A CHURCH AFTER GOD'S HEART:

DISCERNING A MISSIONAL ECCLESIOLOGY FOR THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA

by

Christo R. Benadé

17395764

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Dedication

To Annelie, Carli and Uné

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Full names	Christo R. Benade
Student number	17395764
Topic of work	A CHURCH AFTER GOD'S HEART: DISCERNING A MISSIONAL ECCLESIOLOGY FOR THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA

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SUMMARY

A Church after God's Heart: Discerning a Missional Ecclesiology for the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa

by Christo R. Benadé

The research wants to contribute to the development of a missional ecclesiology for the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) in South Africa. This was done by answering the following two questions: what does the current context of the DRC look like, and is the missional ecclesiology of the church sufficient to guide the church in being a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom? The research was framed by an analysis of philosophical influences on the development of the DRC, as well as the changes in context since the Reformation. A theological framework was developed that describe the contours of a missional ecclesiology. The framework was formed by analysing the broad ecumenical missional literature; the historical and missiological development of the DRC's theology; and the fresh expressions movement. This framework was used in evaluating the decisions of the General Synod of the DRC on missional ecclesiology from 1990 until 2013. The research was hermeneutical, correlational, critical and theological, using a literature study as well as a qualitative deductive analysis.

This research contributes to the field of missional ecclesiology by: adding a fifth wave of missionary revival to Saayman's four waves model; developing a theological framework for a missional ecclesiology; evaluating the fresh expressions movement from a Reformed perspective; evaluating the decisions of the General Synod of the DRC on missional ecclesiology; and lastly, suggesting some contours of a missional ecclesiology for the DRC. Although the research is focused on a missional ecclesiology for the DRC, the results may have broader implications for other denominations as well.

LIST OF KEY TERMS

Dutch Reformed Church

Missional ecclesiology

Philosophical

Theological

Missiological

Fresh Expressions movement.

Qualitative deductive analysis

Fifth wave of missionary revival

Saayman's four waves model

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

'The world has changed' – words coming from the lips of an elderly gentleman in my congregation. In these words, he laments a world he knew, and understood, a world he felt part of, which formed him, a world that he was equipped to deal with. He is articulating an experience of many through the years, in many contexts, in many languages and on many continents.

Change is part of the reality we live in. For some, this changing world is a joyful reality, as they thrive on the new opportunities that change brings. But for others, change brings fear, fear of the unknown, and a feeling of loss, the loss of the world they once knew.

Change presents a challenge not only to individuals, but also to organisations. Organisations are formed within a specific context and for a specific function within that context. When the context changes, the organisation has to adapt or lose its reason to exist. The Church[1] is one such organisation that has existed for more than 2000 years, through many changes, and is still creating communities of faith. The face of the Church of Christ has, however, changed. For the first 1900 years, the Church was growing in the West and in the Northern hemisphere (Tennent, 2010: 34). In 1900, the typical Christian family was white and lived somewhere in a comfortable house in Europe. The Church in the West has been in decline since then, and the growth point of the Church is currently in the global South and Eastern hemisphere (McLeod, 2003: 2-3; Tennent, 2010: 34-36). Today a typical Christian family is African and lives in a small house somewhere in Africa.

Together with Lesslie Newbigin (1987), I want to ask: Can the West be converted? Most Western mainstream churches are struggling to hold their own against the onslaught of

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[1] When 'church' is used in a proper noun (exp. Dutch Reformed Church) or to referring to the broad, ecumenical and historic organization, 'Church' will be used. When 'church' is used it refers to the local denomination or congregation.

secularism, postmodernity, migration, consumerism and changes in demographics. One such church is the researcher's spiritual home in South Africa, the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC). The Dutch Reformed Church[2] is rooted in the Reformed tradition in Europe, beginning with Johannes Calvin. Dutch settlers brought their faith tradition from Europe when they settled in the Cape in 1652. The first minister was called in 1665 in collaboration with the Reformed Church in the Netherlands (Gerstner, 1997: 16). Their ranks were strengthened by the French Huguenots[3] who fled prosecution in Europe in 1688. The Huguenots assimilated with the Dutch settlers largely because of their common Reformed theological tradition (Gerstner, 1991: 219). After the planting of the first congregation in the Cape, it would be 30 years before a second was planted in Stellenbosch (1686). The church in the Cape Colony only gained momentum after 1790, and the church's first Synod was held in 1824 (Giliomee and Mbenga, 2007: 94).

Yet the DRC is not purely Reformed in the Dutch tradition, but had many influences from various Christian theological streams during the last 300 years (Oliver, 2006: 1470). These include streams of variable strength from Calvinism, the Second Reformation, Pietism, Methodism, Scottish Presbyterianism, Liberalism, and the Charismatic movement, to name just a few (cf. Brummer, 2013)

The church had grown to a membership of 1 449 462 by 1985. Since then, there has been a decline in membership to a level of 1 178 837 in 2006. A closer look reveals a more worrying trend: the decline in the number of children in the church. In 1985 there were 489 742 children[4] in the DRC; this has declined to 274 462 in 2006 (Schoeman, 2011: 479-480).

There is a complex matrix of factors influencing this situation, but what is clear is that the DRC is not a growing church. In trying to stem this decline, congregations have fallen into the trap of employing new ministry strategies that worked well in other congregations (from vastly

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2 The DRC family of churches are a larger group of churches consisting of the DRC, the Uniting Reformed Church, the Reformed Church and the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa. These four churches are in the process of forming a united church. At the time of writing, this had not yet happened.

3 The French Huguenots fled prosecution in Europe after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. For more on this history, see Gerstner (1991).

4 Children are defined as baptized and unbaptized members who have not yet been confirmed. Confirmation usually happens around the age of 16.

different theological traditions and contexts) in order to attract new members. Examples of this are strategies from the Church Growth movement that were imported from the USA and used to improve the efficiency of DRC congregations. 'Well-oiled machines' were created to satisfy a boomer generation, but these machines reflected little of the calling of the church to be an instrument, sign and foretaste of the Kingdom. Later, new worshiping styles and worship bands were used to attract a younger generation – a strategy that strengthened consumer culture and created a flock that continuously migrated to the next best worship band. For others, the macro-congregation of Bill Hybels and Rick Warren became the dream, creating seeker sensitive congregations and attempting to draw a bigger flock into the new, bigger auditoriums. Don Browning (1996: 278) writes that a 'theological bridge' is needed for transformation, otherwise the transformation will only be a new strategy without any theological grounding. Change should happen on a deeper level that just strategy and technique.

Taking on board a new ministry technique or strategy does not take into account that each congregation has a unique context and identity. A ministry strategy is developed from a specific theological identity and within a specific context. To take a strategy from another church without taking this into consideration is to uproot that strategy from its original context and theological identity.

What a congregation does is dependent on three questions. The most fundamental question is 'Why?' Why does the congregation do what it does? The answer to this question is determined by the theological identity of the congregation. The second question is 'What?' What does the congregation want to do? The answer to this question will be influenced by the identity of the congregation. Lastly, the congregation have to ask 'How?' How are we going to do what we want to do? If a strategy and technique from another congregation is used, it is destined to fail, because the identities of the two congregations will most probably not be the same.

Congregations must have a clear theological identity to become conversant with their context. From the interaction between theological identity and context, a ministry strategy can be developed. In this research work, the focus will be on the context of the DRC and the theological identity driving the church. It will be suggested that the theological identity should be a

missional identity. This missional identity is the missional theology that describes God's calling for the church.

1.1 Problem Statement

What does the current context of the DRC look like, and is the missional ecclesiology of the church sufficient to guide the church in being a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom?

1.2 Research Questions

1) What is the context of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa?
   a) What is the macro-philosophical and historical context of the DRC?
   b) What have been the socio-cultural, historical and theological influences on the DRC?
2) What was the historical development of the missiology of the DRC?
3) What are the broad contours of themes within ecumenical missional ecclesiology?
4) What lessons could be learned from the ecclesiology of the Fresh Expressions movement?
5) What is the Dutch Reformed Church's position on missional ecclesiology as reflected by the decisions of the General Synod? How would these decisions be evaluated in terms of what was learned from research question 1-4?
6) Bringing the:
   a) changing context of the DRC;
   b) broad themes within missional ecclesiology;
   c) essential aspects of the ecclesiology of the Fresh Expressions of Church;
   d) current ecclesiology of the DRC

into conversation, what should the prominent contours within the missional ecclesiology for the DRC be to navigate the changes in context and to be true to its calling?

1.3 Contribution of This Research

Much has been written on the context of the DRC, as well as on missional ecclesiology in the last ten years. However, little research has been done on the fresh expressions movement from

a DRC perspective[5]. This research would like to broaden the conversation on the lessons learned from the Fresh Expressions movement for the DRC. The second and main contribution of this research is to bring the context of the DRC, the broad ecumenical contours in missional ecclesiology and the ecclesiology of the Fresh Expressions movement into conversation with the recent policy decisions on missional ecclesiology by the DRC. The aim is to have a critical discussion on the current direction of the DRC as a missional church, and to make some suggestions for the road ahead. Although the research is focused on a missional ecclesiology for the DRC, the results may have broader implications for other denominations as well.

1.4 Research Methodology

This section will explain the methodologies used to answer the research questions. The research will be done within the overarching methodology of theology (Swinton and Mowatt, 2006: 76). The particular field of study is Missiology, which employs research methods of Practical Theology. A multi-disciplinary approach will be used, benefiting from the insights of disciplines such as Church History and Dogmatic Theology. To achieve a textured evaluation of the missional ecclesiology of the Dutch Reformed Church, different strategies will be employed in the process of evaluation. In the development of these strategies, Richard Osmer's approach will be followed. Osmer (2008: 91) describes the task of Practical Theology research as asking four questions, namely:

    a. **What is going on?** This is the descriptive-empirical task of practical theology – to gather information that will help the church in discerning the current reality. This question will be dealt with in Chapter 3, where the current reality of the DRC and the challenges facing the DRC are described.

    b. **Why is it going on?** This is the interpretive task of practical theology, where theories of arts and sciences will be employed to understand the first question.

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5 No articles from a South African perspective on Fresh Expressions of Church could be found on the ATLA Religion Database. A search was done using the following keywords: *'Fresh Expressions'; 'Mission shaped church'* [Done on 9 April 2014] Searching SAbinet - SA ePublications, 3 articles were found which refer to the fresh expression movement (Theron and Lotter, 2008; Niemandt, 2012; Knoetze, 2013) and one that evaluates the movement (Kruger, 2013). This search was done using the following keywords: *'Fresh Expressions'; 'Mission-shaped church'.*

This question will be dealt with in Chapters 2, 3 and 6, where the theological, philosophical, political and demographic influences on the DRC will be discerned. Chapter 6 also relates to this question; in this chapter the development of a missional ecclesiology is evaluated to discern why the DRC is not growing.

c. **What ought to be going on?** This is the normative task of practical theology, where 'theological concepts are used to interpret particular episodes, situations, or contexts, constructing ethical norms to guide our responses, and learning from "good practice"' (Osmer, 2008: loc. 94). This aspect will be dealt with in Chapters 4, 5 and 7. This will be the main outcome of the research.

d. **How might we respond?** The pragmatic task strategies are developed to influence the situation. This task is beyond the scope of the current research, but some strategies will be touched on in Chapter 7.

1.4.1 Methodological approach: hermeneutical, correlational, critical and theological

Deductive Qualitative research is not done within a vacuum. The researcher has an interpretive paradigm, or in the words of Guba (Swinton and Mowatt, 2006: loc. 735), a 'net that contains the researcher's epistemological, ontological, and methodological premises'. This researcher's interpretive paradigm could be described in four terms: hermeneutical, correlational, critical and theological (Swinton and Mowatt, 2006: 76; Doornenbal, 2012: 17)

1.4.1.1 Hermeneutical

Hermeneutical, because humans are constantly interpreting their reality within their context and ideological frameworks (Swinton and Mowatt, 2006: 76). Schleiermacher and Gadamer (in Thiselton, 2009: 3) defined hermeneutics as the 'the art of understanding'. Bosch (1986: 65) brings hermeneutics closer to the current field of study in stating that '[h]ermeneutics is the never ending discipline of attempting to make the foundational events of the Christian faith relevant to every new generations of believers'.

Kinsella (2006: n.p.) lists five aspects of the hermeneutical approach to research. Firstly, to seek understanding. The aim of this study is to understand missional ecclesiology, as well as

how missional ecclesiology functions within the DRC. Secondly, to understand the situated location of interpretation in that all observation are contextual. The researcher, within his or her context, becomes an active participant in the research, not seeking objective results, but rather sympathetic engagement with the phenomenon being studied. The researcher does not try to bracket [6] their presuppositions, but rather try to fuse the horizon of the researcher/interpreter (that includes their prejudices) with that of the text. In doing so they deepen and clarify their understanding of the text (Swinton and Mowatt, 2006: loc. 2086). Thirdly, the role that language and history play in studying phenomena. No observation can be made outside a linguistic framework and time. Wachterhauser (2006: 5-6) states that:

> [h]ermeneutical theories of understanding argue that all human understanding is never "without words" and never "outside of time". On the contrary, what is distinctive about human understanding is that it is always in terms of some evolving linguistic framework that has been worked out over time in terms of some historically conditioned set of concerns and practices.

The fourth aspect is that linguistic frameworks are formed over time and reflect the observer's prejudices. The researcher needs to be aware of his or her own language and prejudices they bring to the text, as well as the language and prejudices of the text (Gadamer, 2004: 354). The fifth aspect emphasises inquiry as conversation. The challenge of hermeneutics is to bring various texts into conversation with each other and with the interpreter. To do that, the conversation partners must find a common language. Gadamer (2004: 389) argues:

> Thus it is perfectly legitimate to speak of a hermeneutical conversation [7]. But from this it follows that hermeneutical conversation, like real conversation, finds a common language, and that finding a common language is not, any more than in real conversation, preparing a tool for the purpose of reaching understanding but, rather, coincides with the very act of understanding and reaching agreement.

The last aspect states that the researcher needs to be comfortable with ambiguity and the idea that there can be more than one reading of a text (Kinsella, 2006: n.p.). The text can only be interpreted by the interpreter within a specific context (Gadamer, 2004: 399). The

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6 Bracketing is the suspension of the researcher's beliefs and preconceptions to have an objective perspective of a phenomena (Swinton and Mowatt, 2006: 2024).

7 Emphasis by Gadamer.

hermeneutical approach is in no hurry to harmonise texts, but allows them to speak in all their richness and diversity (Kinsella, 2006: n.p.).

1.4.1.2 Correlational

Theology tries to hold together and correlate three aspects of faith: the current context, the tradition, and other sources of knowledge that help the researcher gain deeper insight (Swinton and Mowatt, 2006: 76). This method tries to bring different sources into conversation, with equal voice and respect for each partner. From this conversation, an integrated model emerges. This research is correlational in that the context of the DRC, the broad ecumenical missional consensus, the FE movement, and the analysis of the current missional ecclesiology of the DRC, will be correlated to draw contours for a missional ecclesiology.

1.4.1.3 Critical

Swinton and Mowatt (2006: loc. 77) argue that the researcher must be cognisant of the human fallenness, and must approach all sources with some suspicion[8]. Doornenbal (2012: 19) adds that the researcher must always be on the lookout for ideological thinking in the different models. Swinton and Mowatt (2006: loc. 77) and Doornenbal (2012: 19) suggest that a research methodology that is critical and suspicious of ideological thinking in the sources used, as well as the findings. 'A key question asked by the Practical Theologian is: is what *appears* to be going on within the situation what is *actually* going on?' (Swinton and Mowatt, 2006: loc. 59). A critical methodology implies that the researcher must be attempt to self-critical (Doornenbal, 2012). This will be done by 'bracketing' my personal values and prior perception about the field through a declaration of my position and biography. A second strategy of a critical methodology is to use different sources on the same theological paradigm. The different sources will help to highlight the underlying ideological thinking of paradigms.

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[8] Swinton and Mowat (2006: 1464) states that: 'It is a critical discipline because it approaches both the world and our interpretations of the Christian tradition with a hermeneutic of suspicion, always aware of the reality of human fallenness and the complexity of the forces which shape and structure our encounters with the world'.

1.4.1.4 Theological

The research is done within the biblical narrative as interpreted within the Reformed tradition. This epistemological stance might not be the only one, but it is the one the researcher finds himself most comfortable in. Secondly, the aim of the research is to discern a missional ecclesiology for the DRC. Most sources used in the research will have been written within the field of Protestant theology.

1.5 Research Strategies

The following research strategies will be employed:

a. A literature study will be done:

- to describe the macro historical-philosophical influences as well as the current influences on the worldview of people that the DRC minister to;
- to describe the theological influences on the DRC and her missiology;
- to describe the ecumenical contours in missional ecclesiology (mostly current theories);
- on the primary and secondary sources of the Fresh expressions movement to evaluate the movement's ecclesiology.

b. A deductive qualitative study of the decisions of the DRC General Synod on missional ecclesiology will be done to discern the theology behind these decisions. The focus of the study will be the decisions made after the end of Apartheid (around 1990) but before the first democratic election, up to the General Synod of 2013.

c. Building on the insights gained from the context of the DRC, the broad ecumenical missional consensus, the FE movement, and the analysis of the current missional ecclesiology of the DRC, contours for a missional ecclesiology for the future will be suggested.

1.6 The Proof is in the Pudding: Truth, Validity, Reliability and Rigor

Validity and reliability have been key aspects to doing quantitative research (Creswell, 2013: 8). Many strategies are indicated that can improve the internal and external validity and reliability of quantitative research (Creswell, 2013: 175-178). When doing qualitative research, the literature on validity and reliability becomes murkier. The prominent researcher Martyn Hammersley (1987: 75) argues that research can be valid if 'it represents accurately those features of the phenomena, that it is intended to describe, explain, or theorise'.

Creswell (2007: 18) uses the terms 'credibility', 'transferability', 'dependability' and 'conformability'. Glaser and Strauss (2006: 225) prefer the term 'credibility'. Corbin and Strauss (2008: 301) argue that debates about 'truth', 'validity' and 'reliability' are superfluous and that the 'proof is in the pudding'. If sufficient rigor has been built into the process, the research will be useful because the specific situation is described and the results would be confirmed in practice.

Glaser and Strauss (2006: 223-235) suggest the following criteria to improve the credibility and rigor of qualitative research:

 a. Sufficient detail and description in the research will convey credibility, because the reader can use the detail to judge for themselves the credibility of the findings;
 b. Sufficient evidence is required of how the researcher gathered the data and came to his/her findings. A codified system will help insure rigor in analysis. This will help the reader to judge the credibility of the research;
 c. The researcher should be clear about what types of data his analysis rests on, for example that it is qualitative data and why qualitative methods were used. (cf. Corbin and Strauss, 2008: 300)

The current research will use these criteria in: firstly, giving detail about the research methodology, and strategies used (1.4-1.6); the type of data gathered (6.1.1); and how the data was analysed (6.1 - 6.2 and Addendum A). The deductive qualitative analysis that will be used was deemed to best to suit the aim of the research in taking the already existing theory on missional ecclesiology and bringing it into conversation with the DRC policies on missional

ecclesiology. Deductive qualitative research begins with an initial theory that is based on hunches, personal or professional experience or existing theory. The researcher can then use the existing theory in pattern matching, i.e. using the existing theory as a pattern or matrix over the new data to evaluate them (Gilgun, 2005: 42). The existing theory will be developed from the following sources: the worldview of those that the DRC serves, the theological influences on the DRC and her missiology, the ecumenical contours in missional ecclesiology, and the ecclesiology of the Fresh expressions movement. This theory will be used to create a matrix of the existing theory that will be used to evaluate the ecclesiology and missiology (as evident in the decisions of the General Synod) of the DRC. The existing theory and evaluation of the current theology will be folded into a new missional ecclesiology for the DRC.

