

**THE MISSIONAL LIFE OF CONGREGATIONS OF
THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN THE
FREE STATE**

by

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the missional life of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State. It aims to listen to the voices of the people and the leadership to access the life and vitality of the Church and to ascertain where the church is most fully alive.

The research problem and research question are stated. The NCLS, an international congregational project endeavouring to understand church vitality is explored and the research methodology utilized in this study is discussed. Healthy missional congregations; missional theology and the evaluation of congregations, is explored.

The ecclesiology of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is discussed. Under ecclesiology, general ecclesiology and Seventh-day Adventist ecclesiology is explored. This includes the fundamental beliefs; structure of governance; church membership of the world wide Seventh-day Adventist Church. An in depth study of the Seventh-day Adventist Congregations in the Free State is done.

The voice of the people in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State is reported by means of the Church Life Study. A detailed review of the vitality of the Church in the Free State is given. The voice of the leadership of the individual congregations in the Free State through the initial and focus group interviews were discussed. Then the voice of the leadership of the SDA Church in the Free State as a whole, through the initial and focus group interviews conducted is explored.

The final chapter gives a conclusion of the Missional Life of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State in terms of the three core qualities. It is concluded that the Free State SDA congregations are not healthy, missional congregations in view of their relationships with God, each other and with the community. It is however encouraging to note that because of the high standard of the worship service and its strong foundation, the Church has the potential to become a fully missional Church and the leadership is determined to achieve this goal in the Free State.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie proefskrif ondersoek die missionale lewe van die Sewendedag Adventiste kerk in die Vrystaat. Dit het ten doel om na die stem van die lede en die leierskap te luister om die lewe en lewenskrag van die Kerk te bepaal en om vas te stel waar die Kerk op sy lewenskragtigste is.

Die navorsingsprobleem en die navorsingsvraag is geformuleer. Die NCLS, 'n internasionale gemeentelike navorsings projek is wat poog om kerk lewenskragtigheid te verstaan is nagevors en die navorsings metodologie wat in hierdie studie gebruik word is bespreek. Gesonde missionale gemeentes, missionale teologie en die evaluering van gemeentes is nagevors.

Die ekklesiologie van die Sewendedag-Adventiste Kerk is bespreek. Onder ekklesiologie is algemene ekklesiologie en die ekklesiologie van die Sewendedag-Adventiste kerk ondersoek. Dit sluit die grondleerstellings; die vorm van organisasie; kerklidmaatskap en finansies van die wêreldkerk van Sewendedag-Adventiste in. 'n In diepte studie van die Sewendedag-Adventiste gemeentes in die Vrystaat is gedoen.

Die stem van die bywonende lede van die Sewendedag-Adventiste Kerk in die Vrystaat is deur middel van die Church Life Study verslag gedoen. 'n Breedvoerige uiteensetting van die lewenskragtigheid van die kerk in die Vrystaat, is weergegee. Die stem van die leierskap van die individuele gemeentes asook die leierskap van die Sewendedag-Adventiste Kerk in die Vrystaat as geheel, is bespreek.

Die laaste hoofstuk behandel die gevolgtrekking van die Missionale Lewe van die Sewendedag-Adventiste kerk in die Vrystaat deur middel van die nege kern kwaliteite. Die gevolgtrekking is dat die Vrystaat SDA gemeentes nie gesonde, missionale gemeentes is nie, in die lig van hulle verhouding met God, met mekaar en met die gemeenskap nie. Dit is egter bemoedigend dat weens die hoë standaard van die Erediens en die sterk grondslag, die kerk die potensiaal het om ten volle 'n missionale Kerk te word, en die leierskap is vasbeslote om die doel te bereik.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

NCLS	National Church Life Survey
SDA	Seventh-day Adventist

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UFS DEPARTMENT OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

THE CHURCH LIFE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

INITIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

ATLAS.ti COOCCURRING CODES (INTERVIEW & FOCUS GROUP)

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CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

The KwaZulu Natal-Free State Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church pride themselves with eleven thriving congregations in the Free State Province of South Africa. Most of these congregations are small congregations and serve a stable and religious community. Times however have changed, and these congregations are facing severe challenges, that affect their very existence. The leadership of these congregations face difficulties that are often difficult to cope with.

Political and sociological factors have pushed faith communities into difficult situations. The Seventh-day Adventist congregations of the Free State especially, are seriously affected by the depopulation of the white community, due to the collapse of industries like the mining and railway industries, young people who are moving to the bigger centres and families who are leaving the country. These factors have plunged many communities in serious predicaments. Unemployment and poverty are threatening previously thriving communities. The faith communities are faced by these changing factors and have to restructure and realign themselves to meet the difficulties in their communities. The Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State are seriously affected by these contextual factors, which impact their congregations and members.

The researcher's personal involvement in these congregations prompted his theological interest and the question; what impact do these factors have on the congregations?; how must congregations respond to these challenges and what should the focus of these congregations be in order to continue their affectivity in meeting the needs of the congregation and the community they serve? The serious challenges that, especially the smaller congregations face, may cause the leadership to lose focus on the role of the church and be side tracked into survival mode. This shift of focus may cause despondency and discouragement that could seriously undermine the effectiveness of the congregation in that community.

This background and context forms the perspective from which the researcher has undertaken this study. The researcher is interested in critically understanding these challenges and their impact on the life of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist congregations. It has been the aim to enable the leadership to understand the needs of their congregations and communities and to regain focus and meet these challenges

in such a way that they remain faithful and focused on the missional role of the church of God in the world.

The purpose of this study, therefore, has been to critically investigate the missional life of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist congregations, to discover their strengths and weaknesses, and to assist in regaining their focus to be the effective missional congregations God called them to be.

The tools provided by practical theology were utilized to undertake the research of this study. The study explores the practical theological approach in understanding challenging situations in the congregational environment. The National Church Life Survey (NCLS)¹ statistical profile for local congregations will be utilized in the study. This profile will present unique results for each congregation; and provide results that will give information on nine core qualities of church life.² They will help congregations to get insight on how their life and mission can be enhanced. (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:iv).

These introductory statements form the basis for focusing on the situation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State, which will be discussed in the research problem of the next section.

1.1 THE CHALLENGES OF THE FREE STATE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

The focus will now be the situation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State; which will be discussed in the research problem of the next section. Seventh-day Adventist congregations normally operate without any knowledge or insight into their own situation or the role they need to play to be a vibrant, missional congregation. Few guidelines and knowledge of the congregations' strengths and weaknesses exist to which the minister can refer. Each minister placed in the congregation, basically starts from the beginning. The fact that ministers are transferred every three to five years makes this a real concern.

This factor in the Seventh-day Adventist Church may negatively affect the church as a whole, as far as the vitality of the congregation is concerned, and causes many

¹ See page 6 for an explanation of the NCLS.

² See Chapter Four, 4.1 for an explanation of the nine core qualities.

members to lose faith in the ministry as they perceive the ministers to be incompetent.

One of the main problems in local congregations is member retention and the high missing member figures (Osmer, 2008:175). It often happens that over time, no real growth has taken place as new members leave again. Many congregations have lost faith in evangelism in general.

Schoeman (2010:115) points out that there is a great need for the congregation to have useful information about their own situation, the health and vitality of the congregation and to understand the missional role of the congregation. This study will assist the congregation to work in a more structured and effective way, equipping the churches to achieve greater effectiveness.

To cover the different aspects and challenges the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State faces, this study will focus on: *The missional life of congregations of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State*. The focus of the research will assist in defining the research question and subsidiary questions in the following section.

1.2 THE ROLE OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SUBSIDIARY QUESTIONS

Whenever there are any difficulties in life, or company issues that need solving, intelligent questions need to be asked to ascertain the road forward. Graziano and Raulin (2004:57) mention that questions are everywhere, all that is needed is to observe and be curious. The same applies to research. Jansen (2010:2) points out that any research stands or falls by the quality of the research question. Jensen and Laurie (2016:6) states that your research question governs all components of your research project. White (2009:1) confirms that the questions posed will be central to the research project. It will dictate the data you collect and how you analyse it (Jensen & Laurie, 2016:6 and White, 2009:1).

The research question then is the center of a research study. It focuses the study, determines and guides the methodology and analysis. Jansen (2010:11) suggests a main research question and subsidiary questions. He further states that the subsidiary questions are more specific and it gives added focus to the main research question and

is directly related to the main research question. Jensen and Laurie (2016:9,10) argue that a single research question may not fully include the different dimensions one wishes to explore and suggests that particular aspects can be stated in more detail by using subsidiary questions which will provide direction and structure for the research. White (2009:65) points out that most authors advise that the total number of main and subsidiary questions should be between twelve and fourteen, but suggests keeping the total number of questions well below this limit. More than three or four sub-questions will be difficult to manage. Research questions should be ascertained prior to the research methods. Punch (1998:21) notes that one should firstly establish what you want to find out, and then how you are going to accomplish that.

This study will restrict the number of research questions to one main research question and four subsidiary questions. In a broad sense this study wants to determine whether the life in the local congregation meets the needs of its members and the community, and how (if at all) the local congregation utilize its strong points, and what the congregation does to strengthen its weak points in order to be a more trustworthy and effective congregation?

MAIN QUESTION

Are the Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State, healthy missional congregations in view of their relationship with God, each other and with the community?

Sub question 1

Do the congregations meet the call to be healthy missional congregations? It needs to be ascertained whether the Free State congregations have an understanding that healthy missional congregations are focused on a three way relationship: a relationship with God; each other and with the community they serve.

Sub question 2

Do the congregations have insight into their strengths and weaknesses? It needs to be

determined whether the congregations know how to utilize their strengths to be affective in meeting the needs of their members and communities.

Sub question 3

Does the leadership fulfil their role in the congregation by inspiring and empowering their members to be missional in their mind set, to ensure that their leadership is related to growth? The role of the leadership is of critical importance to the life of the congregation. It is the leadership that should bring about change in order for the congregation to adapt to the changing environment and be able to move forward. It needs to be explored whether the leadership fulfil this role in the Free State congregations.

Sub question 4

Do the members understand their God given responsibility to be actively involved in the missional life of the congregation, in faith sharing and involvement to ensure a vital and healthy congregation? The active contribution of members to the missional life of the congregation needs to be explored as this will determine the vitality and health of the local congregation.

The National Church Life Survey (NCLS) will be used extensively to answer the research question and subsidiary questions. It is necessary however to explore in the following section, what the NCLS is, its history and context, and the studies that have previously been conducted.

1.3 NCLS AND OTHER RESEARCH PROJECTS

The aim of this section is to examine recent NCLS and other studies and literature both local and international which is intended to hear the voice of congregational members.

The NCLS is a research project responsible for the execution of research on a large scale in church context, and goes into detail on the vitality theme (Erwich, 2013:37). Vitality covers the qualities of various aspects of church life – the extent to which these aspects are developed and recognised, are central to the life of congregations.

These aspects will be discussed in Chapter Five. This study makes it possible to identify and measure aspects of vitality within the life of the congregation. This indicates to congregational leaders where strengths and weaknesses may lie in their congregation: some aspects may be celebrated, some aspects may need to be remedied and in other aspects change will be needed (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:2). The NCLS developed a Church Life Profile for the local congregation, and presents a unique survey result for each congregation in an understandable way. It gives congregations the opportunity to consider what brings life to the congregation and how their life and mission can be enhanced (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:iv, 75). The NCLS is a project of NCLS Research, which is a partnership of three Australian Christian denominations (Anglican, Uniting Church and Catholic) and Australian Catholic University. The primary aim of the NCLS is to provide information to congregations and parishes about the health or vitality of their church. The NCLS has collected data from several thousand congregations/parishes, thousands of churchgoers and thousands of local church leaders from about 20 Christian denominations across Australia every five years from 1991 onwards (Pepper *et al.*, 2015:9).

We will now look at the history and context of the NCLS. In 1991, eighteen denominations and 6700 congregations participated in The National Church Life Survey in Australia (Kaldor *et al.*, 2002:96). The surveys of church attendees and leaders were done in five waves in Australia in 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006 and 2011.

Participants in the 2011 Australian survey were 3000+ local congregations; 260 000+ individuals; 23 denominations and 8 languages (Powell & Hancock, 2014:2).

NCLS projects were launched in the USA, England and New Zealand in 2001 under the banner of the International Congregational Life Survey. The study showed many similarities across the four nations, which confirms that many common insights can be learned about church vitality. In the International Congregational Life Survey 449,058 individuals, 6,554 local congregations and 19 denominations, participated in Australia. In England 107,220 individuals; 1,962 local congregations and 15 denominations participated. In New Zealand 58,744 individuals; 931 local congregations and 12 denominations participated. In the USA 243,840 individuals, 1,777 local congregations and 40 denominations participated (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006: 9). See Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Level of participation in the 2001 International Congregational Life Survey (ICLS)

Nation	Attendees	Local Congregations	Denominations
Australia	449,058	6,554	19
England	107,220	1,962	15
New Zealand	58,744	931	12
USA	24,840	1,777	40
Total	858,862	11,224	

A significant study of American Congregations was done by the Co-operative Congregational Studies Partnership (CCSP) in 2000. This study was headed by Carl Dudley and David Roozen, of the Hartford Institute for Religion Research. It involved more than forty denominations and studied approximately 20,000 congregations. The data was disseminated in a way that made materials and consultation available for the strengthening of congregational life under the label: Faith Communities Today (FACT). The North American Seventh-day Adventist Church participated in this study and 813 congregations were randomly selected. In 2005, CCSP replicated the study to determine what changes might have occurred during the interim of five years.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church again participated and 309 congregations returned surveys. In 2008, CCSP undertook an abbreviated version. Once again, the Seventh-day Adventist Church participated using the Institute of Church Ministry (ICM) at Andrews University as its research arm, as it did in the first two waves. They received responses from 170 congregations. In 2010, for the ten-year anniversary of the original study, CCSP launched a full-effort research projects including the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This study involved the North American Division (United States and Canada) (Dudley, 2011:2-3).

Some of the results prepared by Dudley (2011) of the 2010 study are very significant. Nearly 9% of Adventist congregations rarely or never have any visitors. More than a fourth of the congregations make no attempt to follow-up or contact visitors that do come (Dudley, 2011:8). It is very interesting that the 23 congregations who did personal visits grew nearly 48% over the five year period (Dudley, 2011:9). It is surprising that only about half see their congregation as a moral beacon in the community. Too often, Adventist congregations distance themselves from their surrounding culture. The

North American Adventists tend to see salvation as a personal matter, where, due to the soon coming end of the world, why try to improve the evils of society. As to the theological outlook of the majority of participants in these congregations, 65% are rated somewhat or very conservative, 27% as moderate and only 8% rated as liberal. Of these, less than 1% is apparently very liberal (Dudley, 2011:12). More than a quarter of the participants are senior citizens and half are over 50. North American Adventists are a “greying” group. Only about a third fall into the 18-31 age group, who are those most suited to carry the church and its responsibilities. This should be a cause for concern (Dudley, 2011:12, 13). Growing congregations report that they are spiritually vital and alive. Growth is not simply a matter of programmes; it is the work of the Holy Spirit. Growing congregations are more likely to describe their worship as joyful. (Dudley, 2011:32).

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in the United States participated with 50 other faith groups in the U.S. Congregational Life Study, conducted by the Presbyterian Church in 2001. Over 300,000 worshipers in over 2,000 congregations across America participated in the U.S. Congregational Life Survey - making it the largest survey of worshipers in America ever conducted. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has eight regional bodies or "union conferences" covering the United States. These eight union conferences comprised the sampling for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Congregations were chosen from each union conference so that the overall number of congregations would be proportional to the total number of congregations in that union conference. Of invited congregations, 23 per cent agreed to participate. Of those that agreed to participate, 74 percent returned completed forms. Seventeen percent of invited congregations returned completed forms. The results of this study were published in the book: *A Field Guide to U.S. Congregations: Who's Going Where and Why* (Woolever & Bruce, 2002). A second book: *Beyond the Ordinary: 10 Strengths of U.S. Congregations* (Woolever & Bruce, 2004) was published. A second wave took place in 2008 and 2009.

The National Congregations Study (NCS) was conducted in conjunction with the 1998 General Social Survey (GSS) in congregations in the US. Data about these congregations were collected from 1236 congregations (Chaves *et al.*, 1999:459). The second wave of the National Congregations Study (NCS-II) was conducted in 2006-07, providing a new opportunity to track continuity and change among

American congregations. Data were gathered from 1,506 congregations. (Chaves & Anderson, 2008:415) The third wave of the National Congregations Study (NCS-III) was conducted in 2012. Data about these congregations was collected from 1,331 congregations. The NCSIII tells us about how congregations have changed since 1998. Five trends were noted: more ethnic diversity, greater acceptance of gays and lesbians, increasingly informal worship styles, declining size (but not from the perspective of the average attendee), and declining denominational affiliation. (Chaves & Anderson, 2014:677).

Since 2009 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has worked to develop a survey that can reliably measure qualitative aspects of congregational vitality. This study describes the development of a survey that focuses on key missional outcomes. Congregation members and pastors from 73 congregations were surveyed. Exploratory factor analysis identified important differences in the way pastors and lay people understand concepts like mission resulting in the creation of separate scales for pastors and lay people. These scales describe congregational vitality in five areas. Lay scales describe a congregation's connections with God, each other and the world while pastor scales describe their understanding of the congregation's inner strength and faith in action outside the congregation (Bobbit, 2014:467).

A pilot study was done in the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa during August 2006 (Schoeman, 2010:114-124). This was the first study of its kind done in South Africa. 95 congregations participated in the 2006 survey and returned 12,522 questionnaires. A follow up study in the Dutch Reformed Church was done in 2010. Eighty five congregations participated and 12,286 questionnaires were returned (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015b:54). In 2014, a further study was done, including various South African denominations but did not include the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Of the 141 participating congregations, 18,883 questionnaires were returned. In Chapter Four, the data of these congregations (all South African churches) will be compared with the Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church.

No study of this nature using the NCLS analysis model has been done neither in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State province nor in the rest of South Africa. The study in the Free State will be compared with other denominations, mainly the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa. It will be of great value to discover

the similarities and differences between the studies and to discover what can be learned from the studies in their context.

Using this chapter as background, the methodological considerations and strategies utilized in the study, will be discussed below.

1.4 CONCEPTUALISATION

Three concepts that will be used in this study of the Seventh-day Adventist churches in the Free State will be investigated and explained, namely: The role of Practical Theology in this study; Healthy congregations and Missional congregations. Jansen (2010:3) stipulates the necessity to indicate how key concepts will be interpreted in the framework of the study. The aim of this section is to clarify the understanding of the key concepts.

Of importance in the research of the Seventh-day Adventist congregations is the practical-theological model of Richard Osmer. Erwich (2013:17) confirms that this practical-theological model can strongly be connected to congregational being and the role it can play in the research. This model will play an important role during the research and specifically in the conclusion of this study to determine the results of the research.

1.4.1 The role of Practical Theology

Practical theology historically entered the theological encyclopedia as a discipline of “crisis” in the praxis which ministers, congregations and churches experienced in making the Christian tradition relevant in the life of individuals, communities or in society as a whole. (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015a:8). Ganzevoort (2009:1) admits that the choice to engage in practical theology was far easier than understanding what that thing “practical theology” actually was. He argues that three constitutive terms together form the heart of practical theology namely: religion; lived religion and hermeneutics (Ganzevoort, 2009:3-4). He expresses that there is common ground in practical theology as the hermeneutics of lived religion (Ganzevoort, 2009:6).

Congregational studies have to do with people in a congregation and their connection

with the gospel. Bastian (1968:26-31) states that practical theology interprets the interaction between gospel and people. What is then important in practical theology is the person. Heitink (1984:22) maintains that the text of practical theology is the religious person. Heyns and Pieterse (1990:6) narrows it down by indicating that practical theology focuses on people's religious actions, with the accent on "actions". This is the object of study. He argues that because practical theology is concerned with actions performed in the service of the gospel it ensures its essentially theological character. Heyns and Pieterse (1990:1) points out that practical theology is that part of theology that considers the actions designed to ensure that the Word of God reaches people and is embodied in their lives. Its object is people's religious actions. The practical theology has as objects the religious actions of people. Otto (1974:201) agrees by describing practical theology as the critical theory of religious actions in society. It concerns itself with the encounter between God and humanity and the particular role of humanity in this encounter (Fiet, 1974:14). In this study the members and their actions of the Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State will be explored.

Osmer (2008:37) indicates that doing practical theology is to listen to different voices from both the text and the context. The listening may be an informal and unstructured process, but it is also a formal and empirical research process. MacAllan (2014:3) proposes that if it is true, as Osmer and Swietzer argue, that religious education needs to be seen in its interdependent relationship to its given social contexts, then the task of practical theology is to understand that contexts and certain aspects of it. Cahalan (2014:2) argues that methods in practical theology often bear witness to the complexity of the theory-practice relationship. Practical theologians will often use a spatial metaphor to describe this complexity. He points out that some agree with Osmer that the interplay between the elements of practical theology functions as an infinite loop or spiral. The approach that Browning (1991:7) takes, moves from practice to theory, and then back to practice. He says that it goes from present theory-laden practice to a retrieval of more normative theory-laden practice to the creation of more critically held theory-laden practices. He further states that this should be the structure of all theology. The overall goal of practical theological research is to solve problems in the domain which is the target of a research programme (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015a:15). The domain of practical theology widened from the practices

of minister, to the practices of believers within the community of the Church, to the practices of Christian believers in the co-ordinates of Church and society (public domain), to the interaction between Christian believers with adherents to the religions (Hermans, 2014).

Osmer has entitled his book, "Practical Theology: An Introduction". However Morrison (2011) argues that it is much more. It is an extensive study of method in practical theology and pastoral leadership. Osmer has constructed a vision of practical theology to give life back to the body of the Church. To this end he envisions the four tasks of practical theological interpretation as: descriptive-empirical (priestly listening); interpretive (sagely wisdom); normative (prophetic discernment) and pragmatic (servant leadership). Morrison (2011:711-713) describes that there is something "systematic" as much as "symptomatic" about this. The systematic approach has to do with a need to understand and diagnose the environment of congregations. What appears "symptomatic" is Osmer's stance to the raw reality of congregations struggling to achieve "good practice".

In his review of Osmer's book, Smith (2014:110) affirms that there is much to commend Osmer's approach. It is a useful and helpful introduction to practical theology. One of his critiques however is his disappointment with Osmer's chapter on the pragmatic task. He was hoping to find a system for developing a theological theory of action based on the three foundational tasks, closing the circle of reflection from praxis through theory and back to praxis. Instead, he found a discussion of how to lead a congregation through change (Smith, 2014:113).

Osmer believes that just about all practical theologians at the present time give at least some attention to the descriptive-empirical, interpretive, normative and pragmatic tasks of practical theology which represent a reflective equilibrium in the field (Osmer, 2010:7). His approach will be the guidelines to the research of this study.

The four tasks of Osmer that can guide our interpretation and responses to situations, we will find in the Free State congregations of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the importance it will play in this study will now be discussed.

Osmer (2008:3) argues that good ministry is never merely a matter of solving problems; it is a mystery to be ventured and explored. He proposes four questions to guide

interpretations and responses to any given situation. The questions are: *What* is going on? *Why* is it going on? *What* ought to be going on? *How* might we respond? Osmer (2008:4) points out that answering each of these questions is the focus of one of the four core tasks of practical theological interpretation: *The descriptive-empirical task*: (What is going on?) We are looking for information and data which can help us discern patterns and dynamics in particular episodes, situations, or contexts. *The interpretive task*: (Why is it going on?) In this task we are drawing on theories which can help us to understand the situation. *The normative task*: (What ought to be going on?) Theological concepts, ethical norms, and good practice are coming on board in this task to interpret particular episodes, situations or contexts. *The pragmatic task*: (How might we respond?) Strategies of action are determined in this task, which will influence situations in a desirable manner.

The four tasks and their four questions will be utilized in this study of ten of the Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State. The *first task* will be the descriptive-empirical task question, the “what is going on” in this congregation. This is part of the practical theological reflection (Schoeman, 2010:114). The “what is going on” question lies at the heart of the descriptive-empirical task of practical theological interpretation (Osmer, 2008:33). In this question we are looking for information and data that can help to determine what is going on in the Free State Congregations. Erwich (2013:18) points out that it is important to do this from a listening attitude without making quick conclusions. The researcher will endeavour through the descriptive-empirical task question, the “what is going on” in this congregation to look for information that will answer this question. The gathering of information will have three phases. In Phase One, questionnaires will be made available to the members of the congregation, to complete on a given date during the divine service.³ These questions will give the members the opportunity to be heard and it will determine whether the life in the local church meets the needs of its members and the community. During Phase Two the researcher will meet with the local pastor and elders of the congregations of the Free State, in an initial interview to gather information about the story and the ecology of the congregation and to understand how they view their own congregation. During Phase Three the researcher will conduct focus group

³ The questionnaire can be viewed in the Addendum.

interviews with the leadership of the congregations.⁴

The *second task* will be the interpretive task with its “why is it going on” question. The goal is to draw on theories to better understand and explain particular episodes, situations and contexts (Osmer, 2008:113). Erwich (2013:18) explains that it has to do with finding one or more theories which can help to understand the situation. Theories that will be drawn on are the missional and healthy congregations. A missional congregation is measured by the quality of the vitality of the nine core aspects of church life, the extent to which these aspects are developed and recognised⁵. In this study the questionnaires will be processed to measure the vitality, attitudes, behaviour and experiences of the congregation (Powell, 2014), and how (if at all) the local congregation utilises its strong points, and what the congregation does to strengthen its weak points in order to be a more effective congregation? The reason or reasons why the congregation is in its current situation will then be clear. The results of the questionnaires will be discussed in Chapter Four.

The *third task* will be the normative task with its “what ought to be going on” question. Normative theological perspectives provide interpretive guides with help in determining what they ought to do (Osmer, 2008: 173). Erwich (2013:18) indicates that theological concepts, ethical norms and good practice come on board that can improve the present practice. Utilizing the processed data in this study, it will be possible to determine whether the congregation is a vibrant congregation in view of their internal, inspirational and external direction. Is the congregation missional in their understanding of a congregation? Is the congregation meeting the call to mission? Do the members contribute to the missional understanding of the congregation? The third task will be discussed in Chapter Four.

The *fourth task* will be the pragmatic task with its “how might we respond” question. The pragmatic task of practical theological interpretation tells us how to move particular episodes, situations, and contexts toward desired outcomes (Osmer, 2008:173). The research process that is executed in a hermeneutic circle now reaches its strategic pinnacle. People will have been interviewed, and by this means, collected information will help to give a better idea as to what the real problem is (Erwich, 2013;19). During

⁴ These two interviews will be discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

⁵ See Chapter Two

the focus group interviews in the third phase, the researcher will meet with the leadership of each congregation to discuss the results of the study. During the focus group interviews, strategies will be discussed and put in place to provide hope for the congregation and to present the research and analysis, to nurture life in both the leadership and the congregation, in order to plan for the future to help the congregation to live to the full (Powell, 2014). The focus group interviews will be explored in Chapter Five for the individual congregations, and in Chapter Six for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State as a whole.

The extensive role that Osmer's four tasks will play in this study was discussed. It is however important to clarify what is meant by healthy and missional congregations. These two concepts will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter Two.

1.4.2 Healthy congregations

It is important for a congregation to be healthy. A healthy congregation will meet all the needs of the members: their spiritual needs, their need of belonging, and their need to express their spirituality and care for others. The members will therefore be content and fulfilled in all aspects of church life.

Steinke (2006) proposes five characteristics of healthy congregations. Healthy congregations *focus on mission*. He argues that mission helps mobilize the energy of the faith community. He warns that if the congregation isn't focused on mission, it will focus on its past, its budget, problems or something else. Healthy congregations *focus on challenge*. He states that congregations are like people who feel better when they exercise. It is important for congregations to create small challenges and meet them with successes and good outcomes. Healthy congregations *focus on strengths*. He recommends that congregations should stop trying to recover old strengths they no longer have, but to focus on those they do have. This means building up options. He warns that feeling trapped without options builds anxiety. Healthy congregations *manage conflict*. He declares that it is almost impossible to change without conflict. Where change does not occur, there is always an aversion to conflict. Healthy leaders have a greater toleration of pain in themselves and others. Steinke's proposal of focusing on mission, challenge and strengths, is supported by the NCLS approach of measuring the vitality of the external (outward) core quality, the inspirational core quality

(leadership) and focusing on the strengths of the congregation with the development of a circle of strengths for each congregation. Steinke's proposal and the NCLS approach form a strong connection with the aim of this study to focus on the strengths to determine the health of the Free State congregations.

To attempt to be a healthy Church, the members of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church should therefore know and understand why the congregation exists, and what the purpose of the congregation is (Warren, 1995:86), for their energy to be mobilized. It will be a centre where broken people can find refuge, acceptance and healing (Samaan, 1990:30). A healthy congregation will thus be active in the community and will serve other people and reflect the true God. Healthy congregations will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Two.

1.4.3 Missional congregations

It is of vital importance for a congregation to be a missional congregation. This is the reason for its existence. It is all about relationships. God created human beings to be in relationships and the congregation is there to develop these relationships to their fullness – the relationship with God, each other and with the community. If these relationships are not catered for in the congregation, that congregation has failed in its purpose.

A missional congregation is identified by the members' "three-cornered" relationship: their relationship with God, their relationship with other members of the congregation, and by their relationship with the community (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:6). All three of these components are necessary to be a missional congregation. There would be a balance between the internal, inspirational and external (outward) facets of church life. These three relationships are the focus of the NCLS research used in this study.

Hirsch (2008) adds that a missional theology is not content with mission being a church-based work. It rather applies to the whole life of every believer, who should be an agent of the kingdom of God. Every disciple is to carry the mission of God into every sphere of life. We are all missionaries sent into a non-Christian culture. He believes that *missional* represents a significant shift in the way we think about the church. As the people of a missional God, we ought to engage the world the same

way He does - by *going* out rather than just *reaching* out. To obstruct this movement in any way is to block God's purposes in and through his people. When the church is in mission, it is the true church. Healthy missional congregations will be further elaborated on in Chapter Two.

It is important to establish which approaches and methods should be utilized to answer the research question and to be able to conclude whether the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State meets the criteria for a missional church or not. The aim of the next section is to determine what approaches and methods will be effective in answering these questions.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher will concentrate on the conceptualisation of the research methodology and the research approaches utilized. The term, methodology, will be described and will mention three possible approaches available for conducting the research, namely quantitative-; qualitative- and the mixed method approach. The quantitative and qualitative research, its usage and advantages will be explored. The advantages of the mixed methods approach will also be investigated. The mixed methods approach utilizes both the quantitative and qualitative approaches.

1.5.1 The meaning of methodology

What is understood under the term methodology? The “methodology” is the way to go about achieving the purpose stated (Vyhmeister 2001:25). Research methods are the techniques used by researchers to structure a study and to gather and analyse information relevant to the research question (Polit & Beck, 2004:15). There are three approaches for conducting research: *the quantitative approach; the qualitative approach; and the mixed methods approach.*

1.5.2 Quantitative research explored

The term quantitative research and what it entails will now be explored. Ivankova *et al.* (2010:257) states that quantitative research relies on numerical data to test the

relationship between the variables. The quantitative empirical research model, numbers and percentages, describes the trends or explains the relationships between the variables (Vyhmeister, 2001:126). Specific, narrow research questions will be asked that can be measured (Ivankova *et al.*, 2010:257).

Salkind (2012:11) indicates that quantitative researchers would look to empirical data that are quantitative in nature such as test scores etc. Empirical research is most commonly understood as the search for knowledge-based empirical data. The best known data-based research strategy is survey research and is possibly the most used research strategies in practical theology and congregational studies. When congregational life is explored, a broader (quantitative) lens is essential to examine congregations. This quantitative lens needs to investigate the influence of society on the congregation and also what is happening within the congregation (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015b:45,46). Fink (2006:1) mentions that survey research operates within a quantitative framework where phenomena are viewed as observable and can be empirically studied. Surveys add valuable contributions to congregational studies, as they provide the quantitative perspective on congregational life and context (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015b:45).

Bellamy *et al.* (2006:4) points out that the NCLS provides a way of measuring aspects of a local congregation's vitality. This is done by gaining insights into the attitudes, experiences and behaviour of the members, gathered through a survey form. A quantitative approach will then be of great value for this study to describe the congregation in terms of the life of the congregation. The NCLS research will be vital in this study to measure the vitality of different aspects of the church life in the congregations of the Free State. The results of the NCLS research can be seen in Chapter Four.

1.5.3 Qualitative research explored

The term and the usage of the qualitative research approach will now be discussed. Qualitative research is an inquiry (interview) to seek to understand the views and practices in which individuals engage in their situation and their experiences (Osmer, 2008:49). Neuman, (2000:17) explains that quantitative data techniques are data condensers, while qualitative methods are data enhancers. Qualitative data does not

possess the precision of quantitative data but its main advantage is its descriptive value (Uys & Basson, 1985:75). The purpose of conducting a qualitative study is to transform data into findings (Patton, 2002:432). It is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data (Strydom, 2005:333).

Qualitative research includes the “why” along with the “how many” (Vyhmeister, 2001:126). Interviews permit a deeper and fuller understanding of the attitudes of a respondent than questionnaires. Vyhmeister (2001:136) advises that the interviewer go to the interview with a written outline of questions to be asked. Leedy and Omrod (2005:188) explains that open ended questions should be asked to obtain qualitative data.

Salkind (2012:11) states that qualitative researchers examine individuals, institutions and phenomena within the context in which they occur. The researcher would want to gain an in-depth understanding of behaviour and the reasons for that behaviour. He may look at various sources of information such as archival records, emails, open-ended surveys, videos, physical artefacts, direct observation, transcripts, participant observation, interviews and focus groups. A qualitative approach will also be of great value for congregational study.

The qualitative approach will be important for this study to gain an understanding of the behaviour in the situation of the congregations. This will be achieved by means of the initial interviews and focus group interviews conducted with the leadership of the Free State congregations. This will be elaborated on in Chapters Five and Six.

1.5.4 The mixed methods approach and its advantages

It may be necessary to use both the quantitative and qualitative approaches to ensure the quality of the study and to achieve an in-depth insight into the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State. The viability of using both approaches will now be explored.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods can be blended, and is called the mixed methods approach. This approach builds on both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Ivankova *et al.*, 2010:262). An argument for the use of the mixed methods approach is that the strengths and weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative data

are complimentary. By using both methods, the weaknesses of a single approach may be diminished or overcome (Polit, 2004:273, 274). Bergman (2008:11) indicates that the mixed methods research design is one of the fastest growing areas in research methodology. Bergman (2008:11) states that its aims and benefits are simple: take the better of the two methods, qualitative and quantitative, and combine them.

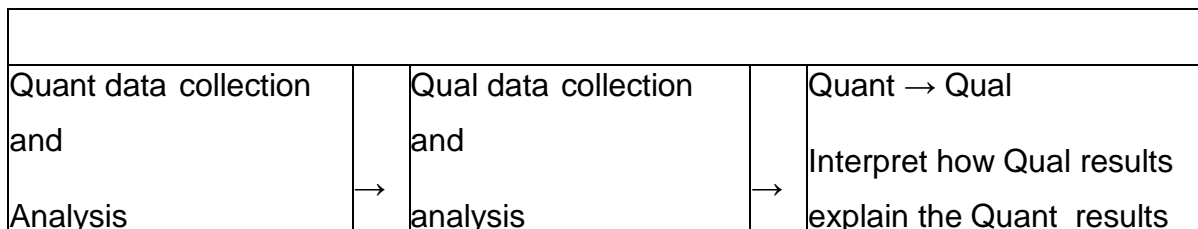
The mixed methods research model will be used in this study. In other words, both quantitative and qualitative approaches will be built upon (Ivankova *et al.*, 2010:262). Ivankova *et al.* (2010:263) further argues that when the quantitative and qualitative methods are used in combination within a mixed methods approach, a more complete analysis of the research situation is allowed for. It is helpful in gaining an in-depth understanding of the trends and patterns and to study the diverse perspectives as well as understanding the relationship between the variables. By using the mixed methods approach we can get answers to both the “what” and the “why” questions, and thereby gain a more complete understanding of the research problem by comparing the quantitative and the qualitative findings. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011:12) indicates that mixed methods research provides strengths that offset the weaknesses of both quantitative and qualitative research. The combination of strengths of one approach makes up for the weaknesses of the other approach. He argues that mixed methods research provides more evidence for studying a research problem than either quantitative or qualitative research alone. It helps answer questions that cannot be answered by one approach alone.

Creswell (2007:81-95) introduces four basic methods designs. These are the *explanatory design*; the *exploratory design*; the *triangulation design* and the *embedded design*. The purpose of the explanatory mixed methods design is to use the qualitative findings to help clarify the quantitative results. (Ivankova *et al.*, 2010:266) The exploratory design is used when a researcher first needs to explore a topic using qualitative data before attempting to measure it quantitatively (Ivankova *et al.*, 2010:267). In the triangulation design both quantitative and qualitative methods are used to best understand the phenomenon of interest (Ivankova *et al.*, 2010:268). The embedded design is used when a secondary research question needs to be answered that is different from, but related to, the primary research question.

The researcher will use the explanatory mixed methods design. The thinking behind

this design is that the quantitative results provide a general picture of the research problem while the qualitative results refine, explain or extent the general picture. In this design, data is collected in two separate phases. First the quantitative data is collected and analysed, then the qualitative data is collected and analysed (Ivankova *et al.*, 2010:266). In this study the quantitative and qualitative data will be collected in two separate phases and analysed. See the analysis of Phase One (quantitative) in Chapter Four and the analysis of the data in the Phases Two and Three (qualitative) in Chapters Five & Six. The word *explanatory* in the design name suggests that the qualitative findings help explain the quantitative results. Figure 1.1 will show the flow of the design (Ivankova *et al.*, 2010:266).

Figure 1.1: Sequential flow of the two phases



1.5.5 The mixed methodology of this study

The specifics of the methodology used in this study will be elaborated on. The research will be divided into three phases. The three phases are in accordance with the explanatory mixed methods design, where the qualitative findings will help to clarify the quantitative results. *Phase One:* NCLS questionnaires will be delivered to all the Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State, for completion. *Phase Two:* Initial interviews will be conducted with some of the leaders of participating congregations. *Phase Three:* Focus Group Interviews will be with larger groups of the leadership of the congregations. The nature and structure of a Focus Group will be explored as well as the role of the researcher in a focus group interview. The importance of the location will be viewed and the size of the focus group will be investigated as it is of great importance to ensure that the interview and data will be effective. The size of the focus group for this study will then be decided upon.

1.5.5.1 Phase One – Questionnaires

Phase One: the completion of the questionnaires by the Free State congregations, is vital to gather the quantitative data for this study. This will give the members of these congregations the opportunity to have their voices heard. The NCLS questionnaires will be used to ensure that the analysed data will be accurate.

Questionnaires (quantitative) in both English and Afrikaans were compiled to gather the information needed for the research. These questionnaires were delivered by the researcher in May 2015 to the eleven Seventh-day Adventist congregations. The members of the congregations completed the questionnaires provided during the worship service. Ten of the eleven congregations participated and returned 219 questionnaires. The information obtained was measured by the NCLS team in Australia and the results will be evaluated to ascertain the correlation between item and success. Phase One will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four, p 97.

1.5.5.2 Phase Two – Initial interviews

In Phase One the voice of the people were listened to. During Phase Two with the initial interviews, a small section of the leadership of the five participating congregations will be listened to. This group will describe their views of their congregations.

When the qualitative data is processed, an initial interview (qualitative) will be conducted by the researcher with the local pastor, where applicable, and a few members of the leadership. Four questions were prepared⁶ prior to the interviews to be discussed by the leadership. Only five of the ten congregations in the Free State region of the Seventh-day Adventist Church participated. The reason for having interviews with only five of the ten congregations is because two of the ten congregations were not willing to participate in the interviews. Three congregations were small congregations and returned less than ten questionnaires. Sterland (2015) from NCLS explains in his email⁷.

⁶ See Chapter Five and Addendum.

⁷ >>> Sam Sterland <SSterland@ncls.org.au> 2015/06/12 01:49

“The reason these three churches have not had profiles produced is because their results would only be based on 6, 6, and 8 survey forms respectively. In Australian churches we usually do not supply the detailed results of a profile based on less than 10 forms. We have two reasons for this: “Confidentiality and Accuracy.”

Confidentiality – As Church attendees were given an undertaking that their responses were anonymous; when a small number of results are returned, it is possible in some questions that every person has answered the same way, giving values of 100% and 0% in places in the profile, and so the responses of individuals are known. Of course, theoretically this can happen for larger response numbers, but we have felt it necessary to take responsibility for protecting confidentiality at these low levels of response where such an outcome may be more common. In the case of confidentiality, drawing the line at 10 is arbitrary, but we have felt there is a need for this, based on responses we have seen in profiles based on so few people.

Accuracy – When a profile is based on so few people the results are: a) very blunt indeed, and b) more prone to spurious variations. This makes comparison to the denomination fairly meaningless and indeed misleading in many cases.

The researcher decided not to request the NCLS to provide more results for these congregations as the validity of the data is of the utmost importance. Only five congregations were then viable and willing to participate in the interview phases of this study.

The aim of these interviews is to learn how the leadership views the health of their congregations; and to gather information about the history and the ecology of the congregation, and to understand how they view their own congregation. The interviews will be recorded, transcribed, summarized and coded using the ATLAS.ti programme.

What is the ATLAS.ti programme? Friese (2014:vi) explains that in German ATLAS.ti is the acronym for “Archiv für Technik, Lebenswelt, Alltags Sprache” [Archive of Technology, Lifeworld and everyday Language]. ATLAS bears on the idea of mapping the world by an archive of meaningful documents. The abbreviation “ti” in the software name means texts interpretation. ATLAS.ti is especially suited in making the thinking part of qualitative data analysis visible (Friese, 2014:14). Friese argues that properly used software like ATLAS.ti can improve the validity of the research (Friese 2014: 267).

At the end of the initial interview, the results of the quantitative data of the Church Life Survey gathered during Phase One will be presented. The individual congregational profile (the circle of strengths) will be introduced to them. During this first meeting the researcher will have an agreement that a Focus Group will meet at a late stage after this presentation of the results and the profile.

1.5.5.3 Phase Three – Focus Group interviews

During Phase Three, focus group interviews will be conducted with a larger group of the leadership. The larger group will give a more balanced picture of the situation of the congregations in the Free State. This group will also have had time to study the results of the quantitative data gathered during Phase One. Their views will therefore be of critical importance. The focus group interviews will be discussed in Chapter Five.

What is the importance of Focus Group interviews?

During these interviews participants are able to build on each other's ideas and comments to provide an in-depth view not attainable from individual interviews. Many researchers argue that focus group interviews produce data, rich in detail that is very difficult to achieve with other research methods (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:90).

After the initial interviews, Focus Group Interviews will be conducted with a larger group of the leadership of all five of the participating congregations, to discuss the results of the survey and compare it with their views of the health of the congregations during the first interview. Three questions⁸ were prepared prior to the interviews to be discussed by the leadership. The validity of Focus Group interviews will be explored and the viability of this method to be used in this study will be researched in the next section. Further actions and strategies will be discussed to be put in place and to provide signs of hope for the congregation and to present the research and analysis to nurture life in both the leadership and the congregation and to plan for the future to help the congregation to live to the full (Powell, 2014).

⁸ See Chapter 6 and Addendum no 5

1.5.5.4 The nature and structure of a Focus Group?

Bryman (2004:346) describes the focus group method as a form of group interview in which there are several participants (in addition to the researcher); there is an emphasis in the questioning on a fairly tightly defined topic; the focus is upon the interaction within the group and the joint construction of meaning; the participants are involved in a particular situation and are asked about that involvement. Thus the focus group method appends to the focused interview the element of interaction within groups as an area of interest. It is more focused than the group interview. Berg & Lune (2012:166) suggest that focus groups are a useful strategy for stand-alone data-gathering strategy or as a line of action in a triangulated project. Osmer (2008:54) indicates that focus groups are about gathering verbal data on a topic with a group of ten or fewer people under the guidance of a discussion leader.

It is necessary however to differentiate between focus group interviews and group interviews. With a group interview a group of participants are asked to respond to a set of semi-structured or structured questions without arguing or debating the responses. With focus group interviews however, the discussions are focused on a particular topic and debate and arguing are encouraged. Participants build on each other's ideas and comments, in order to provide an in-depth view on the topic. It should provide valuable information on how people talk a topic and how they respond to being exposed to other participants' views (Nieuwenhuis, 2010:90). A of a limitation of a focus group sample is that it is relatively small and may not be representative (Nieuwenhuis, 2010:91). As with all qualitative data gathering, taking notes, recordings and capturing non-verbal cues are all of extreme importance. A distinguishing characteristic of focus groups is that oral data is combined with observation as a data gathering technique. Transcripts should be written in a question-by-question format to capture the groups' response to each question (Nieuwenhuis, 2010:92) and (Erwich, 2013:67, 83). A major advantage of focus groups is that members react to what is said by other members, which leads to a richer and deeper expression of opinion and is stimulating to the respondents. Polit and Beck (2008:395) warn that a "group think" may take hold of the respondents as the dynamics of the interview may foster a group culture which may inhibit individual expression, but immediately reassures that studies on focus group interviews have shown that they are similar to individual interviews in respects of number and quality of ideas. Berg and Lune (2012:173) differentiates between focus

group interviews and face-to-face interviews. With focus groups, the researcher is able to observe interactions during a discussion. It is the give-and-take interactions that lead to spontaneous responses from session participants. With face-to-face interviews researchers may never learn how participants might have discussed issues amongst themselves.

Botma *et al.* (2010:210) explains that a focus group is a carefully planned “focused” group interview, which involves a kind of collective activity and discussion determined by the researcher. The emphasis is on the information the researcher wishes to obtain, rather than the needs of the group. Gillham (2005:60) adds that focus groups are focused in two ways: a tightly defined topic for discussion (the *content focus*) and a specifically defined group of individuals (the *group composition focus*). In this study the researcher will focus on both aspects. Predetermined questions will be used in the focus group discussions which will make it *content focused*. Only members of the leadership of the participating congregations will make up the groups, which will also make it *group composition focused*.

Focus groups provide an additional mechanism to engage communities. Potentially it can generate a deep understanding of how individuals feel about an issue (NCVHS, 2014:20). Focus groups can supply a wealth of detailed information and insight. It can create an environment that puts participants at ease and allows them to answer questions thoughtfully in their own words and add meaning to their answers. Focus groups are advisable when one wants to understand issues of a deeper nature (NCVHS, 2005:1). Krueger and Casey (2008) explains that focus groups offer a powerful alternative to conducting surveys. Focus groups allow for the collection of qualitative data from a smaller group of respondents whose responses are often more useful in closing the assessment loop. The main purpose is to collect opinions, beliefs, and attitudes of the focus population regarding your programme. Carlsen and Glenton (2011:1-6) define a focus group as a method of collecting research data through moderated group discussion based on the participants' perceptions and experience of a topic decided by the researcher. Focus groups differ from group interviews in that the emphasis is on the interaction between the participants rather than between the moderator or researcher and the participants. Prevention by Design (2006:1-6) mentions that the goal of a focus group is to gain insight and understanding regarding a topic by hearing from the participants in depth. Focus groups are therefore, generally

small, in order to allow all participants to have ample time to talk, and to deal with topics in a more in-depth way than is possible through a survey. Campbell (2008:1) explains that it is best to select a group that is relatively homogenous in order to reduce inhibitions and facilitate interaction.

