the historical background and contents of the confessions.</p> <p>Knowledge: Basic knowledge of the <i>sola's</i>.</p> <p>Attitude: Accept the confessions.</p> <p>Skill: Can engage with believers in other churches with ecumenical sensitivity.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Knowledge of the historical background and contents of the confessions.</p> <p>Knowledge: Knowledge of the <i>sola's</i>.</p> <p>Attitude: Accept and endorse the confessions.</p> <p>Skill: Can teach people the content of the confessions and <i>sola's</i>.</p> <p>Skill: Have the ability to build ecumenical networks.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Understand the symbolic meaning of the confessions and can engage with them dynamically.</p> <p>Knowledge: Knowledge of the <i>sola's</i>.</p> <p>Attitude: Accept and endorse the confessions.</p> <p>Skill: Can promote commitment to the confessions and <i>sola's</i>.</p> <p>Skill: Have the ability to function ecumenically meaningfully while embedded in a reformed identity.</p>

Capacity L6 – Discern the reign of God

Fundamental to this capacity is knowledge of reformed church governance.

LAY MINISTERS	SERVICE MINISTERS	MINISTERS
<p>Knowledge: Know how a church council functions and where the offices fit in.</p> <p>Knowledge: Know meeting procedures and the principles of congregational management.</p> <p>Attitude: Accept that legal procedures serve the congregation’s work.</p> <p>Attitude: Submission to the supervision of the church council and presbytery.</p> <p>Skill: Can help the congregation to discern the reign of Christ.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Know how a church council functions and where the offices fit in.</p> <p>Knowledge: Know meeting procedures and the principles of congregational management.</p> <p>Attitude: Accept that legal procedures serve the congregation’s work.</p> <p>Attitude: Submission to the supervision of the church council and presbytery.</p> <p>Skill: Can lead their service team within the structure of the Church Order and the reign of Christ.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Knowledge of the theology of reformed church polity.</p> <p>Knowledge: Know meeting procedures and the principles of congregational management and informed about recent church polity developments.</p> <p>Attitude: Accept that legal procedures serve the congregation’s work.</p> <p>Attitude: Submission to the supervision of the church council and presbytery.</p> <p>Skill: Can guide church meetings theologically.</p> <p>Skill: Can interpret the Church Order with good discernment in concrete situations.</p>

		<p>Skill: Can participate and serve in the presbytery and synods.</p> <p>Skill: Can apply church polity in a relevant way in different contexts.</p>
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Pathos

The third aspect, *pathos*, is about having compassion with the context (who and how I serve). It is about a missional focus on and involvement in the context and the outcomes can thus be described as (DRC, 2019:346):

- Students can discern together with others the living presence of the Triune God in the context,
- and be involved in a focused manner according to God's calling for faith communities.

The *pathos* capacities include (P1) discerning where God is working and what God is doing; (P2) building bridges; (P3) taking up the office; (P4) caring and protecting; (P5) discerning the will of God; and (P6) leading worship. What follows is an outline of each capacity.

Capacity P1 – Discern where God is working and what God is doing		
Fundamental to this capacity is the ability to see opportunities for missional ministry in the community.		
LAY MINISTERS	SERVICE MINISTERS	MINISTERS
Knowledge: Understand God's movement towards a world in need (<i>missio Dei</i>).	Knowledge: Can distinguish between deism, theism and a Trinitarian notion of God.	Knowledge: Can distinguish between deism, theism and a Trinitarian notion of God.

<p>Attitude: Open, compassionate, sensitive and service orientated.</p> <p>Skill: Can participate in a project of discernment.</p> <p>Skill: Can participate in a process of implementation.</p>	<p>Attitude: Open, compassionate, sensitive and service orientated.</p> <p>Skill: Can function in a process of discernment in their service group.</p> <p>Skill: Can ask the right questions to identify opportunities in their ministry area.</p> <p>Skill: Can lead the own service group in discernment and guide them towards innovative action.</p> <p>Skill: Can take risks.</p>	<p>Attitude: Open, compassionate, sensitive and service orientated.</p> <p>Skill: Can function in a process of systematical discernment.</p> <p>Skill: Can ask the right questions to identify opportunities for the congregation.</p> <p>Skill: Can lead the congregation in discernment and guide them towards innovative action.</p> <p>Skill: Can take risks.</p>
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Capacity P2 – Build bridges

Fundamental to this capacity is the ability to create community across boundaries.

LAY MINISTERS	SERVICE MINISTERS	MINISTERS
<p>Knowledge: Have a Trinitarian notion of God.</p> <p>Knowledge: Conscious of inclusive and exclusive societal factors.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Have a Trinitarian notion of God.</p> <p>Knowledge: Contextual knowledge of inclusive and exclusive societal factors and forces.</p>	<p>Knowledge: See connections between missionality and a Trinitarian notion of God.</p> <p>Knowledge: Contextual knowledge of inclusive and exclusive societal factors and forces.</p>

<p>Attitude: Open to participation in the life of a diverse community.</p> <p>Skill: Can do introspection to identify own boundaries, prejudices and attitudes.</p> <p>Skill: Can listen to hear different voices.</p> <p>Skill: Can nurture relationships with strangers, also publicly.</p>	<p>Attitude: Open to participation in the life of a diverse community.</p> <p>Skill: Can do introspection to identify own boundaries, prejudices and attitudes.</p> <p>Skill: Can listen to hear different voices.</p> <p>Skill: Can nurture relationships with strangers, also publicly.</p> <p>Skill: Can facilitate a process that leads the own service group to establish community, reconciliation and restorative justice.</p> <p>Skill: Can minister in more than one language and a multi-cultural environment.</p> <p>Skill: Can do a community analysis in their ministry area.</p>	<p>Attitude: Open to participation in the life of a diverse community.</p> <p>Skill: Can do introspection to identify own boundaries, prejudices and attitudes.</p> <p>Skill: Can listen to hear different voices.</p> <p>Skill: Can nurture relationships with strangers, also publicly.</p> <p>Skill: Can facilitate a process that leads the congregation to establish community, reconciliation and restorative justice.</p> <p>Skill: Can minister in more than one language and a multi-cultural environment.</p> <p>Skill: Can do a community analysis to identify kingdom opportunities.</p> <p>Skill: Can read faith culture discerningly and help nurture an alternative culture.</p>
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		Skill: Can form and guide partnerships in the community.
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Capacity P3 – Take up the office

Fundamental to this capacity is leadership abilities in team relationships.

LAY MINISTERS	SERVICE MINISTERS	MINISTERS
<p>Knowledge: Know the importance and function of the office and a reformed understanding of the office.</p> <p>Attitude: Focused on the unity of the congregation.</p> <p>Attitude: Focused on the development of the ministry of believers.</p> <p>Skill: Can build and maintain relationships and offer support through servant leadership.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Know the importance and function of the office and a reformed understanding of the office.</p> <p>Attitude: Focused on the unity of the congregation.</p> <p>Attitude: Focused on the development of the ministry of believers.</p> <p>Skill: Can function as a leader in their ministry area by offering a programme or project leadership.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Know the importance and function of the office and a reformed understanding of the office.</p> <p>Attitude: Focused on the unity of the congregation.</p> <p>Attitude: Willing to offer empowering leadership to members as servants.</p> <p>Attitude: Prepared to represent Christ in the wider community.</p> <p>Skill: Can function as team leader for the congregation’s ministry team.</p> <p>Skill: Can function as a mentor for the congregation’s ministry team.</p>

		<p>Skill: Can guide church members to take up their ministry (Eph. 4:12).</p> <p>Skill: Can motivate and inspire people for the calling of the congregation.</p> <p>Skill: Can establish an integrated missional culture in the congregation.</p> <p>Skill: Can find balance, discern and prioritise ministry focuses.</p> <p>Skill: Can give leadership in public life as office-bearer.</p>
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Capacity P4 – Care and protect

Fundamental to this capacity is having pastoral skills.

LAY MINISTERS	SERVICE MINISTERS	MINISTERS
<p>Knowledge: Recognise the merciful providence of the Triune God and my dependence.</p> <p>Knowledge: Orientated about various current life problems.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Recognise the merciful providence of the Triune God and my dependence.</p> <p>Knowledge: Knowledge of various current life problems.</p> <p>Attitude: Empathic approach.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Recognise the merciful providence of the Triune God and my dependence.</p> <p>Knowledge: Knowledge of various current life problems.</p> <p>Attitude: Empathic approach.</p>

<p>Attitude: Empathic approach.</p> <p>Skill: Can listen to people compassionately.</p> <p>Skill: Ability to include marginalised people.</p> <p>Skill: Can refer people with life problems to the appropriate support and intervention.</p>	<p>Skill: Can listen to people compassionately.</p> <p>Skill: Ability to include marginalised people.</p> <p>Skill: Can guide people towards healing and flourishing.</p> <p>Skill: Can pastorally care for people in their ministry field with life problems, and refer them to appropriate support and intervention.</p>	<p>Skill: Can listen to people compassionately.</p> <p>Skill: Ability to include marginalised people.</p> <p>Skill: Can guide people towards healing and flourishing.</p> <p>Skill: Can pastorally care for people in the congregation with life problems, and refer them to appropriate support and intervention.</p> <p>Skill: Ability to develop and lead a mutual caring system in the congregation.</p>
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Capacity P5 – Discern the will of God

Fundamental to this capacity is the ability to guide members of the congregation in a process of ethical discernment.

LAY MINISTERS	SERVICE MINISTERS	MINISTERS
<p>Knowledge: Orientated about the functioning of an ethical discernment process.</p> <p>Attitude: Openness and teachability.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Know how an ethical discernment process works.</p> <p>Knowledge: Knowledge of the different components that play a role in an ethical</p>	<p>Knowledge: Know how an ethical discernment process works.</p> <p>Knowledge: Knowledge of the different components that play a role in an ethical</p>

<p>Skill: Can participate in discerning discussion.</p>	<p>discernment process (Scripture, tradition, context, experience, etc.).</p> <p>Attitude: Openness and teachability.</p> <p>Skill: Can participate in discerning discussion.</p> <p>Skill: Can lead a discerning discussion in their service group.</p>	<p>discernment process (Scripture, tradition, context, experience, etc.).</p> <p>Attitude: Openness and teachability.</p> <p>Skill: Can participate in discerning discussion.</p> <p>Skill: Can lead a discerning discussion in the church council and congregation.</p> <p>Skill: Can equip others to practise spiritual discernment.</p> <p>Skill: Can develop a discerning culture in the congregation.</p>
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Capacity P6 – Lead worship

Fundamental to this capacity is having liturgical skills.

LAY MINISTERS	SERVICE MINISTERS	MINISTERS
<p>Knowledge: Understand that God, as the initiator of the worship service, brings the congregation together.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Understand that God, as the initiator of the worship service, brings the congregation together.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Understand that God, as the initiator of the worship service, brings the congregation together.</p>

<p>Knowledge: Orientated about the essential elements of the worship service.</p> <p>Knowledge: Orientated about the connection between the aesthetic and liturgy.</p> <p>Attitude: Committed to the value of shared worship for the congregation.</p> <p>Attitude: See myself as someone who is welcomed by God (hospitality).</p> <p>Skill: Can arrange and lead a meaningful missional worship service.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Know the essential elements of the worship service.</p> <p>Knowledge: Know the connection between the aesthetic and liturgy.</p> <p>Attitude: Committed to the value of shared worship for the congregation.</p> <p>Attitude: See myself as someone who is welcomed by God (hospitality).</p> <p>Skill: Can arrange and lead a meaningful missional worship service.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Know the essential elements of the worship service.</p> <p>Knowledge: Know the connection between the aesthetic and liturgy.</p> <p>Attitude: Committed to the value of shared worship for the congregation.</p> <p>Attitude: See myself as someone who is welcomed by God (hospitality).</p> <p>Skill: Can arrange and lead a meaningful missional worship service.</p> <p>Skill: Can equip others to plan and arrange meaningful worship services within the reformed ethos.</p>
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This concludes the description of the different capacities forming part of the *ethos-logos-pathos* aspects of theological education for missional ministry development. Theological education aims to help students acquire these capacities – knowledge, attitudes and skills – needed for missional ministry as a lay minister, service minister or minister (full-time or part-time).

Describing the DRC's *Framework for Missional Ministry Development* was the formal attending of the descriptive-empirical task. What follows is an attempt to answer Osmer's first question, 'what is going on?', by describing the patterns and dynamics observed throughout the task.

3.1.2 *What is going on with the DRC's theological education*

The DRC's *Framework for Missional Ministry Development* is thus a summary of what the General Curatorium is doing in response to the DRC's change in ecclesiology and forms the basis for answering Osmer's question: *what is going on with the DRC's theological education?*

As seen in chapter 2, the DRC realised that being church means being missional. A missional ecclesiology implies missional DRC congregations. Congregations that do not exist for themselves, but (i) are focused on the community, (ii) inspires all members to take part in the *missio Dei*, and (iii) has missional leaders to equip members to live missional lives. Thus, theological education plays a crucial role in the formation of congregational leaders, requires a curriculum and methodology that is missional formation. A curriculum with a missional point of departure and the appropriate methodology that contributes towards the holistic formation. The current theological education has to be transformed.

The *Framework for Missional Ministry Development* shows that there is already some progress made in this process of re-imagining and transforming theological education. First, the document is about the broadening of the offices. And allowing more members with a missional calling to become involved in officially sanctioned ministry. The broadening of the offices will support ministry for a growing diverse context, make theological education more affordable and thus more accessible, and enabling a presbytery or synod to be a part of ministry development for their specific contexts. This is one approach to address the need for missional ministry to be context-sensitive, a church that is focused on the community. The broadening of the offices implies different theological education tracks. These different tracks acknowledge students' particular circumstances and make it possible for more people, called to serve, to receive training for their ministry and then to serve in their context. Second, the document describes holistic training and development premises (pedagogy). Theological education that forms knowledge, but also attitudes, skills and habits (capacities). Following the rhetorical structure focused on the different aspects of learning: personal development (*ethos*), understanding the message (*logos*) and compassion with the context (*pathos*). And there is also the recognition of the complex relationship between theory and practice and the premise is to integrate personal development, intellectual capacity and skills by different dynamic learning contexts. The document provides a *Framework for Missional Capacities*. These capacities are described as part of the *ethos-logos-pathos* aspects of learning and theological education for missional ministry development. The different tracks of theological education will aim to help students acquire these capacities needed for missional ministry as a lay minister, service minister or minister (full-time or part-time). The *Framework for Missional*

Capacities is a comprehensive list and related to the capacities of missional leaders mentioned in chapter 2 (Cordier, 2014).

This document gives guidelines and ideals for missional ministry development. The different tracks are one approach to be more contextually sensitive, and the training and development premises with the *Framework for Missional Capacities* implies holistic formation. There is, however, not yet a model, syllabus or curriculum in place for the formation of missional congregational leaders. The changes made to current theological education programmes and curricula seem to be technical changes and not adaptive changes. As already mentioned in chapter 1, missional transformation is characterised by adaptive change. The question is, will these technical changes over time be enough to eventually form missional leaders and be sufficient for missional ministry development? New methods of theological education or training are crucial for the formation of missional leaders and this does not mean reorganising or repackaging old models.

This brings the descriptive-empirical task to an end. What is going on? Due to the DRC's embrace of missional ecclesiology, technical changes have been made and are proposed for the DRC's theological education. The second task, the interpretive task, can now be implemented.

3.2 Question 2: Why is this going on?

Answering the question, 'why is this going on?', is an interpretive task with a focus on drawing on theories of the arts and sciences to better understand and explain why these patterns and dynamics are occurring. Osmer (2008:80) uses the metaphor of map reading when you interpret and lead others and refers to two important map reading skills. Using theoretical maps are important because they offer an image of the area and the possible routes, but the map is only an image of the area and although it portrays certain features, it leaves many out.

The first map reading skill is to be aware of the difference between a theory and the reality it is mapping. Theories assist with understanding but never provides a complete image of what is going on. "Wise interpretive guides... remain open to the complexity and particularity of people and events and refuse to force them to fit the theory" (Osmer, 2008:80).

The second map reading skill is to be able to choose the right map for the situation and their purpose. "...different theoretical maps are good for some purposes but not others. Interpretive guides, thus, must be wise in discerning which theoretical maps will be most

helpful in guiding others through the territory they are entering” (Osmer, 2008:81). It is about making sense of what is going on in their lives and the world.

A theological starting point for skillful map reading is sagely wisdom. Osmer (2008:82) states that the spirituality of this type of leadership is characterised by three qualities, i.e. thoughtfulness, theoretical interpretation, and wise judgement. Thoughtfulness refers to being considerate in how you treat other people, but in this regard also to being insightful when it comes to pressing issues. Theoretical interpretation, as mentioned above, refers to the ability to draw on theories to understand and respond to what is going on. It is important to note that theories are fallible and always subject to future reconsideration (Osmer, 2008:83). The third quality, wise judgement, is crucial. It refers to the capacity to interpret in three interrelated ways (Osmer, 2008:84): (1) recognition of the relevant particulars of specific events and circumstances; (2) discernment of the moral ends at stake; (3) determination of the most effective means to achieve these ends in light of the constraints and possibilities of a particular time and place.

The second task, being an interpretive task, will focus on why the DRC is responding to the change in ecclesiology in a certain way and the implications it has for theological education. Answering the second question, *why is this going on* with the DRC’s theological education, can be done by focusing on the theory of Ronald Heifetz on technical and adaptive challenges in change. This can be seen as the ‘theoretical map’. This map is appropriate for the interpretive task, as there is an important distinction between technical and adaptive challenges in change and missional transformation is characterised by adaptive change. The researcher acknowledges that there is a difference between theory and reality and will not attempt to force complex situations to ‘fit the theory’, but to merely make sense of what is going on.

This section will then begin with a description of Heifetz’ theory. It will then be used to interpret *why is this going on* with the DRC’s theological education. The researcher will attempt to point out relevant details, discern the moral ends at stake and how to achieve these ends considering certain limitations.

3.2.1 Technical and adaptive change

Heifetz presents a theory of leadership with two types of challenges in the process of change: technical and adaptive. There can be distinguished between technical problems in change, problems that can be addressed by current knowledge and skills, and adaptive challenges, problems that defy current knowledge and skills (Heifetz & Linksy, 2017:13). It is

crucial that leaders in general and for this research, congregational leaders confronted with missional transformation, take this significant distinction into account. Missional leadership, bringing about transformation or change, must keep the difference between continuous (technical) change and discontinuous (adaptive) change in mind (Niemandt, 2019:75). “The most common cause of failure in leadership is produced by treating adaptive challenges as if they were technical problems” (Heifetz *et al.*, 2009:19). Keifert and Rooms (2014:6), acknowledging that churches must attend to adaptive change, states that adaptive challenges require change and transformation on the part of those facing them, in contrast to technical problems where there is a known solution and no real change is required. Technical problems have clear ‘answers’, but adaptive challenges call for unknown and deep change.

Heifetz makes use of analogies to illustrate the importance and difficulty of distinguishing between adaptive and technical change. He explains that car problems can usually be fixed by a mechanic, but if the car problem stem from the way a family member drives, the problems are likely to recur (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002:4). Treating this situation as purely a technical problem – taking the car to the mechanic again and again – masks the real issue. There is an underlying problem that the mechanic cannot solve. Adaptive challenges should be identified and not be treated as technical problems. Change is integral to life, but when it comes to leadership, it is important to identify the type of change and the challenge it poses.

Niemandt (2019:75) gives a comprehensive description of technical change, also referred to as continuous change:

Continuous change is the kind of change where the old systems, structures and way of doing things are still recognisable after the change process. The change is a process of gradual innovation – the improvements are brought about step by step to facilitate the process of change. There is continuity with the previous process. This kind of change is predictable and can be planned and controlled. The solution is already within the repertoire of the congregation or organisation, is not trivial and is important for the maintenance of the system, even if it demands relative major inputs. Experience and current knowledge suffice to manage continuous change. (Niemandt, 2019:75)

Although technical problems are also important to address, the ‘answers’ are clear and it can be resolved by the current way of doing things. In contrast to technical change, adaptive change is disruptive and unforeseen. Niemandt (2019:76) gives a comprehensive description of adaptive change, also referred to as discontinuous change:

It is outside the current repertoire of skills, and the organisation is faced with change or decline. It questions the sense of competence. Adaptive change is a deep change in the complete system of the organisation. It requires courage and usually involves a change in the values and attitudes of the organisation. It affects the whole system... The solutions are outside the current repertoire of the leadership, and the organisation faces a situation of adapt or die. The solutions are thus critical for the future of the system. In many cases, it demands the sacrifice of control. (Niemandt, 2019:76)

It is thus vital to distinguish between technical problems and adaptive challenges. However, each situation posing a so-called problem, challenge or disruption have technical as well as adaptive elements. The following table (Figure 3.4) not only shows the difference between technical problems and adaptive challenges but also acknowledges that most challenges have technical and adaptive elements. The table also shows the 'locus of work'. Technical challenges can be addressed by 'authority' giving instructions from above. Whereas adaptive challenges rely on the 'stakeholders' being a part of the solution.

Kind of challenge	Problem definition	Solution	Locus of work
Technical	Clear	Clear	Authority
Technical & adaptive	Clear	Requires learning	Authority & stakeholders
Adaptive	Requires learning	Requires learning	Stakeholders

Figure 3.4: Technical and adaptive challenges (Heifetz et al., 2009:20)

This implies that addressing the issue as a technical problem would make a difference to the situation, but it would not confront the underlying adaptive challenge. There will always be certain technical issues, but the success or demise lies with addressing the adaptive challenge.

The reason behind the tendency of organisations or systems to address issues as technical rather than adaptive is twofold. First, because of the illusion of broken systems. Heifetz *et al.* (2009:17) point out that the reality is that any social system is the way it is because people in that system want it that way. They maintain the system. Second, when someone realises that the system might be 'broken' the current system is still preferred

because the kind of change needed is painful. Organisations and systems resist dealing with adaptive challenges because it requires change and transformation and this brings about the experience of loss (Heifetz *et al.*, 2009:22).

Roxburgh & Romanuk uses Heifetz' theory when looking at the missional change model. Technical change refers to improving what the congregations are currently doing and applying the same type of solutions to fix new challenges. Changing programmes, introducing new programmes, or changing elements of the organisational life of the congregation and not addressing the fundamental nature of the challenges facing the congregation (Roxburgh & Romanuk, 2006:98). This happens within the comfort zone of the congregation. Adaptive change requires the design of a new approach to immanent challenges, but adaptive change is the kind that congregations strongly resist (Roxburgh & Romanuk, 2006:99). Heifetz *et al.* (2009:22) argue that people do not resist change per se, but loss: "When change involves real or potential loss, people hold on to what they have and resist the change. We suggest that the common factor generating adaptive failure is resistance to loss." In a fast-paced world, this resistance to change, and thus loss, is eminently strong.

What follows is an attempt to answer Osmer's second question, 'why is this going on?', by using Heifetz' theory of technical and adaptive change – technical problems and adaptive challenges. This theory can be used as a map to understand the situation of the DRC concerning the change in ecclesiology and the implications for theological education.

3.2.2 *Why is this going on with the DRC's theological education*

Accepting the policy document in 2013, *Framework Document on the Missional Nature and Calling of the Church* is the precursor for a denomination facing an adaptive challenge. "Missional transformation represents adaptive change" (Niemandt, 2019:77). Missional transformation is inherently an adaptive challenge. An adaptive challenge affects the whole system and calls for a total-system-strategy – the objective of this research methodology. Missional transformation, as seen in chapter 1, is not primarily the restructuring or reorganising of the church, it is about rediscovering the nature and calling of the church – what the church *is*. The church then *does* what it *is* and *organises* what it *does*. Harrison (2017:340-341) also affirms that it is important to start with the identity or nature of the church and not with the purpose or mission of the church, "if the latter is the case, there is a diminishment not only of the sense of God's agency but also of the sense of the church as the creation of the Spirit or the Spirit as the leader of mission". Rediscovering the missional nature and calling of the

church, what the church *is*, involves deep change. This is uncharted territory for the DRC. “In uncharted territory adaptation is everything” (Bolsinger, 2015:85).

Heifetz & Laurie (2001:36) stresses the importance of leadership when it comes to adaptive change, for leaders it can be counterintuitive, rather than providing solutions, it is about asking tough questions, instead of maintaining norms, it is about challenging the way things are being done. The DRC’s missional transformation is a comprehensive process radically affecting the self-identification, theological praxis, theological training and faith formation of denominations (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:1). Such a profound process calls for missional leadership (see chapter 1 and 2). “Current research values leadership as the most important contributing factor towards the formation of a missional congregational culture, and this is equally important in the case of denominational transformation” (Niemandt, 2017:202). Hence the importance of missional leadership for the DRC in the face of the adaptive challenge of missional transformation.

At this point, it is important to remark that a missional leader, able to bring about change, must first be changed. As stated above, adaptive challenges require change and transformation on the part of those facing them. The formation of missional leaders for the missional transformation of congregations is thus in many ways the adaptive challenge confronting the General Curatorium. Considering *what is going on* with the DRC’s theological education (as described above), is the General Curatorium addressing this issue as a technical problem or an adaptive challenge? Noting that issues have technical as well as adaptive elements and that it is vital to address these elements appropriately, this question will now be discussed.

The main amendment in the theological education of the DRC, according to the *Framework for Missional Ministry Development*, concerns the broadening of the offices. This amendment involves developing different tracks of theological education. However, there is not yet a model, syllabus or curriculum in place in any of the different theological tracks or levels for the formation of missional leaders (see chapter 2). The *Framework for Missional Ministry Development* has a *Framework for Missional Capacities*, that indicates the importance of holistic formation for missional transformation, but this framework has not yet been utilised (see chapter 2). These amendments thus denote continuous change – the old systems, structures and ways of doing things are still recognisable, the change is a process of gradual innovation, there is continuity with the way it was, it is not trivial and important for the maintenance of the system and the current knowledge and skills suffice to manage these amendments. With the broadening of the offices and the *Framework for Missional Capacities*,

the General Curatorium has thus addressed a pressing technical problem facing the DRC in her process of missional transformation.

However, General Curatorium has not yet addressed the adaptive challenge concerning the formation of missional leaders. As stated above, new methods of theological education or training are crucial for the formation of missional leaders and this does not mean repackaging old models. “Adaptive challenges can only be addressed through changes in people’s priorities, beliefs, habits, and loyalties. Making progress requires going beyond any authoritative expertise to mobilise discovery, shedding certain entrenched ways, tolerating losses, and generating the new capacity to thrive anew” (Heifetz *et al.*, 2009:19). Adaptive change is uncomfortable deep change and the General Curatorium is also faced with this reality. Adaptive change will be painful and bring about the experience of loss – shedding certain entrenched ways. Adaptive change is necessary, but fortunately, adaptive change is about a new capacity to thrive. The focus should not be on what will be lost, but the elements that an organisation, in this case, the church, should hold on to. The nature and calling of the church. “At the same time, adaptation is a process of conservation as well as loss. Although the losses of change are the hard part, adaptive change is mostly not about change at all... a successful adaptation enables an organization or community to take the best form its traditions, identity, and history into the future” (Heifetz *et al.*, 2009:23). When it comes to missional transformation, it is not so much about taking the ‘best’ from its traditions, identity and history into the future, but returning to the missional nature and calling of the church.

Answering the second question, *why is this going on* with the DRC’s theological education can thus be answered by using the theory of technical problems and adaptive challenges as a theoretical map. The General Curatorium is responding to the DRC’s change in ecclesiology by addressing the pressing technical elements. The technical elements are clear and the solutions are clear. However, the General Curatorium has not yet addressed the adaptive elements of this challenge. Drawing on the theory of adaptive challenges, the reason might be that the General Curatorium is confronted with:

- a challenge that is outside their current repertoire of skills;
- their competence being questioned;
- decline or change, affecting the whole system;
- deep change in values and attitudes;
- solutions being critical for the future;

This task required wise judgement and is grounded in a spirituality of sagely wisdom. The researcher thus attempted this interpretive task using Heifetz's theory as a theoretical map to understand *why this is going on* with the DRC's theological education. Taking the above matters into account, the importance of addressing the adaptive challenge has to be stressed. As seen above, the most common cause of failure is when an adaptive challenge is treated as a technical problem. There will always be certain technical issues, but reorganising theological education is not adequate when the fundamental nature of the challenge has to be addressed – the formation of missional leaders. The challenge requires innovation.

This brings the interpretive task to an end. Why is this going on? The General Curatorium is responding to an adaptive challenge, the DRC process of missional transformation, by only addressing the technical problems. The third task, the normative task, can now be implemented.

3.3 Question 3: What ought to be going on?

Answering Osmer's third question, 'what ought to be going on?', is a normative task with a focus on using theological concepts to interpret particular episodes, situations, or contexts, constructing ethical norms to guide our responses, and learning from "good practice". The normative task thus uses three approaches, i.e. theological interpretation, ethical interpretation, and good practice and normative reflection. These approaches are not mutually exclusive.

Osmer (2008:132) places the normative task in the prophetic office and he describes it as prophetic discernment. Prophetic discernment is twofold, involving both God's word, divine disclosure and the human shaping of God's word. The prophets drew on particular theological traditions to interpret and to critique common and official theologies and the way of life justified by these theologies, and they do so at a particular moment in time (Osmer, 2008:135). Prophetic discernment is thus about helping others to hear and heed God's Word in the particular circumstances of their lives and world.

Osmer (2008:135) states that spirituality of discernment is characterised by three qualities, i.e. sympathy, discernment, and theological and ethical interpretation. Sympathy is about being open to the divine pathos. Identifying with God's suffering over the sin, pain and evil in the world. From here words of grace and hope emerge. Discernment is a crucial part of the normative task. Discernment is about seeking God's guidance and Osmer (2008:138) points out that the first move is to put aside self-confidence and certainty about what we ought to do and the second to actively seek God's will. It is worth mentioning Bonhoeffer's three

practices of active seeking: (i) scriptural listening – daily studying and prayerful reading of God’s word; (ii) confession and radical truth-telling – being open to people who can help us distinguish God’s guiding voice; and (iii) loving and being loved – loving others, in personal relationships and communities, as a basis and focus of discernment (Osmer, 2008:138). Theological and ethical interpretation, the formal part of the normative task and the first two approaches, is about forms of theological and ethical reflection. This will be briefly described below.

Theological interpretation, the first approach of the normative task, differs from other forms of theological reflection because it has a clear focus on the interpretation of *present* episodes, situations and context with theological concepts (Osmer, 2008:139). Ethical interpretation, the second approach of the normative task, uses ethical principles, rules or guidelines to guide action toward moral ends. Osmer (2008:149) follows Ricoeur and describes the role of ethical norms with a three-part account of the moral life: (i) the identity-shaping ethos of a moral community, embodied in its practices, narratives, relationships, and models; (ii) the universal ethical principles a moral community uses to test its moral practices and vision and taking into account moral claims of others beyond this community; (iii) the *phronesis*, or practical moral reasoning, needed to apply moral principles and commitments to particular situations. General ethical principles, like equal regard, guidelines and rules, can thus help determine ‘what ought to be going on’.

Good practice and normative reflection, the third approach of the normative task, gives guidance in two ways (Osmer, 2008:152): (i) deriving norms from good practice, by exploring models of such practice in the present and past, that can alter present practice; or (ii) by engaging reflexively in transforming practice in the present, as a new way of understanding God, the Christian life and social values, beyond those provided by tradition. It can thus help with imagining what a congregation might become and provide resources and guidelines to move in this desired direction. Also, the present practice can be the source of new understanding. Good practice is then more than a model, it is epistemic, yielding knowledge that can be formed only through participation in transforming practice (Osmer, 2008:153).

Osmer concludes the normative task by referring to the cross-disciplinary dialogue in which practical theology is brought into conversation with other fields. The normative task poses the question of theology’s relationship to other disciplines most clearly, but this dialogue is part of all the tasks of practical theological interpretation (Osmer, 2008:173).

The third task, being a normative task, will focus on how the DRC should respond to the change in ecclesiology and the implications for theological education. Answering the third question, *what ought to be going on* with the DRC’s theological education, can be done by

focusing on the adaptive challenge – the formation of missional leaders in the DRC. There are still various technical changes that need to be attended to, but missional transformation can only occur when this adaptive challenge is attended to. The adaptive challenge calls for theological education to be holistic formation. This entails deep formation, or transformation, involving all aspects of life. The task, requiring prophetic discernment, will be approached by drawing on theological traditions to interpret and critique the current theological education. This will be done by describing the relationship between theology and spirituality. The task will also include ethical interpretation by discerning the guiding principles or theological foundations of a missional spirituality. Last, the task will be approached as discerning good practice by engaging reflexively in transforming current practices by proposing a model of theological education and the formation of a missional spirituality. This section will also attempt to contribute to the technical changes needed for missional formation, but the main concern remains the adaptive challenge.

The missional transformation of the DRC requires missional leadership. But it is clear from the research thus far, it is more than acquiring a new skill set or completing an extra academic module on methods for becoming a missional church. Missional leadership requires the transformation of the self. Holistic theological education that forms a missional spirituality. It takes a radical commitment to live a Jesus-life amid radical change. This denotes that fundamental to missional leadership is a missional spirituality. A transformation of the self to be able to transform. Wright (2008:270) challenges the church – if the gospel isn't transforming you, will it transform anything else? Helland & Hjalmarson (2011:loc. 107-216) states that we can bring transformation only to the extent to which we are transformed, a missional spirituality is thus imperative for transformation. "A key insight of the initial missional church conversation is that it was not primarily about the church developing yet another strategic approach for reaching a new generation" (Van Gelder & Zscheile, 2011:7). The emphasis should be on formation for God's mission – on being God's people and then doing by participating in God's mission. Cultivating a faithful missional community is thus an ongoing process of formation and reformation (Guder (ed.), 1998:180). Cultivating DRC students to be missional leaders is also an ongoing process of formation and reformation. It is not adopting a framework document or an adjusted curriculum, more leadership development programmes or research on being a missional church, that is needed to become a missional church, it is a missional spirituality. "A missional spirituality is a spirituality that forms and feeds mission" (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 239-240). The formation of a missional spirituality should be fundamental to theological education.

Despite the inclination of theological education to focus on the intellectual, theological education is not responsible for and concerned with pure academics or the mere contestation of ideas. In a discussion with Moltmann on 30 June 2017 at the WCRC General Council, he notes that theology is not only for the so-called professionals, theology is not something you read, it is something you do. Volf and Croasmun (2019:1) deem that academic theology should be about what matters most: “the true life in the presence of God”. When academic theology or theological education loses this dimension, theology becomes irrelevant.

The failure of theology to attend to its purpose is a loss for the church and for the world, for theology is uniquely qualified to explore what matters the most. And this is a loss for theology itself—for theology will either refocus itself on what matters the most or gradually cease to matter at all. (Volf & Croasmun, 2019:1)

Theology and theological reflection are important because it is about what matters most. And living the true life in the presence of God means theological education has to equip students for this life. This brings us back to the formation of a missional spirituality as fundamental to theological education. What follows then is a description of the connection between theology and spirituality, missional spirituality and theological education and the formation of a missional spirituality.

3.3.1 Theology and spirituality

Theology and spirituality are irrevocably connected. Osmer (2008:28-29) acknowledges this significant connection by pointing out that the four core tasks of practical theological interpretation, implemented in this research, are grounded in spirituality and relies on the spirituality of the researcher. According to Schneiders (2002:135) theology attempts to grasp and articulate what is believed and lived, it is the intellectual articulation of spirituality. Hernandez (2006:4) notes the indivisible relationship between theology and spirituality. Sheldrake (2010:62) asserts that the fundamental connection between theology and spirituality has become axiomatic. Van Niekerk (2019:28) states that theology is ingrained in spirituality. However, this was not always the case as theology and spirituality have, separately, gone through various transitions. The most recent transitions can be mentioned here.