The following suggested strategies of Creswell (2007: 207-209) to improve the 'credibility' and 'trustworthiness' of the research was also employed[9]:

a. Prolonged engagement with the field. The researcher was trained in Reformed Theology and work as an ordained fulltime minister of the DRC church since 1996 and actively doing research on missional ecclesiology for the past five years. Peer reviews were done by academics who are involved in the DRC theology for since 1983 and 1993.

b. Triangulation, namely using multiple and different sources, investigators and theories to provide corroborating evidence. Triangulation was done by using different sources of data. Data from sources on the missional ecclesiology of the DRC since 1990 was used. These sources consisted of a variety of types of documents, exp. decisions, policy documents and vision statements by the General Synod, as well as Church Order article's since1990. The findings were also put to through a peer review process.

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[9] Creswell (2007: 207-209) also suggests member checking (where the researcher uses the inputs of participants on the credibility of the findings). This strategy was not used because only documents were studied. External audits (namely a process where external consultants evaluate the method and results to evaluate their credibility) was also not used because it was deemed that the peer review process would also evaluate the results and the method used.

c. Peer review. The findings of this chapter will be submitted to peers who have adequate academic background and knowledge of missional theology and the DRC. Dr Guillaume Smit was chosen because of his strong research and academic background (Ph.D. – 1997: Practical Theology with a focus on Ecclesiology and Congregational development and Ph.D. – 2010: New Testament Studies) as well as 11 years' experience as a minister in the DRC. In addition to the peer reviewer, the findings will also be submitted to one of the supervisors of this research, Prof. Nelus Niemandt. Prof. Niemandt is currently head of Science of Religion and Missiology at the University of Pretoria. From 1981 to 2007 he was a minister in DRC congregations, and since 2007 he has been a professor in Missiology. He has had various leadership positions within the DRC, and was elected moderator of the 2011 and 2013 General Synods. He has also been chairman of the executive board of the DRC from 2011 until 2015. He has written extensively on missional ecclesiology (2007; 2010; 2012; Nuwe leiers vir nuwe werklikhede, 2013a).

d. Negative case analysis. The risk in doing deductive research is that the researcher is so sensitised to the existing theory that he/she is not seeing 'what is not there'. Negative case analysis is a process that helps the researcher to see 'what is not there' (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2006: 107-108). In the current research, this would be aspects of missional theology that are not incorporated into the current DRC missional ecclesiology, and aspects of the DRC's missional ecclesiology that can enrich the broad ecumenical missional theology. Negative case analysis can be done by using a reflexive journal to reflect on the researcher's 'self-other' relations and the researcher's evolving understanding of the text and the theory (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2006: 108). Negative case analysis is done during the process of data collection by being sensitive to 'surprises' or aspects of the case that do not fit the theory. Memos will also be made of the new aspects the researcher becomes aware of and new relationships that develop. New codes developed during the coding process give an indication of new concepts and theory. In doing deductive qualitative analysis the researcher must be especially aware not to impose the existing data on his/her findings. Negative case analysis will help in limiting this risk (Gilgun, 2005: 43).

e. Clarifying researcher bias. In Chapter 1, the researcher bias is declared in a biographical statement as well as the methodological approach that was used.

f. The use of rich and thick descriptions to give the reader the opportunity to evaluate the transferability of the research. This strategy was employed specifically in the finals chapter where the findings were integrated.

The aim is to use these strategies to improve the reliability and rigor of the research, and to overcome the inherent shortcomings of the research.

1.7 Outline of chapters

The chapter structure will endeavour to reflect the flow in the research process. Chapter 1 deals with the introduction, problem statement, research questions, contribution of the research, research methodology, theological biography and position of the researcher, and will aim to define missional ecclesiology. In Chapter 2, the macro-philosophical context of the DRC will be discussed, with special reference to the Enlightenment and modernity, late modernity or postmodernity, globalisation, consumerism, secularisation as well as the importance of understanding the current context. Chapter 3 will deal with the contours of the theological and missiological developments within the DRC. The chapter will position the DRC within a New South Africa as the church struggles for a new identity. The cultural context of the church will be dealt with. The post-Apartheid demographics of the church will be described. Chapter 4 will describe the broad ecumenical consensus on missional theology. Aspects of missional theology that will be dealt with are: *Missio Dei*; the centrality of the Trinity; the Kingdom of God and the Church; salvation in God's Kingdom; missional hermeneutics. Chapter 5 will deal with the development and context of the fresh expressions movement, as well as the lessons about a missional ecclesiology that can be learned from this movement. The movement will also be evaluated in terms of the broader ecumenical missional consensus on missional theology. In Chapter 6 information ascertained from Chapter 2-5 will be used to create a matrix to evaluate the current missional ecclesiology of the DRC. A deductive qualitative study will be done on the decisions on missional ecclesiology made by the General Synod of the DRC from 1990 until 2013. The codebook for the deductive qualitative study will be in Addendum A.

Chapter 7 will integrate the findings of Chapters 1 to 6 in describing the contours of a missional ecclesiology for the future of the DRC.

1.8 Theological Biography and Position of the Researcher

As stated earlier, this research will be hermeneutical in the sense that, despite the various strategies that will be employed to improve the validity and reliability of the research, the researcher's own position influences his interpretation of reality (Meylahn, 2012: 5). For this reason, the researcher would like to declare his own position in the form of biographical information.

My departure point is the context of the DRC. I grew up in the DRC, in a home where my parents were involved in local congregations. My grandparents were also involved in the work of the DRC at congregational level, as well as in the broader structures, especially 'armoedesorg' (poverty relief).

I have been involved in the activities of the local congregations my whole life. The congregation I grew up in (Universitas Gemeente) had student ministry at its heart and was more open to new liturgical expressions, although orthodox Dutch Reformed in its theology. At university, I was involved in a DRC congregation that focused on students (Kovsie Kampus Gemeente). This congregation was orthodox in its theology, but with a strong vision for evangelism. I was part of many evangelisation programmes here, of which some were cross-cultural. I underwent a mandatory year of practical experience at this congregation.

My theological departure point is the reformed theology as practiced in the DRC. My spiritual home, the DRC, has basic Calvinistic roots, with many other theological influences, most prominently evangelical. The detail of these influences will be discussed later. During the last ten years, I was exposed to the writings originating from within the Emerging Church Movement. I identified with their characteristics, as pointed out by Gibbs and Bolger (2006) to be the following:

a. identifying with the life of Jesus;
b. transforming the secular space;

c. living highly communal lives;

d. welcoming the stranger;

e. serving with generosity;

f. participating as producers;

g. creating as created beings;

h. leading as a body; and

i. merging ancient and contemporary spiritualties.

Although I had some misgivings about some of the more liberal streams of the Emerging Church Movement, I felt comfortable with most of their practices.

During the last five years, the literature of the missional church movement influenced my theology in a fundamental way. The works of David Bosch, Lesslie Newbigin and the Gospel in our Culture Network have been some of the strongest influences.

My experience in leading three different congregations has also influenced my theology. The first congregation I served was the Vaalpark Gemeente (Free State, South Africa – 1997-2007), a progressive congregation in a largely industrial town. The congregation had 1800 members and 900 children, with four full-time ministers serving the congregation. The congregation was very pragmatic in its ecclesiology and open to new worship styles. An experimental change in ministry and worship style led to a youth revival that is still a strong, ongoing ministry today. The second congregation was an international congregation in Britain named the South African Congregation (2007-2013), which was part of the DRC, but functioned ecumenically. The congregation consisted of 5000[10] members (children included), 8 ministry points, 4 full-time ministers and 4 part-time ministers. The ministry was ecumenical in the sense that South Africans from various church backgrounds were attracted to the church because of the Reformed, South African and Afrikaans character of the ministry. The result was a ministry that tried to be inclusive of different spiritualties and theologies. An example of this was the way the congregation dealt with the differences in views on baptism. Some babies were baptised, while others were only blessed. The liturgy was open to experimentation with the

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[10] The membership has since declined to 3500 members. There are various demographical reasons for this which are beyond the scope of the current research.

occasional use of Reformed practices, for instance reciting the Apostles' Creed together, or public confession of sins. The worship used a variety of styles with a strong evangelical character. My time in London opened my eyes to the richness of other traditions and to how churches can benefit from being involved ecumenically.

Currently I serve the Suider Strand Gemeente, a congregation of the DRC located in the Strand, Western Cape, South Africa. The congregation has a long history of being engaged in mission work. This focus was, however, strongly influenced by a Christendom paradigm that located mission work predominately in other countries. The congregation is located in an area that is dominated by elderly, retired people and is adjacent to some large informal settlements. The congregation is currently busy with a process of missional transformation.

Apart from my stated departure points, my biography will also influence my presuppositions on church and theology. My formation as a minister in the DRC will influence my presuppositions on for example, the Bible as the Word of God, my view of the church and the world. Critical reflection on my presuppositions as well as the various research strategies (discussed earlier) will be employed the try and control the influence of my presuppositions on the results of the research.

1.9 Defining Missional Ecclesiology

The concept of 'missional ecclesiology' is central to this research. To understand the term within its context and nuances, it is necessary to take a brief look at the development of the concept. This will be done to position this research within a broader missional conversation. The historical as well as the contemporary use of the term will be dealt with. A synopsis will also be given of the work called *Missional church: A vision for the sending of the church in North America*, edited by Darrell L. Guder in 1998. This important work popularised the term and created a framework for the development of the term (Billings, 2008: 56).

As a starting point, Craig van Gelder (2000: 26) defines ecclesiology as follows:

> The Study of the Church – This field of theological study focuses on understanding
> the church in terms of its nature, ministry, and organization. Attention is given to
> such matters as: biblical and theological foundations, historical ecclesiologies
> (different views of the church in different periods of time), and church polity (how

different churches have been organized). All of this is related to God's redemptive purposes in the world.

Two concepts, missional ecclesiology and missional theology will be used in this text. The focus of the research is missional ecclesiology, but a missional ecclesiology is informed by a missional theology. Missional ecclesiology is the reflection on the being and purpose of God's church, and thus a reflection on the church can never be done outside our reflection on God (Van Engen, 2004: 45). If the term 'missional theology' is used, the emphasis leans towards reflection on God and his purpose for the church; if the term 'missional ecclesiology' is used, the emphasis leans towards how the church reflects the image of God.

Theologically speaking, the concepts of missional and ecclesiology should not be separated. Missional (and missiology) and ecclesiology belong together and qualify each other (Moltmann, 1993a: 9-11). Van Gelder (2000: 30-31) goes as far as arguing that 'missiology and ecclesiology are not separate theological disciplines, but are, in fact, interrelated and complementary'. It is central to the argument of this thesis that mission is part of the essence of the church (*ecclesia*) and that there is an ontological relationship between the two. Although the next section will focus on the development of the term 'missional', the discussion takes place against the background of the relationship between mission and church.

According to Alan J. Roxburgh, '[t]he word 'missional' seems to have travelled the remarkable path of going from obscurity to banality in only one decade' (in Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 1). This statement betrays some of the ambivalence around the term 'missional'. Still, it is a word that has found resonance among many church denominations and theologians (Goheen, 2011: 3). Major denominations have ongoing missional ecclesiology conversations on the highest levels in their church structures[11].

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11 For American Denominations like the Baptist General Conference (Hobart, 2008: 235-262); the Reformed Church in America (Granberg-Michaelson, 2008: 263-282); the Episcopal Church (Zscheile, 2008: 133-165); the Lutheran Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (Dehmlow Dreier, 2007: 189-218), see the work done by 'Partnership for Missional Church' (Keifert, 2006), http://www.churchinnovations.org/. For the Presbyterian Church (USA), see the work done by 'Presbyterians for Renewal' http://www.pfrenewal.org/. For Britain: Fresh Expressions of Church (Cray, 2011a).

The popularity of the term has led to diverse uses of the term (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 17)[12]. Not many authors have made a serious attempt to describe the complex historical development of the term. In the next section, a cursory overview of the historical use and development in meaning of the term will be provided.

1.9.1.1 Missional Church on the Horizon

In the hundred years prior to 1983 the term 'missional' was used in passing to describe the missionary character of certain church leaders. In 1883 C. E. Bourne (in Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 42) used the term to describe the missionary character of the work done by Bishop Tozer: 'Bishop Tozar [sic] is called the 'Missional Bishop of Central Africa' and by some the "fighting parson".' Twenty-four years later W.G. Holmes uses the term to describe church leaders that extended the influence of the institutional church in the East. Holmes (1907 in Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 42) writes about '[s]everal prelates, whose Missional activities brought over whole districts and even nationalities to their creed…' The next occurrence of the term is only in 1975 when it is used in the title of a D.Min thesis by Edsel Albert Ammons (in Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 42) to describe the missionary practices of two congregations: *Congregational Linkage for Missional Ministry: Examination of the Endeavour of Two Urban churches to Create a New Form of Faithful Witness*. In 1976 it appears in a book edited by P.J. McCourd (in Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 42), *Pope for all Christians*, to describe the missionary work of John Wesley: 'In fairness to John Wesley, it can be presumed that in his self-awareness as a virtually monarchical leader of the movement he was guided by the missional principle.'

1.9.1.2 Contemporary uses of 'Missional'[13]

To be able to define the term 'missional' several perspectives need to be taken into account. Firstly, 'missional' is used as an adjective and adverb to describe different nouns and verbs in the missional literature. The first and most popular use is as an adjective in the phrase

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12 For an in-depth discussion of the use of the word 'missional' since 1883, see Van Gelder and Zscheile (2011).

13 Organizational uses of the term missional. The term missional was also used in the context of the organizational aspects of the church. In 1977 Lindgren and Shawchuck (1977) and K.L Callahan (1983) use the term to describe the need for a church to have a clear mission statement (statement of purpose, not necessarily *missio Dei*).

'missional church', to describe a type of church as used in the work of Guder (1998), Barrett (2004), Van Engen (2010), Minatrea (2012), Niemandt (2013a), etc. Van Engen (1991) also uses the term as an adjective to describe a type of outreach (missional outreach), or the intentions of a congregation (the congregation's missional intentions). Roxburgh (2011) uses the term in the sense of the 'missional conversation'. From a Dutch perspective, Doornenbal (2012) uses the same language as Roxburgh when he talks about the 'emerging-missional conversation' and Noort et al. (2008) use 'gemeenschapsvorming' (community formation).

The use of the term as we have it today surfaced in a work by Francis DuBose (1983) titled *God who sends.* DuBose was heavily influenced by the theology of the Tambaram conference (the sending character of the church) and the theology of Karl Barth (his focus on the sending character of the Trinity) (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 44; Stetzer, 2011: n.p.). The main proposition in DuBose's work is that biblical theology is missional theology and he also developed a missional hermeneutic. In many ways, DuBose planted the theological seeds that would later develop into the missional church movement (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 45).

Missiologist Charles van Engen was the next theologian to use missional to describe the Christian's presence in the world. In his work *God's Missionary People: Rethinking the Purpose of the Local Church* (1991), he uses the term to describe Christians' engagement with their context. Van Engen (1991: 166) writes:

> The spiritual, emotional, and mental personhood of the leaders provide the heart of missionary congregations, their managerial acumen provides the structure for missional outreach, and the members must provide the hands, feet, and spiritual gifts necessary to carry out the congregation's missional intentions.

Van Engen (in Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 45) makes an argument for the missionary nature of the church, as well as for the imperative that the church engages with her context. Both these aspects would later become central tenets of the missional church movement.

Although the missional concept was conceived in the abovementioned works, it was only presented to the world in the major work by the Gospel in Our Culture Network[14], called

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14 The GOCN started in the late 1980s as a continuation of the discussions started in Britain around the relationship between gospel and culture. The network builds on the work done by Bishop Lesslie Newbigin on reaching the West for Christ (Guder, 1998: 3).

Missional church: A vision for the sending the church in North America, edited by Guder, in 1998. The work popularised the term 'missional church' and started the missional church conversation. *Missional church* (Guder, 1998: 11) used the term 'missional' to 'emphasise the essential nature and the vocation of the church as God's called and sent people'. Because this work played such an important role in the development of the missional conversation and influenced my thinking in structuring this thesis, a synopsis of the work will be given next.

In the first chapter of the book, called 'Missional Church: From sending to being sent' (Guder, 1998: 11-12), the writers use five fundamental affirmations[15] for the discussion of the missional church:

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[15] The writers of the book developed these five fundamental affirmations for a missional ecclesiology around six themes that they dealt with in the next eight chapters (Guder, 1998: 15-16):

Chapters 2 ('Missional context: Understanding North American culture') and 3 ('Missional challenge: Understanding the church in North America'), written by Van Gelder, describe the changes in the North American church context. Chapter 2 deals with the change from modernity to postmodernity. The factors in the cultural context that inhibit the church in its calling are discussed. Chapter 3 continues with the way the church's identity and life are shaped by the context, and the role of the church in influencing the context. The movement of the church from its dominant position during Christendom to marginalisation in late modernity is described. The writers also critique some strategies used for equipping the church to deal with the challenges during the late modernity and postmodernity (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 49). Furthermore, the chapter critically discusses denomination building, church renewal, church growth and effectiveness movements.

George Hunsberger (in Guder, 1998: 15) explores a basic definition of the church as 'the people of God who are called and sent to re-present [sic] the reign of God' in Chapter 4. The chapter warns against an ecclesiocentric view of mission that relies on the agency of the church (Guder, 1998: 81). If the church's mission does not have a theocentric view, it becomes a vendor of religious goods and services to a consumer society (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 49).

Chapter 5, 'Missional Witness: The Church as Apostle to the World', written by Lois Barrett, develops the theology discussed in Chapter 4 by adding that the church is the apostle to the world. In contrast to the principalities and powers of the world, the church is called to be an alternative community redeemed by God. God's plan is to bring redemption to the world through the life and ministry of this alternative community. The church is reminded in 2 Peter 2:9 of its calling to be a Holy Nation among nations, set apart to represent the Reign of God (Guder, 1998: 118). The church, as an incarnational community, demonstrates an alternative culture and engages in alternative economics, thereby representing the Reign of God (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 50).

Chapter 6, written by Inagrace Dietterich and titled 'Missional Community: Cultivating communities of the Holy Spirit', develops the agency of the Holy Spirit in the creation of the missional church (Guder, 1998: 142). The chapter warns against the modern view that the Spirit's actions are centred exclusively on the salvation of the individual soul. The Spirit brings life to the individual soul, but also incorporates individuals into the Spirit-formed body of Christ. The Spirit is the source of all life, both individual and communal. The Christian community is furthermore equipped by the Spirit for its task in representing the reign of God.

Chapter 7, written by Alan Roxburgh and titled 'Missional Leadership: Equipping God's People for Mission', deals with the role of leadership in the church and the nature and purpose of missional leadership.

a. A missional ecclesiology is biblical. An ecclesiology needs to have a biblical foundation and the Bible gives testimony to God's mission in the world and the sending of His people.

b. A missional ecclesiology is historical. God has been at work through the ages in all cultures. Therefore, when the church shapes an ecclesiology for a specific culture, it needs to take into consideration the historical development of ecclesiologies in other cultures.

c. A missional ecclesiology is contextual. Every ecclesiology is specific to a particular cultural context. To be an incarnational church, God's people must be led by the Spirit to translate the gospel into a specific culture.

d. A missional ecclesiology is eschatological. A church led by the Spirit should be dynamic and constantly reforming and adapting to the revelation of the Spirit within each unique context. The church is constantly reinventing itself as the body of Christ moving towards God's promised eschatology.

e. A missional ecclesiology can be practiced. A missional ecclesiology is not an abstract concept; it is practical and functional within the life of the church. It equips the church for its calling to be God's sent people in the world.