Cohen *et al.* (2007:377) admits that focus groups have their limitations and argues that they tend not to yield numerical, quantifiable or generalisable data; the data may be difficult to analyse succinctly, amongst others. Bless *et al.* (2006:122) however, reveals the advantages of focus groups and states that the participants can discuss the issues in question amongst each other. One person's ideas may trigger a string of related thoughts and ideas in the other participants. One person may also disagree with the thoughts of another person, and this creates an opportunity for the whole group to explore the disagreement in detail, which may lead to a much deeper understanding of the issue. He argues that this debate will give the researcher a much deeper understanding of the issues than he would have gained with individual interviews.

Focus group interviews will thus be a viable and informative method to gather a part of the information needed to answer the research question and to come to a reliable conclusion. The nature of focus groups will help to give a deeper understanding of the participating congregations and to collect and observe the opinions, beliefs, and attitudes of the participating leaders.

1.5.5.5 The role of the Researcher in a Focus Group setting

The researcher should create an environment where everyone is expected to participate and no single perspective will be favoured. He poses some open-ended questions to guide the discussion, taking notes and recording the session so that the information can be analysed later. Polit and Beck (2008:395) agree and state that researchers should ensure that a few vocal people should not dominate the discussion.

A focus group is a small group led by a researcher, large enough to ensure a rich discussion but not so large as to leave some participants out. The moderator (researcher) leads the discussion in an open and spontaneous format in order to generate a maximum number of different ideas and opinions from as many participants in the allotted time. The ideal amount of time is from 45 to 90 minutes. Focus groups

are structured around a set of carefully predetermined questions, generally not more than 10. It is not a debate, not group therapy, not a conflict resolution session or a problem solving session; not an opportunity to collaborate, not a promotional opportunity and also not an educational session (NCVHS, 2005:1, 2).

How involved should the moderator (researcher) be? Bryman (2004:352) points out that the aim in qualitative research is to obtain insights of the perspectives of those being studied. The approach should thus not be intrusive and structured. The researchers therefore use a very small number of general questions to guide the focus group session. Quite a lot of latitude is allowed to participants as it allows the researcher a better chance of getting access to what individuals sees as important.

1.5.5.6 The location for a Focus Group interview

Serious attention should be given to the location used for the focus group discussions. Polit & Beck (2008:395) recommends that a comfortable location should be selected which is accessible, easy to find, and not intimidating.

This study has to do with the leadership of Seventh-day Adventist congregations. Locations will be used where participants will feel comfortable, for example the church hall, board room or at the Manse. The researcher will allow the leadership to guide him in the choice of a location for each congregation.

1.5.5.7 The recommended size of a Focus Group

There seems to be no set criteria as regards the size of a focus group discussion, and views amongst scholars vary. Tang & Davis (1995:474) argue that it is difficult to decide on the optimal number of participants that should be included in a focus group. Critical factors for the determination of the size of a focus group remain uncertain. NCVHS (2005:1) suggests 6-10 respondents.

Tynan & Drayton (1988:5,6) quote various sources and then state that the most widely recommended size for a group discussion is between 8-12 respondents, and report that for more difficult projects, or a more sensitive subjects matter, using fewer respondents is advised. Lipstein (1975:34) states that increasing sample size is

not a guarantee of increasing accuracy. He argues that sheer size makes errors highly likely. Errors that increase with sample size are called non-sampling errors. It includes errors due to factors such as interviewer bias, mistakes in coding, respondent and interviewer fatigue. Increasing the size of a sample decreases the sampling error but it also increases the non-sampling error. Krueger and Casey (2008) suggests that the ideal size of a focus group is 8-10 subjects. Carlsen & Glenton (2011) report that many of the 220 papers reviewed were characterised by an insufficient reporting of sample size. 102 (46%) did not report minimum and maximum number of participants in the focus groups. Prevention by Design (2006) believes that focus groups generally work best with 8-12 respondents. Campbell (2008:1) indicates that focus groups typically consist of 7-10 participants. Mayhew (2015:2) suggests that the moderator (researcher) should decide whether a 3-5 member focus group is manageable for the number of discussion topics. Nieuwenhuis (2010:91) suggests a 5-12 size focus group. Polit & Beck (2008:394) suggests a group of 4 or more, whilst Gillham (2005:65) stipulates a size of 6-10.

This study will opt for a minimum size of 5 respondents in the focus groups, as the participating congregations are relatively small in number, but will request at least 7 participants in case some do not turn up; as Bryman (2004:351) aptly warns that a major problem is, that people agree to participate but do not turn up. He points out that it is almost impossible to control for “no-shows” other than to consciously over recruit.

1.5.5.8 Guidelines for the actual Focus group interview

Bryman (2004:356) recommends that a focus group interview begins with an introduction whereby the respondents are thanked for their participation, introduce themselves, outline the goals, explain the reasons for recording the sessions and sketch out the format. It is important to present certain principles of a focus group, for instance: only one person should speak at a time (perhaps explaining the difficulty in transcribing when two persons speak simultaneously). The data will be treated confidentially and anonymously. The session is open and everyone’s opinions are important, as well as the amount of time. Forms will be handed out to be completed by the participants about the socio-demographic information. In conclusion moderators

should thank the respondents for taking part and explain what will happen to the data.

The focus group interviews will be recorded and then transcribed. Bryman (2004:360) indicates that recordings are time consuming to transcribe because of variations in voice pitch and the need to take into account of “who says what”. Focus group interview recordings are also prone to inaudible elements, which affect transcription (Bryman 2004:357). The researcher will be interested not only by what the respondents say, but also how they say it, for instance the language they use to say it. The nuances of the language they employ will be lost if the researcher has to rely on notes (Bryman, 2004:349). Burns and Grove (2009:520) point out that tape-recorded interviews are generally transcribed word for word. Gillham (2005:62) mentions that tape-recordings might be feasible where all participants speak up clearly, identify themselves and don’t over-talk. He argues that in his experience interviews are nothing like this but more like dog-fights. He suggests that video recordings will be less difficult to understand and analyse, because it will be easier to hear what people are saying when you can see them due to the fact that non-verbal cues are present. It will be easier to identify them because you can see them talking.

In this study an attempt will be made to get a clearer picture about the situation of congregations and help the congregation leadership to evaluate their position. Both the interviews will assist in this goal. Guidelines may possibly be drawn up in order to produce a more comprehensive strategy for congregations which could be followed to reach the desired situation in congregations. The usability of the study by the congregations will be discussed below.

1.6 THE VALUE OF THIS STUDY

The study will provide useful information to Seventh-day Adventist Congregations in the Free State to understand their strengths and weaknesses; to understand the situation they find themselves in, and to help congregations to fulfil their mission as a church. Dudley (2006:51) states that it will help congregations to determine what actions to take to strengthen their congregations. Powell (2015) explains that the study will create a mirror in which the congregation can reflect and build on what they see. She points out that the data will help congregational leaders to match Pastors and

congregations by consulting the profiles. It will provide valuable insight for the allocation of funding for congregations by considering the vitality of the congregation. The data will help to evaluate mission goals as the goals can be built around the survey questions. Congregations can also be ranked on a particular quality - strong, medium and weak which will help congregational leadership in their decision-making concerning congregations in an area. It will also enable the church leadership to look across the region, and look for gaps to see if there is a particular need for training in a given area.

The purpose of this dissertation will be to ascertain what a congregation needs in their outlook and the way of attending to, and going about their high calling in order to be an effective, healthy missional congregation. The members of the congregation need to be heard. Schoeman (2010:115) explains that the National Church Life Survey is a process that will help the leadership of a congregation to hear the voices of members. This will give the congregation the resources to do introspection and to apply the information. Powell (2015) explains that the NCLS is a tool which allows one to listen to all the attendees of the congregation: i.e. the long timers, the newcomers, and persons with or without leadership roles. Dudley (2006:51) agrees and points out that the congregants will be able to measure their strength indices in comparison with the overall figures to determine their strong and weak points. Powell (2015) argues that it enables the congregation to see the effectiveness of their ministry. This is vital as the context of our communities is changing rapidly and we need to test our assumptions about "what works". She warns that the gap between congregations and the community is widening. We therefore need a strong and healthy congregation to take part in God's mission.

Powell (2015) advises that we should hold up the mirror to the church to identify the weak and strong points of the local congregation. This study will provide the congregations of the necessary data to identify the strong and weak points, and will indicate what is needed to be effective and what to do to obtain the necessary tools and methods in order to achieve effectiveness. The application of the information will affect the wellbeing and growth of the church at large. Dudley (2006:54) points out that the data can be used to challenge Seventh-day Adventist Congregations. Comparisons with other faith groups' data will allow them to discover what their congregations is doing well and what they are not doing well.

The Congregational Life Study will thus be of vital importance to ascertain the faith and involvement in the lives of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist congregations. It will help to gain insight into the Free State context and will contribute immensely to operate the local congregation in a more structured and intelligent way to meet the needs in the congregation and the community, and ensure a growing and healthy local congregation which will have a ripple effect in the Seventh-day Adventist Church at large. It will fill a gap in the knowledge base of the Church. The Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State needs an analysis of their congregations they can rely on and use to strategise the way forward. It is however important to consider the ethical aspects of the study and this will be discussed in the following section.

1.7 ETHICAL ASPECTS

Maree and van der Westhuizen (2010:41, 42) point out the importance to highlight the ethical considerations in regard to the research. The confidentiality of the results and findings of the study and the protection of the participants' identities are essential. Strydom (2011:113) states that research should be based on mutual trust, acceptance, co-operation, promises and well accepted conventions and expectations between all parties involved in a research projects. He warns that data should never be obtained at the expense of human beings. This study will be done with utmost integrity and with the highest ethical standards. Meetings will be held with the South African Seventh-day Adventist leaders at the offices of the South African Union Conference, by the researcher, and the supervisor will also have contact with them. It will involve the President of the South African Union Conference and any other officers. The researcher will periodically involve them, to ensure their full consent, support and co-operation. Care will be taken to ensure that the methods of research and the results will not be damaging to the Church at large, or cause risk to any Conference, local congregation or individual. The study will be conducted with complete transparency and in such a way that the end result will be of great value to the Church. All information collected will be depersonalised and treated in a confidential manner. Utmost care will be taken to avoid plagiarism at all cost by giving acknowledgement to

all quoted contributors.⁹

1.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter highlights the lack of insight the congregations have into their own situation and the role they need to play to be an effective missional congregation and the need to function in a more structured manner. The research question and its sub-questions ask the question whether the Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State, are healthy missional congregations in view of their relationships with God, each other and with the community, and in their understanding of a missional congregation? It was pointed out that knowledge about the weaknesses and strengths of the church will be of great value to the church at large. The ethical aspects of the study was discussed and it was pointed out that the research should be based on mutual trust, acceptance, co-operation, promises and well-accepted conventions and expectations between all parties involved in a research projects. Research methodology was investigated. Quantitative, qualitative and the mixed methods approach where discussed. It was decided that the mixed method approach will be the most effective approach for this study. Focus group interviews will make out an important facet of the research and it was decided that groups should not be smaller than five respondents.

The four tasks of Osmer where discussed as an important tool in this study. Osmer proposes four questions namely: What is going on? Why is it going on? What ought to be going on? And how might we respond? Osmer states that answering each of these questions focuses on one of the four tasks of practical theological interpretation: the descriptive-empirical task; the interpretive task, the normative task and the pragmatic task. These four tasks and their four questions will be utilised in this study of the Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State. Healthy and missional congregations was then shortly discussed but will be elaborated on in Chapter Two.

Under the research methodology, the three research approaches were discussed namely quantitative research, qualitative research and the mixed methods approach.

⁹ See letter in Addendum 1.

This study will use the mixed methods approach making use of both questionnaires (quantitative) and interviews (qualitative). Focus group interviews will be conducted. The focus group interview is described as an interview with several participants with a tightly defined topic with the focus on interaction between the participants. It was decided that a minimal size of five respondents will take part in a focus group. Chapter Two will focus on healthy missional congregations. What is understood under healthy congregations? How to evaluate a congregation? What is a missional congregation?

CHAPTER 2 : HEALTHY MISSIONAL CONGREGATIONS

In this chapter the term, missional congregations will be explored, and it will be endeavoured to answer the critical question: What is a healthy missional congregation? To understand the question, three aspects need to be discussed in depth. The three aspects are, *healthy congregations*, *how to evaluate a healthy congregation*, *missional theology and missional congregations*. These three aspects are closely linked to each other. It is necessary to understand what is expected of a congregation for it to be healthy and then how to analyse a congregation to get the bigger picture of its situation. With this background and using it as a foundation, it can be ascertained what missional theology is and which identifying components should be present in a missional congregation. A proper understanding of what a missional and healthy congregation is, is of great importance to this study to evaluate whether the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State is a missional church. An understanding of a missional congregation is necessary to answer the main research question whether the Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church is a healthy missional church. Osmer (2008:80) explains that the second task, the interpretive task of practical theological interpretation, is to draw on theories that allow us to understand the issues (Osmer, 2008:80). He further explains that theoretical interpretation is the ability to draw on theories of the arts and sciences to understand and respond to particular episodes, situations, or context. Theories construct knowledge from a particular perspective, or position (Osmer, 2008:83). The issue that needs interpretation is healthy and missional congregations. The three aspects will be discussed in depth. Views on healthy congregations of various scholars will be explored. Suggestions on how to evaluate a congregation will be researched and then missional theology and missional congregations will be discussed.

2.1 HEALTHY CONGREGATIONS

The main question of this study is a vital question that cuts to the bone of every congregation. "Is our congregation healthy?" The answer is often, "we don't know." If the answer is "no", or "not really", then the important question which would follow is: "Is there any hope that our congregation can be healthy?" A congregation's situation may look hopeless but Warren (1995:398) believes that new life can be breathed into dry

bones by God. This study will give an honest answer to the first question, “is our congregation healthy?”, and will give hope in case the second question needs to be asked, “is there any hope that our congregation can be healthy?”

What is understood under the concept “healthy congregations?” What is a healthy congregation? Careful planning, time and education of the congregation will be necessary to create a healthy congregation. To build a healthy congregation, time must be spent to lay a solid foundation. To achieve that, it is of vital importance to clarify in each member’s mind exactly why the church exists and what the purpose of the congregation is. It often is the case that the congregation does not understand, or has forgotten, what church is all about (Warren, 1995:86). The members of each congregation are important resources of vitality and health of their congregations. Vital healthy congregations, from an ecclesiological perspective, have strengths such as helping members to grow spiritually, caring relationships, strong community involvement, and inspiring leadership. These differences can be mapped through comparison and reflects theologically on the desired future of the life of the congregations (Hermans & Schoeman, 2015b:53).

The NCLS identifies three aspects or core qualities that have proven to be a most helpful way to research congregational vitality. The three core qualities are the *Internal Core Qualities*; the *Inspirational Core Qualities* and the *External (Outward) Core Qualities*. Grouped under these three core qualities are nine Core Qualities of church Life. Under the *Internal Core Quality* are alive and growing *Faith*; vital and nurturing *Worship* and strong and growing *Belonging*. Under the *Inspirational Core Quality* are clear and owned *Vision*; inspiring and empowering *Leadership* and imaginative and flexible *Innovation*. Under the *External (outward) Core Quality* are practical and diverse *Service*; willing and effective *Faith-sharing* and intentional and welcoming *Inclusion*. Measuring these core qualities based upon the survey responses provides a useful analysis tool for congregations to measure their vitality and health. (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:4, 5). Powell (2015) declares that a healthy church has a relationship with God, a relationship with each other, and a relationship with the wider community, and is open to new possibilities. Nel and Schoeman (2015:137) submits that we are in more than one way our relationships. Scholars agree with these qualities in one way or another as will be seen in the following discussion.

The perception of the researcher sometimes is that members of a congregation tend to go to church, listen to a sermon and go back home. That is their life in the church in total. Tucker (2015:381) argues that being missional needs to be continually fuelled by the grace of God, constantly experienced and repeatedly exalted in corporate worship. Samaan (1990:30) points out that the church should be a refuge where hurt persons find healing and restoration in Christ and His people and adds that: “the church is a hospital for sinners, not a museum for saints”. The internal core quality is an essential quality of a healthy congregation.

Schoeman (2015c:366) indicates that a critical question for congregations will be if they are on a maintenance or missional route? Samaan (1990:34) suggests that it would be wise to have a look at how Christ operated to understand how the local church should operate. Christ’s focus was first and foremost on people. His programme was not categorised by activities and meetings. He chose ordinary men to reach the crowds. Burrill (1993:15) submits that a healthy church must be an active, dynamic and healthy organism. It was not the purpose of the church to become a “navel-gazing institution”. The church was called into existence for the purpose to make disciples among all ethnic groups. Burrill (1993:36) suggests that the best remedy for a sick church is to put it to work. Spectator Christianity becomes critical, sterile and unproductive as the focus is directed on itself and its vision is lost. The eternal core quality emphasise the activities of the congregation to serve the community.

To become a healthy congregation, the members have to realize that they have to break away from being a stagnant, inactive, lifeless congregation. Burger (1999:203-260) suggests that the activities of a healthy congregation should be divided into four ministries namely *leitourgia*, *kerugma*, *koinonia* and *diakonia*.

Leitourgia is being used as an umbrella understanding for all the worship activities of the congregation. Through the *Leitourgia* activities, the congregation gives expression to its living relationship with God and through the liturgical service they would live in this relationship with God. The primary reason to attend church should then be to worship God. This correlates with the Internal Core Quality of Worship proposed by the NCLS.

Kerugma points to the proclaiming of the message of the gospel. It has to do with all the activities in the congregation which focus on the Bible and its message and the knowledge of God. It correlates with the External (outward) Core Quality Faith-sharing of the NCLS.

Koinonia has to do with fellowship, supportive and community activities that believers in the congregation execute whereby Christians are tied together to experience the care and healing power of the gospel. This correlates with the Internal Core Quality Belonging of the NCLS. Rice (2014:1) submits that Paul's letters to first-century Christian groups around the Mediterranean Sea indicate that when it came to the church, the apostle wanted to cultivate among the Christians not only a sense of solidarity with Christians everywhere, but also an intimate connection with one another, within the specific locale where they lived. Although he wanted "the intimate, close-knit life of the local groups [to be] seen... simultaneously [as] part of a much larger, indeed ultimately worldwide, movement or entity," (Meeks, 1983:75). It was, as Meeks (1983:74) observes, "concern about the internal life of the Christian groups in each city that prompted most of the correspondence." The principal object of Paul's concern was the way Christians interacted with each other within their local communities. These local groups are described: "a high level of commitment is demanded, the degree of direct interpersonal engagement is strong, the authority structure is fluid and charismatic ..., and internal boundaries are weak...." (Meeks, 1983:190). Each congregation brought into "intimate fellowship persons of a wide mix of social levels" (Meeks 1983:191), and each congregation "enjoyed an unusual degree of intimacy, high levels of interaction among members, and a very strong sense of internal cohesion and of distinction both from outsiders and from "the world"" (Meeks, 1983:74). Paul was concerned about relations within the community; the way Christians treated each other (Rice 2014:3).

Diakonia has to do with the call of the gospel to serve other people with self-denying deeds of love. This would mean that the community would feel the presence of the congregation in their area. This correlates with the external Core Quality of Service of the NCLS. Burrill (1998:7-8) points out that the Great Commission stands as the "Magna Carta" of the Christian Church. It is its reason for existence. Disobedience to the commission means that you are unfaithful to the authoritative Jesus. Erickson (1983:1061) agrees by pointing out that the call to evangelise is a "command." Burrill

(1998:10) further argues that Israel was commissioned to create a caring community that reflected the true God. They were placed at the crossroads of civilization where all the other nations would come to them to learn of God. In contrast Christ commissions the new Israel to go to the nations. He states that the church must be a Great Commission church and its life and practice must revolve around the fulfilment of that commission (Burrill, 1998:14-15). Nel (2015:109) points out that the congregation, which came into being through the *Missio Dei*, has to be in mission, be a mission in all it says and does. Burrill (1998:29-30) strongly warns that when the church loses its reason for existence, it may become a social club rather than the church of Jesus Christ and submits that the mission-centered New Testament church was organized for the purpose of mission but it seems that often churches today are organized for the preservation of the saints. Bultmann (1951, 1955: 1:130) agrees: "The *ecclesia* is not a club in which like-minded individuals have banded together...; [nor] a conglomeration of the Spirit-endowed, each of whom has and enjoys his private relationship to Christ".

Brunner (1990:1094) notices five "alls" that form this commission: "All [*pasa*] authority," "all [*panta*] nations," "into the name [of all of God]," "all [*panta*] that I commanded you," "with you all [*pasas*] the days." The congregation needs then to be healthy, active, and obedient to the command of God, internally and externally to be a healthy congregation. A relevant question then is: how should the congregation be felt by the community? Barth (1936:1) noted that one of the ways the church witnesses to Jesus Christ is simply by its existence. Erickson (1983:1060-1069) adds that a balance of the functions of the church: evangelism, edification, worship, and social concern is essential to the spiritual health and well-being of the body. Berkhof (1939:565) explains that the church is not all about prayer and meditation, although it is very necessary and important, she must be engaged with all her might in the battles of Christ, to become the triumphant church in heaven. Reineke (2013:5) reports on a document that The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist issued in 2011 giving direction to the world church. It declares that Jesus met the physical, emotional and social needs of people. The congregation therefore should also answer all the needs of people and not only to the spiritual needs which is often the only focus in our evangelism. Krause (2013: 18-20) reports on Stephen Haskell's beliefs, (a senior Adventist evangelist and leader), that Christ's followers should follow His incarnational ministry – living and

ministering among the community to come in direct contact with those needing help. The purpose of the church is to show the love of God to men (Hyde, 1965:11).

Boer (1961:161,162) indicates that the church is missional by nature. He writes: "Restlessly the Spirit drives the church to witness, and continually churches rise out of the witness". Mission in the Christian church is not an optional extra (Khathide, 1999:137). Mission is an undertaking in behalf of another – in this context the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. We stand in His stead and speak in His behalf – a divine Mission. To do this we need a personal relationship with Jesus Christ (Froom, 1971:629-630). He declares that this sense of mission is to be the incentive in all preaching, teaching, witnessing and service (Froom, 1971:634). To be a witness for Christ is to give first-hand information because of having seen, heard or known something himself. We need the same intimate experiences with Christ as the disciples, before we can be witnesses (SDA, 1952:501). The church member is different because he lives in the presence of, and according to the standards of Christ, and as far as his fellow man is concerned, he lives in the fellowship of brotherhood. All gifts that God has given man must be used in service (Barclay, 1958:181-182). The church is the instrument of Christ to bring life, light and salvation to men (Barclay 1958:186-187). Moreau (2004:89) suggests that the mission of the church is that it be used by God to witness to people about the reconciliation offered in Christ; to invite people to worship their Creator by leading them to Christ; to incorporate those led to Christ into local church contexts; and to teach them, as people reconciled to God, to obey all that Christ commanded in being salt and light in the world.

Erwich (2013:13) proposes seven characteristics of a flourishing congregation: *It has a clear identity and vision; It realises the importance of a connection with other groups and communities in the area; It gives high priority to the creation of opportunities to share faith experiences and values; It consciously establish a connection between faith and daily living; It is being led by a team; It is open to leading; It is willing to be taught by other congregations.* These characteristics correspond with the Inspirational core qualities of the NCLS.

2.1.1 Conclusion of the healthy congregation's discussion

From the above discussion it can be derived that in a healthy congregation the three

core qualities: the Internal, Inspirational and External (outward) Core Qualities will be in place. Each member will know and understand why the congregation exists and what the purpose of the congregation is. A healthy congregation will be a refuge where hurt persons find healing and restoration in Christ and His people. A healthy congregation will be an active, dynamic and healthy organism with a living relationship with God. All the activities in the congregation will focus on the Bible and its message and the knowledge of God. A healthy congregation will be strong in fellowship, be supportive and active in community activities that will tie them together to experience the care and healing power of the gospel. A healthy congregation will serve other people with self-denying deeds of love, creating a caring community that reflects the true God. A healthy congregation will accept their purpose of mission: evangelism, edification, worship, and social concern, which is essential to the spiritual health and well-being of the congregation. A healthy congregation should therefore answer to all the needs of people. Knight (1991:20) warns however that there is a widespread sense that what was formerly appropriate in worship, has ceased to be so, with the result that many find themselves with no Christian community in which they feel truly at home in worship.

It is necessary to evaluate a congregation to know if the congregation meets the needs of the people and operates the way God intended the congregation to operate. This evaluation will be the topic of discussion below.

2.2 HOW TO EVALUATE A CONGREGATION

The purpose of this section is to explore how to evaluate a congregation. Different ways to evaluate a congregation will be discussed. Congregational analysis are important to help get the bigger picture. Nel (2009a:1) explains that analysis is an investigation of the component parts of the whole and adds that congregational analysis is often a result of the realisation that the congregation is not what it should be (Nel, 2015:268).

It is important when analysing congregations, to focus on the positives. The principle of the NCLS and this study is that it seeks to identify the strengths of the congregations, not simply focusing on the weaknesses. The strengths of the congregations are the springboards of the future. Where there are weaknesses, they can best be addressed

by extending what is done that works well (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:2). Woolever and Bruce (2008:3) endeavoured to change the mind-set from “what’s wrong with us” to “what’s right with us.” Schoeman and Van den Berg (2011:1) agree by stating that the traditional approach of only solving what is wrong is challenged by newer perspectives emphasising the meaning of an appreciation for the positive. Nelson and Cooper (2007:3) propose a moving away from a disease and dysfunction model to a new look at the world. A focus on positive attributes of people and organizations means looking at organisational behavior in a new light. The methodology of Appreciative Inquiry will express this positive focus. Schoeman and Van den Berg (2011:4) argue that the focus on the positive, represents the question of what is working and what would add value to the relevant organization, the viewpoint of the research. In the inquiry of that which is positive and is perceived as strengths, positive change is facilitated. Cooperrider *et al.* (2003: xvii) confirms that every organisation has something that works right. Appreciative Inquiry begins by identifying what is positive and connecting to it in ways that heighten energy and vision for change. Retief (2009:24) affirms that the concept of the positive core is central to the Appreciative Inquiry model. Schoeman and Van den Berg (2011:7) states that it is the imagination of the appreciation of the positive which is reflected in the methodology of Appreciative Inquiry. The principle of the NCLS to focus on the strengths of the congregations and not the weaknesses fits well into the principles of the Appreciative Inquiry and the approach of this study.

Hendriks (2004:37-43) describes three different ways of distinguishing between congregations namely *Denomination*; *Church size*; and *Social location*, but points out that the differences in identity and spirituality are much more profound (Hendriks, 2004:44). Nel (2009a:13) identifies 4 variables in Congregational analysis namely: *Size*; *Type of church*; *Context* and *Theological alignment*. He proposes that size actually does make a difference and indicates that there are different ways to refer to different size churches. Rothauge (1983:5) and Mann (1998:3) made the following distinctions: 50 members active and attending worship ... *family church*; 50-150 active members ... *pastoral church*; 150-350 active members ... *programme church* and 350-500 and over, active members ... *corporation church*. Callahan (1990:8, 9) and McIntosh (1999:22) proposed three sizes: *Small church*: 15-200 regularly in worship: 80% of all churches; *Medium church*: 201-400 regularly in worship: 10% of all churches and *Large churches*: 402+ regularly in worship: 10% of churches. The

Seventh-day Adventist Congregations will fall under the small family and pastoral congregational categories. Nel (2009a:13) rightly submits that size is a critical variable in congregational analysis as it impacts on ministry.

Nel (2009b:13) points out that often only two types of churches are identified namely: *growing* and *declining* (dying) churches but rightly employs four types as distinguished by Dick (2007:10-14): *vital; dystrophic; retrogressive* and *decaying* churches. Nel (2009a:13) argues that *contexts* require separate analysis to be helpful and will be more effective if it precedes a congregational analysis. A local congregation should “classify” its context with regard to demographics and geography. Hendriks (2004:43) labels it “social location” as variable: *Small rural congregations* (one pastor); *Rural congregations* (with two to four pastors); *Larger town congregations* (where more than four ministers serve); *Apartment and extra-ordinary congregations* (downtown) or inner-city congregations with high-rise buildings student congregations, congregations for deaf and blind people, etc.) and *Suburban congregations*.

As far as *Theological alignment* is concerned, Nel (2009a:13) declares that he seriously considers to use the seven streams of religious traditions as proposed by Ammermann (2005:4) in American congregations: *Conservative Protestant 52%; Mainline Protestant 26%; African American Protestant 8%; Catholic and Orthodox 6%; Sectarian groups 3%; Jews 1%; and Other religions 4%*. Nel (2009a:13) states that his analysis approach is based on his understanding of *The missional identity of the congregation; The congregation as inter mediator in the coming of God to His world; and The church’s main reason for existence, namely enjoying the King while serving the coming of his Kingdom*. He suggests that the focus should be an attempt to get congregations to reflect theologically on who they are and where they are going, and then to answer the integrity question: Are we serving God’s coming to us and through us to our context, our world, His world within our reach? This will be a more theological approach.

Nel (2009b:4) indicates that what the church does and can do and what the church is and can become, takes priority in congregational analysis. Nel (2009b:2) points out that in congregational analysis, the theological identity of congregations, impacts and determines *when and how* they are analysed; an empirical identity informs the *content* of the analysis; an empirical identity determines the *kind of process* and the *outcomes*

of the analysis (strategies).

Hendriks (2004:33) points out that after doing research and interviews in the present or contextual reality, a dialogue with or debate about the reality of the past and its normative content ensues. In their analysis of congregations, Woolever and Bruce (2008:3) wanted to change the mind-set from “what’s wrong with us” to “what’s right with us.” Five other “universals to purpose and mission” are used to help define congregations: Congregations create spaces and places for emotional bonding; seek to educate worshippers about the expected behaviours; wish to share their faith and beliefs to others and seek new people to join; serve members and non-members and convey to all that life has ultimate meaning (Woolever & Bruce, 2004:3).

Hendriks (2004:69-195) describes four ways of analysing a congregation, which are four different perspectives, namely. *A contextual analysis*: The ecology of the congregation; *The identity analysis*: The culture of a congregation; *The process analysis*: Relationships and communication in the congregation; and *The resources analysis*: The profile and assets of the congregation. Nel (2009a:12) submits that empirical research is about a search for the vital signs of God’s presence and the preparedness of the church to be His plan for the coming of His Kingdom but immediately reminds us that there is also another text – The Bible. He attempts to bring the two texts together and to suggest a way forward; a way for reading the congregation as a text in context. Hendriks (2004:13) emphasises a critical understanding of the local congregation, its 1) *context*, 2) *identity*, 3) *processes* and 4) *resources*. He explains that local analysis points to where the members of the faith community are involved in a vocationally based, critical and constructive interpretation of their present reality (Hendriks, 2004:24). Nel (2015:256,257) points out that congregational analysis is not a process of self-analysis merely for the pleasure of listing the faults and weaknesses of the congregation. It is an investigation undertaken by the “self” in order to get to know one’s own situation better, or to understand it more thoroughly.

In the evaluation of congregations, the ecology of each congregation is vital to keep in consideration as the congregations operate and function in a specific setting. What is meant by the ecology of a congregation? Hendriks (2004:22) defines ecology as a branch of science concerned with the interrelationship of organisms and their environments. He argues that any congregation is part of, or exists in, a larger

society and culture. If the members of a congregation consider themselves to be a missional church, then they should regard their society as the place where they should witness and serve. To be faithful and effective in their serving a congregation should understand the organisational ecology of its society, how things work and how one gets things done in the bigger world around the congregation (Hendriks, 2004:94). Ecology refers to internal and external relationships with people and institutions (Van den Berg, 2010:113; De Geus, 1997:32).

In the study of the ecology of congregations¹⁰, Thumma (2000-2006:1) suggests a few very valid and practical guides to highlight frames of Studying Congregations. It is important to define *the community*. What is the town all about? Why are they there? Is it a residential area, a commercial town or an industrial environment? Is the town maintained and neat? Is the community in the process of changing? How would you *describe the people*? What can one tell about their lifestyles? What is the pace of the people in the street? Are they leisurely strolling or are they in a hurry. What interaction is there in the streets and public places? Is the community in the process of changing? *Identify invisible people and institutions*. Who is missing in the picture? Which groups are not in the streets? Which businesses do you see? Who is marginalised? What are the *unseen social forces at work*? What are the local economic and political forces that are shaping the community? How will it affect the future. What conditions are shaping this community? What is the relationship between religious groups and the community? *Examine the congregation's immediate environment*. Are the church grounds well kept? What is access to the church like, for example, parking, gates, hedges)? Is the congregation a prophetic spiritual voice, a service provider or leisure centre? How does the church building compare with the neighbourhood?

Theological issues. What is the congregation saying to the community about their role in the world? Are there overt issues like poverty, racial intolerance, or ageism that should be addressed? Where is God in the community? What is the function of the church in this community? Is this a valid Christian expression in the community? *What challenges are there for leadership in this congregation*? How does the context hinder or support the practicality in leading this congregation? What issues in the ecological matrix are enjoying the attention of the leadership, and how do they address it?

¹⁰ See Chapter Three for a discussion on the ecology of each of the Free State SDA congregations.

Are there further issues that need to be addressed?

These questions are necessary to be investigated to understand the environment in which each congregation finds it. Because of the constantly changing context in which a congregation operates it may have a strong influence on how the members believe, belong and engage (Schoeman, 2015a:103). These ecological factors have an important influence on the congregation's perceptions, actions and engagements with the community. This study will utilize these ecological factors to understand the environment that each congregation operates in, to help with the evaluation process of the congregations in the Free State. The most important factors this study will investigate are the immediate location of the congregation, the type of area in which it is situated, the community it serves and the needs of that community. Under the ecology the history of the town and congregation, the demographics and the environment will be discussed.¹¹

2.2.1 Conclusion on the analysis of a congregation

An understanding of the evaluation of a congregation is relevant for the correct evaluation of the Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State. The size, nature, location (rural or urban) and environment needs to be kept in mind to do a fair evaluation. These evaluations will assist the congregations to know their own situation better and to understand it more thoroughly and will also help the congregations to take courage and mobilise their members to be His plan for the coming of His kingdom.

All the Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State are small congregations. Seven of the eleven congregations do not have their own pastor, but share the pastor with two or three other congregations. Most of these congregations are far apart and makes it very difficult for the pastor to give proper attention to all the congregations in his district. One of the congregations does not have a pastor at all. The membership of the Free State congregations was seriously affected by not only the depopulation of the white communities in the area, but also the young people who leave to go to the larger centres for educational purposes. All these factors need to be taken in

¹¹ See Chapter Three.

consideration in the evaluation of the congregations.

Because of the fact that the eleven Free State Seventh-day Adventist congregations are small, the distinctions that Nel, Rothauge and Mann propose will best accommodate all the Free State congregations namely: Family- and Pastoral congregations. The study might also determine which type of church the congregations are, namely Nel's growing or declining types. All eleven congregations will fall into Nel's context of small congregations (one pastor), as all the congregations have only one pastor, but one pastor does not only have one congregation. All the pastors in the Free State have at least two churches. The NCLS core qualities will be used in the evaluation of the congregations in the Free State as well as the methodology of appreciative enquiry which expresses the positive focus.

After acquiring an understanding of the evaluation of a congregation, it is now necessary to explore missional theology and missional congregations to know what a congregation should strive to become. These aspects will be explored below.

2.3 MISSIONAL THEOLOGY AND MISSIONAL CONGREGATIONS

This section is of critical importance to this study as it asks whether the Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church is a missional church, or not. It is therefore imperative to understand what a missional church is. The aim of this section on missional theology and missional congregations is to discover what missional theology and a missional congregation is.

Theology is to know God, to discern His will and guidance for the way we should live and witness. God is missional (Hendriks, 2004:24). Donkor (2008) explained that the word *Theology* is made up of two words namely: *Theos* - meaning the objects of study, and *Logos* - meaning the zone where Theology takes place. Bosch (1991:372) indicates that the church is seen as essentially missional, and proposes that the church-in-mission is primarily the local church everywhere in the world (Bosch, 1991:378). Mission must be seen as the priority and essence of the whole church. Not only are all parts of the world essential parts of the mission symphony, all believers in Christ in each local church are part of mission's music (Dybdahl, 1999:24). The missional dimension of a local church can be seen when it is truly a worshipping

church. It welcomes outsiders and makes them feel at home, the members are equipped for their calling in society and is not a selected group defending its privileges. The church's missional dimension has a direct involvement in society and moves beyond the church boundaries (Bosch, 1991:373).

Flett (2010:270) declares that because the Christian community is a missional community, visibility is essential to the community. Flett (2010:266) goes on to say that if the Christian community fails to live her life of missional service, then she does not live in the Spirit and cannot be Jesus Christ's community. Bosch (1991:467) reports that a dramatic shift is taking place in the church today where ministry is no longer the monopoly of ordained men, but is the responsibility of the whole people of God. Flett (2010:253) stipulates that mission is not a duty one can choose to fulfil. He further states that the Christian community cannot live in fellowship with God without standing at the side of those in affliction. Her solidarity with the world means full and active commitment to and engagement with it. If you want to serve God you have to live in service to the world Flett (2010:272). Flett correctly points out that the Christian community possesses no control over the number of her members. Her responsibility is to sow seeds; it is God who brings the increase. The neglecting of the world threatens the very being of the Christian community and in serving God, the Christian community serves the world (Flett, (2010:273, 275, 281). The Christian community must communicate in such a way that the world can see that the gospel also applies to it.

Flett (2010:284,285) proposes that the sending of the Christian community is not a general activity. Concrete active, intentional missional existence is not a second step alongside fellowship with God. Mission is not a task the Christian community may or may not choose to perform. She is missional by her very nature because the God she serves is missional. Jesus Christ's personal obedience can be seen in His obedience to His mission, in other words a lack of outward orientation reveals the disobedience of the Christian community and only when Christians participate in the missional community, do they mature in discipleship (Flett, 2010:277, 281).

Bosch (1991:492) affirms the movement from a Theology of Mission to a Missionary Theology. Bosch further points out that the basic problem in the definition, was not with what missiology was, but with what mission was. Mission was defined in terms of

saving souls or church extension, whereas missiology was the science for the missionary, a practical subject of how to execute the task. This developed into the view that the church was no longer perceived as bring over against the world, but rather as sent into the world, and existing for the sake of the world. It is no longer just an activity of the church but an expression of the very being of the church. It is called out of the world and sent forth into the world (Bosch, 1991:493). As mission proceeds from the very center of God and aims at His kingdom, the church constitutes neither the beginning nor the end of mission (Flett, 2010:269). Mission means serving, healing, and reconciling a divided, wounded community (Bosch, 1994:494). You either live in active missional fellowship with God, or you remove yourself from this fellowship (Flett, 2010:270).

The identity of the church is missional by its very nature (Bosch, 1991:392). Bosch argues that missiology has a twofold task: 1) *in respects to theology* and 2) *in respects to the missionary praxis*. Firstly, missiology functions by continuously challenging theology and secondly, to interact with the missionary praxis (Bosch 1991:496). The prayer: "Let thy Kingdom come," calls for a missional praxis in faith communities (Hendriks, 2004:32). Niemandt (2012:1) states that missional ecclesiology does this from a missional point of view where the Church is understood as a community of witnesses, called into being and equipped by God, and sent into the world to testify to and participate in Christ's word. Schoeman (2014:3) explains the main elements of a missional ecclesiology which will help with the development and determination of a congregational ecclesiology. It is about the *missio Dei* as identity and commission for the congregation. The congregation, the church at large and every member was sent by God. Awusi-Antwi (2008) mentions that *missio Dei* was coined as a missiological term by Karl Harlestein in 1934. The term was used in the 1952 IMC Willingen Conference to stress that mission is God's, not the church's. *Missio Dei* is the Latin for "The mission or the sending of God". It focuses on everything in His kingdom and in all its fullness in the entire world. It includes but is not limited to what the church does. Moreau *et al.* (2004:73) states that the term was incorporated into mission theology the fact that mission is truly a God-centered enterprise in which the church is privileged to participate. It is everything God himself does in establishing His kingdom on earth; A Missional congregational ecclesiology does not focus on the congregation. The focus is being broadened to include the Kingdom of God; the context is of

cardinal importance. The context is underlined by the fact that the church is directed to the world and on its way to the world. Exegetical expertise which is often neglected is the analysis of context and culture; Incarnation means that the gospel arrived in the world. The cross of Christ implies the incarnation of the gospel in this world. The congregation is part of the faith community who makes this gospel known and visible and makes the congregation contextual; Relationships within a congregation but also relationships to the community, in a missional ecclesiology, are of major importance; the role of leadership as a characteristic of missional ecclesiology cannot be overlooked. Missional leadership equips the congregation to reach the whole world with the whole gospel. This is leadership which promotes transformation.

Rodríguez (2009:21) distinguishes between “mission/missiology” which is about the church’s proclamation of the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ from “missional” which focuses on meeting people’s needs here and now, and in which the agency of the church is not determinative.

Schoeman (2014:4) describes the importance of recognising the connection between change and the congregation’s identity, and ministry. He points out the following processes, which confirms that congregational ecclesiology cannot be a static concept: The story and history of the congregation determines the identity of the congregation. Too strong a focus on the past leads to maintenance ministry which emphasises control; the present and present context influences the identity of the congregation. It has to do with political, ecological, demographical and social factors. An excessive focus on the present leads to a ministry which is so market orientated that it shallows to a needs satisfying driven ministry; the congregation’s vision on the future, ideals, and calling consciousness plays a role in the forming of the congregation’s identity. An excessive focus on the future ignores the story of the past and the present situation and neglects the marginalised and their distress.

Hendriks (2004:21) defines missional as referring to a way of understanding theology as being inherently focused on God’s purpose with humans and creation. He explains that God as our creator-redeemer-sanctifier is a purpose-driven God and as such theology and the church should reflect it, it should be part of our identity. He warns that a stagnant or inward focused church dies because it loses its identity. Moreau *et al.* (2004:83, 84) proposes that the purpose of the church is to submit to Christ who is its

head, and it is done in terms of three relationships: 1. *The church's relationship with God*. The church is to send forth praise and glory to God; 2. *The church's relationship with itself*. Moreau *et al.* (2004:83, 84) proposes two components: The first is, *edification*. God gifts and appoints people in the church. They lead the church in its responsibilities to build up the saints, equip them for service and care for its own who are in need; the second is that of *purification*. The church is to allow Christ to cleanse it so as to be a spotless bride, morally and doctrinally; 3. *The church's relationship with the world*. The church is to call the peoples of the world to repentance by proclaiming the kingdom. The church is the agent that God has chosen to call the world to repent and turn to Christ. The church is to live as a sign of the reality of the kingdom. These three relationships correspond with the three relationships the NCLS proposes. Donkor (2011:16) understands missional as meeting peoples' needs here and now. Nel (2015:89) proposes that a church is either missional or it is not a church. He argues that church means to be God's missional people in His world.

2.3.1 Conclusion

A growing missional church is not only identified by numbers but by the members' relationship with God; by their relationship with other members of the congregation; and by their relationship with the community. Powell (2014) and Erwich (2013:27) agree by stating that three components are necessary to be a missional congregation: *A connection with God* (inspirational); *Fellowship* (internal); *The way the congregations is involved in the community* wherein it finds itself and the way it takes responsibility for that community (external). Van Gelder (2000:168,169) describes three characteristics of a local congregation. 1) Local congregations are inherently missional which reflects the church's apostolicity. They seek to reach beyond themselves into their local areas to bear witness and to invite others into the community of faith. 2) Local congregations are to be bilingual in their communal life. They are responsible to learn the language of faith because they are created by the Spirit. They are also responsible to learn the language of their specific settings because they are contextual. 3) Local congregations are inherently connective. They seek to be dynamically related to one another because each holds an identity of being part of the much larger visible church in the world. It reflects the church's oneness.

2.3.1.1 A general conclusion

The characteristics of a healthy congregation were explored. It was discovered that in a healthy church each member will know and understand why the church exists and what the purpose of the congregation is. It will be a refuge where hurt persons find healing and restoration in Christ and His people. The activities in the congregation will focus on the Bible, and its message and the knowledge of God, will be strong in fellowship, be supportive and active in community activities. A healthy church will answer to all the needs of people. The evaluation of a congregation was discussed. The researcher looked at different ways to evaluate a congregation and it was concluded that all eleven congregations fall into Nel's context of small congregations, as all the congregations have only one pastor. Missional theology and missional congregations were then explored. It was discovered that a growing missional church is identified by the relationship of the members with God; by their relationship with other members of the congregation; and by their relationship with the community.

In the next chapter, the ecclesiology of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be investigated. It will be endeavoured to answer the questions: what is ecclesiology and what is the ecclesiology of the Seventh-day Adventist Church?

CHAPTER 3 : THE ECCLESIOLOGY OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

In this chapter the ecclesiology and the structure of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church will be explored and explained. The term ecclesiology will first be discussed and explained in more general terms. Then the Seventh-day Adventist ecclesiology will be researched as seen and discussed by Seventh-day Adventist scholars under the headings: Relevancy; Unity; Remnant ecclesiology; Practical, pragmatic and flexible ecclesiology, as it interacts with civil law; and Evangelism.

An in depth study of whom and what the Seventh-day Adventist Church is all about and how it is structured and governed will be done. We will look at the mission statement; the mission, the method and the vision. The fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be explored. The structure of governance of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be investigated. An outline of Denominational Organisation will be given and the different world divisions and the General Conference, which is the Head Office of the world church of Seventh-day Adventists, will be discussed.

The Church Manual of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be explored, which is the guiding handbook for the operation of the church and the Five Initiatives, which were proposed by the Southern African Indian Ocean Division, as it has to do with the church operation in the South African Union Conference region. The Personal Ministries Department will be discussed as this department oversees the mission of the church. The Seventh-day Adventist Church membership will be explored. An in-depth investigation will be done into the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State. The ecology of each congregation will be reported on as well as the effect that the depopulation of the Free State has on the area.¹² The ecology is the setting (context) or the environment of each congregation. Under the ecology the history of the town and congregation, the demographics and the environment will be discussed. The Free State Province as a whole and each of the eleven congregations will be explored.

¹² See Chapter Two for a discussion on ecology.

3.1 WHAT IS ECCLESIOLOGY?

Ecclesiology is the theological doctrine relating to the church (Hendriks, 2004:21). Ecclesiology comes from the Greek words *ecclesia* (church/assembly) and *ology* (study of) and refers to the study of the church. Ecclesiology investigates what the Bible teaches about the church both universal (all believers in Christ) and local (local gatherings of believers in Christ) (Got Questions Ministries: 2011-2017). This study is about the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State. It is therefore important to understand what ecclesiology is.

Tyner (2014:1) reports that one definition of ecclesiology is the branch of theology that is concerned with the nature, constitution, and functions of a church. In other words, what is believed the church to be and how it is governed. Sokupa (2011:31) believes that the understanding of the term Ecclesiology has changed in recent history; he understands the term to mean *the study of the nature of the church*.