Sheldrake states that in recent decades several major shifts took place in the relationship between spirituality and theology and three significant changes should be noted. First, what

was understood as 'spirituality' has changed considerably. "It is no longer limited to monastic-clerical elites and has also broadened beyond attention to prayer and contemplation to include reflection on the values and lifestyle of all Christians" (Sheldrake, 2010:61). Second, Christian spirituality is no longer concerned with defining 'perfection' in the abstract, rather it examines the complex mystery of human transformation in the context of a dynamic relationship with God (Sheldrake, 2010:62). Spirituality is thus about all the different aspects concerning human life. According to Williams (1990:12), spirituality is more than a science of interpreting exceptional private experiences, removing the distinction between so-called compromising activities and spheres (the family, state, the individual body, or psyche) and the so-called pure realities (the soul, the intelligible world), spirituality becomes more complex. He states that spirituality "must now touch on every area of human experience, the public and social, the painful, negative, even pathological byways of the mind, the moral and relational world" (Williams, 1990:12). This change in the understanding of spirituality has a profound influence on the goal of spirituality. With this understanding, Christian life is not about enlightenment, but wholeness (Williams, 1990:12). Third, spirituality is now connected with theology and Biblical studies. This connection is partly because of the changes in theology. "Theology has moved from a deductive, transcultural approach to reflection on the experience of God and the practices of discipleship in cultural particularity" (Sheldrake, 2010:62). Waaijman (2006:2) also notes these two approaches when describing spirituality – the deductive approach, theologically orientated, and the inductive approach, starting from lived experience. The latter is no longer neglected. It can thus be concluded that theology and spirituality are interdependent. Hernandez (2006:131) states that this interdependence means that knowing God implies loving God, "theological impression gives way to spiritual expression in the same way that the reality of the expression itself solidifies the truth of the actual impression." However, according to Schneiders, spirituality also goes beyond theology. Considering that both theology and spirituality has gone through shifts and changes, Schneiders (1986:273) states that spirituality was secondary to theology, but "spirituality has emerged as an autonomous dialogue partner demanding independence for the sake of mature interdependence". Kourie (2009:148) also states that spirituality, once regarded as a 'Cinderella' discipline, has returned to its rightful place and is wielding influence inside and outside of the academy.

Despite these ambiguities, specialists in spirituality concur that theology and spirituality are essential companions. They are united in their persistence that first, human experience is a genuine source of wisdom and knowledge about God, second, that this human experience requires a form of interpretation obtained from a diverse and wide range of academic methods,

and third, that the appropriate study of spirituality requires us to go beyond a sense of truth as neutral and objective (Endean, 2005). These considerations demonstrate that spirituality without theological reflection and theology not grounded in real life experience is not only inadequate but also feeble. Spirituality has liberated theology and together it has transformative potential (Kourie, 2009:167).

From this brief overview of theology and spirituality, it has become clear that spirituality is more than an inward movement of contemplation and meditation, it is an outward movement concerning all aspects of life. This means that spirituality is not about enlightenment, but about becoming whole and living a flourishing life. A flourishing life is not about wealth or success, but rather “the good to which humans are meant to strive” (Volf & Croasmun, 2019:13). It has also become clear that theology is not detached from existence or experiences, theology frames and points out the meaning of life. Becoming whole and living a flourishing life in God’s presence, is God’s main concern for his creation and “the purpose of theology is to discern, articulate, and commend visions of flourishing life in light of God’s self-revelation in Jesus Christ” (Volf & Croasmun, 2019:11).

True spirituality is a live, continuous personal relationship with the Creator God that fulfils my deepest human longings for inward and outward peace and gives me meaning and purpose for everyday life. Spirituality is of no use if it is not of earthly use. True spirituality is discovered in human relationships, built on the foundation of a relationship with God. (Amalraj, 2009:9)

This overview of theology and spirituality and their interdependence is significant because, in the same manner, theological education and spiritual formation are interdependent. We now turn to missional spirituality and its theological foundations and then to theological education and the formation of a missional spirituality.

3.3.2 Missional spirituality

The complex history of spirituality will not be discussed here and the definitions might appear to be oversimplified, but for the scope and purpose of this research, only a description of missional spirituality and its theological foundations will be attempted.

Spirituality has recently become a prominent discourse. Kourie (2009:149) notes that this extends to the popular and scholarly spheres, that courses on spirituality and retreats are now prevalent, and that several centres for the study of spirituality have now been established.

Spirituality's newfound place, or restored place, in theology, has already been pointed out. And Van Niekerk (2019:96) points out that spirituality is not only used by theology and religion, but also by various other disciplines such as psychology, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, the natural sciences, ecology, physics, linguistics, art, cyberspace and virtual reality, medical science, education, political discourse and business. Given the broad interest in spirituality, it is difficult to formulate a definition.

That being said, Schneiders (1986:266) examines different definitions for spirituality, religious and non-religious, and concludes that they all suggest that spirituality refers to “self-transcendence which gives integrity and meaning to the whole of life and to life in its wholeness by situating and orienting the person within the horizon of ultimacy in some ongoing and transforming way.” Griffin (1988:1) states that spirituality refers to a person's ultimate values and commitments. In this sense, spirituality is not optional, it is not something you choose for or against. “Everyone embodies a spirituality, even if it be a nihilistic or materialistic spirituality... a way of life oriented around an ultimate meaning and around values other than power, pleasure, and possession.” (Griffin, 1988:1-2). Scharmer (2018:33) developed the concept of ‘presencing’, being present in a way – with an open mind, open heart and open will – that you can sense and actualise your highest future potential, that which has the most meaning. This deep personal awareness can also be referred to as spirituality. According to Waaijman (2002:1) spirituality involves the core of human existence, “our relation to the Absolute.” For Peterson (2005:29) it is a way of life, “living fully and well, is at the heart of all serious spirituality.” The World Council of Churches (2013:52) affirms that spirituality gives the deepest meaning to life and is the motivation behind everything we do. From these views on spirituality, and as seen above, it is evident that spirituality is not an abstract concept, detached from life, it ultimately gives shape and meaning to life. Christian spirituality, then, should be formed intentionally.

Johnson and Dreitcer (2001:1-2) notes that spirituality was once reserved only for zealots, monks and the deeply pious, but spirituality involves more than practising spiritual disciplines, it involves all the ways we live our lives before God. Moltmann (1992:x) refers to ‘life in the Spirit’ as this life is set in the presence of the living God and there is a unity between the experience of God and the experience of life. Bouckaert (2011:26) states that spirituality, pointing to the working of the Spirit, is unpredictable and “blows where it wills”. Bosch (2019:13-14) asserts that spirituality does not mean withdrawal from the world, recharging or revitalising, and then going back into the world, “fundamental to any definition of spirituality is that it can never be something that can be isolated from the rest of our existence.” The Spirit is not confined to certain spaces or times and spirituality is formed where the Spirit moves.

“Christian spirituality is not deracinated from earthly concerns, but fully embraces the phenomenal world” (Kourie, 2009:170). Sheldrake (1995:514) states that spirituality encompasses the whole of human life “viewed in terms of a conscious relationship with God, in Jesus Christ, through the indwelling of the Spirit and within the community of believers.” Christian spirituality, a way of life in the presence of God and within a community of believers, is thus not formed by retreating from the world but by engaging in the world.

Bosch (2019:15) understands spirituality as all-pervading, spirituality is not contemplation and retreating from the world over against action and involvement, spirituality is both at the same time. He refers to the Lund meeting of *Faith and Order* (1952) who recognised this and stated that church was always and at the same time “called out of the world and sent into the world” (Bosch, 2019:16-17). The DRC’s policy document (2013:11) also confirms this:

Spirituality is a journey within, but also to outside ourselves – on the one hand, it is a journey into your inner being and world, on the other hand, it is also a journey to the outside because it is all about a lifestyle befitting this journey. (DRC, 2013:11)

Spirituality has a history of private piety – practising spiritual disciplines such as prayer, meditation and contemplation for personal growth and shaping morality. But as Wright (2008:270) affirms “there is ultimately no justification for private piety that does not work out in actual mission...” This brings us to the description of missional spirituality.

Kreminski (2016:n.p.) makes important distinctions between missional spirituality and Christian spirituality. In my opinion, missional spirituality points to authentic Christian spirituality. ‘Missional’ has become a supporting word, scaffolding, to re-establish an important dimension of spirituality that was lost. Kreminski (2016:n.p.) offers seven ways in which missional spirituality differs from Christian spirituality, or it can be argued, precedes Christian spirituality or goes beyond Christian spirituality:

- Embodied vs. Disembodied
- This-Worldly vs. Other-Worldly
- Service-Orientated vs. Self-Actualised
- Engaging vs. Withdrawing
- Incarnational vs. Excarnational
- Cruciformly vs. Upward Mobility
- Trinitarian vs. Individualistic

Most of these dissimilarities have already been touched on. Missional spirituality is, as Helland & Hjalmarson (2011:loc. 284) suggests, spirituality from the inside out: “missional spirituality is an attentive and active engagement of embodied love for God and neighbour expressed from the inside out”. This means that missional spirituality is a spirituality *for the sake of others*. Zscheile (2012:8) also makes it clear that spiritual formation is not merely for personal growth, but for the love of God and neighbour. “Spiritual transformation is the process by which Christ is formed in us for the glory of God, for the abundance of our own lives and for the sake of others” (Barton, 2008:15-16). For Kremiski (2014:52) the crucial element of a missional spirituality is that “Christians’ connection to God happens with an outward focus; an engagement with the missional characteristic of God”. Bevans (n.d.:1) thus states that missional spirituality is always contextual, like mission, there is not a ‘one-size-fits-all’ missional spirituality, participating in the *missio Dei* and being formed involves moving beyond your comfort zones of culture, social status, language and location, and it can be added – for the sake of others. Henri Nouwen’s understanding of spirituality can also be regarded as missional. For him, authentic Christian spirituality is about three overlapping movements of love, *inwardly* (love of self), *outwardly* (love of others), and *upwardly* (love of God) (Hernandez, 2006:130). Although Nouwen’s spirituality is not set in a missional framework, his three movements indicate a spirituality that leads to love for God and the other. According to Helland and Hjalmarson (2011:loc. 281-282), this describes a new paradigm: personal transformation for the sake of others.

Before we turn to the intentional formation of a missional spirituality, the theological foundations of missional spirituality require further deliberation. The core characteristics of missional spirituality, connected to God’s missional character, will be guiding principles in the intentional formation of a missional spirituality fundamental to theological education. Accordingly, the Trinitarian, incarnational, *kenotic*, and transformational foundations of missional theology will be deliberated below.

3.3.2.1 Trinitarian

“Mission is, primarily and ultimately, the work of the Triune God...” (Bosch, 1991:392). The World Council of Churches (2013:52) also affirms:

Mission begins in the heart of the Triune God and the love which binds together the Holy Trinity overflows to all humanity and creation. The missionary God who sent the Son to the world calls all God’s people (John 20:21) and empowers them to be a

community of hope. The church is commissioned to celebrate life, and to resist and transform all life-destroying forces, in the power of the Holy Spirit. (WCC, 2013:52)

The Trinity is a relational community (Scorgie, 2007:41). Helland & Hjalmarson (2011:loc. 520-521) states that God existed as a loving community of three divine Persons even before the creation. We were created in God's image and God invites us to participate in this loving community. At the Willingen Conference (1952) it was established that the *missio Dei* should be put in the context of the Trinity, not ecclesiology or soteriology, and the classic doctrine of the *missio Dei* was expanded to God the Father sending the Son, God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit, and Father, Son, and Holy Spirit sending the church into the world (Bosch, 1991:390). Mission is "initiated by the Father, mediated through the Son, and perfected through the Holy Spirit" (Jukko *et al.*, 2018:58). This Trinitarian understanding is significant for a missional spirituality. Missional spirituality is participation in the life of the Triune God (Gorman, 2015:loc. 5261). Missional spirituality is embedded in the *imago Trinitatis* (Van Niekerk, 2019:245; Niemandt, 2016:88).

Understanding a missional spirituality as Trinitarian stresses the importance of relationships and community. God's people reflect the community within God and by modelling this community for a broken world, is formed as a missional community (Kreminski, 2014:61). God's people are interdependent. If someone suffers, everyone suffers, and if someone is acclaimed, everyone celebrates (see 1 Corinthians 12:12-31). We are not meant to live in isolation, we are created to live together in this world, and more so, to live *for* each other in this world. This is essential for a missional spirituality. The doctrine of the Trinity demonstrates that life is in its essence a relationship, whereas "so many in our society celebrate the significance of the solitary individual, the truth is that humans are, by nature and design, deeply dependent upon one another" (Bolsinger, 2004:132). And life in the Trinity "opens our hearts and lives to our brothers and sister in the same movement of sharing God's love" (WCC, 2013:63). The Trinitarian foundation re-imagines spiritual formation as communal participation in God's sending movement in the world that God so loves (John 3:16) (Zscheile, 2012:13).

Deliberating the Trinitarian foundation of God's missional character, missional spirituality can be considered relational – formed *in* community and *for* the community. Helland and Hjalmarson (2011:loc. 538-540) points out that everyone wants to belong, but community is more than being surrounded by people at meetings or public events, "community is nurtured in mutual service and interdependence, insignificant interaction and vulnerability, in shared stories and common purpose".

This brings us to the next theological foundation, incarnational. Scorgie (2007:45) remarks that this relational dynamic includes “the blessing of God’s presence”. God became flesh and lived among us (see John 1:14).

3.3.2.2 Incarnational

Jesus is God-incarnate. God became embodied in Jesus. “God became material, visible, exposed, and assumes flesh in an earthly Jesus” (Van Niekerk, 2019:68). He did not reveal himself through ideas or concepts, but through concrete circumstances and actions (Helland & Hjalmanson, 2011:loc. 553). According to Gregersen (2015b:loc. 3545-3550), the embodiment of God is radical and he proposes a concept called deep incarnation:

“Deep incarnation” is the view that God’s own Logos (Wisdom and Word) was made flesh in Jesus the Christ in such a comprehensive manner that God, by assuming the particular life story of Jesus the Jew from Nazareth, also conjoined the material conditions of creaturely existence (“all flesh”), shared and ennobled the fate of all biological life forms (“grass” and “lilies”), and experienced the pains of sensitive creatures (“sparrows” and “foxes”) from within. Deep incarnation thus presupposes a radical embodiment that reaches into the roots (*radices*) of material and biological existence as well as into the darker sides of creation: the *tenebrae creationis*. (Gregersen 2015b:loc. 3545-3550)

God’s radical embodiment means God embraces all of life. “God assumes the whole vulnerable, mortal nature in his becoming human, in order that it may be healed, reconciled, and glorified” (Moltmann, 2015:1962-1963). God’s deep incarnation makes him inseparable from life’s vulnerability, pain and suffering (Van Niekerk, 2018:183). Moltmann (2015:1898-1900) also notes that a person does not only consist of body and soul, a person also exists in relationships. Therefore Jesus’ relationship to the sick, the poor, the outcasts, women, and with his disciples is important when attempting to understand incarnation. “Incarnation here means to understand human and creaturely conditions from an internal first-hand perspective, and not only from a lofty third-person perspective beyond the engagements, struggles, passions, and anxieties of being a human-in-the-world-with-others” (Gregersen, 2015a:loc. 163-169).

Hirsch does not use the concept of deep incarnation but describes an understanding of incarnation that is comprehensive. He states that the incarnation is more than our salvation, it was an act of profound affinity, a radical identification with all that it means to be human, and

beyond identification, revelation, taking upon himself all aspects of humanity (Hirsch, 2006:132). Hirsch (2006:132) presents four dimensions that frame God's incarnation:

Presence – In Jesus, the eternal God is fully present to us. Jesus does not represent God, Jesus is God in the flesh.

Proximity – In Jesus God approached us in a way we can understand and access. He did not only call people to repent and proclaim the presence of God, He lived life in proximity with the broken, outcast, and lost.

Powerlessness – In Jesus God becomes “one of us”, taking on the form of a servant, not the form of a ruler. He lives a humble life as a carpenter in the remote town of Galilee. With his actions, he rejects all normal notions of coercive power and demonstrates how love and humility (powerlessness) reflect the true nature of God. Powerlessness, not power, is the approach needed to transform a society.

Proclamation – In Jesus God proclaimed his kingdom and called all people to respond in repentance and faith. This is the initiation of the gospel invitation.

The World Council of Churches (2013:52) also affirms: “God did not send the Son for the salvation of humanity alone or give us a partial salvation. Rather the gospel is the good news for every part of creation and every aspect of our life and society. It is therefore vital to recognise God's mission in a cosmic sense and to affirm all life, the whole *oikoumene*, as being interconnected in God's web of life”. Smith concurs that Jesus' incarnation is comprehensive. Salvation is not only about the afterlife, it includes every part of life before death, Jesus is concerned with all areas of life, not just the ‘spiritual life’, and spiritual formation is thus more than admiring and accepting Jesus, but following him (Smith, 2014:46-52). God's radical embodiment is significant for missional spirituality. It implies that God's people embody God's love in concrete circumstances – among the people and in the places or environments where they find themselves. Helland and Hjalmanson (2011:loc. 554-555) regard the incarnation as the ultimate theological foundation for a missional spirituality, living in a way that contextualised God's presence. Missional spirituality as incarnational thus implies a spirituality embodied by the people of God (Kreminski, 2014:53).

Understanding a missional spirituality as incarnational stresses the importance of embodiment. Unfortunately, we live in a disembodied society. This is one of the main challenges of missional spirituality. Both Schneiders and Waaijman maintain that spirituality should not be separated from lived experience (Fortin, 2016:38). “The living body is the locus for the perception and expression of spirituality” (Fortin, 2016:44). Missional spirituality is a

spirituality embodied in daily life. “All spiritual disciplines and Christian mission are carried out in the human body” (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:548-550). Jesus’ incarnation is not so we can be saved from this world, but gives us a new identity in this world. We thus find our missional identity “not in our ascent out of the world to God, but rather in God’s descent *into the world* in Christ” (Zscheile, 2012:18). Scorgie (2007:110) also states that authentic Christian spirituality is embodied, following the pattern of the incarnation and following the heart of God into the world. Gorman (2015:loc. 100) notes that Paul urged the first century Christians not to merely believe the gospel, but to become the gospel. It was not so much about *doing* certain things as it was about *being*. Jesus is both the message and the model for witness, both the proclaimer and the embodiment of the kingdom (Guder, 2015:54). Guder (2005:22) explains the implications of embodiment for a missional spirituality:

The centrality of the community to the gospel means that the message is never disembodied. The word must always become flesh, embodied in the life of the called community. The gospel cannot be captured adequately in propositions, or creeds or theological systems, as crucial as all of these exercises are. The gospel dwells in and shapes the people who are called to be its witness. The message is inextricably linked with its messengers. If there is good news in the world, then it is demonstrably good in the way that it is lived out by the community called into its service. (Guder, 2005:22)

Embodiment, then, means being deeply aware that God embraces ordinary life, “it is to be fully present in our bodies and to be at home in the world where God called and placed us” (Niemandt, 2019:93). A spiritual life that is incarnational means participating in this world, this life, this place in our day-to-day relationships in family, work, church and leisure (Webber, 2006:173). This participation should be an incarnational lifestyle of presence, proximity, powerlessness and proclamation (Hirsch, 2006:133-134):

Presence – Presence emphasises the importance of relationships. It is to become part of the fabric of a community. The way we live among people is the message, we cannot take ourselves out of the equation of mission.

Proximity – Jesus engaged with people from every level of society. Proximity is more than being present, it is about genuine availability. It entails spontaneity and regularity in the communities we find ourselves.

Powerlessness – Living a life in a Christlike way is about servanthood and humility in our relationships with each other and the world. Defying the norms of power we find in the world.

Proclamation – The gospel invitation of Jesus is still alive and active today. Proclamation requires that we are always willing to share the gospel story with those in our world.

An incarnational lifestyle, or missional spirituality, means to engage in your community (presence), to be aware of your community's hurts and brokenness (proximity), to be aware of your brokenness (powerlessness), and to be the good news (proclamation) for the sake of others. God's strategy to reach a broken world through his incarnation, implies that God's people too must be the good news in their local context (Kreminski, 2014:33). Van Niekerk (2019:268) states that God's deep incarnation makes God fundamentally part of nature's vulnerability, pain and suffering and this should be recognised and internalised in a missional spirituality. Being the good news means being a healing presence. God's deep incarnation compels us to see what God sees and to be an embodiment of God's restoration of his creation. "God is therefore at work creating an international network of multicultural, socio-economically diverse communities ("churches") that participate in this liberating, transformative reality now – even if incompletely and imperfectly..." (Gorman, 2015:loc 659).

Deliberating the incarnational foundation of God's missional character, missional spirituality can be considered embodiment. Forming a missional spirituality is thus about all aspects of life and living, it is holistic formation. Smith also refers to the importance of holistic formation. When Jesus forms his disciples, it is not about informing their intellect, he also forms their loves and longings (Smith, 2016:2). It is a formation of the head, heart and hands. Smith (2016:9) considers that the Scriptures paint a holistic picture of the human person, it is not only our minds that God redeems, he redeems the whole person – head, heart and hands. This formation takes place while partaking in missional practices, daily habits and rhythms. And these habits and rhythms establish an incarnational lifestyle. Missional spirituality can be formed by the missional practices of everyday life. "We need to abandon our predisposition to look for the Spirit in the extraordinary when God has promised to be present in the ordinary" (Niemandt 2019:93). The key is to discern what God is up to in the ordinary, in everyday life, and to join in.

We can now move on to the next theological foundation, *kenosis*. Fundamental to the incarnation is Jesus' self-emptying (see Philippians 2:5-8).

3.3.2.3 Kenotic

Scorgie (2007:43) states that self-giving love is found at the core of God's nature. In the Trinity each Person is affected simply by relating to the others, any relationship demands a self-limitation (De Klerk, n.d.:2). When God creates, the act involves self-limitation. "Everything was made by God through creative, kenotic love" (De Klerk, n.d.:2). The incarnation itself was kenotic, "Christ left the glory of heaven to put on flesh and serve a lost humanity" (Kreminski, 2014:64). Self-giving love is not limited to Jesus' death on the cross. Jesus' crucifixion should not be isolated from his life, Jesus' *kenosis*, his self-giving or self-emptying love, began at his birth (Bosch, 1991:513). Jesus' whole life displays acts of self-sacrifice, giving up power and control, and embracing weakness. Bosch (1991:513) also states that his identification with those that were powerless and his refusal to act according to the conventions of the day was the reason for his crucifixion. Jesus' ministry does not involve the marginalised by accident, being vulnerable and renouncing power is the necessary starting point for Jesus' ministry.

The World Council of Churches (2013:52) point out that mission was always understood as a movement from the centre to the periphery, from the privileged to the marginalised. From the powerful to the powerless. But Scripture shows that God chose the poor, the foolish, and the powerless for his mission (1 Corinthians 1:18-31). There is a shift from 'mission to the margins' to 'mission from the margins' (WCC, 2013:52-53). *Kenosis* thus means that those who understand vulnerable positions and exclusionary forces first-hand can participate in God's mission (Niemandt, 2019:176). The position of powerlessness is the best position from where to participate in God's mission. Niemandt (2019:36) notes that self-preservation and self-fulfilment are the default position humans take on – *kenosis* deconstructs this position. It seems counterintuitive, but giving up control, power, and privilege is required for God's people in his mission. "A people characterized by communal *kenosis* for the good of the world is both the means and the goal of God's saving activity here and now" (Gorman, 2009:38). Bosch (2019:74) regards the concepts Paul uses in Corinthians as synonyms: weakness, ministry or service, suffering and affliction. This means that the authentic participation in mission "is the weakest and least impressive human activity imaginable, the very antithesis of a theology of glory" (Bosch, 2019:74). Bosch (2019:76) calls these inescapable paradoxes: "Just as, in Jesus, the paradox of heavenly glory and the cross coexist, the paradoxes of power and weakness and of life and death coexist in the ministry and faith of the apostle".

Missional spirituality is shaped by the self-emptying of Jesus and this paradox of power and weakness. It comprises an attitude of humility focused on service and vulnerability (Niemandt, 2019:95). Bosch (1991:515) affirms that mission is not possible when "we are

powerful and confident but only when we are weak and at a loss”. As seen above, acknowledging and embracing our weakness is the necessary starting point. This challenges our worldview characterised by taking control and organising our lives in a way that we can provide for ourselves and make a life for ourselves. Bosch (2019:74-75) states that our instinct or human reaction is a refusal to embrace weakness and to demand strength and power from God, but “only broken men can lead others to the cross”. Missional spirituality is living a life that is cruciform, living for God and others, not for ourselves (Kreminski, 2014:63). *Kenosis* is thus consciously making yourself vulnerable for the sake of others (DRC, 2013:7).

Making yourself vulnerable and giving up power is, first, about realising your own “thorn in the flesh”. Weakness is part of the human condition and Bosch (2019:76) states that everyone has his or her own “thorn in the flesh”. Suffering and hardship is not the purpose of the “thorn in the flesh”, but God’s power that is made perfect in this weakness. God’s grace is all that is needed, his power comes to full strength in weakness – when we are weak, we are strong (see 2 Corinthians 12:9-10). Kenotic spirituality, then, emphasises the significance of sharing our humanity when we share our faith (Niemandt, 2019:95). Sharing our vulnerability and God’s strength in our vulnerability.

Making yourself vulnerable and giving up power is, second, about realising that the mission is God’s. Purves (2007:11-13) points out that our ministries must be displaced by the ministry of Jesus. Too often ministry is approached as ‘my ministry’. We end up imitating Jesus and doing Jesus-*things*, without Jesus. Ministry should be focused on what God is already up to. Missional spirituality is therefore formed by discernment and practising dwelling in the world, an acute awareness in the everyday. Dwelling in the world is shaped by two questions (Niemandt, 2019:133):

- What is God up to? What is God busy doing in his creation?
- What does God want to do? What is God’s preferred future? How does this new transformed reality look like, and how can (we) participate in this process of transformation?

Discernment and joining in with God’s ministry affirms our vulnerability and that our ministries should be displaced. Purves (2007:13-16) calls the process of displacement “the crucifixion of ministry” because the concept of crucifixion also represents redemption. “The crucifixion of ministry by the process of painful displacement by the ministry of Jesus is staggering good news for ministers and for the people among whom we minister” (Purves,

2007:13-16). This displacement can be described as *kenosis*. Jesus says to daily take up our cross – to deny ourselves, to die daily, and to follow him (see Luke 9:23).

Kenosis is not an easy endeavour. And it requires dependency on the Spirit of God (Kreminski, 2014:65) and God’s mercy in all aspects of life (Niemandt, 2019:95). It is not just a matter of giving up power but giving power over to God. Bosch (2019) affirms that it takes courage to be weak. Giving up power and giving over to God means being transformed. Rohr (2004:37) observes that if we do not transform our pain, we will most assuredly transmit it. This self-emptying and ‘letting go’ and subsequent recovery in peace and grace on a new level is one way in which the cross transforms our life (Merton, 1998:160).

Understanding a missional spirituality as *kenotic* stresses the importance of powerlessness and being transformed. Self-emptying and to be transformed by being ‘filled’ by the Spirit. *Kenosis* is an imperative precursor to transformation. Transformation is possible because Jesus’ *kenosis* inaugurates the kingdom of God. This new age, already in our midst, has tremendous consequences (see Luke 17:21). “It ceases to be merely a future reality toward which we are on the way, it has invaded and permeated our earthly historical existence and is in the process of transforming it” (Bosch, 2019:82).

Deliberating the *kenotic* foundation of God’s missional character, missional spirituality can be considered the embracing of powerlessness. The possibility of transformation hinges on humans being vulnerable, the vulnerability of the one being transformed and of the one participating in God’s process of transformation (Bosch, 2019:75). The formation of a missional spirituality hinges on vulnerability.

This brings us to the next theological foundation, and the last one that will be discussed here, transformational. Transformation follows *kenosis*. Being crucified with Christ, I no longer live, but Christ lives in me (see Galatians 2:20).

3.3.2.4 Transformational

God’s compassion for our suffering has initiated a healing and restorative ministry in the world (Scorgie, 2007:102). This can be seen throughout the Old Testament, the Lord who heals (see Exodus 15:26), and throughout the New Testament, Jesus’ ministry (see Matthew 4:23-24) and the apostles continuing his ministry (see Acts 4:30). Scripture gives various perspectives on salvation and affirms that God’s salvation plan is comprehensive. “Whatever salvation is, then, in every specific context, it includes the total transformation of human life, forgiveness of sin, healing from infirmities, and release from any kind of bondage...” (Bosch, 1991:107).

We are not only included in God's comprehensive salvation plan but also take part in the execution. The World Council of Churches' Commission on Faith and Order (WCC, 2013:38) acknowledges that the Church exists to serve the divine plan for the transformation of the world and is not an end in itself. However, the Church's part in transformation is only possible because of the Spirit. Transformation is challenging, but it can be real and lasting with the Spirit alive in us (Scorgie, 2007:78). The World Council of Churches states (WCC, 2013:52):

Life in the Holy Spirit is the essence of mission, the core of why we do what we do and how we live our lives. Spirituality gives the deepest meaning to our lives and motivates our actions. It is a sacred gift from the Creator, the energy for affirming and caring for life. This mission spirituality has a dynamic of transformation which, through the spiritual commitment of people, is capable of transforming the world in God's grace. (WCC, 2013:52)

If it is Jesus that invites us to follow him in his way of life, it is the Spirit that makes this life possible. Following Jesus is being called to a new and transformed life, connected to the transformative work of the Holy Spirit (Niemandt, 2019:45). "Humanity participates in this missionary being of God through active participation in the history of Jesus Christ in the same unity of the Spirit" (Flett, 2010:226). The role of Jesus's incarnation and *kenosis* has been discussed, the crucial role of the Spirit in the process of transformation, and the formation of missional spirituality, will now be discussed and cannot be overstated.

Missional spirituality is formed by the Spirit (Kreminski, 2014:56; Niemandt, 2019:90). Zscheile (2012:16) also affirms that Christian spiritual formation is *Spiritual* formation, a formation that takes place in and by the power of the Holy Spirit. Waaijman (Fortin 2016:42) describes spirituality as the 'life-long transformative interaction of the human with the divine'. As seen above, the spiritual life is not the nonmaterial and abstract part of human existence, it refers to the new identity we form when dwelling in the power and community of the Holy Spirit (Zscheile, 2012:16-17). This new identity is thus formed by engaging in the world and being engaged by the Spirit. Engaging in the world and living in the life of the Spirit is mutually transformative, seeking the one without the other will result in "an individualistic spirituality that leads us to believe falsely that we can belong to God without belonging to our neighbour, and we will fall into a spirituality that simply makes us feel good while other parts of creation hurt and yearn" (WCC, 2013:55). Niemandt (2019:90) also states that without the Spirit's transformation we are "nothing more than mere political or community activists engaged in societal service". The Spirit's transformation is thus essential to missional spirituality. The

prerequisite and means of participating in God's mission – being transformed to be able to transform. Personal transformation for the sake of the transformation of others.

Understanding a missional spirituality as transformative stresses the importance of first being transformed, and then participating in God's salvation plan. Although the Spirit is at work in the lives of God's people and forms them, missional spirituality is about more than being formed. Missional spirituality is focused on the work of the Spirit in the world – discerning where the Spirit is working, to engage with the Spirit and then being formed by the Spirit (Kreminski, 2014:57). Keifert (ed. 2009:11) also states that it is crucial for God's people to develop the capacity to engage and discern the presence and the work of the Spirit in their midst. What God is up to and what God wants to do (see above). Missional spirituality is then to participate in God's comprehensive mission. Opposing and transforming “all life-destroying values and systems wherever these are at work in our economies, our politics, and even our churches” (WCC, 2013:57). And transforming people, organisations, neighbourhoods and all of God's creation (Niemandt, 2019:89). The Arusha ‘Called to Transforming Discipleship’ also shows the extent of God's mission we are called to participate in, individually and collectively (Jukko *et al.*, 2018:46-47):

We are called by our baptism to transforming discipleship: a Christ-connected way of life in a world where many face despair, rejection, loneliness, and worthlessness.

We are called to worship the one Triune God—the God of justice, love, and grace—at a time when many worship the false god of the market system (Luke 16:13).

We are called to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ—the fullness of life, the repentance and forgiveness of sin, and the promise of eternal life—in word and deed, in a violent world where many are sacrificed to the idols of death (Jeremiah 32:35) and where many have not yet heard the gospel.

We are called to joyfully engage in the ways of the Holy Spirit, who empowers people from the margins with agency, in the search for justice and dignity (Acts 1:8; 4:31).

We are called to discern the word of God in a world that communicates many contradictory, false, and confusing messages.

We are called to care for God's creation, and to be in solidarity with nations severely affected by climate change in the face of a ruthless human-centred exploitation of the environment for consumerism and greed.

We are called as disciples to belong together in just and inclusive communities, in our quest for unity and on our ecumenical journey, in a world that is based upon marginalisation and exclusion.

We are called to be faithful witnesses of God’s transforming love in dialogue with people of other faiths in a world where the politicisation of religious identities often causes conflict.

We are called to be formed as servant leaders who demonstrate the way of Christ in a world that privileges power, wealth, and the culture of money (Luke 22:25-27).

We are called to break down walls and seek justice with people who are dispossessed and displaced from their lands—including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers—and to resist new frontiers and borders that separate and kill (Isaiah 58:6-8).

We are called to follow the way of the cross, which challenges elitism, privilege, personal and structural power (Luke 9:23).

We are called to live in the light of the resurrection, which offers hope-filled possibilities for transformation.

This is a call to transforming discipleship.

God’s comprehensive mission can be seen as the transformation from brokenness to wholeness. This implies that it is more than merely repairing what was ‘broken’, wholeness implies a holistic transformation. Being whole means receiving the fullness of life (see John 10:10). Van Niekerk (2018:174) points out that wholeness is closely related to the *shalom* of the Old Testament, “referring to physical health, peace of mind, healthy human relations, social justice and peace with God”. The World Council of Churches (2012:162) also state that this *shalom* implies peace that promotes wholeness. To be missional is to be involved as broken humans in the transformation of people from brokenness to wholeness. We are called for this movement toward life, “celebrating all that the Spirit continues to call into being...” (WCC, 2013:58). We serve the *missio Dei* as the wounded healers of others (Scorgie, 2007:102). Van Niekerk (2019:95) defines missional spirituality as a spirituality of imperfection, a journey to wholeness through human brokenness. This transformation is not a once-off occurrence but, as already stated, a life in the Spirit. “To experience life in the Spirit is to taste life in its fullness” (WCC, 2013:58).

Deliberating the transformative foundation of God’s missional character, missional spirituality can be considered transformative, the prerequisite and means of participating in the *missio Dei*. Helland and Hjalmarson (2011:loc. 283) states that cultivation a missional ministry is to be transformed into a missional person. Van Niekerk (2019:246) notes that both mission and spirituality require a process of transformative reconstruction and he proposes “reciprocal transformative action between *missio*-formation and spiritual formation in forming

a missional spirituality and identity”. Missional spirituality is thus formed by not only participating in the transformation of people, organisations and neighbourhoods but participating in the transformation of mission. This is significant for missional spirituality when considering the adaptive challenges part and parcel of missional leadership. “It is difficult to imagine missional leaders navigating the complexities of adaptive change without being embedded in a transformational spirituality that connects them to the source of all real life-giving transformation – the Holy Spirit” (Niemandt, 2019:90). The significance of the intentional formation of missional spirituality can therefore also not be overstated.

This concludes the description of theological foundations – Trinitarian, incarnational, *kenotic*, and transformative – of missional spirituality. Missional spirituality can thus be understood as relational, formed *in* community and *for* the community; embodiment, formed holistically and shaping all aspects of life and living; powerlessness, formed by embracing vulnerability; and transformative, the prerequisite and means of participating in the *missio Dei*. Missional spirituality is fundamental to theological education and thus fundamental to the capacities (knowledge, attitudes and skills) of forming missional leaders.

We now turn to theological education and the intentional formation of a missional spirituality.