This important work mapped the following important aspects of a missional ecclesiology that inspired the structure of this thesis: Firstly, a church that wants to be missional takes its history and context seriously. This aspect inspired chapter 2 and chapter 3, dealing with the broader as well as local theological, philosophical and socio-economical context of the DRC. Secondly, the basis for a missional ecclesiology is the Bible as the revelation of the Trinity, the agency of the Trinity in the missional church and using a missional hermeneutic inspired chapter 4 in dealing with the dominant contours of a missional theology. Thirdly, the fact that

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Roxburgh (1989: 183) defines the purpose of leadership as 'to form and equip a people who demonstrate and announce the purpose and direction of God through Jesus Christ'. The leader has the challenge to equip all God's people to be a covenant community that represents the full reality of the present reign of God (Roxburgh, 1989: 204; Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 51).

The last two chapters, written by Guder, chart the structural realities of the missional congregation (Guder, 1998: 16). The creation of a structure for missional communities starts with a missional reading of Scripture. Engagement with Scripture will confront churches with cultural captivity and biases (Guder, 1998: 247). The final chapter makes the argument that connecting structures are essential to being the apostolic, catholic, holy and unified church, and are furthermore theologically necessary for the missionary calling of the church (Guder, 1998: 264;246).

missional church is practiced, not just theological and abstract, inspired chapter 5 on the fresh expressions movement as an example of a practiced missional ecclesiology as well as chapter 6 that evaluated the decisions on missional ecclesiology of the General Synod of the DRC. Chapter 6 was also inspired by the emphasis in *Missional Church* on connecting structures that are essential to being the apostolic, catholic, holy and unified church.

1.9.1.3 Defining a Missional Ecclesiology

In defining a missional ecclesiology, the literature takes one of two approaches. The first is a descriptive approach, which lists a number of characteristics or values of a missional ecclesiology. Examples of this approach are the works of Guder (1998), Barrett (2004), Noort et al. (2008) and Van Engen (2010). A second approach is to give a concise definition of a missional ecclesiology. This approach is taken by authors such as Hirsch (2006) and Minatrea (2012). Most authors use a combined approach, as can be seen in the work of the South African missiologist Nelus Niemandt (2013a: 29-33). Although he gives preference to the descriptive approach, a concise definition is given as well.

The definitions are organised in chronological order to reflect the development in the definition of a missional ecclesiology.

> *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* edited by Darrel L Guder (1998: 4-5) used David Bosch's definition of mission to describe their understanding of the missional church:

> > Mission [is] understood as being derived from the very nature of God. It [is] thus part of the doctrine of the Trinity, not of ecclesiology or soteriology. The classic doctrine of the missio Dei as God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and Son sending the Spirit [is] expanded to include yet another "movement": Father, Son, and Holy Spirit sending the church into the world.

> Where Guder et al. described the missional church theologically, from a Trinitarian perspective, *Treasure in clay jars: Patterns in missional faithfulness*, edited by Lois

Barrett (2004: 159-161) emphasized the practices of a missional church[16]. The work played an important role in the further development of term, but because the focus in this section is on defining the missional church, these important practices will not be discussed.

Alan Hirsch (2006: 82) describes the identity, practices and purpose of the missional church in terms of the *missio Dei* when he defines missional church as a 'community of God's people that defines itself, and organises its life around, its real purpose of being an agent of God's mission to the world'. Van Gelder (2007: 84) highlights the role of the Spirit and that the church is called to participate in the *missio Dei* when he defines missional church as a 'community created by the Spirit that is missionary by nature in being called and sent to participate in God's mission in the world'. From a European

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[16] Missional practices in Barrett et al (2004: 159-161): 'The missional church proclaims the gospel': 'The story of God's salvation is faithfully repeated in a multitude of different ways.'

'The missional church is a community where all members are involved in learning to become disciples of Jesus': 'The disciples' identity is held by all; growth in discipleship is expected of all.'

'The Bible is normative in this church's life': 'The church is reading the Bible together to learn what it can learn nowhere else — God's good and gracious intent for all creation, the salvation mystery and the identity and purpose of life together.'

'The church understands itself as different from the world because of its participation in the life, death, and resurrection of its Lord': 'In its corporate life and public witness, the church is consciously seeking to conform to its Lord instead of the multitude of cultures in which it finds itself.'

'The church seeks to discern God's specific missional vocation for the entire community and for all of its members': 'The church has made "mission" its priority, and in overt and communal ways is seeking to be and do "what God is calling us to know, be, and do".'

'A missional community is indicated by how Christians behave towards one another': 'Acts of self-sacrifice on behalf of one another, both in the church and in the locale, characterise the generosity of the community.'

'It is a community that practices reconciliation': 'The church community is moving beyond homogeneity towards a more heterogeneous community in its racial, ethnic, age, gender and socioeconomic makeup.'

'People within the community hold themselves accountable to one another in love': 'Substantial time is spent with one another for the purpose of watching over one another in love.'

'The church practices hospitality': 'Welcoming the stranger into the midst of the community plays a central role.'

'Worship is the central act by which the community celebrates with joy and thanksgiving both God's presence and God's promised future': 'There is significant and meaningful engagement in communal worship of God, reflecting appropriately and addressing the culture of those who worship together.'

'This community has a vital public witness': 'The church makes an observable impact that contributes to the transformation of life, society, and human relationships.'

'There is a recognition that the church itself is an incomplete expression of the reign of God': 'There is a widely held perception that this church is going somewhere — and that "somewhere" is a more faithfully lived life in the reign of God.'

perspective Noort et al have a narrower definition of *'missionaire gemeenskapsvorming'* in their work *Als seen kerk opnieuw begint* (2008) where they emphasise the aim of the missional church as the formation of new missional communities. They (Noort et al., 2008: 15) define it as *'missionaire initiatieven die leiden tot kerklike gemeenchapsvorming'.* They emphasise three aspects of the process: (1) that church planters are sent by a mother-church to focus their efforts on (2) an unreached group of people to (3) build a missional community among them. Mission-Shaped Church and Fresh Expressions went another direction in not wanting to give a precise theological definition of key missional terms, as they do not want to pre-judge what fresh expressions of the church should look like. They (Fresh Expressions, 2009: n.p.) do, however, give a definition of fresh expressions of church as:

> A fresh expression is a form of church for our changing culture, established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church;
>
> - It will come into being through principles of listening, service, incarnational mission and making disciples.
> - It will have the potential to become a mature expression of church shaped by the Gospel and the enduring marks of the church and for its cultural context.

In doing this they do however indicate some practices of a missional church as well as concurring with Noord et al (2008) that the aim of the missional church is to form new mature expressions of church. Van Engen (2010: 24-25) use the same approach as *Missional Church* when he closely links missional ecclesiology and mission. He argues that the future of mission could be found in describing what a missional church would look like. In describing the missional church[17] he emphasises the following:

> 'The nature and vocation of the church is to be God's called and sent people':
>
> a) A missional ecclesiology is biblical, intentional, proclaiming, reconciling, sanctifying, unifying, transforming, historical, contextual, praxeological (it can be translated into practice) and eschatological;
>
> b) A missional church is called and sent to be a 'missionary church' (Van Engen, 2010: 24) both locally and globally;

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[17] He uses 'missional', 'missional church' and 'missional ecclesiology' as synonyms.

c) The church is an instrument of God's mission;

d) Mission is the result of God's initiative to restore and heal creation and call people to live in a renewed covenantal relationship with God;

e) Mission means sending and the church is the primary agent in God's missionary action;

f) The missional church should have a missional intention as well as a missional dimension.

Milfred Minatrea (2012: XVI) agrees with the definitions by Barrett (2004: 159-161) and fresh expressions (2009: n.p.) in emphasising the importance of discipleship formation and being equipped by the church to be disciples when he defines missional church as 'a reproducing community of authentic disciples, being equipped as missionaries sent by God, to live and proclaim His Kingdom in their world'. The World Council of Churches (WCC Central Committee, 2012: 18) placed emphasis on the *missio Dei* and the dynamic adapting character of the missional church in declaring the following about the church: 'We affirm that God moves and empowers the church in mission. The church as the people of God, the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit, is dynamic and changing as it continues the mission of God.'

Nelus Niemandt (2013a: 30-33) draws together most of the other definitions while highlighting the relational character of the missional church as well as a holistic view of salvation. He identifies the following characteristics of the missional church:

a) The focus of the missional church is worshiping the Triune God. The church finds its true being in a loving communion with the Trinity.

b) The missional church should incarnate the gospel of Jesus Christ.

c) Through the power of the Spirit, the missional church facilitates change in the lives of people and communities.

d) The missional church leads normal believers to become disciples of Jesus Christ.

e) The missional church excels in building relationships. Firstly, a relationship with God that is extended to relationship with individuals and the community.

f) The missional church multiplies, primarily through church planting.

g) The missional church is committed to the transformation of the whole of creation, human and non-human.

h) Every member of the missional church is sent by God and forms part of God's mission to the world.

A wide spectrum of views on the definition of a missional ecclesiology can be found. The next section will analyse these definitions to look for common themes in developing a definition for the current body of research.

1.9.1.4 Analysis of Definitions

An analysis of the definitions yields the following key aspects of the term 'missional ecclesiology'. The various definitions describe firstly the fundamental characteristics of a missional church, and secondly certain practices of a missional church. These two aspects need to be differentiated. The practices are important, but are beyond the scope of the current research and will therefore not be discussed. The following are the top four fundamental characteristics found in the various current definitions:

a. *Missio Dei*: God is the primary agent in mission and is in perpetual movement towards His creation.

Examples: 'God's mission in the world' (Guder, 1998: 11); 'an agent of God's mission' (Hirsch, 2006: 82); 'God's mission in the world' (Van Gelder, 2007: 84); 'The church is an instrument of God's mission' (Van Engen, 2010: 25); 'sent by God' (Minatrea, 2012: XVI); 'God moves and empowers the church' (WCC Central Committee, 2012: 18).

b. The Church is called to be missional and is an instrument and agent of the *missio Dei*.

Examples: 'God's specific missional vocation for the entire community' (Barrett, 2004: 165); 'missionary by nature' (Van Gelder, 2007: 84); '*missionaire initiatieven*' (Noort et al., 2008: 15); 'The nature and vocation of the church is to be God's called and sent people'; 'The missional church should have a missional intention as well as a mission dimension' (Van Engen, 2010: 24); 'being an agent of God's mission'

(Hirsch, 2006: 82); 'an instrument of God's mission'; 'the church is the primary agents in God's missionary action' (Van Engen, 2010: 24).

c. A missional ecclesiology takes the Bible as its departure point.

Examples: 'An ecclesiology needs to have a biblical foundation and the Bible gives testimony to God's mission in the world and the sending of His people' (Guder, 1998: 11); 'The Bible is normative in this church's life' (Barrett, 2004: 160); 'A missional ecclesiology is biblical' (Van Engen, 2010: 24).

d. A missional ecclesiology is Kingdom-focused.

Examples: 'There is a widely held perception that this church is going somewhere - and that "somewhere" is a more faithfully lived life in the reign of God' (Barrett, 2004: 161); 'being an agent of God's mission to the world' (Hirsch, 2006: 82); 'participate in God's mission in the world' (Van Gelder, 2007: 84); 'proclaim His Kingdom in their world' (Minatrea, 2012: XVI).

In conclusion, a preliminary definition of a missional ecclesiology is: An ecclesiology that reflects the *imago Dei* in being an instrument and agent of the *missio Dei*. This is done by having its roots in the Bible and its focus on the Kingdom.

1.10 Conclusions

The first chapter of this research introduced the changing context of the church in general, but specifically the DRC. This changing context presents the church with a challenge: to still be a relevant sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom. From this context, the problem statement of this work was formulated as:

What does the current context of the DRC look like, and is the missional ecclesiology of the church sufficient to guide the church in being a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom?

The research problem was developed into five research questions. In answering these five questions, the research hopes to contribute to the further development of a missional

ecclesiology for the DRC. This will be done by broadening the ecclesiological conversation within the DRC to include the philosophical influences on the development of the DRC theology, the historical development of the DRC theology and missiology, broad ecumenical themes in missional theology, and the lessons learned from the Fresh Expressions of Church.

As researcher I am aware that I do not function in a theological and philosophical vacuum. As a researcher I have an interpretive paradigm that I use to navigate what I observe in philosophy, theology and the church. This interpretive paradigm can best be described in four terms: hermeneutical, correlational, critical and theological. My paradigm is hermeneutical because my Reformed Calvinistic roots and current context influence the hermeneutic I use to make sense of what I observe. My methodological approach will also be correlational, because theology strive to bring different sources of knowledge into conversation with each other. For the purpose of this research it would be the tradition, the historical and current context and functioning ecclesiologies. The correlation of different sources will be one of a number of strategies that will be employed to mitigate the effect of ideological thinking by the researcher as well as in the sources. The research will also be critical through the use of a hermeneutics of suspicion to highlight ideological thinking within the researchers own theology as well as those that are studied. Lastly this study is done within the academic discipline of theology, preference will be given to theological sources and more specifically protestant theological sources. Although sources from many other disciplines and theological traditions could benefit the study, the researcher has to limit the scope of the study. This could limit the contexts were the data could be used to protestant churches and more specifically those within the reformed tradition. The study will be done within the sub-disciplines of missiology and ecclesiology.

Various research strategies will also be used in unpacking the various themes. Literature studies on the various themes will be done to develop a theoretical (theological) framework for a missional ecclesiology. This framework will be used to develop a hierarchical coding schema to evaluate the decisions of the General Synod of the DRC on ecclesiology and missiology from 1990 until 2013.

Strategies for improving the validity and reliability of the current research were also discussed. Four strategies were identified, namely: a) Clarifying the researcher's bias; b) Triangulation; c) Negative case analysis; d) Peer review.

The outline and flow of the chapters of this study were also discussed. Because of the hermeneutical nature of the research, the researcher's own position will influence how he or she views reality. For this reason, the researcher declared his own position in the form of biographical information.

Lastly, this chapter endeavoured to give a preliminary definition of missional ecclesiology. A literature study was done on the development of the concept. Available definitions were analysed to discern the strong contours in defining missional ecclesiology and a preliminary definition was given.

Now that the broad outlines of the research have been sketched, Chapter 2 will start with a high level of abstraction in unpacking the philosophical environment and influences on the development of the DRC.

CHAPTER 2

THE MACRO-PHILOSOPHICAL CONTEXT OF THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH

The contextualisation and embodiment of the gospel within a specific cultural context are essential to any missional endeavour (Guder, 1998: 18). Missional congregations and their leaders must not only be good exegetes of the Bible, but also good exegetes of culture (Niemandt, 2013a: 82). The leaders of missional congregations must be bridge builders between the congregation and the world. If a missional leader does not have a good understanding of the culture the church functions in, he or she will not be able to lead the congregation in engagement with that culture.

This chapter focuses on research question 1 (a):

1) What is the context of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa?
   a) What is the macro-philosophical and historical context of the DRC?

The philosophical and geographical framework of this discussion will be the European, British and American contexts because these contexts had the biggest influence on the development of the DRC theology (Brummer, 2013: 16-18). This does not negate the richness of the developments in Eastern and African cultures, but is done for the sake of focus in the limited scope of the research. It is furthermore important to note the differences between European, British and American contexts. Colin Greene (2008: xix-xx) argues, for example, that European culture is predominantly post-Christendom and postmodern, whereas Christianity still has a strong influence on culture and society in the United States. The strong relationship between Christian right and republicanism in the United States shows signs of Christendom. This research will not try to capture every different nuance in culture and religion between these contexts now, because the focus will not be on specific models of church, but instead on broader philosophical and theological trends (Doornenbal, 2012: 23). Later in this study, when the focus

falls on the Fresh Expressions movement and the DRC, a more nuanced approach will be followed.

The prominence of the missional church conversation is the result of fundamental changes that have taken place in Western society during the last 100 years. The changes most relevant to this discussion are the shift from modern to postmodern and from Christendom to post-Christendom (Doornenbal, 2012: 89). This is especially important for church leaders. To be able to lead a congregation through these cultural shifts will demand insight into the cultural and philosophical changes in the world. Gibbs (2005: 175) states that 'in our post-Christendom, postmodern culture we need a new kind of leader. The present missional context necessitates a critical reappraisal of the Western church and its leadership'.

The first aspect that will be discussed falls under the category of historical context, and deals with the substantial influence of the Enlightenment and modern worldview on culture and Christianity. This will be followed by the influence of late modernity and postmodernity on the church and its theology, and lastly, the importance of understanding the current context of the missional church will be discussed.

2.1. Historical context of Christianity since the Enlightenment

To discuss the historical context of the Christian religion in its rich, nuanced complexity could yield enough material for many works of research. As a result, this section is approached on a high level of abstraction, with the emphasis on the some of the main historical influences that have shaped the context of the missional church in a predominantly Western context, i.e. Western Europe, Britain, North America and some parts of South Africa. Some of the relevant and prominent philosophical, religious, and scientific influences that led to the development of the Enlightenment, modernity, late modernity and the postmodern worldview will be dealt with. This is done to sensitise the reader to, for example, the influence of modernity on the reformed theology and missiology of the DRC[18]. Despite the validity of these broad influences,

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[18] Because the discussion of Enlightenment, modernity, late-modernity and postmodernity are done within the context of research in missiology, preference will be gives to sources from the field of missiology.

each congregation is a unique combination of philosophical, cultural, religious, and ethnic influences. This diversity needs to be kept in mind when dealing with individual congregations.

2.1.1 The Enlightenment and Modernity

The development of Reformed tradition cannot be grasped without an understanding of the reciprocal relationship between this tradition and the Enlightenment and modernity. Developments during the Enlightenment and modern era, such as rationalism and empiricism[19], are still dominant epistemologies and need to be understood (Brownson, 1996: 228).

To grasp the seismic shift in worldview that the Enlightenment and modernity brought about, there must be some understanding of the medieval or pre-modern worldview that preceded the Enlightenment.

The medieval period started with the fall of the Roman Empire in 476 A.D (Bishop, 2001: 8) and ended with the start of the early modern age (Campbell, 2005: n.p.). It was a static worldview that could not be challenged by anyone, or so it was perceived. In the West, Christianity provided the validation for this hierarchal structure of society. God was the final authority in the medieval world. His authority was expressed and mediated through the church hierarchy, the kings and nobles to the ordinary people. The kings and nobles had only derived power given to them by the church (Nida, 1968: 49).

In the 15th and 16th century, the inevitable happened: the dominant medieval worldview was challenged by events such as the Renaissance[20], the Protestant Reformation, and the Age of Revolution[21] (Campbell, 2005: n.p.). During the Renaissance (which saw humankind as the centre of reality), the medieval structure of society was challenged and the church's rights as

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19 For more detailed information about the influence of the Enlightenment on the current context, see Newbigin (1986; 1989); Bosch (1993b).

20 The Oxford Dictionary of the Renaissance (Campbell, 2005) define the Renaissance as 'A model of cultural descent in which the culture of 15th- and 16th-century Europe is represented as a repudiation of medieval values in favour of the revival of the culture of ancient Greece and Rome'.

21 Age of Revolution (1789-1848): A period that was marked by a number of revolutions, among them the French Revolution, British Industrial Revolution and on the other side of the Atlantic the American Revolution (Hobsbawm, 1988: 14).

the divine agent of God moved to the kings and nobles (Grenz, 1996: loc. 130). The challenges to the hierarchal structure of society continued with the Age of Revolution, when the power of the kings and nobles was challenged. The result was that neither the church nor the kings and nobles were necessary to mediate God's presence in the world. Ordinary people became the primary agents of God in the world. Then, during the Age of Science, God was replaced by scientific method as explanatory principle for existence. Intellectuals now turned their attention to the subhuman level of existence (animals, plants, and objects) to find authentication and validation for life (Nida, 1968: 50-53).