What does “church” mean? Is it a building, an organization, or a congregation? In this study Church will mean the church at large or a specific denomination as a whole or a building of worship. Klingbeil (2005:11) argues that “Church” is the way we live, pray, worship, study, dialogue, and work together. The “church” is made up of people, but it has been designed by God and reflects His presence. “The church is not simply a sociological phenomenon but an entity of divine origin. It did not come into existence from below. The divine apparition of God in human flesh, out of which the church is born, is not left behind in the life of the church. The church continues to be the church in that it exists in the constant presence of the glory of Christ, in union with Him, and displaying itself that glory” (Rodríguez, 2006a:3). Donkor (2011:15) explains that the church includes all the people who are saved by Christ, which is expressed as one community in the entire world, yet at the same time present in each assembly. Protestants have identified the marks of the true church as the place where the Word is rightly preached and the sacraments properly administered. Van Gelder (2000:15) and Smit (2008:70,71) proposes that “church” refers to a wide range of interpretations namely building, event, denomination, worldwide organization, ecumenical movement or body, worship service, or the local faith community, parish or congregation.

In light of the above views, a study of the church would then be a study of God’s people and the relationship between God’s people. In this study when the

congregations in the Free State are mentioned as a whole, the term the Free State Church will be used. When the local community of faith of the Seventh-day Adventists is mentioned, the term congregation will be used.

A study of ecclesiology would then also include a study of relationships, the relationship between God and His people, the relationship among God's people, and the relationship between God's people and the people around them in the community. Brown and Strawn (2012:120) maintain that the deliberate cultivation of strong relationships within local congregations is vital to the church conceived as the body of Christ. Rice (2014:6) states that something more is needed than the concept that the church is a worldwide movement identified by a message that is conceived as a set of doctrinal convictions. He believes that a group of individuals do not constitute the church if it is defined only by a unified organization, commonly held beliefs, and similar religious practices. Church truly exists where there is genuine community, that is, only when Christians join together to form close, caring relationships.

Stetzer (2011) notes that some are taking the Gospel in the historic form of church but want to make it understandable to emerging culture [relevant]. Donkor (2011:4-5) states that the issue with "relevant" is basically an issue of contextualization, which in principle, is not unbiblical (1 Cor. 9:19-23) but notes that the issues of spiritual formation (contemplative/centering prayer etc.) are the primary concern of Seventh-day Adventists and not contextualisation (Donkor, 2011:4-5).

From a practical theological perspective this study focuses on the congregation as a local faith community (Schoeman, 2015a:65). The ecclesiology of this study will focus on the premise of the local Seventh-day Adventist congregation as a community of believers but will also focus on the understanding that "church" includes the world wide Seventh-day Adventist organization. The ecclesiology of the Seventh-day Adventist church will now be explored. The views and statements of worldwide Seventh-day Adventist scholars will be discussed.

3.2 ECCLESIOLOGY OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

In this section a discussion will follow on different aspects of Seventh-day Adventist ecclesiology. An understanding of these aspects is important as it reveals the mind of

the Seventh-day Adventist people. These aspects influence the thinking and actions of the members of the church at large as well as the members in the local congregations in the Free State and will provide a better understanding of their beliefs, life-style, and biblical worldview. The aim of this section is to come to a better understanding of Seventh-day Adventism. Some of the aspects discussed in the section below by Seventh-day Adventist scholars, were presented as papers at a meeting of The Adventist Society for Religious Studies in San Diego, California, on Ecclesiology in Doctrine and Practice in 2014.

3.2.1 Relevancy

Rodríguez (2006b:1) points out that one of the most important challenges the Seventh-day Adventist Church confronts is maintaining its vitality and relevance in a world that is continually changing since the inception of the movement. Relevance implies that the presence of the church is vital as it satisfies an important need within society and also in the life of its members. Keeping the church relevant requires constant reflection on its identity, nature, and mission. The early church not only searched for the lost, they found them (Burrill, 1998:32). It is very important to realize that Paul's strategy was to make the gospel culturally relevant to every group he attempted to reach without compromising its faith (Burrill, 1998:35). The church's theology must be uncompromisingly biblical but its methodology should be predominantly cultural (Burrill, 1998:36). He declares that the Adventist mission has been nurtured by both Matt 24:14 (to preach the gospel to the whole world) as by the Great Commission. The *parousia* was the spark that ignited Adventist mission for over one hundred and fifty years (Burrill, 1998:48).

3.2.2 Unity

Rodríguez (2006b:1-2) points out that because of the phenomenal growth of the Adventist Movement, it should provide an opportunity to strengthen its unity. In a religious movement characterized by ethnic, national, and cultural diversity, it is a tendency to further diversification. To preserve the unity that characterizes the Seventh-day Adventist Church it is vital to clearly identify the elements that constitute the church's

bond of unity in Christ. The key elements are located in the church's ecclesiology, particularly in its common identity, message, and mission. They need to be reaffirmed through reflection and analysis in the context of its diversity. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a people with a particular body of beliefs, life-style, and biblical worldview. Rodriques suggests that a clearly enunciated Adventist ecclesiology is necessary in order to properly interact with other Christian communities and non-Christian religions.

Unity in Seventh-day Adventist ecclesiology is of tremendous importance. Rodríguez (2006a:4) argues that Jesus assigned great importance to ecclesiological unity. He specifically said to the Father: "I pray that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me, and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (John 17:20-21). He points out that according to Jesus the church does not simply proclaim His message of salvation; it is an "essential expression" of it. Dederen (2000:562) perceptively comments, "This bond of unity" is not found in the ecclesiastical organisation of the church but in the preaching of the word of God. He points out that such a unity transcends the divisive elements of race, class, and gender (Gal. 3:28). He further indicates that it is not the result of a "voluntary act" of uniting by the members of Christ's body, but a "unity enabled by the Spirit, for the church has found oneness in Christ (Eph. 5:2-15)". Rodríguez (2006a:8) declares that history is clear that the visible unity of the church was compromised by the introduction of radical theological and doctrinal diversity into the church and that the Adventist movement is in a sense a revolt against the fragmentation of the Christian world. He suggests that the lack of unity among Christians is considered by the Seventh-day Adventist Church to be a Babylonian element within the Christian world. This is a strong indictment against the past and present condition of the different Christian communities, and should be addressed in an Adventist ecclesiology that emphasises ecclesiastical unity. Unity can be a challenge for a local congregation – how much more for a worldwide family of nearly twenty million people and yet this is the high ideal to which the church have been called (SDA, 2016).

3.2.2 Remnant Ecclesiology

Rodríguez (2009:21) has correctly suggested that Adventist ecclesiology is fundamentally a remnant ecclesiology, one that has always been deeply missiological. For early Adventists, the remnant motif provided “a positive argument for their uniqueness in the history of salvation as God’s faithful remnant participating indispensably in His final rescue mission” (Damsteegt, 1988:244). In addition to the remnant and missiological outlooks of Adventist ecclesiology, Rodríguez (2009:20) mentions Adventists’ unique eschatological, soteriological, and gospel outlooks on ecclesiology.

Rodríguez (2006b:2-3) describes it as follows: *Eschatological Outlook*: Adventism is an eschatological movement and as such will play a specific role within the closing chapters of the cosmic conflict. The church’s self-perception is related to its eschatological expectations. Any attempt to free its ecclesiology from its eschatological moorings will have to redefine the first or ignore the second. Such displacement would not be able to produce an ecclesiology that is Adventists in thinking, orientation, and worldview. The role of the church within the cosmic conflict and its particular role at the final confrontation are of paramount importance in its ecclesiology. *Soteriological Outlook*: Its ecclesiology should be strongly grounded in the conviction that the church is the result of the incarnation, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. This theological conviction will influence the way we develop our understanding of the church, its identity, its message, and its function. Its ecclesiology should examine the biblical witness to the connection between the church and the role of Christ as our Mediator in the heavenly sanctuary, and make room for the high priestly work of Christ. *Gospel Outlook*: The gospel is the truth proclaimed by the church. In Adventist thinking, truth plays a fundamental role and is directly related to central issues in the cosmic conflict. The search for truth and its proclamation make a direct contribution to its self-understanding that is to say to its ecclesiology. This concern with biblical truth is at the very center of its ecclesiology and the one should not be dislodged from the other. *Remnant Outlook*: Adventist ecclesiology cannot ignore the fact that from its beginnings the Adventist Movement saw itself as the remnant mentioned in Rev 12:17. This concept proved to be valuable in that it placed the Movement within the flow of prophetic history, served to define its nature vis-à-vis the rest of the Christian world, and determined its missiology. In

other words we are dealing here with an essential aspect of the nature of the Adventist faith and existence that cannot be ignored in an Adventist ecclesiology. An Adventist ecclesiology is fundamentally a remnant ecclesiology. It is precisely this aspect that makes it challenging, interesting, biblical, and unique.

Donkor (2011:26) submits that the identity of the Seventh-Day Adventists as the remnant as mentioned in Rev 12:17 and its mission are two inseparable concepts. Adventism is bound up with its self-perception as the remnant as described in Revelation. The remnant is a special ecclesiological entity with a specific mission – the proclamation of three closely-related messages symbolized by the three angels (Rev 14: 6-14). Furthermore, the remnant's end mission is to gather all of God's scattered people under the banner of truth of the distinct messages of the three angels. Adventists believe that indeed "our mission is fuelled by the seriousness with which we have taken biblical truth and its relevance for the last days" (Rodríguez, 2009:21).

To accept the soteriological outlook of remnant ecclesiology is to express conviction, in its identity, message, and mission, that the church is the result of the incarnation, ministry, death, resurrection, ascension, and mediation of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary (Rodríguez, 2009:20). The Seventh-day Adventist church is apocalyptic. The church has identified its nature and activity with the end-time remnant as described in the book of Revelation, from its beginning. Particularly, the church understands much of its existence through a historicist interpretation of Revelation 12-14 (Donkor, 2011:28).

Winkle (2014:2) indicates that Seventh-day Adventism has never engaged ecclesiology with as much fervour as it has eschatology. It is interesting to note that of the various biblical metaphors for the church (e.g., corporal, familial, agricultural, architectural), the ecclesiological image of the church as a temple (1 Cor 3:16-17; 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21), while not ignored, has never found a similarly level of interest as Adventism's eschatological interest in the heavenly temple has.

Donkor (2011:29) indicates that the eschatological outlook of Adventist remnant ecclesiology causes Adventist scholars therefore to pay attention to developments regarding worship and spiritualism, in both the secular and religious worlds. Rodríguez (2006b:4) proposes that "one of the first tasks of a remnant ecclesiology is to establish

its connection with Christian ecclesiology in general and with the fact that the Christian church exists in a state of fragmentation. Adventist ecclesiology has on the one hand to justify and define its coexistence and relationship with other Christian ecclesial communities, while on the other hand it must constantly examine the nature and effectiveness of its existence and its commitment to its unity with the Risen Lord. In pursuing that double task the Adventist movement reveals its distinctive identity, which directly contributes to the global unity of the movement.” Commenting on the Seventh-day Adventist remnant ecclesiology Hasel (1988:735) states that In the Old Testament the concept of the remnant is employed to address the fundamental question of life and death.

Rodríguez (2006a:10) explains that Adventist remnant ecclesiology operates on a “bipolar template”. It has to justify and define its co-existence and relationship to other Christian ecclesial communities on the one hand, and on the other hand it must, on an on-going basis, examine the nature and effectiveness of its existence and its commitment to its unity with the Risen Lord. Adventist ecclesiology, in other words, looks “outwardly”, looking to establish a point of contact with the fragmented world of Christianity, but simultaneously it looks “inwardly” in an attempt to nurture unity within itself while fulfilling its mission. In pursuing that double task the Adventist movement reveals its distinctive identity, which directly contributes to the global unity of the movement. The Seventh-day Adventist Church affirms that the fullness of the church of Christ does not reside in a particular ecclesiastical *organisation*. This is based on its ecclesiology. It defines the church as the community of believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. The church is a community of believers. This notion is further elaborated by establishing a distinction between a "universal church" and "a remnant." The universal church is composed of all who truly believe in Christ. It is not embodied in any specific Christian community but it is diffused throughout the Christian world. It is a church in exile (Rodríguez, 2006:4-5).

3.2.3 Practical, pragmatic and flexible ecclesiology, as it interacts with civil law

Tyner (2014:4-5) interestingly discusses the church’s governance, its theological base, where such a base is seen to be relevant, and its interaction with secular law. He submits after examining some instances of interaction, Seventh-day Adventist

ecclesiology, in practice, is seen to have little tie to theology, and to be pragmatic, flexible, and result oriented. He reports that after years of consultation with the American IRS Officials about tax benefits for Seventh-day Adventist ministers, the then General Conference President Neil Wilson wrote to the IRS Commissioner about “some rather extensive ecclesiological changes” made by the church. Wilson then stated in the December 30 issue of the *Review* that “the process by which the church trains its ministers obviously is not a matter of theology or doctrine, but one of methodology.” Tyner (2014:5) indicates that this matter illustrate that the governance side of the Seventh-day Adventist ecclesiology is informed by practical need but only rarely by theological belief.

Tyner (2014:7) reports about another example of the interaction of Seventh-day Adventist ecclesiology and civil law namely: the organizational situation of the church in the People’s Republic of China. The church in China thrives. He reveals that the China union does not follow the working policies as other unions in Northern Asia-Pacific Division, let alone the General Conference Working Policy. “The normal flow of funds and data between levels of the church organisation does not exist. Local congregations have, in effect, a Congregationalist policy. They select and train their own clergy. And most of their pastors are women!” Tyner (2014:8,9) affirms that when the church in China faces a government that will not allow the traditional forms of organisation and control, the church’s ecclesiology focuses on what must be done. The Seventh-day Adventist ecclesiology, as it interacts with civil law, may be characterised as practical, pragmatic and flexible. Its aim is to maximise opportunities while minimising liabilities.

3.2.4 Evangelism

Holdsworth (2014:2) describes how The Seventh-day Adventist Church views evangelism. He reveals that Adventists are compelled by Christ’s end-time prophecies in the New Testament to spread the gospel. While fulfilling Christ’s call, Adventists are admonished in Matthew 25 to care for the nations, as they care for Christ – providing food, water, clothing, shelter, healthcare and human rights to whom they preach the gospel, while they await Christ’s coming and God’s final judgment. The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church does not depend alone

upon the ministers. The members must feel their individual responsibility and be active working members (Damsteegt, 1988:257).

The church is "God's appointed agency for the salvation of men" (White, 1955:218). Rodríguez (2006a:15-17) states that because the church is of divine origin it belongs to God. It is directly assigned by God to be the agency for the salvation of the human race. It is not the effective cause of salvation but the agency of salvation. Its existence presupposes Christ's work of salvation. There is no other divine agency for the salvation of humans and thus points to the uniqueness of the church. For the church to reach its goal, organization is necessary. The church was organised for service and its mission is to carry the gospel into the world. Although the church is God's agency, the effectiveness of its mission is in the hands of God.

The church is never left to itself in the fulfilment of its mission. The church exists to present the glory of God and its mission consists through a transformed life. The glory of God is now revealed in the transformation of the lives of those who have been joined to the body of Jesus (2 Cor 3:18). There is a very close relationship between the church and the grace of Christ. Christ is the only source of grace and the only means to dispense it to mankind. The church is simply and only the repository of grace. It should not be seen as a container filled with grace to be distributed to others, but rather as a living organism in which the richness of Christ's grace is seen in the transformed lives of its members. In its own actuality the church radiates Christ's glory and grace to the human race.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church perceives themselves as a worldwide family of believers. These 5 ecclesiological aspects influence the core beliefs, world view and interaction within the congregation and the interaction with the community of every member. It is thus imperative for this study to understand the Adventist mind in order to understand the situation in the local congregation. An in depth study of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will now follow in the next section.

3.3 THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

An in depth look will now follow about the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Church's Mission Statement; the fundamental beliefs and the structure of governance.

It is necessary to have an understanding of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the setting as a worldwide organisation of which the Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church is a part of, and how it is guided and steered by the world church.

3.3.1 The Mission Statement

The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to make disciples of all people, communicating the everlasting gospel in the context of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12, leading them to accept Jesus as personal Saviour and unite with His remnant Church, discipline them to serve Him as Lord, and preparing them for His soon return.

This mission is pursued under the guidance and through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Accepting Christ's commission (Matt. 28:18-20), the church proclaims to all the world in these last days the everlasting gospel of God's love, most fully revealed in His Son's life, ministry, atoning death, resurrection, and high priestly ministry. Recognising the Bible to be God's infallible revelation of His will, the church will present its full message, including the second advent of Christ and the continuing authority of His Ten Commandment law with its reminder of the seventh-day Sabbath. The church nurtures the newly converted, instructs them in righteous living, trains them for effective witness, and encourages their responsive obedience to God's will. In harmony with the prophecies of the Scriptures, the church sees as the climax of God's plan the restoration of all His creation to full harmony with His perfect will and righteousness (SDA, 2013:10).

If the sentiments expressed in the mission statement are followed by every congregation, then every congregation will be a missional congregation as it contains all the aspects and requirements of a missional congregation.

Seventh-day Adventists can be regarded as a worldwide family of Christian believers. The Adventist presence manifests itself in nearly every country of the world. The United Nations recognises 237 countries and areas of the world and the Seventh-day Adventist work is established in 215 countries and areas of the world, and in all areas of South Africa (SDA, 2014:76).

3.3.2 Fundamental beliefs

Seventh-day Adventists accept the Bible as their only creed and hold 28 fundamental beliefs to be the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. These beliefs constitute the church's understanding and expression of the teaching of Scripture. A revision of these statements may be done at a General Conference session when the church is led by the Holy Spirit to a fuller understanding of Bible truth or finds better language in which to express the teachings of God's Holy Word (SDA, 2010:156). A brief discussion of the beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as given in the church manual will now follow.¹³

The church manual points out that the Bible uses the word church in at least two senses: a general sense applying to the church in the entire world and a particular sense applying to the church in a city or a province. Christ, being the head of the church and its living Lord, has a deep love for the members of His body. In the church He is to be glorified (Eph. 3:21). Through the church He will reveal the "manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. 3:10). Day by day He nourishes the church (Eph. 5:29), and His longing desire is to make of it "a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:27).

There should be no wall of separation. Christ sought by precept and example to teach the truth that with God there was to be no dividing wall between Israel and other nations (John 4:4-42); The apostle Paul writes, "The Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel" (Eph. 3:6). Nor is there to be among Christ's followers any preference of caste or nationality or race or colour, for all are of one blood. The elects of God are a universal brotherhood, a new humanity, "all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28) (SDA, 2010:22).

As the bride of Christ and the supreme objects of His regard, the church is expected in all its functions to represent the order and the character of the divine (SDA, 2010:24). The Bible is the foundation and source of belief and practice; on this basis, the General Conference in session determines the stated fundamental beliefs of the

¹³ See Point 3.3.4 for a discussion on the Church Manual

Church. The General Conference in session also authorises establishment of unions and the attachment of field units, revises the Church Manual, elects General Conference and division leadership, performs other functions as outlined in its Constitution and Bylaws, and considers items referred to it by its Executive Committee. The General Conference Executive Committee between sessions is empowered by the Constitution and Bylaws to act on behalf of the constituents. Thus Church organisations around the world recognise the General Conference in session as the voice of the Church.

The constituent levels of the Church operate a variety of educational, health-care, publishing, and other institutions reaching out in the name of Christ to meet the needs of a distraught world. In Seventh-day Adventist theology and philosophy these institutions from their inception have been indispensable instruments for carrying out the Church's spiritual mission of serving the whole person and taking the gospel to the world (SDA, 2010:30).

3.3.3 Structure of governance

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a worldwide church with a very effective structure of governance. There are several organisational levels within the Church leading from the individual believer to the worldwide organisation of the church. Membership units in each of these levels periodically convene formal business sessions known as constituency meetings or sessions. (The constituency meeting or session of a local church is referred to as a business meeting). In Seventh-day Adventist Church structure, no organization determines its own status, nor does it function as if it had no obligations to the Church family beyond its boundaries (SDA, 2010:29).

Denominational Organisation. Only the levels of organisation relevant to this study will be mentioned. The local congregation falls under the jurisdiction of the local conference which falls under the jurisdiction of the Union Conference. On its part the Conference falls under a Division which reports to the General Conference. The decisions and instructions of the higher organisations influence the workings of the local congregations directly. It is important for this study to understand the influence of the higher organisations on the actions and perceptions of the local congregations.

Local Congregation. The local congregation is group of members in a defined location that has been granted, by the constituency of a conference in session, official status as a congregation.

Local Conference. The local Conference is a group of local congregations, within a defined geographical area, that has been granted, by action of a division executive committee at midyear, year-end, or division council meeting, official status as a Seventh-day Adventist local conference and subsequently accepted, at a union constituency meeting, into the sisterhood of conferences.

Union Conference. The Union Conference on its part is a group of conferences, within a defined geographical area, that has been granted, by a General Conference in session, official status as a union conference.

World Divisions. The church is served through its administration of thirteen world divisions and two attached fields. South Africa is served by the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division.

General Conference. The General Conference represents the worldwide expression of the Church (SDA, 2010:29). It coordinates the global ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and is responsible for the spiritual and developmental plans of the church around the world (World Church: The Official Site of the Seventh-day Adventist Church).

The General Conference in session, and the General Conference Executive Committee between sessions, is the highest ecclesiastical authority in the administration of the Church. Therefore all subordinate organisations, in this case the local congregation and institutions throughout the Church will recognise the General Conference in session, and the General Conference Executive Committee between sessions, as the highest ecclesiastical authority, under God, among Seventh-day Adventists (SDA, 2010:31).

3.3.4 The Church Manual

The Church Manual is the operation manual by which the Church at large and the Free State Church is guided by church policy.

The Church Manual has existed in its current format since 1932 and functions as a guiding handbook for the operation of the church, to be used by the leadership of the church, from General Conference level to the local congregation. It is stated that the Church Manual describes the operation and functions of local churches and their relationship to denominational structures in which they hold membership. The Church Manual also expresses the Church's understanding of Christian life and church governance and discipline based on biblical principles and the authority of duly assembled General Conference sessions.

The standards and practices of the Church are based upon the principles of the Holy Scriptures. These principles are set forth in the Church Manual. They are to be followed in all matters pertaining to the administration and operation of local churches. The Church Manual also defines the relationship that exists between the local congregation and the conference or other entities of Seventh-day Adventist denominational organization (SDA, 2010:18).

A new edition of the Church Manual is published after every General Conference session. The edition used in this study incorporates amendments made at the 2010 General Conference session (SDA, 2010:20). The local congregations in the Free State are thus guided by the Church Manual and it is expected that the local congregations will follow the working policies and guidelines given.

3.3.5 Five initiatives

At the beginning of the 2005-2010 quinquennium the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division (SID) launched a five-year programme entitled "Lift Up Christ – Tell the World." It is based on the promise made by the Lord Jesus in John 12:32. This programme was also launched in all the congregations of the Free State Church.

The programme was built upon five special initiatives around which the entire division family would concentrate its energy and resources. These initiatives were designed to address the five most urgent needs in the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division, of which the Free State congregations is a part of, - needs that have now become the mission objectives of every congregation. (Ratsera, 2010) The five initiatives are very significant to this study as it focus on the principles of a missional church. It

contains the three relationships, the internal (prayer), inspirational (training) and external relationships (evangelism) of a healthy church.

The introduction of Five Initiatives for the quinquennium (2005 – 2010)

- *Epaphras Ministries* (Col 4:12 A call to prayer);
- *Pauls' Method* (2 Tim 2:2 Training);
- *Zechariah projects* (Zech 8:22,23 A call to evangelism);
- *Hezekiah Operations* (2 Chron- 31:9-12 Stewardship);
- *Haggai Venture* (Hag. 1:2,8 Build up the infrastructure of the church),

by the Southern Africa Indian Ocean Division (SID) as the key focus areas of the Church's mission and operations, has marked an extraordinary intervention in the direction of all church members' participation in church life (SAU Head Office Bloemfontein, 2010:31); (Ratsera, 2010).

The Zechariah projects is an initiative that calls the entire Union Constituency to become involved in evangelism, public and personal, according to each member's spiritual gift (SAU Head Office Bloemfontein, 2010:52).

3.3.6 The Personal Ministries Department

This department is of relevance as this department is responsible for the mission activities of every local congregation. The Personal Ministries Department of the South African Union Conference exists for the sole purpose of soul-winning. The year 2009 was dedicated to Evangelism through the Family. The year 2010 has been designated as the Year of Reaping and Celebration. Two major challenges which was noted in the local churches is that it takes a long time for local churches to adopt programmes; and membership participation in evangelism is limited to mere attendance. There is little direct participation by members in planning, organisation, inviting non-SDA's etc. (SAU Head Office Bloemfontein, 2010:201-206).

The Personal Ministries Department provides resources and trains members to unite their efforts with those of the pastor and officers in soul-winning service. It also primary responsibility for programmes, assisting those in need has. The personal ministries council guides the outreach (missionary) efforts of the congregation and

works under the direction of the church board. (SDA, 2010:97-98). The Seventh-day Adventist Church Membership

The Seventh-day Adventist world membership stood at 18,143,745 at the end of 2013, (SDA, 2013:4) and 18,479,257 at the end of 2014 (KNFC 7th Business Session Report 2015:55) Walters (2014:1) reports that members in 2005 were predominately found in Africa (35%); The Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division's membership stood at 3,167,259 with 9,372 churches and the membership for the Southern Africa Union Conference (including Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland) stood at 143,302 with 1,193 churches in 2013 (SDA, 2013:4,21) and a membership of 156,269 at the end of 2014. (KNFC 7th Business Session Report 2015:55) The KwaZulu Natal-Free State Conference stood at 14,251 members in 2010 (SAU Head Office Bloemfontein, 2010:52, 53) and 18,571 in March 2015 (KNFC 7th Business Session Report, 2015:55).

The number of pastors working within the Southern Africa Union Conference at 2010 was 257. The KwaZulu Natal-Free State Conference had 36 pastors at the same period (SAU Head Office Bloemfontein, 2010:175).

This section discussed the ecclesiology and structure of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church. The following section will concentrate on the Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State.

3.4 THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN THE FREE STATE

It is necessary to understand the environment of the Free State congregations. In the following section the Free State province will be explored.

3.4.1 The Free State Province

The Free State is located in the geographical centre of South Africa. It is bordered by the Northern Cape, Eastern Cape, North West, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng provinces, as well as Lesotho. The Free State is a rural province of farmland, mountains, goldfields and widely dispersed towns. Although the Free State is the third-largest province in South Africa, it has the second-smallest population and the second-lowest population density. It covers an area of 129 825km² and has a population

of 2 745 590 – 5.3% of the national population. The capital city of the Free State is Bloemfontein, which is South Africa's judicial capital. Its economy is dominated by agriculture, mining and manufacturing. About 90% of the province is under cultivation for crop production. It produces approximately 34% of the total maize production of South Africa, 37% of wheat, 53% of sorghum, 33% of potatoes, 18% of red meat, 30% of groundnuts and 15% of wool. The province is the world's fifth-largest gold producer, with mining the major employer. It is a leader in the chemical industry, being home to the giant synthetic-fuels company, Sasol. (The Local Government Handbook, 2012-2016)

3.5 THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST FREE STATE CONGREGATIONS

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State Province falls under the jurisdiction of the KwaZulu Natal-Free State Conference. There are eleven Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State. These congregations are mainly white Afrikaans congregations with the exception of two English multicultural congregations and one Afrikaans coloured congregation. As the different congregations in the Free State are discussed, the devastation of the depopulation of the white community in the Free State region of the Seventh-day Adventist congregations in this region will be highlighted.

The aim of this section is to discuss the town history, the demographics of the town, the congregation's history, and the environment of each of the Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the region¹⁴, in alphabetical order. There are 11 Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State Province, served by 4 pastors, as at April 2015.

Unfortunately the Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State do not have church offices where church records are kept. As a result there were no archives available to the researcher to research the history of the different congregations. It was necessary to rely on the memory of longer serving members of the different congregations to gather some information about the history. Therefore no references can be given for the information and the accuracy could not be verified. The purpose in developing a history was to understand the unfolding story of the congregation, and subsequently how it has impacted on the developments in the congregation. In some

¹⁴ See Chapter 2 for a discussion on ecology

cases, the long serving members passed away and no history could be found.

3.5.1 Bethlehem

History of Bethlehem: The town of Bethlehem was founded in 1864. (Van Rensburg, 1989:24) Bethlehem is the main town of the Eastern Free State. Because of the fact that wheat grew so well in this valley, the early settlers established Bethlehem (bread house) and name the river flowing through the valley the Jordaan (Mayhew, 1982:299). Bethlehem is established today as a grain region of format in South Africa (Van Rensburg, 1989:96).

Demographics of Bethlehem: Each of the towns in the Free State falls under the jurisdiction of a municipality that governs the town and adjacent areas. The names of the municipalities are therefore not the same as the name of the town. The municipal name for the Bethlehem area is the Dihlabeng municipality. The Dihlabeng profile data is as follows. The population in the Dihlabeng Municipality is 128 704 people of which 52% are female. 60% of the population is between the age ranges of 18-64. The median age is 26. The white population makes out 10% of the population. The home language of 12 % of the population is Afrikaans and 2% is English. 17.9 % lives in informal dwellings (shacks). The average annual household income is R29 400. The average monthly income is R2 400. Only 40.4% of the population is employed. 60.9% completed grade 9 or higher while only 35.3% completed grade 12 or higher. The child population (< 18) is 44 661 who make out 35% of the population. 93.2% of the children (5-17) are in school (Wazimap South Africa, 2011).

History of the Bethlehem Congregation: The following history of the Bethlehem congregation was verbally collected from older members in the congregation. No written information is available from church records. The researcher received the information from a programme that was drawn up for the 75 year anniversary of the congregation on 26 October 2002. Although no date is mentioned of when the congregation was formerly organised, it should be around 1927 when an evangelistic campaign was held in Bethlehem by Pastor A.W. Staples. The congregation will be 97 years old this year.

Not long after the British-South African war (Anglo-Boer War), a small group of

people met on a farm called Bolivia, approximately 15 km outside the town of Reitz. Mr T.J.J van Rensburg (known as Uncle Tobie) and his neighbour, Mr P.A. Venter, studied the Bible for themselves and discovered that certain truths they believed were not Bible based. They shared their discovery with neighbours and friends and soon a group of almost 50 people met on the farm of Mr van Rensburg to study their Bibles and to worship together. Mr van Rensburg built a sandstone church on his farm that could seat just over fifty people. The church was disbanded after Mr van Rensburg had sold the farm. This group of believers later joined with the group established in Bethlehem. This little church building outside Reitz still stands today, although used as housing for farm labourers.

On October 23, 1927, an evangelist by the name of Pastor A.W. Staples held the first of a series of meetings in a tent pitched in the town of Bethlehem, on a site where at present an abandoned supermarket is standing. Over the following years a number of people were baptised and joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church. On one such an occasion 32 people were baptised. Due to the lack of their own church building, the new congregation met in rented halls. Later, one of the new members bought an orphanage complex where he was an orphan himself. Alterations to the main building were made to accommodate a church on the ground floor as well as a school. The pastor lived on the first level. The gentleman who bought the orphanage later made a corner stand available for the erection of a church building presently used by the Bethlehem congregation.

The Mission Statement of the congregation is as follows: The mission is to proclaim the message in the context of the Three Angels Message as contained in Rev 14:6-12 to prepare people for the Second Coming of Jesus.

The environment of the Bethlehem congregation: Bethlehem developed into the main town of the Eastern Free State. It serves the farming community around it as well as the other little towns in the area. It has several hospitals and clinics and various other industries to fulfil the needs of the community. There are a surprising number of Bed and Breakfast accommodations which provide accommodation to all the tourists and business representatives who visit the area on a regular basis. The town has always been a very neat and picturesque town but lately serious neglects have become visible. It has become dirty with litter everywhere. There is major poverty

in the area and homeless people are living on the streets. The pace of the town is relatively slow, most people are strolling in the streets, and even the traffic goes at a slow pace. The town caters for all types of people with a variety of shops, industries and even malls. A Variety of schools cater for the education of the youth. A major worry in the town is the lack of service and resources of the government hospitals who struggle to serve the community effectively. There are many churches of all denominations in Bethlehem who have a good relationship with the community. These churches work together to organize regular programmes to involve all the communities of the area.

The Seventh-day Adventist church in Bethlehem is situated just off the center of town and opposite a retirement village and is a white Afrikaans/English congregation. Many pedestrians in the street make it quite a busy environment. The church building is very neat and compares well with other buildings in the area. The church grounds are well looked after. A pretty garden and flowers makes it very pleasant to the eye. The church grounds are surrounded by a high security fence. There is no parking inside the church grounds and church members have to park outside in the street. Many of the leaders of the church retired and moved away to bigger centres. This affected the church membership and attendance immensely and the church is seen by the leadership as dwindling (dying) or stagnant at best. The congregation plays a very important role in the community as service provider especially through the Meals on Wheels programme where they provide meals on a regular basis to the elderly and needy that cannot provide for them. The poverty issues in the community are thus addressed by the congregation. The message of the congregation and its Christian expression is that they care about and are willing to serve the community.

The main challenge for the leadership of the congregation is to keep the programme going with the few members that are left, after so many members moved to bigger centres.

3.5.2 Bloemfontein

History of Bloemfontein: Bloemfontein, the most centrally situated city in the country, is the judicial capital of South Africa and provincial capital of the Free State. The name originates from a fountain which the Europeans who stopped here for water called

Bloemfontein; although it was known by the Africans as Mangaung (place of leopards) (Mayhew, 1982: 289). Bloemfontein was founded by Major H. Douglas Warden in 1846 as a fort and residency. It became the seat of the British- administered Orange River Sovereignty (1848-54) and of the Orange Free State (an independent Boer Republic formed in 1854). The failure of the Bloemfontein Conference (May-June 1899) resulted in the outbreak of the South African War (1899-1902) (Doniger, 2016).

Demographics of Bloemfontein: The name of the Municipality of the Bloemfontein area is the Mangaung Municipality. The Mangaung profile data is as follows. The population of the Mangaung Municipality is 747 432 and the median age is 26. 63% is between the age ranges of 18-64. 52% of the population is female. 11% of the population is white. The home language of 16% of the population is Afrikaans and 4% is English. 14.1% of the population lives in informal dwellings (shacks). The annual household income is R29 400. 41.8% is employed. The average monthly income is R2 400. 67.4% completed Grade 9 and higher and 42.6% completed Grade 12 and higher. The child population is 240 517. Children (<18) makes out 32% of the population. 90.5% of school-aged children (5-17) are in school (Wazimap South Africa, 2011).

There are four Seventh-day Adventist churches in Bloemfontein under the auspices of the KwaZulu Natal-Free State Conference, namely Bloemfontein Central, Universitas, Heidedal and Langenhoven Park.

History of the Bloemfontein Central congregation: No real history of the Bloemfontein Central congregation was available. What is known is that the congregation was established in the church building in Selborne Avenue. During that time the English members moved away and established their own congregation in Universitas. At a later stage the Bloemfontein Central congregation moved to their present location in Alexander Avenue. During 2013 a group moved away and started another congregation in Langenhovenpark.

The environment of the Bloemfontein Central congregation: The Bloemfontein Central Seventh-day Adventist church is situated on the outskirts of the center city. The congregation is a white Afrikaans congregation. The area is a mix between a commercial and residential area. There are many apartment blocks in the immediate

vicinity and the community is a mixture of all races. There are signs of upgrading in the area especially that of the pavements which creates a sense of neatness. Right behind the church is a major hotel. The streets are very busy with cars and pedestrians. Two blocks away from the church is the South African Union Conference offices which serve as the head office of the Seventh-day Adventist church in South Africa and neighbouring countries. On the corners are often people with placards begging for money or food. Many of these people are not really from this area. There are also a great number of jobless people waiting in the streets to be picked up to perform odd jobs. The immediate area a few years ago was a relatively white area but has since changed to a multi-cultural lower class area. It is an area of extremes. To the south you will find the poorest of the poor and to the north are the richest of the rich. A block away from the church is a park which many street kids are using as their home. The population around the church changes more and more to a population that is not represented in the congregation itself. There is a high presence of drug and alcohol abuse amongst the population in the area. Together with other denominations in the area, they try to meet the needs of the community with soup kitchens etc. to portray a positive and caring Christian attitude. The need however is so immense that the churches cannot meet all the needs of the community.

The church building is very neatly maintained and compares well with other buildings in the area. The gardens are well looked after and creates a beautiful atmosphere. The church is protected by high fencing with an electrical gate with safe parking inside the church grounds. The congregation is actively pursuing practical and timely seminars to meet the needs and to educate the community in various issues that they have to deal with every day. The relationship of the congregation is very positive and portrays a caring and involved Christian expression. The challenges of the leadership of this congregation are to keep the membership numbers and spirituality of the congregation growing and to ensure that the congregation is felt by the community in a more forceful manner.

3.5.2.1 Heidedal Congregation

History of the Heidedal congregation: The history of the Heidedal congregation was collected from the notes and programmes of Mrs Nooientjie Bloem, an elderly

member of the congregation. No church records have been kept.

Around 1950 Rosy Vaalbank joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church. There was a small group of ladies who regularly met in the house of Sannie Price to worship.

For a few years the Assemblies of God Church generously allowed them to worship in their Church. They later moved to one of the classrooms of the Joe Solomon Primary School to worship. The small congregation applied to the City Council for a church plot, under the leadership of Pastor J.M. Niekerk, during 1958 and again in 1961. Twenty five years later they were able to buy a plot in Heidedal. The church building was erected under the guidance of Pastor Hennie Murray. While the building of the church was in progress, the small congregation again worshipped in the house of Sannie Price. The congregation's Meals on Wheels programme also had its beginning in a back room of the house of Sannie Price where food was prepared. The church building was completed and dedicated to God on 3 November 1990. The congregation grew from its humble beginnings to a strong and active congregation.

The environment of the Heidedal congregation: This congregation is situated in a residential area of Bloemfontein, and is a coloured community. The congregation is an Afrikaans Coloured congregation. Heidedal is one of a few coloured residential suburbs, close to a business district with its own mall. The houses around the Seventh-day Adventist church are small, close to each other, with very small yards, and close to the streets. It is not very neat in the area. The people are poor with many social difficulties. The streets are the play area for the children, meeting place for the young people and visiting place for the grown-ups. As a result the streets are full of people leisurely strolling and playing. A lot of interaction takes place in the streets, cars drive carefully and slowly and drivers are greeted by the pedestrians. Very few white and black people, if at all are visible in the area. This community suffers from poverty; unemployment; family abuse; high drug abuse amongst the youth; drug houses exist in the area. This state of affairs makes it very difficult for the community to rise above their circumstances. Religious groups play a very important part in the community. There are many denominations in the area and despite all their difficulties; the coloured community is very religious.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church congregation keeps the building and grounds as neat as possible. High fences with a locked gate are around the premises, although

some sections have been removed by certain criminal elements. There was a big hall but because of weak foundations the whole building had to be demolished. The church building compares well with other buildings in the area. The congregation is very active in the community and runs a successful Meals on Wheels programme for the needy. Care groups go out in the community to assist and support families of deceased and sick community members. When there are specific needs in the community, the congregation immediately gets involved. The congregation makes God's presence felt in the community of Heidedal which is much appreciated. The leadership feels that they must do more to let their vision and plans filter through to the congregation and that they need to focus more on spiritual growth in the congregation as that facet of the congregation is a real challenge.

3.5.2.2 Universitas Congregation

History of the Universitas congregation: No information regarding the history of the Universitas congregation was available. All that is known is that the English-speaking members moved away from the Bloemfontein Central congregation to establish an English speaking congregation in the suburb of Universitas.

The environment of the Universitas congregation: The Universitas church is situated in a middle class, mostly white, residential area. The suburb is an established well-kept and neat area. The congregation is a multicultural English congregation. The streets are mostly quiet with very little or no pedestrians, as a result very little interaction are taking place between the residents. There are no businesses in the immediate vicinity of the church. The church environment is well kept with neat gardens, a beautiful building that compares well with the area. High fencing surrounds the church and ample parking is available inside the church grounds. There are quite a few other denominations in the area but very little interaction between the different faith groups is taking place. The Community very much stick to their own religious beliefs and churches.

Although very little interaction is taking place between churches and the community, Universitas congregation reaches out to the community by means of a little primary school that they are running on the church property, with about 80 learners. Most members of the Universitas Church do not stay in the area but travels from all over

town to attend church. The challenge that the leadership has in this congregation is to cater for the different needs of about eight different nationalities that makes up the congregation. The other great challenge is to be more functional in the area as a service provider and expression of Christianity in the community.

3.5.2.3 Langenhoven Park Congregation

History of the Langenhoven Park congregation: The history was received from the head elder, Mr Johnny Venter. The congregation was organised as a little group of fifteen members (previously members of the Bloemfontein Central Congregation) on 10 February 2013 and received full church status on 19 October 2013. The membership grew fast to a membership of 60 members as at June 2015, with a median age of 45 years. The tithe income for 2014 was R217 500 and the church budget for 2015 was R398 700. The congregation is involved with the following evangelism or outreach campaigns in the Langenhoven Park community: The distribution of religious CD's to all members of the community; Outreach to the elderly and less fortunate members of the community with the distribution of food on a regular basis through Meals on Wheels; An outreach projects to unmarried mothers; A health seminar campaign in October 2015 to the community; and a three week evangelistic campaign organised for November 2015.

The Mission Statement of the congregation is as follows: United for Mission, Langenhoven Park is a congregation which grows by witnessing for Christ, to live closer to Him; to support each other through our calling of care and love; to create an environment where everyone can find a real Christian home; and to live the message of the end times and bring it to every person.

The environment of the Langenhoven Park congregation: The Langenhoven Park congregation is situated in a mostly white Afrikaans, upper middle class community on the western side of Bloemfontein. The congregation is a white Afrikaans congregation in this residential thriving community with a mix of ages and occupations. The area has many retired villages, homes, business centres, day care centres for children and open areas. The area is very neat and tidy and well maintained. The area has a very relaxed and friendly atmosphere, with people strolling with their children, cycling with their families or jogging.

The church building is rented by the Seventh-day Adventist congregation and is shared with other denominations and a school across the street. The church is a beautiful, neat, well maintained building, with high fencing around and ample parking inside the church grounds. Right across the street from the church is a business area where a very popular weekly farmers market is being held. The church building is a beacon in the area and fits in well with the suburb.

The congregation is very young, only three years old, but is already making its mark in the community. It serves the community with lectures on Bible truths, spiritual DVD's and marriage enrichment seminars. They are also involved with a centre for unmarried mothers to help with material needs. The characteristic of this congregation is that it is a warm, friendly, and caring congregation. The major challenge for the leadership of this congregation is to be functional and a valid Christian expression in this community while the church building is shared with others. It is difficult to fit in their programmes in between the other tenants.

3.5.3 Ficksburg

History of Ficksburg: Ficksburg is situated on the west bank of the Caledon River, the border between Lesotho and the Free State. It was founded in 1867 and was named after Commandant-General Johan Izak Fick. Ficksburg is a gateway to Lesotho and a busy trading centre. It is also the largest cherry-producing area in South Africa. (Mayhew, 1982:302)

Demographics of Ficksburg: The municipal name of the Ficksburg area is the Setsoto Municipality. The profile data of Setsoto is as follows. The population in the Setsoto municipality is 112 597 of which 53% are female. 56% of the population is between the age ranges of 18-64. The median age is 24. The white population is 6% of the population. The home language of 7 % of the population is Afrikaans and 3% is English. 26.6% lives in informal dwellings (shacks). The average annual household income is R14 600. The average monthly income is R1 200. Only 30.8% of the population is employed. 55.8% completed grade 9 or higher while only 28.8% completed grade 12 or higher. The child population (<18) is 43 167 who makes out 38% of the population. 91.5% of the children (5-17) are in school. (Wazimap South Africa, 2011)

History of the Ficksburg congregation: This information was received from Mr Eddy von Maltitz, at one time the head elder of the congregation. Dr. W. E. Staples, then from Maluti Adventist Hospital in Lesotho, moved to Ficksburg to set up a practice there. Mrs Agnes Helen von Maltitz was one of his first converts and was baptized in the middle of winter at Maluti Adventist Hospital in 1964. The group first met for church at Dr. Staples' house at 44 Veld Street. Mr Eddy von Maltitz was baptized in the town hall after evangelistic meetings held there by Ps. Wally Böhme in 1966. By 1970 church was being held in Dr. Staples' surgery at 24 Fontein Street. In about 1972 plans were made to build a proper church in what was then Ficksburg's horse camp. Mr von Maltitz was given the job of tearing the camp fences and water troughs down with his tractor. The church building was finished in 1973 and dedicated that same year. Their first pastor was Ps Millet Coetzee and his wife Hazel. Other pastors through the years included Pastors Stanley Edwards, Koos Louw, Deon Breedt, Paul Kritzinger, Charles Kitney, and Steyn Venter. We were without a Pastor for at least a year during which time Eddy von Maltitz and Dr John Werner took turns leading out. Back in the days Ficksburg church had the highest per capita welfare ingathering in the country.

The environment of the Ficksburg congregation: Ficksburg is a small town and border post to Lesotho. It serves an agricultural community, farming mainly with fruit like apples, peaches and cherries. The town is neat, picturesque and well maintained. The pace of the town is slow. This town is also affected by the depopulation of the rural areas especially amongst the white population. The Seventh-day Adventist church in Ficksburg is also affected by the depopulation. Many of the leadership of the congregation moved to larger centres and the congregation was left with many senior citizens, of which some have passed away, leaving the congregation in a survival battle. The church building and garden is maintained very neatly and compares well with the residential environment in which it is situated. It is protected with high fencing and there is no parking inside the church grounds. There are many pedestrians in the street from Lesotho on their way to the business centre of Ficksburg. Church members have to park in the street. The Ficksburg congregation is a white Afrikaans/English congregation. Because of the small number and age group of the congregation, there is very little contact and interaction with the community. The biggest challenge the leadership of the congregation has is to survive and to provide

the best worship programme possible for the small congregation. They do not have their own minister and the leadership has to maintain the worship service.

3.5.4 Kroonstad

History of Kroonstad: Kroonstad stands on the banks of the Vals River and was founded in 1855. It is named after a horse. The horse of Voortrekker leader Sarel Cilliers, named Kroon, drowned in a pothole in a stream on the site of the present town. (Mayhew, 1982:294) It served briefly as the Boer capital of the Orange Free State (March 13-May 11, 1900) after the fall of Bloemfontein during the South African War (1899-1902) (Doniger, 2016).

Demographics of Kroonstad: The name of the Municipality of the Kroonstad area is the Moqhaka Municipality. The Moqhaka profile data is as follows. The population in the Moqhaka Municipality is 160 553 people of which 50% are female. 61% of the population is between the age ranges of 18-64. The median age is 27. The white population makes out 9% of the population. The home language of 13 % of the population is Afrikaans and 2% is English. 10.3% lives in informal dwellings (shacks). The average annual household income is R29 400. The average monthly income is R2 400. Only 33.8% of the population is employed. 57% completed grade 9 or higher while only 32.8% completed grade 12 or higher. The child population (<18) is 51 858 who makes out 32% of the population. 89.4% of the children (5-17) are in school (Wazimap South Africa, 2011).