3.3.3 Theological education and the formation of a missional spirituality

The formation of a missional spirituality should be the consequence of theological education. However, it seems that theological education lacks intentional spiritual formation. According to Naidoo (2010:189), theological education is in crisis:

The analysis of the problem is that theological institutions have failed to produce the desired product, as skilled leader, or that the purpose of theology is not understood and therefore the theological curriculum is in disarray with minimal integration among the disciplines and a tendency to functionalism. (Naidoo, 2010:189)

This is also evident in the DRC’s theological education. Helland and Hjalmanson (2011:loc. 508-509) asserts that theology is inherently spiritual as it addresses the whole person and inherently missional as it concerns God’s mission to the world. This suggests that theological education is already forming spirituality, but when it is not done intentionally and when theology ceases to focus on God’s mission to the world, it is most likely an immature or

constrained spirituality. Johnson and Dreitcer (2001:vii-viii) observe that many congregational leaders have had no intentional training in spiritual formation and the consequence being the lack of mature spiritualities. This extends not only to the congregational leaders but those lay leaders formed by them. The lack of intentional spiritual formation produces ‘professionals’. Being professional is conflicting and a threat to the profoundly spiritual nature of ministry (Piper, 2013:3). And being professional is in contrast with the characteristics of missional spirituality as described above. There should be a fundamental shift in paradigms and practices “from equipping managers to equipping spiritual directors and leaders, from maintenance to mission, from church at the centre to a kingdom frame” (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 223-2235).

Guder (ed. 1998:217) advocates that the model of academic learning, regarded as an “abstract enterprise and based on observation rather than personal involvement”, should be reconsidered and “structured intentional formation needs to be rediscovered”. It is not enough to add another course or module for spiritual formation, theological education as a whole needs to be re-evaluated – the content, but especially the methodology. Cannell indicates that when theological schools are confronted with the lack of spiritual growth, their response seems to be the addition of another course (Brynjolfson, 2010:197). Or as Helland and Hjalmarson (2011:loc. 2243) note, to simply attempt to improve what has always been done. Banks already wrote about re-envisioning theological education and alternative missional models 20 years ago. He notes that when certain questions regarding theological education come up, they are usually addressed as operational matters, concerning academics and administration, and not as theological matters (Banks, 1999:9). The crisis of theological education is ultimately a matter of addressing adaptive challenges with making technical changes. Theological education is in desperate need of deep change. What follows is a proposal for a model of theological education and the formation of a missional spirituality by engaging reflexively in transforming current practices. This proposal will be made by deliberating the outcomes or primary goal of theological education; a pedagogical model for holistic formation; and a syllabus for the formation of missional leaders.

3.3.3.1 Outcomes – primary goal of theological education

Attending to the theological education crisis and addressing the adaptive challenge requires clarity on the primary goal of theological education. Rowan Williams states in an interview with Christianity Today (2020:n.p.) that the purpose and nature of theological education is not about a set of issues or problems, in the broadest possible sense, is learning more about the world that faith creates, or the world that faith trains you to inhabit, “it is about

a landscape you move into – the new creation if you like. You inhabit this new set of relationships, this new set of perspectives. You see differently, you sense differently, you relate differently”. You are formed to see, sense and relate in a new way, grounded in the *missio Dei*. This perception of theological education differs radically from the impression of the current theological education in the DRC.

Determining the purpose or primary goal of theological education will shape the nature and content of the curriculum and will have implications for spiritual formation in the educational structure (Naidoo, 2010:189). The primary goal of theological education was determined as the formation of missional leaders to equip the church for its missional calling. It was also determined that the current theological education of DRC students is not attaining this primary goal. Accordingly, the action problem was stated as ‘how can theological education assist in forming missional leaders in the DRC?’ Affirming this primary goal is essential for theological education that aspires to be intentional and holistic formation, and consequently spiritual formation. Spiritual formation can and does happen implicitly through current theological education, spirituality is formed by engaging in all aspects of life, including academics. However, when outcomes are not addressed intentionally, “we will end up generating other outcomes, some not at all desirable” (Brynjolfson, 2010:200).

A theological education curriculum, or any curriculum for that matter, starts with specific outcomes that it wants to achieve to attain its primary goal. These outcomes are usually determined for each module, discipline and degree. However, the theological education outcomes mentioned here will be general, overall outcomes focused on a theological, rather than a pragmatic, point of view. The capacities mentioned in chapter 2 and the *Framework of Missional Capacities* as referred to above, can be considered as more specific outcomes (or capacities) of theological education in the formation of missional leaders.³²

Helland & Hjalmarson (2011:loc. 2279) proposes three significant outcomes, or it can be described as areas of equipping, in the formation of missional leaders. These three areas of equipping can be expanded upon towards a holistic theological education for DRC students.

1. *Equip for theological reflection and integration*

The purpose of theology is not the formation of theologians, but equipping leaders for the *missio Dei*. Helland & Hjalmarson (2011:loc. 2281) state that the main purpose or *telos* of theological education should be to equip leaders who will then equip others in what it means to love God from all one’s heart, soul, mind and

³² The *Framework Document for Missional Ministry Development* provides outcomes aligned with the NQF levels. The outcomes described here are general outcomes and not based on the SAQA framework.

strength, and one's neighbour as oneself. This should be the backdrop for all theology, spirituality and mission. "It's inadequate merely to offer courses in systematic theology and ethics that are stand-alone studies abstracted from the practice of theology for spirituality and mission" (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 2282-2283). Theological education should also equip in spiritual directing or guiding beyond pastoral counselling (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 2284). This implies theological education should cultivate students' spirituality. Theology is not just about knowing, theology is about doing and being. Students and lecturers should develop and practice a 'rule of life' (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 2285-2287).

2. Equip for mission and disciple making

As indicated in chapter 2, mission studies only recently became a recognised discipline. Mission and disciple making is not currently the main theme when it comes to any of the disciplines of theology. "Equipping for a missional spirituality in the academy requires that leaders are taught not only how to exegete Scripture but also how to exegete culture, how to be engaged incarnationally in their communities and how to make disciples" (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 2290-2292). How to be present and participate in God's mission.

3. Equip for spirituality and subversion

A leader cannot be competent in church ministry without the foundation of spirituality, "spirituality and virtue are first, then leadership" (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:2292-2293). Nelson writes about spirituality and leadership and states that "leadership is more complex than ever, requiring leading beyond our means" (Nelson, 2016:16). The task of equipping leaders then is not about power and control, but about cultivating a missional spirituality. Self-emptied leaders who resist the temptation to be powerful, because as Henri Nouwen states: "Power offers an easy substitute for the hard task of love" (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 2295-2296). Theological education cultivates the mind, but should also cultivate the heart, "the driving force of our affections, with love as the core desire" (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 2302-2303). This should be reconsidered as the core of the curriculum. "To participate in mission is to participate in the movement of God's love toward people since God is a fountain of sending love" (Bosch, 1991:390).

These three areas of equipping indicate the importance of forming spirituality as fundamental to holistic theological education. The primary goal of theological education, as the formation of missional leaders, is about more than acquiring knowledge about the missional church or even acquiring missional ministry skills, it is about the formation of a missional spirituality. “Surely, the acquisition of more knowledge about God is, by itself, an inadequate outcome for theological education... Knowledge about God should inspire love for God, and love for God, obedience to God” (Brynjolfson, 2010:196).

It should also be noted that spiritual formation is a life-long process and not something that can be seen as accomplished after the completion of formal theological studies. It is thus inherently a goal of theological education to cultivate life-long learners. Naidoo (2010:187) states that this formation is a “lifelong process of becoming, of being formed and developed in the likeness of Christ”.

This primary goal and outcomes of theological education call for theological education to restore the imbalance between spiritual formation, skill development, and academic excellence. This restoration is about more than adding ‘spiritual qualities’ as desired outcomes of theological education. These outcomes are usually present in theological curricula. However, Brynjolfson (2010:198) notes that when theological institutions are to point out where and how these outcomes are generated, vague references are made to times of worship or prayer. This challenge is not a technical problem and reorganising theological education by adding new modules or outcomes, is a mere pragmatic approach. This challenge is an adaptive challenge and concerns the theological foundations of education. The content of theological education must then be formed by the central theme of mission, the focus of theological education directed to the community, and the consequence of theological education the formation of a missional spirituality. To attain the primary goal and outcome of theological education requires a missionally orientated curriculum and the appropriate methodology. What follows is a description of a theological education methodology, a pedagogy for the holistic formation of missional leaders.

3.3.3.2 Pedagogy – a model for holistic theological education

The pedagogical model and dominant structure of many theological education institutions prioritise academic instruction with some practical exposure and compartmentalises spiritual formation, seen as happening implicitly or informally (Naidoo, 2010:185). This is also the current situation of theological education of DRC students at the University of Pretoria. Chapter 2 indicated that the Faculty of Theology and Religion is mainly focused on academics

with the ability to engage critically with theology and life, with little practical exposure and compartmentalised spiritual formation. Intentional spiritual formation is not typically part of formal classes. Church specific education is focused on supplementary academics, varied practical exposures, and compartmentalises spiritual formation. Intentional spiritual formation is confined to a course in the final year of studies. “In protestant theological institutions formation is more likely to be pursued through individual faculty contributions and extracurricular activities” (Naidoo, 2010:186). Harrison (2017:347) expresses the importance of holistic theological education by stating:

Formation involves cultivating wisdom as well as providing information, shaping character as well as conveying content and ways of thinking, nurturing holiness as well as equipping with skills. It calls for an educational goal that develops habits, perceptions, a way of being in the world, a kind of theological habitus, combined with a sense of personal wellness and growing spiritual maturity. Christian character and spirituality are integrated with intellectual learning here. (Harrison, 2017:347)

The current pedagogical model does not promote holistic theological education. Naidoo (2012:2) notes that only recently has there been a shift from merely focusing on the cognitive and the right information to focusing on learning methods and formation. Mainly focusing on academic excellence causes an imbalance. The curriculum’s structure is focused on books and classroom work, safely removed from real life (Paas, 2011:126; Houston, 2013:114). The practical exposure is minimal and the intentional formation of spirituality nominal. However, it should be said, effectively integrating the academic, practical and spiritual has rarely been achieved (Kelsey, 1992:105). According to Nell (2014:1) preparing students requires different pedagogies and these “pedagogies each contribute towards an integrated spirituality as prerequisite for authentic leadership”.

The challenge of addressing the whole person means resources should be allocated accordingly and all the areas of formation should be deemed essential. A curriculum with an integrated approach aims to generate outcomes in all the areas of formation and learning (Brynjolfson, 2010:22). Therefore, the pedagogical model utilised here will be the holistic pedagogical model for missional ministry development as processed, designed and proposed by the General Curatorium in the *Framework for Missional Ministry Development* described above.³³ This is one of the important technical changes brought about by the General

³³ This pedagogical model is not the current working model of theological education at the University of Pretoria.

Curatorium to align theological education with a missional ecclesiology. This pedagogical model uses the rhetorical structure of the DRC document, *Profile of the Graduate Student*. As stated above, the aim of the structure is to equip and empower, those called, to partake in a missional ministry. The rhetorical structure indicates the different aspects of a student's formation:

Ethos – Personal development (who I am and become)

Logos – Understanding the message (what and how I believe)

Pathos – Compassion with the context (who and how I serve)

This pedagogical model also uses different areas or types of learning to cultivate certain capacities for each of these aspects (see above). These areas of learning are described by Ellison as knowledge, skills and attitudes. A minimum knowledge base, skills, attitudes and beliefs are the elements for consideration when teaching congregational leaders (Ellison, 2009:160). These different areas of learning are also commonly used by others in pedagogical models for theological education: cognitive (knowledge and understanding), skills (abilities), and affective (character formation) (see Houston, 2013:111; Brynjolfson, 2010:198; Wall, 2015:185-186). Learning and formation typically does not take place in these neat categories. And perhaps it is important that the lines are blurred and the different aspects and areas are seen as more integrated. However, using these aspects and areas of learning of formation is a way to be intentional about holistic theological education. To be able to achieve specific outcomes, there has to be a high degree of intentionality.

A pedagogical model focused on these different aspects of a student's formation and the different areas of learning to cultivate capacities can be regarded as a holistic model. A model that forms a student's head, hands and heart. A model where there is an opportunity for intellectual development, practical exposure and engagement in community and the formation of character. A model that creates the proper culture for learning and formation and that can lead to the intentional formation of spirituality. It is worth noting again, spirituality and spiritual formation do not denote something abstract or mystic, but a way of life. "When different methods for cultivating spirituality are aligned in an intentional way, the effect will be powerful... Spiritual formation in this case is not simply a goal among others, but a permeation of all educational goals" (Naidoo, 2010:193).

The intentional and explicit formation of spirituality then implies attending to the methodology of formation and the context of formation. According to Brynjolfson (2010:199), theological education is inclined to use inappropriate methods, methods focus on acquiring

knowledge and developing critical and analytical skills, and thus are not able to intentionally form spirituality. Moreover, intentional spiritual formation requires an appropriate context. Brynjolfson (2010:199) states that the three areas of education correspond to three contexts:

- Cognitive learning is typically compatible with a formal education context, associated with schools, institutions, classrooms and graded systems of assessment and development.
- Skill development is typically compatible with a non-formal education context, associated with on-the-job learning, systems of certification, and the demonstration of competence in specific skills.
- Spiritual formation is typically compatible with an informal education context, associated with learning acquired through our lives in the context outside of an organised or systematised experience.

This poses a challenge. If certain outcomes are to be achieved, there has to be a high degree of intentionality. However, the informal education context, where spiritual formation takes place according to educational theorists, is unstructured and lacks intention, and when education is intentional and structured it becomes non-formal or formal (Brynjolfson, 2010:199). The *Framework for Missional Ministry Development* also acknowledges the complex relationship and interdependence between different learning areas, theory and practice, and suggests a dynamic interaction between learning contexts (see above). Brynjolfson (2010:199) suggests that instead of being intentional about providing learning experiences to achieve spiritual formation outcomes, to be intentional about providing the contexts in which certain outcomes can be anticipated. This is a significant insight for intentional spiritual formation. Intentional spiritual formation can take place if theological education can also provide, suggest or anticipate these non-formal or informal contexts. These contexts entail minimum structure and giving up control and implies that lecturers, as well as students, will have to be open to the guidance of the Spirit. Intentional spiritual formation can and should thus be part of the theological education curriculum or syllabus.

3.3.3.3 Syllabus – a proposal for the formation of missional leaders

Albert Einstein's well-known phrase is applicable when it comes to the DRC's theological education: "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." Missional leaders will not be formed by the same theological education that forms traditional congregational ministers focused on managing, maintenance and ministry to

members. Webber (2002:194-195) writes about a new kind of leadership and states that this new type of leadership is shaped by (1) a missiological understanding of the church, (2) theological reflection, (3) spiritual formation, and (4) cultural awareness. These four points are also essential when discussing the missional leadership of the DRC and proposing a syllabus for the formation of missional leaders. The syllabus proposal for the formation of missional leaders will, for Osmer's third task, only comprise a framework. The syllabus framework will be proposed by building on the description of a missionally orientated curriculum and the appropriate methodology (described in chapter 2) and following the outcome and pedagogy (described above). According to Harrison (2017:347), a syllabus for this type of theological education should include the following core components: Minimum knowledge base; pass-on-able habits & skills; and attitudes and beliefs. This has already been established as the different areas of learning and will give shape to the framework. Although these are known as the common learning areas, the balance needs to be restored and all the areas of learning should be addressed intentionally. The content of theological education must then be formed by the central theme of mission, the focus of theological education directed to the community, and the consequence of theological education the formation of a missional spirituality.

Minimum knowledge base

Re-framing the cognitive learning area as a 'minimum knowledge base' maintains the significance of theological knowledge and theological reflection. Quality academics are by no means optional or redundant. Yet, this re-framing restores the balance between the different areas of learning. The cognitive learning area is only one part of a student's formation. A minimum knowledge base is about (1) becoming a life-long learner and (2) emphasises that knowledge is not an end in itself but has to be integrated and reflected on.

Enrolling for formal theological education is thus a start, an introduction, and forms the basis for further learning. "It is minimum because the model expounded here is one of life-long learning rather than front-loading education" (Harrison, 2017:350). The goal is to form students that learn how to learn. In a report to the Reformed Ecumenical Council (2005:56) it was also noted that transformational leaders must become life-long learners:

...life-long learners who can "think on their feet," analyse, understand and see the interconnections between various complex systems. They must become flexible and creative. They must become critical thinkers and reflective practitioners. Theological education should intentionally equip them with the necessary skills and attitudes to

be such. What is important is not for students to learn huge amounts of knowledge, but to learn how to learn: where to get the information they will need, how to analyse, assess and identify the relevant and important information, how to comprehend it, how to integrate it into their practice, apply and use it. (REC, 2005:56)

This minimum knowledge base also includes students being equipped for theological reflection and integration. Studying theology is more than acquiring knowledge and applying what was learned. Academic disciplines cannot be abstracted from the practice of theology for spirituality and mission. Williams (2020, n.p.) explains it as follows: “Don’t think the importance of education is what it’s going to do for you tomorrow. To me, the question is, what’s it doing for you today?” This perspective is one way to integrate the cognitive learning area, most commonly formed in a formal classroom setting, with spirituality and mission. Spirituality and academic theology call for input and critique of the other (Cannell, 2006:95). And as seen above, are irrevocably connected.

Re-framing the cognitive learning area as a ‘minimum knowledge base’, focusing on students becoming life-long learners and an emphasis on theology for mission and spirituality addresses the first outcome stated as equipping for theological reflection and integration. The cognitive learning area can then be formed by the central theme of mission, but also focus on the local community and student’s participation in their local communities and intentionally form student’s spirituality.

Pass-on-able habits and skills

Re-framing the skill development learning area as ‘pass-on-able habits and skills’ broadens the focus to include habits, implying a formation of the self rather than mere professional skills, and pass-on-able implying the formation of others. Missional ministry is more than acquiring skills or learning about missional practices in a formal context and then applying what was learned in ministry. This learning area especially takes place in a non-formal context. Williams states (2020:n.p.) that the most effective method for theological education is not to gain the theory and then to go practice it, or to do the practice and then to reflect on it from a distance, “there’s a to and fro all the time”. Banks (1999:126) proposes that theological education orient itself primarily around ‘in-service’ ministry “within which intellectual, spiritual, and practical concerns form a seamless whole”. Van Niekerk (2019:246) also suggests that, while both mission and spirituality require a process of formation, it is a reciprocal formation between *missio*-formation and spiritual formation (see above). Participating in missional practices thus forms missional ministry and a missional spirituality –

being transformed by taking part in transformative practices. “Practices of the Christian faith... are not... activities we do to make something spiritual happen in our lives. Nor are they duties we undertake to be obedient to God. Rather, they are patterns of communal action that create openings in our lives where the grace, mercy, and presence of God may be made known to us” (Dykstra, 1999:66). Helland & Hjalmarson (2011:loc. 906-907) then state that it is not a matter of just believing our way into spirituality, we must practice our way. They describe a practice as a task or action that applies a theory or skill in praxis (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 913-916):

To pray or to read Scripture regularly is a practice. Praxis involves practices, but when you are engaged in the practices, you discover meaning as truth in action. We learn obedience as we practice obedience. We learn humility as we practice humility. We learn truth as we practice Scripture. We learn to love God and neighbour through various practices whose meanings are discovered and revealed in actions. The church embodies its theology through praxis. (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 913-916)

Pass-on-able habits and skills refer to these practices. This learning area is about (1) forming habits that are formative and (2) habits that are pass-on-able to form others.

Smith declares that you are what you love, what you desire (see Smith, 2016). He denotes that your daily habits and the practices you are immersed in calibrates your love and desire and it becomes second nature. Love is then seen as our most fundamental orientation to the world, “less a conscious choice and more a baseline inclination, a default orientation that generates the choices we make” (Smith, 2016:16). Naidoo (2010:187) states that authentic Christian spirituality must be integrated into the lives of students, observable wherever they find themselves, in the classroom, church or society. Theological education should be retraining and reforming of our dispositions with intentional habit formation.

Habits should also be pass-on-able. To achieve this, theological education has to be context-driven, “the focus from the first moment of training being on equipping and enabling the local Christian community in mission” (Harrison, 2017:347). Apart from theology and theological education being context-driven, it should also happen in the local context and the local faith community. The local context is the primary locus of education (Harrison, 2017: 347). Zscheile (2012:20) states that from a missional perspective, God and neighbour play central roles in spiritual formation:

Such formation plays out not just within the limited sphere of church gatherings, activities, or programmes... but also in the workplaces, streets, markets, family rooms, and public squares where we encounter our neighbours, especially those who are strangers... Missional theology insists on the importance of the curriculum of the world in spiritual formation, not as a place to be shunned, rejected, or withdrawn from, but rather as a place to encounter God – especially in those who have been shunned or rejected. (Zscheile, 2012:20)

Being missional means to be present in the world in a way that makes disciples. Smith (2016:18) notes the importance of imitation information, “we learn to be virtuous by imitating exemplars of justice, compassion, kindness, and love.” There are various missional practices to engage in to form mission and to form others, however, “we can't give what we don't have, and what we have to give is who we are” (Helland & Hjalmanson, 2011:225-226). We first must be transformed to be able to transform.

Re-framing the skill development learning area as ‘*pass-on-able habits and skills*’, focused on formation in and for the local faith community, addresses the second outcome stated as equipping for mission and disciple-making. “The inculcation of pass-on-able corporate spiritual and missional practices is a promising starting point for training, and indeed for changing the trajectory of theological education to serve a missional ecclesiology” (Harrison, 2017:349). The skill development learning area is then formed by the central theme of mission, focused on the local community by engaging in missional practices, acquiring skills through these practices and passing them on, and intentionally form student’s spirituality.

Attitudes and beliefs

The affective learning area, as seen above, poses a challenge. Naidoo (2010:188) notes that educators are not motivated to address intentional spiritual formation as it is “difficult to quantify and almost impossible to programme effectively”. Brynjolfson (2010:198) also states that educators resist addressing intentional spiritual formation or affective learning goals because it cannot be objectively measured. Helland and Hjalmanson (2011) list challenges of missional spirituality that also applies to theological education and the intentional formation a missional spirituality. Although these challenges extend to all three learning areas, it will be mentioned here:

- *Disenchantment* – The church, whether intentionally or not, divided the secular and the sacred. This dualism poses a challenge for missional

spirituality. Living in two worlds means not recognising God in one of them. “Disenchantment discards the sacred, where wonder, worship and faith thrive” (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 326). There is no place for this dualism and secularism, God is at work everywhere in the world, not in restricted holy spaces. Theological education can also not be regarded as the secular and the church space as the sacred.

- *Excarnation* – Taylor (2007:554) states that Christianity has gone through excarnation, “a transfer out of embodied, ‘enfleshed’ forms of religious life, to those which are more ‘in the head’”. Missional spirituality is essentially the embodiment of faith. However, Frost (2014:12) notes that excarnation, the disembodied nature of contemporary life and our disembodied approach to the missional church, resulted in a preference for short-term mission trips and as he calls it ‘treasure hunting’ approaches to evangelism. Faith only lives in our minds and is not expressed as an integrated part of our lives. Smith (2016:5-6) notes that knowledge and information, although important, do not seem to translate into a new way of life and that “we need to embrace a more holistic, biblical model of human persons that situates our thinking and knowing in relation to other, more fundamental aspects of the human person.” Helland and Hjalmarson (2011:loc. 372-375) state that we have emptied our hearts to fill our heads – focused on books, academics and theology, earning doctoral degrees in leadership and spiritual formation, writing dissertations, books and articles, and appearing spiritual with research on deep truths, but limited to a world of ideas that primarily reaches people’s heads. The challenge is to develop an approach to spiritual formation that is not knowledge-based, but a holistic formation.
- *Abstraction* – Helland and Hjalmarson (2011:loc. 380-381) states that an excarnational faith has roots in abstraction, “the process in which you distance ideas from objects or subjects”. It is then possible to study spiritual formation and discipleship, as an intellectual endeavour, without being grounded in actual practices. It is possible to become a congregational leader in the DRC, as an intellectual endeavour, without being grounded in living faith. “An abstracted faith and culture is free to turn Christian symbols, values and practices into religious commodities or conduct shorn of their biblical meaning and substance” (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 403-404). This once again

denotes the importance of forming a missional spirituality as fundamental to the formation of congregational leaders.

- *Consumerism* – Abstraction causes a world divided into objects and subjects. It creates distance, it is impersonal and it causes a lack of accountability. This contributes to consumer culture, we become detached from our world rather than engaged in it as stewards, and our Christian ministry becomes another cultural form of consumerism (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 414-424). Congregations are focused on attracting members, rather than on their transformation. “We can't entertain people into discipleship” (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 427). And members go to church for ‘spiritual food’, but do not intend to commit for something more. Sheldrake (1998:198) states that contemporary versions of ‘spirituality’ can easily become another version of consumerism as it offers personal practices as a way to “assuage our inner hunger”. Helland and Hjalmarson (2011:loc. 429-430) notes that missional discipleship is not reconcilable with consumerism, consumers are only committed to their needs and want. This is the opposite of a missional spirituality, transformation for the sake of others. Theological education should also not be reduced to religious goods or a religious product, it should be a process of deep formation.
- *Entitlement* – Being consumer-orientated denotes that church members can feel entitled to what the church offers (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 430-431). Easum (2000:153) states that in an entitled system the primary focus is on membership and not on servanthood. The focus is on congregational leaders meeting member’s needs, not equipping them. And members are entitled to complain when their needs are not met – they did not like the music chosen for the Sunday service, they did not like the language used in the sermon, and somebody dared to sit in their seats. Missional spirituality is about servanthood, not being served by a congregational leader. Theological education should form missional leaders to serve but to serve the mission of God and to equip others to serve the mission of God.
- *Extraction* – Helland and Hjalmarson (2011: loc. 444-446) notes that the focus cannot be on assimilating people into your congregations and helping them to become good members, “when we remove people from their natural habitat and insert them into church life, we create an artificial environment that's separate from real life”. Extracting goes against the grain of a missional

spirituality. Helland and Hjalmarson (2011:loc. 449-450) suggests that congregational leaders, and church members, in turn, are trained to be missionaries, not ministers – in most congregations people can attend Sunday services and never take their faith outside the church building. McNeal (2003:73) states that the question is not ‘how to develop church members’, but ‘how to develop Jesus followers’. Theological education should also develop Jesus followers, congregational leaders that can take their faith outside the church building.

- *Mutant pietism and programism* – Spirituality is commonly considered to be an inner movement and individual endeavour. Helland and Hjalmarson (2011:loc. 461-462) state that pietism is seen as meaning inward spiritual devotions and disciplines. McNeal (2003:27) refers to this as refuge thinking where Christians “hideout” in Bible study. Spirituality, as seen above, is a way of life and influences all aspects of life. Helland and Hjalmarson (2011:loc. 474-473) refer to the other challenge as programism, the assumption being “if we offer an array of good programmes, studies and small groups, and get people to participate, they will grow spiritually”. This is a pragmatic and narrow approach to spiritual formation. Spiritual formation is a life-long process of becoming who you are in Christ. Thus, the focus of theological education on holistic formation and becoming life-long learners.

The challenges of a missional spirituality listed here indicate that it is not merely a matter of lecturers not being motivated or resisting the affective learning areas because it is complicated or hard to measure. The hostility to spiritual formation is entrenched in our culture. We are accustomed to comfort and resist anything that threatens our solace. However, these challenges also point out the necessity of spiritual formation that is intentional.

The intentional formation of attitudes and beliefs takes place within the informal learning context. And as determined above, it is not possible to provide intentional learning experiences to achieve certain spiritual formation outcomes, but it is possible to be intentional about the context where certain outcomes can be anticipated. Brynjolfson (2010:199) states that the most effective ways of forming attitudes are through instrumental learning and observational learning: “Instrumental (or operant) learning is the result of an individual learning on their own through exposure to experiences within a given context, it produces attitude transformation out of life’s experiences. Observational learning is strongly relational. Participants observe a model (a professor, a missionary in residence, an international student,

a pastor, etc.) and assimilate desirable qualities”. This learning area is thus about being intentional about context and (1) creating the space, opening or opportunity for formation to take place and (2) relationships within this context.

Creating this space, opening or opportunity does not imply a strict arrangement, but for it to be intentional it has to involve a dedicated time, place and guidelines. This time, place and guidelines will be referred to as a spiritual formation programme for lack of a better word and to emphasise the intentionality. In this space, the main guideline is an openness toward the Spirit for guidance. Being vulnerable, letting go of the need to be in control and giving power over to God. This context thus relies on relationships, with God and others. According to Brynjolfson (2010:200), this context will be highly relational, requiring programmes outside the learning experiences of classroom or ministry practice, that intentionally cultivate spirituality, he suggests for example, mentoring programmes, adviser groups or peer facilitation groups. Even though spiritual growth is not easily measured, “we know it occurs in the context of authentic community” (Brynjolfson, 2010:200). Amalraj (2009:9) affirms that authentic spirituality is discovered in relationships, built on the foundation of a relationship with God. Harrison (2017:351) states that the aim is a journey that profoundly shapes attitudes and beliefs, “through action-reflection in context; a journey that will not just be shaping the trainee but other trainees, the Christian community and hopefully, others within the wider community.”

While acknowledging the challenges of the affective learning area, the significance of the intentional formation of attitudes and beliefs are also evident. The affected learning area can be addressed by creating a space, opening or opportunity, for vulnerability and reflection, in relationships with others and deeply aware of God’s presence – a spiritual formation programme. This also addresses the third outcome stated as equipping for spirituality and subversion. The affective learning area is then formed by the central theme of God’s mission, focused on the presence of others, and intentionally forming spirituality.

Assessment

Every syllabus has an assessment component to determine whether students have achieved certain outcomes and completed the programme or course. Assessment is an important tool to measure not only students but the syllabus itself. The saying goes ‘we measure what we treasure’ and if we do not measure what we treasure, we treasure what we measure. This is also the case with theological education.

Harrison (2017:351) states that if students are primarily focused on and stressed about academic marks and how to complete assignments on time, this will reflect what they understand the institution to treasure. “Assessment of theology students for ministerial

practice is traditionally performed through completing assignments and oral examinations, which often only concentrate on the knowledge component and outcomes of the programme” (Nell, 2020:2). In a sense, this is the experience of the problem-owner as observed in chapter 2. While it is difficult to assess certain learning areas, students have become preoccupied with the learning areas that can and are being assessed. Students are primarily concerned with completing assignments on time and passing grades. Harrison (2017:351) argues that the focus should shift to other important qualities, apart from foster high academic scores and mastering frenetic timetables:

Of course, the aspiration to intellectual excellence remains, but the measures used in the future need to reflect the emphasis on the training of minister in acquiring and facilitating pass-on-able habits as well as spiritual and missional disciplines; developing a contextually sensitive theological approach, together with an emerging collaborative style; and leadership shaped by such action-reflection. (Harrison, 2017:351)

Assessment should expand to emphasise all the learning areas. If the DRC’s current theological education assessment is the way we measure, the emphasis also primarily falls on academic qualifications and to a lesser extent the capacities regarding Sunday sermons and congregational activities. It has already been stated that the affective learning area is difficult to measure, yet if it is to be measured, there should be a different matrix. An assessment not determined by retaining or recalling knowledge, not by completing a set of tasks or assignments, but determined by and in relationships. The affective learning area is formed in the context of relationships and determining spiritual growth or development should also happen within relationships and utilising action-reflection. The intention then also extends beyond giving a student a grade to being concerned with a student’s wholeness. Naidoo (2010:185) points out that the church fathers and mothers were concerned that someone might become clergy when lacking spiritual maturity, even though they possess the proper knowledge and skills, the primary qualification for ordination was to possess the desire for God. According to Dallas Willard, it comes down to our idea of success. Theological education should rather understand success rooted in spiritual terms, determined by the vitality of a student’s or congregational leader’s own spiritual life and the capacity to pass that on to others (Willard, 2010:n.p.). If congregational leaders lack rich spiritual lives, “they become victimised by other models of success – models conveyed to them by their training, by their experience in the church, or just by our culture. They begin to think their job is

managing a set of ministry activities and success is about getting more people to engage those activities” (Willard, 2010:n.p.).

Approaching assessment in a new way is imperative for holistic formation. It might require the addition of a new matrix, or no matrix at all, to emphasise the importance of the different learning areas and conveying concern for a student’s wholeness and not focused on a student’s skills for ministry or passing grades alone.

This concludes the description of the relationship between theology and spirituality, the theological foundations of a missional spirituality and a proposed model for theological education in the formation of a missional spirituality. The intention was to approach the task with theological interpretation, ethical interpretation and good practice and normative reflection and to discern what ought to be going on with the DRC’s theological education. The focus was on the present situation and context, on determining principles and theological foundations and by engaging reflexively in transforming the present practice. What follows then is an attempt to answer Osmer’s third question, ‘what ought to be going on?’ by referring to the interpretation and reflection as described above.

3.3.4 *What ought to be going on with the DRC’s theological education?*

The DRC’s General Curatorium is facing an adaptive challenge – the formation of missional leaders. The General Curatorium responded to the change in the DRC’s ecclesiology by making and proposing technical changes to align theological education with a missional ecclesiology. There are still various technical changes that need to be attended to, but missional transformation can only occur if the adaptive challenge is attended to. The adaptive challenge calls for holistic theological education and the formation of a missional spirituality. Missional spirituality is fundamental to theological education and fundamental to the formation of missional leaders.

A missional spirituality can be described as a personal transformation *for the sake of others*. The theological foundations or core characteristics of missional spirituality is connected to God’s missional character – Trinitarian, incarnational, *kenotic*, and transformative. Accordingly, missional spirituality can be understood as relational, formed *in* community and *for* the community; embodiment, formed holistically and shaping all aspects of life and living; powerlessness, formed by embracing vulnerability; and transformative, the prerequisite and means of participating in the *missio Dei*. Spirituality is not an abstract

concept, detached from life, it ultimately gives shape and meaning to life. Spirituality then should be formed intentionally.

Spirituality's place in theology has to be restored. Theological education forming missional leaders should be holistic formation. The pedagogical model for missional ministry development, as processed, designed and proposed by the General Curatorium in the *Framework for Missional Ministry Development*, is a pedagogical model for holistic theological education. Addressing the different aspects of learning (*ethos, logos, and pathos*), the different learning areas or capacities (knowledge, skills, and attitude) and acknowledging the different contexts of learning. This model is thus appropriate for the formation of missional leaders. Although this pedagogical model, together with the *Framework of Missional Capacities*, is an important technical change, it is not enough to address the adaptive challenge.

This research proposes a syllabus, albeit a framework, for the holistic formation of missional leaders by re-framing and expanding on the learning areas. The syllabus includes:

- A minimum knowledge base, focused on becoming life-long learners and emphasising the importance of theological integration and reflection.
- Pass-on-able habits and skills, focused on forming habits that are formative and habits that are pass-on-able to form others.
- Attitudes and beliefs, focused on creating a space, opening or opportunity for formation to take place and focused on relationships within this context.

The content of theological education should be formed by the central theme of mission, the focus of theological education directed to the community and the consequence of theological education the formation of a missional spirituality. "Without a missional spirituality, we run the risk of becoming mere activists who simply engage in community service, justice-making or overseas missions projects" (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 219-220). Participating in the *missio Dei* is not an activity or mere pragmatic undertaking, it is a way of life. Theological education that is missional formation cannot be achieved by re-organisation or updating old systems, it is a new way of formation focused on cultivating this way of life, forming a missional spirituality.

Osmer's third question, *what ought to be going on* with the DRC's theological education can thus be answered by the proposed syllabus for holistic theological education. This brings the normative task to an end. What ought to be going on? The General Curatorium ought to

implement a holistic theological education that forms a missional spirituality. The fourth task, the pragmatic task, can now be implemented.

3.4 Question 4: How might we respond?

Answering the question, ‘how might we respond?’, is a pragmatic task with a focus on determining strategies of action that will influence in ways that are desirable and entering into a reflective conversation with the “talk back” emerging when they are enacted. Osmer (2008:178) refers here to three forms of leadership: task competence – carrying out the leadership tasks in an organisation; transactional leadership – influencing others through a process of trade-offs; and transforming leadership – leading an organisation through a process of “deep change” in its identity, mission, culture, and operating procedures. All three forms of leadership are important in a congregation, but the context of the church today especially calls on transforming leadership, leadership that can guide a congregation through a process of “deep change”. Deep change or adaptive change, as described above, requires transforming leadership as it can only be addressed through changes in people’s priorities, beliefs, habits, and loyalties. It requires going beyond any authoritative expertise to activate innovation and breaking away from the old ways of doing embedded in systems.