In the early 1700s, Anthony Ashley Cooper, the Earl of Shaftesbury in Britain, wrote to his friend in the Netherlands about the 'light' that came to Britain and the Netherlands as far as religious tolerance was concerned (Hunt and Jacob, 2003). It was one of the early signs of an age (Enlightenment) that would dominate every aspect of scientific, philosophical, and religious thought for the more than 300 years. There is little agreement on the exact date of the beginning of the Enlightenment. Bousquet (2006: 238) identifies the early antecedents of the Enlightenment around 1620, but it only came to prominence around 1680. Israel (2002: 4) sees strong currents of rationalism and secularism rising from 1650, in an attempt to rid the intellectual world of magic and superstitions. Bousquet (2006: 238) states that 1680-1780 are 'round dates' for the Enlightenment era. Grenz (1996: loc. 124) already sees the precursor of the modern era in the Renaissance's elevation of humankind to the centre of reality.

The Enlightenment was, however, not a single orchestrated and homogeneous movement against authority and religion, but rather a collective term for a series of concurrent developments that started in the European academia. Although the Enlightenment was centred in Western Europe and Britain, its influence was also felt in the rest of Europe and North America (Israel, 2002: 141). Despite the fact that the Enlightenment started in the academia, it soon permeated the rest of society.

One of the prominent figures to come from the Enlightenment era, Immanuel Kant (2003: 54), gave the following definition of the Enlightenment in his 1784 essay 'An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?' (in Reiss, 2003: 5):

> Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another. This immaturity is self-incurred if its cause is not lack of understanding,

but in lack of resolve and courage to use it without guidance of another. The motto of Enlightenment is therefore: Sapere Aude[22]! Have courage to use your own understanding!

It was not only philosophical, scientific thought and society in general that were influenced by the Enlightenment, but also religious life and the church. The influence of the Enlightenment on religion would be felt for centuries to come. The different Christian traditions experienced the influence of the Enlightenment at different times and in different ways. In Bosch's view (1993b: 262), the Enlightenment had a profound influence on Protestantism since the early 18th century, but the influence of the Enlightenment on the Catholic Church only became prominent at the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). Kung (1991: 217) argues that, despite their initial insulation from the influences of the Enlightenment, the Catholic Church was hit by two simultaneous paradigm shifts at that time: that of the Enlightenment, and that of postmodernism. Stanley (2001: 3) is of the opinion that the Roman Catholic Church had put up a strong defence against the values of the Enlightenment, whereas Protestantism had appropriated the intellectual legacy of the Enlightenment.

There needs to be a balanced and nuanced view of the influence of the Enlightenment on the Christian tradition, the church, and its mission (Doornenbal, 2012: 97). The following discussion will, hopefully, indicate that some Christian traditions (e.g. evangelicalism) benefitted from the environment created by the Enlightenment, but in general, that the Christian faith was negatively influenced by some of the major philosophical tenets of the Enlightenment (e.g. emphasis on reason, subject-object split, etc.). Care needs to be taken not to oversimplify when describing the influence of the Enlightenment. The nuances of the philosophical, cultural, political, social and religious atmosphere will be missed if statements like those of Bosch (1993b) about the Enlightenment ('religion would be banished to the private sphere, leaving the public sphere to reason' (259); 'the real power of kings and nobles was also destroyed' (263); 'God was largely eliminated from society's validation structure' (263) were followed blindly. Although there is definite truth in these statements, they do not accurately

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22 Translated as 'dare to know'.

describe every aspect of the influence of the Enlightenment on European, British and American society (cf. Himmelfarb, 2004).

The Enlightenment worldview was initially propagated by the likes of Nicholas Copernicus[23] (1473-1543), Francis Bacon (1561-1626), Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) and René Descartes (1596-1650), among others, and later reinforced by John Locke (1632-1704), Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz (1646-1716) and Isaac Newton (1642-1717) (Bosch, 1993b: 363; Guder, 1998: 19-25). These scientists and philosophers did not set out to undermine the Christian faith and authority, but developments in their respective scientific and philosophical fields resulted in theories and philosophies that challenged conventional theology.

These newly developed theories and philosophies were beginning to emancipate humans from the authoritarian world they lived in. It was a search for more personal freedom, freedom from monarchies, religious hierarchies, historical tradition, and biblical teaching (Jacob, 2001: 3). The principle of radical doubt and the supremacy of reason, developed by Descartes and refined by the later proponents of the Enlightenment, became a prominent point of departure for all the natural sciences, and later the humanities (including theology) as well. Reason became the key to knowledge. The role reason played is clear from this statement by one of the Rationalist philosophers, Baruch Spinoza (Herrick, 1997: 6): 'Whatsoever is contrary to nature is contrary to reason, and whatsoever is contrary to reason is absurd, and, ipso facto, to be rejected.' The second scientific approach that played a pivotal role in the development of the Enlightenment was the Empiricism of Bacon (Bosch, 1993b: 350). Empiricism emphasised the importance of

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23 Nicholas Copernicus was a prominent astronomer who was born in the former Kingdom of Poland, but had a German heritage. He and the Italian scientist Galileo Galilei challenged the long-held view that the earth was the centre of the universe by stating that the sun was at the centre, and that the earth, along with the other planets, encircled the sun (Hatfield, 2003: n.p.). Isaac Newton, the English physicist, built on their theories, but used his theory of gravity to correct Copernicus and Galilei's theories in stating that the planets moved in elliptical orbits around the sun (Russell, 2003: n.p.). Francis Bacon was an English philosopher who, together with the French philosopher René Descartes, saw empirical science as the ultimate knowledge that would emancipate humans to be in control of their own world (Hatfield, 2003). John Locke, the English political philosopher, was one of the founding thinkers of liberalism. He also argued for the separation between church and state (Nuovo, 2003: n.p.). Baruch Spinoza was a Dutch philosopher who contributed to Enlightenment thought through his works on the nature of God and ethics (Verbeek, 2003: n.p.). Wilhelm Leibnitz was a German philosopher and mathematician who played an important role with Spinoza and Descartes in the development of the rationalist philosophy (Blackburn, 2008: n.p.).

sensory experience in the attainment of knowledge. Phenomena which could not be verified by empirical observation, were doubted or dismissed (Hergenhahn, 2009: 131).

Seven philosophical threads can be defined in the Enlightenment worldview that will help to clarify the influence of the Enlightenment on Christian theology (Bosch, 1993b: 264-267; Nussbaum, 2005: 71; Fensham, 2008: 25-26). Green and Robinson's (2008: 6) argument that not all western contexts were influenced to the same extend by modernity should be taken seriously. These threads are discussed because they are formational to the worldview of the westernized proportion of the South African public. The first thread is Rationalism, the theory that all actions are based on of reason (Greene and Robinson, 2008: 21-22). The human mind and reason were seen as the point of departure of all forms of understanding. The age of Reason was signified by the famous dictum of René Descartes, *'Cogito, ergo sum'* (I think, therefore I exist) (Bosch, 1993b: 264). Human reason was seen as objective and independent from the norms of tradition or presuppositions (Guder, 1998: 22). Final authority was no longer found in tradition or revelation outside of human experiences, but instead in the rational abilities of the human mind. Modern thinkers believed that knowledge was inherently good, which led to the belief that progress was inevitable, and that knowledge would set humans free from bondage to nature and a belief system that curtailed freedom (Grenz, 1996: loc. 152-157).

The second is the 'subject-object split'. Confidence in the human ability to reason and observe led to the so-called subject-object split. Despite being part of nature, humans thought they were able to detach themselves theoretically from what they were observing. In Bosch's (1993b: 264) words, '[n]ature ceased to be "creation" and was no longer people's teacher, but the object of the analysis'. The message of the Bible was reduced to a single perspective that is the result of human analytic effort, from a specific perspective, in a specific context. Fensham (2008: 25) sees the influence of the subject-object split in modern theology as well, when the Bible is read as an object, something that can be analysed, dissected, and objectively explained.

The third thread is the 'cause and effect' explanation of all reality. The natural order of pre-modern time, namely that the transcendent (God) controlled the immanent (nature), was replaced by a paradigm of causality. There is no immanent being controlling reality, just a series of actions and reactions (Hendriks, 1996: 496). Purpose was eliminated from science and the understanding of reality (Newbigin, 1986: 79). Reality was reduced to direct cause and

effect. From the early 17th century, science became hostile towards a teleological perspective, because it could not be explained by cause and effect (Bosch, 1993b: 265). Teleological questions were not even asked, because they were deemed unanswerable. The result was that the mystery and purpose of life were lost in favour of explicable, clearly definable processes.

The fourth thread is the belief in progress. The Enlightenment developed an unbridled belief in the human ability to develop, explore, and create (Grenz, 1996: loc. 158). The belief was that all human beings would benefit from the development of the West and the upper echelons of society. If the privileged West experienced wealth and well-being, this would trickle down to the poor and underdeveloped (Hyland, Gomez and Greensides, 2003:36)[24]. Green and Robinson argue that the work of Adam Smith (1998) (*An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of nations*) first published in 1776 were central to the development of idea that the economic development of some will benefit the whole of society. 'The harsh reality, however, was that the development of the Western world created wealth and power that was used to colonise and dominate the rest of the world to their detriment (Bosch, 1993b: 266).

The fifth thread is that scientific knowledge is factual, value-free, and neutral. Under the influence of Classical Greek dualism[25], the world of the Enlightenment was divided into two distinct realities (Newbigin, 1991: 15). First, there was scientific knowledge that was factual, value-free, neutral and inherently good (Newbigin, 1989: 7; Grenz, 1996: loc.158). This knowledge was not influenced by the observer's perspective, beliefs or history. Secondly, there were values, based not on knowledge but on opinions and beliefs. Facts belonged to the scientific and public spheres, and values to the private and personal. Truth was no longer found in revelation and tradition, but in the use of rational scientific methods (Guder, 1998: 22). Religion was relegated to the private world of opinion, as it was not based on objective, measurable facts (Bosch, 1993b: 266). The result of this public-private dichotomy was that religious beliefs were divorced from all claims of truth.

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24 This was also part of the mission paradigm during the colonial era. Missionaries felt it their obligation not only to share the gospel, but also to share the benefits of Western progress with underdeveloped areas (Bevans and Schroeder, 2009: 221).

25 Classical Greek dualism was prominent in the philosophy of the Greek philosopher Plato (427-347 B.C.). Plato had a dualistic view of human beings, namely as a body and a soul. The soul is immortal and controls the mortal body (Ritschl and Hailer, 2008: 127).

The sixth thread is that all problems are, in principle solvable. The confidence in the human ability to reason left no room for the mystery and wonder of life. All problems were in principle solvable, and all questions answerable as knowledge increased. Science was growing in its scope and understanding of reality. Human beings were at last able to explain the world, as well as create a world according to their own image, or so it was thought (Bosch, 1993b: 267).

The last thread is Individualism - a theory that argues that people are emancipated, autonomous individuals. Although the emphasis on the individual had already started in the Middle Ages, humans were still seen as primarily relational beings and part of a community. The focus shifted during the Enlightenment to focus more on individuals and their priorities. The individual was emancipated from his/her bond to God, the church and social authority (Bosch, 1993b: 267). This led to the rise of radical individualism, where the rights of the individual superseded those of society, and nothing was absolute except personal freedom. A society dominated by the rule of sovereigns was replaced by a society build around the principles of the social contract theory. The social contract theory reflected the changes taking place in society. The notion was that humans are rational beings who enter into a social contact with each other to create a society where all people and their basic human rights are respected. Social contact theorists believed that in a society where people are truly free, they are able to live out their potential (Guder, 1998: 24-25).

These ideas of the Enlightenment became embedded in the social, political, and economic structures of the time (Van Gelder, 1996a: 31). It is within this context that modernity developed and became the most pervasive culture of the period (Balia and Kim, 2010: 65). The problem that the church had with modernity was its resistance to the gospel (Guder, 1998: 25). One of the main reasons why modernity was so resistant to the gospel was that modernity was built around confidence in the autonomous and rational self, which left little room for God and spirituality. This conceptual framework became the dominant frame of reference for the modern self. Guder (1998: 26-31) describes five characteristics of this new modern self: Firstly, the modern self is a citizen with rights and freedoms (Guder, 1998: 26-31). The social contract theory led to a change in the collective identity of individuals. Before the Enlightenment, the identity of individuals was seated in their family, ethnicity, and culture. Now, however, the individual identity would be defined by the nation state the individual was part of, and which granted them personal rights and freedoms. The modern self was no longer viewed collectively

but as an individual elevated to the centre of reality (Grenz, 1996: loc.126). Political freedom of the individual was also seen inalienable right of each individual and formed the basis of the democratic system where governance was in, through and for the people (Greene and Robinson, 2008: 14). The second is that the modern self is a consumer. Capitalism became the economic mainstay of modern society. People moved from rural areas, where they were part of an economically self-sustaining family unit, to cities, where they became salaried producers and consumers. The economy started to be driven by man's ability to produce and need to consume. The modern man was caught in the tension between his ability to produce more and his need to consume more (Guder, 1998: 26-31). The third characteristic is that the modern self is constructed by their roles and identities. The identity of the modern individual was not only formed by their allegiance to a nation state, but also by the role they played in society, their job, and their social standing (Guder, 1998: 26-31). The fourth is the modern self as a product of technique. Technique and technology became the modern man's saviours. Most problems could be solved with a new technique or technology. All life forms are interconnected and are part of a part of an innovative process of evolution regulated by scientific laws and principals (Greene and Robinson, 2008: 14). Modernity led to growth in science-based technology, which was being used to manipulate the social and natural world. The modern self was also influenced and formed by the orchestrated messages transmitted through various channels by the government, the economic sector, and social and religious organisations. In addition, many churches bought into this paradigm and started to use the best technology, oratory and marketing skills and techniques to convey the ancient truths of the gospel (Guder, 1998: 26-31). Lastly, the counter movement called Modernism emphasising the modern self as being able to experience feeling, intuition, and desire' (Guder, 1998: 26-31). Modernity's emphasis on a 'rationalised, bureaucratised, technicised, and commodity-driven world' (Guder, 1998: 30) led to a countermovement called Modernism. Modernism is the twin of modernity, but not an identical twin. It refers to the movement among artists and writers in the early 20th century (Guder, 1998: 30). The Modernists believed that humans were more than just rational and scientific beings, and Modernism created an outlet for the 'emotive, affective, intuitive, and experiential' (Guder, 1998: 30) needs of humans in art and literature. Artists searched for the meaning of life in their affective and experiential dimensions, and communicated this through art and literature. Individuals were caught in the tension between the rational aims of

modernity and their own emotive, affective, intuitive, and experiential impulses. This tension created fertile soil for the development of postmodernism, which will be dealt with later.

These characteristic of the modern self is important in it creating a 'confident self', that would have no need for grace or mystery; a modern self that would embrace a secular worldview (Taylor, 2007: 229-230). To understand the later discussion on secularisation, the influence of modernity and the modern self, need to be understood.

2.1.2 Modernity and Christianity

It will later be argued that most of DRC membership are still strongly influenced by intellectual paradigms that developed during modernity. Therefor an understanding of the relationship between modernity and Christianity is very important. During the medieval period, every aspect of life was characterised by its relationship with religion. Humans made sense of their world in the context of their relationship with God. The Enlightenment profoundly changed the role that religion and the church played in the modern era (Bosch, 1995: 262-263). The hierarchical structure of God – Church – Kings and Nobles was fundamentally changed. François Bousquet (2006: 237) states that the Enlightenment was 'a rallying point for knowledge against naiveté and ignorance, for democracy against tyranny, and for humanism against religion'.

The change in the hierarchical structure of society had a profound influence on the role that Christianity, the Church and mission played in society. The Enlightenment did not deny the existence of the Christian faith as a valid reference point for individuals, but Christianity was relegated to being just one of several reference points (Bousquet, 2006: 237). This led to a re-evaluation of traditional Christian concepts like the 'inherent sinfulness of human nature', which were in conflict with the much more optimistic view of human potential held during the Enlightenment (Bosch, 1995: 268).

2.1.2.1 Enlightenment and the Reformation

There was a reciprocal relationship between the Enlightenment and the Reformation (Van Gelder, 1996a: 27). This relationship was woven from many threads. The first was the breakdown of the pre-modern hierarchical society, which opened up the opportunity for Martin

Luther to start questioning the dominant theological paradigm of the Catholic Church. The idea that man could relate directly to God without the intervention of popes, priests, and the Church was welcomed in a society that was in a transition from a pre-modern to a modern worldview (Woodhead, 2004: 159).

The second was the transition from feudalism to capitalism (Woodhead, 2004: 163). In medieval times, family, locality, and community regulated the economy. Wealth and property were passed down through generations. Those who controlled the land controlled the lives of those without land. Peasants working on the farms were bound to the landowner for their survival. However, during the Enlightenment, some of the peasants became less dependent on landowners through their own trade and manufacturing. This increasing independence from landowners was especially important in light of the fact that the Catholic Church was by far the richest landowner in Europe during the 14th and 15th centuries (Stark, 2011: 322). A manufacturing class developed that employed people in their workshops. Labour was no longer just a method of subsistence, but it became a commodity that was bought and sold (Woodhead, 2004: 163). Money and the ability to make a profit started to replace family and allegiances as the determining factors in economic status. These manufacturers and merchants formed a new middle class that was not enslaved by a hierarchical society, and was able to challenge the dominance of the nobles and the Catholic Church. The rise of capitalism and the new middle class also created an environment for the development of the modern nation state. The absolute power of kings was no longer acceptable to a growing number of subjects, who were becoming economically emancipated. This posed an increasing threat to the centralised authority of the Roman Catholic Church: the further people were from Rome, the less threatened they felt by papal authority. It was then no coincidence that the seed of the Reformation grew strongest in Northern European countries, who felt more independent from papal rule (Woodhead, 2004: 167). As people became more economically and politically independent, they wanted to be spiritually independent as well. Stark (2011: 326) argues that the backbone of the Lutheran Reformation was 'the merchants, bankers, lawyers, physicians, manufacturers, schoolmasters, shopkeepers, and bureaucrats, as well as the members of the highly skilled guilds'. The paternalism of medieval Christianity was no longer acceptable in a society that was largely emancipated from the control of kings and landowners. People wanted to read the Bible for themselves, and relate directly to God.

All these threads prepared a tapestry that formed the background for the Reformation. The Enlightenment was ripe for the ideas of Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli. The progress of Enlightenment also benefited from the Reformation in that Protestant theology validated a more equal society.

As mentioned before, it was not only society in general that was changed by the Enlightenment; Christianity itself could also not escape the impact of the dominant *zeitgeist* (Bosch, 1993b: 269-274; Guder, 1998: 21-30; Shenk, 1996: 69-78). Reason became the point of departure for an ever-growing number of Christians. Although reason has always been part of religion, it had always played a secondary role in faith. During the Enlightenment, God was no longer the reason for being, but became an object of human reason, study, and rational enquiry (Shenk, 1996: 70). The notion of truth was longer seen as embedded in tradition or revelation, but was discovered through the use of rational methods (Guder, 1998: 22). As confidence in human ability developed, a spiritual framework was no longer needed to answer existential questions. However, resistance within the Christian faith and theology against the influence of reason during the Enlightenment soon developed. Christians responded in diverse ways to the challenges of pure reason to the Christian faith. The first response came from the likes of Schleiermacher[26] and Pietism, who grounded faith in experience and not in reason (Bosch, 1995: 269). The second reaction was dualism, dividing human existence into private and public domains, where religion belonged to the private domain. The third approach was less defensive in declaring theology as a science in itself, and even more than that, a superior science. The fourth approach was as a 'Christian society', where Christianity dominated public governance and society. The last response by some Christians was to embrace secular society and to declare that humans had outgrown pre-modern belief systems (1993b: 270).