History of the Kroonstad congregation: No information about the history of the Kroonstad congregation was available.

The environment of the Kroonstad congregation: Kroonstad was a very vibrant town but the last few years the quality of the town went backwards. Also affected by depopulation and the neglects and collapse of the railways, this historic town is suffering to survive and unemployment is rife. Unfortunately the town is not maintained well and the streets are deteriorating at an alarming rate. The pace of the people in the streets is slow and people are leisurely strolling along.

The Seventh-day Adventist church is situated in a neat residential area and compares well with the area. It is surrounded by fencing and parking is available in the church

grounds. The depopulation of the rural areas had a very negative effect on the congregation. Young people and professionals moved to larger centres and left the congregation with a few of the older members. The congregation is a white Afrikaans congregation and the leadership is struggling to keep the church going. The result is that the congregation has very little or no contact with the community and all their energy are focused on keeping the programme going.

3.5.5 Parys

History of Parys: Parys is situated on the southern bank of the Vaal River. It is said that the German surveyor (Schilbach) of the town who had fought in the siege of Paris in 1870, was reminded by the situation of Parys, which was established in 1876, of Paris and the Seine (Mayhew, 1982:294). Parys officially became a town in 1887 and had a population of 10,712 in 2001 (Doniger, 2016).

Demographics of Parys: The name of the Municipality of the Parys area is the Ngwathe Municipality. The Ngwathe profile data is as follows. The population in the Ngwathe Municipality is 120 521 people of which 52% are female. 57% of the population is between the age ranges of 18-64. The median age is 26. The white population makes out 10% of the population. The home language of 13% of the population is Afrikaans and 2% is English. 17.6% lives in informal dwellings (shacks). The average annual household income is R14 600. The average monthly income is R1 200. Only 34.1% of the population is employed. 57.6% completed grade 9 or higher while only 31.6% completed grade 12 or higher. The child population (<18) is 42 733 who makes out 35% of the population. 92.1% of the children (5-17) are in school. (Wazimap South Africa, 2011)

History of the Parys congregation: Unfortunately no information about the history of the Parys congregation was available.

The environment of the Parys congregation: Parys is a small, beautiful little town on the banks of the Vaal River which makes the town a very popular tourist and recreational destination. The town is very neat and picturesque. The people are laid back and the pace is very slow. The Seventh-day Adventist church is situated in a residential area and is very neatly maintained and compares well with the area. The

membership is small and is in a survival battle. There is little interaction with the community. The church is mainly a worship centre for the members of the congregation.

3.5.6 Sasolburg

History of Sasolburg: The South African Coal, Oil and Gas Corporation (Sasol) established its complex and chemical plant on a vast coal field south of the Vaal River. Other manufacturers also have their plants in the area. (Mayhew, 1982:295) Sasolburg was established in 1954 and was built by Sasol Ltd. to house employees at the world's first oil-from-coal plant producing commercial quantities of oil. Sasolburg attained official town status in 1967 (Doniger, 2016).

Demographics of Sasolburg: The name of the Municipality of the Sasolburg area is the Matsimaholo Municipality. The Matsimaholo profile data is as follows. The population in the Matsimaholo Municipality is 149 107 people of which 48% are female. 64% of the population is between the age ranges of 18-64. The median age is 27. The white population makes out 16% of the population. The home language of 16 % of the population is Afrikaans and 3% is English. 14.3% lives in informal dwellings (shacks). The average annual household income is R29 400. The average monthly income is R2 400. Only 42.8% of the population is employed. 67.7% completed grade 9 or higher while only 39.6% completed grade 12 or higher. The child population (<18) is 46 434 who makes out 31% of the population. 90.7% of the children (5-17) are in school (Wazimap, 2011).

History of the Sasolburg congregation: Unfortunately no historical information about the Sasolburg congregation was available.

The environment of the Sasolburg congregation: Sasolburg is mainly a residential area for the Sasol employees although an infrastructure was built around the Sasol plant to accommodate the other needs of the community. The area is neat but the foul smell coming from the plant causes an unpleasant atmosphere and the dirty feeling of an industrial environment. The Seventh-day Adventist church is situated in a residential area. The building compares well with the area and the garden and the church is well maintained. The white Afrikaans membership is small but active and

has a good relationship with the community. The challenge of the leadership is to continue with evangelism to ensure that new and younger members join the congregation to keep it an active and growing congregation.

3.5.7 Virginia

History of Virginia: Virginia was founded in 1954. It stands on the banks of the Sand River. It is one of the centres of the Free State gold fields. The name derives from a former whistle-stop on the railway (Mayhew, 1982:295). The population as at 2001 was 21,189 (Doniger, 2016).

Demographics of Virginia: Virginia and Welkom fall under the same Municipality and the demographics therefore is for both areas. The name of the Municipality of the Virginia and Welkom areas is the Matjhabeng Municipality. The Matjhabeng profile data is as follows. The population in the Matjhabeng Municipality is 406 461 people of which 50% are female. 63% of the population is between the age ranges of 18-64. The median age is 26. The white population makes out 10% of the population. The home language of 12% of the population is Afrikaans and 3% is English. 19.7% lives in informal dwellings (shacks). The average annual household income is R29 400. The average monthly income is R2 400. Only 36% of the population is employed. 63.9% completed grade 9 or higher while only 35.2% completed grade 12 or higher. The child population (<18) is 132 749 who makes out 33% of the population. 91.2% of the children (5-17) are in school. (Wazimap, 2011).

History of the Virginia congregation: Unfortunately no information about the history of Virginia congregation was available.

Environment of Virginia: Virginia was a very vibrant town and a strong infrastructure was built around the mining industry. Unfortunately the town was severely affected by the collapse of the mines. Poverty is a major problem and many residents left town. The Virginia church building is situated in residential area and compares well with the area. It is a neat building with no fencing and large parking area and it creates a welcoming atmosphere. The congregation is small but very active in providing food to the poor and elderly through their Meals and Wheels programme. Individuals are also very active in faith-sharing.

3.5.8 Welkom

History of Welkom: Welkom is the main centre of the Free State gold fields. It was founded in 1947 on the open sandveld (Mayhew, 1982: 296,297). The development of the goldfields brought rapid growth and quickly became the provinces second largest town. It attained municipal status in 1961 and was declared a city in 1968. In addition to gold and uranium mining, Welkom has many industries, such as slaughtering, steelmaking, sawmilling and a variety of other manufactures. The population in 2001 was 34,158 (Doniger, 2016).

Demographics of Welkom: Welkom and Virginia fall under the same Municipality and the demographics therefore is for both areas. The Matjhabeng profile data is as follows. The population in the Matjhabeng Municipality is 406 461 people of which 50% are female. 63% of the population is between the age ranges of 18-64. The median age is 26. The white population makes out 10% of the population. The home language of 12% of the population is Afrikaans and 3% is English. 19.7% lives in informal dwellings (shacks). The average annual household income is R29 400. The average monthly income is R2 400. Only 36% of the population is employed. 63.9% completed grade 9 or higher while only 35.2% completed grade 12 or higher. The child population (<18) is 132 749 who makes out 33% of the population. 91.2% of the children (5-17) are in school (Wazimap, 2011).

History of the Welkom congregation: Unfortunately the researcher could find no information about the Welkom congregation.

The environment of the Welkom congregation: Welkom is to a great extent a mining community and was a very progressive town but the collapse of the mining industry had a detrimental effect on the town. The community is stricken with unemployment and poverty. The effects of the depopulation as a result of the collapse can be seen everywhere. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a multicultural congregation situated in a residential area. The church compares well with the area and is well maintained. Parking is mainly in the street. The pace of the community is slow with people leisurely strolling in the streets. The congregation is very active in the community by means of the distribution of religious tracts, DVD's, food and clothing. The church serves as a caring centre to the community. The major challenge that the leadership of the congregation faces, is to provide in the immense need of the

community as well as the needs of the different nationalities that make up the congregation.

3.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the ecclesiology of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was discussed. It was pointed out that ecclesiology investigates what the Bible teaches about the church – its nature, constitution and function. Church is the way we live, pray, worship, study and work together. A study of the church would then be a study of the relationships between people – both in the church and the community. The Seventh-day Adventist ecclesiology was discussed and the importance of relevancy, unity, remnant ecclesiology, evangelism and ecclesiology as it interacts with civil law in Seventh-day Adventist ecclesiology were investigated. It focused on the Seventh-day Adventist church, its mission, vision and beliefs. The structure of governance was investigated and the important role the church manual plays in Seventh-day Adventist operations. An extensive report was given on the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It was discovered that the Church is a world Church which is present in 215 of the 237 countries in the world, with a 2013 world membership of 18,143,745. Discussion covered the ecclesiology, structure, mission and fundamental beliefs. The role of the Church manual was outlined and an extensive report was given on the Seventh-day Adventist churches in the Free State which fall under the jurisdiction of the KwaZulu Natal-Free State Conference.

This chapter is vital to understand the mind-set and the core beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist. All the elements of a healthy missional organisation are formulated in the section about the Seventh-day Adventist Ecclesiology and its mission statement. A journey was taken through the ecological environment of the Free State congregations to give an understanding of the socio-political and economic environment of every congregation. The congregations are faced with many challenges. The main challenge of the congregations is the depopulation of the white community in the area. This caused unemployment, poverty, hunger, substance abuse and crime, to name a few. These circumstances put a lot of strain on the congregations as far as maintaining a high standard of worship as well as providing in the needs of the communities. Knowledge of these elements will help to have a

better understanding of the situation of each congregation. The effect that these external factors have on the internal situation of the congregations, are vital to answer the research question and subsidiary questions of this study. We have ascertained that the Seventh-day Adventist organisation has in its very core a vibrant missional mind-set. The following chapters will reveal whether the local Free State congregations share this vibrant missional mind set in their relationships with God, each other and with the communities they serve.¹⁵ Do they have insight in their strengths and weaknesses and their responsibility to their communities and do the leadership inspire and empower their congregations? In short, do they live the missional mind set the Seventh-day Adventist Church propagates as its reason for existence?

In the next chapter, the results of the National Church Life Survey for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State will be viewed. The data gathered through the questionnaires completed by ten of the eleven congregations will be analysed. The data will be compared with the All South Africa group of denominations.

¹⁵ See Chapters 4,5 & 6.

CHAPTER 4 : THE NCLS RESULTS OF THE SDA CONGREGATIONS IN THE FREE STATE – THE VOICE OF THE ATTENDEES.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State is facing major challenges because of the changing environment, not only in the context of the Free State, but also in the South African context. A changing virtual, socio-political and economic environment poses enormous challenges on the Church. The position and role of religion are not the same as ten or twenty years ago (Schoeman, 2015b:104). The depopulation of the white community in the Free State had a major effect on, not only the number of members, but also the attitudes and perceptions of the members. This changing environment is not always taken in consideration when the effectiveness of the Church in its environment is evaluated. Congregations and the Church at large tend to compare past performances and ministers, to present performances and ministers without taking the changing environment in consideration. This situation causes despondency to congregations and discouragement to many ministers. Brouwer (2008:59) affirms that the contextualisation of faith practices asks for the re-evaluation of congregational life, identity and the congregation's role in the community. Joubert (2013:116-117) points out that the religious identity of both worshippers and congregations are not static. It is not possible to be static in a fluid and transforming context. Nel (2009a:12) submits that empirical research is about a search for the signs of God's presence and the preparedness of the church to be His plan for the coming of His Kingdom to suggest a partial way for reading the congregation as a text in context.¹⁶

In the light of the above discussion, this chapter aims to listen to the voice of the attendees and how they experience church life in the Free State environment. The Church Life Survey results will be used to describe the religious identity of the members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State. The data will measure different aspects of the church life of the Church.¹⁷ The questions from the questionnaire will be discussed at the beginning of each section. The empirical results from this survey will give insight in the missional life of the Church in the Free State and will help to “explore and rethink the identity and role” of the Seventh-day

¹⁶ See Chapter 2, Point 2.2 on the evaluation of a congregation.

¹⁷ The data will answer the Research Sub Questions 1 and 2 in Chapter 1.

Adventist Church within the Free State context (Schoeman, 2015b:104). This quantitative, empirical research process will help the Free State congregations to find their strong and weak connections in a reliable and credible way within the global and local context (Schoeman, 2010:114).

A four page questionnaire with 59 items grouped into 5 sections was prepared by the NCLS team.¹⁸ These 5 sections are (1) a general personal information section as well as questions on some of the church activities. (2) About the attendees faith. (3) About the attendee and the congregation. (4) Leadership and Direction. (5) About the children. These questionnaires were personally delivered by the researcher on 10 March 2015 to a responsible leader (Pastor or elder) of the 11 Seventh-day Adventist Churches in the Free State. A copy of a letter of support from the President of the KwaZulu Natal-Free State Conference that was sent to the pastors and leaders of all the Free State Congregations, was also delivered to the congregations.¹⁹ In the letter the President gave his permission for the study in the Free State but left it to the congregations to decide whether they want to take part in the study or not. The congregations, with the assistance of local leaders, completed the 4-page questionnaire. These questionnaires were completed by ten of the eleven congregations and personally collected by the researcher at the end of March 2015. A total number of 219 adult attendees, 15 years and older completed the questionnaires. The data was then processed by the NCLS Research in Australia and returned to the researcher. The data was compared with all South African Churches, 18,838 questionnaires and 141 congregations.

During the first two weeks of August 2015, the researcher had initial interviews and focus group interviews with five of the Free State Congregations. Each of the congregations had been given their individual profiles. The other three very small congregations received a poster showing their profiles.

The aim of this study is to measure the vitality of the ten Free State Seventh-day Adventist congregations to be able to answer the research questions in Chapter One. What do we understand under the term "Vitality"? Congregations firstly help people to respond to the Christian faith, to worship God and to apply their faith in life in

¹⁸ See addendum No 3.

¹⁹ See addendum No 1.

general. Congregations are secondly communities of believers where people can find love and acceptance. Congregations are thirdly a place where people can be inspired to mission to the communities around them. "Church vitality" then is about the quality of these three aspects of the life in the congregation to what extent they are developed, recognised and is central to the life of the congregation. (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:2). If there is no vitality in the congregation, the congregation has become a social club where the members are only entertaining themselves and lost their reason for existence as Burrill (1998:14-15) and Bultmann (1951,1955:1:130) stated. The survey results are based on 219 adult attendees aged 15 years and over and in 10 churches that completed the questionnaires in Phase One of the research.

The groups that are compared in this profile are: 1. The Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church in 2015; 10 congregations took part and returned 219 questionnaires. 2. All South African Churches in 2014; 141 congregations took part and returned 18,838 questionnaires.

4.1 DESCRIPTION OF ATTENDEES

Each Church is a community of people from many different backgrounds and circumstances. Looking at who goes to Church also reveals the extent to which the Church is connecting with the many elements of South African society. Very significant is the high percentage of 57% of females in the Free State Church, 14 percentage points higher than their male counterparts. These percentages are the same for the All South African Church. This seems to be a trend in most of the conservative denominations in South Africa. Also significant is the stability in marriage as 44% Adventists are in their first marriage and 59% in the All South African Church (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Demographics (%)

	Free State SDA Church	All South African Church
Gender		
Female	57	57
Male	43	43
Marital Status		
Never married	29	15
In first marriage	44	59
Remarried	12	9
In a defacto relationship	2	2
Separated or divorced	5	6
Widowed	8	10
Highest educational qualification		
Primary/secondary school	8	10
Trade certificate, diploma or associate diploma	26	25
University degree	19	29
Employment status		
Employed	57	55
Full-time home duties/family responsibilities	8	8
Unemployed	6	2
Retired	16	28

Of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist attendees 59% say they are regularly involved in group activities and 51% regularly take part in the church’s activities of outreach to the wider community (Table 4.2). 23% say this church should give greater attention to building a strong sense of community within the congregation in the next six months (Table 4.15).

The members of the Free State Church are very involved with the church activities as 59% reported regular involvement (Table 4.2). What is significant in this section is the financial giving of the members. They report that 65% of the members regularly give 10% or more of their net income to the Church. They are 51 percentage points higher than the All South African Church of 14% (Table 4.2). The reason for this may be because Adventists are admonished to give 10% tithe plus offerings to support the Church. These figures show that they are very committed in giving their tithes and

offerings.

Table 4.2: Involvement at Church (%)

	Free State SDA Church	All South African Church
Frequency of church service attendance		
First time/hardly ever/ special occasions only	2	2
Less than once a month	1	2
Once a month	7	5
Two or three times a month	11	28
Usually every week	67	59
More than once a week	13	4
Attendees who perform leadership and ministry roles		
Worship services (teaching/preaching, music, lead/assist in service)	37	11
Children's ministry/youth ministry role	17	7
Small group leadership	5	7
Social group leadership	5	3
Management/admin/committee/task force member	17	15
Pastoral care/visitation role	6	2
Attendees who perform any of above leadership/ministry	55	32
Roles		
Some other role	16	10
Involved in activities of the congregations		
Small prayer, discussion or bible study groups	44	27
Fellowships, clubs, social or other groups	25	25
Evangelistic or outreach activities	37	9
Community service, social justice or welfare activities	24	24
Financial giving		
Regularly give 10% or more of net income	65	14
Regularly give up to 9% of net income	14	56
Give a small amount whenever I am here	17	26

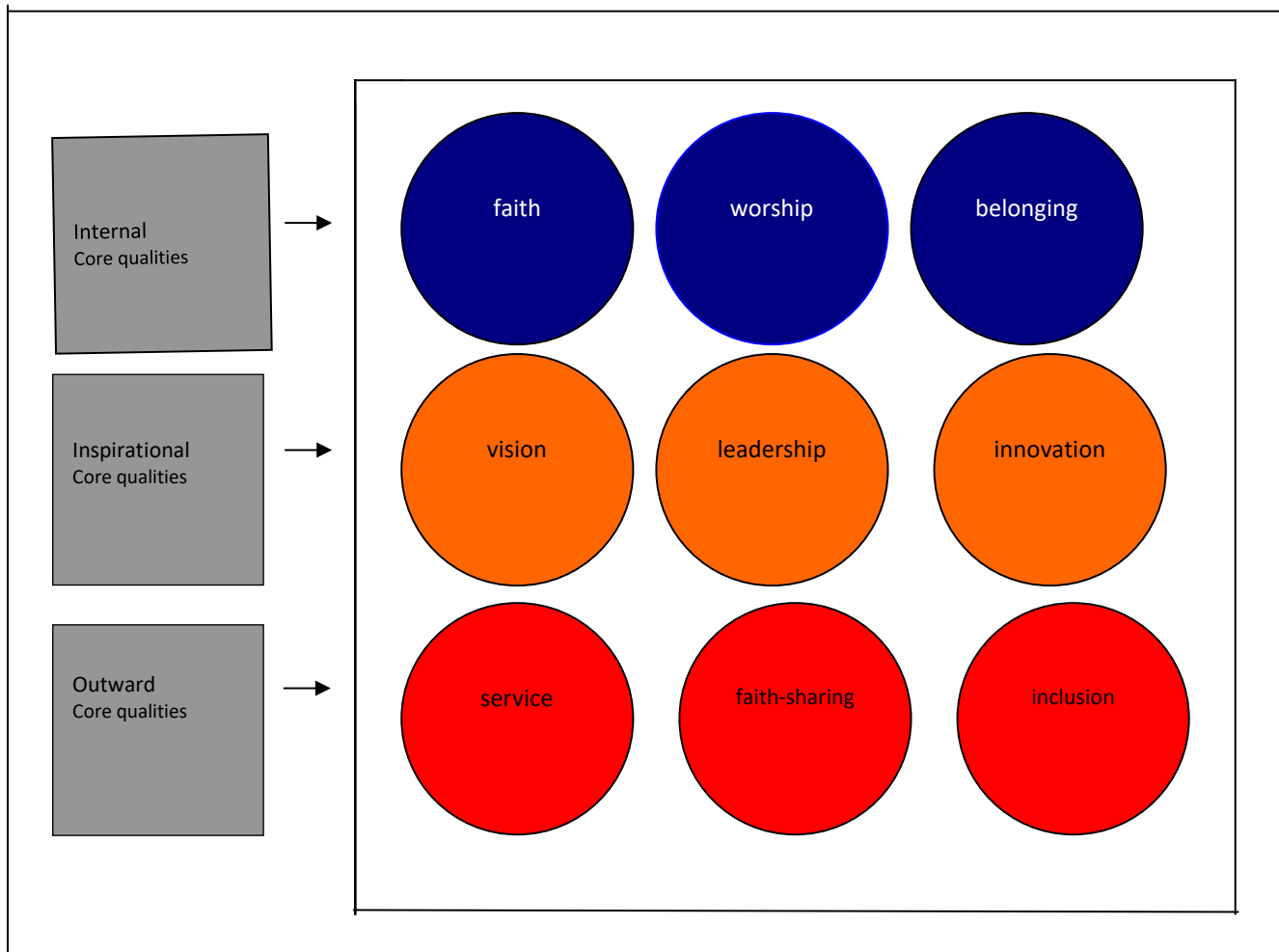
4.2 THE NINE CORE QUALITIES

The next section will give an explanation of the Core Qualities of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church vitality. A common theme of research into church life is that there is no one aspect that dictates the effectiveness of a local church's ministry and mission. Instead, the contribution of each aspect of church life, whether positive or negative, needs to be considered separately. Identifying distinct 'Core Qualities' of church life and how these interact is central to the approach used to measure church vitality through the Nation Church Life Survey (Powel *et al.*, 2012:3). These Core Qualities are highly interrelated. Congregations that have high levels of one Core Quality often have high levels of other Core Qualities (Powel *et al.*, 2012:95). The NCLS Research highlights nine core qualities of church health and vitality. (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:10-29). A Church Life Survey invites attendees to reflect on their own experience of church and evaluate these core qualities of church life. There are many measures of vitality. Each Core Quality is evaluated by attendees through a range of different survey questions. Their responses are used to create a series of indicators to measure a church's vitality in particular areas. Results are displayed by each section of the profile.

The data has been divided into nine *Core Qualities* (Figure 4.1). The first three core qualities measure the faith in God and the relationships within the congregation (*Internal Core Qualities*). It has to do with the inner life of the congregation and forms the foundation to the life of the congregation, as it energizes the other core qualities. The three internal core qualities are: 1) Alive and growing *faith*; 2) Vital and nurturing *worship*; and 3) strong and growing *belonging*. The first two has to do with our relationship with God while the third one has to do with our relationship with each other in the congregation. The congregation is the place where people can have meaningful friendships with which they can share their lives, difficulties, hopes and dreams with other members. The next three core qualities focus on leadership and direction (*Inspirational Core Qualities*). They determine the basis for change in the congregation. It says something about the congregation's willingness to change and to venture into new avenues. In order to grow, congregations need: 1) Clear and owned vision; 2) Inspiring and empowering leadership; and 3) Imaginative and flexible innovation.

The last three core qualities, the (Outward Core Qualities) focus on the interaction between the local congregation and the community in which they find themselves. It has to about serving, sharing and assisting others in becoming part of the congregation. These qualities are: 1) Practical and diverse service; 2) Willing and effective faith-sharing; and 3) Intentional and welcoming inclusion (Bellamy et al., 2006:2).

Figure 4.1: Nine Core Qualities of Church Life (Bellamy et al. 2006:5)



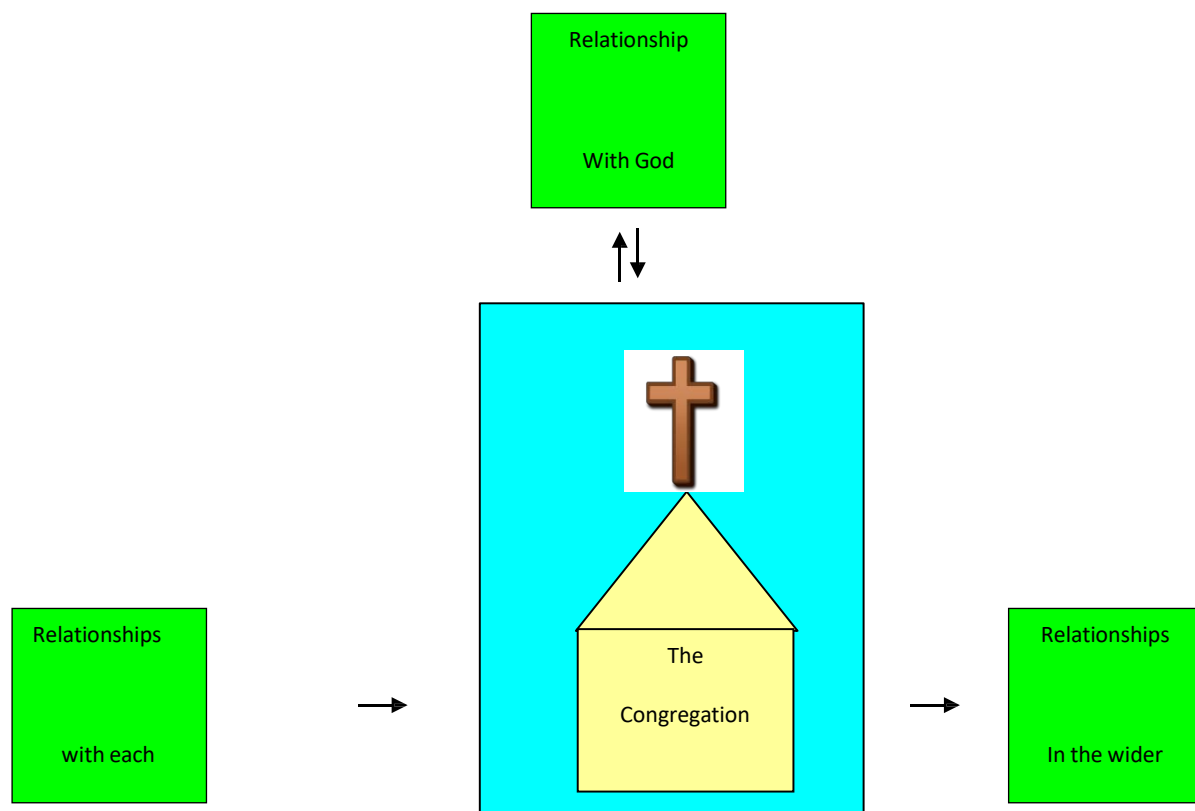
What would be the basis then of the vitality measures? Moreau *et al.* (2004:83, 84) correctly proposes that the purpose of the church is to submit to Christ who is its head, and it is done in terms of three relationships: 1) the church's relationship with God. The church is to send forth praise and glory to God; 2) the church's relationship with itself. 3) The church's relationship with the world.

The basis then to measure a congregation's vitality is by way of the three relationships (Figure 4.2). *Relationship with God* (faith and worship): Do the attendees experience a connection with God and grow spiritually?

Relationship with each other (belonging, leadership, vision, and innovation): Do the members have fellowship (koinonia) with each other and do they feel a sense of belonging, and how the leadership lead, inspire and utilise the gifts of the members.

Relationship with the community: Do the attendees connect with the community by means of service, faith sharing and inclusion.

Figure 4.2: Three relationships to measure Church vitality (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:7)



4.3 THE VITALITY OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN THE FREE STATE

This section looks in detail at the vitality of the Seventh-day Adventist church in the Free State region. It provides attendees' responses to questions about each of the nine Core Qualities.

The Internal Core Qualities focus on the inner life of the community of faith. They are often seen as foundational to church life, providing both shape and energy to the other Core Qualities: An alive and growing faith: vital and nurturing worship. Strong and growing belonging.

What is understood under *faith*? A growing, lively faith is at the center of church vitality. The main purpose of the church is to teach people about God and to help them to worship Him by living out their faith in every aspect of their lives. There are various elements that result in a lively, growing faith. This may include a growing understanding of doctrine, of trust and belief in God, of the experience of the presence of God, or of putting faith into practice by living out your belief in God in everyday life. The faith aspects can be measured by the *Importance of God*: how important members believe God is to them; *Faith commitment*: have the members experienced a faith commitment, or is there a gradual growing of their commitment? *Private devotional activity*: do members spend time in private devotions? *Growth in faith*: do members believe that their faith has grown? (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:12) Fowler (1981:14) argues that faith is the orientation of the total person, giving purpose and goal to one's hopes and strivings, thoughts and actions. Berkhof (1939:503) argues that faith is an activity of man as whole, and not of any part of man. The researchers own definition of faith is: Faith is the answer of the human heart to the love of God as revealed on the cross. De Roest (2008:39) indicates that the experience of faith is reflected by the fact that members regularly engage in personal prayer and Bible study, participate in prayer meetings, attend services regularly and base their views on Scripture on the authority of the Bible. Douglass (1978:29) indicates that faith describes a principle of human nature by which we believe something on the basis of evidence of authority on which we have places vale and act accordingly.

What is understood under Worship? We are discussing here a vital and nurturing Worship. In Heb 10:25 Paul advices that believers should never neglects their meeting

together as it will encourage them in their faith in Christ. Worship here refers to congregational worship, such as during a congregational divine- or worship service. Do the members experience a sense of God's presence; inspiration; awe; joy; growth in understanding of God and preaching that is helpful to everyday life? On the opposite side, do the members experience boredom during the worship service? (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:14). Burrill (1998:224) declares that to most Adventists today, the chief religious activity is passive: listening to a sermon or seminar, which is promptly forgotten.

What is understood under *Belonging*? We are discussing here a strong and growing Belonging. According to the New Testament the congregation is a body where members have various functions. (1 Cor 12) Attendance at the services of the congregation, especially the worship service is much more than simply to be present. It is about being part of a community of believers with different privileges and responsibilities. This feeling of belonging to a community of faith is essential for believers and is vital as a quality that enhances the life of a congregation. A feeling of belonging is also strongly linked to the other core qualities. (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:16) *Belonging* may be described as an element of bonding to a group, an emotional aspect of religion that facilitates experience and rituals (Sarasaglou, 2011:1326).

The *Inspirational Core Qualities* relate to leadership and direction. These qualities are the major catalysts for churches to move forward. They give a measure of the extent to which the Free State churches have a culture of: a clear and owned *vision*; inspiring and empowering *leadership*; openness to imaginative and flexible *innovation*.

What is understood under *Vision*? We are discussing here a clear and owned Vision. When it comes to congregational vitality, it is the ability of churches to develop a clear vision that members are strongly committed to. Church leaders should face the challenge of helping their congregation to develop a compelling vision, to be committed to that vision and to maintain that commitment through to its fulfilment. The vision of the congregation must include those beyond the congregation. Congregations must expand their horizons beyond the people in their immediate circle. (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:18) Research has shown that most members of congregations are mostly inward-looking than on reaching those beyond congregational life (Hughes, 2004:16).

What is understood under Leadership? We are discussing here an inspiring and

empowering Leadership. Leadership is of critical importance to church life. It is vital for problem solving, for promoting visionary goals, for encouraging individuals to work together and for responding to new opportunities, for resolving conflicts, and for maintaining standards of behaviour and best practice in the congregation. Inspiring and empowering leadership is the primary force for change and for the congregation to move forward. Congregational leadership can inspire members by not only what they say but by what they do (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:20). Leadership aims, among others, to influence individuals or groups (Gibbs, 2005:25). Research recognized three leadership styles: *strongly directive leadership; leadership that inspires people to action* and *leadership that allows other people to start most things*. Of the three styles, leadership that inspires people to take action is most associated with other aspects of church vitality. (Kaldor, 2002:82)

What is understood under *Innovation*? We are discussing here an imaginative and flexible Innovation. Leaders must contemplate how can change be brought about to help this congregation become more healthy? Leaders may meet with opposition to changes and should realise that it may take a long process of negotiation or even conflict to bring about even small changes. The congregation need to be open and willing to try new approaches (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:22). Leaders who do not occasionally stop to evaluate and consider new ideas will lose the opportunity they were given to make a difference. Some leaders follow the same path and never questioning whether earlier methods and plans were the best. A bold decision may move us from the path of mediocrity to the highway of creativity and of a ministry that really makes a difference (Arrais, 2007: 27). The Outward Core Qualities focus on the outward looking life of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church, and a measure is made of the extent to which the attendees undertake: practical and diverse service; willing and effective faith-sharing; intentional and welcoming inclusion.

What is understood under Service? We are discussing here a practical and diverse Service. The church has been called through the ages to reflect God's love for the world with acts of service. Service is central to the mission of the church. Church organisations are major providers of welfare, educational and medical facilities and services. Research done by the NCLS found definite links between churches having and outward focus beyond the congregation and growth of membership (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:24).

What is understood under *Faith-sharing*? We are discussing here willing and effective Faith-sharing. In the Great Commission, Jesus calls His people to make disciples of all nations. Although there is different emphasis across the denominations, the activity mentioned by Bellamy *et al.* (2006:26) that describes the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the one where it involves church members in active engagement, taking part in the outreach activities of the congregation. Religious sociologists view the inviting of outsiders to congregational programmes and activities by friends and relatives as the most common way in which people join religious groups. (McGuire, 1987:70) Congregations need to sow in a multiplicity of ways in order to reap even a moderate harvest among those who are currently beyond the life of the congregation. (Hughes, 2004, 115-119).

What is understood under *Inclusion*? We are discussing here intentional and welcoming Inclusion. Inclusion has to do with the successful integration of people into church life. This inclusion is intentional and seeks out new people and including and welcoming them in the programme of the congregation. (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:28) This has also to do with retaining people within the life of the congregation and needs to be firmly on the congregation's agenda along with outreach (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006: 28, 29). Retaining is vital for a congregation and should always be a concern. Sterland (2006) reports that there is evidence in Australia, that more than 10% of church attendees will leave church life every five years.

4.3.1 The Internal core qualities

Faith: Of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist attendees 42% say that in the last year they have experienced much growth in their faith through their church. (Table 4.3). 40% choose spiritual growth as an area their church should pay more attention to (Table 4.15) and 10% choose the church's small groups as an aspects of the church they most value (Table 4.16).

According to the above statistics, the Free State Seventh-day Adventists are experiencing their growth in faith in the Church and are not as likely to join small groups. This correlates with the All South African Church as the percentage of both samples are very much the same. One point difference in growth of faith through the church and 4 point difference in choosing small groups. This means that the South

African people at large mainly experience their growth in faith through their church. It is however significant to note that 40% of the Seventh-day Adventists in the Free State chose spiritual growth as an area their church should pay more attention to. It is 13 points higher than the All South African Church of 27%. This may show a dissatisfaction of the Adventist members in the Free State with the spiritual level of their Church.

Seventy nine per cent of the Free State Adventists say that they are committed to every day private prayer, Bible reading and meditation. This correlates with the general belief amongst Adventists that Seventh-day Adventists are a people of the Bible. Faith features as one of the four strengths on the circle of strengths on the Free State Adventist Church profile (Figure 4.4). Adventists are 8 points higher than the All South African Church's 71% (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3: Alive and growing faith (%)

	Free State SDA Church	All South African Church
Growth in faith		
<i>Attendees' growth in faith in the past year</i>		
Much growth through this congregation	42	41
Much growth through other churches	10	11
Much growth through private activity	23	22
Some growth	21	21
No growth	4	5
Private devotional activity		
<i>Time spent in private prayer, Bible reading, meditation:</i>		
Every day/most days	79	71
A few times a week	11	15
Once a week	1	3
Occasionally	8	10
Hardly ever	1	2
Never	0	1
Identification with approaches to matters of faith		
<i>Attendees chose up to 2 out of 11 options</i>		
<i>e.g. Catholic, Charismatic, the 3 most common were:</i>		
I do not identify with such descriptions	71	n/a
Moderate	8	n/a
Reformed	7	n/a
Importance of God in your life		
God is the most important reality in my life	83	75
God is more important to me than almost anything else	15	22
Fairly important, but many other things are more important	2	3

Worship: Of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist attendees 87% say that they always or usually experience inspiration during worship services and 88% always or usually experience a sense of God's presence during worship services (Table 4.4). 24% prioritise developing worship services that nurture people's faith as an area that the Seventh-day Adventist should give greater attention to in the next 6 to 12 months (Table 4.15). The worship service is rated very high by the Adventist attendees and measures well with the All South African Church with 2 points higher in experiencing inspiration,

and two points lower in experiencing God's presence (Table 4.4). It is also rated the strongest point on the circle of strengths of the Adventist profile (Figure 4.4). The measured vitality in this section is very encouraging as worship forms the basis of the vitality of a congregation.

The sermons during the Worship Services and the congregational singing are very helpful and important to both samples with a one point difference in each case. Helpful sermons for the Adventists are at 51% and All South African Church at 50%, and music and singing at 76% and 77% respectively. While the Meaningful Worship index is high in both samples, it is notable and understandable that the boredom index during the worship service is so low with a 9% for both the Adventist and the All SA sample (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Vital and Nurturing Worship (%)

	Free State SDA Church	All South African Church
During church services attendees:		
Always experience inspiration	42	44
Usually experience inspiration	45	41
Always experience joy	51	47
Usually experience joy	34	38
Always experience boredom	3	4
Usually experience boredom	7	5
Always experience a sense of God's presence	64	61
Usually experience a sense of God's presence	24	29
Always experience growth in understanding of God	53	48
Usually experience growth in understanding of God	35	42
Always experience being challenged to take action	29	25
Usually experience being challenged to take action	35	39
The preaching at church is very helpful to my life		
Always	51	50
Usually	33	39
Sometimes	14	10
Rarely/never	3	1
Music and singing is an important part of worship for me		
Strongly agree	76	77
Agree	19	19
Neutral/unsure	4	3
Disagree	1	1
Strongly disagree	0	0

Belonging: Of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist attendees 68% experience a strong and growing sense of belonging (Table 4.5). 23% prioritise building a strong sense of community within the congregation as something for attention in the next 12 months (Table 4.15). Of the things people most value about their church, praying for one another is chosen by 29% and practical care for one another in times of need is chosen by 21% (Table 4.16). There is a gap of 19% between the Adventists and the All South African Church. This is due to the fact that 68% of the Adventists attendees feel that they have a growing sense of belonging to their congregations while 49% of the All South African Church does. The reason may be because of the fact that Adventists

look at themselves as a family and like to socialise together after church and have regular congregational meals. This strengthens the sense of belonging amongst the members (Table 4.5). The members interestingly however rated belonging on the circle of strengths of the Adventist profile rather low compared with the other strengths (Figure 4.4). This may be that although there is a strong sense of belonging amongst the members, many of the members may not feel completely fulfilled.

Table 4.5: Strong and growing belonging (%)

	Free State SDA Church	All South African Church
Sense of belonging to the congregation		
Strong and growing	68	49
Strong and stable	12	25
Strong but weakening	10	10
No, but I am new here	2	5
No, and I wish I did by now	4	4
No, but I am happy as I am	2	6
Don't know/not applicable	2	2
Sense of belonging to the denomination		
Attendees strongly agree they have a strong sense of belonging to the denomination	50	37
Attendees agree they have a strong sense of belonging to the denomination	34	43
Regular participation in the church's activities		
Small prayer, discussion or Bible study groups	44	27
Fellowship, clubs or other social groups	25	25
Evangelistic or outreach activities	37	9
Community service, social justice or welfare activities	24	24
Length of time attending this church's services or activities		
Less than 1 year	11	7
1-5 years	39	21
6-10 years	11	16
More than 10 years	38	55
Visitor	1	2

4.3.2 The Inspirational core qualities

Vision: Of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist attendees, 29% are aware of, and strongly committed to the church's vision, goals and directions and 51% are fully confident the vision can be achieved (Table 4.6). Ten per cent believe that this church should pay more attention to creating a clear vision for the church's future as a priority in the next 12 months (Table 4.15).

Although 29% of the Adventists attendees say that they are strongly committed to the church's vision, 37% are partly or not committed to the vision and 23% are only aware of ideas and not of any clear vision, goals or directions. This may be the reason why many of the members are not involved in the programmes of their congregations (Table 4.6). A clear and owned vision is also rated lowest by the members on the circle of strengths of the Adventist profile (Figure 4.4). There are no major differences between the two groups. There seems to be a gap between the leadership and their vision and the members owning their vision.

Table 4.6: Strong and growing belonging (%)

	Free State SDA Church	All South African Church
Awareness of vision, goals and directions of the church		
Attendees are aware and strongly committed	29	29
Attendees are aware and partly committed	24	27
Attendees are aware and not committed	13	19
Attendees are aware of ideas not of any clear vision, goals or directions	23	16
Attendees are unaware of any clear vision, goals or direction	12	10
Confidence that the congregation can achieve the vision, goals or directions it has set for itself.		
Fully confident the vision can be achieved	51	48
Partly confident the vision can be achieved	29	32
Not confident the vision can be achieved	7	5
Vision, goal or directions are not clear enough to be able to evaluate this	6	6
Don't know	7	10
Leaders are strongly focused on future directions		
Strongly agree	31	36
Agree	45	45
Neutral/unsure	21	17
Disagree	4	2
Strongly disagree	1	0

Leadership: Of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist attendees, 31% say that leaders encourage them to use their gifts and skills to a great extent (Table 4.7). 22% say the Church should encourage people here to discover and use their gifts as a priority in the next 12 months (Table 4.15) and 10% believe one of their strengths is empowering: helping others to make their contributions (Table 4:17).

The Adventists say that the leaders encourage them to use their gifts and skills to a great extent (31%), but 49% say that the leaders encourage them only to some extent or a small extent (Table 4.7) Only 10% believe that empowering leadership is one of their strengths (Table 4.17) It may be that a large percentage of the members' gifts and skills are overlooked and not utilized in the congregations. Inspiring and Empowering leadership may be largely lacking in the Free State Church. Are the

leadership perhaps doing the ministry by themselves rather than equipping and encouraging the members? Empowering Leadership is rated third lowest by the members on the circle of strengths on the Free State Seventh-day Adventist profile (Figure 4.4) There is no major difference between the Adventist sample and the All South African sample except that there is a 10 point difference between the samples about leadership helping the congregations to identify and build on its strengths as well as a 10 point difference about the agreement that the congregations has good and clear congregational systems. It is 66% and 76% respectively for the Adventists and 76% and 87% respectively for the All South African Church (Table 4.7).

Table 4.7: Inspiring and Empowering Leadership (%)

	Free State SDA Church	All South African Church
How leaders are perceived by attendees		
<i>Attendees say the church leaders encouraged them to find and use their gifts and skills:</i>		
To a great extent	31	26
To some extent	34	35
To a small extent	15	19
Not at all	13	10
<i>Attendees say that the congregations' leaders take into account the ideas of the people:</i>		
To great extent	44	41
To some extent	32	34
<i>Attendees agree that leaders ...</i>		
Inspire us to action	68	70
Keep us strongly focused on connecting with the wider community	72	81
Always communicate clearly and openly	70	79
Encourage innovation and creative thinking	70	74
Are strongly focused on directions for the future	75	81
Help our congregation identity and build on its strengths	66	76
Congregational systems		
Attendees agree that the congregations have good and clear systems	77	87
Attendees who perform a leadership or ministry role	55	32

Innovation: Of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist attendees, 59% believe the Free State congregations are always ready to try something new and 65% would tend to support innovative change to the worship service they attend (Table 4.8). 8% say encouraging new approaches to ministry and mission should be a priority in the next 12 months (Table 4.15)

The Adventist worshipers feel that their congregations are always ready to try new things. They are impressed by the innovative ideas of the leadership. It is also rated as the fourth strength on the circle of strengths on the Adventist profile by the members (Figure 4.4) There is however quite a difference in the two groups. The Adventist sample percentage is 59% and the All South African Church percentage is 74% (Table 4.8). There is thus much room for improvement of imaginative and flexible innovation by the leadership on the Adventist side.

Table 4.8: Imaginative and Flexible Innovation (%)

	Free State SDA Church	All South African Church
Willingness of the congregations to try new things		
<i>The congregations are always ready to try something new:</i>		
Strongly agree	22	31
Agree	37	43
Neutral or unsure	28	19
Disagree	11	5
Strongly disagree	3	1
Leaders encourage innovation		
<i>Leaders encourage innovation and creative thinking</i>		
Strongly agree	28	29
Agree	42	45
Neutral/unsure	24	21
Disagree	6	4
Strongly disagree	2	1
<i>Leaders are strongly focused on future directions</i>		
Strongly agree/agree	75	81
Openness to change of worship style		
<i>If innovative change was proposed to the worship service they attend (e.g. style of music, seating layout etc.), attendees would tend to:</i>		
Strongly support such changes	23	25
Support such changes	42	46
Be neutral or unsure	25	24
Oppose such changes	5	4
Strongly oppose such changes	5	2

4.3.3 The External (outward) core qualities

Service: Of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist attendees, 52% informally helped others in three or more of the listed ways in the last year and 38% are regularly involved in some form of community group activity beyond the church (Table 4.9). 12% say the church should give more attention to supporting social justice and aid to people in need in the next 12 months (Table 4.15).

The Adventists in the Free State seem to be quite active in the community. The reality is however quite different. 52% informally helped others in the community but only 24% were involved in church-based service activities (Table 4.9). This means that individually attendees in the Free State are involved in community service but not as a Church. This is supported by the Adventist profile where Service is rated second last in the circle of strengths (Figure 4.4). This is a matter of concern and much attention should be given to practical and diverse service by the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Table 4.9: Practical and Diverse Service (%)

	Free State SDA Church	All South African Church
Informal ways of helping others (In the last year)		
<i>Attendees who helped others in three or more of the ways below:</i>	52	44
Lent money outside family	44	33
Cared for someone who was very sick	38	30
Helped someone through a crisis	52	42
Visited someone in hospital	46	41
Gave possessions to a needy person	46	41
Tried to stop someone abusing alcohol or drugs	20	11
Donated money to charity	30	44
Contacted a parliamentarian or councilor about an issue	7	6
Involvement in church-based service activities		
Attendees involved regularly in community service, social justice or welfare activities connected to the congregations	24	24
On-going involvement in community groups not connected to the church		
Community service, care or welfare groups	20	19
Social action, justice or lobby groups	4	3
Sport, recreation or hobby groups	10	12
School or youth groups (e.g. P&C, Scouts)	12	10
Another kind of group	6	7
Not involved with such groups	62	59

Faith-sharing: Of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist attendees, 52% invited someone to church in the past year and 90% feel at ease talking about their faith

(Table 4.10). 17% choose reaching those who do not attend church as an aspect of the church that they most value (Table 4.16) and 28% believe more attention should be given to encouraging people to share their faith or invite others in the next 12 months (Table 4.15).

Ninety per cent of the Free State Adventists feel at ease talking about their faith but it may be that they do not really talk about their faith, as it is rated low by the members in the Free State profile (Figure 4.4) Adventists are 10 percentage points higher (90%) than the All South African Church (80%). If the Adventists in the Free State will really talk about their faith, it may have wonderful consequences. The Adventists are also 14 points higher (52%) than the All South African Church (38%) in their willingness to invite friends to church. The Free State Adventist Church has the potential to be very strong in Faith-sharing.