Osmer (2008:183-184) refers to the goal of this “deep change” by reflecting on Jesus as the embodiment of God’s royal rule in the form of a servant – Jesus redefines the nature of power and authority by taking on the form of a servant. “He teaches his followers that servanthood is fundamental to the mission of the community of disciples and leadership within this community” (Osmer, 2008:184). Servanthood is fundamental to the mission of congregations. A congregation that embodies this reversal of power and authority is depicted as a contrast society on the one hand and as a catalyst of social transformation on the other (Osmer, 2008:191). The pragmatic task is thus grounded in the spirituality of servanthood. Osmer (2008:192) gives an overview of what these three forms of leadership, as stated above, look like when they are forms of servant leadership.

Task competence as a form of servant leadership requires more than commitment, hard work and experience, it requires humility (Osmer, 2008:193). Humility is described as the virtue of a contrast society where power and authority is about Jesus self-giving love. Transactional leadership as a form of servant leadership is about persuasion and boundary-crossing. Leadership that attempts to help people be responsive to the needs of others, felt needs and their deepest needs (Osmer, 2008:194). Transforming leadership as a form of servant leadership concerns fundamental change, or as stated above, “deep” change or

adaptive change”. “Fundamental alterations of its identity, culture, operating procedures, and mission occur” (Osmer, 2008:196). This type of leadership involves risks, resistance, conflict, failures, disappointment and suffering. In the end, servant leadership thus comes down to leaders willing to take risks on behalf of a congregation to make possible for them the embodying of Jesus self-giving love. This type of leadership can also be described as missional leadership, the focus of this study. Niemandt (2016:86) describes missional leadership as “the transformation of people and institutions to participate, through meaningful relations and in the power of the Spirit, in God’s mission”.

The fourth task, being a pragmatic task, will focus on how the General Curatorium should respond for “deep change” or adaptive change to occur. Answering the fourth question, how might we respond, can be done by building on the syllabus proposed as part of the normative task. Adaptation, as seen above, is a process of conservation as well as loss. The successful deep change enables an organisation or congregation to take the best from its traditions, identity, and history into the future. The process of missional transformation is not about a new church model, but about rediscovering the nature and calling of the church. The proposed syllabus is also not mainly about a new model but about re-framing and refocusing to rediscover the nature and calling of theological education. And ultimately to equip people for God’s mission. This requires a missional *metanoia*.

3.4.1 Missional *metanoia*

The purpose of theological education is to equip for God’s mission. Regulation 11 of the DRC Church Order (2019:59) states that the theological education of the church is primarily focused on education and formation of congregational leaders for the ministry of the church. It should be noted, not for ministry *in* the church, but the ministry *of* the church. Being a congregational leader thus means to be equipped and to equip for God’s mission. As much as the congregation brings the gospel and *is* the gospel, a congregational leader represents the gospel and brings the gospel. To participate in God’s mission is not primarily about knowing or even doing, but about being. Being equipped thus means holistic formation and the formation of a missional spirituality. Spirituality and mission are the same, with spirituality preceding mission, without life-giving spirituality, the missional church would not be sustainable (Pretorius & Niemandt, 2018:2).

A missional spirituality, as described above, is a personal transformation for the sake of others. Therefore, this research suggests that the missional transformation of the DRC does not depend on a framework document, an adjusted curriculum, more leadership development

programmes, or even research on being a missional church. Even though these are important exertions, these are mere technical changes in the process of missional transformation. Addressing the adaptive challenge will require change and transformation on the part of those facing them (Keifert & Rooms, 2014:6).

As already stated above, systems, or a denomination, in this case, tend to address issues as technical rather than adaptive. Heifetz *et al.* (2009:17) note that there are two reasons for this, the first being the illusion of a system that is broken. The reality is that any social system is the way it is because people in that system want it that way. Those in the system maintain the system. The second reason is that when someone realises that a system might be 'broken', the current system is still preferred because change is painful. Addressing the adaptive challenge requires change and transformation and this brings about the experience of loss (Heifetz *et al.*, 2009:22). Addressing this challenge then relies on transforming the people in the system, it relies on the transformation of *yourself*, rather than transforming an elusive system. Since being a missional congregational leader or missional lecturer is not a new skill set, but rather about the person's nature and calling, this shift in focus is the only way to address the adaptive challenge. The DRC's missional transformation calls students, congregational leaders and lecturers to transform. It requires a missional *metanoia*.

Bosch (1991:413) states that *metanoia* involves the total transformation of our attitudes and lifestyle, an ongoing, life-long process. Niemandt (2019:45) states that a missional life is a life of continuous conversion and transformation. According to Guder (2015:117), missional conversion is not a model, it is a process of continuing conversion that begins when members understand who they are and what they are for:

...this faith is neither a thing nor a status nor a possession. It is a new way of walking. It is a living hope. It is the capacity to join a pilgrimage going in a new direction. This gift of faith initiates our continuous conversion, that transformation by the renewing of our minds spoken of in Romans 12:2... This faith, which God's Spirit enables, is more than an assent; it is more than merely saying "yes" to creedal propositions; it is more than a confessional tradition or a particular theological position. This faith that God gives us becomes expressive and active. It becomes a transforming knowledge that results in action. (Guder, 2015:117)

Newbigin (1989:239) asserts that Jesus' call to conversion is a radical conversion of the mind, leading to an entirely new view and way of life. Sweet (2009:128) describes it as not viewing God from a distance, but entering into a relationship, "conversion is more than a

change in direction; it is a change in connection”. According to Wright (2008:221) a new life in the Spirit and in following Jesus “should produce radical transformation of behaviour in the present life”. *Metanoia* thus refers to a continuing process of being transformed, ‘missional’ *metanoia* emphasises being transformed for the sake of others. This continuous transformation can be considered as the formation of a missional spirituality.

Transforming the DRC’s students, congregational leaders and lecturers require a missional spirituality. As the last task of Osmer is a pragmatic task focused on determining strategies of action, it will be addressed by suggesting a programme for spiritual transformation as part of holistic theological education in the formation of missional leaders in the DRC. A complete rewrite of the DRC’s current curriculum, with a missional point of departure, is a drawn-out process and arduous task, especially taking into account the disagreement among lecturers and congregational leaders in the DRC. Moreover, the aim is not to rewrite the current curriculum, but to reframe and refocus it. Adding missional practices to the existing part of the curriculum, especially with regard to church specific education, is a more feasible way to respond. However, adding miscellaneous practices might result in mere ‘missional activities’. These changes can come down to technical adjustments if it is not grounded in a missional spirituality. It is not about commitment, hard work or experience. It is existential, not theoretical or technical. It is not *deciding* or *learning* to be missional. It is a process of holistic formation that takes place over time. A process of transformation. A process wholly dependent on the Spirit.

Hence, the need for innovation, a programme for spiritual transformation as part of holistic theological education. A process of forming lecturers and students and challenging the curriculum to adapt to the experiences and insights ‘brought to class’. Approaching the challenge from the inside out might result in a new set of needs and a new awareness emerging, providing a framework for re-framing and refocusing the curriculum. And as Osmer (2008:4) states, “entering into a reflective conversation” with new insights emerging when a new strategy is enacted.

This new strategy of action will focus primarily on the affective learning area as this is the area that has been neglected by current theological education. The affective learning area is formed by being intentional about context and (1) creating the space, opening or opportunity for formation to take place and (2) relationships within this context. This space, opening or opportunity should be intentional about the aspects of a missional spirituality (as determined above):

- Relational – formed *in* community and *for* the community.

- Embodiment – formed holistically and shaping all aspects of life and living.
- Powerlessness – formed by embracing vulnerability.
- Transformative – the prerequisite and means of participating in the *missio Dei*.

A programme for spiritual transformation, and ultimately a missional *metanoia*, is not a replacement for current theological education. It is also not the sole area for forming a missional spirituality. Rather, it is an attempt to be intentional about missional formation. What follows is an attempt to answer Osmer's last question.

3.4.2 How might we respond to the DRC's theological education?

The DRC's process of missional transformation calls for the transformation of students, congregational leaders and lecturers – a missional *metanoia*. People tend to maintain systems and prefer to address situations with technical adjustments since it does not affect them fundamentally. This is an important shift in focus to make to address the adaptive challenge of forming missional leaders in the DRC.

Osmer's fourth task, grounded in a spirituality of servanthood, is focused on guiding a denomination, or system, through a process of adaptive change – a change in identity, mission, culture, and operating procedures. This research suggests the way to guide the DRC through this process of deep change is by designing an innovation, a programme for the transformation of spirituality. Osmer's fourth question, *how might we respond to the DRC's theological education*, can thus be answered by suggesting the intentional formation of a missional spirituality by designing a programme of spiritual transformation, to equip for God's mission.

3.5 Conclusion

The second research question can now be answered: *What is going on 'underneath the surface' of the DRC's theological education?*

Through implementing the four core tasks of practical theological interpretation it was determined that the DRC's General Curatorium have made and proposed various technical changes for theological education in light of the DRC's embrace of a missional ecclesiology (Osmer's first question – What is going on?). However, the General Curatorium is responding to an adaptive challenge, the DRC's process of missional transformation, by only addressing the technical problems as they might be confronted with a challenge that is outside their

current repertoire of skills, questions their competence and effects the whole system and requires deep change (Osmer's second question – Why is this going on?). The DRC's General Curatorium ought to implement a holistic theological education that intentionally forms a missional spirituality (Osmer's third question – What ought to be going on?). The DRC's process of missional transformation calls for the transformation of students, congregational leaders and lecturers – a missional *metanoia*. The research suggests responding to the adaptive challenge by designing a programme for spiritual transformation as part of a holistic theological education in the formation of missional leaders in the DRC (Osmer's fourth question – How might we respond?). The researcher attempted to answer these questions with an openness toward the Spirit, as these tasks are grounded in a spirituality of presence, sagely wisdom, discernment, and servant leadership.

By examining the deeper levels of the DRC's theological education the research question is clarified and there is expanded on the action problem as determined in phase 1 (chapter 2): *How can theological education assist in forming missional leaders in the DRC?* The answer to these questions also point towards the type of research to be conducted and it will thus take place within the practice stream.

This chapter also considered the systematic nature of challenges and attempted to discern the root of the challenge – simply put, the lack of a missional spirituality. The intervention (chapter 4) will focus on the root of the challenge and not the symptoms. The intervention can contribute to and address the pain of the problem-owner.

With this chapter the second research aim is addressed: *To describe, interpret, propose, and respond to what is going on 'underneath the surface' of the DRC's theological education.* This is the handover moment and the next phase can now start, as this chapter provides the framework for the design of an intervention. The next phase is about developing a prototype.

Chapter 4

Develop Prototype

Chapter 4 will focus on the third phase of the research cycle (see Figure 1.3, p. 27), developing a prototype. Developing a prototype is practice-oriented, an important part of this research methodology, but uncharacteristic of theological research. However, missional transformation calls for innovative practices. The challenge facing the DRC in her process of missional transformation is an adaptive challenge (as seen in chapter 3). The world we live in has changed fundamentally and it challenges theological enterprises to an appropriate response. Bosch (1991:188) asserts that this response should apply to the context and in harmony with the essence of Christian faith. Marais (2017:77) stresses the importance of developing innovations that provide leadership with doable missional alternatives. According to Scharmer (2009:426), these solutions lie in profound innovation. An adaptive challenge requires the appropriate innovative response.

In chapter 4 the researcher will therefore attempt to answer the third research question: *What innovation can be designed to address the DRC's theological education impasse?* and address the third research aim: *To explore, decide, plan and create an innovation to address the DRC's theological education impasse.*

Using the theoretical framework from phase 2 as a basis (see chapter 3), this research will respond by designing a prototype. The design of a prototype can either present something new or it can improve an existing practice (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:6). This research will use an existing programme of spiritual transformation as a model to design a new programme of spiritual transformation as part of holistic theological education in the formation of missional leaders in the DRC. The research will therefore contribute to practice by developing an intervention to address the action problem: *How can theological education assist in forming missional leaders in the DRC?*

The development of this intervention will attend to the first part of the design cycle (as described in chapter 1) by utilising, the main resource that will be used in this chapter, the process for construction of prototypes designed by the Presencing Institute. The Presencing Institute was founded in 2006 by Otto Scharmer and his colleagues at MIT. The aim was to create an action research platform at the intersection of science, consciousness, and profound social and organisational change (Presencing Institute, 2020:n.p.). They are known for

developing *Theory U* – a change framework and set of methodologies. *Theory U* is an appropriate method for the design of a prototype in this research as it acknowledges the importance of addressing adaptive challenges with a new way of seeing, learning, and doing. This will be explored below.

Prototyping is part of movement four of five and placed on the right side of the U-process. The Presencing Institute (2020:n.p.) describes prototyping as:

Moving an idea or innovation into a concrete next step. Prototypes are an early draft of what the final result might look like which means that they often go through several iterations based on the feedback generated from stakeholders. The feedback from stakeholders is valuable for refining the concept and its underlying assumptions. The purpose of prototyping is to create a microcosm that allows you to explore the future by doing. Prototypes work on the principle of “failing early to learn quickly”. (Presencing Institute, 2020:n.p.)

Before commencing with the design of the prototype, the theory and principles behind the U-process will be discussed briefly.

4.1 Theory U

Scharmer’s *Theory U* begins with the concept of a ‘blind spot’. There is a ‘blind spot’ in the current theory and practice of leading, learning, and effecting change (Scharmer, 2003:9). This ‘blind spot’ refers to the deeper source or inner place from which an individual or system operates. We can see *what* leaders do and *how* they do it, but we cannot see the inner place from which they act – determined by *who* they are. Scharmer (2009:21) uses the metaphor of an artist creating artwork to explain this ‘blind spot’: We can observe the result of the artist painting, the finished artwork; we can observe the artist while painting, the process of creating; and we can observe the artist standing in front of the empty canvas. This third observation is that significant occurrence which we cannot see – the ‘blind spot’. This is significant because it means that two leaders can do the same thing in the same way, but there will be two different outcomes. *Theory U* is about illuminating the ‘blind spot’, activating the deeper source of individual and collective intelligence (Scharmer, 2003:9). This is essential since this ‘blind spot’ has an impact on leading, learning, and effecting change – it is the source of our creativity. Thus, the importance for leaders to be able to tap into this ‘blind spot’, and it can be done by utilising *Theory U*.

According to Scharmer (2009:56), there are two different sources of learning: (1) learning by reflecting on the past and (2) learning by sensing and actualising emerging future possibilities. The problem is that most leaders face challenges that cannot be responded to by just reflecting on the past, it is inadequate and has limitations. These past experiences are not always helpful and sometimes the very obstacles for addressing the challenge (Scharmer, 2018:n.p.). Adaptive and disruptive challenges require leaders to address challenges by letting go of the past and by *learning from the emerging future*. In other words, breaking the patterns of the past and connecting to the emerging future. Scharmer calls this ‘presencing’ – a combination of the words ‘presence’ and ‘sensing’. We can thus engage in the present moment in two ways: (1) as a moment that is an extension of the past or (2) as a moment shaped by what wants to emerge – connecting to this means ‘presencing’ the highest future potential (Scharmer, 2018:n.p.).

These concepts, ‘blind spot’ and ‘presencing’, initiated Scharmer’s (2018:n.p.) deep learning cycle, a process that moves us to the edge of the system (down the left side of the U), connects us to our deepest sources of knowing (the bottom of the U), and prompts us to explore the future by doing (up the right side of the U). *Theory U* is a way of making a system (or individual) sense and see itself. It also offers language and a road map for crossing the threshold to authentic renewal and change (Scharmer, 2009:118). *Theory U* has five movements which will be described concisely and can be seen by the diagram below (see Figure 4.1). These five movements have already, in part, been attended to and are inherently part of the process of constructing a prototype.

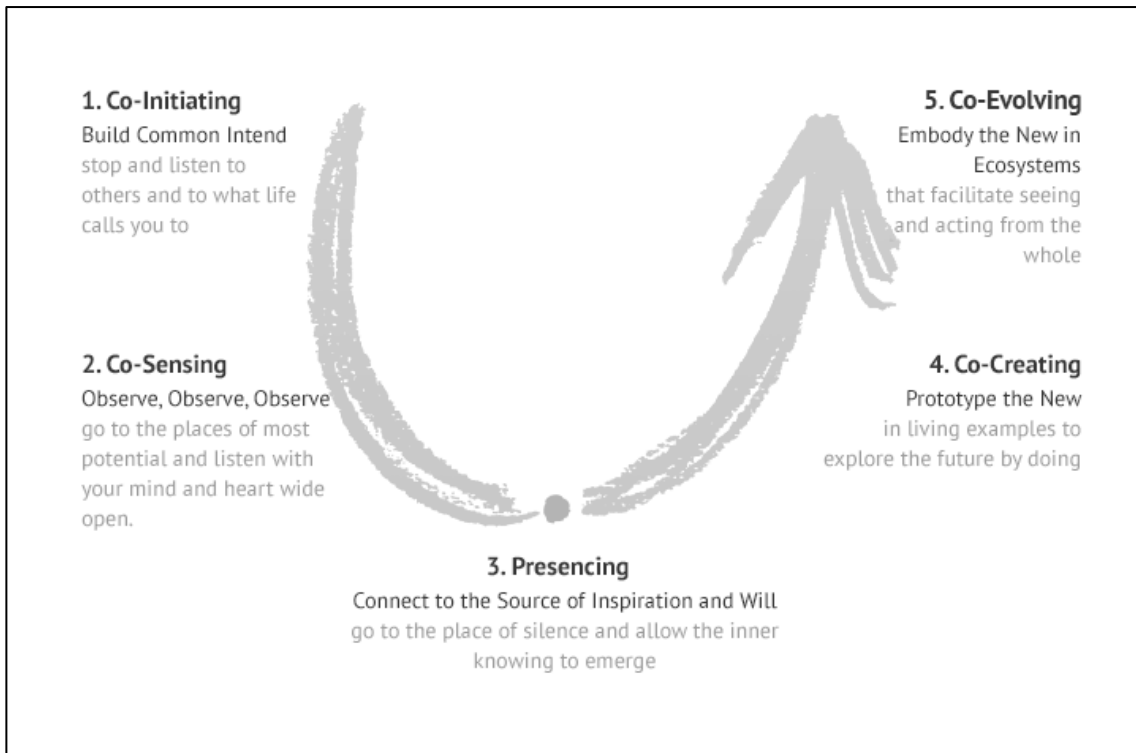


Figure 4.1: Theory U (Presencing Institute, 2020:n.p.)

1. Co-initiating

The diagram illustrates that the first movement is down the left side of the U and is to listen to others and to what life calls you to. Listening to what life calls you to do is about strengthening your presence and actively participating in the world (Scharmer, 2009:379). It implies being present at the moment and attending with an open mind. Listening to others suggests connecting with interesting partners in the field. The highly visible core partners, but also the less visible and unexpected partners, these can turn out to be most important (Scharmer, 2009:380). Scharmer (2009:384) states that co-initiating is thus about a diverse group that inspires a common intention, as opposed to you trying to get people to ‘buy-in’ to your idea.

The first movement can be linked to the first phase of the missional research cycle – articulating the pain of the problem-owner. The researcher and the problem-owner determining a common intention before a clear statement of the problem being researched.

2. Co-sensing

The second movement is about observing, to go to the places of the most potential and to listen with your mind and heart wide open. A journey of sensing, discovering and learning by doing (Scharmer, 2009:387). Connecting us to the world that is outside our institutional

bubble and immersion in the contexts and ideas that are relevant to creating a possible future. Observing is therefore about suspending your voice of judgement and connecting with your sense of wonder. Shutting down the habit of judging based on past experiences and patterns to open up a new space of exploration, inquiry and wonder (Scharmer, 2009:393). Observing can thus be described as deep listening.

The second movement can be linked to the second phase of the missional research cycle – clarifying the question. Exploring the situations further and determining what is going on at a deeper level or ‘underneath the surface’.

3. Presencing

The third movement is about going to the place of silence and allowing the inner knowledge to emerge. During this movement, it is important to let go and to let come. The biggest obstacle when moving through the U is because of resistance (individually and collectively) and not being able to let go of your old self and the old things that must die (Scharmer, 2009:399). Letting come is about surrendering to the future that wants to emerge through you. According to Scharmer (2009:401), the most important leadership tool is the leader’s Self and what we can become through our forward journey. Consequently, it is significant to connect with what is most essential for you and the best way to do this is through intentional silence and to pick a practice that helps with deep reflection. “The currency that counts at the bottom of the U is not ideas, words, or insights” (Scharmer, 2009:402).

The third movement can be linked to what happens within the researcher and transpires as a result of intentional silence and participating in practices that leads to deep reflection.

4. Co-creating

The fourth movement is about exploring the future by doing, rather than analysing. Co-creating is putting ideas onto their feet by prototyping. Prototyping is presenting your idea, or work in progress before it is fully developed and to get feedback from stakeholders to refine the assumptions about the project (Scharmer, 2009:417). The movement up the other side of the U is focused on integrating head, heart, and hand in the context of practical applications. And Scharmer (2009:424) states that this is the key virtue required on this side of the U to prevent mindless action, endless reflection without a will to act (analysis paralysis) or talking without connection to source and action.

The fourth movement can be linked to the third phase of the missional research cycle – developing a prototype (the focus of this chapter). Integrating the knowledge, insights and possibilities and designing an innovation that can be implemented.

5. *Co-evolving*

The last movement is about bringing forth the new into the world. Systems can easily snap back into place, into the old way of operating, despite great transformational change and breakthrough (Scharmer, 2009:425). Systems are managed in a certain way and even though the outcomes the system produce are insufficient, the solution is not to add another overlay of regulation. According to Scharmer (2009:426), the solution lies in a profound innovation – seeing and acting from ‘presencing’ the emerging whole. It is thus important to move the system from the outer to the inner circles of communication by starting with the key stakeholders currently outside of this circle. Also important is to create innovation infrastructure. “Creative processes need a cocoon – a sheltered interior place for the collective – from which something new can emerge” (Scharmer, 2009:430).

The fifth movement can be linked to the fourth phase of the missional research cycle – testing and evaluating the prototype.³⁴

This concludes the description of the *Theory U* movements. The journey through the U also develops seven essential leadership capacities, ways of attending to and co-shaping the world. These capacities can be noted here as it is important capacities for the researcher, for the stakeholders or problem-owner, as well as for the formation of missional leaders, the focus of this research.

Scharmer (2008:n.p.) states that at the beginning of the U-process there is an important spark of becoming aware. This moves the leadership beyond *downloading* – beyond extending the patterns of the past. “As long as we operate from downloading, the world is frozen by our old mental habits and past experiences; nothing new enters our minds. Same old, same old” (Scharmer, 2008:n.p.). Going through the U-process thus begins here and involves the following (Scharmer, 2018:n.p.; Presencing Institute, 2020:n.p.):

- *Holding the space of listening*: The foundational capacity of the U is listening – effective listening requires the creation of an open space in which others can contribute to the whole.
- *Seeing*: Attending with an open mind – observing and suspending the voice of judgement.

³⁴ The fifth movement of *Theory U* (and the fourth phase of the missional research cycle) is an area of future research and will not be implemented in this research.

- *Sensing*: Connecting with your heart – tuning of three inner instruments: the open mind, the open heart, and the open will.
- *Presencing*: Connect to the deepest sources of self—to go to the inner place of stillness where knowing comes to the surface.
- *Crystallising*: Accessing the power of intention – letting come, crystallising vision and intention, and committing to a shared purpose.
- *Prototyping*: Exploring the future by doing – integrating head (thinking), heart (feeling) and hand (will).
- *Performing*: Embodying the new by evolving our practices and infrastructures – for the benefit of the larger eco-system.

These capacities should not be confused with the missional leadership capacities as described in chapter 2. These capacities merely show the importance of *who* the leader is when it comes the change process as emphasised by *Theory U*. *Theory U* can be used not only to acquire knowledge and insight by analysing but to reach the ‘blind spot’ and help leaders to discover great ideas that can be evolved and implemented. The research will now move on to the process of prototyping, developing a new idea. And in addressing the third research aim of exploring, deciding, planning and creating an innovation to address the DRC’s theological education impasse.

The Presencing Institute (2020a:n.p.) uses core milestones or stages in the process of prototyping but stipulates that the process needs to be adapted to the specific requirements of each idea or innovation. This research will thus make use of the following milestones or stages for developing a prototype as an adaptation of the Presencing Institute’s process:

Stage 1 – Clarifying the intention and the purpose of the prototype.

Stage 2 – Exploring the perspective of the stakeholder or problem-owner.

The first two stages attend to the goal and design assumptions of the design cycle and will be addressed as the presuppositions.

Stage 3 – Proposing a possible idea or innovation.

Stage 4 – Questioning and evolving the idea or innovation.

Stage 5 – Reframing the idea or innovation.

Stages three to five attends to the structural specifications of the design cycle and will be addressed as the proposal.

Stage 6 – Creating an example.

The last stage attends to the prototype construction and will be addressed as the design of the prototype.

What follows is the development of a prototype for a new programme of spiritual transformation as part of a holistic theological education in the formation of missional leaders in the DRC. In this way, the research question stated as *what innovation can be designed to address the DRC's theological education impasse?* will be answered. This will be done by using these different stages, an adaptation of the Presencing Institute's process.

4.2 Presuppositions

This section, the presuppositions, will attend to the first two stages of the Presencing Institute's process of developing a prototype.

Stage 1 – Clarifying the intention and the purpose of the prototype

The first stage is about clarifying the intention and purpose of creating this prototype. When starting the journey down the U, the first movement is about listening and gathering information with an open mind. To make this possible, it is important to move beyond extending the patterns of the past and beyond viewing the world through one's habits of thought (*downloading*). Listening to others with an open mind also implies suspending judgement, to be able to look at things with 'fresh eyes'. This type of listening can inspire a common intention or purpose.

Downloading is the accepted practice to keep a system consistent or stable. The only change occurring when the system is upgraded to a newer version. Systems facing an adaptive challenge, however, needs innovation and a new system. Scharmer, as seen above, makes it clear that innovation cannot rely on reflecting on the past and extending the past, it relies on 'presencing' – sensing and actualising emerging future possibilities. This is the reality the DRC is facing in the process of missional transformation and this is the reality the curatorium is facing in the formation of missional leaders. Considering the fast-paced world and the changes in the DRC's ecclesiology (as seen in chapter 1), the pain of the problem-owner (as seen in chapter 2), and the need for adaptive change (as seen in chapter 3), this reality can be overwhelming for leadership and leadership lacks the right skills to bring about change constructively. Existing knowledge, techniques and skills are incapable of addressing these challenges (Niemandt *et al.*, 2018:6). According to Scharmer (2009:328) leadership

often perceives that the system in which they find themselves is dysfunctional and “they know that collectively they often produce results that nobody wants”. However, the alternative is not within grasp and the solution is fleeting. Moving beyond the patterns of the past is not only crucial in the way leadership functions but also for the DRC’s theological education. *Theory U* suggest beginning by listening and *seeing*.

Seeing with fresh eyes and deep listening means having an open mind and suspending the voice of judgement. The voice of judgement can be described as old and limiting patterns of thought (Scharmer, 2009:246). This research began by gathering information about the actual and the desired situation of the DRC’s theological education, but then moved on to ask Osmer’s four questions: *What is going on?*; *why is this going on?*; *what ought to be going on?*; and *how might we respond?* Asking these four questions led to *seeing* that for the DRC’s theological education to be holistic and to form missional leaders is more about addressing the spirituality of the students, congregational leaders and lectures than adjusting the theological education curriculum.

Being a missional leader is not only about acquiring a new skill set, it is ultimately about the person realising his or her nature and calling. Being missional, having a missional spirituality, is a way of life rather than just a set of beliefs or a state of mind. It is existential and this means, as already stated, that it is not as simple as *deciding* to become missional or simply *learning* to be missional. It is a process of holistic formation that takes place over time. Theological education that intends this type of formation needs innovation. The patterns of the past have to be broken, this challenge can only be responded to by bringing something new forth into the world.

Therefore, this research focused on holistic theological education for the formation of missional leaders, came to the presupposition that the formation of church leaders with a missional spirituality is the specific adaptive challenge facing the DRC’s theological education. The intention and purpose of creating this prototype are to propose a programme for spiritual transformation as part of holistic theological education. An innovation that can contribute to the missional transformation of the DRC.

Stage 2 – Exploring the perspective of the stakeholder or problem-owner

The second stage is about exploring the perspective of the stakeholder or problem-owner who requires or can make use of the prototype. The Presencing Institute (2020a, n.d.) suggests that the researcher ‘step into their shoes’ or ‘become the customer’. The notion is that this type of exploration makes the development of the prototype more concrete. Scharmer (2009:45) emphasises the importance of placing yourself in other people’s shoes as this is to

prevent missing great ideas, but also a way to empathise and a way of tuning into the context. He proposes that 4 minutes a day is set aside to review the day from someone else's perspective, to suspend judgement and to just observe.

The perspective of the stakeholder or problem-owner, the curatorium at the University of Pretoria, has been explored in chapter 2 by attempting to discern the pain of the problem-owner. The researcher set out to 'step into their shoes' by listening to their experiences of educating students, planning a curriculum and collaborating with the University of Pretoria rather than just analysing the syllabus. The researcher also formally 'stepped into their shoes' by becoming a part-time lecturer at the University of Pretoria and not just researching theological education, but also taking part in designing a module, presenting the module, assessing the students, and experiencing some of the ins and outs of theological education as it is. Furthermore, the researcher is a 'customer' by studying theology at the University of Pretoria and also experienced the so-called receiving end of theological education.

Exploring these different perspectives, the following came to light. First, although the DRC and NHKA have officially opted for a process of missional transformation, the DRC and NHKA lecturers at the Faculty of Theology and Religion are not all in agreement. Missional ecclesiology and its implications are not explicitly part of the formal curriculum and it is not planned to be in the future. There is yet to be consensus on not only a definition but the place of missional church in the faculty. Second, given that the curatorium consists of DRC congregational leaders that have not been formed as missional leaders, they will have to design and implement a theological education programme for spiritual formation that they will have to go through. This innovation will require the curatorium to act as pioneers to not only initiate, but be a part of this holistic process of formation. Third, although various adjustments had been made to the theological curriculum at the University of Pretoria and that of church specific education, the researcher, as a student, has not been formed as a missional leader in the 14 years of studying theology. Last, the researcher found, as a part-time lecturer, that the theological education system is resilient. Improving practices is possible and the University advocates progress, but the system easily reverts to the old ways of doing.

Exploring these different perspectives is an important way to start shifting awareness. And to make the system *see* itself (Scharmer, 2018:n.d.). With these presuppositions in mind, the research will now move onto the next stage.

4.3 Proposal

This section, the proposal, will attend to stages three to five of the Presencing Institute's process of developing a prototype.

Stage 3 – Proposing a possible idea or innovation

The third stage is about brainstorming and proposing a possible idea or innovation. As seen above, going down the left side of the U is about more than listening passively, it is about actively approaching people and opportunities. Connecting to the context, observing and *sensing* with an open mind, heart and will. The premise is to go to the places of most potential. This means exploring those who have the most experience in the field, but also those that seem to be irrelevant. “The most important players, helpers, future partners, and guides often turn out to be different from what you expect; therefore, your inner work is to stay open to suggestions and stay tuned to the help and guidance that the universe offers you” (Scharmer, 2009:380).

The third stage will thus focus on exploring a variety of resources, inside and outside of the DRC and the discipline of theology to propose an idea or innovation for a programme of spiritual transformation as part of holistic theological education. Exploring these resources will begin by considering what has already been done and offered by the respective universities and curatoria for DRC students (University of Pretoria; Stellenbosch University; and the University of the Free State). And second, other programmes for spiritual formation, not associated with an academic institution.

4.3.1 Spiritual formation of DRC students

The curatorium at Stellenbosch University offers a seminary programme for student formation and the Faculty of Theology offers a postgraduate degree in missional leadership with a focus on missional spirituality. The curatorium at the University of the Free State also offers a seminary programme for student formation and the Faculty of Theology and Religion offers a postgraduate degree in practical and missional theology focused on student development. The church specific education at the University of Pretoria has as part of its curriculum a spiritual formation programme, *Viam Dei*, offered by a local congregation. These spiritual formation programmes will be explored.

4.3.1.1 Seminary programme (Stellenbosch University)

The curatorium at Stellenbosch University has a seminary that offers a five-year programme in ministry formation, the equivalent of the curatorium at the University of Pretoria's church specific education and the seminary at the University of the Free State. The seminary programme is described as "a journey on which students are shaped for ministry in the church" (DRC Seminary, n.d.:4). It comprises of five milestones focused on a process of formation by integrating knowledge, skills, attitudes and habits to give structure to a faithful life. The seminary programme is designed to be a part of the five years of formal theological education (BTh & MDiv). Each milestone is focused on an area of development (DRC Seminary, n.d.:5):

Milestone 1 (year 1) – Personal development

Milestone 2 (year 2) – Vocational development

Milestone 3 (year 3) – CREDO

Milestone 4 (year 4) – Ministry skills and development

Milestone 5 (year 4 & 5) – Development of missional ministry

Frederick Marais, head of the curatorium at Stellenbosch University, states in an interview on 17 August 2020 that the seminary programme is focused on the *ethos* and *pathos* aspects of formation and the faculty is responsible for academics, the *logos* aspect. In this manner, the curatorium at Stellenbosch University attempts to form DRC's students holistically.

Students are also supported throughout the programme by a faith promotion group (students learn and practice habits of faith together); a mentor (the mentor is the primary guide and each student consults with his or her mentor at least once a month); training congregations (students participate in congregational activities overseen by their mentors, these congregations provide the context for ministry formation and growth); and Iziko Meetings (students attend weekly seminary periods linked to the milestones and facilitated by the Seminary) (DRC Seminary, n.d.:5). These support structures provide an appropriate context for formation.

The seminary programme has three 'cross-ties' that forms the framework and binds the five milestones. These three practices or 'cross-ties' are as follows (DRC Seminary, n.d.:6):

1. Training congregations where students are exposed to practical ministry;
2. Spiritual formation receives attention throughout the Seminary programme as the years progress, and;

3. Missional opportunity, to be identified within the context of the training congregation through discernment and listening during contact with and exposure to the congregation as from year 1.

The seminary programme and church specific education have similarities and differences. The seminary programme is primarily focused on forming *ethos* and *pathos* aspects, while the church specific education has a stronger emphasis on forming *logos* aspects. The seminary programme has four different avenues of supporting students throughout their process of formation. The church specific education is less intentional about student's support and mentorship becomes more important in the fifth and final year of studies. Spiritual formation is an important part of both programmes but is addressed intentionally and consistently throughout the seminary programme. The church specific education has areas focused on being missional, however, for the seminary programme this is one of the three 'cross-ties' and a missional opportunity is engaged in from the first year of the programme.

The seminary programme offers a programme in ministry formation that is intentional about formation being holistic and missional. The programme also emphasises that spiritual formation receives attention throughout. Students are formed by creating and utilising the appropriate contexts, a local congregation (training congregation) and a community of students (faith formation group), and relationships within this context (especially mentorship). However, while student mentors are DRC congregational leaders, it should be noted that these mentors are most likely mainly focused on ministry within congregations and if they are not formed as missional leaders and do not serve in missional congregations, their own experience might be limited. Mentors model and share their spiritual life – teach knowledge and skills and shapes character and values (DRC Seminary Mentoring, n.d.:4-5). The question is, will these mentors be able to model a missional spirituality?