The footprints of the Enlightenment's separation between object and subject could be seen in some Christian theological circles. One example of this was the emphasis on the historical distance between the contexts of the writers of the Bible and contemporary time. The Bible

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26 Friedrich Schleiermacher was strongly influenced by the Moravians' Pietism. His father, Gottlieb Schleiermacher, had experienced an awakening (1778) under the influence of the Moravians. Schleiermacher himself was educated at two Moravian institutions, first at school in Niesky (1783-1785), and then at a seminary in Barby (1785-1787). Although he broke with the Moravians, the influence of the Moravians remained throughout his life, especially their emphasis on personal conviction, mystic communion with Jesus and pious practices (Schleiermacher, 2010: 4).

became an ancient text that could be prodded and probed by exegetical and hermeneutical methods, but it had no real existential value for the reader. Orthodox protestant theologians reacted by emphasising the infallibility of the Bible as God's Word and Pietism reacted by privatising and individualising the Word beyond public scrutiny.

The notion that purpose is the key to the understanding of Christian reality was replaced by direct causality. The teleological questions that theology was trying to answer were no longer valid in a world that saw a direct link between cause and effect. Humans had control over their own circumstances, and trust in God and the need to be 'saved' were no longer important.

The belief in progress and the belief in human ability formed the background of the belief among the early 20th century missionary movements[27] that the world could be evangelised within a lifetime. Coinciding with this belief was confidence in the positive influence of Western culture on the development of human beings (Guder, 1998: 29). The Christian faith and Western culture were seen as redeeming features for the rest of the world as part of the West's colonisation conquests.

The Enlightenment's separation of facts (that which can be measured) **and values** (the philosophical and religious aspects of life) led to a two-pronged reaction from the church. On the one hand, Christians argued that faith did not belong to the domain of values, but to the domain of facts. This approach placed a lot of emphasis on the 'inerrancy of Scripture' (Bosch, 1993b: 272). By contrast, the other response assigned faith to the domain of values, but in line with Platonic thinking, the spiritual and transcendental values were seen as supreme to the purely scientific. Both had more or less the same aim in describing the Christian faith as superior to pure reason.

The mysteries and wonder of life were replaced by the Enlightenment notion that all problems were in principle solvable (Guder, 1998: 29). This relegated God to the 'God of the gaps'. God was no longer needed to give an answer to the many existential questions in life and to solve human problems. As humans discovered more about their world, they pushed God to the periphery of existence. In some Christian circles, progress in science was seen as a threat to

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27 See the Edinburgh conference of 1910 and the book by John Mott (1900).

the Christian faith, while others assimilated into their theology the diminishing role that God was playing.

The Enlightenment's view of humans as emancipated and autonomous individuals led to the growth of individualism among Christians. Individuals no longer needed the clergy or church to facilitate their interaction with God (Guder, 1998: 23). This led to a further alienation of individuals from the church.

It is clear that the Enlightenment had a fundamental influence on the church, theology and individuals' faith. Even well-intentioned Christians could not escape the rationalising, objectifying, individualising, and anthropocentric influence of the Enlightenment, but it would be wrong to describe the Enlightenment as evil or anti-Christian. One example of this was the influence the Enlightenment had on the development of the Evangelical movement. Bebbington (1989: 53) argues that 'Evangelicalism was accepted with many of the characteristic traits of the Enlightenment. Its emergence was itself an expression of the age of reason'. In his view, Evangelicalism was the result of the protestant tradition's contact with the Enlightenment. These aspects of the Enlightenment are still prominent among the DRC membership. This is noticeable in the rationalised spirituality that dominates the DRC. In a reaction to the rationalized faith of the reformed tradition, a pietist spirituality developed in some congregation and individuals. The DRC struggle to strike a balance between rationalism and pietism, to help member in forming and incarnational faith.

In short, the Enlightenment brought light into the darkness of the pre-modern era. Scientific progresses brought hope to many afflicted with illness, but also oppression for the subjects of the ever-spreading influence and power of the West. As is the case with every dominant worldview, so the Enlightenment and modern world were in turn challenged by newer philosophical forces.

2.1.3 Late Modernity or Postmodernity

There have been differences of opinion on what followed modernity. In the late modernity camp are Anthony Giddens (1991), using the term radicalised modernity, and Zygmunt Bauman (2005a), who uses the term liquid modernity. David Bosch (1993b) and Van Gelder (1996c)

prefer to see the current era as a new development – the postmodern era. Because both of these paradigms are present within the missional literature, both will be discussed.

2.1.3.1 Late Modernity

Sociologist Anthony Giddens (1991: 3) talks about radicalised modernity rather than postmodernity, implying that this was not a completely new era, but a timeframe where the consequences of modernity have become more radicalised. Similarly, Zygmunt Bauman (2005) calls the era that followed modernity 'liquid modernity'. He is of the opinion that the modern era fluctuated between 'solid modernity' and 'liquid modernity'. The start of the modern era was the melting of the solidity of the pre-modern era, which then solidified into the new order of the modern era (Bauman, 2005a: 299). Solid modernity was period of solidity of space in the presence of time. The current era is the melting of this bond between space and time, which creates a fluid state of society. Giddens (Giddens and Pierson, 1998: 116-117) argues that 'the dynamic sources of modernity are still there: the expansion of capitalism, the transformative effects of science and technology, the expansion of mass democracy'. Bauman, along the same lines, emphasises two prominent social processes during late modernity, namely globalisation and individualisation (Davies, 2013: 2).

According to these and other relevant sources, the characteristics of late modernity are:

- Highly individualistic and relativistic pluralism that sees personal taste and choice as sacred (Grenz, 1996: loc. 304).
- The discarding of the attempt to give validity to faith in God through reason (Grenz, 1996: loc. 1388;3273). By contrast, the Enlightenment gave religion validity through human reason, but faith was relegated to the private sphere.
- The growth of secularism (Grenz, 1996: loc. 3016).
- An atheistic-materialistic worldview (Grenz, 1996: loc. 3273).
- The radicalisation of the dualistic worldview of modernity, up to the point where late moderns found it difficult to conceive that God had any influence on human existence (Grenz, 1996: loc. 3273).
- The disintegration of social bonds and the alienation of the individual. Late modernity is a time of radical individualisation (Bauman, 2005b: 14). Research

by Adrian Franklin (2012: 23-24) confirmed Bauman's theory that loneliness is becoming endemic in late modern times.

- Highly fluid identity. Identity was no longer something born into that could be discovered, but rather something that needed to be constructed. This construction of identity was, however, not a 'solid' construction. Identity was constantly developing and changing in late modernity (Bauman, 2005b: 82-84). Identity formation was the result of endless work and anxiety (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 122).
- The relegation of the church to the margins of society (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 50).

The late modern period had profound implications for individuals, as well as for faith and the church. Although the current membership is predominantly from a modern worldview the church is challenged to function in a late modern context. The Dutch Reformed Church will have to be cognisant of the influence of late modernity on the population of South Africa in developing a missional ecclesiology.

2.1.3.2 Postmodernity[28]

The groundwork for the postmodern era was laid in the reaction to modernity. A change in the mood toward modern ideas could be sensed at the end of the 19th century. Modernity's reliance on liberal-democratic political ideals, science-based technology, and capitalist economy began to have a 'stifling effect' (Van Gelder, 1996c: 119) on many living in this era. This led to a reactionary movement first noticed in art, which became known as Modernism. While Modernism was still a product of modernity, the movement began to exhibit a different spirit in trying to 'incorporate a different set of values into the cultural mix' (Van Gelder, 1996c: 119). The emotive, creative, and subjective dimension became central to the human condition, and unleased great creativity. As Modernism developed, tension rose within the culture of modern ideas.

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28 The discussion of postmodernity will be done from a theological and missiological perspective. Because of the limited scope of the discussion, sources from these two fields will be the primary source of the discussion.

David Lyon (2005: 255) argues that the most important thinker to anticipate the postmodern era was Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900). In 1888, he announced that 'nihilism stands at the door'. For Nietzsche, the concept of nihilism corresponded closely to (later) postmodern concepts, featuring a fluid and anchorless sense of reality (Lyon, 2005: 255). A second important figure in the early days of the postmodern era was Martin Heidegger (1899-1976). Early in the 20th century, the values of modernity were challenged by the likes of Karl Marx, Max Weber, Sigmund Freud, Albert Einstein, and others. Through the cracks in modern ideas the seeds of a new era, postmodernity, were starting to sprout.

To describe postmodernity is a challenging endeavour since it is not a clearly defined era, but an ongoing process (Balia and Kim, 2010: 64). Two terms that need to be distinguished are 'postmodernity' and 'Postmodernism'. Although there is no watertight differentiation between the two, Postmodernism generally refers to the sphere of architecture, art and literature, and postmodernity to the 'areas such as philosophy, the political/social sphere and ethical matters, such as human rights, denoting a way of thought, practice and existential orientation' (Balia and Kim, 2010: 64). Postmodernism was a reaction to the architecture, art and literature of Modernism (Balia and Kim, 2010: 64; Gibbs and Bolger, 2006: 28). The term postmodernity only became prominent in the 1960s and 1970s, although it was earlier used to denote the era that followed the devastation of the First World War[29]. Greene and Robinson (2008: 25) argue that the postmodernity could also be noticed in the avant-garde artistic and literary circles of the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Central to the development of postmodernity was the disillusionment with and distrust of governments and the church experienced by the troops returning from the battlefield of WWII (Van Gelder, 2007b: 31). This feeling was compounded by the fact that it had been Christian nations who had been killing each other. The two world wars challenged the metanarratives of modernity, in particular:

- The dominance of reason – human reason was not enough to stop senseless wars that killed millions.

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29 The term had already been mentioned as early as the late 1800s, but the current use only found its form after World War II.

- The belief in progress – progress (such as the development of the atom bomb) had the potential to annihilate humankind.
- Despite the personal freedom brought about by modernity, this freedom soon led to dominance of the strong over the weak, the power of colonial nations, and the economic inequality of the market economy.
- Despite the many virtues of the democratic system, it also made the rule of Adolf Hitler possible.

The impact of the world wars was, however, experienced differently in Europe and North America. The European soldiers returned to decimated towns and communities, with a sense of loss, even among the Allied soldiers. The American soldiers returned home as victors and heroes to a country that was on the brink of substantial industrial and economic growth. The disillusionment of the Europeans was only experienced by many in the USA after the Vietnam War in the 1960s and 1970s (Roxburgh, 2002: n.p.).

The start of postmodernity encompassed more than just a reaction to war: it was a reaction against the whole modern worldview, which was in the process of collapsing (Van Gelder, 1996b: 60-62). The foundations of modernity began to crumble as it became evident that the technological advances of the modern era caused just as many problems as they solved. One example was the destruction caused by the atom bombs, which brought home the realisation that technological progress could not only benefit human civilisation but also destroy it as well. One of the problems was that humans lacked sufficient morals and wisdom to curtail their own technological advances (Gibbs and Coffey, 2001: 28-29).

Keeping in mind that scientific development was central to the influence of modernity, it is ironic that the foundations of modernity were challenged by developments in physics. Physics was the intellectual home of many of the proponents of the Enlightenment, but the theories of

Werner Heisenberg[30], Albert Einstein[31], and Niels Bohr[32] shook its foundations (Bosch, 1993b: 350; Grenz, 1996: loc. 1017). The theory of quantum mechanics formulated by Heisenberg and developed by Einstein and Bohr made it clear that science had come to a point where it could only make 'inexact' predictions about reality (e.g. the position and momentum of a particle) (Günther, 2009: 425; Grenz, 1996: loc. 1031). The certainty, measurability and objectivity of science were challenged. If modernity was known for its certainty, postmodernity became known for its relativity.

The world wars and concurrent developments in physics led to a re-evaluation of the notion of truth. In the modern era, truth could be defined and described by the observer. Yet researchers realised that the mere act of observing changed the nature of the object being observed. The dream of an objective truth was an impossible one. 'Everything is hermeneutical,' writes Anthony Thiselton (2009: 218); every assertion needs to be understood as an answer to a specific question that is asked against the background of a tradition, history and context, and all these aspects influence how an assertion will be interpreted.

As postmodernity took root, the notion of objective truth was steadily replaced by the reality of relativity. The quest for this objective truth was abandoned among an infinite number of personal truths. Relativity and diversity became the main characteristics of the postmodern era (Gibbs and Coffey, 2001: 29). This view of truth also influenced the notion of meaning. According to postmodern thought, there was no objective, discernible meaning to life or circumstances, only the meaning the individual assigned to them. Central to postmodern thought was the deconstruction of metanarratives. This was a direct repudiation of the modern worldview that created metanarratives (Van Gelder, 1996a: 31), because postmodern philosophers saw metanarratives only as an attempt to control. Jean-François Lyotard (1984:

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30 Werner Karl Heisenberg was a theoretical physicist best known for his work on the initial theory of quantum mechanics, for which he received the Nobel Prize in 1932 (Clapham and Nicholson, 2009b: n.p.). Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle doubted the certainty of modernistic science in stating that there is an essential indeterminacy in natural phenomena that 'no amount of observation can overcome' (Grenz, 1996: loc. 1031).

31 Albert Einstein was a prolific German physicist known for his special theory of relativity and his work on quantum theory (Clapham and Nicholson, 2009a: n.p.).

32 Niels Bohr was a Danish theoretical physicist who won the Nobel Prize in 1922 for his work on the structure of atoms. He also contributed to the theory of quantum mechanics, and worked on the development of the atom bomb (Clapham and Nicholson, 2009c: n.p.).

xxiv) exemplifies this idea in stating: 'Simplifying to the extreme, I define postmodernism as incredulity towards metanarratives.'

The differences between the modern and postmodern eras can be summarised as follows (Bosch, 1993b: 251-362; Gibbs and Bolger, 2006: 30; Niemandt, 2007: 21-23; Van Gelder, 1996):

Modern era	Postmodern era
Optimistic view of human race.	Pessimistic view of human race.
Reason and sensory observation as the only way of knowing.	Reason and sensory observation inadequate, and must be expanded to include emotion, metaphor, symbol, ritual, and myth as valid ways of knowing.
Centralised hierarchies govern the world and organisations.	Decentralised networks govern the world and organisations.
Predictable change in the world and long-range planning.	Unpredictable, discontinuous change in the world requiring rapid response and adaptability.
The aim of science is objectivity.	True objectivity not possible, only inter-subjectivity.
Emphasises technique and skill.	Emphasises authenticity and character.
Confidence in the human ability to manage the present and face the future.	Uncertainty in dealing with the present, and pessimism and paranoia in considering the future.
Linear, analytical and atomistic thinking.	Holistic, relational and systemic thinking.
Individualistic view of identity.	Collective view of identity.
Humans see themselves as consumers.	Humans see themselves as part of the ecosystem that needs protection.

Linear, causal reasoning eliminates purpose.	Purpose is rediscovered in the teleological dimension.
The solution to all problems is technological progress.	Technological progress can lead to the destruction of the world.
Command and control in leadership.	Post-control: servant leadership (an encouraging and empowering leadership style that creates an environment of creativity).
Change initiated at the centre.	Change initiated at the periphery.
Find metanarratives.	Deconstruct metanarratives.

The optimism of the Enlightenment and the modern era was replaced by a general feeling of pessimism and scepticism resulting from the disappointment and trauma caused by the world wars and the misuse of technology. The 'tower of Babel' created by rationalism collapsed and left a generation with very little to be optimistic about (Gibbs and Bolger, 2006: 29). This disillusionment accelerated the decline of the modern period and the influence of the Enlightenment. Relativity and pluralism started to make inroads into the certainty and metanarratives of the modern era.

It should be noted at this point that although postmodernity became the dominant worldview, the foundations laid by modernity are still very strong in society, especially in the scientific disciplines.

The postmodern era presents many challenges as well as opportunities to the Christian faith. A missional ecclesiology will have to deal with challenges such as a pessimistic worldview, discontinuous change, distrust in objective truth, uncertainty, and the deconstruction of metanarratives. On the other hand, the opportunities include the use of emotion, metaphor, symbol, ritual, and myth as valid ways of knowing; an emphasis on authenticity and character; holistic and relational thinking; emphasis on the world as an ecosystem; purpose being rediscovered in the teleological dimension; the need for servant leadership; and initiating change from the periphery. In the current context, only a portion of South African society

follows the postmodern ideology in all its consequences; however, most Western people are influenced in one way or another by postmodern ideas.

2.1.3.3 Globalisation

The impact of postmodernity was intensified by the occurrence of globalisation (Van Gelder, 2007b: 31). Schreiter (2001: 4) defines globalisation as the concurrent contraction and expansion of time and space[33]. The globalisation process was set in motion by advances in telecommunications, transport and trade and have political. technological, cultural and economic dimensions (Giddens, 2011: 13). Thomas Friedman (2007: 201-223) describes the evolution of globalisation as a three-phase process. Globalisation 1.0 was the first period, from 1492 to 1800, and was made possible by the maritime ability to traverse the world's oceans. This period was driven by the need to explore, as well as to display a show of strength, by the dominant nations of the time (Friedman, 2007: 9). Globalisation was fuelled by the interests of countries. The questions driving this phase were: where does my country fit into the world stage, and how can countries collaborate (Friedman, 2007: 9)?

Globalisation 2.0, the second phase, ran from more or less 1800 until 2000, with an interruption in its evolution during World Wars I and II and the Great Depression (Friedman, 2007: 9). This second phase was facilitated by the reducing cost of transportation, and later by developments in telecommunications (Greene and Robinson, 2008: 14). During the 2.0 period, Britain emerged as the dominant world power, helped by technological advancements like the invention of the steam engine, the telegraph, and later the telephone and the internal combustion engine. Britain also benefited from the open world economy and the mass manufacturing of utility goods (Greene and Robinson, 2008: 16). A major force in the globalisation process was the development of multinational companies. These companies brought shareholders from different countries together in one economic goal. The main question driving this phase of globalisation was no longer centred on the benefit of individual countries, but rather of individual companies, which were vying for space in the global economy (Friedman, 2007: 10).

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33 'Globalisering is de gelijktijdige expansie èn compressie van tijd en ruimte. De enige manier om dit nog intellectueel te kunnen vatten is door middel van de paradox' (Schreiter, 2001: 4).

The dominance of Britain before 1900 was replaced by a new superpower, the United States of America. The United States' large economic appetite opened up new markets in the global economy. It was not only American economic interests that spread throughout the world, but also the ideology of Americanisation and consumerism. And yet this strong ideology was not welcome everywhere. Many smaller cultural groups began to resist the influence of American and Western values – none more so than Islam, a faith that also aspires to become a dominant power in the world (Greene and Robinson, 2008: 17). This response to Americanisation led to cultural wars that spilled over into military wars. The standoff between Western values as propagated by the United States and Europe, and the militant factions of Islam as found in the Middle East, Indonesia, and North Africa, is ongoing (Greene and Robinson, 2008: 19).

As the world was becoming more integrated, there was also a growing awareness and appreciation of different cultures and traditions. Two paradoxical processes were part of the globalisation movement: on the one hand the integration and harmonising of different cultures, but on the other an awareness of the differences between cultures and religions (Wells, 2008: 20). Humans were becoming more aware of their shared humanity, despite the fear of that which is different. The problem with globalisation and its twin sister, postmodernism, was that they institutionalised diversity, but failed to create 'any centre to adjudicate differences' (Van Gelder, 1996a: 29).