Table 4.10: Willing and Effective Faith-sharing (%)

	Free State SDA Church	All South African Church
Inviting others to church here		
<i>Willingness to invite to a church service any friends and relatives who do not currently attend a church</i>		
Willing and invited someone in the last 12 months	52	38
Willing, but didn't invite someone in the last 12 months	36	46
Probably wouldn't invite someone	3	5
Definitely wouldn't invite someone	2	1
Don't know	9	11
Involvement in evangelistic or outreach activities		
Attendees involved regularly in outreach or evangelistic activities	37	9
Readiness to share faith with others		
Feel at ease talking about their faith and look for opportunities	23	14
Mostly feel at ease talking about their faith, and do so if it comes up	67	66
Find it hard to talk about their faith in ordinary language	9	12
Do not like to talk about their faith; life and actions are sufficient	1	8
Do not have faith	0	0
Aspects of church most valued – outreach		
Attendees who most value this congregation reaching those who do not attend church	17	10
Attendees who want this congregation to give greater encouragement over the next 12 months for people to share their faith or invite others	28	21

Inclusion: Of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist attendees, 18% say if they knew someone was drifting away from church involvement, they are certain they would take the time to talk with them about it and 45% say they are very likely or likely to follow up someone drifting away. 26% always personally welcome someone who they know is a new arrival (Table 4.11). 12% choose social activities or meeting new people as an aspect of the church they most value (Table 4.16).

The Free State Adventists rated inclusion as second strongest on the circle of strengths profile (Figure 4.4). This data pictures the Adventists as a very welcoming Church to newcomers. They are willing to follow someone up that is drifting away

(45%) and willing to welcome new arrivals (26%) (Table 4.11) These figures are very encouraging as it portrays the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a warm and welcoming church where newcomers may feel welcome and have the desire to stay. There is quite a gap between the percentages of the Adventist Church and the All South African Church. 34% of the Seventh-day Adventists say they will certainly and very likely follow up someone who drifts away against the 20% of the All South African Church, a gap of 14 points. 61% of the Seventh-day Adventists and 29% of the All South African Church reports that they will always and mostly seek out and welcome newcomers, a gap of 32 points.

Table 4.11: Intentional and Welcoming Inclusion (%)

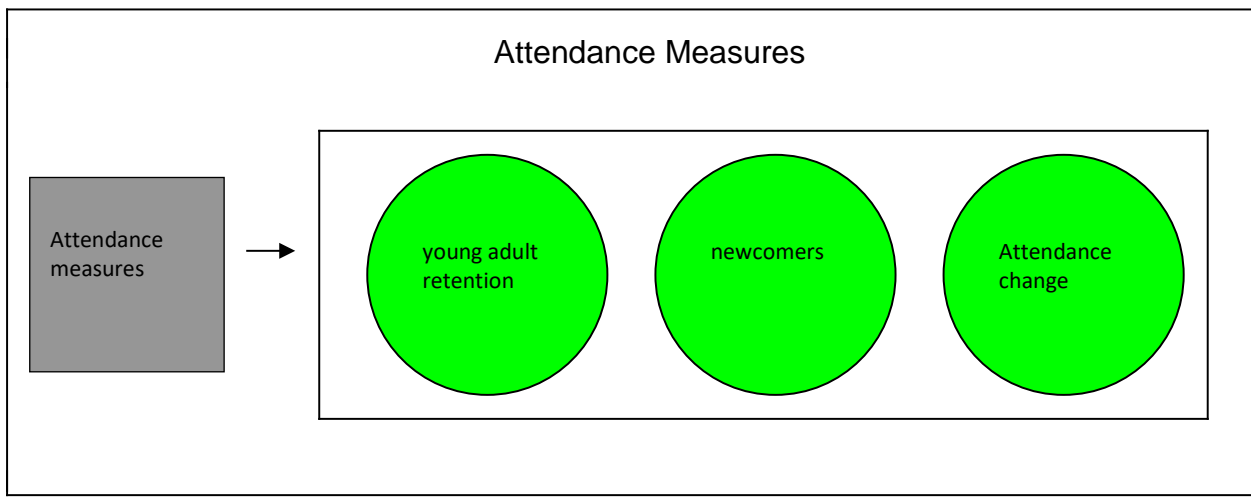
	Free State SDA Church	All South African Church
Likelihood of attendees to follow up someone drifting away from church		
Certain	18	11
Very likely	16	9
Likely	29	25
Hard to say	28	40
Unlikely	10	15
Attendees personally seek out and welcome people they know who are new arrivals		
Always	26	10
Mostly	35	19
Sometimes	29	32
Rarely/never	7	23
Attendees have found it easy to make friends		
<i>Among all attendees:</i>		
Agree or strongly agree	80	71
Disagree or strongly disagree	8	7
<i>Among those who have arrived in the last five years;</i>		
Agree or strongly agree	84	64
Disagree or strongly disagree	6	9

4.3.4 Three attendance measures

This section looks at the people of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church key attendance measures of those who attend the church.

There are three *Measures of Attendance* (Figure 4.3) that measures the congregation's vitality. 1) *Young Adult Retention*: It measures the proportion of attendees aged 15-19 who attended the congregation for more than five years – the extent to which the children of church attendees remain regular attendees when they grow into young adulthood. 2) *Newcomers*: This measures the percentage of people who have joined the congregation in the last 5 years, who were not part of any other congregation or switch congregations and are previously from another faith group (switchers) – the extent to which new arrivals are present in churches and whether they are newcomers to church life, transfers from another church or switchers from another denomination. 3) *Attendance Change*: Changes in attendance or church growth can indicate congregational vitality - the extent to which attendance numbers have changed over the last five years through the inflow and outflow of people.

Figure 4.3: Attendance Measures (Bellamy et al., 2006:5)



4.3.4.1 Young Adult Retention

Of the adult church attendees (aged 15+), 12% are aged 15 to 19 years and 60% are satisfied with what is offered for children under 12 years (Table 4.12). 13% say that ministry to children and youth is one aspect they most value at the church

(Table 4.16) and 23% want ministry to children and youth to get more attention in the next 12 months (Table 4.15).

The data in Table 4.12 are very significant since 82% of children aged 0-14 years attend church. This percentage drops to 71% for children 15 and over and a significant drop to 12% is reported in young people 15-19. The reason for this may be that young people move away from the smaller areas to attend higher education institutions in the larger centres. Many young people thus are away at school and do not worship in their home congregations anymore. This may also relate to the large loss of young people from the Church during their late teens and early twenties. This fact is also supported by the average age of the Seventh-day Adventist attendees in the Free State of 44 years and 10 months. The average age is dangerously high as it portrays that the Free State Church are lacking in young membership. There is no real significant difference in the two groups.

Table 4.12: Young Adult Retention (%)

	Free State SDA Church	All South African Church
Church attendance pattern of attendees' children still living at home		
<i>Aged 0-14:*</i>		
Still attend the church	82	90
Attend elsewhere	10	5
Do not attend any church	10	4
<i>Aged 15 and over:*</i>		
Still attend the church	71	63
Attend elsewhere	27	18
Do not attend any church	9	19
Young people (aged 15-19) at the church		
Young people who have been attending more than 5 years	3	5
Young people who have been attending 5 years or less	9	3
Satisfaction with what is offered for young people		
<i>All attendees satisfied with what is offered for:</i>		
Children under 12 years	60	65
Youth aged 12-18 years	52	58
Young adults aged 19-25 years	48	49
15-18 year old attendees satisfied with youth activities offered	50	71
19-25 year old attendees satisfied with young adult activities offered	52	57

4.3.4.2 Newcomers

Of the adult church attendees (aged 15+), 5% are newcomers to church in the last 5 years and 23% switched from another denomination in the last 5 years. 19% are transfers from a church of the same denomination in the last 5 years (Table 4.13). 19% say this church should give greater attention to ensuring new people are included will in church life in the next 12 months (Table 4.15).

A large percentage of Adventist attendees are new (less than five years). The percentage for switchers (23%) is significantly higher than the percentage of 3% for the All South African Church. This reflects the high emphasis on evangelism in the Seventh-day Adventist Church (Table 4.13).

Table 4.13: Newcomers (%)

	Free State SDA Church	ALL South African Church
Newcomers to church		
Newcomers returning after an absence of several years	2	2
Newcomers who never regularly attended	3	1
Church attendance history*		
Total newcomers in the last 5 years	5	3
Switchers from another denomination in the last 5 years	23	3
Transfers from same denomination in the last 5 years	19	21
Long-term attendees: attended for more than 5 years	53	72
Visitors from other churches	1	1
Visitors who do not regularly go to church	1	1
Length of attendance at the Free State SDA church		
Less than 1 year	11	7
1-2 years	22	8
3-5 years	17	14
6-10 years	11	16
11-20 years	17	23
More than 20 years	22	32
* Note: Church attendance history is calculated from three survey questions. The figures may not match those for length of attendance due to non-responses.		

4.3.4.3 Attendance change

The attendance change can only be measured when a second study is done. The two sets of data are then compared with each other and positive or negative changes can then be assessed. This is the first study done with the Seventh-day Adventist Church and no attendance changes can thus be measured.

4.4 SUMMARY OF THE DATA

This section will give a summary view of the data for the Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church. The top four strengths of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the

Free State are *Worship; Inclusion; Faith and Innovation* (Fig 4.4). The top four leadership strengths among attendees are *listening deeply; building mutual connections; learning from experience* and *maintaining resolve* (Table 4.17). The top four areas attendees say need attention in the next twelve months are *spiritual growth; a larger congregation; encouraging faith sharing* and *nurturing worship* (Table 4:15). The top four aspects attendees most valued are *sharing in Holy Communion; preaching or Bible teaching; traditional worship or music*, and *praying for one another* (Table 4:16) The average age is 44 years and 10 months. The gender distribution is female 57% and male 43%. Tertiary education is 19%. The data is very important for this study. It shows according to the attendees, what the strong points of the SDA Church are. It states what the attendees feel need urgent attention and what they value. The average age pictures a dangerous situation as it shows that the Church in the Free State is becoming a “greying” Church. Urgent attention needs to be given to reaching out to, and retention of the youth. The data gives a view of how the attendees experience their church life.

4.4.1 Core Qualities

Table 4.14: The Core Qualities Measures (%)

	Free State SDA Church	All South African Church
1. Alive and Growing Faith Attendees have had “much growth in faith in the past year, through these congregations.”	42	41
2. Vital and nurturing Worship In church, attendees who “always experience inspiration.”	42	44
3. Strong and growing belonging Attendees whose “sense of belonging is strong and growing”	68	49
4. Clear and owned Vision Attendees who are “aware of and strongly committed to the vision of the church.”	29	29
5. Inspiring and Empowering Leadership Attendees who agree that “leaders encourage attendees to use their gifts and skills to a great extent”.	31	26
6. Imaginative and Flexible Innovation Attendees who “strongly agree the congregations are always ready to try new things.”	22	31
7. Practical and Diverse Service Attendees who helped others informally in 3 or more listed ways.	52	44
8. Willing and Effective Faith-sharing Attendees who “have invited someone in the last 12 months.”	52	38
9. Intentional and Welcoming Inclusion Attendees who are “certain they would follow up someone drifting from church”.	18	11

Figure 4.4 shows according to the data, the profile of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State. The circle of strengths portrays the strong points of the Free State Church from their greatest strength down to their not so strong points. In this profile worship, inclusion, faith and innovation are portrayed as the four greatest strengths of the Church, while vision, service, leadership and faith-sharing is portrayed as not so strong according to the data.

Figure 4.4: A profile of the 10 Seventh-day Adventist Churches in the Free State



4.4.2 What the SDA Church hope for and what is valued

Table 4.15: What the Free State SDA Church hope for (%)

	Free State SDA Church	All South African Church
Spiritual growth	40	27
Worship services that are nurturing to people's faith	24	29
Building a strong sense of community within the congregation	23	25
Creating a clear vision for the congregation's future	10	13
Encouraging the people to discover/use their gifts	22	25
Encouraging new approaches to ministry and mission	8	10
Supporting social action and aid to people in need	12	13
Encouraging the people to share their faith or invite others	28	21
Ensuring new people are included will in church life	19	23
Ministry to children and youth	23	24
Growing into a larger congregation	28	23
Starting a new church or mission venture	14	4

Note: Attendees could select up to three options so percentages may not add up to 100%

Table 4.16: What the Free State SDA Church most valued (%)

	Free State SDA Church	All South African Church
Wider community care or social justice emphasis	25	36
Reaching those who do not attend church	17	10
Traditional style of worship or music	30	22
Contemporary style of worship or music	8	16
Sharing in Holy Communion	44	39
Social activities or meeting new people	12	9
Sermons, preaching or Bible teaching	36	45
Small prayer, discussion or Bible study groups	10	14
Ministry to children or youth	13	15
Praying for one another	29	12
Practical care for one another in times of need	21	25
Openness to social or cultural diversity	8	6
Presence of a church school or pre-school	8	10

Note: Attendees could select up to three options so percentages may not add up to 100%

The Free State Church reported a high 44% of attendees who value sharing in Holy Communion. This may be because the Seventh-day Adventist Church only has communion once a quarter. This may result in the Communion service staying a special occasion for the attendees. Also important to note is that traditional style of worship or music is also rated high with 30%. The Seventh-day Adventist Church views itself generally as a conservative Church and therefore favours the traditional style of worship and music.

4.5 LEADERSHIP STRENGTHS

The attendees were asked: We all have different strengths to contribute at work or in daily life. Which of the following do you do well? The top four leadership strengths were, Listen deeply to others (68%); Build good relationships with others (46%). The ability to learn and grow from experience (44%) and to stay on course when things get difficult (37%) (Table 4.17). There are no significant differences between the Adventists and the All South African Church. The significance of this data is that it shows that the attendees have important qualities that need to be noted in order to utilize them in their endeavour to ensure that the Free State Church becomes a vibrant missional Church.

Table 4.17: Leadership strengths of the Free State SDA Church (%)

		Free State SDA Church	All South African Church
LISTEN:	Listen deeply to others	68	62
CONNECTS:	Build good relationships with others	46	41
ENVISION:	Help people discover direction	9	9
EXPLORE:	Help people creatively explore fresh ideas	16	11
INSPIRE:	Inspire commitment to new possibilities	22	20
EMPOWER:	Help others to make their contributions	10	14
STRUCTURE:	Create clear reliable communication	18	20
COMMUNICATE:	Generate clear reliable communication	18	20
OPTIMISM:	Build optimism & hope, even in difficult times	33	30
ACT:	Know the right moment to move to action	16	16
RESOLVE:	To stay on course when things get difficult	37	34
LEARN:	The ability to learn and grow from experiences	44	38

Note: Attendees could select up to four options so percentages may not add up to 100%

In this chapter the results the National Church Life Survey for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State were reviewed. These results represent the voice of the attendees – the attendees of the Free State congregations. The data are useful to challenge Adventist Congregations. The leaders of the Free State Church can study the profile of their congregation and compare it with the profile of the Free State Church. This will help them to see what their congregation and the Free State Church is doing well and what it is not doing well, compared with each other. The ten participating congregations in the research study have already been given their individual profiles (Dudley, 2006: 54).

In the next chapter the voice of the leadership of the individual Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State will be heard and investigated through the Phase Two (initial interviews) and the Phase Three (focus group interviews) of the research.

CHAPTER 5 : PHASES TWO AND THREE OF THE RESEARCH OF THE FIVE PARTICIPATING SDA CONGREGATIONS – THE VOICE OF THE LEADERSHIP

It was important to listen to the voice of the attendees in the previous chapter. In Chapter Five the voice of the leadership of the individual congregations will be heard and reviewed. The nine core qualities divided under the Internal, Inspirational and the External (outward) core qualities of the NCLS will be utilised to be able to answer the research question. Because of the major challenges due to the virtual, socio- political and economic environment of the region, the leadership of the Free State Church faces severe challenges to adapt to these changes and to lead their congregations accordingly. The aim of this chapter is to listen to the voices of the leadership to ascertain their views and how they experience church life in the Free State environment. The data derived from these interviews will help to answer the main research question and the four subsidiary questions, whether the Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church is healthy and missional, with their relationships with God, each other and with the community in place. Do the leadership have knowledge about their strengths and weaknesses, do they inspire their congregations and are they involved with their communities in faith-sharing and service?

Initial interviews and focus group interviews were done with church leaders of five of the eleven Seventh-day Adventist churches in the Free State. The interviews were recorded and transcribed by the researcher. These interviews were then coded, super coded and linked, using the ATLAS.ti programme²⁰. The aim of the initial interviews was to discuss how the leadership experiences the congregation, and the influence of the leadership on the congregation. The results of the NCLS research were then introduced to the leaders and thoroughly explained and discussed. It was suggested that the leadership study their individual congregational NCLS profiles and then present it to their congregations at a special congregational business meeting. The second interviews (Focus Group Interviews) were conducted a few months later with the leadership of the five churches to get their views after studying the NCLS profile reports and how it influenced their thinking and future plans. The aim of the Focus Group Interviews was to discuss the role of leadership in the

²⁰ See for a detailed discussion under Research methodology in Chapter One.

congregation. A look at the NCLS report was done and an evaluation was done to determine how it can help each congregation.

It was explained that the initial interviews as well as the focus group interviews will form part of the researcher's Doctoral Studies with regard to the Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State. Permission was requested to record and transcribe the interviews and all the congregations gave their permission.²¹ Biographical information of the participants was obtained namely their name, age, gender, profession and their role in the congregation. The questions discussed in the initial interview can be viewed in the Addendum No 4. The questions discussed in the second interview (Focus Group Interview) can be viewed in the Addendum No 5.

The names of the participants were changed to ensure anonymity and detailed biographical information about the participants was given in random order. A discussion will follow of the Atlas.ti coded initial interviews and the focus group interviews. ATLAS.ti is especially suited to make the thinking part of qualitative data analysis visible (Friese, 2014:14). Friese argues that properly used software like ATLAS.ti can improve the validity of the research (Friese 2014: 267). Codes are keywords that are generally linked to quotations (Friese 2014:36). A well-developed coding system describes the data material in all its facets. It shows the main aspects in the data in the form of categories (Friese 2014:159). Super codes can be part of a code family or a network view. (Friese 2014: 203) Codes in this study were grouped together under a Super Code which binds them together as a family.

The interviews were coded by the Atlas.ti programme in the following manner. A deductive approach was used where the categories of information required from the data was formulated in advance, and is called *a priori categories* (Maree, 2010:99). Maree (2010:107,109) explains that if one is making use of a set of existing codes with the data. These codes are called *a priori codes* and are developed before examining the current data. When pre-set codes (*a priori coding*) is used, then there will be pre-set categories into which the data will be sorted. In this case one would start with a list of categories in advance, and then search the data for these topics. These preset categories that were used as codes are the nine core qualities of church life. There are three groups of Core Qualities of church life which were used as super

²¹ See Addendum No 4 for Ethics Letter.

codes for the nine core qualities. These super codes are the *Internal Core Qualities*, the *Inspirational Core Quality* and the *External (outward) Core Quality*.²²

The Atlas.ti programme coding as used in this study will now be discussed. The nine Core Qualities of church life will be investigated using the transcribed interviews as recorded during the interviews of the leadership of the five Seventh-day Adventist congregations individually. The findings will be supported with coded quotations²³. The quotations are numbered for easy location on the transcribed interviews if needed, for example [2:19]. The numbers mean that the quotation can be located in the Initial Interview of Congregation 2, under the drop-down menu of the “Quotes” tab, on the top toolbar. The number 19 means the 19th quotation in this interview.

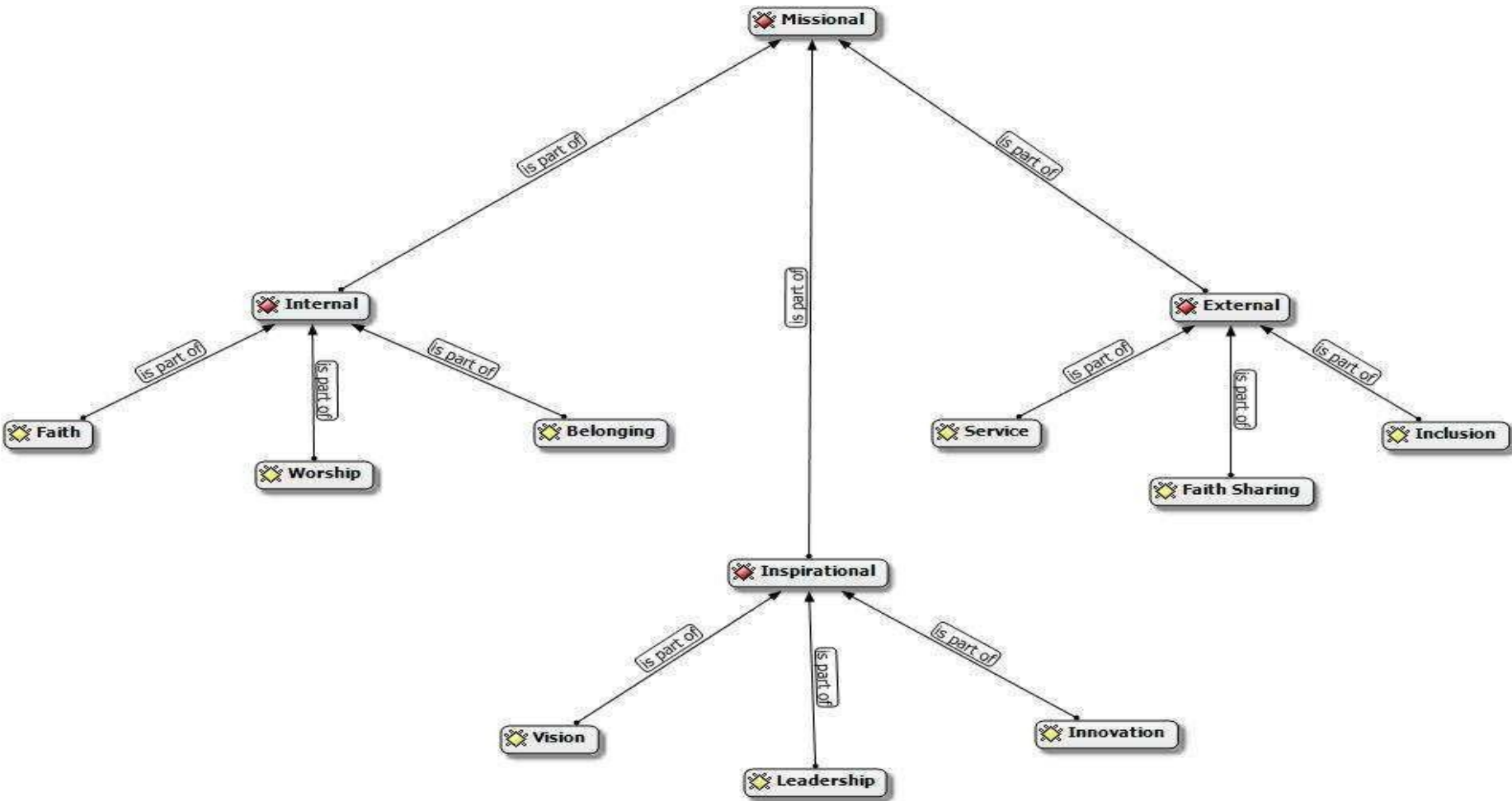
The *Internal Core Qualities* focus on the inner life of the congregation. The Core Qualities coded under the Super Code *Internal* are *Faith*, *Worship* and *Belonging* which can be seen as foundational to church life (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:42). The *Inspirational Core Quality* focus on the commitment of the attendees to the vision of the congregation; inspiring and empowering leadership; and a willingness to be flexible and innovative. (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:46) The core qualities coded under the super code *Inspirational* are *Vision*, *Leadership* and *Innovation*. The *external (Outward) Core Quality* focuses on the external or outward activities of the congregation in their communities. (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:48) The core qualities coded under the super code *external* are *Service*, *Faith-sharing* and *Inclusion*. All of these core qualities are associated with a church at large as a missional church.²⁴ These core qualities can be mapped as seen in Figure 8.

²² See Figure 5.1.

²³ Refer to Addendum 6.

²⁴ See Chapter Four on a discussion of the Nine Core Qualities of the NCLS.

Figure 5.1: Map of the Nine Core Qualities of a Missional Church



The report on the data gathered during Phase Two (initial interviews) and Phase Three (focus group interviews) will be structured as follows. Firstly a biographical description will be given of the participants (pseudonyms used) of Phases One and Two. Then the responses of the leadership, of each of the five participating congregations, to the two sets of previously prepared questions,²⁵ as coded by the Atlas.ti programme, will be discussed under the nine core qualities as grouped under the Internal core quality, the Inspirational core quality and the External (outward) core quality.

5.1 BETHLEHEM CONGREGATION

5.1.1 Biographical information

Initial Interview

There were two participants in this interview. Peter is a 45 year old male in the medical field and serves as an Elder in the congregation. Matthew is a 61 year old male pensioner and serves as an Elder in the congregation.

Focus Group Interview

There were six participants in this interview. Peter and Matthew were present again. The others were Andrew a 23 year old male, an Information Technology specialist who serves as a Deacon in the congregation. Mark is a 19 year old male student who serves as the Youth Leader. Mary is a 64 year old female pensioner and serves as Treasurer. Paul is a 28 year old male Minister and serves as Pastor of the Congregation.

5.1.2 The Internal Core Qualities Faith

Initial Interview

The leadership in Bethlehem see themselves as a stagnant, dwindling congregation. [1:20] "I think at this stage we are a stagnant congregation. [1:21] "Yes I would also say dwindling to, or ... stagnant." The depopulation of the rural areas affected this

²⁵ See Addendum No 4 and 5 for the actual prepared questions.

congregation severely and they jumped into a survival mode. [1:22] “Because many people have moved away, so that reduces the numbers. The challenges that we face as leadership, are to keep the programme going with the few that are left.” Although they are few in numbers they work hard to keep the faith of the congregation lively and growing. [1:22] “... we just share the preaching and things like that.” [1:24] “We have vespers programme that brings us together. Prayer meeting is to me, that’s like a pulse of the church, it’s stagnant but on-going. We have prayer meeting Wednesday evenings, we are only a few but we’re there.”

Focus Group Interview

The participants in this interview were more outspoken about their situation. [1:6] “I definitely think that we have a group of Sabbath keepers, not Christians living out their life.” The same thought was expressed of the congregations as being a bunch of Sabbath keeping people [1:20] but then goes on to say that “it is more important that your faith is shared because everyone at church already has to a certain extend that faith.” The youth often has [1:8] “... a love of pleasure rather than a love for spiritual things for God.” They feel that their personal devotional life is vital for their congregation and should be focused on [1:18]. The congregation should [1:20] “live what they believe.” They strongly stated that [1:20] “individuals are very committed.”

Conclusion

The reduced numbers in membership because of the depopulation of the rural areas seem to have had an effect on the faith and spirituality of the congregation, as they just try to keep the programme going to survive. When that happens the congregation becomes self-centered and self-entertaining and that is not an ideal situation for an alive and growing faith.

Worship

Initial Interview

There is no real comment in the Initial Interview about worship. The reason might be because of the fact that worship is the top strength of the congregation according to the NCLS report, so it is pushed back in their minds as not a problem area and

therefore did not find the need to discuss it. Another reason might be that the questions did not directly focus on worship as such.

Focus Group Interview

After the participants studied the NCLS report, interesting comments were made. [1:2] “It makes me think why the worship service on top is on top, because I think if the worship service, and what is preached, and what is taught, and what is lift up by leadership is on top, then either the leadership is not living a life of evangelistic endeavour, for it is not being communicated to the people.” And also [1:5] I would agree with what many people would consider a fairly good programme as far as the Sabbath service ... that is probably our strongest point because everyone does sort of come together on Sabbath, but throughout the rest of the week it is very, very, very difficult to get involved.”

Conclusion

These comments may indicate that although worship is the congregation’s top strength, it may only be either entertainment or that the focus is on survival and keeping the programme going. The participants indicate that it does not influence them during the week in faith sharing. Bellamy *et al.* (2006:14) submits however that the measures of vitality in worship are likely to be growing congregations and it is not happening here. The opposite is true, they indicate that the congregation is stagnant and dwindling (dying).

Belonging

Initial Interview

In the interview the participants strongly express their belonging as a very strong point. [1:23] “The strengths in this community I’d say that we do stand together and there is a bond of love amongst the members. If there’s a church that has a well knit together ...and people do have a bond of love and affection for each other.” The participants feel that they manage to keep the friendship and bonds of love through the social programmes, vesper programmes and prayer meetings [1:24].

Focus Group Interview

There were no comments about *Belonging*, during the Focus Group Interview. It may be that they focused on other qualities they feel more concerned about.

Conclusion

The positive comments about a strong belonging in the initial interview can be debated. According to the Church Life Profile of Congregation 1, *Belonging* is the second last quality on their NCLS profile. These comments may indicate that the participating leaders of the congregation may belong to a core group who feel a strong sense of belonging. This seems not to be the case with the rest of the congregation, as according to their feedback, they do not feel a similar sense of belonging, therefore the not so strong indication on their congregational profile.

5.1.3 The Inspirational core qualities Vision

Initial Interview

An important quote under vision is [1:5] “Those who are serving in the leadership on the church board are aware of our vision and mission and others share that ... we all share the vision to take the gospel to our community.” And [1:2] “There are programmes in place to do things.”

Focus Group Interview

There were no comments in this interview under vision.

Conclusion

The intention and understanding of vision is commendable but needs to be communicated and owned by the congregation as a whole. At the moment it is only really owned by the leadership. The reason for the lack of quotations in the focus group interview may be because of an awareness that the leadership needs to filter it through to the congregation, for them to live out the vision.

Under the Core Quality *Leadership* in the Focus Group Interview, the following statement was made: [1:10] “In the area of vision... this is an area where people felt there was a lack and expressed that; and now we are focusing, we are communicating our vision down to the community and the congregation.” The

appointment of a pastor to this congregation inspired the leadership to action.

Leadership

Initial Interview

The participants in the interview immediately recognized an important concern: [1:4] “There’s probably some disconnects between communication, leadership and the congregation.” The lack of inspiring and empowering leadership is highlighted by the following statement: “The challenges that we face as leadership, are to keep the programme going.”

Focus Group Interview

The participants in this interview understand the role the leadership should play after studying the NCLS-report [1:11]. “I think how our congregation could be helped to be more missional is to have a leadership team that is missional in not just what we preach on Sabbath but in what we do.” This thought was further highlighted and steps to achieve empowering leadership were stated: [1:17] “Our first step is to have a leadership team that is itself missional. And then from there on you will inspire people and then you can get them involved.” The urgent need for training (equipping) the members of the congregation was also stressed. [1:17] “Definitely there is a need for training even thou people are set in there ways. There is a need for training. Some people fell a lack of knowledge.” The same urgency for training and support was expressed in [1:23] and [1:24].

Conclusion

This congregation seems to be in survival mode because of the many members that moved away. Their focus is now on survival instead of empowering and inspiring the congregation. Leadership needs not only to inspire the congregation but equip (train) them and involve them in the activities of the congregation. Research suggests that leadership that encourages members to use their gifts and skills is also most associated with growth in attendance (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:20, 21). Although the congregation may be small and suffering from the effect of the many members that moved away, they must not lose their God called mission as a congregation.

Innovation

Initial Interview and Focus Group Interviews

There were no remarks under Innovation in both the interviews.

Conclusion

The reason for that may be a realization that a complete mind shift is needed in the leadership thinking about what is expected of them before they can think of new approaches, a mind shift from survival mode to inspiring and empowering leadership.

5.1.4 External (outward) core qualities Service

Initial Interview

The Bethlehem leadership reports that there are many ways in which they can make a difference in the community [1:18]. A major need of the community is a lack of employment [1:9] which naturally causes poverty and hunger. The congregation's Meals on Wheels programme, providing food to the elderly and the poor provides in this need: [1:12] "I think the best way the community feels, or is aware of our programme, or our church, is through Meals on Wheels, that's been the way for years." Another way this congregation serves the community health wise is when they do Stop Smoking Clinics which they call "Breathe Free" [1:13].

Focus Group Interviews

During the Focus Group Interview, it was reported that although they have a strong leadership team in the Meals on Wheels programme, they don't see that the "congregation as a whole making a difference in the community" [1:19]. This means that individuals are active in service to the community but the congregation as a whole is lacking in this regard.

Conclusion

Their service to the community lacks the support of the whole congregation. It is only individuals that are involved in the few services that they are conducting. Their concentration is inward and that will ensure that the congregation stay in survival mode for a long time if the leadership do not change their thinking.

Faith-sharing

Initial Interview

Although there are some programmes in place like “Homes of Hope and Health” [1:7] and their Prison Ministry [1:14] where the congregation share their faith, they are very aware that the community experience individuals more than the congregation [1:10]; [1:15], and [1:16] “Individually people are also touching and making differences in this community ... but I again say as a congregation I don’t think we are all that present.

Focus Group Interviews

The participants admit a great lack in faith sharing in this congregation: [1:1] “we are not really focusing on that. “ [1:2] “Either the leadership is not living a life of evangelistic endeavour or it is not being communicated to the people.” They admit that some individuals are active in faith sharing but not as a congregation.

Conclusion

The focus of this congregation is to survive. All other inspirational and external activities are non-existent except by some involvement by individuals.

Inclusion

Initial Interview

The leadership admits that they are not active in intentional and welcoming Inclusion: [1:11] “We are not perhaps as open to inviting people to our programmes.”

Focus Group Interviews

During the Focus Group interview this fact was further stressed by the participants: [1:25] “as a community of faith ... we don’t know how to make friends,” and they go on to admit that they tend to be rather exclusive. [1:26]

Conclusion

The Bethlehem congregation is very exclusive at this moment but with their new minister, this situation may soon change.

Figure 5.2: The Church Life Profile - Bethlehem Congregation



According to the circle of strengths of the Bethlehem congregation, their four strengths are worship, faith, inclusion and service. They're not so strong points are vision, belonging faith-sharing and leadership. The people reported that worship and faith, as part of the internal core quality, is strong but their sense of belonging is very low in their profile. Vision is reported as the lowest point in their profile which may show that the members have very little understanding of the goals and plans of the leadership. Faith-sharing is also very low which supports the report of the leadership that very little faith-sharing is done by the congregation.

There is some disconnection between the leadership and the congregation as far as communication is concerned. The leadership on the church board are aware of the vision to take the gospel to the community. The community might be aware of the congregation but actually more aware of individuals in the congregation. The congregation is not as open to inviting people to their programmes. The main service that the community is aware of, and touched by the congregation, is their Meals on Wheels programme. Another way that the community is impacted is through the Breathe Free (Stop Smoking) programme and the active Prison Ministry. Business individuals make an effort to speak to their clients and organize Bible Studies. A previously clean town is now a dirty town. Other needs are poverty, employment and homelessness amongst all races. There are major health needs. Health practitioners do

their best but there is a critical lack of resources.

At this stage, the Bethlehem congregation is a stagnant or dying congregation. Many people have moved to the cities. The strength of the congregation is that the leadership stand together and have a bond of love amongst them. The congregation does not really focus on evangelism possibly because it is not communicated to the congregation from the leadership. There is a disconnection between what is preached and what is lived out. A fairly good worship service programme is presented which results in a group of Sabbath keepers and not Christians living out their life. The young people tend to disappear and there is a love of pleasure rather than a love for spiritual things.

The congregation will be more missional if the leadership team is more missional in not only what is preached in the worship service, but what they do. The focus must be on a missional leadership team. Meals on Wheels make a difference in the community and individuals are reaching out in faith sharing but not as a congregation. Training how to reach out to the community is needed. The devotional life of the congregation is vital for the congregation and should be focused on. The role of the leadership should be "example" and "opportunity." Opportunities are needed to make friends and reach out to the community in friendship and include them in the programme of the congregation.

According to both interviews the Bethlehem congregation is in survival mode and tend to just keep the congregation going. The congregation is therefore stagnant and dwindling. A definite mind shift is needed to realise that the calling of the congregation is not to just survive but to be a viable congregation for God in their situation and community. The leadership needs to communicate their vision, and the congregation needs to buy into their vision and own it. The support of the whole congregation will ensure that this congregation will turn around from a dwindling congregation to a missional congregation, active in all nine core qualities, and achieve vitality in their congregation. The NCLS report and the interviews helped the leadership of this congregation to understand the undesirable situation they are in and inspired them to actively endeavour to change the congregation's situation to become more missional. The researcher was struck by the dedication of the leadership who kept the congregation going under very difficult conditions, not having a minister. The newly appointed minister will help to change this congregation from survival mode to a vibrant

missional congregation.

The environment²⁶ of the Bethlehem congregation needs to be taken note of to understand the situation the congregation finds it in. This congregation lost a major section of its leadership due to their retirement and who moved away to bigger centres. They also had to continue without a minister for a long time. Many young people moved to the bigger centres for educational purposes and some members emigrated. This affected the membership numbers and the finances of the congregation. The poverty and unemployment of the area put a huge strain on the reduced finances and manpower of the congregation. In the light of these factors, the remaining leadership need to be applauded for their dedication and on-going loyalty to God in continuing serving their people under these difficult circumstances.

5.2 WELKOM CONGREGATION

5.2.1 Biographical information

Initial Interview

There were two participants in this interview. Adam is a 29 year old male Minister and serves as Pastor of the congregation. Jacob is a 47 year old male in the security field and serves as an Elder.

Focus Group Interview

There were 7 participants in this interview. Jacob was also present in this interview. Eve is a 59 year old female pensioner who serves as an Elder in the congregation. Elizabeth is a 21 year old female student who serves as a Deaconess. Rebecca is a 49 year old female in the medical field and serves as a Deaconess. Esther is a 25 year old female in administration and serves as a Deaconess. David is a 60 year old male in administration and serves as Treasurer. Salome is a 36 year old female manager and serves as a Deaconess.

²⁶ See Chapter Two for a discussion on ecology and Chapter Three for a discussion on the ecology of each of the Free State SDA congregations

5.2.2 The Internal core quality Faith

Initial Interview

The faith of the congregation is not alive and growing. This is seen by the fact that there is a lack of support for outreach programmes, and attendance at other religious programmes from the congregation: [2:14] “The welfare cupboard is empty.” [2:30] “People stay at home and rather watch a sermon on TV,” This statement is an assumption. Prayer meetings are poorly attended [2:27]. This situation cause a very slow growth in membership, if at all. [2:21]; [2:22]; [2:23].

Focus Group Interview

The participants repeated the concern that programmes are not supported and attended by the congregation. [2:1]; [2:3]; [2:4]. “It is more comfortable to stay at home.” [2:5]

Conclusion

The participants repeatedly discussed the lack of support and attendance of the congregation at organized programmes. The reason for this may be that the congregation in general does not have an alive and growing faith. Leadership is looking at the lack of support and are very despondent. They need to explore creative ways to involve the congregation more.

Worship

Initial Interview and Focus Group Interview

There were no comments in both the interviews under this code.

Conclusion

The reason for this may be because the worship service is not of concern to the participants as this is normally well attended. The core quality worship features as the strongest point on the NCLS profile of Congregation 2. Their concern is with the other programmes of the congregation that is not well attended and supported.

Belonging

Initial Interview

Belonging is identified as one of the congregation's strengths by the participants: [2:24] "One of the strong points of the congregation is that it is a very close knit family. Everybody cares a lot about each other." The same sentiments are expressed in [2:25]; [2:26]; [2:28] and [2:29].

Focus Group Interview

The participants expressed their concern that the lack of attendance affects the sense of belonging. This is expressed in [2:1]; [2:7]; [2:11] and [2:32]. It is only a core group that supports everything and has a strong sense of belonging. The rest of the congregation feels excluded and sees the core group as a clique. This situation will be rectified if the leadership manages to get the rest of the congregation involved, and then to own the vision and programmes: [2:9]; [2:10]; [2:12] and [2:29].

Conclusion

Although it was said in the Initial Interview that belonging is one of the congregation's strengths, the Focus Group participants were very concerned about the attendance of programmes, as this situation negatively affects the sense of belonging amongst the members.

5.2.3 The Inspirational core quality Vision

Initial Interview

The leadership knows what the vision of the congregation is: [2:3]. The participants in this interview believe that everybody in the congregation is aware of the vision as it is communicated to the congregation on a weekly basis [2:1] and [2:4].

Focus Group Interview

Although the participants in the Initial Interview were sure that the congregation was aware of the vision, the participants of the Focus Group Interview were shocked to discover through the NCLS report, that the members are not aware of the vision of the congregation [2:2]. The vision is not communicated well enough and owned by

the congregation as they do not support and attend programmes that are organised [2:21].

Conclusion

The leadership of Congregation 2 assumed that the congregation knew what their vision was but according to the NCLS profile of this congregation, vision was rated low by the congregation. This may be because the leadership do communicate programmes but perhaps do not communicate why they are doing certain programmes. The vision that the leadership has needs to be clearly communicated and explained to the congregation.

Leadership

Initial Interview

The leaders of the congregation set an example and are always present at programmes: [2:2] “The leaders of the congregation are always there, so they set an example.” “They are really dedicated and continue with the programme even though it as very poorly attended” [2:27].

Focus Group Interview

The leadership are organizing training courses to empower the members [2:18]. The participants realise the importance of setting an example to the members [2:23]; [2:28]. When some of the leaders do not attend, the members take note and capitalise on it as an excuse for them not attending [2:31].

Conclusion

The leadership of Congregation 2 are very dedicated. They set an example to the congregation, organise and support programmes and organise training to empower the members. Despite all of what they are doing, it seems that the congregation is not inspired to action by the leadership. The congregation rated leadership second lowest in the NCLS profile of the Welkom congregation. The leadership may need to rethink their approach to the congregation to assure that they inspire the congregation.

Innovation

Initial Interview

The leadership think and plan to get more involved in the community [2:13].

Focus Group Interview

The participants reported that they are thinking of many new ways to involve the congregation and stress that they need to think of alternative ways to create opportunities to get the congregation more involved. [2:24]. they are thinking of getting T-shirts to motivate the members [2:25]. Individual members need to be requested to make or bring something for the outreach programme so that they can get involved and own the event [2:29]. They are also suggesting that the leadership come together on a regular basis to pray for the congregation [2:38].

Conclusion

The NCLS report inspired the participants to explore innovative ways to involve the congregation more and assure that the congregation become more vibrant. The congregation rated innovation as one of their strengths. This may be because they respects the imaginative and flexible innovation of the leadership, but it seems as if the leadership have trouble letting the congregation buy into and own their innovative ideas they present.

5.2.4 The External (Outward) core quality Service

Initial Interview

The congregation is involved in a number of outreach programmes: [2:7] “I believe the church has an impact on the community and the community knows about them ... but we can do more.” The same thoughts were expressed in [2:8]. Outreach programmes that the congregation is involved in, are the handing out of food parcels [2:9], [2:17]; Stop Smoking programmes [2:10]; and the distribution of clothing [2:7]. The greatest need, because of unemployment, is food [2:16]; [2:28].

Focus Group Interview

Only a core group is involved in the outreach programmes [2:7]. This involves the distribution of food [2:7]; [2:24], and the contribution to the welfare cupboard [2:26]. The leadership are contemplating alternative ways to reach out, and also how to involve the rest of the congregation [2:24], and to involve the community [2:27].

Conclusion

During this interview the participants expressed their concerns about the congregation and the outreach work. Their concern is that the majority of the congregation are not involved in the outreach programmes. It is only a core group that is always involved. Although many practical and diverse outreach programmes are organised by the leadership to serve the community, the majority of the congregation is not involved.

Faith Sharing

Initial Interview

Individual members of the congregation are quite involved in faith-sharing like the distribution of tracts [2:6] and the giving of Bible Studies [2:20]. They expressed the possibility of getting involved in other faith-sharing ministries like the distribution of mission DVD's [2:11].

Focus Group Interview

The concern was again expressed by the participants that only a core group is involved in faith-sharing and that the rest of the congregation is not supporting the programmes [2:17]. They believe that they should focus more on friendship evangelism, as the distribution of tracts does not have any real impact on the community [3:7].

Conclusion

The participants were concerned about the fact that only a core group is involved in the activities of the congregation. There is a severe lack of willing faith-sharing by the majority of the congregation. Faith-sharing was rated in the lower half of the NCLS profile of Congregation 2.

Inclusion

Initial Interview

There were no comments in this interview about the core Quality Inclusion.

Focus Group Interview

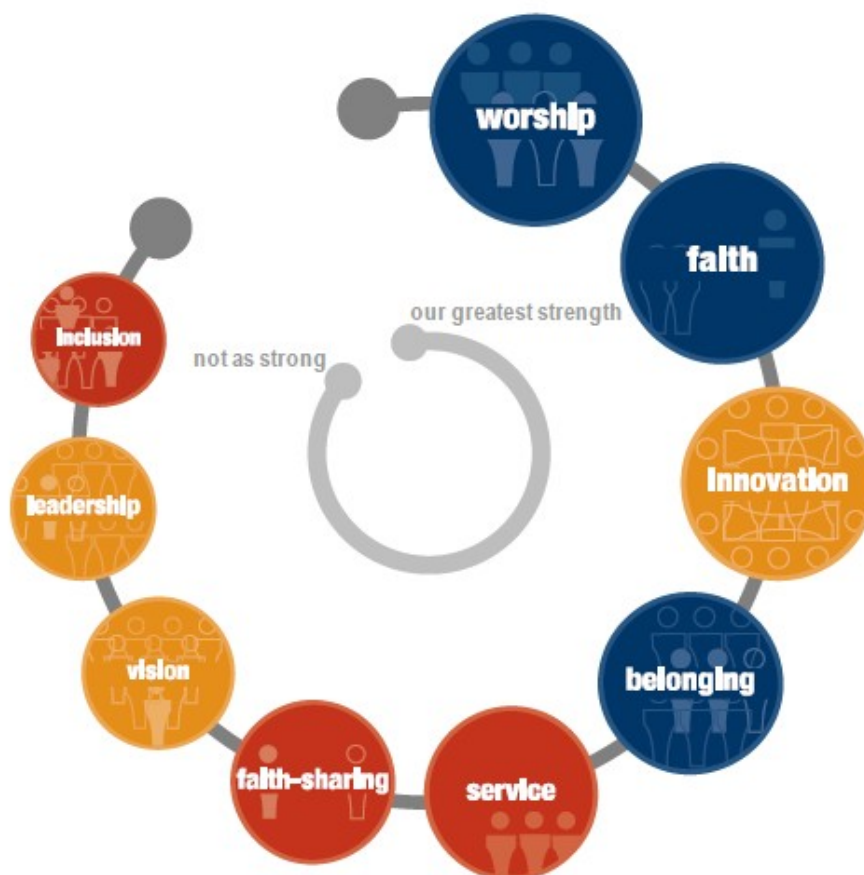
There is, at this stage, not much of an Inclusion of the community. The thought was expressed to involve the community in their programmes [2:27], and also ways to include the members of the congregation more by inviting them individually. [229].

Conclusion

At the moment the inclusion of the community is not happening but the leadership are planning to change this situation.

5.2.5 Conclusion

Figure 5.3: The Church Life Profile - Welkom Congregation



The members of the Welkom congregation see their four strengths as worship, faith, innovation and belonging. Their not so strong points are inclusion, leadership, vision and faith-sharing. It is important to note that all three the Internal Core Qualities are amongst the four strengths of the congregation. This can have a positive as well as a negative connotation. The positive connotation is that this congregation has a very strong basis from which to strengthen the other core qualities. The negative connotation is that this congregation is very inward focused. This means that they are strongly looking at their own needs and may be only entertaining themselves.