4.3.1.2 MTh in Missional Leadership (Stellenbosch University)

The postgraduate degree in missional leadership is specifically aimed at missional formation. The MTh programme is focused on building missional leadership capacities which include the formation of a missional spirituality. The programme is a joint effort of practical theology, missiology and *Ekklesia* (an ecumenical centre linked to the Faculty of Theology) and research done in congregations of the (SAPMC) shapes the focus and content of the different modules in this programme (Nell, 2015:82). The programme comprises six modules over two years. The hermeneutical-rhetorical framework of the six modules in the programme can be seen below (see Figure 4.2):

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
Pathos (Character of the audience)	<i>Module 1</i> Congregations – their formation, deformation and reformation. Reading the culture of a congregation and community.	<i>Module 6</i> Missional ministry integration. Developing a missional ministry of empowerment through formation.
Logos (Character of the message)	<i>Module 2</i> Trinity and <i>missio Dei</i> . The plot of the gospel. Developing a missional language.	<i>Module 5</i> Kingdom communities and faith formation in the community. Spiritual formation.
Ethos (Character of the messenger)	<i>Module 3</i> The spirituality of the missional leader. The personal practice of missional faith habits.	<i>Module 4</i> Missional leadership/guidance in faith and insights from secular leadership. Spiritual formation.

Figure 4.2: Hermeneutical-rhetorical framework of modules (Nell, 2015:86)

While the modules do not function in isolation and are not presented as such, modules 3 and 4 specifically focus on spiritual formation and the objectives, content and outcomes will be pointed out.

The objective of module 3, spiritual discernment and missional spirituality, is to develop personal and corporate spirituality and skills for missional leadership; the content comprises the exercising of *Lectio Divina* and *Examen*, discussions about these experiences and the prescribed material and a short silence *retraite*; the outcomes include an increased awareness of God's activity in the world and their life and the ability to practice spiritual discernment (Nell, 2015:88-89). The objective and content of module 4, missional spirituality and spiritual direction, is for students to spend time with a person experiencing suffering and to simply 'be there', reflecting on their visit(s) and writing a report of their experience and what God is saying to them through his Spirit; the outcomes are related to the three following questions: (1) What is spiritual guidance? (2) What is the most important design that emerges from a spiritual guidance relationship? (3) How does spiritual guidance relate to our life in this world? (Nell, 2015:89-90)

This programme consists of individual faith practices and reflection, studying literature and doing assignments, and group reflection and discussions (during contact weeks). It has been part of the faculty's prospectus from 2011 and the students have given positive feedback and testimonies. This qualitative data has been used for continuing the refining of the programme (Nell, 2015:102).

The MTh in missional leadership is a structured programme that takes place over two years. It is aimed at forming the capacities as set out in the *Framework for Missional Capacities*. Frederick Marais states (in the interview on 17 August 2020) that this programme is not focused on research and theory, but on formation and building capacities.

This programme forms a missional spirituality by guiding students to be aware of God in every day and to practice discernment (module 3) and by engaging with a person suffering and learning how to embrace vulnerability (module 4). Although the programme can be regarded as successful by using *Framework for Missional Capacities* as a reference and by considering the students' feedback, it has limitations. Being a structured postgraduate programme at an academic institution it has to meet certain academic requirements which can be, as seen in chapter 2, a stumbling block for spiritual formation. It is a postgraduate programme and only available to students that have already completed at least a 4-year degree in theology. And last, it is a programme that can be seen as completed after two years with no explicit follow up programme.

4.3.1.3 Seminary programme (University of the Free State)

The curatorium at the University of the Free State also has a seminary programme for ministry formation. This programme is similar to the seminary programme offered by the curatorium at Stellenbosch University and the church specific education offered by the curatorium at the University of Pretoria and will thus not be discussed here. Johan Nel, head of the curatorium at the University of the Free State, states in an email on 31 August 2020 that their programme also follows the principle of preparing students for ministry (according to the DRC's requirements) and that the faculty is responsible for the academic formation of students.

4.3.1.4 MTh in Practical and Missional Theology (University of the Free State)

The Faculty of Theology and Religion at the University of the Free State offers a master's programme aimed at developing and equipping students to be involved in congregations and communities and to make relevant theological contributions. The programme extends over a minimum of two years and comprises contact sessions (clustered in block weeks) and a

comprehensive dissertation in the last year of study. Students can select four modules of which one may be an elective in a participating department (e.g. Psychology, Education, Developmental Studies, and Systematic Theology, etc.) (University of the Free State, n.d.:2). The Department of Practical and Missional Theology offers specialisation-study fields with corresponding elective modules. However, the department only makes recommendations and the notion is that students select their modules to construct and personalise a programme. These specialisation-study fields include (University of the Free State, n.d.:3-4):

- *Congregational Studies and Leadership* – this study field is focused on the ministry of the congregation and her service in society, developing a missional and contextual ecclesiology from a practical theological perspective.
- *Faith Formation* – this study field is focused on faith formation that is a lifelong, holistic and comprehensive process, representing the relational fibre of faith formation ministries in the church.
- *Homiletics and Liturgy* – this study field is focused on equipping students in preaching the Gospel and leading people in worship in a rapidly changing world.
- *Missiology* – this study field is focused on new approaches in missional theology, the contemporary context from the perspective of missional theology, engagement of the contemporary world and the evaluation of missional theology in contemporary contexts. Contextual missional ministries are studied with an emphasis on missional ministries and contemporary challenges. This field of study is also focused on missional theology regarding the proclamation to, as well as discussion and dialogue with a selection of world religions.
- *Pastoral Care and Therapy* – this study field is focused on methods of care and healing regarding moral and religious life and development, and interpersonal and family relationships.

The MTh in practical and missional theology is a structured programme aimed at forming students to engage their congregations and communities in a meaningful way. Although this programme includes faith formation as an elective specialisation-study field, the programme as a whole is not focused on the intentional spiritual formation of students. Schoeman states in an email on 31 August 2020 that the contact sessions take place in the form of a seminar or lecture. This programme, as the MTh offered by Stellenbosch University, is a postgraduate

programme and only available to students that have already completed at least a 4-year degree in theology.

4.3.1.5 Viam Dei (University of Pretoria)

The University of Pretoria does not offer a programme similar to the postgraduate degree in missional leadership (Stellenbosch University) or the postgraduate degree in practical and missional theology (University of the Free State), however the curatorium, as part of the church specific education, including a spiritual formation programme offered by a local congregation.

Viam Dei is a spiritual formation ministry presented by a DRC congregation (*Ooskerk*) in Pretoria. The ministry consists of the *Viam Dei* course, retreats and a *Laudate* services (a contemplative worship service). After completing the course, there is the option to join a *Viam Dei* small group. DRC students studying at the University of Pretoria are expected to participate in this year-long course during their six years of studying theology. *Viam Dei* creates a space encouraging awareness of God in their life; for spiritual growth; and for deep transformation to become what they are in Christ (Viam Dei, 2016). The programme entails a weekly session of two hours (for 30 weeks during the year). The themes include the following (Viam Dei, 2016a):

- Two sides of the same coin
- Image of God
- Jesus' life and example
- The Spirit of God as the fountain of life
- Different phases of spiritual development
- The power of simplicity
- Awareness
- Contemplative lifestyle
- Faith disciplines
- Spirituality types
- Contemplative prayer
- The Bible and spiritual formation
- Discernment
- Journaling and reflection
- Drawing up a rule of life
- The Enneagram
- My life story

- Superfluous self/essential self
- Closer to God's way, closer to God's heart
- From a faith community to the community of believers
- The art of relaxation
- "Stop doing work, start doing life"
- The Dark Night
- Spiritual guidance

The outcome of this course is not specified and in general, it is about getting to know God's heart to be able to live in God's way. Though it is stated that the course is about being open to God's Spirit and the outcome is thus determined by God's Spirit (Viam Dei, 2016a).

The *Viam Dei* course covers an array of topics on spirituality and spiritual formation. However, it is not explicitly focused on, or covers the topic of, missional spirituality. And the focus on various topics implies knowing about spirituality and not necessarily forming spirituality. It is presented at a local congregation and by their ministry team, but not in and as part of the local congregation. The context of this spiritual formation programme is therefore limited, especially if a student or attendee do not opt to join a *Viam Dei* small group after the completion of the one year course.

4.3.2 Other spiritual formation programmes

As stated above, the most important resources often turn out to be different from what you expect. It is therefore important to stay open to suggestions and to embrace what comes your way. To let go of habitual patterns of thinking and to let come what wants to emerge. According to Scharmer (2018,n.p.): "I attend (this way); therefore it emerges (that way)." He states that form follows consciousness. For this reason, the brainstorming stage will attend by *sensing* and spiritual formation programmes will be explored arbitrarily.

The spiritual formation programmes that will be explored include the classic *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius of Loyola; the Renovaré spiritual formation organisation; the *Rhythm of Life* spiritual formation consulting group; Kreminski's missional formation practices; and the international fellowship and programme Alcoholics Anonymous.

4.3.2.1 Ignatius of Loyola's Spiritual Exercises

The classic *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius of Loyola from his 16th century's spiritual manual is worth mentioning when discussing spiritual formation programmes. Ignatius of Loyola, co-

founder of the Jesuit order, was a spiritual director and recorded his methods, *Spiritual Exercises*, in a manual first published in 1548.³⁵

Spiritual Exercises are every method of examination of conscience, meditation, contemplation, vocal or mental prayer, and other spiritual activities, any means of preparing and disposing the soul to remove all disordered affections and then to seek the will of God concerning the ordering of one's own life (Seager, 1847:1). The *Spiritual Exercises* are divided into four weeks and are expected to be completed in about thirty days. The idea is that the *Spiritual Exercises* be adapted to the disposition of the exercitant and for him or her to withdraw from all friends and acquaintances and all earthly concerns (Seager, 1847:10-14). It is conducted as a long retreat to be rid of all distractions.

The 'Principle & Foundation' of these exercises are about God's creative, unconditional love and call for total response and described in his manual as (Seager, 1847:16):

Human beings are created to praise and admire God, and serve Him in order to save their souls. Other things found on earth are created to help human beings in working towards the end for which they are created. Humans ought to be indifferent to all created things – to not seek health rather than sickness, wealth rather than poverty, honour rather than dishonour, a long life rather than a short one, and so on in all other matters. And only desire that which is more conducive towards the end for which humans are created. (Seager, 1847:16)

The original structure and outline of the *Spiritual Exercises* performed for four weeks are given below as well as a brief description of what each week entails.

Week I (Seager, 1847:27-45):

- Daily Particular Examination of Conscience
- General Confession and Holy Communion
- Exercise 1: The first, second, and third sin
- Exercise 2: A meditation on our sins
- Exercise 3: A repetition of the first and second
- Exercise 4: A summary of the third
- Exercise 5: A meditation on hell

³⁵ Although Ignatius of Loyola was one of the most influential figures of the counter-reformation, he also greatly influenced practices of spiritual formation still practiced today throughout faith traditions (see Sheldrake, 2005; Willard, 2002 & Foster, 1998).

- Other Exercises, Notes & Directions

The first week can be described as purification, facing the reality of sin and focusing and acknowledging God's grace. Looker (2010:186) describes the first week as the loved sinner dwelling on God's love which is greater than human sin.

Week II (Seager, 1847:46-81):

- Exercise 1: A contemplation of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, from the likeness of an earthly king calling out his subjects to war.
- Exercise 2: Several contemplations on the incarnation, nativity, presentation in the temple, flight to Egypt, Jesus' obedience to his parents at Nazareth, and the finding of Jesus in the temple. Contemplations include an application of the five senses in imagination.
- Exercise 3: A meditation on two standards, the one of Christ, our supreme commander and Lord, the other of Lucifer, the mortal enemy of our human nature.
- Exercise 4: A meditation on three classes of persons.
- Exercise 5: Several contemplations on the baptism of Jesus, the temptations of Christ, the calling of the apostles, the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus walking on water, Jesus preaching in the temple, Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead, Palm Sunday.

The second week can be described as illumination, contemplating Jesus' life. During the second week, the spiritual seeker develops a keener sense of discernment of the spirits, the content, focused on the Gospel, leads the spiritual seeker through prayer and experience into the mysteries of the life of Christ (Looker, 2010:186).

Week III (Seager, 1847:82-93):

- Exercise 1: Contemplation on how Christ our Lord went from Bethany to Jerusalem for the Last Supper.
- Exercise 2: Contemplation on the time between the Last Supper and Jesus' agony in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- Exercise 3: Contemplations on the events from the Garden to the houses of Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, and Herod, and on the Way of the Cross.
- Exercise 4: Contemplation of all the passion taken as a whole.

The third week is centred on the paschal mystery, contemplating Jesus' passion and death. Followers are in a position where they must choose how to respond to this encounter with a mystery which can lead to new depths of compassion and love (Looker, 2010:186).

Week IV (Seager, 1847:94-108):

- Exercise 1: Contemplation on how Christ our Lord appeared to our Lady.
- Exercise 2: Contemplation to attain love.

The fourth week is about contemplating Jesus' resurrection. The grace of the fourth week is joy, according to Ivens (1998:162), "[w]e are concerned with paschal joy, the joy proper to Easter, the joy which springs from a still more fundamental grace, that of the faith and love that make the Risen Christ, though invisible, the very core of the believer's existence."

As can be seen, by this structure and outline, Ignatius of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* is not a manual to be read for spiritual enlightenment. Sheldrake (2005:n.p.) states:

In the case of a text that exists to be performed, such as Ignatius Loyola's *The Spiritual Exercises*, the imperative adaptation to the needs of retreatants is built into text itself and is reinforced in the earliest practical interpretations of it. Thus... 'the Exercises' is not only a written document but is also what emerges in every use of the text as a medium of spiritual development. (Sheldrake, 2005:n.p.)

It is a series of meditations and contemplations to be used as guidelines by a spiritual director who has been through the experience themselves. Ignatius intended that the *Spiritual Exercises* were worked along with a spiritual director or guide (Looker, 2010:185-186). It has to be said that acute knowledge of these exercises is important for the spiritual director, but more so qualities such as empathy, intuition, insight, and overall personal wisdom (Ivens, 1998:xi).

The *Spiritual Exercises*, meant to be adapted, has also been adapted for today's contemporary culture. There are various ways to partake in these exercises, from a thirty days silent retreat to three separate silent retreats of ten days each, to a weekend silent retreat. It is also common to opt for a retreat in daily life. A programme of daily prayer, reflection, and spiritual direction as part of normal daily responsibilities for a set period.

The *Daily Examen*, presented in the first week of the *Spiritual Exercises*, has also been adapted and even though it is a requirement for Jesuits to practise the *Examen* twice daily, it

is used by many in various other traditions.³⁶ It is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day with the aim of discerning God's presence and God's will for us. "The Examination of Consciousness is a simple form of prayer directed toward developing a spiritual sensitivity to the special ways God approaches, invites and calls" (Jackson, 2010:10). According to Ignatius the *Examen* was a gift that came directly from God with the intention that it be shared as widely as possible (Ignatian Spirituality, 2020). What follows is a five-step version of Ignatius's *Daily Examen* (Ignatian Spirituality, 2020):

1. Become aware of God's presence.
2. Review the day with gratitude.
3. Pay attention to your emotions.
4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.
5. Look toward tomorrow.

The *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius of Loyola is a programme for transformation and spiritual formation. The exercitant is guided through the whole programme by a spiritual director, one who has already experienced the process and not only guides with integrity, but shares and transfers insights gained. The pass-on-ability of a formational process is vital for missional leadership. The original intention of thirty days of retreat is an effective programme in the sense that it confronts the exercitant on various levels and provides an intensive spiritual experience by guiding him or her through four different phases, starting with acknowledging sin and ending with the resurrection and the ever-present grace of God. This in-depth experience instils the important practice of discernment – significant to a missional spirituality. Jackson (2010:7) suggests that it is the understanding that God is an 'active God' at work in people's lives that gives it its internal cohesion. However, these exercises intended to be practised when withdrawn from 'distractions' and while on retreat, questions the ability to form an embodied spirituality if not practised as part of the everyday life. These exercises provide an experience of rest with God and inner peace from life's distractions but do not cultivate a desire to be a part of God's mission in the world (Kreminski, 2014:66). While the intention is not to separate the secular and the sacred, as declared through the *Spiritual Exercises*, this can readily be the outcome. The complexity of the initial programme also suggests that it was not intended for laity. That being said, the exercises have a lot to offer, especially when adapted and used in specific contexts, for example, the *Examen* that is already used in certain

³⁶ The *Daily Examen* is used during the Seminary Programme (Stellenbosch University).

DRC gatherings. The *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius of Loyola can thus be utilised in several ways to assist students to ‘tune-in’ to God.

4.3.2.2 Renovaré

Renovaré is an international, ecumenical, non-profit organisation that promotes fullness of life by the grace of God and through the spiritual practices of Jesus and the church. The founder, Richard Foster, wrote *Celebration of Discipline* (first published in 1978) which is regarded as an excellent resource on Christian spirituality. Other faculty include Carolyn Arends, Trevor Hudson, Lacy Finn Borgo, Gary Moon, Nathan Foster, Juanita Campbell Rasmus, Chris Hall, Miriam Dixon and Dallas Willard (*in memoriam*). Although Renovaré does not present a specific spiritual formation programme, the organisations offer various retreats, spiritual formation groups, and educational initiatives and are thus worth mentioning here.

Renovaré (n.d.) has a simple vision: “a life of flaming love for God with all our ‘heart, soul, mind and strength’ and to love our neighbour as ourselves (Mark 12:29-31).” And apart from their vision, there is also a Renovaré *Covenant* (n.d.):

In utter dependence upon Jesus Christ as my ever-living Saviour, Teacher, Lord, and Friend, I will seek continual renewal through Spiritual Exercises, Spiritual Gifts, and Acts of Service. (Renovaré *Covenant*, n.d.)

This covenant can be signed by anyone as a gesture of their general commitment to transformation. The formation of a balanced spiritual life is envisioned by Renovaré as six streams, the core characteristics of Christ’s life, now called traditions – to become like Jesus and be transformed from the inside out. The six streams include (Renovaré, n.d.):

1. *Prayer-Filled Life*
Described as the heart’s steady attention on God. The *Contemplative Tradition* stresses the value of silence, solitude, and prayer when engaging with God’s presence.
2. *Virtuous Life*
Described as responding with integrity. The *Holiness Tradition* emphasises the re-formation of hearts so that people can respond appropriately to the challenges of life.
3. *Spirit-Empowered Life*

Described as fuelling life from the presence and power of God. The *Charismatic Tradition* focuses on the power of God's Spirit moving in and through people. Through the Spirit, people can do more than on their own, and these abilities not only remind of God's presence but equips to build up communities in love.

4. *Compassionate Life*

Described as extending compassion in every sphere of life. The *Social Justice Tradition* expresses the themes of justice, compassion, and peace. It emphasises wisdom and loving kindness to bring relationships into harmony, unity, and balance, even within the relationship to nature. *Compassionate Life* takes place in all arenas of life, from personal to social to global.

5. *Word-Centred Life*

Described as living the life-giving message. The Evangelical Tradition encompasses much more than simply converting people. The evangel – the 'good news' – is God's great message to humanity: that all can be redeemed and restored to its intended design. This is the message embodied in Jesus himself, rooted in the word of God, and ultimately expressed through the lives of those who follow Christ. It is a living tale of grace spoken in and through word and action.

6. *Sacramental Life*

Described as encountering the invisible God in the visible world. The *Incarnational Tradition* focuses on the relationship between the invisible Spirit and physical reality, helping us to see God's divine presence in the material world in which we live. God manifests himself in his creation, even amid mundane activities, whenever and wherever we acknowledge God.

On a practical level incorporating these six streams, these traditions, and the formation of a Jesus-life requires spiritual disciplines. The spiritual disciplines that Renovaré (n.d.) recommend include the following:

- *Meditation*: The ability to hear God's voice and obey his Word.
- *Prayer*: The interactive conversation with God about what we are doing together.
- *Fasting*: The voluntary denial of an otherwise normal function for the sake of intense spiritual activity.

- *Study*: The mind taking on an order conforming to the order of whatever we concentrate upon.
- *Simplicity*: An inward reality that results in an outward lifestyle.
- *Solitude*: An open relational space for being found by God and freed from competing loyalties.
- *Submission*: The discipline which frees us to let go of the burden of always needing to get our own way.
- *Service*: The many little deaths of going beyond ourselves which produces in us the virtue of humility.
- *Confession*: Experiencing the grace and mercy of God for healing the sins and sorrows of the past.
- *Worship*: Entering into the supra-natural experience of the *Shekanyah*, or glory, of God.
- *Guidance*: Knowing in daily life an interactive friendship with God.
- *Celebration*: A life of ‘walking and leaping and praising God’ (Acts 3:8).

Foster (1998) considers the first four to be ‘inward disciplines’, the next four to be ‘outward disciplines’, and the last four to be ‘corporate disciplines’. Renovaré’s traditions and spiritual disciplines give a comprehensive overview of what spiritual formation can comprise. Their emphasis on a Jesus-life and Jesus-characteristics imply a spirituality grounded in Jesus’ incarnation. These traditions and spiritual disciplines can thus be utilised when designing a programme of transformation for the formation of missional spirituality.

4.3.2.3 Rhythm of life

Rhythm of life is a spiritual formation consulting group, located in South Africa that encourages communities to adopt, embody and contextualise certain rhythms, ways of living, in their communities. Tom Smith (2014:20), the co-founder of *Rhythm of Life*, states that they seek to embody a ‘raw spirituality’ for the sake of the world. *Rhythm of Life* is about accepting seven invitations by embracing these seven rhythms and incorporating them in everyday life. Consequently forming new habits. The rhythms include (Smith, 2014:20):

1. Developing healthy images of God as number one in our lives.
2. Plugging in daily.
3. Journeying with other people.
4. Discovering our piece of the puzzle and gifting others with it.

5. Placing ourselves in other people's shoes.
6. Commitment to downward mobility and servitude.
7. Seeing our working lives as an essential expression of our with God life.

Rhythm of life is not designed to be an individual undertaking and a lot of emphasis is placed on the support of a close community, "a journey within the environment of encouraging friendships" (Smith, 2014:21). *Rhythm of life* also emphasises 'training', practising these rhythms. The training involves reflection and discussion, an individual exercise and a group exercise. A training group meeting will typically consist of (Smith, 2014:205-209):

i. *Warmup*

Someone in the group reads the warmup: As a community, we are training to become the kind of people who love God and others with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. Through the grace of relationships, we are here to encourage one another to become more like Jesus. Jesus loves us. This love is the reason why he invites us to follow in his footsteps and become more like him.

ii. *Rhythm of life prayer*

The prayer is read together:

By God's grace, we seek healthy pictures of God and make God *number one*.

By God's grace, we set aside time to *plug in* with God.

By God's grace, we *build relationships* with others.

By God's grace, we discover what *piece of the puzzle* we are and serve the world with it.

By God's grace, we learn how to *live in the shoes* of others.

By God's grace, we pursue a *downward mobility*, learning how to be stewards of everything in our lives.

By God's grace, we work out our salvation in our *job, ministry, work and career*.

iii. *Examen Questions*

During this Examen experiences with the rhythm(s), chosen at the previous meeting, are shared. The Examen Questions help to explore each rhythm. The facilitator reads all the questions under the rhythms out loud and allows each group member to respond to the question that spoke to him or her. Group members are encouraged to use I statements when responding.

iv. *Training for the Next Weeks*

Each member shares his or her plans for the coming week: In which of the rhythms (not more than one) do you sense an invitation from God? What specific exercises would you like to experiment with as a response? How can we help you to do this? Writing these commitments down helps to remember what others are doing and to pray for them.

v. *The Lord's Prayer*

After each person shared, there is an opportunity to pray for anyone in the group with a particular need or situation. After the prayer members join hands in a circle and pray the Lord's Prayer aloud and in unison.

This spiritual formation programme functions as an informal endeavour designed to be used by any small group or Bible study group. It is structured in a way that forms new habits gradually; it is focused on the community and how members can serve; it equips group members to discern God in their everyday lives; and is 'open' for God's preferred future. *Rhythm of life* can be considered as a programme of transformation for the formation of a missional spirituality. The limitations to consider are the likely homogeneity of the group with which the training takes place. Transformation is certainly possible when training with such a group, but a diverse group in a diverse country like South Africa might introduce more opportunities for growth and formation and raw spirituality.

4.3.2.4 Kreminski's missional practices

Karina Kreminski, in her PhD thesis, designed a spiritual formation model for transforming members of a missional church into missional Christians. Her premise is that church members wanting to engage with the missional paradigm has to adopt a missional spirituality by learning new practices (Kreminski, 2014:v). Kreminski thus identified four formational missional spiritually practices that can transform a non-missional expression of Christianity into a more missional expression. The four missional practices are (Kreminski, 2014:138):

1. *Missio Divina*
2. Praying with open eyes
3. Radical acts of hospitality
4. Communal reflection

Kreminski (2014:143) ascertains that these practices create a context for the Holy Spirit to bring transformation as believers engage in them. These four missional practices can be expounded upon.

The first missional practice is about reflectively reading Scripture. This practice makes use of *Lectio Divina*, but it is described as *missio Divina* because of the missional intent. *Lectio Divina* comprises four techniques: *lectio* (reading the text), *meditatio* (meditate on the text), *oratio* (pray the text); and *contemplatio* (contemplate the text). This practice alone does not foster a missional spirituality as it is focused on an inner discipline and does not have an outlet into the world (Helland & Hjalmarsen, 2011:loc. 114-1147). The practice was thus adapted to be a reflective reading of Scripture, in a *Lectio Divina* format, in a public place. This adjustment meant that reading the passage and waiting to hear what God was saying to them through the passage, and then relating that passage to the world they could see before their eyes at that moment (Kreminski, 2014:145).

The second missional practice is about praying with eyes open every day in your local context. Praying with eyes closed internalises encounters with God, praying with eyes open could help people to become aware of not only what was happening around them, but what the Spirit of God was doing in their midst (Kreminski, 2014:145). McNeal (2009:70) describes an exercise of praying with eyes open, going to a coffee shop, sitting on a park bench, or standing in a mall parking lot and praying this simple prayer: 'God, help me to see what you see'. Praying with open eyes somewhere in your local community and praying this simple prayer will expose what is broken in the world around you and awaken an urgency to address it. Praying with eyes open can also be done by undertaking a prayer walk around the neighbourhood or workplace with the same intention in mind (Kreminski, 2014:146).

The third missional practice is about engaging in radical acts of hospitality at least once a week. The practice is about getting out of your comfort zone and engaging with unexpected people, people not normally associated with (Kreminski, 2014:147).

The last missional practice is about meeting in a group once a week and reflecting on the missional practices for spiritual discernment and spiritual formation to occur. Kreminski (2014:147) states that if Christians were to be formed as missional Christians then this formation also needed to take place in a community.

Kreminski's missional practices encourage engagement with God and with the world. It is focused on experiencing the presence of God in everyday life. Practising missional habits during a busy schedule, as part of the person's lifestyle, and not making extra time for it, missional practices on-the-go. Taking part in these missional practices shapes missional Christians. Kreminski (2014:151) explains that participating with these missional practices is

not about individuals practising several activities, but about being the church scattered and engaging with society. Kreminski's missional practices are simple to incorporate in one's life and should be part of a programme of spiritual formation.

4.3.2.5 Alcoholics Anonymous

Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) is a renowned international programme and fellowship for people wanting to recover from alcoholism and fundamentally a programme for spiritual transformation. The fellowship has local groups in thousands of communities in more than 180 countries (Alcoholics Anonymous, 2017:7). Over the last 80 years, it has helped countless people to transform their lives by *working the steps* (the *Twelve Steps* programme). According to Vermeulen (2017:1), this recovery programme has the longest history and the most success. Committing to the program implies the belief of one's powerlessness over alcoholism, a belief in a power greater than one's self, and a belief that a spiritual awakening to that greater power is a gift arising out of completing the programme (Vermeulen, 2017:1). This spiritual transformation is what distinguished A.A. from other recovery programmes.

Within the A.A. fellowship, there are men and women of all ages and many different social, economic, and cultural backgrounds (Alcoholics Anonymous, 2017:7). It is important to note that A.A. does not recruit new members, but makes an effort to welcome new members whose lives have become unmanageable. A.A. members share their experience with anyone seeking help with a drinking problem and an A.A. member taking on this role provides his or her service by becoming a 'sponsor'. The official A.A. preamble states (2013):

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organisation or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

Kurtz (1979:108-110) gives a comprehensive account of the discovery and development of the programme and fellowship of A.A. and states that the core ideas include the concept of hopelessness as the condition of alcoholism, hitting bottom because of this hopelessness,

turning from this condition of alcoholism to sobriety, and turning to a state of wholeness. This is the process of spiritual transformation A.A. members undergo.

Newcomers are encouraged to join a group, to get a sponsor and to do ninety meetings in ninety days. After these ninety days, A.A. members are still encouraged to go to meetings as frequently as needed and at least once a week. A sponsor is someone who is further along with the programme and can guide someone else through the steps. A.A. has daily meetings that take place all over the world. There are open meetings, open to alcoholics and non-alcoholics wanting to learn what A.A. is about, and there are closed meetings only for alcoholics or prospective A.A. members. The meetings are informal, can take place in community centres or churches, and do not have official leaders. The meetings can take in these different forms (Alcoholics Anonymous, 2020b):

- Speaker meetings (open and closed meetings) – A.A. members tell their stories by sharing their experiences with alcohol, how they came to A.A., and how their lives have changed as a result of A.A.
- Discussion meetings (open and closed meetings) – One member briefly shares his or her drinking experience and then leads a discussion on A.A. recovery or any drinking-related problem anyone brings up.
- Step meetings (usually closed meetings) – Discussion of one of the *Twelve Steps*.
- Other meetings – A.A. members also take meetings into correctional and treatment facilities and A.A. members may be asked to conduct the informational meetings about A.A. as part of safety projects.

A.A. has certain regulations to which they adhere (Alcoholics Anonymous, 2020b):

- A.A. does not provide alcoholics with initial motivation to recover.
- A.A. does not solicit members.
- A.A. does not engage in or sponsor research.
- A.A. does not keep attendance records or case histories.
- A.A. does not join “councils” of social agencies.
- A.A. does not follow up or try to control its members.
- A.A. does not make medical or psychological diagnoses or prognoses.
- A.A. does not provide detox or nursing services, hospitalisation, drugs, or any medical or psychiatric treatment.

- A.A. does not offer religious services or host/sponsor retreats.
- A.A. does not engage in education about alcohol.
- A.A. does not provide housing, food, clothing, jobs, money, or any other welfare or social service.
- A.A. does not provide domestic or vocational counselling.
- A.A. does not accept any money for its services or any contributions from non-A.A. sources.
- A.A. does not provide letters of reference to parole boards, lawyers, court officials, social agencies, employers, etc.

From these regulations, it is clear that the fellowship does not exist for any other reason than to help people to transform their lives. Kurtz (1979:110) also points out the A.A. does not focus on alcoholism, but rather on the alcoholic.

A.A. was founded in 1935 by Bill Wilson and Bob Smith, both alcoholics when they met and discovered that they were fellow sufferers. According to the history of Alcoholics Anonymous (2020), Wilson gained sobriety with the help of the Oxford Group, a Christian organisation and a non-alcoholic fellowship with an emphasis on universal spiritual values in daily living. It is stated that Wilson maintained his recovery by working with other alcoholics. Smith, also a member of the Oxford Group, unfortunately, did not achieve sobriety. This changed when Smith met Wilson. "...he found himself face to face with a fellow sufferer who had made good" (Alcoholics Anonymous, 2020). Smith responded to Wilson's notion that alcoholism was a disease of mind, emotions and body and he soon got sober. Wilson and Smith then started working with alcoholics at Akron's City Hospital in Ohio (U.S.A.). Wilson, Smith and the first patient who achieved sobriety began the very first A.A. group (Alcoholics Anonymous, 2020). The group was focused on support, spirituality and how to be rehabilitated. Later in 1935, a second group was formed in New York and in 1939 the third group was formed in Cleveland. "It had taken over four years to produce 100 sober alcoholics in the three founding groups" (Alcoholics Anonymous, 2020). From here on the fellowship grew and as of 31 December 2019 it is estimated that the A.A. has more than two million members worldwide (Alcoholics Anonymous, 2019).

The basic textbook of Alcoholics Anonymous was published in 1939 and is more commonly referred to as the *Big Book*. This textbook describes the *Twelve Steps* of recovery and explains the A.A.'s philosophy and methods. The chapters include (Alcoholics Anonymous, 2020a):

- Chapter 1: Bill's Story (pp. 1-16)
- Chapter 2: There is a Solution (pp. 17-29)
- Chapter 3: More About Alcoholism (pp. 30-43)
- Chapter 4: We Agnostics (pp. 44-57)
- Chapter 5: How It Works (pp. 58-71)
- Chapter 6: Into Action (pp. 72-88)
- Chapter 7: Working With Others (pp. 89-103)
- Chapter 8: To Wives (pp. 104-121)
- Chapter 9: The Family Afterward (pp. 122-135)
- Chapter 10: To Employers (pp. 136-150)
- Chapter 11: A Vision For You (pp. 151-164)

The fourth edition (2001) now also includes personal stories on how forty-two alcoholics have recovered. The personal stories help alcoholics to identify with fellow sufferers. The personal stories begin with the story of Smith (co-founder of A.A.) and the rest of the stories are divided into three parts (Alcoholics Anonymous, 2020a):

Part 1: Pioneers of A.A.

This group of ten stories shows that sobriety in A.A. can be lasting.

Part 2: They stopped in time

Seventeen stories may help you decide whether you are alcoholic; also, whether A.A. is for you.

Part 3: They lost nearly all

Those who believe their drinking to be hopeless may again find hope in these fifteen impressive tales.

The *Big Book* is concluded with the following appendices (Alcoholics Anonymous, 2020a):

- i. The A.A. Tradition (pp. 561-566)
- ii. Spiritual Experience (pp. 567-568)
- iii. The Medical View On A.A. (pp. 569-570)
- iv. The Lasker Award (pp. 571)
- v. The Religious View on A.A. (pp. 572)
- vi. How to Get in Touch With A.A. (pp. 573)
- vii. Twelve Concepts (Short Form) (pp. 574-575)

Wilson published another book in 1953, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, about his and his co-founder's experience over the years on how members recover and how society functions. The *Twelve Steps*, also part of the *Big Book* and found in chapter 5, forms the basis of the A.A. fellowship. These steps are principles with a spiritual nature and "if practiced as a way of life, can expel the obsession to drink and enable the sufferer to become happily and usefully whole" (Wilson, 1953:15). The *Twelve Steps* include:

- Step One* "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable."
- Step Two* "Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."
- Step Three* "Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."
- Step Four* "Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves."
- Step Five* "Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs."
- Step Six* "Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character."
- Step Seven* "Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings."
- Step Eight* "Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amend to them all."
- Step Nine* "Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."
- Step Ten* "Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it."
- Step Eleven* "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."
- Step Twelve* "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

The second part of the book, the *Twelve Traditions*, concerns the life of the fellowship. It is an outline used by the A.A. to uphold unity within the fellowship and a way to connect or relate, with the world. The *Twelve Traditions* include:

- Tradition One* “Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.”
- Tradition Two* “For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”
- Tradition Three* “The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.”
- Tradition Four* “Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.”
- Tradition Five* “Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the alcoholics who still suffers.”
- Tradition Six* “An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.”
- Tradition Seven* “Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”
- Tradition Eight* “Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centres may employ special workers.”
- Tradition Nine* “A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”
- Tradition Ten* “Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.”
- Tradition Eleven* “Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.”
- Tradition Twelve* “Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.”

The *Twelve Steps* programme of the A.A. were also adopted by other organisations and for other causes. Narcotics Anonymous (2020), originally for narcotic abuse and addiction now welcomes anyone trying to overcome any type of drug or alcohol dependence and follows the same programme and guidelines used with the A.A. programme. Al-Anon and Alateen (for teenagers) is a mutual support group for those affected by another person’s drinking and also adapted the *Twelve Steps* programme (Al-Anon, n.d.). Debtors Anonymous (2020) offers a recovery programme for people who want to stop incurring unsecured debt by following the

Twelve Steps programme. Emotions Anonymous (2020) is a group concerned with depression, emotional and mental well-being and sets up meetings according to the *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions*. There are also groups for Sex Addicts Anonymous; Food Addicts Anonymous; Gamblers Anonymous; Racists Anonymous, Survivors of Incest Anonymous, Workaholics Anonymous and many more can be added to this list, all using the same *Twelve Steps* programme.