Around the start of the new millennium, the third phase of globalisation came to fruition: Globalisation 3.0. Friedman (2007: 11) argues that where Globalisation 1.0 and 2.0 were driven by British and American interests, Globalisation 3.0 is driven by a much more diverse group of individuals who have been empowered by communications technology to have a global influence.

Naturally, these phases try to describe the evolution, and are by no means clearly differentiated. Although individuals will be the driving force in Globalisation 3.0, this does not mean that dominant world powers will not influence the globalisation process. However, there is a definite change in the landscape of world powers. Previously less developed countries, like China, India, Brazil and the Middle Eastern countries, now have ever-increasing economic, military, and intellectual influence (Van Gelder, 1996a: 30).

One consequence of globalisation is a generation of people who have multiple cultural homes. Alejandro Portes (1996: n.p.) describes these communities as transnational communities. They live, travel, and work in different countries, cultures, and languages. This mosaic of influences is not a threat to them but adds to the richness of their lives. Van Engen (2006: 157) calls this interweaving of global and local influences and events 'glocal'. The missional church will therefore have to move beyond the global/local dichotomy. The calling for the church is to navigate within the 'glocal' world, where these two contexts are interwoven.

There are, however, many questions about globalisation, as well as the process of anti-globalisation. The assumption that market liberalisation will benefit all, is questioned by growing income inequalities among nations, an increase in ecological problems, and the fact that international markets are skewed against poorer countries (Girvan, 2008: 115-116). These are some of the negative consequences of globalisation, which are leading to an anti-globalisation movement. The anti-globalisation movement is growing on the periphery of the world economy, among those who see their livelihood and way of life threatened by globalisation (Drainville, 2008: 244). Examples of this is the Brexit vote in Britain in 2016 and the popularity of ant-establishment candidates (Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders) in the USA election of 2016 (Giddens, 2011: 13).

Western Christians are not immune to the influence of globalisation. Christians are being introduced to, and confronted with, diversity in the cultural and spiritual traditions of the world (Van Gelder, 1996a: 29). They are able to test their own thoughts about God and faith against that those of many other religious traditions. Christians are not only being influenced by other Christian traditions, but also by other faiths and philosophies. The influence of globalisation is becoming stronger, and Christianity is now explicitly being challenged by the opinions of atheists and other religions, which may create anxiety. Giddens (2011: 19) lays the blame for this anxiety at the door of Christian institutions, who are unable to guide people through the change they are experiencing. Giddens argues that institutions need to change because 'globalisation is not incidental to our lives today. It is a shift in our very life' (2011: 19). This is an area where the DRC should engage its membership in equipping them to deal with the complex realities of globalisation.

Individual congregation need to be aware of their 'glocal' character and learn to function in a globalized world. This 'glocal' character of the church is nothing new. Since the day of the Pentecost, the church was characterized by its multitude of cultures, but also by its local presence. The missional church need to be an institution that are able to guide people to find a new identity in a globalized world. God's intension with the church has always been that is should by a universal church. The earliest confessions formulated this characteristic of the church: *'We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church'* (Nicene Creed -325 C.E).

Manual Castells discusses this how globalisation and information technology are changing the way identity is formed in his work *The power of identity* (2010). He also notes that the social construction of identities takes place in the context of power relationships (Castells, 2010: 7). He identifies three ways of identity formation. Firstly, 'legitimising identity' is top-down identity formed by dominant (powerful) social structures. Jurgens Henriks (2012: 6) identifies the Apartheid government and ideology as such an identity-forming social structure, which kept the Afrikaners together during the Apartheid years. In reaction to these dominating 'legitimising identities', a 'resistance identity' is created by those who feel themselves stigmatised and devalued (powerless) by the dominant social structures. A 'resistance identity' is a reactionary identity that rarely communicates in constructive ways with other social structures, and emphasises the exclusivity of the group (Castells, 2010: 421). These groups are built around strong communal identities centred on for example fundamentalist religion (radical Islam), or a cause such as sexual liberation. The third type of identity is 'project identity', where a group of social actors build an identity around a specific aspect of society with the aim of transforming society (Castells, 2010: 8). This identity is more constructive in bringing about change than the 'resistance identity'. Hendriks (2012: 6) identifies the ecological and missional church movements as examples of this identity, and cites the work done by Communitas at Stellenbosch University and the Suid-Afrikaanse Vennootskap vir Gestuurde Gemeentes (SAVGG) as examples of organisations that are building a 'project identity'. A church that tries to form identity through top-down church polity and dogmatic decisions is still functioning as a 'legitimising identity' and would be met by strong resistance. It would benefit the DRC to work towards building a 'project identity' with the focus on being a missional church and the transformation of society.

2.1.3.4 Consumerism

Steven Miles (2006: 1) describes consumerism as the biggest religion of our day. Consumerism has been a prominent aspect of modern society since the second half of the 18th century. At first, the aim of consuming was to satisfy basic physical needs, but since then, consuming has developed into a mechanism to satisfy primarily emotional needs (Miles and Miles, 2004: 12). Consuming has become a way to give meaning to life in a secular society; in the words of Jean Baudrillard (1996: 204), a 'reason to live'. Because consuming started to play this existential role, it has led to a vicious spiral of ever-increasing consumption - that which is needed to satisfy today's needs, must be exceeded tomorrow, to have the same effect. The freedom of a postmodern society has been replaced by the dictatorship of consumerism. Michael Goheen (2011: 14) argues that consumerism is the result of increasing wealth in the West, and the concurrent loss of meaning. The irony is that in the process of rejecting all metanarratives (with the accompanying loss of meaning), postmodern society has created a new metanarrative – consumerism.

The church, too, has been drawn into this culture of consumerism. In the words of Stanley Hauerwas: 'The church becomes one more consumer-oriented organisation, existing to encourage individual fulfilment rather than being a crucible to engender individual conversion into the Body' (2004: 30). Individuals who have been brought up on a diet of consumerism fill the pews of our churches. These individuals bring with them their needs which they want to satisfy. This 'holy consumerism' has created a system of belief that Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton (2005: 162) call 'moralistic therapeutic deism'. This system is characterised by the following beliefs (Smith and Lundquist-Denton, 2005: 162-163): Firstly, a God exists, he created and orders the world and watches over human life on earth; secondly, God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions; thirdly, the central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself; fourthly, God does not need to be particularly involved in one's life except when God is needed to resolve a problem; lastly, good people go to heaven when they die.

Consumerism has not only been a prominent driving force in society, but also in the South African society. Consumerism is driving economic development, manufacturing, and spending patterns. Many 'successful' churches have succumbed to the consumerist needs of their

members in providing what they want, and not necessarily teaching them what following Christ is about.

2.1.3.5 Postmodernity and Christianity

The Western church is by no means homogenous, it is a complex landscape with many philosophical influences. The internal philosophical framework of Western Christianity ranges from pre-modern, modern, to postmodern, although modern and postmodern are dominant (Niemandt, 2007: 50). The external cultural context these Christians function in range from modern to postmodern, while they are reading the gospel written in pre-modern times. It is within this complex landscape that the DRC functions. Modern readers naturally interpret the gospel for a modern context and feel threatened by a postmodern context. In contrast, postmodern readers read the Bible for a postmodern context and feel threatened by a modern context. If we believe that the gospel speaks to all people in every context, a way need to be found to interpret the gospel across philosophical boundaries.

Modern Christians experience the main challenge for the church in the Western context as how to respond to the relativism and deconstruction of postmodernity, and the plurality brought about by globalisation, where the biblical narrative becomes one of many, and is no longer normative in society (Van Gelder, 2007b: 32). They see postmodernity as threatening and removed from their perception of a biblical worldview (Hirsch, 2006: 16). Orthodox Christian epistemology finds it difficult to get a foothold in a postmodern era and the metanarrative of the Christian gospel is not accepted in a postmodern worldview. This is because postmodernity characteristically questions everything, even the fundamental tenets of the Christian faith (Niemandt, 2007: 24). There is a shift from the ontological, one-dimensional, rational, and subject-object (modern) approach to a hermeneutical, sensitive, and relative (postmodern) approach (Hendriks, 2007: 1001). Christians whose faith was formed in a modern era find it difficult to deal with this postmodern turn. Some churches react by trying to insulate themselves from the threats they perceive, strengthening their defences, and emphasising a dualistic worldview, differentiating between the sacred and profane (Niemandt, 2007: 37; Gibbs and Bolger, 2006: 17-18).

The challenge that church face, is that postmodernity is a prominent influence in the current context. Modern Christians might not like it, but is the reality for the church in the West

(McKnight, 2007: n.p.). Christians might criticise and fear the postmodern era but they are influenced by it, and yet the missionary task of the church is to reach postmodern people as well. The baby boomer generation, born between 1946 and 1964, was the last generation that was comfortable with a purely modernistic church (that is linear, abstract, and cognitive) (Hamm, 2006: 53-54; Gibbs and Coffey, 2001: 31-32,36,124). Leonard Sweet (1990: 160) describes this situation very eloquently in writing:

> But the conviction is widespread, and growing, that our feet are already moving in some emerging postmodern world even if our hearts are left far behind, still stuck in the deracinated and disconnected forms of modernism's passing epoch.'

The church also engages with people that are on the postmodern end of the spectrum, that are living in a postmodern context. People born after 1965 were formed by the postmodern influences, relativism, and pluralism that were part of the world they lived in (Gibbs and Bolger, 2006: 21). These generations are looking for authenticity, rituals, symbolism, and experiences. If the Western church is to survive, it will have to learn to live and share the gospel within a postmodern world (Gibbs and Bolger, 2006: 16-16,21).

A generation of Christian leaders during the early 2000's was trying to incarnate the gospel in a postmodern society. Among others, Tony Jones, Doug Pagitt, Chris Seay, Tim Keel, Karen Ward, Johnny Baker, Andrew Jones, Shane Hipps, Rob Bell and Peter Rollins are expressing the gospel within a postmodern context (McKnight, 2007: n.p.; Gibbs and Bolger, 2006: 239,276-277,278-279,293-294, 300-301,320-321; Niemandt, 2007: 51-58). Scott McKnight (2007: n.p.) differentiates between those who minister *to* postmoderns, those who minister *with* postmoderns, and those who minister *as* postmoderns. The first category is sceptical about integrating postmodernism with Christianity. They see the relativism and pluralism of postmodern epistemology as a threat to the orthodox Christian faith (McKnight, 2007: n.p.). The American theologian David F. Wells (cf. Wells, 2005), and Christian leaders like Kevin DeYoung and Ted Kluck (cf. Deyoung and Kluck, 2005) fall into this category.

The second category refers to those who live, work and pray *with* postmoderns, and who accept postmodernity as a reality of life. They are, however, still critical of postmodernity. They believe that there are redeeming facets to the postmodern worldview, but they have some reservations about actually practising a postmodern faith. Alan Hirsch (2006) is a good example of this category. He is able to minister within a postmodern paradigm, but he still

holds on to biblical metanarratives. A South African example is Dialoog[34], started by Roedolf Botha.

Lastly, those who choose to minister *as* postmoderns embrace the deconstruction of metanarratives and the idea that there is no absolute truth. Orthopraxy is more important to them than orthodoxy, and they use narrative and symbolism to express their faith. Their emphasis on orthopraxis (i.e. how a Christian lives is more important that what he believes) (McKnight, 2007: n.p.) is explained by Peter Rollins in *How (not) to speak about God'* as follows (2006: 3):

'Thus orthodoxy is no longer (mis)understood as the opposite of heresy but rather is understood as a term that signals a way of being in the world rather than a means of believing things about the world.' This group prefers to worship in smaller, unstructured communities.

Examples include Icon, started by Peter Rollins in Belfast[35], Ireland; the Solomon's Porch community[36] in Minneapolis, Minnesota, led by Doug Pagitt and Tony Jones; and 3rd Place[37] who meet in Pretoria, South Africa.

The challenge to the church is not only to acknowledge these philosophical paradigms that exist among people and the contexts they function in, but also to build bridges to the dominant culture of the time (Sweet, 1990: 162). Bridges are needed for the gospel to cross to each context and person.

2.1.3.6 Secularisation and the decline of the Western Church

During the last century there were significant changes in the geographical makeup of the Christian world. The 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference still divided the world into two spheres. One was made up of countries dominated by the Christian religion (predominantly Northern hemisphere, Western countries), and the other of non-Christian (predominantly Southern hemisphere, Eastern countries) religions, thereby implying that the church from the

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34 Dialoog: http://www.dialoog.co.za/index.html
35 Ikon Belfast: https://ikonbelfast.wordpress.com/
36 Solomon's Porch community: http://www.solomonsporch.com/
37 3rd Place: http://3rdplace.co.za/love/

Christian sphere had the task of bringing the gospel to the non-Christian sphere. Within the Christian sphere, Reformed churches had the task of 'ministry' (pastoral care of Christians) and in the non-Christian sphere, the churches had a 'missionary' task.

However today the West can no longer be characterised as a Christian society, and the majority of Christians currently live in non-Western countries[38] (Johnson and Chung, 2004: 170). The challenge to Reformed churches today is how to be a missional church in a post-Christendom Western context. The missiology of the church was developed in a Christendom context, when the objects of mission were in different countries and cultures. A new mission strategy had to be developed for a church that functions on the periphery of society and is challenged by a pluralistic context.

For many decades, the West was the major source of missionaries to the rest of the world. Ironically, the objects of Western missionary activity (countries such as Nigeria, South Korea, and China) are now vibrant and growing Christian communities, while the Western church is declining (Tennent, 2010: 32). Although this emphasises the great work done by many Western churches (Catholic and Protestant), it also highlights the decline in many of those churches that were faithful in their missionary task for many years (Barrett, Kurian and Johnson, 2001).

Yet the decline of Christianity in the West should not be seen as an indication of the secularisation of the Western world. In the discussion of secularisation two terms need to be differentiated – secularisation and secularism. 'Secularisation' was first used to describe the expropriation of monasteries and other church properties by the state. Secularisation became the popular concept to describe the process of the secular realm increasing to the detriment of sacred or religious space. On the other hand, there is 'secularism' that is an ideology that strive towards a secular society that sees a non-religious worldview as the new normal in a modern society (Paas, 2011: 6). Berger (2000: 39) argues that the assumption that modernisation has

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38 Research done for the - *'World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World'* (Johnson and Chung, 2004: 171) indicates that around the year 1500, 92% of all Christians were European. After 1900, the percentage of European Christians started to decline while the percentage of Christians in non-European countries started to grow. The current balance between Western and non-Western countries is nearing the same balance as during the time of Christ. The prediction is that in 2100 three-quarters of Christians will live in non-Western countries. For more detail on the geographical distribution of Christianity, see Barrett, Kurian and Johnson (2001).

a causal relationship to secularisation is false. Although modernisation had some secularising effects, there were also counter-secularisation movements during this period. Berger (2000: 42-44) identifies the Islamic and Evangelical/Charismatic revivals as two prominent (albeit opposing) examples of counter-secularisation movement. It is also important to note that these two movements are not limited to Third World countries and uneducated people.

Furthermore, secularisation on a societal level does not lead directly to secularisation on an individual level. Although the influence of Christianity might be declining in the West, the influences of the other spiritual traditions are increasing. The assumption that modernity would relive the world of pre-modern religious beliefs was proven false by the growth in spiritual practices throughout the world (Tennent, 2010: 32). This has been confirmed by data collected for the Atlas of Global Christianity, which project that by the year 2200, 80%[39] of people will still be affiliated with some kind of religion (Johnson, 2004: 10).

The prominent work of Charles Taylor (2007) will be used as guide to develop a perspective on secularisation in the current age. Taylor[40] concur with Berger (2000) in opposing the mainline secularisation theory, that the modern world is on a trajectory towards unbelief. To frame Taylors argument, one has to see how he defines secularisation first. He articulates three prominent definitions of secularisation in history. The first meaning is the **separation of church and state**, which is the case in most Western countries[41] (Taylor, 2007: 1). This is also true for other public institutions like business and education, where there is an official separation between the church and these institutions. This sense of secularity does not, however imply a decline in religious belief and practices. An example is the USA, with a strong official separation of church and state, but with high levels of religious practice. The same could also be said of South Africa. The second meaning describes a context where **people are turning away from religious practices and the church**. This could happen despite the fact that the church still has some influence and prominence in the public sphere. An example of this is the Scandinavian countries (Taylor, 2007: 2). This is the dominant understanding of secularisation and is in line

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39 For more detail, see D B Barrett, G T Kurian, and T M Johnson (2001).

40 It is not possible to do justice to Taylor's 900-page treatise on secularization theory here, although some relevant arguments will be highlighted.

41 There are a few exceptions, like Britain and the Scandinavian countries, where the involvement of the church with the state is low-key and mainly ceremonial.

with secularisation theory that argues that modernisation leads to secularisation. Taylor (2007: 3) adds a third meaning that is related to the other two, but also unique. This third sense describe a context where there is a **shift towards secularity**, for example from a time where belief in God was unchallenged, popular, and socially accepted to a time where belief in God is one possibility among many others, and probably not the most evident one. He contrasts Western Christian societies with Middle Eastern Muslim societies. Within Muslim societies, faith is natural and society is conducive to faith; on the other hand, in some of the Western, secularised societies, faith is frowned upon. Secularisation in this sense is however not void of belief or enchantment, it is a time where immanence and transcendence coexist as fragile partners of reality (Taylor, 2007: 303-304). In this context of secularisation there is however a shift in the conditions of belief, furthermore belief has also changed for those who are still believing. In is with this context that Taylor makes his arguments about secularisation.

How did we get from a time when unbelief was nearly impossible, to a time where belief is highly improbable? Taylor gives a very detailed argument, but for the current discussion just a few cursory contours.

Before the Enlightenment, humans had a 'porous self', a self that was vulnerable to outside forces, both transcended and immanent. A self who's emotions and mental space were influenced by outside forces both benevolent and malevolent (Taylor, 2007: 35-36). This porous self was so vulnerable that, to reject God was too risky, the human agent was not able to defend themselves, they needed God on their side to protect them.

During the Enlightenment and modernity three central aspects of the premodern world were challenged: Firstly, that there is a close relationship between the cosmos and God (God as the creator of the order in the cosmos, but also God as the one that is involved the natural events, like fertility and natural disasters - 'acts of God'); secondly, the very existence of society (the kingdom, church, etc.) are grounded in a higher purpose or is in service of God; lastly, people lived in an enchanted (Taylor's word) world, filled with spiritual powers, God, evil, and demons (Taylor, 2007: 25;41).

The removal as these transcendent dimensions of society was however not enough to create a secular man (called the subtraction story of secularisation) (Taylor, 2007: 90-91). Something had to replace the loss of the transcendent. The 'buffered self', started to develop in place of the

vulnerable 'porous self'. This self was not open to the outside world, porous or vulnerable, and it became possible to deny God and still survive (Taylor, 2007: 27). The second obstacle to unbelief in premodern times was the inherently social nature of humans. Social living and transcendence was deeply entwined. The life of the community was filled with rituals and spiritual practices (Taylor, 2007: 41). Turning your back on God had deep spiritual implications for the whole community, therefore the community had an incentive to keep the individual part of the spiritual fold. Exclusive humanism developed as a way of being in a secular world, that offered significance without transcendence' (Smith, 2014: loc. 46). Exclusive humanism only become an option when the transcendent dimension of existence was removed and the deep social bonds were weakened. The emergence of the buffered-self paved the way for this change. The third obstacle to unbelief was the transcendent and immanent aspirations of humans. During Christendom the tension between the transcended and immanent aspirations was inhabited in the form of a ritualized life. The normal labourer balanced his mundane work by partaking in spiritual rituals and practices (religious gathering, fasting and festivals). During modernity the tension between the transcendent and the immanent was resolved in favour of either the one or the other. For some this tension was resolved by denouncing the immanent and living a monastic life, or in the majority of cases, the abandonment of the expectation of an eternity and instead a focus on flourishing in this world (Smith, 2014: 33).