The congregation should be aware of the vision as it is discussed on Congregational Business Meetings and the different departments to share it with the congregation. One of the main programmes that were organized is the "Mission to the Cities" programme. The mission is twofold: In reach and Outreach. WhatsApp notices are sent to all church members, on a regular basis, to keep them informed. The congregation is involved in the distribution of religious tracts, DVD's, books and reading matter. People are often helped with food parcels, money and clothing but more can be done. Meals on Wheels help a lot to relieve the plight in the community. Stop Smoking programmes are also conducted. If the whole congregation get involved everyone in the community will know about them. The youth invite the children and the youth to the congregation.

Unemployment, poverty and a lack of food are the main problems in this community, but help in this regard is very difficult because of limited funds. Once a month a harvest day programme is organised where members of the congregation bring fresh fruit and vegetables, eggs ext. Food parcels are then delivered to needy people. Meals on Wheels are also involved to address the needs and deliver 40,000 meals per month. Liquor abuse in the community is another concern and the congregation is also getting involved with the community in conducting Stop Smoking programmes. Members are involved with the conducting of 280 Bible studies per month. The status of the congregation is described as stagnant growth. People come in but others leave, so the numbers basically stay the same. One of the strengths is the close relationship amongst the members. They care about each other. The congregation is a caring loving community. Another strength is the dedication of the leadership. The leadership caters for all the different nationalities in the congregation.

The NCLS report pointed out the things that need attention in the congregation. A shocking realization to the leadership was that the members of the congregation are not aware of the vision of the congregation. One of the main concerns is the fact that programmes are not well attended by the members although they are well promoted.

This situation is very discouraging to those who present these programmes. The weak support of the programmes cause a difficulty with belonging as those that do not attend feel excluded. The worship service however is well attended. The weak attendance also negatively affects the outreach programmes of the congregation. They feel that the leadership must continue to set an example and if the congregation doesn't want to support their outreach programmes, the leadership must look for help from the community and get them involved to help them. Leadership should contact members individually and involve them with the outreach programmes. Their programmes are of a good quality as visitors enjoy the programmes. The suggestion is that the leadership urgently pray for the congregation and future projects.

The major concern of the leadership of the Welkom congregation is the lack of support and commitment by the congregation as a whole. It is only a core group that is involved in the support of the programmes and activities of the congregation. If one takes the environment of this congregation in consideration, the lack of enthusiasm of the congregation can be in a way understood. Welkom was a vibrant and thriving town with a strong mining industry. The collapse of the mining industry forced many of the people to move away. Some areas were "evacuated" so rapidly that it caused a kind of a "ghost" atmosphere. The poverty and unemployment they left behind had a depressing effect on those who stayed. One can almost say that the area suffers from a post traumatic syndrome. The members of the congregation need to be inspired and uplifted by the leadership to regain their previous enthusiasm. The present situation causes despondency amongst the leadership. The Welkom congregation is fortunate to have a very strong and committed leadership and with a change in approach, this congregation can develop into a thriving missional congregation.

5.3 HEIDEDAL CONGREGATION

5.3.1 Biographical information

Initial Interview

There were two participants in this interview. Esau is a 58 year old male minister and serves as Pastor of the congregation. Saul is a male engaged in administration and serves as an Elder.

Focus Group Interview

It was unfortunately not possible to get the desired number of participants and the researcher settled with two participants. Esau participated again and Luke joined the interview. He is a 31 year old male in the financial field and serves as an Elder.

5.3.2 The Internal core qualities Faith

Initial Interview

The participants identify the lack of alive and growing faith, as a real concern: [3:18] “We can grow more spiritually. I think we are stagnating spiritually.” [3:20] “The biggest problem I think that stares us in the face is the spiritual growth.” The same concern is expressed in [3:19] and [3:21]. A ray of light is found amongst the youth who are excited about the work [3:22] and [3:23].

Focus Group Interview

The participants repeated the concern of a lack of alive and growing faith: [3:6] “I think I would like to see more spiritual growth.”

Conclusion

The leadership of the Heidedal congregation expressed their concern about the spiritual condition of the congregation. They do not experience an alive and growing faith from the members. The youth however seems to be active and committed and have a growing faith.

Worship

Initial Interview and Focus Group Interview

There are no quotations mentioning Worship in both interviews. The reason might be because a vital and nurturing worship is not a concern in this congregation. This fact is supported by the NCLS profile report as Worship is their strongest Core Quality.

Belonging

Initial Interview

There are no quotations coded under the Core Quality Belonging in this interview.

Focus Group Interview

[3:8] “I noticed that when the congregation work together on a projects, whether a campaign or whatever it may be ... that co-operation binds the congregation so that the congregation grows. The interpersonal relations in the congregation ... there is unity.” The same sentiments are expressed in [3:9] and [3:11].

Conclusion

The leadership reported a fair sense of belonging amongst the members of the congregation. They reported that the support of the congregation of activities creates a sense of belonging amongst the members. They suggested that they should organise more such activities to unify the congregation.

5.3.3 The Inspirational core qualities Vision

Initial Interview

The leadership has a vision but it is not well communicated to the congregation: [3:1] “Yes the leadership, I believe, has a vision, but again whether the congregation share the vision that the leadership has, 100%, I’m not sure about that.” This thought was again expressed in [3:5] and [3:4] “We have never really carried through the plan to the congregational level.” “Certain leaders try to involve the congregation.” [3:2] and [3:3].

Focus Group Interview

The participants want to see more growth as far as Vision is concerned because Vision features low on the Church Life Profile [3:5]. The participants repeated the fact that the leadership's plan did not filter through to grassroots level [3:4]. The congregation will be more missional if they have a mission, they go out and help others and have a year plan [3:10].

Conclusion

The participants reported a good knowledge of the vision that the leadership has for the congregation, but they are certain that this vision is not communicated to the congregation at all. This may be the reason why the core quality, vision, features second last on the NCLS profile. They want to see growth as far as the vision is concerned and are positive that it will help the congregation to be more missional.

Leadership

Initial Interview

A strong point according to the participants is a pastor who is amongst the members of the congregation [3:24]. There are people in the congregation who are hungry to learn and the leadership is there to train them which they see as another strong point [3:25] and [3:26].

Focus Group Interview

What the NCLS report taught them is that there has to be communication between the leadership and the congregation [3:1] and [3:4]. The participants feel that the leadership firstly has a responsibility to implement and teach the congregation what their vision is [3:5]. Secondly they must help the congregation to own their projects [3:8], thirdly they must realise that they as leadership should not do all the work but get the congregation involved [3:16], and fourthly they should endeavour to build the relationship of the congregation [3:18].

Conclusion

The Leadership core quality features at the bottom of the Church Life Profile as the

least strong point of this congregation. This may be because of the fact that they do not communicate their plans and vision to the congregation. The congregation does not experience leadership as inspiring and empowering as they do not know what they are up to.

Innovation

Initial Interview

There are two major needs in the community. The first need is to address drug and substance abuse. They arranged with a medical doctor to address this need during their campaigns [3:14] and [3:16]. The second need is poverty and how to manage your finances. They organised seminars to address this need [3:15]; [3:17].

Focus Group Interview

The leadership plan to organise a projects which the congregation can work towards and own. This would help them to go out and help others and help the congregation to be more missional [3:10]. They are also innovative in the conducting of a Spiritual Gifts Survey to help the congregation to discover their gifts, and empowering and equipping them by training [3:17].

Conclusion

The leadership of this congregation has a very imaginative and flexible innovation to meet the needs of their community. They do not only talk about what the needs are, they are also implementing it.

5.3.4 The External (Outward) core quality Service

Initial Interview

This congregation has a very strong “Meals on Wheels” programme which has a great impact on the community [3:7]. Although the congregation is active in the community, the leadership feels that there is still room for improvement [3:6]; [3:9].

Focus Group Interview

As a result of the congregation's presence in the community, the councilors and the Mayor's office assisted and supported them when they met with opposition from another faith group [3:13]; [3:14]; [3:15].

Conclusion

The Heidedal congregation is conducting a practical and diverse service to the community. They are very creative in organising new programmes to answer to any needs of the community. The community is aware and appreciate what this congregation means to them and their services are appreciated by the community.

Faith-sharing

Initial Interview

Members of the congregation have weekly community prayer meetings at the home of the family when someone passed away, to support such family [3:8]. The youth also conducted a community survey to discover the needs of the community in order to get involved [3:11].

Focus Group Interview

The congregation is very active in faith sharing. They hand out tracts in the community but believe that they should concentrate more on Friendship Evangelism [3:7]. They have done a community survey to ascertain the needs of the community [3:11] and they plan an outreach projects later in the year [3:12].

Conclusion

This congregation is where the community is. They share their faith in homes where people are ill or bereaved. They do not wait for the community to come to them; they meet the community where they are. It may be for this reason that faith-sharing was rated as one of the strengths of this congregation on their NCLS profile.

Inclusion

Initial Interview

No quotations were coded under the Core Quality Inclusion in this interview.

Focus Group Interview

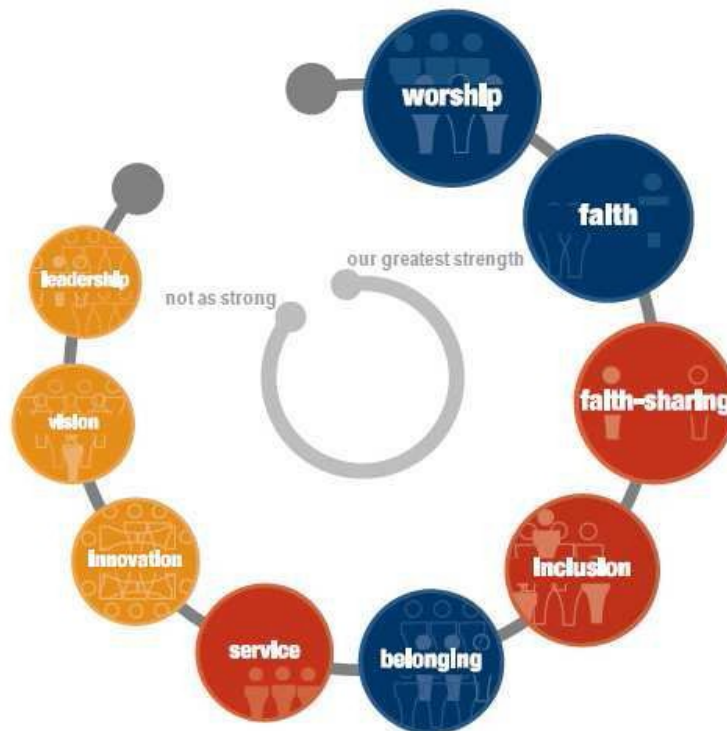
The leadership plan to focus on Friendship Evangelism to reach the community and involve them in their programmes [3:7]. Because of their activities in the community, the Mayor’s office and councilors got involved in their outreach programme. [3:15]

Conclusion

There is a need in the Heidedal congregation to include the community more in their programmes. This will not be very difficult to achieve as the community is very positive towards this congregation.

5.3.5 Conclusion

Figure 5.4: The Church Life Profile - Heidedal Congregation



According to the circle of strengths, the members of the Heidedal congregation see worship, faith, faith-sharing and inclusion as their four strengths. This is an excellent picture as they have a strong foundation in worship and faith and they are active in the community. What needs urgent attention is that all three the Inspirational Core Qualities, leadership, vision and innovation, are rated the lowest strengths.

The leadership has a vision but whether the congregation share the vision 100% is questionable. Many leaders are trying to sell the vision to the congregation. They know about the vision but did not own the vision. The leadership came together to plan but have failed to carry it through to the congregation. The congregation can play a bigger role in the community. Meals on Wheels do a lot for the community. The prayer group impact on the community by visiting the sick as well as where there is death in a family, to pray and support them but there is definitely room for improvement. Help is also given to assist the community to budget properly. Assistance is also given to terminally ill members of the community. Drug and substance abuse is a major problem in the community. Seminars will be conducted to address this problem. Financial Seminars and one-on-one interviews will also be conducted to address the poverty and lack of budgeting in the community.

The congregation is slowly growing but it is spiritually stagnant according to the leadership. Strengths of the congregation are the enthusiasm of new converts and the members who want to learn more and go forward. The hunger for souls of the personal Ministries leader is another strong point as well as the experience of the pastor and his involvement with the people. The participants learnt from the NCLS report that if there is communication the congregation can only improve. They are impressed with the worship which features strong, but not so happy with the leadership which features much lower. The leadership did not feed their plans through to grassroots level. They would like the vision and the spirituality (faith) to grow stronger.

The participants realize the importance of the congregation to own their projects. Co-operation binds the congregation together and results in growth and unity. If they have a mission and specific projects they believe it will help to make the congregation more missional. They need to get the congregation behind the projects. The Meals on Wheels programme makes a difference in the community. When they met with problems to erect a tent for evangelism, the office of the Mayor and councilors

supported them and even sponsored a special tent for the last day of the meetings. The reason given was that the Mayors' office is aware of what the congregation is doing in the community. The leaders need to realize that they should not do all the work. Their work is to get the congregation involved. The leaders need to build a relationship with the members.

The Heidedal congregation features very high on the NCLS profile with the core qualities of worship, faith, faith-sharing and inclusion. This shows that there is a good balance in their quality of worship, spirituality, involvement in the community and the inclusion of the community. The leadership however needs to assess their inspirational core quality. If the leadership can strengthen these core qualities, this congregation will rapidly move forward as they are very close to be a vibrant missional congregation. Although the environmental situation of Heidedal is very unfavourable because of poverty, substance abuse and crime, this congregation is serving their community, caring for their young people and working hard to provide a belonging environment to its members.

5.4 BLOEMFONTEIN CENTRAL CONGREGATION

5.4.1 Biographical information

Initial Interview

There were two participants. Esau also participated in this interview and Moses assisted. He is a 43 year old male Scientist and serves as an Elder.

Focus Group Interview

It was unfortunately not possible to get the desired number of participants and the researcher settled with two participants. Esau also participated in this interview and Abraham assisted. He is a male Manger and serves as a Deacon.

5.4.2 The Internal core qualities Faith

Initial Interview

There is a growing component amongst the youth in the support of programmes and

taking part in the planning of programmes [4:9]. There is a numerical growth of the congregation [4:15]. The congregation endeavours to focus on spiritual growth [4:16].

Focus Group Interview

The general feeling amongst the participants is that there is a need for a spiritual revival in the congregation. Only then can the congregation be on fire and do what the congregation is called to do, to reach out [4:2]; [4:7].

Conclusion

The participants are concerned about the spirituality of the congregation. They do not see an alive and growing faith in the congregation. They feel the need for a revival.

Worship

Initial Interview

There is no coded quotation under the Core Quality Worship in this interview.

Focus Group Interview

The participants feel that worship is a strong point according to the NCLS report and it shouldn't be different, but they are concerned about the Core Quality service that features so low on the Church Life Profile [4:4]

Conclusion

Worship is one of the strengths of the congregation. The other core qualities can be strengthened from this strong foundation.

Belonging

Initial Interview

The caring for each other was lacking in the past but the leadership feels that it is becoming a strength in this congregation as well as caring for the youth [4:17]; [4:18].

Focus Group Interview

Not much was said about belonging in this interview by the participants, only a few suggestions to strengthen this core quality. They need to work amongst each other. Prayer groups and visitation programmes will strengthen the relationship [4:9]. They also need to invite each other to programmes [4:22].

Conclusion

Although the participants view belonging as becoming a strength, it seems as if they need to concentrate on this core quality more as it is still a need in the congregation.

5.4.3 The Inspirational Core Qualities Vision

Initial Interview

The leadership is reasonably aware of the vision of the congregation [4:1] but the congregation needs to buy into the vision and it is only starting to happen now [4:3].

Focus Group Interview

There is no quotation coded under the Core Quality Vision in this interview.

Conclusion

The core quality vision is rated very low by the congregation on the NCLS profile. This may be because it seems as if the vision is not a priority amongst the leadership and the congregation does not share the vision, or is not aware what the vision of the leadership is.

Leadership

Initial Interview

The leadership is aware of the vision and they are trying to inspire the congregation. There is support from the congregation for the projects [4:5].

Focus Group Interviews

The participants feel that the reason for the fact that the leadership does not feature as

strong on the Church Life Profile is because everyone is battling to create an existence for themselves [4:6]. They suggest that the leadership should motivate and mobilise the congregation [4:15]. The Church Organisation created a programme called “All Member Involvement” where every member, in a given congregation, should be involved. This programme should be implemented by the leadership [4:16]. The leadership should involve the congregation in the programmes and not only do it themselves [4:17]; [4:18]; [4:19]; [4:20]. Leaders should pave the way so that the congregation can follow [4:21]; [4:24].

Conclusion

There seem to be a lack of inspiring and empowering leadership in this congregation. The congregation is not mobilized and involved in the programmes they organise. This may be the reason why the congregation rated leadership low on the NCLS profile.

Innovation

Initial Interview

The congregation did their research and ascertained what the needs of the community are and they try to meet those needs [4:14].

Focus Group Interview

The leadership can see that Innovation is strong in the congregation as shown by the Church Life profile. The idea is there, it is the implementation which is lacking [4:19].

Conclusion

Innovation is rated as strongest core quality in the congregation on the NCLS profile. The leadership are very innovative in their thinking and planning but there seems to be a problem with the implementation of those ideas to make this congregation more vital. This fact neutralises their innovation, as can be seen in the NCLS profile where the congregation rated service and faith-sharing as the lowest core qualities. Leaders are not only called to serve but also to prepare the congregation for service.

5.4.4 The External (Outward) Core Qualities Service

Initial Interview

The congregation conducted programmes like the New Start Programme (Health); The Nedley Programme (Depression Recovery) and Stewardship programmes [4:6]; [4:8], but they do not really reach the immediate community [4:13].

Focus Group Interview

The Core Quality Service is a real concern and it is also the lowest strength on the Church Life Profile. The participants admit that they are lacking in service [4:4]. They do not reach out to the immediate community [4:11]. They have no impact on their community [4:12].

Conclusion

This is a very dangerous situation to be in. The leadership is very innovative, faith and worship is rated high on the NCLS profile. They do things but have no impact on the community. These facts portray a self-serving congregation who goes through the motions of activities but has no impact on the community.

Faith-sharing

Initial Interview

The congregation conducted a very good Vocational Bible School programme [4:7].

Focus Group Interview

The leadership is glad to see that the congregation realises according to the Church Life Profile that they are lacking in faith-sharing [4:1].

Inclusion

Initial Interview

The congregation tried to knock on doors but because of security systems, they could not reach the community [4:11].

Focus group Interviews

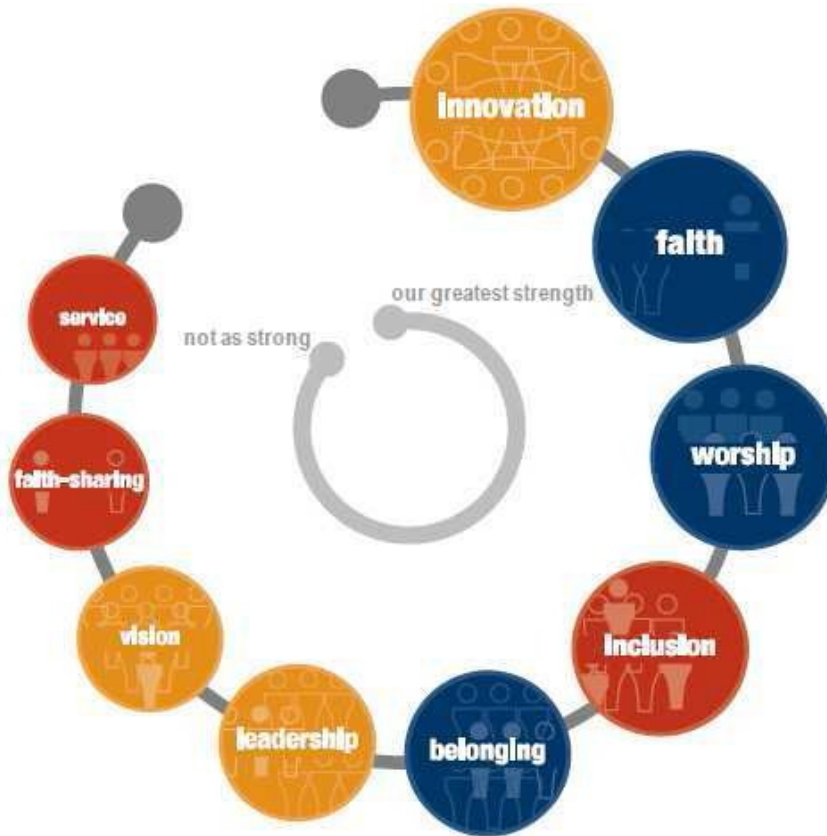
The leadership is thinking of possible ways to include the community in their programmes but at the moment there is nothing in place [4:10]; [4:22].

Conclusion

Inclusion of the community at this moment is non-existent.

5.4.5 Conclusion

Figure 5.5: The Church Life Profile - Bloemfontein Central Congregation



The membership of the Bloemfontein central congregation rated innovation, faith, worship and inclusion as their four strengths. Innovation is their top strength. This may be because the congregation is very impressed by the creative ideas and programmes of the leadership but this is where it stops. Vision and leadership is rated low on the circle of strengths. This shows that the vision and plans of the leadership are not bought into and owned by the congregation. The service to the

community and faith-sharing is rated lowest. It may be that the congregation is focusing inward and has no connections with the community around them. The leadership is fairly informed about the vision to share the message. The congregation is informed but there is a technical flaw. It is difficult to get the congregation on board but the leadership do not get to market it to its full potential. There is support from the congregation for different programmes but there is room for improvement.

Programmes that the congregation conducted in the community are the New Start programme (health); a VBS programme (Vacation Bible School); Nedley programme (Depression Recovery Programme) and weekly seminars that are conducted. The programmes are a wide spectrum of seminars which address different needs of the community as they serve a very diverse community. Stewardship is a great need in the community as poverty is everywhere. Lack of food is a great need and perhaps they can do something about that,

It is a growing congregation and the leadership strive to promote spiritual growth not to lose members via the back door. They feel the need for a spiritual revival. They are concerned about the spirituality of the congregation. This is very interesting as the congregation rated faith as second strongest on the NCLS profile. This may point to a self-centered attitude amongst the members as their external (outward) core quality is rated the lowest on the NCLS profile. Nel (2015:87, 88) describes that in developing a missional congregation it is about more than revival in the traditional sense. Revival gives the impression that we expect God just to repeat what He did before. The challenge of the church is to move forward and not to be captured in a spiral of repetition – discerning the will of God for His congregation. This is true reformation. He further argues that this reformation is about a sincere and corporate endeavour for the will of God. The congregation need to rediscover their God-given identity and purpose of existence in order to recover from whatever it is suffering from.

One of the strengths is the care of especially the youth and also the co-operation of the congregation. The leadership was happy to see that according to the NCLS report that the congregation realises there is a lack of reaching out to the community but first there is a revival necessary. They are happy that worship is strong but would have like service to be much stronger. They feel that the growth that is necessary is a

spiritual growth. It is expressed that if the congregation is fed during worship services, they would go out amongst each other and amongst the community. Prayer meetings and visiting programmes are important to strengthen each other. The community should be invited to their prayer meetings. Programmes should be in place to accommodate the spiritual needs of the community. At the moment they don't make a difference in the community. The Office of the Mayor will not be able to say they know what this congregation is doing in the community. The point that they need to work towards is to make an impact in the community. They know what the needs are for quite some time but they now need to turn the knowledge around into action. The leadership need to involve the congregation in their programmes.

The leadership needs to motivate and mobilise the whole congregation. At the moment a core group, the leadership, are doing all the work. The leadership should demonstrate, encourage and motivate the congregation. The leadership are more aware of what needs to be done but the message does not go down to grassroots. The leadership should train and empower the congregation to do the work in order for the congregation to become more health and can reach out with the community. The leadership are fully equipped to do the work and tends to take over and do everything themselves. The leadership reported that when they study the NCLS report, they see that the knowledge is there but the implementation is lacking. The congregation's faith, their worship is strong but the faith-sharing and service is not there. Leadership need to go to the congregation and use the strengths, faith and worship to reach out. The environment of the Bloemfontein Central congregation makes it very difficult for the congregation to reach out to the community. The environment changed in such a way, as far as language and culture is concerned, that the congregation finds itself now in an environment different from that of the congregation. This makes it almost impossible to be relevant in the community.

5.5 LANGENHOVEN PARK CONGREGATION

5.5.1 Biographic information

Initial Interview

There were three participants in this interview. Isaac is a 61 year old male in

management and serves as an Elder in the congregation. Job is a 63 year old male in administration and serves as a Deacon. Lot is a 70 year old male pensioner and serves as an experienced leader.

Focus group Interview

There were 6 participants in this interview. Isaac and Lot also participated in this interview and they were assisted by Joshua, a 74 year old male Pensioner who serves as an experienced leader. Hagar is a 70 year old female Pensioner and serves as Church Clerk. Samuel is a 77 year old male farmer who serves as an Elder and Benjamin is a 67 year old male Pensioner who serves as an Elder in the congregation.

5.5.2 The Inspirational core qualities Faith

Initial Interview

The leadership expressed how beautiful it is to see new converts spreading the Word in the community [5:29]. Bibles are being distributed and their faith is shared [5:30]. Individuals also had phenomenal spiritual growth [5:39]. When this interview was done nothing happened in the week to strengthen their faith [5:34]. The leadership were a little despondent because of the fact that they do not have a minister and the fact that they are renting the church building and share it with other tenants. This situation makes additional church activities difficult if not impossible [5:35]. The leadership stated that the barometer for a vibrant church is their growth in tithe [5:40] and their tithes are of the highest in the KNFC Conference [5:41]; 5:42].

Focus Group Interview

The NCLS report shows that the faith of the congregation is strong and that reveals the road the congregation took to get to that strong point [5:1]. The participants believe that their congregation has grown much in spiritually [5:9], they need to understand that they do not have to rely on a minister's support to grow spiritually [5:12]. The tithe figures of the congregation reflect their faith [5:15]. Individuals in the congregation have had phenomenal spiritual growth [5:16].

Conclusion

The leadership are impressed by the alive and growing faith of the congregation. In spite of the fact that the congregation do not have a minister, this congregation is thriving. The health of the congregation is also proven by their tithe income.

Worship

Initial Interview

There were no coded quotations under the Core Quality Worship in this interview. The reason might be because it features as the top strength of this congregation on their Church Life Profile.

Focus Group Interview

The participants confirmed that this congregation has a worshipping spirit. This is also reflected by the NCLS report, as worship is this congregations strongest Core Quality [5:19]; [5:20]; 5:21].

Conclusion

It is reported that this congregation is a worshipping congregation.

Belonging

Initial Interview

The feeling of belonging in the congregation is very strong [5:37]. There is a great love amongst the brothers and sisters [5:45]. From the first worship service the members were bound together in love [5:38]; [5:43]; [5:44].

Focus Group Interview

This congregation has strong leaders and together they have a strong hospitality [5:7]; [5:41]. Although the belonging quality is strong, they need to further build on that [5:11]. The participants stated that this quality of belonging can be strengthened by praying together as members and friends [5:25]; [5:26]; [5:27].

Conclusion

The Langenhoven Park congregation has a very strong sense of belonging. They actively focus on being a congregation of love and caring.

5.5.3 The Inspirational core qualities Vision

Initial Interview

The leadership stated that the congregation is aware of the vision but do not know if they take note of the vision [5:1]. If you want the congregation involved the leadership need to communicate it continuously [5:2]. The vision for the congregation is about involvement. Everyone needs to be involved to keep the congregation burning [5:9]. At his stage not everyone in the congregation owns the vision [5:10].

Focus Group Interview

There is no quotation coded under the Vision Core Quality.

Conclusion

The leadership expressed the need to communicate their vision more and to involve the congregation more.

Leadership

Initial Interview

“I would say that the initiative that is planned by the leadership of the congregation and as is presented in the vision, is known by the congregation [5:5]. The leadership need to delegate responsibilities downwards and not do everything themselves [5:6]; [5:7]; [5:8]; [5:9]. “There should be more ownership” [5:11]. The leadership need to inspire, motivate and guide the congregation on a regular basis to keep the congregation enthusiastic [5:15]; [5:16]. “I believe that to get people involved you need to make them part of the conversation. They need to understand how you think and what it is about to become part of your plan and to brainstorm to get their ideas and to perhaps get them involved.” [5:17]. This congregation has strong excited

leadership with a collective 300 years" experience [5:36] but they need to filter their enthusiasm and excitement to the congregation [5:3]; [5:4].

Focus Group Interview

"From this report (NCLS) I think all of us learnt a little bit, because to be able to follow, you need to be able to lead as well, how can you achieve anything without leading" [5:6]. The congregation is operating successfully without a minister and the fear is there that a minister with different agendas might be negative to the congregation. "We have to show enough leadership to keep the things of the congregation on the track and to let no one derail us and let us vanish on another road" [5:13]. The leaders must realise that everything they do, they do for God [5:33]. There must be co-operation amongst the leadership: [5:35] "We need to take hands and form a unity." The participants expressed the importance that all members should take the responsibility of leadership whether you are elected or not: [5:37]; [5:38]; [5:39]; [5:36]. "Everyone in this congregation is a leader. You cannot stand apathetic towards leadership, whether you are elected or not." The view that every member is a leader, needs to be filtered through to the congregation [5:39]; [5:40].

Conclusion

The leadership need to communicate their plans more to the congregation and motivate and inspire them. They expressed the desire to let every member understand that they are also leaders.

Innovation

Initial Interview

The thought was expressed to let the community know that there are alternative free Christian TV channels available that they can watch [5:27]. This congregation are thinking constantly of new innovative ways to share their faith and to serve the community.

Focus Group Interview

The leadership sent two members for training in order for them to train the congregation and to help the congregation to be more missional [5:5]; [5:22]. They

are in the planning stages of doing surveys in the community to identify people who need financial help, spiritual help, and psychological help etc. so that the congregation can impact the community.

Conclusion

The leadership of this congregation is very creative and innovative. They are constantly planning new creative ways to share their faith and serve the community.

5.5.4 The External (Outward) core qualities Service

Initial interview

At this stage the impact that this congregation has on the immediate community is hardly noticeable if at all: “We have no projects at the moment that involve the community” [5:18]. “We need to get involved with projects so that the community can take note of the congregation” [5:19]. “The impact on the community at this stage is zero [5:21]; [5:24]; [5:26]. The leadership realise that they must get their community projects in place [5:20]; 5:21].

The leadership of this congregation has many plans to change the inactiveness of the congregation towards the community. They plan depression seminars; a service centre; health projects and the unmarried mother assistance etc. [5:23]; [5:28]; [5:31].

Focus Group Interview

The activities of this congregation changed completely since the last interview. They conducted an Evangelistic Campaign where 83 people attended. They conducted a stop smoking clinic where 30 people attended and is going to follow that up with a Marriage Enrichment seminar. “So the exposure of the congregation to the community, I think is busy getting momentum” [5:4]. The young people do visitation to old age homes and hospitals and do evangelism on their level [5:23]. They also plan to do a survey in the community to ascertain their needs and how the congregation can meet these needs [5:24].

Conclusion

A drastic change happened between the initial interview and the focus group interview in this congregation. It changed from a non-existent service to the community to an extremely active programme and many activities are going to follow.

Faith-sharing

Initial Interview

Not much is going on in this congregation, at this stage, as far as faith-sharing is concerned. There are future plans for conducting an Evangelistic Campaign [5:13].

Focus Group Interview

The congregation is actively busy expanding their evangelism and thereby involve the community, as their faith-sharing features low on the Church Life Profile [5:3]. The participants reported that their Evangelism Campaign and other programmes were very successful [5:4]. "The majority of the congregation is very positive about the growth of the congregation and what we have seen over the last year" [5:14]. It was very encouraging that most of the members of the congregation was part of the Evangelistic Campaign [5:18].

Conclusion

A drastic change in faith-sharing also happened between the two interviews. It changed from no sharing to an active faith-sharing programme.

Inclusion

Initial Interview

The participants reported that their congregation has a warm inviting atmosphere and inclusive; "I think the congregation is warm. We received a lot of feedback amongst our own people that visited us. Outside people visit us with our music programme, we invite our friends.

Focus Group Interview

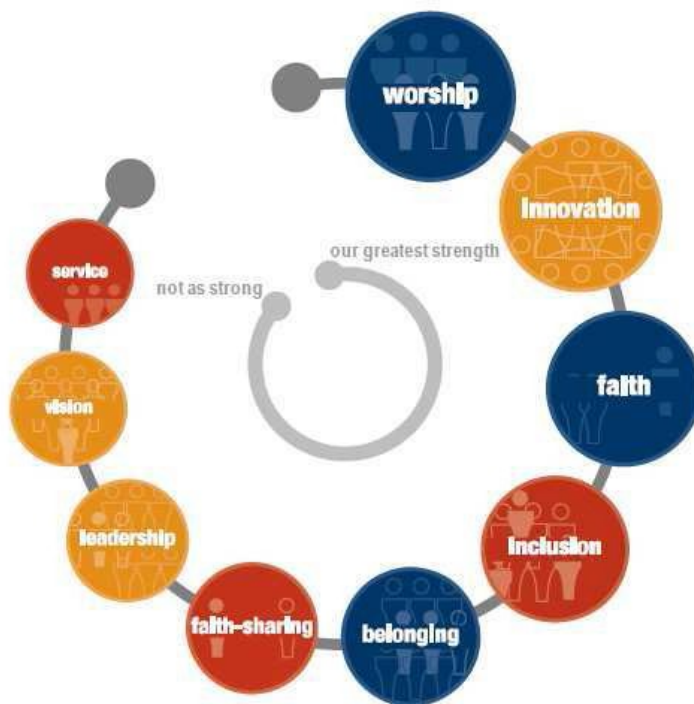
The participants reported that a visitor attended two communion services and said the following: “I want to be in this congregation” [5:2]. Inclusion is one of the strengths of the congregation according to the Church Life Profile and the leadership is happy that the congregation responded like that [5:3]. The following quotation is very encouraging: “It was the first time in my life that I have seen such a seminar, where the members of the congregation and the visitors literally just about overnight, became friends” [5:10]. “I think the word “inclusive” is the keyword. We should be inclusive not only with visitors; we should also be inclusive with our own people. Belonging and inclusion, it is two different things, but it is the same thing. It is how I love you and how you experience my love. It is two sides of the same coin and I think we must firstly build this thing” [5:11].

Conclusion

This congregation is a warm, friendly, loving, inclusive congregation where visitors feel welcome and at home.

5.5.5 Conclusion

Figure 5.6: The Church Life Profile - Langenhoven Park Congregation



The membership rated worship, innovation, faith and inclusion as the strengths of their congregation. This rating includes all three of the Core Qualities which is a very vibrant situation. The leadership has already started to strengthen their weaker points. The vision is communicated continuously to the congregation by the leadership, but whether they take notice is questionable. There should be an enthusiasm and inspiration from the leadership which can filter through to every member. The vision is known by the congregation but there is a shortage of initiative to make the members enthusiastic. The involvement of the congregation should be addressed as they listen and talk but there is no real cohesion. The congregation don't own the mission.

The congregation has initially not broken through to the community yet. At that stage there were no programmes which involved the community. The impact on the community by the congregation at that moment was zero, mainly because the building does not belong to the church. The members also did not invite their friends to church. The congregation did spread DVD's and flyers to try to reach the community. A large percentage of the community in the area are elderly people who will benefit from a Service Centre but because of renting the building, it is not possible to provide this service. The congregation is involved with the Pregnancy Crisis Centre to provide young needy mothers with blankets etc. to care for their babies. A Depression Recovery programme and an Evangelistic Campaign were planned. The motto of the congregation is to grow but they were stagnant. The potential to grow is there but the fact that the congregation does not have a pastor makes it very difficult. The strengths of the congregation can start at the leadership. Collectively there are 300 years of experience. The community of the congregation is a very strong point. Another strength is the spiritual growth of the congregation and the principle of forgiveness amongst the members. The congregation lives their love for each other.

The initial state of the congregation changed. The need for worship, belonging and congregational growth underlines the road that the congregation took. The participants feel that these strengths must be used as basis to grow even greater. They should carry on building on positivity but also build on the known shortcomings. The congregation should broaden evangelism and they are actively doing just that. They conducted an Evangelistic campaign followed up by a Stop Smoking Clinic and a Marriage Enrichment seminar. They sent two members on a training course. This congregation is gaining momentum. They stated that there was much growth spiritually

in the congregation. The congregation is involved in the programmes and the leadership should keep the members involved. The congregation is very inclusive and that should also be broadened not only to visitors but also their own members. A strength of the congregation is that they are a working congregation. The faith and spirituality of the congregation is contagious and one can also hear it in the congregational singing. Two people were sent for training to help the congregation to be missional. The youth are visiting old age homes and hospitals. Questionnaires are going to be distributed in the community to determine the need of the community. Members should pray together when they are invited for lunch. Prayer meetings were suggested to strengthen the spirituality and faith of the congregation. This has been implemented. The leadership should understand that they do not work for the congregation but they work for God. Any position that they are elected to should be viewed as doing for God. Every member of the congregation should see himself as a leader.

Although the Langenhoven Park congregation does not have a minister and do not own their church building, this congregation moved into a vibrant and missional congregation. They are spiritually vibrant, is a warm and friendly inclusive congregation and they are active in serving their community faith-sharing and service. The environment the congregations finds it in, lends itself to serve the community in a variety of ways. The congregation is actively exploring all these avenues and is creating creative ways to serve the community in all their needs.

5.6 THE EFFECT OF THE NCLS ON THE CONGREGATIONS

A short summary will now follow of each of the five participating congregations of their initial situation and what effect the NCLS research findings had on them between the Initial Interviews and the Focus Group interviews.

Bethlehem Congregation: The leadership experienced the congregation as stagnant and dwindling. Membership figures were reduced by many members moving away. They were despondent and in a complete survival mode. They also mentioned that there was a disconnection between leadership and congregation. They had to

operate and survive without a minister.

The researcher mentioned in the challenges section (See Chapter One 1.1) that few guidelines and knowledge of the congregation's strengths and weaknesses exists to which the minister can refer to. Because of the fact that ministers are transferred every two to five years, makes this a real concern, as each minister placed in the congregation basically starts from the beginning. The researcher had the privilege to witness the value of the NCLS research first hand. At the focus group interview, a new minister was just appointed to the Bethlehem congregation. As we introduced him to the NCLS profile of the congregation, and explained its strengths and weaknesses, he could immediately visualise the situation the congregation was in. From that knowledge he already made suggestions in the interview of how the congregation should rectify their situation.

Welkom Congregation: The leadership in the initial interview described the status of the congregation as "stagnant growth" as people who are transferred are replaced by newcomers. The congregation is basically stagnant. The vision of the congregation is known by the members, as it is shared on a regular basis. The congregation is active in the servicing of the community.

The NCLS report pointed where the congregation need attention. The participants in the Focus Group were shocked to discover from the profile that the members are not aware of the vision. It also highlighted the fact that the leadership do not connect with the congregation. It may be the reason why the attendance and support of the programmes are so weak. This is again proving that often leadership operate on assumptions, and that these assumptions about their situation are more often than not completely skew.

Heidedal Congregation: At the initial interview the leadership mentioned that they knew what their vision is but they were not sure whether the congregation is 100% aware of what it is, as the plans and programmes are not well communicated.

The participants at the Focus Group interview reported that they learnt from the NCLS profile that the congregation can improve by effective communication. They

realised that the leadership should focus on the communication of their plans and vision.

Bloemfontein Central Congregation: The participants in the initial interview reported that the leadership and congregation are fairly informed about the vision and that is a growing congregation.

At the focus group interview the leadership were impressed that according to the NCLS profile, the members realise that there is a lack of reaching out to the community. They would like to see the service section to be stronger and will focus on involving the congregation in that.

Langenhoven Park Congregation: The leadership of this congregation was a little negative at the initial interview as they have to face many obstacles that hinder their plans for the future. They had no impact on the community and they saw themselves as a stagnant congregation.

After the NCLS report was presented to the whole congregation by the researcher, the congregation took fire. They are now actively involved in the community sharing their faith and are of service to the community. Members are being trained, prayer meetings were started, and innovative programmes are planned for the future. This congregation changed in a relatively short time into a vibrant missional congregation.

The NCLS research and the interviews with the leadership of the congregations had a strong positive effect on all the congregations. They know what their strengths and weaknesses are and where they need to improve. The participants had a very positive attitude with regard to the research and the results. Many positive things will come from this research.

In this chapter the Initial Interviews and the Focus Group Interviews of the five participating Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State were individually explored and discussed.

The Phase Two and Phase Three interviews discussed in this chapter were a good experience for the leadership participants of the five congregations. They obtained

insight about their congregations previously not known. They had the opportunity to discuss concerns in the light of their new knowledge obtained by the NCLS report. Their knowledge about the strengths and not so strong points of their congregations will help them to utilize these strengths to develop their congregations into healthy missional congregations. In the next chapter the Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church as a whole will be explored. The three phases of the research will be integrated to give a complete picture of the Church and concluding remarks will be given about the Missional life of the Free State SDA Church.

CHAPTER 6 : THE VOICES OF THE FREE STATE SDA CHURCH

This chapter will analyse the research study retrospectively to assess whether the intended answers to the research questions were obtained. The journey and the processes that the Free State congregations went through in this study, and what was learned, will be described.

This study focused on the missional life of congregations of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State. The study was guided by one main research question and four subsidiary questions. The main question is: Are the Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State, healthy missional congregations in view of their relationships with God, each other and with the community? The subsidiary questions are: 1) Do the congregations meet the call to be missional healthy congregations? 2) Do the congregations have insight into their strengths and weaknesses? 3) Does the leadership fulfil their role in the congregation by inspiring and empowering their members to be missional in their mind set, to ensure that their leadership is related to growth? 4) Do the members understand their God-given responsibility to be actively involved in the missional life of the congregation, in faith-sharing and involvement to ensure a vital and healthy congregation?

Three phases were conducted to answer the research question. Phase one was the quantitative phase. The first contact that the attendees had with this study was when they completed the NCLS questionnaires. The results of this phase were discussed in Chapter Four. Phase Two was a qualitative phase where initial interviews were conducted with a few members of the leadership of each individual congregation. During the interviews, four prepared questions were put to the church leadership, which they endeavoured to answer.²⁷ One of the aims of this phase was to gather information about the story and the ecology of each congregation.²⁸ After this interview the NCLS individual results of each congregation was presented and explained, in order for them to study and then to present their findings to the congregations. Phase Three was also a qualitative phase where focus group interviews were conducted with larger groups of the leadership. These interviews were conducted against the background of the NCLS results and aimed at discovering what they had learned and how they

²⁷ The actual questions can be viewed in the Addendum No 4.

²⁸ See Chapter Two for a discussion on ecology

are going to utilise this knowledge to ensure healthier missional congregations. Three questions were presented.²⁹ Phase two (initial interviews) and phase three (focus group interviews) conducted with the individual congregations were discussed and compared with the results of phase one in Chapter Five. The aim of this chapter is to integrate what was learned about the Free State SDA Church as a whole, through the three phases this study undertook. The discussion of each phase will be guided by the Internal; Inspirational and External Core Qualities and then a final conclusion will be drawn to answer the research questions.

Congregations are in a three way relationship: their relationship with God, each other and with the community. The congregation's relationship and identification with its context (community environment) is of vital importance. The Seventh-day Adventist Church operates within an ecclesiological framework.³⁰ The congregation should interact within its ecological context³¹ as well as the ecclesiological framework of the Church. This ecclesiological framework and the context of the congregations should be in interaction with each other. This interaction will be explored in this chapter. The ecclesiology of the Church presents guidelines as to what is expected of a missional congregation in its life in the Church. The life of the Free State Church will now be explored through the three phases.

6.1 PHASE ONE: THE NCLS QUESTIONNAIRES

The aim of phase one was to gather information from the members of each of the congregations by means of questionnaires. The data³² gathered from the questionnaires were presented to the leadership of each participating congregation.

The Internal Core Qualities: These qualities have to do with the relational life of the attendees with God, and each other. The worship experience was rated the strongest quality by the attendees. The communion service was also rated as the service they valued most in their life in the Church. Worshipping God then is rated as a strong foundation from which all other qualities can be strengthened. Although the attendees

²⁹ The actual questions can be viewed in the Addendum no 5

³⁰ See Chapter Three for a discussion on the ecclesiology of the SDA Church

³¹ See Chapter Two

³² The results of Phase One is discussed in Chapter Four.

rated their faith as one of their strengths, they also indicated that it is an area more attention should be focused on. This indicates that attendees are not completely satisfied with their faith and that they would like to grow further in their faith. Faith is closely connected with one's response to the love of God. The attendees feel that there is room for growth in their relationship with God. This is very positive as our worship experience and faith form the foundation of all our relationships. It is significant to note however that belonging is rated much lower by the attendees.

Although the relationship with God and the worship of Him is strong, it seems that many attendees do not feel completely part of the community of faith. This sense of belonging is essential as it enhances the life of a congregation and special attention should be given to this facet of church life. A sense of belonging unites the attendees of a congregation and unity is of tremendous importance in the Seventh-day Adventist ecclesiology. Unity in a congregation will strengthen the congregation's interaction with each other and with the community. This will be further discussed under the external core quality.

The Inspirational Core Qualities: This quality has to do with the leadership of a congregation and its ability to adapt to circumstances and its willingness to change to meet the challenges of its environment or ecological context in order to move ahead.³³ The vision of the leadership and congregation is rated lowest by the attendees. This is worrying as owned vision by the congregation is what inspires them to live their faith. It seems that leadership do not involve the attendees in the sharing of their vision and programs. There seems to be a gap between the leadership and the members. They indicated that a large section of the members' gifts and skills are overlooked. The attendees rated empowering leadership low, but indicated however that they are confident that the vision can be achieved. The attendees respect their leadership and their innovation and indicate that they are open to new ideas and to try new things. This hopefully will inspire the leadership to involve their congregations in their vision and innovative plans.

The External (outward) Core Qualities: According to the response of the attendees, The Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State is not really in service of their community, does not really talk about their faith, but is strong in making

³³ See for a discussion about the leadership in Phase One and Phase two

newcomers feel welcome. The welcoming part indicates that members hope and expect newcomers to get themselves to church without the involvement of the members. This uninvolvement of the Church in the Free State with the community is contrary to the ecclesiology and mission of the Church. An important challenge to the Church is to stay relevant in a constantly changing environment. If the congregation is not involved with the community, it will not move with the times and adapt to the changing world around it, and will find itself totally irrelevant to their community. Evangelism forms a vital part in the ecclesiology of the Seventh-day Adventist church³⁴ and is strongly emphasised in the mission statement of the church.³⁵ This means that the Church in the Free State is not following the directions of the Church at large and fails in its calling as a faith community to proclaim the gospel of God and fails in serving the community within which God has placed it.

6.2 PHASE TWO: LEADERSHIP INITIAL INTERVIEWS

During phase two interviews were conducted with a small section of the leadership of each congregation. The report of the results of the data gathered through the questionnaires in phase one of each congregation were presented to the leadership after the Initial interviews of phase two were completed.