This research does not attempt to argue for or against A.A. as a programme for recovering alcoholics and acknowledges that various factors play a part in the process of recovery. This research does however consider that the *Twelve Steps* programme, as used by the A.A., can serve as a model for a programme of spiritual transformation as part of holistic theological education in the formation of missional leaders.

The third stage of developing a prototype is about proposing a possible idea or innovation for a spiritual formation programme. The notion is to explore a variety of programmes, well-known and obvious, but also those that seem irrelevant. Scharmer (2009:380) notes that the most important guides often turn out different than you expect and you should thus be open to what seems irrelevant. Past experiences are not always helpful (as seen above). Adaptive challenges call on leaders to let go of the past and to learn from the emerging future.

This research will then, after exploring a variety of resources inside and outside the DRC and the discipline of theology, propose that the *Twelve Steps* programme of the A.A. can serve as a model for a programme of spiritual transformation as part of holistic theological education in the formation of missional leaders. This appears to be an unlikely choice, however the *Twelve Steps* programme is not only focused on recovery and mere sobriety but to help an addict to be transformed. This spiritual transformation is the significant feature of A.A. This is the element that truly changes lives, that enables individuals to leave the past behind and embrace their futures (Vermeulen, 2017:3). And, as will be seen below, this unlikely programme comprises significant elements capable of forming a missional spirituality.

4.3.3 Proposed spiritual formation programme

Stage 4 – Questioning and evolving the idea or innovation

The fourth stage is about questioning and evolving the proposed idea or innovation. The Presencing Institute (2020a:n.p.) suggest answering seven questions to select and evolve an idea for prototyping. The questions, slightly adjusted to make it applicable to this research, are as follows:

1. Is it relevant?
2. Is it right?
3. Is it revolutionary?
4. Is it rapid?
5. Is it rough?
6. Is it relationally effective?
7. Is it replicable?

The *Twelve Steps* programme will now be considered and evaluated by answering these questions and pointing out important elements, specifically for the formation of a missional spirituality.

4.3.3.1 Is it relevant?

The first question for selecting and evolving an idea for prototyping extends to the relevance for the stakeholder or problem-owner, but also the relevance for theological education.

The problem-owner of this research, the curatorium at the University of Pretoria, is not equipped to address the adaptive challenge. As stated above, any programme for spiritual transformation that the curatorium wants to implement as part of theological education, they will have to go through. The *Twelve Steps* programme is intended to be readily available for anyone who wants to change and partaking in the programme is intended to be with others wanting change, without the need for a leader or facilitator.

The current theological education cannot be regarded as holistic theological education. As seen throughout this research, the main impediment is the lack of a spiritual formation programme as part of the DRC's theological education. The technical changes brought about were important and there are still various technical changes that have to be made, but without the formation of a missional spirituality amongst theological students, none of the technical changes will have the intended effect. As seen in chapter 3, if there is no change when it comes to the formation of a missional spirituality – a missional *metanoia* – nothing will change, with the formation of a missional spirituality, everything else may well fall into place. The *Twelve Steps* programme is a relevant programme for spiritual transformation and this research proposes that the *Twelve Steps* of A.A. can be utilised as a programme or process of spiritual transformation as part of holistic theological education for DRC students.

A.A. makes it clear that it is not affiliated with any denomination (or religion) and you do not have to be religious to take part in the programme or to become part of the fellowship (see the official A.A. preamble). The only condition is a desire to change. Although the message remained the same, the Christian lexicon of the A.A. was deliberately adapted to be more inclusive and less intimidating for new members (Vermeulen, 2017:2). The steps specifically refer to God *as we understood Him* to make room for the non-religious, atheist or agnostic. There is even a chapter in the *Big Book* dedicated to this matter (*Chapter 4: We Agnostics*). That being said, A.A. has a Christian foundation and spiritual orientation.

Wilson, a co-founder of A.A., gained sobriety with the help of a Christian organisation, the Oxford Group, and had undergone a powerful spiritual experience (*Big Book*, Chapter 1: Bill's Story). Wilson was desperate and called out to God, as he understood him at that time, and he was redeemed, never to drink again. "God comes to most men gradually, but His impact on me was sudden and profound" (Wilson, 2001:14). Wilson (2001:14) expressed that it was simple, but not easy, because it meant he had to completely give up his self-centredness and give control over to God. This spiritual experience together with the Oxford Group experience forms the basis of the A.A. programme that he had created. The Oxford materials rooted A.A. in the works of St. Paul and St. Augustine as well as scholars such as Carl Jung and William James (Vermeulen, 2017:3).

This Christian foundation and spiritual orientation make the A.A.'s *Twelve Step* programme more than a recovery programme. Especially because the outcome of this programme is a newfound spiritual awareness, as seen in the last step, "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps..." (*Step Twelve*). According to Wilson (2001:58), that is what the *Twelve Steps* offer if you completely give yourself over to the programme. Wilson did not intend that the *Twelve Steps* programme lead to mere sobriety, it was always about transformation and a vital spiritual experience. This spiritual transformation can also be seen in the second part of the *Big Book* – the personal stories of alcoholics that have recovered. Thus, the *Twelve Steps* programme is more than a way to recover from this disease and to stop drinking, it is a process of becoming whole, to reconnect with God, to give your life over to Him and to take part in the healing of others, as seen in the last part of *Step Twelve*.

Jeff Sandoz (2014:948), a psychologist, notes that although the *Twelve Steps* programme is a fairly recent spiritual discipline, it follows the same spiritual paths that have been utilised in established religions throughout the world. Richard Rohr (2011), a Franciscan friar, connects the Gospel message of Jesus, or what he also refers to as the marrow of the Gospel, and the wisdom of the *Twelve Steps* programme. Trevor Hudson (2007:xi) Methodist and pastoral therapist, regards the *Twelve Steps* programme as one of the most powerful

programmes for change and spiritual progress ever devised. Dallas Willard (2002:85) states that any effective programme or plan for spiritual formation, whether for the individual or group, will have to be significantly similar to the *Twelve Steps* of the A.A. It seems clear that the Twelve Steps provides an appropriate and relevant approach to spiritual formation and transformation, and applies to holistic theological education.

Consequently, the *Twelve Steps* is for anyone wanting transformation. Wilson (1953:15-16) also affirms that the *Twelve Steps* have helped many people, non-alcoholics, with other difficulties in their life. Hudson (2007:ix-x) presumes that the *Twelve Steps* can be used as a process of spiritual transformation by anyone who:

- Worries too much.
- Struggles with some form of compulsive and addictive behaviour.
- Battles with increasing levels of stress and tension.
- Sabotages their relationships with destructive patterns of behaviour.
- Feels trapped by feelings of self-condemnation, guilt, and regret.
- Who may worship regularly but somehow feel that their faith has become bogged down in pious clichés and empty ritual.

And this research presumes that the *Twelve Steps* can be used as a process of spiritual transformation for DRC students as part of theological education. Creating a holistic theological education, not a mere academic qualification and a skill set for ministry, but a vital spiritual experience. Furthermore addressing a root cause of the challenge – tepid and superficial spiritualities as opposed to a vital missional spirituality.

Rohr (2011:xxi) deems that most well-intentioned Christians and clergy have not been transformed by their congregations or training. “Christians are usually sincere and well-intentioned people until you get to any real issues of ego, control, power, money, pleasure, and security... Then they tend to be pretty much like everybody else” (Rohr, 2011:xxi). Since theological education or training tends to focus on *knowing* and *doing*, and not enough on *being*, students are not adequately prepared for existential issues. Without any deep transformation of the self, it comes down to tepid, superficial or fast food religion. According to Rohr (2011:xxi), this is a spiritual disaster, so-called Christian countries tend to be consumer-oriented, proud, warlike, racist, class conscious, and as addictive as everybody else. Transformation is hard work. The *Twelve Steps* are not fast food or cheap grace. Rohr (2011:xxii) states:

Gospel people need to do their honest inner work, “Steppers” need to “do the steps”; and they both need to know that they are then eating from the very rich and nutritious “marrow of the Gospel”. (Rohr, 2011:xxii)

The *Twelve Steps* programme is thus relevant and with this research, it will be attempted to utilise the programme or process of spiritual transformation to form a missional spirituality as part of holistic theological education.

4.3.3.2 Is it right?

The second question for selecting and evolving an idea for prototyping wants to determine if this is the right programme to use as a model for prototyping for what wants to be achieved. It is also important to determine if the root cause of the challenge is addressed rather than the symptoms. This research proposes that the *Twelve Steps* of A.A. can be utilised as a programme or process of spiritual transformation as part of holistic theological education for DRC students and that the root cause of the challenge is being addressed.

Utilising the *Twelve Steps* for this prototype is appropriate as it is a programme for spiritual transformation, but also because it addresses addiction and the holistic recovery of addicts. Addiction is defined by five elements: (i) engagement in the behaviour to achieve appetitive effects; (ii) preoccupation with the behaviour; (iii) temporary satiation; (iv) loss of control; and (v) suffering negative consequences (Sussman & Sussman, 2011:4025). Addiction involves craving for something intensely, engaging in behaviour that satisfies this craving and making you feel good, even if it is just temporary, being preoccupied with it, losing control over it, and continuing involvement despite adverse consequences. And addiction, as will be indicated below, is not limited to substance abuse and it can even be asserted that everyone is an addict and in need of a recovery programme. This can be construed as a root cause of the challenge.

According to Rohr (2011:xxiii), human beings are addictive by nature. He states that substance addictions, like alcohol or drugs, are the most visible forms of addiction, but there are various other addictions and the universal addiction is our way of thinking. We have a certain way that we process our reality, how we look at the world, how we do things, and we are unable to comprehend that it can, and should, be different. We do the same thing over and over again, even if it is not working for us. Rohr (2011:xviii-xix) explains that this is the self-destructive nature of all addiction and especially of the mind. Smith (2016:1-25) takes it further by stating that ‘you are what you love’. He explains that your heart – who you are – is calibrated by that which you desire. In other words, by that which you are addicted to. And we do not necessarily desire what we think we desire. Our desires are formed by the practices

and habits we immerse ourselves in. “Your deepest desire is the one manifested by your daily life and habits” (Smith 2016:29). And often the result is not kingdom reflecting practices, but rather reflects a broken perception of the ‘good life’ or even a way of coping with a life that turned bad. The society we live in makes it possible for our addictions and misdirected desires to thrive. Smith (2016:46) indicates the importance of reading “secular liturgies”, we are immersed in these routines and rituals of our daily life and we are constantly directing our loves toward the rival deities of consumerism, materialism, individualism, etc. This means that if spirituality, a way of life, is not formed intentionally, it will be formed by default. Spiritual formation is thus retraining of dispositions and kicking bad habits and addictions. And spiritual formation that is missional redirects our focus and desire to God and what God is doing in the world. Missional spirituality is about being part of the counterculture in society. Schaef (1987:4) states that our society is an addictive system, our society has all the characteristics and exhibits all the processes of the individual addict. Rohr (2011:xxiii) argues that our societies create co-dependency, there are shared and agreed-upon addictions embedded in every system and culture. He claims that these are the hardest to heal because people are accustomed to them and when you are part of the system or addiction, you cannot see the addiction. “The American addiction to oil, war, and empire; the church’s addiction to its own absolute exceptionalism; the poor person’s addiction to powerlessness and victimhood; the white person’s addiction to superiority; the wealthy person’s addiction to entitlement” (Rohr, 2011:xxiii). Addiction and co-dependency are not limited to substance abuse, it can be asserted that everyone is an addict and that we live in an addictive and co-dependent society.

Rohr (2011:xxii) sees ‘addiction’ as the modern-day term and honest description for the biblical tradition’s ‘sin’, it is what the medieval Christians called ‘passions’ or ‘attachments’. Sandoz (2014:950-951) considers alcoholism (and other forms of addiction) to be spiritual misdirection and idolatry – that which has come between you and God. For Kurtz (1979:604) it is a matter of denial, self-centredness and of “playing God”. Addiction can be compared to, or described as, sin, since addiction and sin depict something of the human condition and not morality. Addiction is a disease and a symptom of a broken society. A turning point for Wilson on his recovery journey was when Dr Silkworth, New York specialist in alcoholism, diagnosed him (see *The Doctor’s Opinion* in the *Big Book*). Dr Silkworth’s theory was that alcoholism was a disease, a legitimate illness, and not the result of Wilson’s lack of willpower or his immorality. Realising his brokenness, as opposed to him being a ‘bad’ person, was a liberating moment. The DRC’s reformed tradition acknowledges the brokenness of the human condition. The reformed confessions of faith, the Heidelberg Catechism, does not provide a moralistic or legalistic perspective on sin (Baard, 2014:86). Sin, or brokenness, is part of being

human. The creation narrative of Genesis implies that there is a frailty that lies at the heart of the human condition. This ‘brokenness’ creates distance between humans and their Creator. The biblical narrative of redemption and the mission of God is about healing and restoring that which is broken by sin.

The A.A. discovered Jesus’s emphasis on the healing and transformation of individuals and systems. “Christians are in a process of transformation, all of us without exception. Some are more mature in one area than in others, but no one is perfect — and that means we both desire mature Christian living and know maturity takes time” (McKnight, 2014:133). This is a foundational connection between the Gospel and the *Twelve Steps*. Jesus wants to restore, heal and recover what is broken. Rohr (2011:xv-xvi) points out that the New Testament calls it salvation and the *Twelve Steps* calls it recovery. “The problem is that most Christians pushed this great liberation off into the next world, and many Twelve Steppers settled for mere sobriety form a substance instead of a real transformation of the self” (Rohr, 2011:xv-xvi). However, it appears that the *Twelve Steps* can make Jesus’ message of healing practical and immediate with the possibility of being transformed in the here and now. Being missional means being deeply aware of God’s presence in the here and now. It can be explained as participation in the *missio Dei* and an acute awareness of the importance of incarnation. Rohr (2011:xvii) calls it the Divine Indwelling, “the real “incarnation” that still has the power to change the world”. Missional theology affirms that God is active in the world and that the Spirit transforms us. Apart from this reality, it should also be once again noted that the *Twelve Steps* programme is more than recovery from alcoholism or any other addiction. It is the restoration of physical, mental and spiritual health (Wilson, 2001:572). A process of transformation, becoming whole and being able to serve others in becoming whole. Bosch (1991:399) also explains that God’s mission is comprehensive salvation, it involves the individual as well as society, soul and body, present and future. “Anyone who know that one day there will be no more disease can and must actively participate the conquest of disease in individuals and society now” (Bosch, 1991:400).

The reality of our ‘addicted’ and broken society and the possibility of salvation, or wholeness, makes the *Twelve Steps* programme the right model for the formation of a missional spirituality.

4.3.3.3 Is it revolutionary?

The third question for selecting and evolving an idea for prototyping wants to determine if it is new. If this prototype could change the game and if it changes (some of) the root issues in the system. Although the *Twelve Steps* programme has been used by numerous other

fellowships and groups for various causes, it has never been utilised by academic institutions for theological education. The research proposes that the *Twelve Steps* can ‘change the game’ because the A.A. fellowship, without intending to, has various missional characteristics and values and forms a missional lifestyle. This model of transformation that falls outside the institutional bubble and without the institutional baggage gives a fresh look on how such a spirituality can be formed. Rohr (2011:9) even states that what goes on in church halls on Wednesday evenings (during an A.A. meeting) is in many ways more church than what goes on in the church’s main building on a Sunday morning. The research does not suggest that Sunday sermons can be replaced by A.A. meetings. However, in many ways, A.A. groups are currently more missional than DRC congregations.

The rise of the missional church is such a big development that it can be equated to the Reformation. While this research makes it clear that it is not the newest trend or a model for being church, but about rediscovering the nature and calling of the church, many contemporary ministry activities are referred to as missional and for some congregations, it is their new brand. This research does not attempt to brand the A.A. programme as missional, but rather to highlight how it is an appropriate programme that can be utilised for missional formation. Bosch (1991:511) refers to Neill’s saying that if everything is mission, then nothing is mission. To highlight the A.A. programme’s missional characteristics and values the programme will first be explored with the aspects of a missional spirituality (as determined in chapter 3) in mind, and second, by looking at the A.A. fellowship’ structure and practical functioning.

Missional spirituality is formed by embracing vulnerability (powerlessness). When studying the *Twelve Steps* programme that A.A. members go through, it can be said that embracing and working these steps leads to a kenotic way of life. An important value for missional living. The DRC’s *Framework Document* (2013:6) states that the church should practice a kenotic existence, emptying itself and giving itself up totally. It requires the courage to be weak. Bosch (1979:74) states that true mission is the weakest and least impressive endeavour there is, but the possibility of change relies on humans being vulnerable, only broken people can lead others to the cross. This value of weakness can also be seen throughout the steps, starting with *Step One*, admitting your defeat and powerlessness. Only when realising your weakness and vulnerability (see *Step One*), and relying on a Power beyond yourself (see *Step Two & Three*) is transformation possible. The A.A. fellowship is a group of people, acknowledging their brokenness, giving their lives over to God and helping others to restore their lives.

Missional spirituality is transformative, the prerequisite and means of participating in the *missio Dei*. A missional existence is transformative to its core (Niemandt, 2019:89). A.A. members are not only transformed through the *Twelve Steps* programme, experiencing a spiritual awakening (*Step Twelve*), but they take part in the transformation of others. A.A. members share what God has done in their lives by carrying the message of how He stored them to sanity (*Step Twelve*) and by actively partaking in the restoration of relationships (*Step Eight & Nine*). A.A. members also sought through prayer and meditation to improve conscious contact with God and to be able to know His will and have the power to carry it out (*Step Eleven*). This can also be described as discernment. Discernment is the first step in mission (DRC, 2013:6). Former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan William defines mission as finding out where the Holy Spirit is at work and joining in (Kim, 2012:1).

Missional spirituality is relational, formed *in* community and *for* the community. The importance of relationships with God, within the A.A. community and with others, is seen throughout the steps (see *Step Five*). The A.A. is referred to as a fellowship, men and women sharing their experiences, strength and hope with each other and reaching out and helping others to be restored to sanity.

Missional spirituality is formed holistically and shapes all aspects of life and living. The missional God wants to heal and restore. This is not intended to be solely eschatological, but to be tangible in the here and now, healing and restoring of the mind, body and soul. “God is by nature a missional God, who is seeking not just to save “souls” to take to heaven someday, but to restore and save the created order: individuals, communities, nations, the environment, the world, the cosmos” (Gorman, 2018:4). The A.A. fellowship and *Twelve Steps* programme are determined to create a space for this healing and restoring to take place, for the Holy Spirit to transform. Achieving not only sobriety but wholeness. The *Twelve Steps* programme is about holistic restoration, concerning all aspects of life and living (see *Step Four, Six, Seven & Ten*).

Taking these characteristic and values into account, the A.A. fellowship can be seen as an intentional programme that can be described as currently more missional than the DRC. Even though the A.A. fellowship is not a church, it does display aspects of a community of believers cultivating a spirituality with missional values. These missional values or characteristics can also be seen in the A.A. fellowship’ structure and practical functioning.

A.A. makes it clear that it does not exist for any other purpose than to help people transform their lives. A.A. does not focus on addiction, it is focused on the addict. Being missional means a shift from developing programmes to developing people (McNeal, 2009:xvi). The A.A. fellowship is not concerned with administration or supervision by keeping

attendance records or case histories, joining councils of social agencies, providing letters of reference, and A.A. does not follow up or try to control its members. A.A. meetings are held in community centres or church halls and A.A. is not responsible for the maintenance of any building or property. Procuring and using resources for administration or maintenance is not pertinent. *Tradition Six* indicates that problems concerning money, property and prestige should never divert A.A. from its primary purpose. This is important to point out, as the maintenance of traditional churches and the focus on administration is a huge stumbling block for missional transformation.

The missional church embraces diversity. McKnight (2014:91) states that to be in Christ is “realising that diversity is God’s design”. The DRC’s *Framework Document* (2013:6) states that church should encourage diversity by equipping their members to be more sensitive and respectful in the diverse society we find ourselves and to appreciate and celebrate the “other”, the “differently minded” and “multifaceted”. The document also states that this implies the church should be a listening community. Diverse narratives create space for new understanding and hope (DRC, 2013:6). Since A.A. is not affiliated with any sect, denomination, political party, organisation or institution, it embraces anyone regardless of their affiliations. The A.A. fellowship comprises men and women of all ages and many different economic and cultural backgrounds. A.A. is open to anyone, there are no dues or fees for A.A. membership. The only requirement for membership is, as stated above, the desire to change. A.A. embraces diversity and share their experience, strength and hope with each other. And they are brought together by their desire for transformation. The A.A. fellowship is without the cultural baggage that comes with any church tradition or denomination or the economic status assumption linked to the church’s location and is thus accessible to almost anyone. Therefore, A.A. meetings tend to be diverse, making room for anyone broken or struggling.

The DRC’s *Framework Document* (2013:12) states that the primary ministry of the church is not the ministry of the offices to members of the church, it is the ministry of every ordinary believer to and in the world. This distinction between the ordained and laity is still prevalent in DRC congregations. With the consequence of few ordinary believers stepping up to their missional calling. A.A. meetings, on the other hand, are not presented or led by a professional (see *Tradition Eight*) – counsellors, psychologists or any other health care workers trained to work with addiction – an A.A. meeting consists only of ordinary members. There are no official group leaders or facilitators, only group members further along the recovery journey. *Tradition Two* states that these leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern. The A.A. members recover by sharing their stories, working the steps together and supporting each other. A.A.

members do have sponsors, which can be described as mentors that can guide newcomers by sharing their personal experience with addiction.

Each A.A. group has the primary purpose to carry its message to the alcoholics who still suffer (*Tradition Five*). A.A. members share their experience with anyone seeking help with a drinking problem or struggling. The *Twelve Steps* build up to the last step which equips and sends A.A. members to carry this message and help other addicts to recover. A.A. members taking on this role and serving in this way become sponsors. A.A. does however not recruit new members. *Tradition Eleven* states that it aims to attract rather than promote. Not only because the A.A. wants to maintain personal anonymity, but because A.A. members have to be there and take part of their own accord. When new members do join the fellowship they are welcomed and embraced. And these new members are then also encouraged to, in this process or *Twelve Step* programme of transformation, to carry the message to others. McNeal (2009:xvi) notes the important shift of being missional from a ministry focused internally to externally. Being part of A.A. is not passively receiving, but being pro-active and passing on the healing and grace received. This can be likened to making disciples. The concept of making disciples is another important value of the missional church (DRC, 2013:6).

Even though newcomers are encouraged to initially do ninety meetings in ninety days, joining A.A. and going to meetings is a lifelong commitment. Realising that giving control over to God has to happen daily. And committing to use these practical tools for spiritual growth and healing becomes a lifestyle. As stated above, a missional spirituality is a way of life. Gorman (2018:loc. 228) understands missional spirituality as “a spirituality of participation in the very life and life-giving mission of God, by which Jesus’ disciples demonstrate their likeness to God and become more and more like God”. It is a lifelong process of becoming who you are in Christ.

Utilising the *Twelve Steps* of A.A. can be revolutionary as it displays missional characteristics and values, but falls outside of the institutional bubble and constitutes an adaptive solution.

4.3.3.4 Is it rapid?

The fourth question for selecting and evolving an idea for prototyping wants to determine if this prototype can be done quickly. A prototype is about learning while doing and getting constant feedback. Feedback can be used to adapt and try again. Prototyping is a way to avoid analysis paralysis.

This prototype can be done quickly in the sense that there is an existing model, the A.A.’s *Twelve Steps* that can be replicated and adjusted to serve as a programme for the spiritual

formation of DRC students as part of holistic theological education. The current programme already has all the necessary elements and it can be attuned to be missional formation.

This prototype cannot be done quickly in the sense that it takes time to work the steps. Testing the prototype will take a minimum of ninety days, as per the recommended ninety meetings in ninety days for someone starting with the programme. This will be the time needed to get constructive feedback.

4.3.3.5 Is it rough?

The fifth question for selecting and evolving an idea for prototyping wants to determine if it can be done on a small scale. Since the design of a prototype relies on constant feedback, as pointed out above, it should be tested locally and the local context can teach you how to get it right. The notion is that the right helpers and collaborators will show up when you issue the right kinds of invitations to the universe (Presencing Institute, 2020a:n.p.).

The A.A. fellowship have grouped all over the world. The many groups that can be found only in Pretoria are listed below (Alcoholics Anonymous South Africa, n.d.):

- CCC Group (open meeting, SANCA Castle Carey, Pretoria North)
- Moreleta Group (open & closed meeting, Coram Deo Building, Waterkloof Glen)
- Morning Awakening Group (express meeting, Methodist Church, Brooklyn)
- White Flag Group (closed meeting, DRC, Elardus Park)
- Eersterust Group (closed meeting, St George's Methodist Church, Eersterust)
- Pretoria East Group (open & closed meeting, St. Francis Anglican Church Hall, Waterkloof)
- Villieria Group (open & closed meeting, Reformed Church, Rietfontein)
- Waterkloof Group (open meeting, The Way Recovery Centre, Waterkloof Ridge)
- Wierda Park Group (open & closed meeting, DRC, Centurion)
- Launching into action Group (closed meeting, Methodist Church, Brooklyn)
- Pretoria North Group (open meeting, DRC, Pretoria North)
- The Solution Group (closed step meeting, Corpus Christi Anglican Church, Garsfontein)
- Uitzicht Group (open meeting, Manger Marine Care Centre, Uitzicht)
- Irene Group (open & closed meeting, St. Martins in the Fields Anglican Church, Irene)

- Laudium Serenity Group (open & closed meeting, Hajee Joosub Creche, Laudium)
- Mamelodi Group (closed meeting, Thandanani Drop Inn Cent, Mamelodi)
- New Beginnings Group (closed meeting newcomer group, Corpus Christi Anglican Church, Garsfontein)
- Raslouw Centurion Group (open & closed meeting, Presbyterian Church, Centurion)
- Sinoville Group (closed meeting, Methodist Church, Sinoville)
- Centurion Group (closed meeting topic discussion, DRC, Centurion)
- Early Bird Weekender Group (closed meeting, Methodist Church, Brooklyn)
- Waverley Morning Group (open & closed meeting, Stabilis Recovery Centre, Moregloed)
- Weekend Remedy Group (closed meeting, Christ Anglican Church, Arcadia)
- The Solution Group (closed Big Book meeting, Corpus Christi Anglican Church, Garsfontein)
- Lyttleton Group (open & closed meeting, Methodist Church, Centurion)
- Rietvalleirand Group (open meeting, 607 View Street, Rietvalleirand)
- Women's Big Book Solutions Group (closed speaker Big Book meeting, Corpus Christi Anglican Church, Garsfontein)

Since the open meetings are accessible to non-alcoholics and observers, attending these meetings can give first-hand experience of how a group gathers and how a meeting is set up and takes place. Attending these meetings can also be a way of 'inviting' and being open to the right opportunities, helpers and collaborators.

4.3.3.6 Is it relationally effective?

The sixth question for selecting and evolving an idea for prototyping wants to determine if it leverages the strengths, competencies and possibilities of the existing networks and communities at hand.

This question relates to the previous question. The A.A. groups in and around Pretoria can be used as resources to give shape to the prototype. Other networks and communities can include the other spiritual formation programmes mentioned above, local DRC congregations and all the partners involved in theological education of DRC students

4.3.3.7 Is it replicable?

The last question for selecting and evolving an idea for prototyping wants to determine if the prototype can be replicated and if you can scale it. This is important for any innovation in business or society, its replicability and whether or not it can grow to scale. In the context of prototyping, this criterion favours approaches that activate local participation and ownership and excludes those that depend on massive infusions of external knowledge, capital, and ownership.

Even though the DRC is not a business and profit is not the prospect, the approach used with this prototype does activate local participation and ownership as opposed to external knowledge, capital and ownership. A.A. groups function in a way that uses minimal resources. A.A. groups do not require any professional or leaders training. Customarily A.A. groups do not have any permanent staff. A.A. groups do not invest in property that needs to be maintained but makes use of inexpensive or free of charge venues for their meetings. There are also no dues or fees when joining a group. Building on the A.A. model for a programme (and group) for spiritual transformation, implies that it will be easy to replicate and it will rely on local participation and ownership of curatorium members, but also of students, congregational leaders and lecturers. A.A. groups spring up as needed, where there is a group of people who desires change. Spiritual formation groups as part of theological education can also be established as needed. The replicability implies that this programme of spiritual transformation can also be established in other theological education settings and curatorium's, in other congregations and other communities. The A.A. fellowship intends on expansion and to be adapted in new places and contexts as needed.

This concludes Stage 4, answering the question about the proposed spiritual formation programme to selecting the important elements and evolve the idea for prototyping. The proposed spiritual formation programme can now be reframed with Stage 5.

Stage 5 – Reframing the idea or innovation

The fifth stage is about reframing the idea or innovation following the questions answered above. With this stage, the concept of letting go and letting come, presencing, is once again significant. This is the driving force behind innovation. This is not something that can be written up in a research paper, but rather something that the researcher has to be aware of and make time throughout the research process and prototype design.

Reframing the idea or innovation can be done based on the insights gained and what was sensed by answering the above questions. First, important elements to be utilised will be listed and then the limitations and adjustments, the reframing, needed.

The important elements include:

- The programme has a Christian foundation and is focused on spiritual transformation.
- The programme is focused on transformation in the here and now.
- The programme is for anyone wanting to change as the programme addresses the brokenness and misdirected desires that are part of being human.
- The programme is not focused on mere sobriety, but on becoming whole.
- The programme is a programme focused on participation, becoming whole and serving others in becoming whole.
- The programme has missional characteristics and values.
- The programme results in the formation of a community of believers.
- The programme does not have to be presented by a trained professional.
- The programme does not distinguish between people on any grounds.
- The programme considers those further along the journey to be mentors to others.
- The programme is focused on people, not on programmes or organisations.
- The programme is open to anyone and embraces diversity.
- The programme is a lifelong process of becoming.

The most important limitation when utilising the *Twelve Steps* programme as a model to design a new programme of spiritual transformation is A.A.'s concept of 'bottoming out'. The A.A. programme has found that change comes when your circumstances have become unbearable or unmanageable, the colloquial term is 'bottoming out'. The only other reason for the change, and this was less common, was when someone shared their story and this sharing caused someone else to also turn their lives around. It could be argued that the A.A. programme will not be effective for spiritual transformation if there was no experience of 'bottoming out' or any other life-altering moments or circumstances. These experiences cannot be fabricated. The first step of the A.A. will thus be adjusted and reframed to describe 'bottoming out' as the realisation that things are not as they should be, a holy dissatisfaction. This will be described below as *Step One* of the programme.

The other limitation when utilising the *Twelve Steps* programme as a model is that it stays a *model* for the design of a new programme of spiritual transformation. The A.A. programme might have missional values and characteristics, but the A.A. is not the definitive missional community and ultimate programme for missional formation. These values and characteristics can only be used to design a new programme. The *Twelve Steps* will thus be reframed to focus on the formation of a missional spirituality. The Twelve Steps will be named as follows:

Step One – Holy dissatisfaction

Step Two – *Missio Dei*

Step Three – Powerlessness

Step Four – Missional vocation

Step Five – Cultivating Community

Step Six – A way of life

Step Seven – Bold humility

Step Eight – Formed *in* community

Step Nine – Formed *for* community

Step Ten – Faithfully present

Step Eleven – Discernment

Step Twelve – Missional *metanoia*

For this research, the fifth stage is then also the stage where the vision and intention are crystallised and a prototype example can be created, Stage 6.

4.4 Prototype

This section, the prototype, will attend to the sixth stage of the Presencing Institute's process of developing a prototype.

Stage 6 – Creating an example.

The last stage is about creating an example. While creating the example, it is important to connect with relating material in the field. Two important resources for this stage and utilising the *Twelve Steps* programme as a model for spiritual transformation is Rohr (2011) on spirituality and the *Twelve Steps* and Hudson (2007) on discovering the freedom of *Twelve Step*-spirituality.

The theological frame the researcher used can be described by the core characteristics of missional spirituality, connected to God's missional character. This is regarded as the guiding principles in the intentional formation of a missional spirituality fundamental to theological education. Gorman attended to the development of a missional spirituality in terms of *missional theosis*. It is a "missional transformative participation" and a spirituality that, in the words of Gorman (2018:8):

...consists in the mutual indwelling of the Triune God (Father, Son, and Spirit) and Jesus' disciples such that disciples participate in the divine love and life, and therefore in the life-giving mission of God, thereby both demonstrating their likeness to God as God's children and becoming more and more like God as they become like his Son by the work of the Spirit. (Gorman 2018:8)

The core characteristics develop in this research can be summarised as Trinitarian, incarnational, *kenotic*, and transformational, and it informs the theological frame against which the *Twelve Steps* programme can be evaluated.

The Trinitarian characteristic stresses the importance of relationships and community. The Triune God is a relational community. The incarnational characteristic stresses the importance of embodiment. Jesus is God-incarnate, God became embodied in Jesus. The *kenotic* characteristic stresses the importance of self-sacrifice. This self-giving love or self-emptying love is found at the core of God's existence. The transformational characteristic stresses the importance of wholeness. God heals and restores – God transforms brokenness to wholeness.

This theological frame then suggests that the Twelve Steps should form a missional spirituality that can be understood as relational, formed *in* community and *for* the community; embodiment, formed holistically and shaping all aspects of life and living; powerlessness, formed by embracing vulnerability; and transformative, the prerequisite and means of participating in the *missio Dei*.

The working of the *Twelve Steps* takes place in sequence, but some of the steps will have to be taken more than once and some of the steps will have to be taken daily. This is not a programme that you do once and complete, this is a process of transformation that forms your daily life – it changes your lifestyle. It is thus never 'complete'.

The proposed *Twelve Steps* programme will form part of the theological education curriculum at an university, but can also be seen as para-academic training. The importance of studying theology at an university has already been pointed out in chapter 2. The university

context exposes students to various disciplines and people from different cultures, backgrounds and faith orientations. The appropriate context for theological education that can be engaging and formative and can also be seen as a ‘mission field’. As seen in chapter 3, spiritual formation concerns all aspects of life and should thus not be considered as a separate curriculum. The *Twelve Steps* programme is merely one way to be intentional about spiritual formation. It forms part of the affective learning area, attitudes and beliefs, and all three learning areas are significant to a theological education syllabus for the formation of missional leaders. Confining intentional spiritual formation to a seminary can easily cause a disconnect from real life and ministry, be considered less important (as already seen at universities) and fail to contribute to and be integrated with the other two learning areas. It should also be considered that the Twelve Steps programme be undertaken together with lecturers and congregational leaders.

This being said, the Twelve Steps programme can also be considered as para-academic training, as it is not completed with formal academic studies. The reframing of the cognitive learning area as a ‘minimum knowledge base’ and the skill development learning area as ‘pass-on-able habits and skills’ already indicated that formal theological education is focused on establishing a sound foundation for further learning and development. The Twelve Steps programme is thus also a lifelong process of being formed and becoming who you are in Christ, the formation of a missional spirituality.

The first section of the *Twelve Steps* consists of the first three steps. Sandoz (2014:953) considers these first three steps the building of a spiritual foundation. *Step One* is to admit defeat, powerlessness, and that their lives have become unmanageable. This step is said to be the most difficult, but admitting something needs to change, is the necessary first step.

Step Two is about hoping for change and recognising that this hope for change lies in a power greater than themselves. *Step Two* is a gradual process of trust in this power greater than themselves, a three-fold process (Sandoz, 2014:953):

- “One must come”—specifically to meetings;
- “One must come to”—meaning that the person becomes aware that a change is possible; and
- “One must come to believe”—namely by seeing the changes that have occurred in the lives of others in recovery and coming to the personal realisation that it is available for the newcomer.

This highlights the importance of the fellowship, especially for *Step Two*. The A.A. meetings are where people identify with each other's personal stories, where the shared experiences give a sense of understanding and hope, and where people are equipped for their journey.