Taylor's poses an interesting opinion on the influence of various reform movements on the development of exclusive humanism in the late medieval period. The reform movements were broader than the Protestant Reformation and included reform movements within the Roman Catholic Church and Renaissance humanism. The reform movement was driven by profound dissatisfaction with the hierarchical society's 'two-tiered religion', that had the priests and monks in a revered position looking down on the lay in their mundane vocations (Taylor, 2007: 63). During Christendom the religious orders carried the spiritual weight of the whole of society and very little spirituality was expected from the laity. The reform movement tried to level society, in effect raising the expectations of the laity. Every vocation was now spiritual and they had to live and work *coram Deo.* Ordinary people had to live paradoxical lives, doing '"this-worldly" tasks with a sense of devotion and worship' (Smith, 2014: 37).

During medieval times, fear was a dominant emotion - fear of immanent dangers, but even more so, fear of transcendent powers. The Roman Catholic Church used this fear to keep the

laity loyal, reminding them of the damnation that lay outside the church, sacraments and indulgences. The Reformers emphasis on justification through faith touched on an import nerve among the ordinary people. It was no longer just the church that could protect them from eternal damnation, but salvation became personal and possible for everyone. The other side of the salvation coin was the raising of the bar for personal piety. As argued before, personal piety was no longer just expected from the clergy, but from the laity as well. Protestant ministers became worried that their flock was becoming complacent in their justification through faith and they began to follow their Roman Catholic colleagues in creating fear among believers with 'terrifying visions of damnation' (Taylor, 2007: 75). Taylor (2007: 75) is of the opinion that this raising of the bar for personal piety, to a level that very few of the laity could attain, had a polarising effect. On the one hand it gave rise to the pietism, but on the other hand laity felt that they could not live up to the high moral expectations and were driven to humanism.

Exclusive humanism was also facilitated by a theological development called 'providential deism' - a theological paradigm that limits God's actions to creating and providence, and religion to a moral order (Taylor, 2007: 221;225). Providential deism developed due to an anthropological shift that was taking place. This anthropological shift unfolded in four movements: Firstly, the eclipse of a sense of further purpose or a 'good that transcends human flourishing' (Smith, 2014: 48); Secondly, the eclipse of grace – grace was not needed because God's design was there, discernible by reason, for everyone to see and through 'reason and discipline humans could rise to the challenge and realize it.' (Taylor, 2007: 222). God became a passive spectator of humans reaching for their potential.; Thirdly, the fading of a sense of mystery as God's providence and purpose is known to man – God's purpose for humans are also limited to their own wellbeing and thriving. Besides God's providence and his purpose for humankind there is no other mystery. d) Finally, the eclipse of 'the idea that God was planning a transformation of human beings which would take them beyond the limitations which inhere[exist] in their present condition' (Taylor, 2007: 224). These anthropological shifts created a framework for the development of providential deism that left little room for a sense of mystery, personal relationship with God and acts of worship.

This was a cursory perspective on some of the antecedents of the secularisation seen today. Now the focus shifts to a description of secularisation as a phenomenon today. In rejecting the

mainline secularisation theory (especially the subtraction story[42]), Taylor does concede that on the surface there is a decline in religious practices in the West. Taylor however depart from the mainline secularisation theory in explaining the *causes and implications of* secularisation (Taylor, 2007: 431-432;530).

Taylor is of the opinion that the regression from, a context where unbelief was nearly impossible (fifteenth century) through an era of (partial) élite unbelief to a wider (but still partial) unbelief in the twentieth century, was not a linier one. The regression was complex and influenced by many factors. Despite 'the incompatibility between some features of "modernity" and religious belief' there remains, a longing for, and response to, a more-than-immanent transformation perspective' (Taylor, 2007: 530). The result is a wide range of people positioning themselves between unbelief and belief, i.e. those who do not see themselves as active members of orthodox Christianity but still belongs to some confession, or still retain some form of belief in God (Taylor, 2007: 513).

Taylor describes the following characteristics of the secular age: Firstly, it is not an age of **unbelief but of different beliefs**, a time were the sacred or spiritual has been placed in a new relation to the individual and the social life (Taylor, 2007: 437). One cannot go back to an age of universal belief where it was the only option available - transcendence is just one way to explain the purpose of existence. The second characteristic is that, in a secular age, a **replacement for the transcendent is needed**. The problem is that man is in search of significance, and if significance can no longer be found in the transcendent, something has to replace it. The replacement came in the form of an anthropocentric shift [43] to exclusive humanism. Exclusive humanism is a human condition that is self-sufficient and offers significance without the need for transcendence (Smith, 2014: loc. 41). The third characteristic is that, within the immanent frame of the secular age, people experience significant **'cross pressure'**. He argues that between fundamentalist religion and fundamentalist atheism lies a

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42 The subtraction story of secularization argues that secularization is the result of the loss of the religious and metaphysical illusions that human held for centuries. The religious worldview was tested by reason and striped of all enchantment and superstition, what was left was a rational kernel (Taylor, 2007: 270).
43 Smith (2014: 48) calls this a process of 'immanentization', articulating the shift of meaning from the transcendent to the immanent.

space where faith is haunted by doubt and doubt is haunted by faith. The late modern capitalism did not satisfy all human needs and a cross-pressured space developed were the secular person longed for the lost transcendence and meaning[44] (Taylor, 2007: 320). Within this space, new ways of being developed that is not religious, but also not atheist. He calls this the 'nova effect'.

Taylor calls our current secular age, an Age of Authenticity. A development of the last half-century, 'which profoundly altered the conditions of belief in our societies' (Taylor, 2007: 273). He describes this as an age of 'expressive individualism', an age where society is growing more affluent and individuals have the means to create private spaces wherein they can 'express' their taste and needs through the use of consumer goods. It is an age where the individual's needs are paramount and the primary point of reference. There is little pressure to conform to societal or spiritual values (Taylor, 2007: 473-475). The self-understanding of humans is described with the term 'authenticity', because the individual has the right and the freedom to express their authentic needs in whatever way they deem fit. All needs are tolerated and the only sin not tolerated is intolerance itself (Taylor, 2007: 484). A further challenge of this age is that the limits to personal freedom is being eroded as the emphasis on individual fulfilment is increased. The challenge the church face to present a normative and uniting spiritual frame of reference to its members, is clearly very difficult in an Age of Authenticity.

The complexities of the secular age and the Age of Authenticity necessitate an urgent rethink of every aspect of the church's work. The missional church will have to navigate societies with different forms of secularisation. Secularisation has brought the mission field to the local church. The missionary calling of the church in a post-Christendom context remains the same as it has always been (to be a sign, instrument and foretaste of the kingdom), but the mission field has changed. The loci of the missionary's endeavours are no longer faraway, underdeveloped countries - the Western church is already in the missionary field. The challenge is to be a missional church within a context where belief in God is no longer part of society's frame of reference.

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[44] Taylor (Taylor, 2007) calls this longing for transcendence in a world that is flat and empty the 'malaise of immanence'.

2.1.3.7 From Christendom to Post-Christendom

Hugh McLeod (2003: 1) describes Christendom as a period in which:

> there were close ties between the leaders of the church and those in positions of secular power, where the laws purported to be based on Christian principles, and where, apart from certain clearly defined outsider communities, every member of the society was assumed to be a Christian.

The period of Christendom started with the alleged [45] conversion of the Roman emperor Constantine (AD 312) and the Edict of Milan [46] (AD 313), and lasted until in the middle of the 20th century (Hirsch, 2006: 58). During this period, the church had a privileged position and significant influence as a key social institution (Gibbs and Bolger, 2006: 17). By the end of the fourth century, Christianity was the only religion allowed by the Roman emperors, and most of the Roman elite had converted to Christianity (McLeod, 2003: 1). Despite the prohibition of other religions, they were still practiced privately.

Christendom saw Christianity at the centre of Western culture, and Western society as a Christian society (Murray, 2004: 76). During this period, the Church became better organised and, in following the example of the state, divided the Church into dioceses (Heitink, 1999: 94). Heitink (1999: 94) highlights an ecclesiological shift with great missiological implications during this time. Before the era of Christendom, the Church had been divided into communities called *paroikia* (community of outsiders, parish). After Christendom, this changed to 'dioceses', derived from the Greek *dioikein* (to rule one's household). This ontological shift betrays the position of Christians in society before and during Christendom. Churches were planted to serve every village, town, and city throughout the Western world. The task of these local parish churches was to care for the 'already' Christians in their area (Shenk, 1996: 70). Mission was politicised to subdue and bring under control the local tribes, and when this goal was achieved, there were no further need for mission activities. From this perspective, mission within the

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45 It has been debated for many years whether Constantine had had an authentic conversion, or whether it had only been political opportunism. What is clear is that he favoured Christianity throughout his reign (Litfin, 2007: 169; Stark, 2011: 169).

46 An agreement between Constantine 1 and Licinius in February AD 313 (Hirsch, 2006: 578; Veyne, 2010: 5).

territories of Christendom was not necessary, and the world outside this territory only became relevant when colonisation efforts started (Shenk, 1996: 71)

Throughout the last two centuries, there has much debate over the virtues and iniquities of the era of Christendom. Newbigin (1983: 20) argues that after two and a half centuries of persecution, the Christians had no option but to embrace the emperor's change of heart. They had to risk and experiment with a new world order for the sake of the gospel. Unfortunately, this experiment held many adverse long-term consequences for the church, but these could of course only be seen in hindsight. Rodney Stark (2003: 33) states that:

> For too long, historians have accepted the claim that the conversion of Emperor Constantine (ca. 285-337) caused the triumph of Christianity. To the contrary, he destroyed its most attractive and dynamic aspects, turning a high-intensity, grassroots movement into an arrogant institution controlled by an elite who often managed to be both brutal and lax.

The era of Christendom gave power and influence to Christianity, but robbed it of its unique influence as a movement that serves, and has a heart for those on the margins of society. Stuart Murray (2009: 198) writes that 'Christendom was also imperialistic, oppressive, and brutal, and that it distorted the Christian faith'. It is clear that despite the growth in the power and influence of Christianity during the Christendom era, it left a legacy that the religion is still trying to recover from.

The dominance of Christianity was weakened by the Renaissance and the Reformation, starting in the 14th century and coming to end during the modern period (late 18th and early 19th century) (Hirsch, 2006: 60). With the demise of Christendom, Christianity moved from the centre of society to the periphery. This move helped to unmask the false perception that Western culture was Christian, and so the West became part of the missionary task of the church (Tennent, 2010: 20 - 21). During Christendom, the perception had been that culture was dominated by Christian values and doctrine. The post-Christendom church had to function instead within a pluralistic society, dominated by humanistic values and sceptical individuals.

The institutional confidence of Christendom and the epistemological certainty of modernity used to give security to the church. In a post-Christian context, however, the church has lost both the institutional confidence and the epistemological certainty it had for many years. The end of Christendom created fear and uncertainty in the hearts of many Christians, but this

must be seen as an opportunity for the church to rediscover its apostolic roots (Hirsch, 2006: 66). The church must therefore be challenged to look back to the pre-Christendom era, where the early church was a missional community in a non-Christian and hostile society.

Moving from maintenance to a missional mindset is an especially difficult endeavour for mainstream Reformed churches whose DNA was formed during the Christendom era. All the major Reformed confessions accepted before the 20th century were written at a time when the Christian faith was dominant (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 19). These Reformed confessions[47] were also written as a reaction to the 'heretical' (from a Reformed perspective) theological positions of other Christian groups (Cochrane and Rogers, 2003: xi). The context of these confessions was dogmatic disputes, and not missional engagement. Shenk (1996: 71) argues that to question the missional intent of the Reformers is futile; it is only an attempt to impose 20th century questions on a 16th-century world. Mission was not part of their worldview and the questions they tried to answer[48] (Bosch, 1979: 125-126). The result was confessions that did not deal sufficiently with the *missio Dei* and the church's missional calling, but focused on doctrinal truth instead. This legacy still hampers many churches that function with a Christendom DNA in a post-Christendom context (Hirsch, 2006: 61). They provide typically Christendom answers to a world that is asking post-Christendom questions.

In was only in the 20th century that some Reformed churches started to accept new confessions that dealt with the church's calling to be a missional community. The first of these was the Barmer Theologische Erklärung ('The Theological Declaration of Barmen', henceforth called the Barmen Declaration), which was issued by the Confessing Church in Barmen (Germany) in 1934 in reaction to the so-called 'Deutsche Christen' acceptance of the Nazi ideologies (Wells, 2010: 186). The Barmen Declaration was divided into six theses, of which the fifth[49] deals with

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47 For more on the Reformed Confessions, see Cochrane and Rogers (2003).

48 For an overview of the debate, see Yoder (1984).

49 The Theological Declaration of Barmen, Thesis 5: '"Fear God. Honor the emperor" (1 Peter 2:17). 'Scripture tells us that, in the as yet unredeemed world in which the Church also exists, the State has by divine appointment the task of providing for justice and peace. [It fulfils this task] by means of the threat and exercise of force, according to the measure of human judgment and human ability. The Church acknowledges the benefit of this divine appointment in gratitude and reverence before him. It calls to mind the Kingdom of God, God's commandment and righteousness, and thereby the responsibility both of rulers and of the ruled. It trusts and obeys the power of the Word by which God upholds all things'

the church's relationship with the state and the church's social and political responsibility. In this thesis, the declaration makes a strong statement about the unredeemed world the church function in and cautioned against a church that is co-opted by the state to advance its own evil agenda (Busch, 2010: 72).

The sixth thesis[50] deals with the relationship between Christians and non-Christians. The church is reminded about its calling to bring the message of free grace to all people. What the content of God's calling to the church is, has led to much discussion. Eberhard Busch (2010: 88) warns against two dangers when dealing with the missional calling of the church. On the one hand, ecumenically minded Christians tend to place much emphasis on social justice and the political responsibility of the church, and neglect personal salvation and mission. Evangelical Christians, on the other hand, tend to focus more on personal salvation and mission and neglect social justice and political issues. The Barmen Declaration chose a balanced approach in emphasising social justice and political aspects, as well as the church's missionary responsibility to bring people to faith. Early signs of the church's break with the Christendom paradigm can be seen in the Barmen Declaration. The Confessing Church realised that neither society nor government could be described as Christian.

The Barmen Declaration lit a fire that would burn in many contexts over the next century. From a South African perspective, the Barmen Declaration had a strong influence on the Confession of Belhar, accepted by the General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church of South Africa in 1982 (Koopman, 2009 : 61). The Confession was a reaction to the suffering caused by the Apartheid ideology and the racial division within the Dutch Reformed Church family (Smit, 2007: 21-22).

(Busch, 2010: 72).
We reject the false doctrine, as though the State, over and beyond its special commission, should and could become the single and totalitarian order of human life, thus fulfilling the Church's vocation as well.
We reject the false doctrine, as though the Church, over and beyond its special commission, should and could appropriate the characteristics, the tasks, and the dignity of the State, thus itself becoming an organ of the State' (Busch, 2010: 71).

50 The Theological Declaration of Barmen Thesis 6. "'Lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." (Mt 28.20) "The word of God is not fettered." (2 Tim 2.9) The church's commission, upon which its freedom is founded, consists in delivering the message of the free grace of God to all people in Christ's stead, and therefore in the ministry of his own Word and work through sermon and sacrament. We reject the false doctrine, as though the church in human arrogance could place the word and work of the Lord in the service of any arbitrarily chosen desires, purposes, and plans' (Busch, 2010: 87).

In a post-Christendom context, new ecclesiologies are needed to be faithful to the church's calling to be a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom. A central aspect of the ministry of a missional church within a post-Christendom context is an incarnational ministry. David Bjork (1997) proposes such a model, which was developed from his experience as an American evangelical missionary in post-Christendom France, where the majority of people have a Catholic background. The traditional evangelical mission ministry in France were Church-centred and in opposition to the Catholic Church. The foundations of his model are a *perichoretic* view of the Trinity (cf. Bjork, 1999) and a focus on the Kingdom of God (cf. Bjork, 1997). He argues that evangelisation strategies are influenced by the underlying theological paradigm of the missionary. Any underlying paradigm is articulated on two axes that create a four-variant matrix for evangelisation. The x axis is the continuum between having a Church-centred paradigm or a Kingdom of God paradigm. Evangelisation within the Church-centred paradigm focuses on doctrinal differences between churches, and leading people to Christ so that they can join the missionary's church. The Kingdom of God paradigm recognises that followers of Christ are found in all churches, and the aim of their evangelisation is to help people become followers of Christ and to let them join a community of believers. The y axis is the continuum between a formal strategy of evangelisation, which emphasises activities like evangelisation crusades, organised door-to-door evangelisation and formal classes, and a relational strategy, which emphasis the role of every believer to build relationships with other people in the community. Within these relationships, faith is shared and a community is built.

The matrix created by these two axes looks as follows (Bjork, 1997: 284):

Formal

Separatist	Ecumenical
Sympathetic	Incarnational

Church-Centred

Kingdom of God

Relational
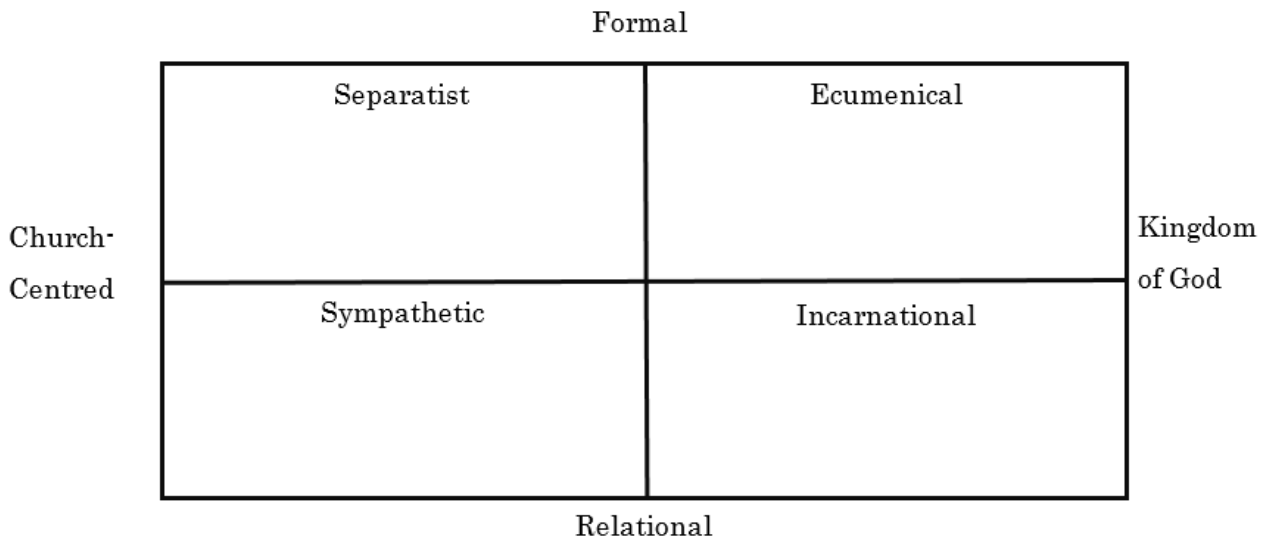
Figure 1: David Bjork's Analytical Model of Incarnational Ministry

The four quadrants are:

Separatist (Church-centered/Formal)

Bjork describes this group as follows: 'These missionaries understand their mission in terms of individual conversions, with the implied aim of gathering believers into self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating churches on the basis of a closely defined statement of faith'.