The Internal Core Qualities: The leadership participants were not in agreement with the members. The general report of the leadership is that their congregations are stagnant; or dwindling (dying) or slowly growing but spiritually stagnant. [1:20] “I think at this stage we are a stagnant congregation]. [1:21] “Yes I would say, dwindling or stagnant.” This situation is not encouraging, but it does challenge the leadership to turn this situation around and create a healthy, missional congregation.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State should be concerned about the faith of the congregations. This concern was so strong amongst the leadership participants that worship, which is a strength of the Church, was not even mentioned. There is a major concern with members not attending services and who do not participate in the outreach of the congregations. This has a detrimental effect on the

³⁴ See Chapter Two for a discussion on the Ecclesiology of the SDA Church.

³⁵ The Mission Statement is discussed in Chapter Two.

spirituality and faith of the Church in the Free State. Bellamy *et al.* (2006:12) reports that research has shown that the level of growth in faith within a congregation is related to changes in attendance level and the level of newcomers. The major concern expressed by the majority of the participants is that there is no spiritual growth in their congregations. The general feeling amongst the leadership in the initial interviews is that belonging is one of their strengths. This again is not in agreement with the members. There might be a strong sense of belonging amongst the leadership but the members do not share this sense of belonging.

The Inspirational Core Qualities: The leadership participants report a strong awareness of the vision amongst the leadership, but the participants report that there is a disconnection in the communication to the congregations. A non-commitment by the congregations was reported. In cases where the congregation is aware of the vision, they do not own the vision, the leadership fail to inspire the congregation to action.

The leadership participants reported that in general the leadership of the congregations are very committed. These reports portray a very positive picture but it seems unfortunate that there is some disconnection between leadership and congregation. The leadership knows what they want to achieve but it is not well communicated down through to the congregational level. [3.4] “We have ever filtered it through to the congregational level.” In some instances, the leadership do not enjoy the support of the congregation for the programmes and they have fallen into the habit of doing everything themselves. As a result they are in survival mode and are only content to just carry the programme along.

Another concern is that leadership, in some cases, are discouraged by the outflow of members because of the depopulation of the areas. The goal of leadership should be to inspire the congregation and endeavour to allow the congregation to own the vision of evangelism and service to the community. This was discovered in the mission statement of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Chapter Three that the mission of every congregation should be to make disciples of all people, communicating the gospel and leading them to accept Jesus as personal Saviour. This was affirmed in the ecclesiology of the Seventh-day Adventist Church where it was revealed that Adventists are compelled to spread the gospel. It seems as if the Free State congregations in general have failed to live up to the vision and ecclesiology of the

Church at large.

The External (outward) Core Qualities: The leadership participants reported a variety of services they provide to the community. According to the reports of the participants, most of the faith-sharing in the congregations is done by individuals. The congregations seem to be mostly uninvolved. The community might be aware of the congregation but it seems that the community is actually more aware of individuals in the congregation. In most cases the only real way that the community is touched by the congregations, is through the Meals on Wheels programme. Even through Meals on Wheels, only a few church individuals are involved. Sporadic programmes are organised to reach the community, but the general feeling is that there is much room for improvement. [1:8] “There are ways that we can do, to make a difference.” The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, as seen in the ecclesiology of the Church, does not depend alone upon the ministers. The members must feel their individual responsibility and be active working members. This is not happening in the Free State Church, the members are largely uninvolved with congregational activity and outreach.

Many challenges in the communities face the congregations. The importance of the ecology and the influence on a congregation was discussed in Chapter Two, where the evaluation of a congregation was investigated. The ecology of each of the Free State congregations was discussed in Chapter Three. As a result of the major challenges of unemployment; poverty, homelessness, health needs, hunger, substance abuse and psychological needs, there are very real challenges. There is however a critical shortage of much-needed funds for the congregations to effectively address these needs, but even so, much more can be done to help the communities. It was expressed in the evangelism section of the ecclesiology of the Church in Chapter Three that Adventists are admonished to care for the nations, as they would care for Christ – providing basic human needs to those to whom they preach the gospel. It seems that the Free State Congregations sometimes forget whom they are working for, as very little involvement within the community is taking place.

At the end of the Initial interview of Phase Two, the results of the NCLS research were presented and explained. The leadership was requested to study the results and present it to their congregations.

6.3 PHASE THREE: LEADERSHIP FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

Focus group interviews were conducted with a larger group of the leadership of the individual congregations. The focus group interview was based on the background of the Phase One reports. These interviews were discussed in Chapter Five.

The NCLS report of Phase One, that was made available to the leadership in Phase Two, resulted in a mind shift. The leadership, through the NCLS report, realised that they are in an undesirable situation and they are inspired to change. They have learned that the internal core quality is relatively strong but their inspirational and external (outward) core qualities need urgent attention. This is in accordance with the high emphasis of evangelism in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The Internal Core Qualities: The majority of the leadership participants again expressed great concern about the spiritual condition of the congregations. In most of the congregations there were committed individuals, but the congregations as a whole, lack in faith. The low attendance in some congregations may be as a result of a low level of faith and a low spirituality of the members. There is an urgency to focus on the faith and spirituality of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church in general, as this is expressed as a great concern amongst the participants. The fact that worship was identified as the top strength by the NCLS profile of the Free State Congregations was well received and supported by the participants. They seem to enjoy the worship service and feel that they are uplifted and drawn closer to God by it. This report by the leadership is very encouraging as the worship service forms the basis for all the other qualities. There seems to be somewhat of a discrepancy about belonging between the participants of the two interviews. It may be that the top leadership in the initial interview may perceive their congregations differently from that of the focus group interview. The positive picture of a strong belonging, painted by the leadership in the initial interviews, changed a little in the focus group interviews. Concern was expressed by some of the participants that the members are not friends with each other.

The Inspirational Core Qualities: The leadership was somewhat shocked by the NCLS report that the congregations are not aware of the vision. It was taken as a given that everybody knows what the vision is. The leadership expressed that they need to ensure that their vision and plans are filtered through to grassroots level. The congregations cannot share the vision of the leadership if they do not know what

the vision is. Their vision and plans need to be thoroughly communicated to the congregations so that they can become part of their activities to the communities. This is the recommendation of the higher organisation and the belief of every Seventh-day Adventist, that every member must proclaim the gospel message to their community as stated in the mission statement in Chapter Three. The participants agreed that the programmes are there. The leadership reach out, but they do not have the support of the whole congregation.

The leadership realise that they need to allow the congregations to be involved and not try to do everything themselves. This will help the congregations to become healthy missional congregations. The ecological environment the Free State congregations are in, desperately need the faith community of Seventh-day Adventists to be active and caring in the communities they serve. This study and the NCLS report, inspired imaginative ideas in the minds of the leadership to inspire their congregations to be useful in a needy community. This is the area where they lack the most.

There is a definite communication problem between the leadership and the congregation. The leadership know what they want to achieve. They are concerned about the lack of support by the congregations but in some cases they do not trust the congregations to do the work properly and therefore do it themselves. The leadership need to let go and train and empower the congregations to be able to do what the leadership envisage. The leadership know what they want to achieve and are creative and innovative in their programmes. The members are impressed by their innovation but it is not carried through to fruition. During the focus group interviews many new innovative ideas were expressed and inspired by the NCLS report, that would address different aspects of the activities of the congregations and get the members involved in the programmes.

The External (Outward) Core Qualities: Various activities to the communities were reported to try to fulfil the great need in the communities. Unfortunately most of these activities are done by only a few members and most of the activities are not on-going. The congregations at large are not really involved with their communities. The participants painted a bleak picture about their faith-sharing non activities. Most of the faith-sharing is being done by individuals. It was reported that the congregations

are not supportive. This results in a very weak outreach of the Church in the Free State in faith-sharing. The participants were also a little quiet about inclusion. The report of the majority of the leadership is that inclusion is not very strong. They do not really invite outsiders to their programmes and they feel that they should find ways to draw people to their programmes.

We have listened to the voice of the people in Phase One; we have listened to the voice of the leadership in Phases Two and Three. All the data has been explored and evaluated. Below is the conclusion of the missional life of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State.

6.4 THE MISSIONAL LIFE OF THE FREE STATE SDA CHURCH

This conclusion section of the study aims to compare the voices of the attendees³⁶ with the voices of the leadership³⁷. This comparison will follow the same structure as the previous sections. The discussion will be done under the headings of Internal, inspirational and external (outward) core qualities. The main research question will then be answered.

The Internal Core Quality: The leadership reported the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State is dwindling and stagnant. In the participants' understanding, the health of the congregation and faith is reflected by congregational growth. Bellamy *et al.* (2006:12) reports that research has shown that the level of growth in faith within a congregation is related to changes in attendance level and the level of newcomers. It was noticed that the dwindling numbers in some cases create despondency amongst the participants. The leadership participants were concerned about members not attending services and outreach programmes. It has a detrimental effect on the spirituality and faith. [2:30] "People are staying at home; rather watch a sermon on TV, which is not what church is about." Bellamy *et al.* (2006:10) explains however that the vitality of the congregation is about a much broader set of issues than attendance. The membership figures and attendance do not always tell us much about the quality of the three missional relationships namely, *relationship with God, each*

³⁶ The data of the questionnaires in Chapter 4 and the NCLS Church Life Profile Figure 4.4

³⁷ See the initial- and focus group interviews in Chapters 5 and 6

other and the *community*. There are also issues of becoming committed to the faith and of discipleship. He further argues that congregations in areas of declining population may find it difficult to grow in numbers but may grow in vitality. He points out that there is much criticism of congregational growth as the pre-eminent measure of congregational health. This is a reality that has to be explained to the Free State Church, especially in the light of the depopulation of the white communities, as their members are made up from this population group. Of importance is the fact that the majority of the leadership reported no spiritual growth. [2:18] “I think we are stagnating spiritually.”; [3:20] “I big problem I think, that stares us in the face, is spiritual growth.”

The people however reported their faith as one of the top four strengths on the circle of strengths in the NCLS Church Life Profile. They may view their individual personal faith as much stronger than the perception the leadership has. The most important area attendees say need attention is spiritual growth.

The leadership described the worship experience as very positive and uplifting. Worship is rated as the strongest quality in the NCLS Church Life Profile. This means that the members view the worship service as of a high quality where they experience a sense of God's presence; inspiration; awe; joy; growth in understanding God and preaching that is helpful to everyday life (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:14).

This fact is very encouraging as Bellamy *et al.* (2006:14) reports that their research shows that these qualities of worship act in a cumulative way and add up to higher levels of newcomers into church life. These findings are very significant for the Church to take note of. The high standard of the worship service and all other programmes, for that matter, will draw people to the congregations. One cannot expect newcomers to join the congregation if the quality of the programmes and services are of a low standard. It is presumed that the worship is particularly of a high quality as many of the congregations in the Free State are experiencing an alarming decline in membership. The worship service may be the one aspect that keeps the congregations going and the members spiritually nurtured.

It is however of great importance to note what Nel (2015:124) writes about the worship service. He argues that the more honest the service to God in the worship service is, the more consequential will service to one's neighbour become. Service of Christ must manifest in service to our neighbour. Nel further states that, we must

become for others what Christ was, and is, for us. The conclusion that one can draw from his argument is that if a congregation is rated high in the core quality of worship, but the core quality of service is low, it may be that there is not an honest service to God in the worship service of that congregation. Nel's statement that we must become for others what Christ was and is, for us, places an enormous and very real responsibility on every member of the faith community. The Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State should note that true worship cannot be only internal, but must flow outwardly to the community. Nel (2015:125) reveals that the question to ask is whether worship shows forth the character of service, and whether it builds willingness to service the world from within the congregation. The strong foundation of worship shows an enormous potential for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State to become fully missional.

More attention should be given to the core quality belonging. Leadership should give attention to the happiness and the sense of being part of a community of believers. The importance of a sense of belonging is highlighted by Bellamy *et al.* (2006:16) who states that a sense of belonging is a by-product of attending the congregation frequently. The low rating that the core quality belonging received by the members in the NCLS Church Life Profile may be because of the concern that the leadership participants expressed, that members do not support the programmes of the congregations. In other words the less one attends the congregation; the less one feels a sense of belonging. Bellamy *et al.* (2006:16) reports that research has shown that attending frequently is indeed associated with a sense of belonging.

The Inspirational Core Qualities: The leadership participants report a strong awareness of the vision amongst the leadership, but they admitted that there is a lack of communication of the vision between the leadership and the congregation.

The people rated the core quality vision the lowest in the NCLS Church Life Profile. Some leaders took it as a given that the congregations know what the vision is. The leadership has all their plans and programmes in place but it seems not to be communicated to the congregations. This situation results in poor support, a lack of owning the programmes, and ignorance of the plans of the leadership by the congregations. This is a very discouraging situation. Bellamy *et al.* (2006:18) reports that most congregations are inward-looking, they place greater value on their

congregations" teaching ministry, worship style etc., than on reaching those beyond congregational life. Few members" value their congregations" caring for the wider community (Hughes, 2004:16).

The fact that the leadership of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church do not communicate their vision to the members at grassroots level has an even worse effect on the Church at large. The Free State leadership must help the Church to embrace the vision in order for the Church to move forward. The leadership participants reported that in general, the leadership of the congregations are very committed but unfortunately there is some disconnection between leadership and congregation. The core quality Leadership, features third last on the NCLS Church Life Profile. The members, through the survey, reveal the extent to which their leaders inspire them to action. (Bellamy *et al.*, 2006:20). The leaders who participated in the interviews revealed the problem themselves. They have a vision, they have a year plan, they know what they want to achieve, but that vision is not communicated to the congregations; it is impossible for the congregations to be inspired to action by the leadership. This may be the reason why leadership is rated so low by the members in the NCLS Church Life Profile. The leadership is not inspiring them to action through what they say and do. The fact that ministers are transferred so often (every three to five years) may also be a major influence on the leadership of Seventh-day Adventist Church, as it influences the contingency of visions and strategies of the congregation. Without the knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the congregation, every new minister starts from scratch and little progress is achieved.

It is remarkable that most of the innovative ideas of the Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State are how to get the members involved in the programmes of the congregations. This implies a major concern of the leadership, and should be focused on to inspire and mobilise their congregations. It is however important for the leadership to understand that this is in direct opposition to a firm conviction in the missional conversation that more programs does not make the congregation more missional – we are in mission. This study opens up the possibility for the leadership to implement creative and innovative ideas. It may be that earlier leadership was so involved with "doing church" that they lost sight of why the church was established. Bellamy *et al.* (2006:2) aptly describes congregations as places where people can be caught up in God's mission to the wider community and beyond.

It is very significant to note that the members of the Free State Church rated Innovation as the fourth strongest quality in the NCLS Church Life Profile. This may mean that the members are impressed by the leadership's innovation, but leadership does not inspire and mobilise the congregation.

The External (Outward) Core Qualities: The leadership participants reported a variety of services they provide to the community, but also admitted their inactivity in their communities. Although it seems as if the Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church is active in the community, most of their service to the community is sporadic and also involves only a few of the members of the congregations. Some Congregations rely on Meals on Wheels as their contribution to the community, but in each case, only a very small number of members are involved with Meals on Wheels. The rest of the congregation do not even know what is being done at Meals on Wheels and have no part in the running of it. The Church is mostly inactive and has very little impact on the community. The Core Quality Service also features second lowest by the members in the NCLS Church Life Profile.

The leadership participants reported a generally unsatisfactory faith-sharing in most congregations. Individuals are active but congregations do not support their endeavours. In most instances a single individual does more in faith-sharing than the whole congregation. According to the NCLS Church Life Profile, faith-sharing is rated at the lower end of the profile of the Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The members who filled in the questionnaires rated inclusion as the fourth highest core quality. The leadership participants of the interviews did not share the same view. It may be that the attendees were not very realistic in their views, as they rated service and faith-sharing much lower. It is possible that they confused inclusion and belonging, although belonging was rated much lower than inclusion. Could it be that visitors and newcomers are perceived to be more welcome than members? That will have to be explored in another study.

These reports by the leadership participants of the interviews correlate with regard to faith-sharing and service. If the congregations are not out there in the communities, the communities will not be in the congregations. Nel (2015:113) suggests that in the developing of a missional local congregation the question that should constantly be asked is: What are we communicating? What are people most aware of when they

observe us: Do they become most aware of the gospel or is it of something else, for instance the law or the culture of the congregation? In the case of the Seventh-day Adventist Church one might add to the list: The Sabbath, the Health Message, the Spirit of Prophecy, and the Church Structure etc. There is nothing wrong with all these listed items, they are all very important, but they should take their rightful place in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and not push the Gospel into a secondary position.

6.5 ANSWERING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS – FINAL REMARKS

Before the research question and subsidiary questions³⁸ are discussed, two facets of church life need to be highlighted. The first facet is the ecclesiology of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Congregations need to inform themselves about the ecclesiology of the Church and follow the instructions and directions the Church provides about church life in the congregation. If these are ignored, congregations might forget what the Church's mission and relevance in the world is. The fact that ministers are transferred so often (every three to five years), influence the contingency and quality of the programmes and strategies. The second facet is the ecology of the congregations. They find themselves in a certain environment and they need to be able to adapt to the needs of the community to be relevant in their situation.

Research Sub Question One: *Do the congregations meet the call to be missional healthy congregations?* The Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church did not have a specific understanding that missional healthy congregations are focused in a three way relationship: a relationship with God; a relationship with each other; and a relationship with the community they serve. There existed a loose understanding and connection with the three way relationship but it was not expressed. After this study and the interview with the leadership, they are very aware of the three way relationship and the importance of focusing on these relationships. They expressed the desire to rectify their approach.

Research Sub Question Two: *Do the congregations have insight into their strengths and weaknesses?* The Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church had no knowledge

³⁸ See Chapter One

of their strengths and weaknesses. The circle of strengths in the profile was an eye opener to the leadership and the members of the Church in the Free State. The knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses will help the leadership to utilize their strengths to be affective in meeting the needs of their members and communities.

Research Sub Question Three: *Does the leadership fulfil their role in the congregation by inspiring and empowering their members to be missional in their mind set, to ensure that their leadership is related to growth?* The leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State fail to fulfil their role in the Church by inspiring and empowering their members to be missional in their mind set, to ensure that leadership is related to growth in attendance.

Research Sub Question Four: *Do the members understand their God called responsibility to be actively involved in the missional life of the congregation, in faith-sharing and involvement to ensure a vital and health congregation?* The members did understand their God-given responsibility to be actively involved in the missional life of the congregation, in faith-sharing and involvement to ensure a vital and healthy congregation, but were side-tracked by the fact that they have lost so many members due to the depopulation of the white community in the Free State, that they have lost sight of their responsibility.

6.6 SDA CONGREGATIONS IN THE FREE STATE: HEALTHY MISSIONAL CONGREGATIONS

The Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the Free State, are unfortunately not healthy, missional congregations in view of their relationships with God, each other and with the community.

The fact that the leadership described the worship experience as very positive and uplifting, and that worship is rated as the strongest quality in the NCLS profile, is very encouraging as it was stated previously by Bellamy *et al.* (2006:14) that their research shows that these qualities of worship act in a cumulative way and add up to higher levels of newcomers in church life. These findings are very significant to take note of. The high standard of the worship service and all other programmes will draw people to the congregations and will help the Church to prosper. Because of the strong foundation

of worship, the Church has the potential to become a fully missional Church. This study has made the Seventh-day Adventist Church aware of their responsibility to become a healthy, more focused and effective missional Church in the Free State.

This research has been aimed at investigating the missional life of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State by listening to two voices, the voice of the attendees and the voice of the leadership. These voices revealed both the strong and not so strong points of the Church. This study was a revelation to both the researcher and the congregational leadership, and created a determination in the minds of the leadership of the congregations to become fully missional congregations.

In the NCLS research, the Free State Seventh-day Adventist Church was compared with the All South African Church, which was mainly the Dutch Reformed Church.³⁹ For this reason I would like to include a statement from the scholars who were involved in that research. Their statement may also be valid for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Nel and Schoeman (2015:153) “Although there is an awareness in respect of the missional calling of the church and the congregation, the change is still limited and there is room for a greater and more deliberate involvement of the congregation and its leadership within the community.”

6.7 DELIMITATION AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study did not attempt to draw a conclusion about the Seventh-day Adventist Church at large. The study has been limited to the eleven congregations in the Free State which falls under the jurisdiction of the KwaZulu Natal-Free State Conference. Of these eleven congregations only five participated fully.

This study has been limited by finances, time and other resources. The research project could therefore not engage in a wider study to include more SDA congregations in South Africa. Only the Free State Seventh-day Adventist congregations, who are all small congregations, were studied. The results of this study can thus not be drawn through to all the Seventh-day Adventist congregations in South Africa.

³⁹ See Chapter Four

A further limitation was that the congregational study was mainly representative of the white community. A different picture may have been obtained should other cultures have been included.

6.8 FURTHER RESEARCH

Areas of study that will need further analysis in future research may be to expand to the other larger congregations and conferences, of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa and also include other cultures.

The fact that the attendees in Phase One rated inclusion of newcomers much stronger than belonging of members⁴⁰ may be an interesting and very important study. Do the members perceive that they are not as important as newcomers?

I wish to end this dissertation with a prayer that the God of the Church will provide enthusiasm, determination and wisdom to the leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State in all their endeavours towards a more focused and fully missional Church which will work together to further the Kingdom of God.

⁴⁰ See Figure 4.4 in Chapter 4

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SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

KWAZULU NATAL - FREE STATE CONFERENCE

22 August 2014

Dear Pastors

Greetings from my office and trust you are well.

We have received a request from Steyn Venter for access to our Free State KNFC churches with a view to compile data for his doctoral studies with the University of Free State. We are granting him authorisation to speak to you as pastors on his intention. However, he has been advised that access to the churches is dependent on whether those churches agree to allow him access to speak/interview their members or not. Take note of the actual nature of his research as attached below.

Kind Regards,
MC Nhlapo

STEYN VENTER - PhD

PROPOSED TITLE

A Congregational Life Study of the membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, with special focus on the faith and involvement in the life of the congregation in the KwaZulu Natal-Free State Conference.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Does the life in the local church meet the needs of its members and the community, and how (if at all) does the local church utilize its strong points, and what does the church do to strengthen its weak points to be a more effective church?

1. What effect does the regular transfer of leaders have on the growth of membership on the local church? What is the voice of the members – how do they experience it?
2. How can the church be more effective in the retention of members and how do the members voice their experience of the missing member problem?
3. Are the church meeting the needs of its members and how can there be a greater effectiveness?
4. Are the SDA congregations missional in their understanding of a congregation and is the local church meeting the call to mission? Does it meet the needs in the local community? Do the members contribute to the missional understanding of the congregation?
5. What are the reasons for the irregular church attendance of members?

DETAILS OF PRIOR STUDY THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE

In 1991 eighteen denominations participated in The Church Life Survey in Australia. (Kaldor. 2002:96) The survey was repeated in 1996 and also in 1997 in New Zealand and expanded to England and the United States.

The SDA Church in the United States participated with 50 other faith groups in the U.S. Congregational Life Study in 2001. The results were published in the book *A Field Guide to U.S. Congregations* (2002) by Cynthia Woolever and Deborah Bruce. Recently a second book: *Beyond the Ordinary: 10 Strengths of U.S. Congregations* (2004) was published.

A pilot study was done in the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa during August 2006. Prof W.J. Schoeman published an article in the NGTT Dell 51, Nummer 3 & 4, September & December 2010 about the Congregational Life Survey in the Dutch Reformed Church. This was the first study of this kind done in South Africa but no study has been done as yet on the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa.

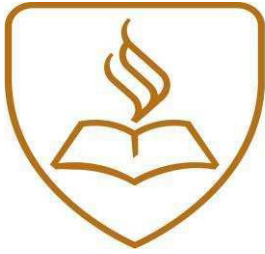
The study in South African will be compared to the studies done by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia, New Zealand and Amerika. It will be of great value to discover the similarities and differences between the studies of different nations and to discover what we can learn from their studies in their context.

VALUE OF THE STUDY

The study will provide useful information to SDA congregations to understand their strengths and weaknesses; to understand the situation they find themselves in, and to help congregations to fulfil their mission as a church.



Christian Regards,
Ps MC Nhlapo



3 August 2015

Informed consent

1. **Researcher:** Steyn Venter
Contact details: 076 302 7393; steyn.venter@yahoo.com
2. **Title of the study:** The missional life of congregations of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Free State.
3. **Purpose of the study:** To describe the missional life of 7 SDA congregations in the Free State by using their NCLS report.
4. **Procedures:** Empirical study: Focus group discussions in each congregation (about four people per group) comprising of the congregational leadership; collect data from them using the formulated research questions as background, discussions observed by the researcher.
5. **Risks and discomforts:** Not foreseen
6. **Benefits:** Researched Leadership will be aware of their level of understanding on the missional of their congregation, and the researcher will gain knowledge for his studies.
7. **Participants' rights:** participation is voluntary; and you may withdraw from participation in the study at any time and without negative consequences.

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8. **Confidentiality:** All information is treated as confidential; anonymity is assured and the data would be destroyed should the subject withdraw.

9. The subject has the **right of access to the researcher** and may contact him/her in order for clarity on any issue be sought, should doubts arise.

Researcher:

Participant:

Date:

Date:

Approved by:



Prof WJ Schoeman

HOD: Practical Theology

Thank you for taking part in this survey

2014-15 South African

Church Life Survey

- Please use a BLACK OR BLUE PEN or dark R_!!QCil-a1 1d:press'firm'!
- FILL IN or CROSS the box next to of Ytht best describes your responsJ-OF-Y . PLEASE DONOTUSETICKS.
- Chogse ONEOLY for each question unless it states otherwise

Congregation Code

Elfample: /- 60 you eat fruit? •Yes D No

ZAP1

1. How often do you go to church services (worship services) at this congregation?

- This is my first time
- Hardly ever /never /special occasions only
- Less than once a month
- Once a month
- Two or three times a month
- Usually every week
- More than once a week

2. How long have you been going to church services or activities at this congregation?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-2 years
- 3-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years
- More than 20 years
- I am visiting from another congregation
- I am visiting and do not regularly go anywhere else

3. Are you regularly involved in any group activities here? (Mark ALL that apply)

- Yes, in small prayer, discussion or Bible study groups
- Yes, in fellowships, clubs, social or other groups
- No, we have no such groups
- No, I am not regularly involved

4. Do you regu,ltrly take part in any activities of this congregation that reach out to the wider community? (Mark ALL that apply)

- Yes, in evangelistic or outreach activities
- Yes, in community service, social justice or welfare activities of this congregation
- No, we don't have such activities
- No, I am not regularly involved

5. Do you have a strong sense of belonging to this congregation?

- Yes, a strong sense of belonging, which is growing
- Yes, a strong sense - about the same as last year
- Yes, although perhaps not as strongly as in the past
- No, but I am new here
- No, and I wish, I did by now
- No, but I am happy as I am
- Don't know / not applicable

6. What is the STARTING TIME of the church service(s) that you regularly attend here? (Mark up to TWO)

This service (Leave blank if you are a visitor)

(Write time, eg 09:45 and mark am or pm, and day of week)

4 • Dam Sunday Saturday weekday
• Opm D D D

Another church service you regularly attend here

(Only fill this in if it applies to you)

4 • Dam Sunday Saturday weekday
• Opm D D D

7. Before you started coming here, were you participating in another congregation?

- No, I've come here for most /all of my life
- No, before coming here I had not been attending church for several years
- No, before coming here I had never regularly attended a church
- Yes, immediately prior to coming here, I was participating in another congregation

8. Before you started coming here, what was the denomination of your previous church?

(Mark ONE only)

- I did not attend elsewhere before coming here
- Catholic
- Anglican/Episcopalian
- Baptist
- Lutheran
- Methodist
- Presbyterian
- Pentecostal
- African Independent Church/African Initiated Church
- Coptic Christian, Greek Orthodox, or Russian Orthodox
- DR Church, Reformed Church, Ned Herv Church, Uniting Reformed Church, or Christian Reformed Church
- Jehovah's Witness
- Seventh Day Adventist
- Mormon
- Mennonite
- Quaker/Society of Friends
- Congregationalist
- Other

9. In what year were you born?

Please complete the year: 1 9

10. Are you:

- Female
- Male

11. What is the highest educational qualification you have completed?

- Primary school
- Some secondary school
- Completed secondary school
- Trade certificate
- Diploma or associate diploma
- Bachelor degree from a university or equivalent institution
- Post graduate degree or diploma

12. Which term best describes your present marital status?

- Never married
- In first marriage
- Remarried after divorce
- Remarried after death of spouse
- In a defacto relationship
- Separated
- Divorced
- Widowed

13. Do you have a spouse or partner who is also completing a survey form here?

- Yes
- No

*This form will be scanned - Please mark boxes and
WRITE NUMBERS CLEARLY to help scanning process*

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14. What is the postcode of the place where you usually live?

Please write in the squares:

15. What is your employment status? (Mark ALL that apply)

- Employed full time (30 hrs or more)
- Employed part-time Self-employed
- Unemployed Retired
- Student Other
- Full-time home duties /family responsibilities

16. What language do you use mostly as home language?

- Afrikaans Sesotho
- English Setswana
- IsiNdebele Siswati
- IsiXhosa Tshivenda
- IsiZulu Xitsonga
- Sepedi Other

17. What race are you?

- White Coloured
- Black Other
- Asian Not applicable

About Your Faith

18. Over the last year, do you believe you have grown in your Christian faith?

- No real growth
- Some growth
- Much growth, mainly through this parish
- Much growth, mainly through other groups or churches
- Much growth, mainly through my own private activity

19. How often do you spend time in private devotional activities (eg prayer, meditation, Bible reading alone)?

- Every day /most days Occasionally
- A few times a week Hardly ever
- Once a week Never

20. Do you identify with any of the following approaches to matters of faith? (Mark up to TWO options)

- Catholic or 'Anglo-Catholic' Pentecostal
- Charismatic Progressive
- Evangelical Reformed
- Liberal Traditionalist
- Lutheranism I do not identify with such descriptions
- Moderate

21. How important is God in your life?

- God does not matter to me at all
- Fairly important, but many other things are more important
- God is more important to me than almost anything else
- God is the most important reality in my life

About You and This Congregation

How often do you experience the following during church services at this congregation?

(Mark one box on EACH line)

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely, /never
22. Preaching very helpful to my life	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D
23. Inspiration	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D
24. Joy	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D
25. Boredom	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D
26. A sense of God's presence	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D
27. Growth in understanding of God	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D
28. Being challenged to take action	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D

29. If innovative change was proposed to the worship service you attend at this church (eg style of music, seating layout etc), what would your response tend to be?

Would you...

- Strongly support such changes
- Support such changes
- Be neutral/unsure
- Oppose such changes
- Strongly oppose such changes

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Mark one box on EACH line)

30. Music and singing is an important part of church worship for me

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D

31. I have found it easy to make friends within this congregation

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> D

32. If you know someone who is a new arrival here do you personally seek to make them welcome?

- Yes, always Rarely or never
- Yes, mostly Not applicable (I don't meet new arrivals here)
- Yes, sometimes

33. Are you involved in any community service, social action or other groups not connected to this congregation? (Mark ALL that apply)

- Yes, community service, care or welfare groups
- Yes, social action, justice or lobby groups {eg environmental, human rights, local issues}
- Yes, sports, recreation or hobby groups
- Yes, school or youth groups {eg P & C, Scouts}
- Yes, another kind of group {eg arts, cultural, political}
- No, I'm not involved with such groups

34. In the past 12 months, have you done any of the following? (Mark ALL that apply)

- Lent money to someone outside your family
- Cared for someone who was very sick
- Helped someone through a personal crisis (not sickness)
- Visited someone in hospital
- Given some of your possessions to someone in need
- Tried to stop someone abusing alcohol or drugs
- Donated money to a charitable organisation
- Contacted a parliamentarian / councillor on a public issue

35. Which of the following best describes your readiness to talk to others about your faith?

- I do not have faith, so the question is not applicable
- I do not like to talk about my faith; my life and actions are sufficient
- I find it hard to talk about my faith in ordinary language
- I mostly feel at ease talking about my faith and do so if it comes up
- I feel at ease talking about my faith and look for opportunities to do so

36. Would you be prepared to invite to a church service here any of your friends and relatives who do not currently attend a church?

- Yes, and I have done so in the past 12 months
- Yes, but I have not done so in the past 12 months
- Don't know
- No, probably not
- No, definitely not

37. If you knew someone was drifting away from church involvement, how likely is it that you would take the time to talk with them about it?

- Certain
- Very likely
- Likely
- Hard to say
- Unlikely

How satisfied are you with what is offered here for children and young adults?
(Mark one box on EACH line)

38. For children aged under 12 years

Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral / unsure	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

39. For youth aged 12-18 years

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

40. For young adults aged 19-25 years

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

41. About how much do you give financially to this congregation?

- I give 10% or more of net income regularly
- I give about 5% to 9% of net income regularly

Leadership and Direction

42. Do you currently perform any of these leadership or ministry roles here? (Mark all that apply)

- Teaching/preaching
- Music ministry
- Children's ministry role
- Youth ministry role
- Small group leadership
- Social group leadership
- Lead/assist in church services
- Management/admin role
- Committee/task force member
- Pastoral care/visitation role
- Some other role
- No such role

43. Have this congregation's leaders encouraged you to find and use your gifts and skills here?

- Yes, to a great extent
- Yes, to some extent
- Yes, to a small extent
- Not at all
- Don't know

44. Does this congregation have a clear vision, goals or direction for its ministry and mission?

- I am not aware of such a vision, goals or direction
- There are ideas but no clear vision, goals or direction
- Yes, and I am strongly committed to them
- Yes, and I am partly committed to them
- Yes, but I am not committed to them

45. To what extent does this congregation's leaders take into account the ideas of the people here?

- A great extent
- Some extent
- A small extent
- Not at all
- Don't know
- There is currently no leader here

46. How confident are you that your congregation can achieve the vision, goals or directions it has set for itself?

- I am fully confident we can achieve them
- I am partly confident we can achieve them
- I am not confident we can achieve them
- They are not clear enough to me to be able to evaluate this
- Don't know

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Mark one box on EACH line)

47. This congregation

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
----------------	-------	-----------------	----------	-------------------

is always ready to try something new

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

48. Leaders here

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
----------------	-------	-----------------	----------	-------------------

inspire me to action

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

- I give less than 5% of net income regularly
- I give a small amount whenever I am here

49. Leaders here always
Strongly

communicate clearly
Disagree disagree

agree

Agree

Neutral/
Strongly
Unsure

D I do not contribute financially here

and openly

D D D D D

SO. Leaders here

Strongly

Neutral/

Strongly

encourage innovation
and creative thinking

agree

Agree

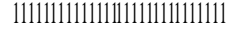
Disagree

Disagree

Disagree

D D D D D

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Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Mark one box on EACH line)

51. Leaders here keep us strongly focused on connecting with people in the wider community
- | | | | | |
|----------------|-------|-----------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral/ Unsure | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| D | D | D | D | D |
52. This congregation has good and clear systems for how it operates
- | | | | | |
|----------------|-------|-----------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral/ Unsure | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| D | D | D | D | D |
53. Leaders here are strongly focused on directions for the future
- | | | | | |
|----------------|-------|-----------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral/ Unsure | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| D | D | D | D | D |
54. Leaders here help our congregation identify and build on its strengths
- | | | | | |
|----------------|-------|-----------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral/ Unsure | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| D | D | D | D | D |
55. I have a strong sense of belonging to the denomination of this church
- | | | | | |
|----------------|-------|-----------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral/ Unsure | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| D | D | D | D | D |

56. We all have different strengths to contribute at work or in daily life. Which of the following do you do well? (Mark up to FOUR options)
- Listen: Listen deeply to others
 - Connect: Build good relationships with others
 - Envision: Help people discover direction
 - Explore: Help people creatively explore fresh ideas
 - Inspire: Inspire commitment from others to new possibilities
 - Empower: Help others to make their contributions
 - Structure: Create clear, positive systems
- Communicate: Generate clear reliable communication
- Optimism: Build optimism and hope, even in challenging times
- Act: Know the right moment to move to action
 - Resolve: To stay on course when things get difficult
 - Learn: The ability to learn and grow from experiences

57. Which of the following aspects of this congregation do you personally most value? (Mark up to THREE options)
- Wider community care or social justice emphasis
 - Reaching those who do not attend church
 - Traditional style of worship or music
 - Contemporary style of worship or music
 - Sharing in Holy Communion / the Eucharist / Lord's Supper
 - Social activities or meeting new people
 - Sermons, preaching or Bible teaching
 - Small prayer, discussion or Bible study groups
 - Ministry to children or youth
 - Praying for one another
 - Practical care for one another in times of need
 - Openness to social or cultural diversity
 - Presence of a church school or pre-school

58. In your opinion, which of the following should be given greater attention by this congregation in the next 12 months? (Mark up to THREE options)
- Spiritual growth (eg spiritual direction, prayer groups)
 - Worship services that are nurturing to people's faith
 - Building a strong sense of community within the congregation
 - Creating a clear vision for the congregation's future
 - Encouraging people here to discover/use their gifts
 - Encouraging new approaches to ministry and mission
 - Supporting social justice and aid to people in need
 - Encouraging people here to share their faith or invite others
 - Ensuring new people are included well in church life
 - Ministry to children and youth
 - Growing into a larger congregation
 - Starting a new church or mission venture

About your children

59. Please answer the questions below for each of your children who are still alive, starting with the eldest.

If you have more than five children, just answer for the

first five.

Eldest Child	Child No 2	Child No 3	Child No 4	Child No 5
--------------	------------	------------	------------	------------

What is his/her age in years?

years	years	years	years	years
-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

Does he/she live at home?

Yes	D	D	D	D	D
No	D	D	D	D	D

Does he/she attend church regularly? (Mark all that apply)

Eldest Child	Child No 2	Child No 3	Child No 4	Child No 5
Yes, here	D	D	D	D
Yes, somewhere else,	D	D	D	D
same denomination	D	D	D	D
Yes, at another denomination	D	D	D	D
No	D	D	D	D
Don't know	D	D	D	D

Thank you for your help today

INITIAL INTERVIEW

Aim of discussion: To talk about how the leadership experiences the congregation, and the influence of the leadership on the congregation.

Permission: I use the focus groups as part of my Doctoral Studies with regard to the SDA congregations in the Free State. These are anonymous, but I am going to tape and transcribe them. Is the in order with everyone?

Biographic information of the Focus Group participants Name, Age, gender, profession, role in congregation.

Questions:

1. Are you aware of the vision of the leadership / congregation and does leadership inspire the congregation to become involved in outreach programmes/ Give examples.
2. What role does the congregation play in the community and does the community experience the presence of the congregation. How does the congregation make a difference in the community. Give examples, what stories do you have to share?
3. What challenges or problems exist in the community with which the congregation can help, or make a difference?
4. What is the current status of the congregation. Is it a growing, stagnant or dying congregation? Give a brief summary of the strengths of the congregation.

Proposal:

- Explain the NCLS-report to the congregation – business meeting.
- Meet again in one month to discuss focus group 2.

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Aim of discussion: To discuss the role of leadership in the congregation. We will look at the NCLS report and how it can help.

Permission: I will use the focus group discussion as part of my Doctoral Studies. They are anonymous but I will tape and transcribe them. Is this in order with everyone?

Questions:

1. What new things did you learn from the NCLS report about the congregation? What should change from this point? In which area would you like to see growth? Give examples of the strengths and weaknesses.
2. How can the congregation be helped to be more missional? How does the congregation make a difference in the community? How can they become more involved? Give examples.
3. What is the role of the leadership to make the congregation healthier and more involved in the community?

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Belonging {15-1} [1]

Faith {31-1} [1]

1:24 I think we manage to keep thos.. (26:26):

External {54-4} [5]

Faith {31-1} [1]

5:35 Ek dink die probleem in die ge.. (69:69):

Faith Sharing {14-1} [14]

1:7 We do have an active program a.. (14:14):
1:9 people are aware of Seventh-da.. (16:16):
1:10 I wouldn't say that they neces.. (16:16):
1:14 Another outreach is Prison ... a.. (18:18):
1:15 Sipporah, haar van, en sy praa.. (19:19):
1:16 individually people are also t.. (20:20):
2:6 Die Adventiste Kerk doen baie .. (15:15):
2:11 a daar is goeters waar ons bai.. (18:18):
2:20 ek dink hy doen nou ... hy het g.. (28:28):
3:8 Ek dink ook aan die Dinsdagaan.. (13:13):
3:11 Dinsdagaande gebedsgroepie wat.. (14:14):
4:7 Daar was 'n VBS (Vakansie Bye.. (14:14):
5:13 die uitreikingsprogram van Eva.. (32:32):
5:22 So ... buite voorstad dink ek da.. (44:44):

Inclusion {3-1} [3]

1:11 not perhaps as open to invitin.. (16:16):
4:11 ons het 'n bietjie in die geme.. (20:20):
5:25 So ek dink die gemeente is war.. (44:44):

Leadership {24-1} [1]

5:16 Pregnancy Crisis' Sentrum, men.. (36:36):

Service {37-1} [37]

1:12 I think the best way the commu.. (16:16):
1:13 Other ways that we do impact t.. (16:16):
1:18 there are ways that we can do,.. (23:23):
1:19 employment – big need; work cr.. (23:23):
2:7 Die kerk doen baie uitreiking .. (15:15):
2:8 die gemeenskap is bewus van on.. (15:15):
2:9 die welsyns-departement ek bed.. (16:16):
2:10 So en ons het Stop Rook semina.. (18:18):
2:12 in die gemeenskap betrokke raa.. (18:18):
2:15 Die welsynskaste is leeg. Daar.. (22:22):
2:16 en van die grootste behoeftes .. (22:22):
2:17 ons het elke dertiende Sabbat .. (24:24):
2:18 So met die gevolg van daai myn.. (27:27):
2:19 Meals on Wheels wat nou ons di.. (28:28):
3:6 ek dink wel die gemeente kan '.. (13:13):
3:7 ns natuurlik nou Meals on Whea.. (13:13):
3:9 So ek dink daar is 'n inpak wa.. (13:13):
3:10 amper 'n 10 uit 10 gee want me.. (14:14):
3:12 hy uitgaan om siekes te help ... (14:14):
3:13 it ook gekom by mense wat geso.. (15:15):
4:6 Ons het somtyds programme geha.. (12:12):
4:8 Daar was die Nedley program, N.. (14:14):

4:10 Ja, mens sou net hoop dat die .. (18:18):
4:12 ons het reeds ook rentmeesters.. (20:20):
4:13 So daar is baie wat die kerk k.. (21:21):
5:16 Pregnancy Crisis' Sentrum, men.. (36:36):
5:18 ons het nie projekte op die oo.. (41:41):
5:19 ons moet dus betrokke raak met.. (41:41):
5:20 ons moet, ons het planne, Isaa.. (41:41):
5:21 die impak op die gemeenskap op.. (42:42):
5:23 dis bitter moeilik dink ek, om.. (44:44):
5:24 die eienaarskap van die gemeen.. (44:44):
5:26 ek dink die impak in die gemee.. (44:44):
5:28 Dis is senior persone in die g.. (51:51):
5:31 En so hy moet ... na daai hele o.. (60:60):
5:32 So die behoeftes wat ons sien .. (61:62):
5:35 Ek dink die probleem in die ge.. (69:69):

Faith {31-1} [3]

Belonging {15-1} [1]

1:24 I think we manage to keep thos.. (26:26):

Leadership {24-1} [2]

1:22 Because many people have moved.. (26:26):

2:27 Hulle is r rig dedicated. As j.. (37:37):

Service {37-1} [1]

5:35 Ek dink die probleem in die ge.. (69:69):

Faith Sharing {14-1} [0]

Inclusion {3-1} [0]

Innovation {8-1} [0]

Inspirational {50-4} [5]

Faith {31-1} [2]

1:22 Because many people have moved.. (26:26):

2:27 Hulle is r rig dedicated. As j.. (37:37):

Innovation {8-1} [8]

1:17 it's dirty ... litter everywhere.. (22:22):

2:13 Dan dink ek gaan ons nog meer .. (19:19):

3:14 'n Probleem in die gemeenskap?.. (17:17):

3:15 Ons gaan 'n rentmeesterskap di.. (17:17):

3:16 het ons 'n dokter gekry om te .. (17:17):

3:17 daar is baie arm mense en dit .. (18:18):

4:14 die bepaling was gedoen en ons.. (21:21):

5:27 Ek wil byvoorbeeld noem dat on.. (45:45):

Leadership {24-1} [24]

1:3 it is in the front of the chur.. (4:4):

1:4 there's probably some disconne.. (7:7):

1:22 Because many people have moved.. (26:26):

2:2 die leiers van die kerk is alt.. (6:6):

2:5 julle huidige planne weet die .. (12:13):

2:27 Hulle is r rig dedicated. As j.. (37:37):

3:24 Ons het 'n Leraar wat goeie on.. (23:23):

3:25 daar is ... daar is ... daar i.. (23:23):

3:26 die Persoonlike Bedienings lei.. (24:24):

4:5 die leierskap is bewus en ons .. (10:10):

5:3 Voortdurend kom en ek dink die.. (13:13):

5:4 Daar moet entoesiasme wees wat.. (14:14):

5:5 Ek sou s  dat die inisiatief w.. (15:15):

5:6 alhoewel hulle entoesiasies i.. (17:17):

5:7 as jy delegeer ondertoe gebeur.. (18:19):
5:8 En ek dink dit is, om aan te s.. (20:20):
5:9 Die gemeenskap se visie gaan o.. (21:21):
5:11 Daar hoort meer entoesiasme te.. (24:24):
5:12 Daar word nie verantwoordelikh.. (26:26):
5:14 aar moet eienaarskap van daai .. (32:32):
5:15 evangelisasie projek wat voorl.. (35:35):
5:16 Pregnancy Crisis' Sentrum, men.. (36:36):
5:17 ek glo om mense betrokke te kr.. (36:36):
5:36 Ek dink die sterkpunte in ons .. (71:71):

Service {37-1} [1]

5:16 Pregnancy Crisis' Sentrum, men.. (36:36):

Vision {20-1} [20]

1:1 The vision for our congregatio.. (4:4):
1:2 there are programs in place to.. (4:4):
1:5 those who are serving in the l.. (7:7):
2:1 Ek glo almal is bewus van die .. (6:6):
2:3 Die missie sou ek sê is tweevo.. (7:7):
2:4 ek sou sê die mense in die gem.. (7:7):
3:1 Ja die leierskap, glo ek, het .. (4:4):
3:2 verskillende departement leier.. (4:4):
3:3 Ek dink aan die Personal Minis.. (4:4):
3:4 ons kom kort daarin want ek ka.. (7:7):
3:5 Die ... die ... die ... die de.. (7:7):
4:1 ek dink die leierskap sovêr as.. (7:7):
4:2 dit is maar 'n globale toekoms.. (7:7):
4:3 daar's miskien 'n tegniese fla.. (9:9):
4:4 Ek stem saam die leierskap is .. (10:10):
4:5 die leierskap is bewus en ons .. (10:10):
5:1 Hulle is bewus, maar of hulle .. (6:6):
5:2 Ek dink dit word baie goed gek.. (11:11):
5:9 Die gemeenskap se visie gaan o.. (21:21):
5:10 Sou julle sê dat daar soort va.. (22:23):

Internal {45-4} [4]

Belonging {15-1} [15]