Step Three is deciding to give control over to God, to let go of one's will. *Step Three* is a turning point. These first three steps require humility, acceptance and surrender to God (Sandoz, 2014:954).

The next section of the *Twelve Steps* consists of *Step Four* to *Step Nine*. These steps can be seen as preparing for a new way of life. And the last section consists of *Step Ten* to *Step Twelve*, the formation of new habits for this new way of life.

The *Twelve Steps* as the formation of a missional spirituality will now be discussed in detail.

4.4.1 Step One – Holy dissatisfaction

Step One of the A.A. programme is as follows: "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable." The first step is about realising that things are not as they should be and admitting that it is out of your control (see Romans 7:15-18).

Admitting defeat, or powerlessness, goes against the grain of human nature, but this is the necessary starting point on the road to recovery and step one of the *Twelve Steps* programme. The first step forms the foundation of the next steps. Only through utter defeat is it possible to take the first steps toward liberation and strength (Wilson, 1953:21). Utter defeat meant hitting rock bottom and the A.A. fellowship discovered that few people will gain sobriety unless they reach this lowest point possible. Only once they realised the fatal nature of their situations and that 'up' was the only way, were they prepared to do almost anything to be able to recover.

Defeat is not only a reality for those in the clutches of alcoholism. Although powerlessness has become a vivid reality for those with alcohol addiction, it is a reality that has to be faced by anyone in need of deep change or transformation. This research has described the DRC's process of missional transformation. And although many things have been done towards this end, the DRC cannot be described as a missional denomination. Perhaps it is time for the DRC to admit defeat and powerlessness because things are not as they should be. This causes a holy dissatisfaction. Hirsch and Ferguson (2011:loc. 1319) explain that a holy dissatisfaction is created when you realise that your kingdom commitments are not met and

you know you have to do something about it. This research suggests that the formation of a missional spirituality as fundamental to the formation of missional leaders can do something about it. The transformation of DRC students, congregational leaders and lectures thus begins with this holy dissatisfaction. “Holy dissatisfaction draws energy from the fact that people long for change, and inspires hope that change is not simply possible, but inevitable” (Niemandt, 2019:163). And the basis for this transformation then, is DRC students, congregational leaders and lecturers admitting that they are powerless.

Step One is to admit your weakness and limits. Paul says that “it is when I am weak that I am strong” (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). However, admitting weakness seems to be extremely difficult. Hudson (2007:3-4) believes it is because weakness has negative connotations, you are weak when you do not have what it takes to succeed; we were taught to be strong and in control, and even if you are not, to at least pretend that you are; and we are easily blind to our weakness, we deny it or rationalise it. The ego is the culprit here. Rohr (2011:3) refers to heroic spiritualities – people in dire situations try to make themselves stronger by using their willpower and determination, wanting to be in control again and to manage their situation. Heroic spirituality implies that change (and transformation) is in your control. Rohr (2011:4-5) states that:

...we try to engineer our own transformation by our own rules and by our own power, which is by definition, therefore, not transformation! It seems we can in no way engineer or steer our own conversion. If we try to change our ego with the help of our ego, we only have a better-disguised ego! (Rohr, 2011:4-5)

This might be why change comes easier when you hit rock bottom, you have to reach your own limits. Only when your usual resources are exhausted will you learn to draw upon another source, a Larger Source (Rohr, 2011:3). Hudson (2007:xi) notes that “when it comes to inner change, human resources alone are not sufficient”.

Admitting defeat and powerlessness is the important first step in transformation and the formation of a missional spirituality. A missional leader is thus formed by admitting his or her weakness, being a missional congregational leader is not a separate role you take on, it involves your whole being. Jesus said that unless a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it will not bear fruit (see John 12:24). Hudson (2007:5) refers to this first step as having the courage to change, and this means a courageous admission of weakness. Rohr (2011:6) points to Meister Eckhart that said spirituality has more to do with subtraction than with

addition. The first step is about unlearning and letting go of power and our strong will. The power is God's, the mission is God's.

The first step, in the formation of a missional spirituality, can thus be described as holy dissatisfaction – realising the need for transformation and our powerlessness in this process.

4.4.2 Step Two – *Missio Dei*

Step Two of the A.A. programme is as follows: “Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.” The second step is about surrendering to a Power beyond ourselves that can redeem and transform us (see Luke 15:21).

A.A., as stated above, is not reserved for Christians. Hence the reference to a “Power greater than ourselves” in *Step Two*. This is how Wilson tried to make the A.A. fellowship open to everyone. This is a simple way to remove a barrier and made it possible for the *Twelve Steps* to help many people whom the church has not been able to reach (Hudson, 2007:16-17). A.A. meetings thus comprised of those who say they will not believe; those who once had faith but lost it; those intellectually self-sufficient; those disgusted with religion and all it stands for; and those full of faith, but still reeking of alcohol (Wilson, 1953:25-32). Wilson found that A.A. had a place for each one of them and could help them to reconstruct their distorted image of God, even though they were especially sceptical when they arrived at *Step Two*. Believing in God, or a greater Power, did not happen through force or manipulation or arguments, but through the sharing of personal stories and experiences. The A.A. meetings became an assurance that God will restore them to sanity. In this way, many alcoholics came to a deeper understanding and belief in a loving and caring God who can help them change (Hudson, 2007:17).

The first part of *Step Two*, “we came to believe”, demonstrates that it is not something that happens instantly, it is a gradual process. And this process is about surrendering ourselves to this Higher Power so that we can be restored. According to Rohr (2011:8), this process of restoration relies on three spaces being simultaneously opened up within us: the opinionated head; the closed-down heart; and the defensive and defended body. Restoration is holistic. Spiritual transformation is holistic formation. Spirituality is not a set of beliefs, it is a way of living. It is a way to be present. And Rohr (2011:10) states that being present is about allowing the moment, the person, the idea, or the situation to change *you*.

The last part of *Step Two*, “restore us to sanity”, gives an idea of the nature of this Higher Power. Restoring us to sanity implies a state in which we think, feel and behave in a healthy

and life-giving way (Hudson, 2007:19). This is the image and the experience recovering alcoholics have of this Power. Rohr (2011:14) describes *Step Two* as follows:

...the work of spirituality is the ongoing liberation of head, heart, and body, toward full luminous seeing and living, and not a mere mental “decision for Jesus” or the one-time insurance policy of sacraments received. (Rohr, 2011:14)

The DRC describes this Power greater than ourselves that can restore us to sanity as the *missio Dei*. And the nature of this Power is, as described by Bosch (1991:390), “a fountain of sending love”. God’s plan to restore the world, the *missio Dei*, is carried out through the sending of the Son and the Holy Spirit (WCC, 2013:9). Holistic restoration, or wholeness, is the work of the Trinity for the sake of the world. Believing in and surrendering to this Power is the second step in transformation and the formation of a missional spirituality. As missional leaders we only participate in God’s sending love towards us, others and the world. The mission is God’s, we only participate in God’s restorative plan. Knowing about the *missio Dei* theoretically and then believing in and surrendering to, is part of the gradual process of missional leaders that “came to believe”. Forming a missional spirituality requires a Power beyond ourselves. And participation in this Power cannot happen on the grounds of merely knowing about. There is a difference between knowing and knowing about. “The key is that we learn how to *live* in Christ not just *learn* about Christ” (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 957). We are not called to be volunteers, we are called to “to follow him and become his servant-slaves” (Helland & Hjalmarson, 2011:loc. 1036-1037). *Step Two* is accepting the importance of self-abandonment or referred to as *kenosis*.

The second step, in the formation of a missional spirituality, can thus be described as surrendering to the *missio Dei*’s restorative power.

4.4.3 Step Three – Powerlessness

Step Three of the A.A. programme is as follows: “Make a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood God.” The third step is about giving up control and giving over to God (see Proverbs 3:5-6).

Wilson (1953:34) states that the first two steps were focused on reflection and acceptance, whereas the third step, like all the remaining steps, calls for action. As seen above, these first three steps form the foundation and the effectiveness of the *Twelve Steps* rests on this “decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God”. It does not have to be a matter

of being all in from the start, it is about a willingness and even the smallest beginning is all that is needed (Wilson, 1953:35). To turn our will and lives over to God means to become dependent in a new way. Not dependent on alcohol, but dependence on this Higher Power means gaining true independence of the spirit (Wilson, 1953:35). It is when I am weak that I am strong (see 2 Corinthians 12:9-10). It is when I am dependant on God, that I am independent of anything else. Wilson (1953:39-40) notes that *Step Three* is just the beginning of this dependence on God, attending a few A.A. meetings and being sober does not mean your life is now manageable. That is what the remaining steps are for. *Step Three* opens the door and the rest of the steps are action steps, a way to align your will with God's will. "Our whole trouble had been the misuse of willpower. We had tried to bombard our problems with it instead of attempting to bring it into agreement with God's intention for us" (Wilson, 1953:40).

Making this decision gives our life a new centre and a new focus. Rohr (2011:20) states that our culture does not respect people who do not take control of their lives. This step is therefore not an easy decision as we tend to be in control and to see ourselves as the main character in our story. As theology students, congregational leaders and lecturers, with all the skills and knowledge gained, there is also a tendency to see ministry as *our* ministry. Purves (2007:11-12) regards this as the root problem of ministry today, our ministry should merely be "a sharing in the continuing ministry of Jesus Christ, for wherever Christ is, there is the church and her ministry". God is not a part of our ministry, we are a part of God's ministry. And giving up control and power and surrendering ourselves to the *missio Dei*, is the only way to be a part of God's ministry. It is the only way to gain victory over our selfishness and our compulsion to control everything and everyone around us (Hudson, 2007:28). Jesus says that "for whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it" (Matthew 16:25). Rohr (2011:20) even denotes that the lack of handing over power, the concrete "decision to turn our lives over to the care of God", is the reason why religion seems to be fruitless. He explains it as the myth of sacrifice and calls it being *sacrificial*.

...there is a love that sincerely seeks the spiritual good of others, and there is a love that is seeking superiority, admiration, and control for itself, even and most especially by doing "good" and heroic things. (Rohr, 2011:22)

It looks like the Gospel, but it is not the Gospel. Co-dependents are sacrificial. This is such an eminent reality that, apart from A.A., a group called Al-Anon was created specifically for co-dependents. It is not about being busy with "church" activities, is a life of self-abandonment and following Jesus. "To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding

and with all your strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices” (Mark 12:33). Newbigin (1989:239) notes that the transformation to which Jesus calls us and which the Spirit effects “involves at the same time a demand for total self-surrender and the gift of utter security”.

Forming a missional spirituality means embracing vulnerability and requires a decision “to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood God”. According to Hudson (2007:31), surrendering begins with a deliberate and definite decision to give our life and will over to God, but it then continues as a daily process of seeking God’s will – giving up control does not mean becoming passive, surrendering empowers us to live more responsibly and creatively. “The strongest human will is always the one that is surrendered to God’s will and acts with it” (Willard, 2002:375). Missional leaders participate in God’s sending love toward and transformation of the world.

The third step, in the formation of a missional spirituality, can thus be described as being powerless and choosing to be open to the Spirit’s transformation.

4.4.4 Step Four – Missional vocation

Step Four of the A.A. programme is as follows: “Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.” The fourth step is about who you are and who you are called to be (see Lamentations 3:40).

Wilson (1953:42) notes that God created humans with instincts or desires. They are not only necessary for survival but also a full life. However, these desires can be misdirected and take over our life. “Nearly every serious emotional problem can be seen as a case of misdirected instinct” (Wilson, 1953:42). Instincts, or desires, that have been corrupted become liabilities. Wilson (1953:42) refers to the Seven Deadly Sins – pride, greed, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth – as a universally recognised list to give a general description of these liabilities and he states that *Step Four* is “our vigorous and painstaking effort to discover what these liabilities in each of us have been, and are”. Rohr (2011:30-31) refers to this moral inventory as “shadow boxing” and he remarks that the notion is not to determine if a person is morally good or bad, being honest with oneself is foundational to spiritual transformation. It is a process of self-examination. “Strict honesty with ourselves is crucial to the experience of deep inner change” (Hudson, 2007:40). Acknowledging exactly what is broken is an important step in becoming whole. Usually, this brokenness is what caused the alcohol addiction and is not the alcohol addiction itself.

Wilson (1953:45) connects this moral inventory to humility, stating that this is necessary, to be honest with oneself as our natural response to these liabilities is self-righteousness. It is either the drinking's fault or someone else's fault. And if the drinking stops, then everything will be fine. There is however a deeper root to what is going on. The sponsors are extremely important at this point, sharing their stories and experiences and guiding newcomers in the process (Wilson, 1953:46). The other common response is that there is no need for moral inventory, this is called self-justification. Certain conditions, out of our control, caused the drinking to start. "It never occurred to us that we needed to change ourselves to meet conditions, whatever they were" (Wilson, 1953:47). Confronting the deeper root(s) is not an easy endeavour. And Wilson (1953:48) notes that it takes time, but gets easier, and eventually leads to getting perspective on yourself and gaining in humility. Egotism and fear are the two culprits that cause this process to be drawn-out, thus the need for a "searching" and "fearless" inventory. The first part of *Step Four* is about the newcomer realising that (Wilson, 1953:50):

[H]is character defects, representing instincts gone astray, have been the primary cause of his drinking and his failure at life; that unless he is now willing to work hard at the elimination of the worst of these defects, both sobriety and peace of mind will still elude him; that all the faulty foundations of his life will have to be torn out and built anew on bedrock. (Wilson, 1953:50)

The next part is about actually taking moral inventory. Wilson (1953:50) suggest that since *Step Four* is the beginning of a life-long practice, to first look at the apparent and the worst personal flaws and then to move on and to search deeper. Hudson (2007:46) also notes that for transformation to occur this step should become a habit of self-examination and personal reflection. It is important to be thorough and honest and Wilson (1953:54) even suggests writing down the moral inventory as "tangible evidence of our complete willingness to move forward".

Step Four is not about moral victory or superiority, but about luminosity (see Matthew 6:22-23). Rohr (2011:32) states that alcoholics, no matter how many years have passed, are still alcoholics and still imperfect, however, they know it and that makes all the difference. Thus the need for continuous shadow boxing, for "we grow best in the shadowlands" (Rohr, 2011:33). The shadowlands do not refer to evil, but rather the hidden part. According to Rohr (2011:35), *Step Four* is about a truly seeing oneself, "creating a good and trustworthy lamp inside of us that reflects and reveals what is really there, knowing that "anything exposed to the light will itself become light" (Ephesians 5:14)". Making an inventory displays a willingness,

to be honest about and place every aspect of life before God and under God's influence (Hudson, 2007:41).

Step Four, to make "a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves", is ultimately about acknowledging who you are, your nature and calling. Scharmer (2009:21) notes that leaders act from this inner place called the "blind spot" – it is not determined by *what* they do and *how* they do things, but by *who* they are. This "blind spot" needs to be illuminated for students, congregational leaders and lectures, to be transformed, and to be able to transform. First, through honesty and humility realising your brokenness and imperfection, because this makes all the difference. Henri Nouwen's three movements, the inward, outward and upward journey, is described as a journey to broken wholeness, journeys of imperfection (see Nouwen, 1986). *Step Four* can be described as the inward journey of imperfection:

The inward journey of imperfection involves self-confrontation in conjunction with the human reality of brokenness. The path leading to wholeness is through the inward process of woundedness and brokenness. One experiences a growing sense of wholeness by first coming in direct contact with one's inner condition of brokenness. (Hernandez, 2006:131-132)

This step emphasises that transformation concerns all aspects of life. Taking inventory is not about compiling a list of all your good and bad deeds, it is the life-long habit of a constant awareness of your wholeness in brokenness – who you are in Christ. Barton (2008:16) states that spiritual transformation is a process not concerned with "behavioural tweaks", but rather *who you are*:

In the process of transformation the Spirit of God moves us from behaviours motivated by fear and self-protection to trust and abandonment to God; from selfishness and self-absorption to freely offering the gifts of the authentic self; from the ego's desperate attempts to control the outcomes of our lives to an ability to give ourselves over to the will of God which is often the foolishness of this world. (Barton, 2008:16)

Forming a missional spirituality concerns all aspects of life and taking inventory of all the aspects of your life is a practical way to determine what is not as it should be and needs to be addressed (a holy dissatisfaction). As this is *Step Four* of the programme, this inventory will take place in the context of the previous steps and is about becoming aware of who you are

and who you are called to be. “Vocation is an integral part of the understanding of the missional church... there can be no sending without calling (vocation)” (Niemandt, 2019:116). And as Christians, we are called to participate in God’s restoration of a broken world, because we are also broken. Acknowledging our vulnerability, which this step makes tangible, makes all the difference. “Spirituality creates the fertile circumstances where calling can be heard and vocation can be discerned, both individually and in the community of disciples” (Niemandt, 2019:116). This is also important for the next step.

The fourth step, in the formation of a missional spirituality, can thus be described as discerning your missional nature and calling (vocation).

4.4.5 Step Five – Cultivating community

Step Five of the A.A. programme is as follows: “Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.” This step is about the ancient discipline of confession and the result of confession – a deep relationship with God and others, a sense of belonging (see James 5:16).

All the steps confront and deflate the ego, although *Step Five* is especially difficult and important in this regard (Wilson, 1953:55). The first A.A. members discovered that they could not recover and heal on their own, “we cannot live alone with our pressing problems and the character defects which cause or aggravate them” (Wilson, 1953:55). It is crucial to share with someone what is going on in your life, especially the shadows of your life. While many A.A. members have tried to skip over this step, Wilson (1953:56) notes that it is perilous, everyone had to partake in this practice of admitting their wrongs to another. And A.A. members declare that without this fearless admission, they could not stay sober. The previous step was about making a list, now it has to be admitted out loud in the context of relationships – admitting to God, to ourselves and to another human being.

Transformation, and wholeness, is not possible without acknowledging “the exact nature of our wrongs”. However, this does not mean to be punished or to pay for your sins to be transformed. Rohr (2011:42) states that cultures and religions tend to function in a dualistic system of good and bad, reward and punishment, and the ego expects the pattern to be:

sin → punishment → repentance → transformation

He calls this the economy of merit. “The revelation from the cross and the Twelve Steps, however, believes that sin and failure are, in fact, *the setting and opportunity for the*

transformation and enlightenment of the offender...” (Rohr, 2011:38). This is an economy of grace. Rohr (2011:42) explains the pattern instead to be (also see Ezekiel 16:63, 20:44):

sin → unconditional love → transformation → repentance

The admission of wrongdoings should lead to an experience of God’s love and forgiveness. Especially because this takes place within the context of relationships. Joining an A.A. group eliminates the isolation that every alcoholic feels, however, in the beginning, it is only in a social sense, to really belong meant to work *Step Five*. “Until we had talked with complete candour of our conflicts, and had listened to someone else do the same thing, we still didn’t belong” (Wilson, 1953:57). *Step Five*, then, is the beginning of an authentic and deep relationship with God and fellow humans.

Being honest not only to ourselves but to God and other human beings, is the way to receive and offer forgiveness and to gain humility. “When we are honest with another person, it confirms that we have been honest with ourselves and with God” (Wilson, 1953:60). Rohr (2011:43) notes that humans need “a human mirror to reflect the un-seeable divine gaze, especially if our heads and body are bowed in shame.” This other person should be someone specific, it might be a sponsor or it might be someone else, but Hudson (2007:55) states that it should be someone trustworthy and understanding to be truly honest. And within this honest relationship of sharing there is the experience of oneness with God and other fellow humans. Wilson (1953:62) states:

This feeling of being at one with God and man, this emerging from isolation through the open and honest sharing of our terrible burden of guilt, brings us to a resting place where we may prepare ourselves for the following Steps toward a full and meaningful sobriety. (Wilson, 1953:62)

Step Five is truly embracing vulnerability and to be ready to become what you are in Christ. *Step Four*, acknowledging who we are, is followed by, as Wilson (1953:58) remarks, “a sincere attempt to become what we could be”.

Forming a missional spirituality takes place in community. Sharing our brokenness, as required by *Step Five*, also means sharing in each other’s brokenness. And this cultivates community – a sense of belonging because of our brokenness. “Hospitality becomes community as it creates a unity based upon the shared confession of our basic brokenness and upon a shared hope” (Nouwen, 1972:100). Community is not built around shared interest,

common strengths or by attending special events, community is built around shared weakness (Helland & Hjalmarsen, 2011:loc. 1860-1862). A faith community is not formed by attending a Sunday service, community is formed by collectively acknowledging our vulnerability and dependence on God. “A community is bound together by God’s covenant with his people, and the nature and content of the relationships are determined by the covenant” (Niemandt, 2019:204). Rohr (2011:49) then states that those unbound by God, “are best prepared to unbind the rest of the world.”

The fifth step, in the formation of a missional spirituality, can thus be described as cultivating community through a shared vulnerability and dependence on God.

4.4.6 Step Six – A way of life

Step Six of the A.A. programme is as follows: “Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.” This step is about being willing to embrace a new way of life and not merely changing undesirable aspects of your life (see Romans 12:1-2).

A.A. members testify that they became ready and God removed the alcohol obsession from their lives (Wilson, 1953:65). However, this experience does not denote that they were now without “defects of character”. On the contrary, this is only one step forward in the life-long process of transformation and removing defects of character. *Step Six* is then the A.A.’s way of stating that in this life-long process being “entirely ready” is the best possible attitude to have (Wilson, 1953:65). Wilson (1953:66) notes that when you have escaped an extreme defect like alcohol addiction, it is easy to take pleasure in defects like feeling superior (pride) or self-righteous anger (wrath). It is easy to disregard taking comfort in food (gluttony) or procrastination (sloth). It seems acceptable to decide which defects need to be removed and which are justifiable. Although it is impossible to achieve a condition where all defects of character are removed by God, the point is to strive towards this end. This step is about making a beginning and to keep trying, to keep an open mind and to not reach the point of: “No, never!” This is the part of the *Twelve Steps* programme that shifts the focus from mere sobriety to a new way of living as we, according to Wilson (1953:69), abandon limited objectives and move toward God’s will for us.

Rohr (2011:54) explains that this step, and all authentic spirituality, has a paradoxical character as we must first acknowledge our defects of character, “but then equally step back and do nothing about it, as it were, *until we are entirely ready to let God do the job!*” This paradoxical character implies that it takes time, preparation and a willingness but ultimately

depends on God. Hence, Wilson's reference to having the best possible attitude, this part is our responsibility. "It seems we must both surrender and take responsibility" (Rohr, 2011:56).

The lack of taking responsibility leads to excarnation, one of the challenges of missional spirituality as described in chapter 3. Faith that only lives in our minds and not expressed as an integrated part of our lives. *Step Six* is focused on an embodied faith. Being Christian can easily be reduced to a mere personal decision to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and saviour without any real transformation or a different way of life. Without this attitude of being "ready to have God remove all these defects of character" and being open to the Spirit's transformation, not much will change. "Such a mechanical notion of salvation frequently led to all the right religious words, without much indication of self-critical or culturally critical behaviour" (Rohr, 2011:56). Wright (2008:253) notes that Jesus's incarnation and resurrection has implications for this reality, "both at the macrolevel, in applying the gospel to the major problems of the world – and if Soviet Communism and apartheid don't count on that scale I don't know what does – and to the intimate details of our daily lives". When a Christian does not take this responsibility seriously, it makes a mockery of the gospel. Missional spirituality is about an embodied faith that shapes all aspects of life and living. Without this attitude of willingness, Rohr (2011:56) states:

...many Christians have remained thoroughly materialistic, warlike, selfish, racist, sexist, and greedy for power and money... they surely did not bring much heaven onto this earth to help the rest of us... (Rohr, 2011:56)

Part of becoming whole is giving up parts of the person we once were (Hudson, 2007:63). Even though, as Wilson noted, we are inclined to take pleasure in and justify some of these defects of character. It has become embedded in our character and seems inconceivable to just give it up. And the point is, we cannot, we need power from outside ourselves. "It is God's Spirit alone that can do this inner work" (Hudson, 2007:65). Hudson (2007:66) states that working the *Twelve Steps* is to "put our lives in the way of God's transforming love and power like few other things can". Forming a missional spirituality is not limited to gaining knowledge or learning new skills, it is to put all aspects of your life in the way of God's transforming love.

The sixth step, in the formation of a missional spirituality, can thus be described as being open to a way of life in the Spirit.

4.4.7 *Step Seven* – Bold humility

Step Seven of the A.A. programme is as follows: “Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.” This step is about gaining humility (see James 4:10).

Wilson (1953:70) states that the foundational principle of each step is the attainment of greater humility. Humility is an ideal very difficult to reconcile with our world. Achievements and personal satisfaction appear to be the primary focus and purpose in life. Wilson (1953:71) notes that there is never enough of what we think we want and “in all these strivings, so many of them well-intentioned, our crippling handicap had been our lack of humility”. Doing good and acting in certain ways does not have the same effect if it is done with a hidden agenda of personal satisfaction. “We never thought of making honesty, tolerance, and true love of man and God the daily basis of living” (Wilson, 1953:72). Living a life dependent on God is different than merely believing that God exists. Humility is grounded in a desire to seek God and to do God’s will, not your own (Wilson, 1953:72). Giving up your will is extremely painful and takes time. However, this humble admission of powerlessness (over alcohol), is the first step toward liberation (from the clutches of alcohol) (Wilson, 1953:73). Embracing humility is an extremely difficult task, but it sets you free, it transforms failures into abilities, it brings strength out of weakness, and it heals. And humility becomes desired, rather than a necessity. “The Seventh Step is where we make the change in our attitude which permits us, with humility as our guide, to move out from ourselves toward others and toward God” (Wilson, 1953:76). Moving away from our self-centredness and life determined by our satisfied or unsatisfied needs and demands. The emphasis of *Step Seven* is thus beyond alcohol, a willingness to try humility “in seeking the removal of our other shortcomings...” (Wilson, 1953:76).

The “asking” part of this step is important. The principle of asking is seen throughout the Bible (see Matthew 7:7-6). However, asking, or praying, is not about controlling God or getting what we ask for. Rohr (2011:60-61) explains it as follows: “*We ask not to change God but to change ourselves. We pray to form a living relationship, not to get things done.*” In the end, God gives us the power of the Spirit, not our list of demands (see Luke 11:13). Thus the reference to “humbly” ask, an attitude of humility. Humility is required to ask or pray in the right way (Hudson, 2007:72). Having a relationship with God where there is the expectation to receive exactly what we ask for because we deserve it in some way, is called entitlement. Rohr (2011:61) states that a sense of entitlement is the demise of all relationships. This is not how relationships work and this is not how the economy of grace works. Entitlement is also listed as a challenge of missional spirituality in chapter 3. Missional spirituality is about servanthood, serving the mission of God. The primary focus and purpose in life thus cannot

be our will and presumed needs. “God has to radically change the central reference point of our live” (Rohr, 2011:63).

Forming a missional spirituality requires humility. And asking God to change us and to “remove our shortcomings” as we are broken, is not about our brokenness, but implies transformation for the sake of others. Bosch (1992:420) argued that the whole mission enterprise must be done in “humble boldness” and “bold humility”. Niemandt (2019:96) states that a missional spirituality implies the bold participation in mission, but with humility, as it relies not on our strength, but the power of the Spirit.

The seventh step, in the formation of a missional spirituality, can thus be described as bold humility, asking God for transformation.

4.4.8 Step Eight – Formed *in* community

Step Eight of the A.A. programme is as follows: “Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.” This step is about restoring our relationship with God by restoring our relationships with others (see 1 John 4:20-21).

Steps Eight and *Nine* are about restoring relationships. First, looking back at people who have been hurt by the A.A. member, second, attempting to repair these relationships, and third, focused on building relationships, “the best possible relations with every human being we know” (Wilson, 1953:77). The order is important. To be able to build new, vital relationships, the past must be acknowledged and addressed. This is a difficult process since it is difficult to ask for and to offer forgiveness. Apart from this, it is difficult because of purposeful forgetting, believing that “when drinking we never hurt anybody but ourselves” (Wilson, 1953:79). The fact is, harm was done and in various instances and ways. To make a list of all persons harmed means those whom have been harmed nearby and most deeply, but also to go through our lives and to list everyone that has, to some extent or other, been affected (Wilson, 1953:81). “It is the beginning of the end of isolation from our fellows and from God” (Wilson, 1953:82).

Restoration, God’s grace and forgiveness, is not a way to “avoid honest human relationships, but to redo them – but now gracefully – for the liberation of both sides” (Rohr, 2011:69). Rohr (2011:71) notes that receiving God’s forgiveness without taking responsibility, is too vertical, and can be self-serving, merely alleviating your guilt. There is a necessary horizontal dimension. Hudson (2007:82) remarks that the New Testament writers indicate that we “cannot have one posture toward God and another toward people.” Wilson (2001:77) states in the *Big Book* that this step is about our real purpose, “to fit ourselves to be of

maximum service to God and the people about us.” Restoring relationships flows from a life in the Trinity. The perfect relationships within the Trinity serve as a model and illustration of mission (Breedt & Niemandt, 2013:2). Breedt and Niemandt (2013:2) argued: “The journey of discovering the community and its relationship in the Trinity as well as the community and relationship of Trinity to creation, sets an example and standard of who and what the church should be.” Taking *Step Eight* is liberating, but for the sake of others. “We take Step Eight because it sets us free to love people more deeply and to do God’s will more faithfully” (Hudson, 2007:86).

Another challenge of missional spirituality is mutant pietism as described by Helland and Hjalmarson (2011:loc. 461-462), a spirituality focused on inward spiritual devotions and disciplines. Forming a missional spirituality is not an individual endeavour, it takes place in community. By restoring relationships and within authentic relationships with God and others. “Step 8 is a marvellous tool and technology for very practical incarnation, which keeps Christianity grounded, honest, and focused on saving others instead of just ourselves.” (Rohr, 2011:72).

To be formed in community is a centripetal movement – it draws others into community with the Trinity and each other. The eight step, in the formation of a missional spirituality, can thus be described as relational, formed with others *in* community.

4.4.9 Step Nine – Formed for community

Step Nine of the A.A. programme is as follows: “Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.” This step is about restoring relationships for the sake of others (see Matt 5:23-24).

According to Wilson (1953:83), the qualities needed for *Step Nine* include, “good judgement, a careful sense of timing, courage, and prudence”. After *Step Eight*, making a list of all persons harmed, these persons can be confronted. Restitution is however, not as simple as making an appointment and apologising. It is only after a reflection on each instance and acquiring the right attitude when there can be proceeded (Wilson, 1953:83). Making direct amends will not take place all at once, and some will be harder than others. Timing is important and there is an instance were amends will not be direct. Instances where disclosures would cause serious harm (Wilson, 1953:85). This is where good judgement comes in. *Step Nine* requires courage and “a complete willingness to make amends as fast and as far as may be possible in a given set of conditions” (Wilson, 1953:87).

This step requires the right timing, right approach and the right measure (Hudson, 2007:98-99). It is, as *Step Eight*, for the liberation of others and not a means to soothe your guilty conscience. It is a process of restoration and transformation for the sake of others. What sets the formation of a missional spirituality apart from Christian spirituality, as described in this research, is that it is a process of transformation for the sake of others. It is focused on human well-being and justice, and the restoration of the *imago Dei* in the other.

To be formed for community is a centrifugal movement – it reaches out to others to restore relationship with others and to extend an invitation to participate in the life-giving community of the Trinity. Niemandt (2019:184) argues that the church as a “relational community of disciples is bound together by love, and the whole ethos, lifestyle and witness of the community of disciples is characterised by love”. The church is a community of love. At its core, this step reminds us that missional spirituality is a movement of reconciliation, and to participate in God’s work of restoration and reconciliation. The ninth step, in the formation of a missional spirituality, can thus also be described as relational, with the focus on formed *for* community.

4.4.10 Step Ten – Faithfully present

Step Ten of the A.A. programme is as follows: “Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.” This step is about being fully present and aware of the Spirit’s presence (see Romans 5:5).

Wilson (1953:88) describes the first nine steps as preparing for a new life and with *Step Ten*, the focus is on the practical aspects of this new way of life. The *Twelve Steps* programme is life-long, and thus necessitates continuous personal inventory. This inventory is similar to the inventory described in *Step Four*, however, the timing differs. Where *Step Four* is mainly focused on the past, *Step Ten* is about day to day living. Wilson (1953:89) notes the different ways to take personal inventory: spot-check inventory, taken any time during the day when experiencing the daily ups and downs; at the end of the day, reviewing what happened during that day; and when alone or with a sponsor, carefully reviewing progress since the last meeting. This is not intended to be a burden, rather a daily habit and an integral part of life. “The emphasis on inventory is heavy only because a great many of us have never really acquired the habit of accurate self-appraisal” (Wilson, 1953:89). This is something to grow into. Wilson (1953:91) states that the notion is progress, not perfection, but progress has to be made, “the idea that we can be possessively loving of a few, can ignore the many, and can continue to fear or hate *anybody*, has to be abandoned, if only a little at a time”. This step is

ultimately about moving from self-centredness to a life of kindness, love and justice focused on those we dislike or those who did not feature before. When someone is harmed, it is then important to promptly admit the wrong we have done. Taking inventory is about being honest with ourselves, reflecting on our motives and how we reacted. Wilson (1953:94-95) states that spotting, admitting and correcting these flaws is the essence of building character and a good life:

An honest regret for harms done, a genuine gratitude for blessings received, and a willingness to try for better things tomorrow will be the permanent assets we shall seek. Having so considered our day, not omitting to take due note of things well done, and having searched our hearts with neither fear nor favour, we can truly thank God for the blessings we have received and sleep in good conscience. (Wilson, 1953:94-95)

Rohr (2011:88) highlights the role the Spirit should play in this step as “a Loving Inner Consciousness that we all share, but we have not been taught to rely upon or to allow to guide us”. There is the tendency to perceive the Spirit as the reward for a “good life” or as present during distinctive experiences. There is a divide between the secular and sacred and in certain parts of life the Spirit is disregarded. “We severely limited the Spirit’s available working hours, edged God’s defending Presence out of its pivotal role for us” (Rohr, 2011:88). This is why *Step Ten* is significant for a new way of life, taking personal inventory as a daily awareness of the presence of the Spirit, her guidance and when we deviate. This step forms the habit of constant reflection (Hudson, 2007:111). However, the focus is not to determine all your rights and wrongs, it is a way to be fully present.

Disenchantment, the division between the secular and the sacred, is another missional spirituality challenge. A disenchanted world is a world where the Spirit’s presence is limited to specific times, spaces and people. Rohr (2011:89) states that the purpose of religion is to eliminate the divide, to reconnect us to God, to ourselves, and one another. God is active in the world, in all spheres of life, and invites us to join in. The formation of a missional spirituality is about being aware of the Spirit’s presence and to be faithfully present. *Step Ten* cultivates this awareness. “Faithful presence is to participate in God’s life-giving mission with a deep awareness that God transforms life where his people are faithfully present” (Niemandt, 2019:50). Sparks (*et al.*, 2014:46) describes faithful presence as connected to your concrete life and God giving you what you need to be formed to live a faithful life. “God comes to us disguised as our life!” (Rohr, 2011:103).

The tenth step, in the formation of a missional spirituality, can thus be described as cultivating a deep awareness of the Spirits presence in your life and being faithfully present.

4.4.11 Step Eleven – Discernment

Step Eleven of the A.A. programme is as follows: “Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.” This step is about connecting to God and discerning His will (see Romans 8:23).

Prayer and meditation are the *Twelve Steps* programme’s chief means of conscious contact with God (Wilson, 1953:96). This step appears to be abstract and not necessary for dealing with the practical aspects of life, yet A.A. members have come to realise that without prayer and meditation, their minds, emotions and intuitions are deprived of vitally needed support (Wilson, 1953:97). The reflection, or self-examination, of *Step Ten*, should be linked to prayer and meditation. According to Wilson (1953:98) when these practices are interwoven, “the result is an unshakeable foundation for life”. A.A. suggests that members, uncertain where to begin, should start by reading the following prayer in the form of meditation – reading it several times, slowly, searching for the deeper meaning of each phrase and idea and dropping any resistance (Wilson, 1953:99):

Lord, make me a channel of thy peace— that where there is hatred, I may bring love— that where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness— that where there is discord, I may bring harmony— that where there is error, I may bring truth— that where there is doubt, I may bring faith— that where there is despair, I may bring hope— that where there are shadows, I may bring light— that where there is sadness, I may bring joy. Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort than to be comforted— to understand, than to be understood— to love, than to be loved. For it is by self-forgetting that one finds. It is by forgiving that one is forgiven. It is by dying that one awakens to Eternal Life. Amen. (Wilson, 1953:99)

Meditation is essentially a practical matter. Looking at where we are at the moment and then at what might be, and moving closer to this ideal by improving “our conscious contact with God, with His grace, wisdom, and love” (Wilson, 1953:101). Prayer includes meditation and involves, as seen in the second part of *Step Eleven*, knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out. Prayer should not be focused on *our* needs as we perceive them, but

rather on God's will and intention for our lives. "We ask simply that throughout the day God place in us the best understanding of His will that we can have for that day, and that we be given the grace by which we may carry it out" (Wilson, 1953:102). A.A. members testify that they have in their attempt for conscious contact with God experienced strength that was not their own, wisdom beyond their own, and peace amid difficult circumstances.

Step Eleven describes *why* we pray and meditate and *what* we pray and meditate. Simply put, praying is about talking to God and meditation is about listening to God to improve our conscious contact with God (Hudson, 2007:118-119). Praying and meditation are about connecting to God. Prayer and meditation are about becoming aware of God's will and then to begin to live and act, through the power of the Spirit, in a way that is in line with God's will (Hudson, 2007:120-121). Prayer and meditation are about discerning God's will. Rohr (2011:96) remarks that true prayer is not a way to change God (God's will), but to change you (being willing to let God change you). It is thus important to also get the *who* right, "who is doing the praying? You or God in you?" (Rohr, 2011:97).

This conscious contact with God can then be described as discernment. Discerning where and how God is working in your life and the world around you and how to join in. "Basically prayer is an exercise in *divine participation* – you opting in and God always there!" (Rohr, 2011:97). Merton (1958:211) explains this divine participation as a creative act:

For instance that the will of God is not a "fate" to which we submit but a creative act in our life producing something absolutely new (or fail to do so) something hitherto unforeseen by the laws and established patterns. Our cooperation (seeking first the Kingdom of God) consists not solely in conforming to laws but in opening our wills out to this creative act which must be retrieved in and by us—by the will of God. (Merton, 1958:211)

God is actively involved in his creation, through creative actions, and we are invited to join in this creative act. "We can only follow God in mission when we join in with the Spirit, discerning what the Spirit is up to and participating in the life of the Trinity" (Niemandt, 2019:112-113). *Step Eleven* is then important in the formation of missional spirituality as discernment is the first step in mission. Consciously connecting to God to determine what God is up to and where God invites us to join in. This step orientates our life, *lex orandi est lex vivendi*, "how you pray determines how you finally live" (Rohr, 2011:100).

The eleventh step, in the formation of a missional spirituality, can thus be described as discerning what God is up to and being willing to join in.

4.4.12 *Step Twelve* – Missional *metanoia*

Step Twelve of the A.A. programme is as follows: “Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.” This step is about being transformed and the consequences of this transformation (see Mark 5:19).

The last step of A.A. is the result of the previous steps and described as having had a spiritual awakening. Wilson (1953:106-107) notes that there are many definitions for what this means, but ultimately it is an A.A. member being able to “do, feel, and believe that which he could not do before on his unaided strength and resources alone”. Working the *Twelve Steps* resulted in a readiness to be transformed. “He has been granted a gift which amounts to a new state of consciousness and being” (Wilson, 1953:107). Because of this new state of consciousness and being A.A. members feel compelled to carry the message to others who suffer. To share what has happened to them, to encourage, to guide and to support. And their greatest reward lies in being able to truly help others, “to watch the eyes of men and women open with wonder as they move from darkness into light...” (Wilson, 1953:110). A.A. members do not want or expect anything in return – they experience the divine paradox of giving.

The second part of this step is that all the previous steps should then be practised “in all our affairs”. After first completing the *Twelve Steps*, some A.A. members resort to only practising one or two of the steps, however, to sustain this new way of life, all of the twelve steps should be practised in daily life. The A.A. programme helps people to be transformed and to lead a new way of life, but it is a lifelong process of developing new habits and continuously redirect instincts and desires. Committing to this new way of life guides members in all their affairs and helps them to address challenges. Wilson (1953:114) notes that well-grounded A.A. members seem to have the ability, “by God’s grace, to take these troubles in stride and turn them into demonstrations of faith”. Through the A.A. programme members found that true ambition is different than what they thought, Wilson (1953:124-125) states:

Service, gladly rendered, obligations squarely met, troubles well accepted or solved with God's help, the knowledge that at home or in the world outside we are partners in a common effort, the well-understood fact that in God's sight all human beings are important, the proof that love freely given surely brings a full return, the certainty that we are no longer isolated and alone in self-constructed prisons, the surety that we

need no longer be square pegs in round holes but can fit and belong in God's scheme of things – these are the permanent and legitimate satisfactions of right living for which no amount of pomp and circumstance, no heap of material possessions, could possibly be substitutes. (Wilson, 1953:124-125)

Step Twelve is thus about a spiritual awakening, compassion for others, and to practice the *Twelve Steps* as principles of life. The spiritual awakening is different for everyone. It is not the end product or qualification you receive after completing the steps. Hudson (2007:129) describes it as “coming alive in some area of your life where previously there was a deadness”. Rohr (112) describes it as a vital spiritual experience – when we are unbound and God is unbound. “We all seem to bind up both God and one another inside of our explanations, our preferences, and even our theologies” (Rohr, 2011:111). The spiritual awakening is about liberation and becoming whole. Sometimes it can happen in an instant, as Wilson described his spiritual awakening (see above), however, usually, it happens over time. Rohr (2011:114) affirms that “we cannot programme grace and mercy”, but a programme can provide the context and opportunity and get us going. The A.A. programme is a programme that has put the lives of many in the way of the Spirit's transformation.

The further consequence of the *Twelve Steps* is a deep compassion for others. Rohr (2011:106) points out that the *Twelve Steps* has an outward focus from the beginning, a shortcoming of many churches and training institutions:

If they did not turn outward early, they tended never to turn outward, and their dominant concern became personal self-development, spiritual consumerism, church as “more attendance” at things, or to use the common phrase used among Christians “deepening my relationship with Jesus”... Until people's basic egocentricity is radically exposed, revealed for what it is, and foundationally redirected, much religion becomes occupied with rearranging the deck chairs on a titanic cruise ship, cruising with isolated passengers, each maintaining his or her personal programme for happiness, while the whole ship is sinking. (Rohr, 2011:106)

The *Twelve Steps* programme is focused on serving others, this is not an optional extra, this is the only way to be truly transformed. This is the only to rid ourselves of our self-centredness, the root of our problems. And we cannot comprehend or truly experience God's grace until we give it away, pass it on.

The *Twelve Steps* should then be practised as principles of life. It should be implemented in all aspects of our life, in financial affairs, in relationships, in business dealings, in sexual conduct, and so forth (Hudson, 2007:133). It is about being continuously formed and transformed by the Spirit.

The transformation of the Spirit, the spiritual awakening, can be described as a missional *metanoia*. A vital spiritual experience that redirects your life and important in the formation of a missional spirituality as it is the prerequisite and means of participating in the *missio Dei*.

The twelfth step, in the formation of a missional spirituality, can thus be described as a missional *metanoia*, transformation for the sake of others.

This concludes the example of a programme for the formation of a missional spirituality by utilising the Twelve Steps programme of A.A. as a model. This is also the last step of the Presencing Institute's process of developing a prototype before the prototype will be tested. Testing the prototype does not form part of this research.

4.5 Conclusion

The third research question can now be answered: *What innovation can be designed to address the DRC's theological education impasse?*

This chapter used the theoretical framework from phase 2 (see chapter 3) as a basis to respond to the DRC's theological education impasse and to design an intervention to address the action problem: *How can theological education assist in forming missional leaders in the DRC?* The development of this intervention focused on the first part of the design cycle by utilising the process for construction of prototypes designed by the Presencing Institute. This chapter thus described the research presuppositions, made a proposal and created a prototype example.

The research presupposed that theological education that can assist in forming missional leaders in the DRC needs to be a process of holistic formation that takes place over time. The current theological education cannot be regarded as holistic theological education. The main impediment is determined as the lack of a spiritual formation programme as part of the DRC's theological education. Missional leaders require a missional spirituality. Theological education that intends this type of formation needs innovation. The adaptive challenge of missional transformation calls for innovative practices. The patterns of the past have to be broken, it is not enough to reflect on and learn from the past, this challenge can only be

responded to by bringing something new forth into the world, to learn from the emerging future. Scharmer describes this as presencing.

The research proposed a possible programme for spiritual formation by attempting to employ the practice of presencing, suspending the voice of judgement, letting go and letting come. The surprising finding of this research is that the *Twelve Steps* programme of the A.A. fellowship can be utilised as a model to design a programme for spiritual transformation as part of holistic theological education in the formation of a missional spirituality. Creating a holistic theological education, not a mere academic qualification and a skill set for ministry, but a vital spiritual experience to form a missional spirituality. The *Twelve Steps* programme has missional characteristics and values and provides the appropriate context and relationships within this context for spiritual formation to take place. It is a model that can be used to place students, congregational leaders and lecturers lives in the way of the Spirit's transformation.

An example of a programme was created by using the *Twelve Steps* programme of the A.A. fellowship as a model. The prototype example can be summarised as follows:

Step One – Holy dissatisfaction: Realising the need for transformation and our powerlessness in this process.

Step Two – *Missio Dei*: Surrendering to the *missio Dei's* restorative power.

Step Three – Powerlessness: Being powerless and choosing to be open to the Spirit's transformation.

Step Four – Missional vocation: Discerning your missional nature and calling (vocation).

Step Five – Cultivating community: Cultivating community through a shared vulnerability and dependence on God.

Step Six – A way of life: Being open to a way of life in the Spirit.

Step Seven – Bold humility: Asking God for transformation.

Step Eight – Formed *in* community: Community with others.

Step Nine – Formed *for* community: Community for others.

Step Ten – Faithfully present: Cultivating a deep awareness of the Spirit's presence in your life and being faithfully present.

Step Eleven – Discernment: Discerning what God is up to and being willing to join in.

Step Twelve – Missional *metanoia*: Transformation for the sake of others.

With this chapter the third research aim is addressed: *To explore, decide, plan and create an innovation to address the DRC's theological education impasse.* This is the handover moment, the process is ready for phase 4, testing and evaluating the prototype. Phase 4 is not part of this research and the next chapter will focus on the research findings and conclusion.

Chapter 5

Findings & Conclusion

Chapter 5 is the final chapter in this research and will focus on pointing out the research findings and draw conclusions. This chapter will thus attempt to answer the fourth research question: *What will change in the DRC's theological education when this innovation is implemented?* and address the fourth research aim: *To envisage the preferred future of the DRC's theological education with the implementation of the innovation.* The second part of this chapter will make suggestions for the implementation of the prototype and attempt to answer the fifth research question: *Can this innovation help to re-imagine theological education in the formation of missional leaders in the DRC?* and address the fifth research aim: *To formulate expectations of the innovation to help re-imagine theological education in the formation of missional leaders in the DRC.*

This chapter aims to point out the contribution of this research for a holistic theological education in the formation of missional leaders in the DRC, but also to set the stage for further research. The research cycle used allows for the investigation of implementation, and the testing and evaluation of the prototype, but this falls outside the scope of the current project. This is an area for future research and can and is an area for future research contribute to the formation of missional spirituality fundamental to the formation of missional leaders.

The important research findings and contributions will be described below and then a few suggestions for implementation of the prototype will be identified.

5.1 Research findings

The DRC is a denomination in the process of missional transformation. This research explored an important aspect of this process by considering the DRC's theological education. The research methodology used in this research, *Research Strategy for Missional Transformation* (Niemandt, *et al.*, 2018), utilised a missional research cycle. It must be noted that the process and research findings underline the appropriateness of this particular methodology. The research methodology is a dynamic process that can take place over several years and this research utilised the first three phases of this dynamic process (see Figure 5.1).



Figure 5.1.1: Missional Research Cycle (Niemandt et al., 2018:5)

To point out the important findings of this research, the implementation of the missional research cycle will be described briefly.

The researcher recognised a disruption in the DRC’s theological education and addressed the curatorium at the University of Pretoria (the problem-owner). The researcher acknowledged and described the pain of the problem-owner (phase 1). The researcher then explored the disruption further by attempting to discern what is going on ‘underneath the surface’ of the DRC’s theological education and clarified the question (phase 2). After gaining important insights and realising the nature of the challenge, the researcher attempted to

develop a prototype to address the challenge (phase 3). The research findings of each phase can be seen below.

5.1.1 Phase 1 – Findings

The second chapter focused on the first phase of the research cycle, articulating the pain of the problem owner, and described the action problem. This chapter attempted to answer the first research question: *What is the DRC's theological education impasse and the disruption experienced by the problem-owner*, and to address the first research aim: *To acknowledge the DRC's theological education impasse and the disruption experienced by the problem-owner with a denomination in the process of transforming its ecclesiology*.

The first phase thus described the A_component, the actual situation, the D_component, the desired situation, and hence the pain of the problem owner.

A_component:

The DRC's congregational leaders go through an extensive programme of theological education to prepare them for ministry. The programme consists of at least six years studying theology at a university, six years of church specific education and continued ministry development after the completion of formal studies. *Despite this comprehensive programme, congregational leaders are not equipped for a missional ministry and for the missional transformation of the DRC.*

Regulation 11 of the DRC Church Order (2019) gives a comprehensive description of all the different aspects regarding the theological education and legitimation of congregational leaders. A few aspects can be highlighted:

- *The local curatorium* – Although the formal theological education of DRC students mainly takes place at one of the three Universities as described in the DRC Church Order, the holistic formation of theological students is the responsibility of the local curatorium and the local curatorium should therefore be the leading promoters of theological education that forms missional leaders.
- *Theological lecturers* – Theological lecturers are not trained to be missional leaders and are thus not able to train students to be missional leaders. Theological lecturers require missional leadership skills and a missional

lifestyle. The formation of a missional spirituality is equally important for theological lecturers, congregational leaders and students.

- *Theological education requirements* – Theological education requirements as described in the DRC Church Order have to be re-imagined. Missional formation requires a missionally oriented curriculum and the appropriate methodology. The current theological education is mainly focused on academic excellence, with sporadic practical training and the formation of spirituality appears to be implicit. Academic qualifications alone are not sufficient for becoming a congregational leader.
- *Students' practical year* – Students' practical year is mainly focused on congregational experience and a congregational leader as a mentor. It should be considered that practical training for missional leaders should be focused on the communities outside of their congregations and training should be expanded to not only include these areas but to focus on these areas. It should also be considered that there are other possible mentors 'outside' the church that can share their faith experience and guide young congregational leaders to work and serve focused on the world 'outside' the church. Missional theology does not use a top-down approach and relies on vulnerability and being open to where and through whom God is working in the world.
- *Licensing exam* – The research showed the significance of assessment as it demonstrates what the curatorium and theological lecturers deem as important. It is essential to create a sound framework or matrix to determine a student's readiness for missional leadership, as this is a different form of leadership. This framework should also demonstrate what matters most in the process of becoming a missional congregational leader in the DRC. Hence, the formation of a missional spirituality should be fundamental to this framework.

The current specifications of the DRC Church Order (2019) do not pay attention to the training of DRC congregational leaders as missional leaders for missional transformation.

The DRC's theological education takes place in partnership with academic institutions. This research described the theological education that takes place at the Faculty of Theology and Religion at the University of Pretoria where the problem owner is situated. Two important findings can be highlighted:

- *Academic excellence* – The Faculty of Theology and Religion's main focus is academic excellence, pass rates are of utmost importance and the output of high-quality research. This compromises the holistic formation of students, as the focus falls on one area and aspect of learning. The Faculty, although in various processes of transformation, is not in a process of missional transformation – and thus not specifically focused on training DRC congregational leaders for missional transformation.
- *Diverse environment* – It should be noted that studying at a university is a great opportunity for the DRC in her process of missional transformation. The Faculty, with students from more than 33 denominations create a diverse environment. DRC students can engage with students from different denominations, languages, cultures, and learn more about the world outside of their homogeneous church environments.

The current theological education at the Faculty cannot be regarded as missional formation.

The DRC's theological education also has a church specific education component. The purpose of church specific education is the spiritual formation of students and to acquire practical skills, some of which are denomination specific. Two important findings can be highlighted:

- *Learning areas* – Church specific education claims to be focused on spiritual formation and the acquiring of practical skills for ministry, but the content and design does not show intentionality when it comes to a missional spirituality or practical skills for missional transformation. The programme predominantly focuses on knowledge about theology and congregational ministry and acquiring skills for congregational activities 'inside' the church. There is a lack of intentional formation of students' spirituality and missional spirituality.

- *Assessment* – The content, design and especially the assessment of church specific education does not attest to an attempt to develop missional leaders, the formation of a missional spirituality or give sufficient attention to the missional transformation of congregations.

The current theological education of the DRC to a great extent still reflects the needs of the church decades ago. Re-imagining theological education that is missional formation is about more than simply making a few adjustments and renewing the current curriculum and education programme. *The DRC's missional ecclesiology demands re-imagining an alternative theological education model.*

D_component:

The DRC realised that being church means being missional. A missional ecclesiology implies missional DRC congregations – the DRC desires to be a church that does not exist for herself. The focus is thus shifted from a church as a formal structure, offices, buildings, and congregational activities to the church as a movement participating in the *missio Dei*, focused on the community and inspiring and equipping members to live missional lives. The current theological education is focused on training congregational leaders for the former. *The missional church requires missional leaders.*

The significance of missional leaders lies not in the leader's authority, but in a leader being the first person to be transformed and to live a new way of life. Missional leadership is more about *being* than *knowing* or *doing*. Being missional leaders means living a missional lifestyle, inspiring others to live a missional lifestyle, being open to the Spirit's guidance and transformation, and being a guide in the process of transformation. *Being a missional leader requires a missional spirituality.*

Theological education plays a crucial role in the formation of congregational leaders and requires a curriculum and methodology that is missional formation. It requires an academic programme with the necessary content and point of departure (curriculum) but also with the applicable presentation and practices (methodology). *This type of theological education has to be intentional in all areas of learning – holistic formation.*

The pain of the problem owner:

The pain of the problem owner can be seen in the discrepancy between the A_component and the D_component, the great responsibility of re-evaluating theological education to align with a missional ecclesiology. Added to this is the challenge of lecturers and congregational

leaders who do not buy into a missional ecclesiology and the impact it has on the DRC's theological education. *This is the DRC's theological education impasse.*

It was however determined that the re-evaluation of theological education does not merely depend on a new curriculum or the buy-in of lecturers and congregational leaders. It calls on students, current congregational leaders and lecturers to be part of a process of a transformation that takes place over time and is wholly dependent on the Spirit. Theological education is not about passing grades or gaining a degree, it is about being part of a holistic process of formation, cultivating a missional spirituality and being equipped to serve God's mission. *It requires a missional metanoia.*

Theological education should therefore create the appropriate context for this transformation to take place. Hence, the action problem was stated as: *How can theological education assist in forming missional leaders in the DRC?*

5.1.2 Phase 2 – Findings

The third chapter focused on the second phase of the research cycle, clarifying the question, and expanded on the action problem. This chapter attempted to answer the second research question: *What is going on 'underneath the surface' of the DRC's theological education?* and to address the second research aim: *To describe, interpret, propose, and respond to what is going on 'underneath the surface' of the DRC's theological education.*

The second phase used Osmer's (2008:3) practical theological interpretation to describe what is going on?; why is this going on?; what ought to be going on?; and how might we respond?

What is going on?

The General Curatorium's response to the DRC's change in ecclesiology and the proposed changes for theological education is described in the *Framework for Missional Ministry Development*. This document shows that there is already some progress made in this process of re-imagining and transforming theological education. *It opens the way to design and apply a more appropriate pedagogy embedded in the whole life of the denomination, and serving the missional existence of the church.*

First, the document proposes the broadening of the offices, allowing more members with a missional calling to become involved in officially sanctioned ministry. The broadening of the offices will support ministry for a growing diverse context, make theological education more affordable and thus more accessible, and enabling a presbytery or synod to be a part of

ministry development for their specific contexts. *This is a very promising approach to address the need for missional ministry to be context-sensitive, a church that is focused on the community.*

Second, the document describes the holistic training and development premises (pedagogy). Theological education focused on the different areas of learning and that forms knowledge, but also attitudes, skills and habits (capacities). Following the rhetorical structure focused on the different aspects of learning: personal development (*ethos*), understanding the message (*logos*) and compassion with the context (*pathos*). And acknowledging the different learning contexts. The outcomes of holistic theological education are then described in the *Framework for Missional Capacities*. *This document gives important guidelines and ideals for missional ministry development.*

There is, however, not yet a model, syllabus or curriculum in place for the formation of missional congregational leaders. Due to the DRC's embrace of missional ecclesiology, the General Curatorium responded to the emerging change in the DRC towards a more missional ecclesiology by making adjustments and proposing changes to the DRC's theological education. The broadening of the offices, and the introduction of different qualifications to serve the needs of the church, can surely be regarded as important adaptive changes. However, in terms of a model, syllabus and holistic curriculum, the changes are, *at best, only technical and need more research, reflection and adaptive solutions.*

Why is this going on?

The DRC's process of missional transformation is not primarily about the restructuring or reorganising of the church, it is about rediscovering the nature and calling of the church. This involves a process of deep change and such a profound process calls for the appropriate leadership. *Missional transformation is inherently an adaptive challenge and calls for missional leadership.*

The formation of missional leaders for the missional transformation of congregations is the adaptive challenge confronting the General Curatorium. It is vital to address this challenge appropriately. The most common cause of failure is when an adaptive challenge is treated as a technical problem. *Although this challenge has technical aspects, it is fundamentally an adaptive challenge.*

The adjustments and proposals the General Curatorium made denote continuous (technical) change – the old systems, structures and ways of doing things are still recognisable, the change is a process of gradual innovation, there is continuity with the way it was, it is not trivial and important for the maintenance of the system and the current knowledge

and skills suffice to manage these amendments. *The General Curatorium took brave steps and embarked on a brave process of change, but as of yet only addressed pressing technical problems concerning the formation of missional leaders.*

Adaptive change is uncomfortable deep change and the General Curatorium is also faced with this reality. Adaptive change will be painful and bring about the experience of loss – shedding certain entrenched ways. Adaptive change is necessary, but fortunately, adaptive change is about a new capacity to thrive. The focus should not be on what will be lost, but the elements that the church, should hold on to – a rediscovery of the nature and calling of the church. *The General Curatorium has not yet addressed the adaptive challenge concerning the formation of missional leaders.*

The General Curatorium is responding to an adaptive challenge by only addressing the technical problems and drawing on the theory of adaptive challenges, the reason might be that the General Curatorium is confronted with:

- a challenge that is outside their current repertoire of skills;
- their competence being questioned;
- decline or change, affecting the whole system;
- deep change in values and attitudes;
- solutions being critical for the future;

Although there will always be certain technical elements, reorganising theological education is not adequate when the fundamental nature of the challenge has to be addressed – the formation of missional leaders. The General Curatorium is confronted with an adaptive challenge that will demand institutional involvement, a revisiting of traditional conventions in terms of partnerships where theological education are delivered, and more creative ways to attend to practise formation – *a challenge that requires innovation.*

What should be going on?

The adaptive challenge calls for holistic theological education that forms missional leaders. This challenge requires an innovation that forms a missional spirituality. *Missional spirituality is fundamental to theological education and fundamental to the formation of missional leaders.*

A missional spirituality can be described as a personal transformation *for the sake of others*. The theological foundations or core characteristics of missional spirituality is connected to God's missional character – Trinitarian, incarnational, *kenotic*, and

transformative. Accordingly, missional spirituality can be understood as relational, formed *in* community and *for* the community; embodiment, formed holistically and shaping all aspects of life and living; powerlessness, formed by embracing vulnerability; and transformative, the prerequisite and means of participating in the *missio Dei*. Spirituality is not an abstract concept, detached from life, it ultimately gives shape and meaning to life. *Spirituality then should be formed intentionally.*

Spirituality's place in theology has to be restored. Theological education forming missional leaders should be holistic formation. The pedagogical model for missional ministry development, as processed, designed and proposed by the General Curatorium in the *Framework for Missional Ministry Development*, is a pedagogical model for holistic theological education. This model is thus appropriate for the formation of missional leaders. Although this pedagogical model, together with the *Framework of Missional Capacities*, is an important technical change, *it is not enough to address the adaptive challenge.*

This research proposed a syllabus, albeit a framework, for the holistic formation of missional leaders by re-framing and expanding on the learning areas. The syllabus includes:

- A minimum knowledge base focused on becoming life-long learners and emphasising the importance of theological integration and reflection.
- Pass-on-able habits and skills, focused on forming habits that are formative and habits that are pass-on-able to form others.
- Attitudes and beliefs, focused on creating a space, opening or opportunity for formation to take place and focused on relationships within this context.

The content of theological education should be formed by the central theme of mission, the focus of theological education directed to the community and the consequence of theological education the formation of a missional spirituality.

Participating in the *missio Dei* is not an activity or mere pragmatic undertaking, it is a way of life. Theological education that is missional formation cannot be achieved by re-organisation or updating old systems, it is a new way of formation focused on cultivating this way of life, forming a missional spirituality. *The General Curatorium should thus implement a syllabus for holistic theological education that forms a missional spirituality.*

How might we respond?

The DRC's process of missional transformation calls for the transformation of students, congregational leaders and lecturers – a missional *metanoia*. People tend to maintain

systems and prefer to address situations with technical adjustments since it does not affect them fundamentally. *This is an important shift in focus to make to address the adaptive challenge of forming missional leaders in the DRC.*

This research suggests the way to guide the DRC through this process of deep change is by designing an innovation. *A programme for the intentional formation of missional leaders by designing a programme for spiritual transformation and the formation of a missional spirituality.*

5.1.3 Phase 3 – Findings

The fourth chapter focused on the third phase of the research cycle, developing a prototype, designing an innovation to address the action problem. This chapter attempted to answer the third research question: *What innovation can be designed to address the DRC's theological education impasse?* and to address the third research aim: *To explore, decide, plan and create an innovation to address the DRC's theological education impasse.*

The third phase used the Presencing Institutes process for constructing prototypes to design an innovation. The different stages of constructing a prototype were addressed by describing the research presuppositions, making a proposal and creating a prototype example.

Presuppositions:

The research presupposed that theological education that can assist in forming missional leaders in the DRC needs to be a process of holistic formation that takes place over time. The current theological education cannot be regarded as holistic theological education. *The main impediment is determined as the lack of a spiritual formation programme as part of the DRC's theological education.*

Missional leaders require a missional spirituality. Theological education that intends this type of formation needs innovation. The adaptive challenge of missional transformation calls for innovative practices. And what Scharmer describes as presencing. The patterns of the past have to be broken, it is not enough to reflect on and learn from the past, *this challenge can only be responded to by bringing something new forth into the world, to learn from the emerging future.*

Proposal:

The research proposed a possible programme for spiritual formation by attempting to employ the practice of presencing, suspending the voice of judgement, letting go and letting come. The surprising finding of this research is that the *Twelve Steps* programme of the A.A. fellowship can be utilised as a model to design a programme for spiritual transformation as part of holistic theological education in the formation of a missional spirituality. *The Twelve Steps programme provides an opportunity for innovation.*

This programme can assist in creating a holistic theological education, not a mere academic qualification and a skill set for ministry, but a vital spiritual experience to form a missional spirituality. The *Twelve Steps* programme has missional characteristics and values and provides the appropriate context and relationships within this context for spiritual formation to take place. It is a model that can be used to place students, congregational leaders and lecturers lives in the way of the Spirit's transformation. *This model can be utilised to design an innovation to address the action problem*

Prototype:

An example of a programme was created by using the *Twelve Steps* programme of the A.A. fellowship as a model. The prototype example can be summarised as follows:

Step One – Holy dissatisfaction: Realising the need for transformation and our powerlessness in this process.

Step Two – *Missio Dei*: Surrendering to the *missio Dei*'s restorative power.

Step Three – Powerlessness: Being powerless and choosing to be open to the Spirit's transformation.

Step Four – Missional vocation: Discerning your missional nature and calling (vocation).

Step Five – Cultivating community: Cultivating community through a shared vulnerability and dependence on God.

Step Six – A way of life: Being open to a way of life in the Spirit.

Step Seven – Bold humility: Asking God for transformation.

Step Eight – Formed *in* community: Community with others.

Step Nine – Formed *for* community: Community for others.

Step Ten – Faithfully present: Cultivating a deep awareness of the Spirit's presence in your life and being faithfully present.

Step Eleven – Discernment: Discerning what God is up to and being willing to join in.

Step Twelve – Missional *metanoia*: Transformation for the sake of others.

The fourth research question can thus be answered: *What will change in the DRC's theological education when this innovation is implemented?* This prototype example presents an innovation that can address the adaptive challenge facing the General Curatorium. This innovation assists in the formation of missional leaders by creating a vital context for the formation of a missional spirituality and a missional *metanoia*. Theological education can thus utilise this prototype as part of holistic theological education. The formation of a missional spirituality is fundamental to missional transformation. Forming a missional spirituality equips congregational leaders for missional transformation. The fourth research aim is thus also addressed: *To envisage the preferred future of the DRC's theological education with the implementation of the innovation.*

5.2 Prototype suggestions

Suggestions for the prototype implementation is focused on phase 4 of the missional research cycle, testing and evaluation the prototype, and is thus focused on setting the stage for future research. A few notes for testing and evaluating the prototype will be described here by referring to three important aspects for creating a culture of innovation and biblical imagination as described by Niemandt (2019:160): Flat open structures; embracing liminality; spontaneity and improvisation. These aspects will be briefly described below.

5.2.1 Flat open structures

Niemandt (2019:160) states that creativity and innovation flourish in flat open structures “where there are little or no hierarchal limitations and where input is not evaluated in terms of position of power”. The concept of flat open structures is critical for this innovation. The current congregational leaders, curatorium members and theological lecturers are not equipped to form students as missional leaders. They too require a programme of spiritual transformation for the formation of a missional spirituality. The innovation created based on the *Twelve Steps* programme of the A.A is a programme that functions as a flat open structure. The *Twelve Steps* programme is not presented by a trained professional and anyone can work the steps without any previous qualifications. The only requirement is a desire to change or a holy dissatisfaction. This programme thus presents the unique opportunity for students, congregational leaders, curatorium members and theological lectures to undertake the journey

together. Within the programme no distinction is made between members on any grounds, there are only members further along the journey that can act as mentors (the A.A. programme's sponsor). It can also be considered to undertake this journey in local congregations and with others in the community.

5.2.2 Embracing liminality

Liminality should be embraced as it is “birthplaces of a new future” (Niemandt, 2019:160). The concept of liminality is important for innovations. The tension between what is and what should or can be is important for the formation of missional leaders in the DRC. A theological education programme that is perceived as fulfilled after six years of studying denotes that the formation is now complete and congregational leaders just have to be kept up to date with new ministry aids and theological insights by attending continuous ministry development courses. The *Twelve Steps* programme of A.A. makes it clear that it is a lifelong process of becoming who you are and can thus never be seen as completed. It is a holistic process of continuous formation dependent on the Spirit. This programme embraces liminality.

Embracing liminality also denotes that transforming the theological education programme does not have to start with a total rewrite of the curriculum, as it should always be in the process of becoming. Though it is important to focus on developing DRC leaders with a missional spirituality, leaders that comprehend and embrace the ever-present reality of liminality. The curriculum will in this way be transformed from the inside out.

5.2.3 Spontaneity and improvisation

Niemandt (2019:161) states that God's people “play their part in a great divine story”. Spontaneity and improvisation acknowledge the unpredictable nature of the Spirit and the invitation to be a part of the great divine story. The strict requirements of the DRC's current theological education with specific outcomes and certain assessment methods appears to limit the awareness of the Spirit. The *Twelve Steps* programme of A.A. does not comprise a strict programme or a course that has to be completed. The programme provides guiding principles and do not have a timeframe connected to the working of the steps. The programme aims to create a context where transformation can take place and emphasises the relationships in this context. Working the steps is dependent on and open to the Spirit's guidance. This programme for spiritual transformation is an innovation that thus relies on spontaneity and improvisation.

These three aspects for creating a culture of innovation are important specifically for this research innovation and should be considered when testing and evaluating the prototype. These three aspects are important guiding principles for this innovation to help re-imagine theological education. The researcher and problem-owner should also be aware of other suggestions arising in the process of implementation.

With these three aspects the fifth research question is answered: *Can this innovation help to re-imagine theological education in the formation of missional leaders in the DRC?* and the fifth research aim is addressed: *To formulate expectations of the innovation to help re-imagine theological education in the formation of missional leaders in the DRC.*

This concludes the research questions and aims.

5.3 Conclusion

Missional transformation is a comprehensive process that profoundly affects the DRC and requires a process of deep and painful change. The DRC as a denomination is not prepared for this challenge. The DRC's leadership is not equipped for this challenge. And the changes made to the DRC Church Order and theological education seem to have little effect in addressing this challenge. The DRC appears to be powerless.

Fortunately, this is the best position to be in, in the process of missional transformation as this process is wholly dependent on the Spirit. Although the DRC has to make important pragmatic and technical changes in this process, missional transformation cannot be engineered. Missional transformation is not about *knowing* or *doing*, but about *being*. It requires a missional *metanoia*.

This research described a programme of spiritual transformation, a missional *metanoia* that can assist in forming missional leaders in the DRC. This programme is, however, a lifelong process of becoming and focused on creating the right context for transformation to take place. The programme is grounded in a missional spirituality – formed *in* community and *for* the community, formed holistically and shaping all aspects of life and living, formed by embracing vulnerability, and the prerequisite and means of participating in the *missio Dei*.

Missional transformation requires that the DRC work the steps! Newcomers working the steps should begin with the first three, forming the basis for transformation:

Step One – Admitting powerlessness and that this challenge is not manageable.

Step Two – Believe that a Power greater than the DRC could restore this denomination to its nature and calling.

Step Three – Make a decision to turn the DRC’s functioning over to a transforming God.

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Interviews & communication

- Dr André Bartlett, the head of *Excelsus*, University of Pretoria, Zoom interview, 22 April 2020.
- Dr Frederick Marais, head of the curatorium, Stellenbosch University, telephone interview, 17 August 2020.
- Dr Hanré Janse van Rensburg, senior lecturer in New Testament and Related Literature, University of Pretoria, telephone interview, 28 August 2020.
- Dr Jacques Beukes, senior lecturer in Practical Theology, University of Pretoria, telephone interview, 12 August 2020.
- Dr Johan Nel, head of the curatorium, University of the Free State, email sent on 31 August 2020.

Dr Kobus Myburgh, head of the curatorium, University of Pretoria, *Zoom* interview, 8 June 2020.

Dr Tanya van Wyk, senior lecturer in Systematic and Historical Theology, University of Pretoria, telephone interview, 6 August 2020.

Prof Danie Veldsman, head of Department Systematic and Historical Theology, University of Pretoria, *Zoom* interview, 27 August 2020.

Prof Dirk Human, head of Old Testament and Hebrew Scriptures, University of Pretoria, email sent on 27 August 2020.

Prof Ernst van Eck, deputy dean and head of the Department New Testament and Related Literature, University of Pretoria, telephone interview, 5 August 2020.

Prof Jaco Beyers, associate professor in Religion Studies, University of Pretoria, email sent on 8 August 2020.

Prof Johan van der Merwe, associate professor in Systematic and Historical Theology, University of Pretoria, telephone interview, 13 August 2020.

Prof Stephan de Beer, director of the Centre for Contextual Ministry and professor in Practical Theology, University of Pretoria, *Zoom* interview, 11 August 2020.

Prof Yolanda Dreyer, a professor in Practical Theology, University of Pretoria, email sent on 7 August 2020.