1:23 the strengths in this communit.. (26:26):
1:24 I think we manage to keep thos.. (26:26):
2:24 een van die sterkpunte van Wel.. (36:36):
2:25 as iemand weet van iemand wat .. (36:36):
2:26 in die omgee ding pas ons alma.. (36:36):
2:28 daai broederskap ...daai ... e.. (37:37):
2:29 Ons het tot vir die Portugese .. (48:48):
2:31 dit is definitief een van die .. (53:53):
4:17 is dit veral in die versorging.. (27:27):
4:18 ek dink nogal ons versorging b.. (27:27):
5:37 Die samehorigheid, alhoewel di.. (71:71):
5:38 toe ons die eerste diens hier .. (77:77):
5:43 Ek dink een van die samebinden.. (90:90):
5:44 Op 'n Sabbat is ons hier by di.. (90:90):
5:45 ie liefde vir mede broers en s.. (95:95):

Faith {31-1} [31]

1:6 Bywoning van? Navorsers: By 'n .. (11:13):
1:8 a health based outreach but wi.. (14:14):
1:20 Ek dink op hierdie stadium is .. (25:25):
1:21 Moab ... Ja ... en ... dis 'n .. (25:26):
1:22 Because many people have moved.. (26:26):
1:24 I think we manage to keep thos.. (26:26):
2:14 is werkloosheid een van die gr.. (22:22):
2:21 daar is groei maar nie so vinn.. (33:33):
2:22 soos wat die myne toegemaak he.. (33:33):
2:23 Hy's op 'n stagnante groei. Di.. (34:34):
2:27 Hulle is rêrig dedicated. As j.. (37:37):
2:30 Vertaal maar hulle kom minsten.. (53:53):
3:18 Numerical is daar ietwat van '.. (20:20):

3:19 as daar moet nou rêrig opgesta.. (21:21):
3:20 die groot probleem dink ek wat.. (21:21):
3:21 getalle groei maar ons weet ni.. (21:21):
3:22 daar is 'n kern groep mense wa.. (23:23):
3:23 jongmense en hulle het lus om .. (23:23):
4:9 daar's vir my 'n baie groeiend.. (15:15):
4:15 As ons kyk na die aantal dope .. (24:24):
4:16 ons praat nou seker van fisies.. (25:25):
4:19 Ja ek moet sê daar is ... daar.. (31:31):
5:29 Dis wonderlik om te sien hoe '... (58:58):
5:30 Die Bybels word gegee vir die .. (58:58):
5:33 Maar ek dink ons het die antwo.. (66:66):
5:34 So ons kom Sabbat kerk toe en .. (66:66):
5:35 Ek dink die probleem in die ge.. (69:69):
5:39 En tweedens kyk ek na die groe.. (77:79):
5:40 Hulle sê 'n barometer van 'n g.. (80:80):
5:41 Ons is van die hoogste betaald.. (85:86):
5:42 Ek het 'n ander gesprek gehad .. (87:87):
Leadership {24-1} [2]
1:22 Because many people have moved.. (26:26):
2:27 Hulle is rêrig dedicated. As j.. (37:37):
Service {37-1} [1]
5:35 Ek dink die probleem in die ge.. (69:69):

Leadership {24-1} [3]

Faith {31-1} [2]
1:22 Because many people have moved.. (26:26):
2:27 Hulle is rêrig dedicated. As j.. (37:37):
Service {37-1} [1]
5:16 Pregnancy Crisis' Sentrum, men.. (36:36):
Vision {20-1} [2]
4:5 die leierskap is bewus en ons .. (10:10):
5:9 Die gemeenskap se visie gaan o.. (21:21):

Missional {145-3} [8]

Belonging {15-1} [15]
1:23 the strengths in this communit.. (26:26):
1:24 I think we manage to keep thos.. (26:26):
2:24 een van die sterkpunte van Wel.. (36:36):
2:25 as iemand weet van iemand wat .. (36:36):
2:26 in die omgee ding pas ons alma.. (36:36):
2:28 daai broederskap ...daai ... e.. (37:37):
2:29 Ons het tot vir die Portugese .. (48:48):
2:31 dit is definitief een van die .. (53:53):
4:17 is dit veral in die versorging.. (27:27):
4:18 ek dink nogal ons versorging b.. (27:27):
5:37 Die samehorigheid, alhoewel di.. (71:71):
5:38 toe ons die eerste diens hier .. (77:77):
5:43 Ek dink een van die samebinden.. (90:90):
5:44 Op 'n Sabbat is ons hier by di.. (90:90):
5:45 ie liefde vir mede broers en s.. (95:95):
Faith {31-1} [31]
1:6 Bywoning van? Navorsers: By 'n .. (11:13):
1:8 a health based outreach but wi.. (14:14):
1:20 Ek dink op hierdie stadium is .. (25:25):
1:21 Moab ... Ja ... en ... dis 'n .. (25:26):
1:22 Because many people have moved.. (26:26):
1:24 I think we manage to keep thos.. (26:26):
2:14 is werkloosheid een van die gr.. (22:22):
2:21 daar is groei maar nie so vinn.. (33:33):
2:22 soos wat die myne toegemaak he.. (33:33):
2:23 Hy's op 'n stagnante groei. Di.. (34:34):
2:27 Hulle is rêrig dedicated. As j.. (37:37):

2:30 Vertaal maar hulle kom minsten.. (53:53):
3:18 Numerical is daar ietwat van .. (20:20):
3:19 as daar moet nou rêrig opgesta.. (21:21):
3:20 die groot probleem dink ek wat.. (21:21):
3:21 getalle groei maar ons weet ni.. (21:21):
3:22 daar is 'n kern groep mense wa.. (23:23):
3:23 jongmense en hulle het lus om .. (23:23):
4:9 daar's vir my 'n baie groeiend.. (15:15):
4:15 As ons kyk na die aantal dope .. (24:24):
4:16 ons praat nou seker van fisies.. (25:25):
4:19 Ja ek moet sê daar is ... daar.. (31:31):
5:29 Dis wonderlik om te sien hoe '.. (58:58):
5:30 Die Bybels word gegee vir die .. (58:58):
5:33 Maar ek dink ons het die antwo.. (66:66):
5:34 So ons kom Sabbat kerk toe en .. (66:66):
5:35 Ek dink die probleem in die ge.. (69:69):
5:39 En tweedens kyk ek na die groe.. (77:79):
5:40 Hulle sê 'n barometer van 'n g.. (80:80):
5:41 Ons is van die hoogste betaald.. (85:86):
5:42 Ek het 'n ander gesprek gehad .. (87:87):

Faith Sharing {14-1} [14]

1:7 We do have an active program a.. (14:14):
1:9 people are aware of Seventh-da.. (16:16):
1:10 I wouldn't say that they neces.. (16:16):
1:14 Another outreach is Prison ... a.. (18:18):
1:15 Sipporah, haar van, en sy praa.. (19:19):
1:16 individually people are also t.. (20:20):
2:6 Die Adventiste Kerk doen baie .. (15:15):
2:11 a daar is goeters waar ons bai.. (18:18):
2:20 ek dink hy doen nou ... hy het g.. (28:28):
3:8 Ek dink ook aan die Dinsdagaan.. (13:13):
3:11 Dinsdagaande gebedsgroepie wat.. (14:14):
4:7 Daar was 'n VBS (Vakansie Bye.. (14:14):
5:13 die uitreikingsprogram van Eva.. (32:32):
5:22 So ... buite voorstad dink ek da.. (44:44):

Inclusion {3-1} [3]

1:11 not perhaps as open to invitin.. (16:16):
4:11 ons het 'n bietjie in die geme.. (20:20):
5:25 So ek dink die gemeente is war.. (44:44):

Innovation {8-1} [8]

1:17 it's dirty ... litter everywhere.. (22:22):
2:13 Dan dink ek gaan ons nog meer .. (19:19):
3:14 'n Probleem in die gemeenskap?.. (17:17):
3:15 Ons gaan 'n rentmeesterskap di.. (17:17):
3:16 het ons 'n dokter gekry om te .. (17:17):
3:17 daar is baie arm mense en dit .. (18:18):
4:14 die bepaling was gedoen en ons.. (21:21):
5:27 Ek wil byvoorbeeld noem dat on.. (45:45):

Leadership {24-1} [24]

1:3 it is in the front of the chur.. (4:4):
1:4 there's probably some disconne.. (7:7):
1:22 Because many people have moved.. (26:26):
2:2 die leiers van die kerk is alt.. (6:6):
2:5 julle huidige planne weet die .. (12:13):
2:27 Hulle is rêrig dedicated. As j.. (37:37):
3:24 Ons het 'n Leraar wat goeie on.. (23:23):
3:25 daar is ... daar is ... daar i.. (23:23):
3:26 die Persoonlike Bedienings lei.. (24:24):
4:5 die leierskap is bewus en ons .. (10:10):
5:3 Voortdurend kom en ek dink die.. (13:13):
5:4 Daar moet entoemasie wees wat.. (14:14):
5:5 Ek sou sê dat die inisiatief w.. (15:15):
5:6 alhoewel hulle entoesiasties i.. (17:17):
5:7 as jy delegeer ondertoe gebeur.. (18:19):
5:8 En ek dink dit is, om aan te s.. (20:20):
5:9 Die gemeenskap se visie gaan o.. (21:21):

5:11 Daar hoort meer entoesiasme te.. (24:24):
5:12 Daar word nie verantwoordelikh.. (26:26):
5:14 aar moet eienaarskap van daai .. (32:32):
5:15 evangelisasie projek wat voorl.. (35:35):
5:16 Pregnancy Crisis' Sentrum, men.. (36:36):
5:17 ek glo om mense betrokke te kr.. (36:36):
5:36 Ek dink die sterkpunte in ons .. (71:71):

Service {37-1} [37]

1:12 I think the best way the commu.. (16:16):
1:13 Other ways that we do impact t.. (16:16):
1:18 there are ways that we can do,.. (23:23):
1:19 employment – big need; work cr.. (23:23):
2:7 Die kerk doen baie uitreiking .. (15:15):
2:8 die gemeenskap is bewus van on.. (15:15):
2:9 die welsyns-departement ek bed.. (16:16):
2:10 So en ons het Stop Rook semina.. (18:18):
2:12 in die gemeenskap betrokke raa.. (18:18):
2:15 Die welsynskaste is leeg. Daar.. (22:22):
2:16 en van die grootste behoeftes .. (22:22):
2:17 ons het elke dertiende Sabbat .. (24:24):
2:18 So met die gevolg van daai myn.. (27:27):
2:19 Meals on Wheels wat nou ons di.. (28:28):
3:6 ek dink wel die gemeente kan '. (13:13):
3:7 ns natuurlik nou Meals on Whea.. (13:13):
3:9 So ek dink daar is 'n inpak wa.. (13:13):
3:10 amper 'n 10 uit 10 gee want me.. (14:14):
3:12 hy uitgaan om siekes te help ... (14:14):
3:13 it ook gekom by mense wat geso.. (15:15):
4:6 Ons het somtyds programme geha.. (12:12):
4:8 Daar was die Nedley program, N.. (14:14):
4:10 Ja, mens sou net hoop dat die .. (18:18):
4:12 ons het reeds ook rentmeesters.. (20:20):
4:13 So daar is baie wat die kerk k.. (21:21):
5:16 Pregnancy Crisis' Sentrum, men.. (36:36):
5:18 ons het nie projekte op die oo.. (41:41):
5:19 ons moet dus betrokke raak met.. (41:41):
5:20 ons moet, ons het planne, Isaa.. (41:41):
5:21 die impak op die gemeenskap op.. (42:42):
5:23 dis bitter moeilik dink ek, om.. (44:44):
5:24 die eienaarskap van die gemeen.. (44:44):
5:26 ek dink die impak in die geme.. (44:44):
5:28 Dis is senior persone in die g.. (51:51):
5:31 En so hy moet ... na daai hele o.. (60:60):
5:32 So die behoeftes wat ons sien .. (61:62):
5:35 Ek dink die probleem in die ge.. (69:69):

Vision {20-1} [20]

1:1 The vision for our congregatio.. (4:4):
1:2 there are programs in place to.. (4:4):
1:5 those who are serving in the l.. (7:7):
2:1 Ek glo almal is bewus van die .. (6:6):
2:3 Die missie sou ek sê is tweevo.. (7:7):
2:4 ek sou sê die mense in die gem.. (7:7):
3:1 Ja die leierskap, glo ek, het .. (4:4):
3:2 verskillende departement leier.. (4:4):
3:3 Ek dink aan die Personal Minis.. (4:4):
3:4 ons kom kort daarin want ek ka.. (7:7):
3:5 Die ... die ... die ... die de.. (7:7):
4:1 ek dink die leierskap sover as.. (7:7):
4:2 dit is maar 'n globale toekoms.. (7:7):
4:3 daar's miskien 'n tegniese fla.. (9:9):
4:4 Ek stem saam die leierskap is .. (10:10):
4:5 die leierskap is bewus en ons .. (10:10):
5:1 Hulle is bewus, maar of hulle .. (6:6):
5:2 Ek dink dit word baie goed gek.. (11:11):
5:9 Die gemeenskap se visie gaan o.. (21:21):
5:10 Sou julle sê dat daar soort va.. (22:23):

Service {37-1} [2]

Faith {31-1} [1]

5:35 Ek dink die probleem in die ge.. (69:69):

Leadership {24-1} [1]

5:16 Pregnancy Crisis' Sentrum, men.. (36:36):

Vision {20-1} [1]

Leadership {24-1} [2]

4:5 die leierskap is bewus en ons .. (10:10):

5:9 Die gemeenskap se visie gaan o.. (21:21):

Worship {0-1} [0]

ATLAS.ti Cooccurring Codes

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Edited by: Super
Date/Time: 2017-01-31 19:07:50

Codes: 13

Belonging {26-1} [5]

Faith {42-1} [4]

2:1 'n swakpunt is ... as mense ko.. (4:4):
2:32 Ek dink regtig nie dat hulle k.. (42:42):
4:9 Jy weet ... ek dink om onder m.. (9:9):
5:1 Miskien moet ek net sê ek dink.. (6:6):

Faith Sharing {21-1} [4]

3:11 Wat goed gewerk het vanjaar wa.. (15:15):
3:12 Ek hoop hierdie volgende proje.. (16:16):
5:18 die groot meerderheid werk om .. (16:16):
5:28 ek dink regtig ons moet miskie.. (24:24):

Inclusion {12-1} [3]

2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):
4:22 En so ook moet ons gemeenteled.. (15:15):
5:11 ek dink die woord "inklusiwite.. (13:13):

Innovation {11-1} [2]

2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):
5:25 Sy sê hoekom kan ons as ons by.. (22:22):

Leadership {43-1} [2]

2:32 Ek dink regtig nie dat hulle k.. (42:42):
3:8 om te help dat die kerk om 'n .. (12:12):

External {42-4} [7]

Belonging {26-1} [7]

2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):
3:11 Wat goed gewerk het vanjaar wa.. (15:15):
3:12 Ek hoop hierdie volgende proje.. (16:16):
4:22 En so ook moet ons gemeenteled.. (15:15):
5:11 ek dink die woord "inklusiwite.. (13:13):
5:18 die groot meerderheid werk om .. (16:16):
5:28 ek dink regtig ons moet miskie.. (24:24):

Faith {42-1} [4]

1:20 I see individuals that want (12:12):
1:21 They need to learn to share it.. (12:12):
2:26 Ja ... as 'n mens dan vra vir .. (33:33):
4:7 ek dink herlewing is brood nod.. (7:7):

Faith Sharing {21-1} [21]

1:1 our evangelistic endeavours..... (4:4):
1:2 makes me think why the worship.. (4:4):
1:14 we have people that again are .. (10:10):
1:15 I think that about just two or.. (10:10):
1:21 They need to learn to share it.. (12:12):
2:17 weereens dis 'n geval van die .. (24:24):
3:7 ek glo dat friendship evangeli.. (10:10):
3:11 Wat goed gewerk het vanjaar wa.. (15:15):
3:12 Ek hoop hierdie volgende proje.. (16:16):
4:1 Wel ek is eintlik verbaas en b.. (4:4):
4:7 ek dink herlewing is brood nod.. (7:7):
4:10 en dan as ons uitgaan na die g.. (9:9):
4:23 Baie interessant as ons kyk na.. (16:17):
5:3 So dis vir my verblydend om te.. (7:7):

5:4 As ek kan teruggaan na Novembe.. (7:7):
5:14 maar die meerderheid is positi.. (14:14):
5:17 Ek dink ons sterk punt is: ons.. (16:16):
5:18 die groot meerderheid werk om .. (16:16):
5:24 Hulle is besig met 'n projek o.. (21:21):
5:28 ek dink regtig ons moet miskie.. (24:24):
5:31 as jy 'n seëning aan iemand oo.. (28:28):

Inclusion {12-1} [12]

1:25 as a community of faith, as a .. (19:19):
1:26 I think we tend to be rather e.. (19:21):
2:27 So we have just will have to m.. (35:35):
2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):
3:7 ek glo dat friendship evangeli.. (10:10):
3:15 Een hoogtepunt van die tent wa.. (19:19):
4:10 en dan as ons uitgaan na die g.. (9:9):
4:22 En so ook moet ons gemeenteled.. (15:15):
5:2 Uria was twee nagmaal kere na .. (6:6):
5:3 So dis vir my verblydend om te.. (7:7):
5:10 Dis die eerste keer in my lewe.. (13:13):
5:11 ek dink die woord "inklusiwite.. (13:13):

Innovation {11-1} [3]

2:24 ek weet ons dink reeds aan bai.. (28:28):
2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):
5:24 Hulle is besig met 'n projek o.. (21:21):

Service {17-1} [17]

1:13 We've got a very good Meals on.. (10:10):
1:19 I look at the congregation as .. (12:12):
1:22 that would be 'example' and 'o.. (17:17):
2:17 weereens dis 'n geval van die .. (24:24):
2:24 ek weet ons dink reeds aan bai.. (28:28):
2:26 Ja ... as 'n mens dan vra vir .. (33:33):
2:27 So we have just will have to m.. (35:35):
3:13 Ek dink hoe maak die gemeente .. (16:16):
3:14 hy sê hy praat namens die Mayo.. (18:18):
3:15 Een hoogtepunt van die tent wa.. (19:19):
4:4 ek sou byvoorbeeld ons sterk p.. (5:5):
4:11 a ek dink wat ek besig was om .. (10:10):
4:12 as die munisipaliteit besluit .. (10:10):
4:13 Ek weet daar's sommige mense w.. (10:10):
5:4 As ek kan teruggaan na Novembe.. (7:7):
5:23 Die jongmense gaan uit na die .. (21:21):
5:24 Hulle is besig met 'n projek o.. (21:21):

Worship {9-1} [2]

1:2 makes me think why the worship.. (4:4):
4:4 ek sou byvoorbeeld ons sterk p.. (5:5):

Faith {42-1} [6]

Belonging {26-1} [4]

2:1 'n swakpunt is ... as mense ko.. (4:4):
2:32 Ek dink regtig nie dat hulle k.. (42:42):
4:9 Jy weet ... ek dink om onder m.. (9:9):
5:1 Miskien moet ek net sê ek dink.. (6:6):

Faith Sharing {21-1} [3]

1:20 I see individuals that want (12:12):
1:21 They need to learn to share it.. (12:12):
4:7 ek dink herlewing is brood nod.. (7:7):

Innovation {11-1} [1]

2:38 En ek dink nou dat Eve so praat.. (47:47):

Leadership {43-1} [4]

2:18 Barak bied nou weer 'n kursus .. (24:24):
2:21 So basies wat jy sê is dat die.. (25:25):
2:32 Ek dink regtig nie dat hulle k.. (42:42):
2:38 En ek dink nou dat Eve so praat.. (47:47):

Service {17-1} [1]

2:26 Ja ... as 'n mens dan vra vir .. (33:33):
Vision {5-1} [1]
2:21 So basies wat jy sê is dat die.. (25:25):

Faith Sharing {21-1} [6]

Belonging {26-1} [4]
3:11 Wat goed gewerk het vanjaar wa.. (15:15):
3:12 Ek hoop hierdie volgende proje.. (16:16):
5:18 die groot meerderheid werk om .. (16:16):
5:28 ek dink regtig ons moet miskie.. (24:24):
Faith {42-1} [3]
1:20 I see individuals that want (12:12):
1:21 They need to learn to share it.. (12:12):
4:7 ek dink herlewing is brood nod.. (7:7):
Inclusion {12-1} [3]
3:7 ek glo dat friendship evangeli.. (10:10):
4:10 en dan as ons uitgaan na die g.. (9:9):
5:3 So dis vir my verblydend om te.. (7:7):
Innovation {11-1} [1]
5:24 Hulle is besig met 'n projek o.. (21:21):
Service {17-1} [3]
2:17 weereens dis 'n geval van die .. (24:24):
5:4 As ek kan teruggaan na Novembe.. (7:7):
5:24 Hulle is besig met 'n projek o.. (21:21):
Worship {9-1} [1]
1:2 makes me think why the worship.. (4:4):

Inclusion {12-1} [4]

Belonging {26-1} [3]
2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):
4:22 En so ook moet ons gemeentel.. (15:15):
5:11 ek dink die woord "inklusiwite.. (13:13):
Faith Sharing {21-1} [3]
3:7 ek glo dat friendship evangeli.. (10:10):
4:10 en dan as ons uitgaan na die g.. (9:9):
5:3 So dis vir my verblydend om te.. (7:7):
Innovation {11-1} [1]
2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):
Service {17-1} [2]
2:27 So we have just will have to m.. (35:35):
3:15 Een hoogtepunt van die tent wa.. (19:19):

Innovation {11-1} [7]

Belonging {26-1} [2]
2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):
5:25 Sy sê hoekom kan ons as ons by.. (22:22):
Faith {42-1} [1]
2:38 En ek dink nou dat Eve so praat.. (47:47):
Faith Sharing {21-1} [1]
5:24 Hulle is besig met 'n projek o.. (21:21):
Inclusion {12-1} [1]
2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):
Leadership {43-1} [2]
2:38 En ek dink nou dat Eve so praat.. (47:47):
4:19 Ek dink die leierskap se ontha.. (15:15):
Service {17-1} [2]
2:24 ek weet ons dink reeds aan bai.. (28:28):
5:24 Hulle is besig met 'n projek o.. (21:21):
Vision {5-1} [1]
3:10 'n Kerk wat 'n missie het, wat.. (13:13):

Inspirational {53-4} [8]

Belonging {26-1} [4]

- 2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):
- 2:32 Ek dink regtig nie dat hulle k.. (42:42):
- 3:8 om te help dat die kerk om 'n .. (12:12):
- 5:25 Sy sê hoekom kan ons as ons by.. (22:22):

Faith {42-1} [4]

- 2:18 Barak bied nou weer 'n kursus .. (24:24):
- 2:21 So basies wat jy sê is dat die.. (25:25):
- 2:32 Ek dink regtig nie dat hulle k.. (42:42):
- 2:38 En ek dink nou dat Eve so praat.. (47:47):

Faith Sharing {21-1} [1]

- 5:24 Hulle is besig met 'n projek o.. (21:21):

Inclusion {12-1} [1]

- 2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):

Innovation {11-1} [11]

- 2:24 ek weet ons dink reeds aan bai.. (28:28):
- 2:25 Ek wil nog 'n kerk hemp kry (29:29):
- 2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):
- 2:38 En ek dink nou dat Eve so praat.. (47:47):
- 3:10 'n Kerk wat 'n missie het, wat.. (13:13):
- 3:17 Ek dink ons het dit probeer do.. (22:22):
- 4:19 Ek dink die leierskap se ontha.. (15:15):
- 5:5 As ons gaan kyk, ons het twee .. (7:7):
- 5:22 Ons het twee mense ingestuur v.. (21:21):
- 5:24 Hulle is besig met 'n projek o.. (21:21):
- 5:25 Sy sê hoekom kan ons as ons by.. (22:22):

Leadership {43-1} [43]

- 1:10 we have new leadership in our .. (8:8):
- 1:11 I think how our congregation c.. (10:10):
- 1:12 our first step is to have a le.. (10:10):
- 1:17 But definitely there is a need.. (11:11):
- 1:23 often people feel a need for t.. (18:18):
- 1:24 circumstances get in the way o.. (18:18):
- 2:18 Barak bied nou weer 'n kursus .. (24:24):
- 2:21 So basies wat jy sê is dat die.. (25:25):
- 2:22 ons moet ook onthou daar's bai.. (26:26):
- 2:23 Ek dink die beste manier om hu.. (27:27):
- 2:28 Ons moet maar lei deur 'n voor.. (37:37):
- 2:31 Maar ek dink dit is waar wat J.. (41:41):
- 2:32 Ek dink regtig nie dat hulle k.. (42:42):
- 2:34 ons praat nou van die leierska.. (44:44):
- 2:38 En ek dink nou dat Eve so praat.. (47:47):
- 3:1 hierdie graph wat ek nou hier .. (4:4):
- 3:3 Ek meen so mens weet nie ... m.. (5:6):
- 3:4 Ja ek onthou verlede jaar ... (7:7):
- 3:5 So waar wil julle bietjie meer.. (8:9):
- 3:8 om te help dat die kerk om 'n .. (12:12):
- 3:16 dis vir ons as leiers om te be.. (22:22):
- 3:18 Ek dink ook dat dit baie belan.. (23:23):
- 4:5 as ek moet kyk na plekke waar .. (5:5):
- 4:6 dis nie net die predikant wat .. (6:6):
- 4:14 leierskap is gewoonlik daai gr.. (12:12):
- 4:15 Wel ek dink ons plig is om die.. (14:14):
- 4:16 en die kerk het juis nou die p.. (14:14):
- 4:17 Ek dink dan, as almal gaan bet.. (14:14):
- 4:18 So ek dink dit is belangrik da.. (14:14):
- 4:19 Ek dink die leierskap se ontha.. (15:15):
- 4:20 om die gemeente gesonder te ho.. (15:15):
- 4:21 So om meer betrokke te raak by.. (15:15):
- 4:24 partykeer moet iemand die ys b.. (17:17):
- 5:6 Uit hierdie verslag dink ek he.. (8:8):
- 5:13 Ons sal baie duidelik, as ons .. (13:13):

5:33 My tyd raak beperk. Soos wat o.. (30:30):
5:34 Ons moet uitgaan van die stand.. (30:30):
5:35 So dit is my siening van leier.. (30:30):
5:36 Elke een in hierdie gemeente i.. (31:31):
5:37 leierskap is nie net by die ge.. (31:31):
5:38 Die leierskap wat jy vir ons v.. (33:33):
5:39 Op die einde van die dag het o.. (35:35):
5:40 Jy moet nou vir ons sê hoe gaa.. (37:37):
Service {17-1} [2]
2:24 ek weet ons dink reeds aan bai.. (28:28):
5:24 Hulle is besig met 'n projek o.. (21:21):
Vision {5-1} [5]
2:2 Wat my nogal geskok het van di.. (6:6):
2:21 So basies wat jy sê is dat die.. (25:25):
3:4 Ja ek onthou verlede jaar (7:7):
3:5 So waar wil julle bietjie meer.. (8:9):
3:10 'n Kerk wat 'n missie het, wat.. (13:13):

Internal {73-4} [9]

Belonging {26-1} [26]

2:1 'n swakpunt is ... as mense ko.. (4:4):
2:7 Maar ek dink ook omdat ... die.. (11:11):
2:9 deur van self aan daai goed de.. (14:14):
2:10 ek voel ons moet die gemeente .. (14:14):
2:11 Hulle vorm nie 'n gesin basies.. (15:17):
2:12 En ek dink die wat nie altyd d.. (18:18):
2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):
2:32 Ek dink regtig nie dat hulle k.. (42:42):
3:8 om te help dat die kerk om 'n .. (12:12):
3:9 So ek dink meer projekte aanpa.. (12:12):
3:11 Wat goed gewerk het vanjaar wa.. (15:15):
3:12 Ek hoop hierdie volgende proje.. (16:16):
3:19 Sou jy sê dat as julle 'n goei.. (24:25):
4:9 Jy weet ... ek dink om onder m.. (9:9):
4:22 En so ook moet ons gemeenteled.. (15:15):
5:1 Miskien moet ek net sê ek dink.. (6:6):
5:7 Ons het sterk leiers en diesel.. (8:8):
5:8 Ek dink wat ons kan doen is om.. (9:9):
5:11 ek dink die woord "inklusiwite.. (13:13):
5:18 die groot meerderheid werk om .. (16:16):
5:25 Sy sê hoekom kan ons as ons by.. (22:22):
5:26 Ek meen as jy jou lidmate beso.. (23:23):
5:27 Ja ek dink ons kan almal aansl.. (24:24):
5:28 ek dink regtig ons moet miskie.. (24:24):
5:30 Weet julle ek glo dit is die e.. (28:28):
5:41 Ek het nou-nou gepraat oor bel.. (38:38):

Faith {42-1} [42]

1:3 There is a disconnect between .. (5:5):
1:4 We know what we should be doin.. (5:5):
1:6 I definitely think that we hav.. (6:6):
1:7 The young people tend to disap.. (6:6):
1:8 more often a love of pleasure .. (7:7):
1:16 So again you need to have from.. (10:10):
1:18 our personal devotional life. .. (11:11):
1:20 I see individuals that want (12:12):
2:1 'n swakpunt is ... as mense ko.. (4:4):
2:3 Baie van die mense stel nie be.. (7:7):
2:4 Dit is dieselfde met biduur, S.. (8:8):
2:5 Ek dink die mense is gemaklik... (10:10):
2:6 Ek dink baie keer is dit ook h.. (11:11):
2:8 Hy sê vandat hy in die kerk in.. (12:12):
2:13 ek sien as ons vir hulle die k.. (19:19):
2:14 Daar word van die ouers verwag.. (19:19):
2:15 Ja en jy sien dit groei want a.. (20:20):
2:16 So julle sal basies sê, as men.. (21:21):

2:18 Barak bied nou weer 'n kursus .. (24:24):
2:19 Ons het hier begin met 'n ding.. (24:24):
2:20 daar moet 'n mind change kom b.. (24:24):
2:21 So basies wat jy sê is dat die.. (25:25):
2:26 Ja ... as 'n mens dan vra vir .. (33:33):
2:30 y vra en dan sê hy ja en dan d.. (39:39):
2:32 Ek dink regtig nie dat hulle k.. (42:42):
2:33 we had a guy visiting from the.. (43:43):
2:35 luister as jy by hierdie kerk .. (44:44):
2:36 Die een groep sal in die Engel.. (44:44):
2:37 aat ons dit na die Here toe va.. (46:46):
2:38 En ek dink nou dat Eve so praat.. (47:47):
2:39 Ek dink ons kan dit ook doen W.. (49:49):
3:6 Ek dink ek sal meer geestelike.. (10:10):
4:2 ek voel dat daar is 'n herlewi.. (4:4):
4:3 Om wel uit te ryk na andere ma.. (4:4):
4:7 ek dink herlewing is brood nod.. (7:7):
4:9 Jy weet ... ek dink om onder m.. (9:9):
5:1 Miskien moet ek net sê ek dink.. (6:6):
5:9 Wat die tweede ding hier aan b.. (11:11):
5:12 ons sal op 'n punt moet kom, w.. (13:13):
5:15 Ek kan vanmôre vir julle sê da.. (14:14):
5:16 as ek kyk na die groei van sek.. (14:14):
5:32 Maar aan die einde van die dag.. (28:28):

Faith Sharing {21-1} [8]

1:2 makes me think why the worship.. (4:4):
1:20 I see individuals that want (12:12):
1:21 They need to learn to share it.. (12:12):
3:11 Wat goed gewerk het vanjaar wa.. (15:15):
3:12 Ek hoop hierdie volgende proje.. (16:16):
4:7 ek dink herlewing is brood nod.. (7:7):
5:18 die groot meerderheid werk om .. (16:16):
5:28 ek dink regtig ons moet miskie.. (24:24):

Inclusion {12-1} [3]

2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):
4:22 En so ook moet ons gemeentel.. (15:15):
5:11 ek dink die woord "inklusiwite.. (13:13):

Innovation {11-1} [3]

2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):
2:38 En ek dink nou dat Eve so praat.. (47:47):
5:25 Sy sê hoekom kan ons as ons by.. (22:22):

Leadership {43-1} [5]

2:18 Barak bied nou weer 'n kursus .. (24:24):
2:21 So basies wat jy sê is dat die.. (25:25):
2:32 Ek dink regtig nie dat hulle k.. (42:42):
2:38 En ek dink nou dat Eve so praat.. (47:47):
3:8 om te help dat die kerk om 'n .. (12:12):

Service {17-1} [2]

2:26 Ja ... as 'n mens dan vra vir .. (33:33):
4:4 ek sou byvoorbeeld ons sterk p.. (5:5):

Vision {5-1} [1]

2:21 So basies wat jy sê is dat die.. (25:25):

Worship {9-1} [9]

1:2 makes me think why the worship.. (4:4):
1:5 I would agree with what many p.. (6:6):
3:2 Dis bemoedigend om te sien dat.. (5:5):
4:4 ek sou byvoorbeeld ons sterk p.. (5:5):
4:8 as ons gemeente kry wat hulle .. (9:9):
5:19 Weet jy as jy daar voor op die.. (17:17):
5:20 Tweede is dat dis 'n aanbiddin.. (17:17):
5:21 Jy moet voor daai klavier sit .. (18:18):
5:29 Ek dink daai is die belangriks.. (26:27):

Leadership {43-1} [4]

Belonging {26-1} [2]

2:32 Ek dink regtig nie dat hulle k.. (42:42):
3:8 om te help dat die kerk om 'n .. (12:12):

Faith {42-1} [4]

2:18 Barak bied nou weer 'n kursus .. (24:24):
2:21 So basies wat jy sê is dat die.. (25:25):
2:32 Ek dink regtig nie dat hulle k.. (42:42):
2:38 En ek dink nou dat Eve so praat.. (47:47):

Innovation {11-1} [2]

2:38 En ek dink nou dat Eve so praat.. (47:47):
4:19 Ek dink die leierskap se ontha.. (15:15):

Vision {5-1} [3]

2:21 So basies wat jy sê is dat die.. (25:25):
3:4 Ja ek onthou verlede jaar (7:7):
3:5 So waar wil julle bietjie meer.. (8:9):

Missional {148-3} [9]

Belonging {26-1} [26]

2:1 'n swakpunt is ... as mense ko.. (4:4):
2:7 Maar ek dink ook omdat ... die.. (11:11):
2:9 deur van self aan daai goed de.. (14:14):
2:10 ek voel ons moet die gemeente .. (14:14):
2:11 Hulle vorm nie 'n gesin basies.. (15:17):
2:12 En ek dink die wat nie altyd d.. (18:18):
2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):
2:32 Ek dink regtig nie dat hulle k.. (42:42):
3:8 om te help dat die kerk om 'n .. (12:12):
3:9 So ek dink meer projekte aanpa.. (12:12):
3:11 Wat goed gewerk het vanjaar wa.. (15:15):
3:12 Ek hoop hierdie volgende proje.. (16:16):
3:19 Sou jy sê dat as julle 'n goei.. (24:25):
4:9 Jy weet ... ek dink om onder m.. (9:9):
4:22 En so ook moet ons gemeentede.. (15:15):
5:1 Miskien moet ek net sê ek dink.. (6:6):
5:7 Ons het sterk leiers en diesel.. (8:8):
5:8 Ek dink wat ons kan doen is om.. (9:9):
5:11 ek dink die woord "inklusiwite.. (13:13):
5:18 die groot meerderheid werk om .. (16:16):
5:25 Sy sê hoekom kan ons as ons by.. (22:22):
5:26 Ek meen as jy jou lidmate beso.. (23:23):
5:27 Ja ek dink ons kan almal aansl.. (24:24):
5:28 ek dink regtig ons moet miskie.. (24:24):
5:30 Weet julle ek glo dit is die e.. (28:28):
5:41 Ek het nou-nou gepraat oor bel.. (38:38):

Faith {42-1} [43]

1:3 There is a disconnect between .. (5:5):
1:4 We know what we should be doin.. (5:5):
1:6 I definitely think that we hav.. (6:6):
1:7 The young people tend to disap.. (6:6):
1:8 more often a love of pleasure .. (7:7):
1:16 So again you need to have from.. (10:10):
1:18 our personal devotional life. .. (11:11):
1:20 I see individuals that want (12:12):
1:21 They need to learn to share it.. (12:12):
2:1 'n swakpunt is ... as mense ko.. (4:4):
2:3 Baie van die mense stel nie be.. (7:7):
2:4 Dit is dieselfde met biduur, S.. (8:8):
2:5 Ek dink die mense is gemaklik... (10:10):
2:6 Ek dink baie keer is dit ook h.. (11:11):
2:8 Hy sê vandat hy in die kerk in.. (12:12):
2:13 ek sien as ons vir hulle die k.. (19:19):
2:14 Daar word van die ouers verwag.. (19:19):
2:15 Ja en jy sien dit groei want a.. (20:20):
2:16 So julle sal basies sê, as men.. (21:21):

2:18 Barak bied nou weer 'n kursus .. (24:24):
2:19 Ons het hier begin met 'n ding.. (24:24):
2:20 daar moet 'n mind change kom b.. (24:24):
2:21 So basies wat jy sê is dat die.. (25:25):
2:26 Ja ... as 'n mens dan vra vir .. (33:33):
2:30 y vra en dan sê hy ja en dan d.. (39:39):
2:32 Ek dink regtig nie dat hulle k.. (42:42):
2:33 we had a guy visiting from the.. (43:43):
2:35 luister as jy by hierdie kerk .. (44:44):
2:36 Die een groep sal in die Engel.. (44:44):
2:37 aat ons dit na die Here toe va.. (46:46):
2:38 En ek dink nou dat Eve so praat.. (47:47):
2:39 Ek dink ons kan dit ook doen W.. (49:49):
3:6 Ek dink ek sal meer geestelike.. (10:10):
4:2 ek voel dat daar is 'n herlewi.. (4:4):
4:3 Om wel uit te ryk na andere ma.. (4:4):
4:7 ek dink herlewing is brood nod.. (7:7):
4:9 Jy weet ... ek dink om onder m.. (9:9):
5:1 Miskien moet ek net sê ek dink.. (6:6):
5:9 Wat die tweede ding hier aan b.. (11:11):
5:12 ons sal op 'n punt moet kom, w.. (13:13):
5:15 Ek kan vanmôre vir julle sê da.. (14:14):
5:16 as ek kyk na die groei van sek.. (14:14):
5:32 Maar aan die einde van die dag.. (28:28):

Faith Sharing {21-1} [22]

1:1 our evangelistic endeavours.... (4:4):
1:2 makes me think why the worship.. (4:4):
1:14 we have people that again are .. (10:10):
1:15 I think that about just two or.. (10:10):
1:20 I see individuals that want (12:12):
1:21 They need to learn to share it.. (12:12):
2:17 weereens dis 'n geval van die .. (24:24):
3:7 ek glo dat friendship evangeli.. (10:10):
3:11 Wat goed gewerk het vanjaar wa.. (15:15):
3:12 Ek hoop hierdie volgende proje.. (16:16):
4:1 Wel ek is eintlik verbaas en b.. (4:4):
4:7 ek dink herlewing is brood nod.. (7:7):
4:10 en dan as ons uitgaan na die g.. (9:9):
4:23 Baie interessant as ons kyk na.. (16:17):
5:3 So dis vir my verblydend om te.. (7:7):
5:4 As ek kan teruggaan na Novembe.. (7:7):
5:14 maar die meerderheid is positi.. (14:14):
5:17 Ek dink ons sterk punt is: ons.. (16:16):
5:18 die groot meerderheid werk om .. (16:16):
5:24 Hulle is besig met 'n projek o.. (21:21):
5:28 ek dink regtig ons moet miskie.. (24:24):
5:31 as jy 'n seëning aan iemand oo.. (28:28):

Inclusion {12-1} [12]

1:25 as a community of faith, as a .. (19:19):
1:26 I think we tend to be rather e.. (19:21):
2:27 So we have just will have to m.. (35:35):
2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):
3:7 ek glo dat friendship evangeli.. (10:10):
3:15 Een hoogtepunt van die tent wa.. (19:19):
4:10 en dan as ons uitgaan na die g.. (9:9):
4:22 En so ook moet ons gemeenteled.. (15:15):
5:2 Uria was twee nagmaal kere na .. (6:6):
5:3 So dis vir my verblydend om te.. (7:7):
5:10 Dis die eerste keer in my lewe.. (13:13):
5:11 ek dink die woord "inklusiwite.. (13:13):

Innovation {11-1} [11]

2:24 ek weet ons dink reeds aan bai.. (28:28):
2:25 Ek wil nog 'n kerk hemp kry (29:29):
2:29 as 'n mens dalk mense individu.. (38:38):
2:38 En ek dink nou dat Eve so praat.. (47:47):
3:10 'n Kerk wat 'n missie het, wat.. (13:13):

3:17 Ek dink ons het dit probeer do.. (22:22):
4:19 Ek dink die leierskap se ontha.. (15:15):
5:5 As ons gaan kyk, ons het twee .. (7:7):
5:22 Ons het twee mense ingestuur v.. (21:21):
5:24 Hulle is besig met 'n projek o.. (21:21):
5:25 Sy sê hoekom kan ons as ons by.. (22:22):

Leadership {43-1} [43]

1:10 we have new leadership in our .. (8:8):
1:11 I think how our congregation c.. (10:10):
1:12 our first step is to have a le.. (10:10):
1:17 But definitely there is a need.. (11:11):
1:23 often people feel a need for t.. (18:18):
1:24 circumstances get in the way o.. (18:18):
2:18 Barak bied nou weer 'n kursus .. (24:24):
2:21 So basies wat jy sê is dat die.. (25:25):
2:22 ons moet ook onthou daar's bai.. (26:26):
2:23 Ek dink die beste manier om hu.. (27:27):
2:28 Ons moet maar lei deur 'n voor.. (37:37):
2:31 Maar ek dink dit is waar wat J.. (41:41):
2:32 Ek dink regtig nie dat hulle k.. (42:42):
2:34 ons praat nou van die leierska.. (44:44):
2:38 En ek dink nou dat Eve so praat.. (47:47):
3:1 hierdie graph wat ek nou hier .. (4:4):
3:3 Ek meen so mens weet nie ... m.. (5:6):
3:4 Ja ek onthou verlede jaar (7:7):
3:5 So waar wil julle bietjie meer.. (8:9):
3:8 om te help dat die kerk om 'n .. (12:12):
3:16 dis vir ons as leiers om te be.. (22:22):
3:18 Ek dink ook dat dit baie belan.. (23:23):
4:5 as ek moet kyk na plekke waar .. (5:5):
4:6 dis nie net die predikant wat .. (6:6):
4:14 leierskap is gewoonlik daai gr.. (12:12):
4:15 Wel ek dink ons plig is om die.. (14:14):
4:16 en die kerk het juis nou die p.. (14:14):
4:17 Ek dink dan, as almal gaan bet.. (14:14):
4:18 So ek dink dit is belangrik da.. (14:14):
4:19 Ek dink die leierskap se ontha.. (15:15):
4:20 om die gemeente gesonder te ho.. (15:15):
4:21 So om meer betrokke te raak by.. (15:15):
4:24 partykeer moet iemand die ys b.. (17:17):
5:6 Uit hierdie verslag dink ek he.. (8:8):
5:13 Ons sal baie duidelik, as ons .. (13:13):
5:33 My tyd raak beperk. Soos wat o.. (30:30):
5:34 Ons moet uitgaan van die stand.. (30:30):
5:35 So dit is my siening van leier.. (30:30):
5:36 Elke een in hierdie gemeente i.. (31:31):
5:37 leierskap is nie net by die ge.. (31:31):
5:38 Die leierskap wat jy vir ons v.. (33:33):
5:39 Op die einde van die dag het o.. (35:35):
5:40 Jy moet nou vir ons sê hoe gaa.. (37:37):

Service {17-1} [17]

1:13 We've got a very good Meals on.. (10:10):
1:19 I look at the congregation as .. (12:12):
1:22 that would be 'example' and 'o.. (17:17):
2:17 weereens dis 'n geval van die .. (24:24):
2:24 ek weet ons dink reeds aan bai.. (28:28):
2:26 Ja ... as 'n mens dan vra vir .. (33:33):
2:27 So we have just will have to m.. (35:35):
3:13 Ek dink hoe maak die gemeente .. (16:16):
3:14 hy sê hy praat namens die Mayo.. (18:18):
3:15 Een hoogtepunt van die tent wa.. (19:19):
4:4 ek sou byvoorbeeld ons sterk p.. (5:5):
4:11 a ek dink wat ek besig was om .. (10:10):
4:12 as die munisipaliteit besluit .. (10:10):
4:13 Ek weet daar's sommige mense w.. (10:10):
5:4 As ek kan teruggaan na Novembe.. (7:7):

5:23 Die jongmense gaan uit na die .. (21:21):
5:24 Hulle is besig met 'n projek o.. (21:21):

Vision {5-1} [5]

2:2 Wat my nogal geskok het van di.. (6:6):
2:21 So basies wat jy sê is dat die.. (25:25):
3:4 Ja ek onthou verlede jaar (7:7):
3:5 So waar wil julle bietjie meer.. (8:9):
3:10 'n Kerk wat 'n missie het, wat.. (13:13):

Worship {9-1} [9]

1:2 makes me think why the worship.. (4:4):
1:5 I would agree with what many p.. (6:6):
3:2 Dis bemoedigend om te sien dat.. (5:5):
4:4 ek sou byvoorbeeld ons sterk p.. (5:5):
4:8 as ons gemeente kry wat hulle .. (9:9):
5:19 Weet jy as jy daar voor op die.. (17:17):
5:20 Tweede is dat dis 'n aanbiddin.. (17:17):
5:21 Jy moet voor daai klavier sit .. (18:18):
5:29 Ek dink daai is die belangriks.. (26:27):

Service {17-1} [5]

Faith {42-1} [1]

2:26 Ja ... as 'n mens dan vra vir .. (33:33):

Faith Sharing {21-1} [3]

2:17 weereens dis 'n geval van die .. (24:24):
5:4 As ek kan teruggaan na Novembe.. (7:7):
5:24 Hulle is besig met 'n projek o.. (21:21):

Inclusion {12-1} [2]

2:27 So we have just will have to m.. (35:35):
3:15 Een hoogtepunt van die tent wa.. (19:19):

Innovation {11-1} [2]

2:24 ek weet ons dink reeds aan bai.. (28:28):
5:24 Hulle is besig met 'n projek o.. (21:21):

Worship {9-1} [1]

4:4 ek sou byvoorbeeld ons sterk p.. (5:5):

Vision {5-1} [3]

Faith {42-1} [1]

2:21 So basies wat jy sê is dat die.. (25:25):

Innovation {11-1} [1]

3:10 'n Kerk wat 'n missie het, wat.. (13:13):

Leadership {43-1} [3]

2:21 So basies wat jy sê is dat die.. (25:25):
3:4 Ja ek onthou verlede jaar (7:7):
3:5 So waar wil julle bietjie meer.. (8:9):

Worship {9-1} [2]

Faith Sharing {21-1} [1]

1:2 makes me think why the worship.. (4:4):

Service {17-1} [1]

4:4 ek sou byvoorbeeld ons sterk p.. (5:5):