Ecumenical (Kingdom of God/Formal)

These missionaries focus on the Kingdom of God, but are also deeply committed to formal activity-centered ministries that emphasise differences in theology and spirituality. They acknowledge other churches as 'Christian', but they maintain their separateness from them.

Sympathetic (Church-Centred/Relational)

This group is relational in their evangelisation approach, while still emphasising the uniqueness of their specific church. They encourage people who have made a commitment to leave their previous church and join the missionaries' church.

Incarnational (Kingdom of God/Relational)

Missionaries in this quadrant focus on leading people to Christ within their own worldview and spirituality. Bjork (1999: 235-236) grounds the Incarnational approach in a *perichoretic* understanding of the Trinity. The *perichoris* emphasises a *kenotic* relationship with others. Within this *kenotic* relationship, the missionaries empty themselves of their need to preserve their own tradition and spirituality and focus on the Kingdom of God. The *perichoretic* view of the Trinity also emphasises the unity between Christians. Bjork articulates the following implications of a *perichoretic* understanding of the Trinity for mission (Bjork, 1999: 237-241):

- Christian unity is interpersonal, not organisational. This missionary paradigm is built on personal relationships instead of doctrinal agreement or organisational unity.
- Christian unity is characterised by constantly interacting with each other. As the Trinity work cooperatively in reconciling humankind to their creator, so must Christians work together in building the Kingdom.
- Christian unity needs to preserve the unique identity and character of individuals. The *perichoretic* unity among the Trinity does not result in a morphed loss of identity of the respective persons in the Trinity. The unity between churches and Christians celebrate the character and identity of each group.
- Christian unity is an interdependent unity, where members are defined based on their relationships with each other. Just as it is impossible to understand one person of the Trinity without reflecting on the other two, Christians should not be defined by how they are different from other Christians, but in their relationships with each other.
- Christian unity is characterised by the self-emptying of ourselves in the lives of the other. Jesus did not hold on to his divine self, and his disciples have to give up their comfort and status to become one with those they want to reach. Disciples must be willing to sacrifice their own tradition to benefit the other.

An incarnational ministry is central to the ministry of the missional church within a post-Christendom world. It will ask of the church to embody the *perichoretic* and *kenotic* character of the Trinity. In developing a missional ecclesiology for the DRC the incarnational paradigm of ministry will have to be taken seriously. It will be later argued that the *perichoris and*

kenōsis are important aspects of a missional theology and will thus inform an incarnational ministry.

2.1.4 Some important historical influences on the development of Reformed missiology

The development of the DRC missiology will be dealt with in the next chapter. Together with the previous discussion of the macro-philosophical influences on the development of the DRC theology, the focus will now shift to some of the historical influences on the development of the Reformed missiology. Reformed missiology formed the basis for the DRC missiology. To understand the DNA of the DRC missiology the reader must me sensitized towards these general trends. This discussion will also help to frame the development of a missional ecclesiology in chapter 4.

The Reformation of the 16th century led to a variety of new church movements: Lutheran churches in Germany and Scandinavian countries; Reformed churches in the Netherlands and Scotland; and later the Anglican Church in England. Each of these churches tried to legitimise their historical development by adopting various confessions[51]. These confessions formed the DNA of the post-Reformation churches, so to speak. At the heart of these churches was a differentiation between ecclesiology and missiology (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 18-19). The Reformers were also strongly influenced by the prevailing Christendom paradigm, which was the dominant worldview of their time. Christendom was an era that started in the fourth century A.D., when the church won official recognition from the state, which created a position of power and privilege for the church. The church of Christendom[52] was, however, a 'church without mission', according to Wilbert Shenk (1996: 71). Mission was co-opted by the state in

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[51] Examples of these confessions were the Augsburg Confession (Lutheran Church, 1530); the Belgic Confession (Continental Reformed, 1561); the Heidelberg Catechism (Continental Reformed, 1563); the Canons of Dort (Continental Reformed, 1619); the Dordrecht Confession (Anabaptist, 1632); and the Westminster Confession (English Reformed, 1646) (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 19).

[52] Christendom is a period that stretches from roughly A.D. 312, with the conversion of the Emperor Constantine, to the middle of the 20th century (Hirsch, 2006: 58). During this period, the Christian church had a dominant position and influence on all aspects of life, and there was no clear differentiation between Western political and cultural categories and Christianity (McLeod, 2003: 1).

the Christendom era to promote state policy. Shenk (1996: 71) argues that once the people of Europe were brought under control, there was no further need for this politicised mission. Kärkkäinen (2009: 253) argues that for Luther, it was especially difficult to leave behind the Christendom paradigm. Influenced by Christendom's worldview, Reformed confessions understood God and King to reign over the same location. Children were baptised into the church and state at the same time. The church functioned within a Christendom context where mission was deemed unnecessary, since everyone was seen as Christians.

There is disagreement among authors regarding the role mission played in the theology of the Reformers. Gustav Warneck (1834-1910), the founding father of modern missiology, had a harsh evaluation of the Reformers' mission theology. According to him, the early Protestants' movement 'lack[ed] any semblance of missionary activism' (McGrath and Marks, 2004: 393) and there was no motivation to undertake missionary work. Bosch (1993b: 244) sees this criticism as too harsh and argues that Warneck had used a definition of mission (a missionary going to another country to evangelise non-Western people) developed in 'the great missionary century'[53] to evaluate the Reformers' missionary zeal. Bosch (1993b: 244-245) argues that Luther's focus was on God's act of redemption in the world and not on the human effort or zeal – emphasising that God's sovereign act of grace implores and motivates the believer to bring the gospel of hope to the non-believer. Engelsviken (2003: 481) agrees with Bosch that the theocentric perspective on mission was already found in Luther's thinking. He goes on to quote James A. Scherer (1987 in Engelsviken, 2003: 481), stating that:

> [f]or Luther, mission is always pre-eminently the work of the triune God - missio Dei – and its goal and outcome is the coming of the Kingdom of God. Luther sees the church, along with God's word and every baptised believer, as crucial divine instruments for mission. Yet, nowhere does the reformer make the church the starting point or the final goal of mission, as 19th century missiology tended to do. It is always God's own mission that dominates Luther's thought, and the coming of the Kingdom of God represents its final culmination.

Calvin's emphasis on the believer's responsibilities in the world also had definite missionary implications. Despite these missionary aspects of the early Reformers' theology, very little missionary outreach took place in the first two centuries of the Reformation (Bosch, 1993b: 245).

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53 The 19th century was called 'the great missionary century' because of the great missionary fervour during this period (Bosch, 1993b: 224).

A prominent indication of the low priority of mission in the Reformers' ecclesiology was their view of the marks of the true church *(nota ecclesiae)*. John Calvin (2001: 4.1.9) deems these marks to be the (a) ministry of the Word and (b) the administration of the sacraments. Later Reformers[54] added (c) church discipline as a third mark (Belgic Confession, article 29). Granberg-Michaelson (2011: 237) argues that the Reformed confessions have no missional words in them. If they do reflect the DNA of the church, then where does this leave the Reformed tradition's missional impulse?

Although the enlightenment destroyed any ideals of theocracy on earth, it also released the Christian energy that motivated the modern missionary movement (Bosch, 1993b: 334). Still, the impetus for the modern mission movement was not found within the church, but developed alongside the church. This led to the development of mission societies that functioned as para-church organisations and focused only on mission[55]. Although most mission societies were closely linked to specific denominations, there was a clear differentiation between 'church work' and 'mission' (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 22).

This differentiated view of 'church' (ecclesiology) and 'missions' (missiology) found its way into the development of the theological curriculum. An early theological curriculum developed by Schleiermacher in 1811, proposed that missiology should be a sub-discipline of practical theology, to be distinguished from the discipline of ecclesiology[56] that seeks to define and understand the church (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 22;24). This compartmentalised view of church and mission prevailed despite extensive missionary activity in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Mission was one of the many activities of the church, alongside youth work, pastoral

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54 The Belgic Confession, article 29: 'The marks, by which the true Church is known, are these: if the pure doctrine of the gospel is preached therein; if she maintains the pure administration of the sacraments as instituted by Christ; if church discipline is exercised in punishing of sin: in short, if all things are managed according to the pure Word of God, all things contrary thereto corrected, and Jesus Christ acknowledged as the only Head of the Church. Hereby the true Church may certainly be known from which no man has a right to separate himself…'

55 The Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (1698); the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (1701); the Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen (1792); the London Mission Society (1795); the Scottish Missionary Society (1796); the Church Mission Society (1799); the American Board (1810); the Berlin Mission Society (1824), and the China Inland Mission (1865) (Bosch, 1993b: 330-333; Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 19-20).

56 Ecclesiology is a theological term that refers to the study of the church: from ecclesia = 'church'; ology = 'study of' (Van Gelder, 2009: 2).

work, diaconal work, etc. Even churches planted by the mission societies turned inward and became absorbed in forming denominations and attempts at church unity. Although these newly planted churches were the fruit of the missionary commitment of the mission societies, they did not see themselves as primary missionary agents. McGavran (1970: 171) used the churches in India after the Second World War as examples of young churches being preoccupied with their internal functioning[57].

However, the Third International Missionary Conference, held in Tambaram, India in 1938, was a turning point in the protestant debate on the relationship between church and mission. The conference emphasised the integral link between church and mission (Bosch, 1993b: 370). The conclusion reached by the Tambaram conference was that church and mission could not be separated (Philip, 1999: n.p.). Tambaram focused on the local church, and not para-church organisations, as the agent of God's mission (Scherer, 2001: 727).

The distinction that existed between Christian and non-Christian countries was also abandoned (Bosch, 1993b: 370). In principle, this meant that the West should be included in the focus of missionary activity. The Tambaram conference made a bold statement that the church plays an integral role in God's mission to the world. Although the conference was criticised for overemphasising the church,[58] rather than the Kingdom as the focus of God's plan for the world, there is no doubt that Tambaram opened doors for a new understanding of mission in the world. In a world where the missionary calling was championed by para-church organisations, Tambaram brought the church back to its primary calling as being missionary by its very nature.

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57 'National churches, too, become absorbed in these labors [sic]. Several large churches in India, for example, since the end of World War II, have been consumed by protracted conversations about church union. Though other matters are discussed, nothing else really matters. Whether churches minister to the remarkable openness of the Shudras in Andhra Province to the gospel or not, they must work at church union. In India, among the larger churches at any rate, the evangelization of the world is a minor matter. Organizational concerns, church union, and struggles for power within the national churches themselves get prime time and prime space' (McGavran, 1970).

58 The Tambaram conference's focus on the church can clearly be seen in the following statement by the conference (Philip, 1999): 'It is the Church and the Church alone which can carry the responsibility of transmitting the Gospel from one generation to another, of preserving its purity and of proclaiming it to all creatures. It is the Church and Church alone which can witness to the reality that man belongs to God in Christ with a higher right than that of any earthly institution which may claim his supreme allegiance. It is within the Church and the Church alone that the fellowship of God's people receive together the gifts He offers to His children in Word and Sacrament.'

The next conference of the IMC, held at Willingen in 1952, continued with the themes started by Tambaram. One major difference was the question of agency. Tambaram emphasised the local church as the primary agent in mission, whereas Willingen corrected this notion and stated that the Trinity was the primary agent of mission. God is missionary by His nature and mission was a function of the Trinity – no longer just of the ecclesiology or soteriology. The *missio Dei* concept developed from the work done at the Willingen conference (Sundermeier, 2003: 560). The traditional view of the *missio Dei* as the Father sending the Son and the Son sending the Holy Spirit into the world was extended to include the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit sending the church into the world (Bosch, 1993b: 390). The mission of the church is to join God in his Mission. The church was no longer the sending agency, but the one being sent by God.

The last conference to be held under the banner of the IMC was in Achimota, Ghana (1958), where the decision was made to amalgamate with the World Council of Churches (WCC) (Bosch, 1993b: 370). The amalgamation of the two organisations was driven by the newfound conviction that mission and church should be one. Subsequent conferences were organised by the WCC: 1961 New Delhi; 1963 Mexico City; 1972 Bangkok; 1980 Melbourne, Australia; 1989 San Antonio, United States; 1996 Salvador de Bahia, Brazil; 2005 Athens; and 2010 Edinburgh (World Council of Churches, 2012). These conferences will not be discussed in detail, because they did not have the same level of influence on the development of the missional concept as the conferences in Tambaram and Willingen.

2.2 Incarnational Church: The Importance of Understanding the Current Context

Contextualisation as concept developed during the 1970s is fundamental to the church's calling to incarnate the gospel wherever the church is (Bosch, 1993b: 421-422). For centuries, the church was declared orthodox if it looked like the historical church. Friedrich Schleiermacher was one of the first to argue that this approach was wrong, and that the Protestant Reformation did not try to reconstruct the church of the apostles. In the words of David Bosch (1993b: 422),

'[t]he Christian church is always in the process of **becoming**; the church of the present is both the product of the past and the seed of the future'.

Critical to the development of a contextual, relevant church is what Bosch (1993b: 423-424) calls the epistemological break. For many years, theology was conducted from 'above' by the initiated elite, using as its main source scripture, tradition and philosophy, with its main interlocutor the educated non-believer. Contextual theology, by contrast, is theology 'from below', which uses scripture, tradition and – importantly – social sciences, with its main interlocutor the culturally marginalised. The development of theology has moved from academia to *praxis*. This is a critical shift in the development of a missional ecclesiology that is dynamic and contextual.

To be an effective missional church, the church and the congregation members need to have a good understanding of their context. Because the missional church takes the incarnation seriously, understanding the culture is central to the missional task of the church. Central to the Christian faith is the incarnation of Jesus, son of God. Jesus was God incarnated as he immersed himself in human life, experiences, happiness and sorrow (Barth, 2004: 1). The most basic confession of the early church was that 'Jesus is Lord', the son of God who came to live among us (Hirsch, 2006: 24). Frost and Hirsch (2003: 35) put it as follows:

> When we talk of the Incarnation with a capital I we refer to that act of sublime love and humility whereby God took it upon Himself to enter into the depths of our world, our life, and our reality in order that the reconciliation and consequent union between God and humanity may be brought about. This "enfleshing" of God is so radical and total that it is the bedrock upon which rests all subsequent acts of God in his world.

An incarnational theology emphasises God's redemptive work in the here and now; it is about God's heart for justice and the liberation of the oppressed (Wright, 2006b: 44). Incarnational theology was developed to strike a balance between the 'already' and the 'not yet' dimensions of God's soteriological work in the world. It is the Kingdom of God that is already present in the lives of believers, and through the presence of believers in their communities (McNeal, 2009: 50). God's redemptive work is not an abstract act that opens up the eternal Kingdom only for believers in future, but God also redeems the present.

Although a theology of incarnation featured strongly in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions, sadly the incarnational perspective of the gospel has often been neglected in the Protestant tradition. It was the liberation theologians who discovered the message of the Incarnation for those who were being oppressed in the *favelas* in Brazil and the townships of South Africa (Bosch, 1993b: 512-513).

The incarnational perspective of the gospel is not only part of a theology of liberation: it also needs to be part of the theology of the missional church. The Bible is clear about the calling of the church as the body of Christ, to be an incarnation of the gospel of Jesus Christ in a specific cultural context (Dean, 2010: 64). The church follows the Head of the church (God) in being present in the world, not only as saved observers, but also as being part of the struggle for humanity. The incarnation inspires the church to have a good understanding of the culture. Central to the missional task is the construction of a variety of local theologies. These local theologies make the gospel relevant to the specific context. The challenge for the church is to communicate in a relevant and culturally specific way, but still to be an alternative community that stays true to the gospel (Newbigin, 1989: 153-154). The church must constantly avoid the temptation to be so relevant that it loses its prophetic voice.

The problem the church have is that the majority of current church practices are cultural accommodations to a society that no longer exists. As important as the cultural context of the church is the corporate culture within a church (Gibbs and Bolger, 2006: 19). A church's corporate culture reflects the values and attitudes of the members of that specific church. For many years, church pews were filled with Christians who had been formed by the modern era, resulting in a church culture that was shaped by the needs and preferences of these modern people. Yet these modern cultural practices have become stagnant in many churches, resulting in churches that are unable to reach a younger generation of people who were formed by postmodernity. Postmodern society's rejection of Christian metanarratives, scepticism about religion created a crisis of identity for modernistic churches. Churches were not equipped to navigate the pitfalls of the postmodern era. Tennent (2010: 23-24) argues that during this period of change, mainstream Protestants tried to stay relevant, culturally influential, and intellectually respectable, but in the process they became culturally domesticated and lost their prophetic voice in society.

One such an attempt to stay relevant was the Church Growth movement, which developed and emphasised aspects like church effectiveness and church health (Van Gelder, 2007b: 26). The movement used various leadership strategies from management theory to make churches more effective and increase their impact (Van Gelder, 2007b: 26). The most prominent exponent of the Church Growth movement was the Megachurch Movement in the USA[59]. During the last fifty years, the Megachurch Movement has been a major and prominent growth point within the Western church. This growth was, however, only possible within a modernistic, corporate culture, and most megachurches are not prepared to navigate the challenges of postmodernity (Tennent, 2010: 29). The Megachurch Movement has been successful in making Christianity more acceptable, but it has had difficulty in creating an alternative community. The megachurch was a typical baby boomer phenomenon, with its emphasis on effectivity, corporate culture, and membership numbers. Postmoderns seek authenticity[60], intimacy, ritual, and mystic experiences, which they do not usually find in modern churches (Frederickson, 2007: 53-54). Modern churches were created in the image of the baby boomers, but culture has moved on. This challenge is exasperated because postmodern children tend not follow the religion of their parents (Gibbs and Bolger, 2006: 23). For generations, children followed the religious and denominational loyalties of their parents, but postmoderns does not follow in this tradition and are searching for their own truth. Their spiritual identity is no longer linked to a community or loyalty to an institution. A more recent approach at reaching these postmoderns is the Emerging Church Movement (EMC). Churches within the EMC embraced a postmodern epistemology, but some of the proponents within the EMC were so taken in by this postmodern epistemology that they failed to be a prophetic voice against the pitfalls of that same epistemology (Tennent, 2010: 30; Doornenbal, 2012: 83-84).

The postmodern era is also challenging the hierarchical structure within the church (Gibbs and Bolger, 2006: 20-21). Hierarchical organisational structures became dominant in the church during modernity. Although these structures were intended to enhance efficiency, they also became bastions of power and control (Niemandt, 2007: 17,25). These hierarchical structures

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59 For a more detailed discussion of the Church Growth Movement, see Chapter 4 of this work.

60 Scott Frederickson (2007: 53-45) offers the following excerpt of an interview he did with a postmodern church leader: 'Postmoderns do not trust things that are slick. They want authenticity above other values. For postmoderns, process is as important as product, if not more so.'

became the creators of dogma and fountains of truth; truth not only for the 'legitimisation' of the church structure, but also for the members of the church (Niemandt, 2007: 38-42). The failures of these hierarchical structures eventually led to distrust of church structures among postmodern people.

The religious and spiritual landscape of the postmodern era looks a lot different to the era that has gone before. In a globalised, postmodern world, the spirituality of other religions is becoming more influential (Gibbs and Bolger, 2006: 22). The influence of the Christian faith is inhibited not only by secularisation, but also by the appeal of spiritualities derived from other religions. Where the need of postmoderns for spiritual experiences is not satisfied in a modern church, spiritual practices and experiences from other religions fill the vacuum. Postmoderns search for transcendence and spiritual fulfilment in the spiritual practices of Eastern religions. An example of work done on the growth of Eastern spiritualities is the research done by Gerald Parsons (1994) on religious diversity in Britain. His work documents the growth in the popularity of Eastern religious practices among native Britons.

The global face of Christianity is also changing. The statistical centre of gravity of Christianity indicates a point on the globe where an equal number of Christians are living north, south, east,
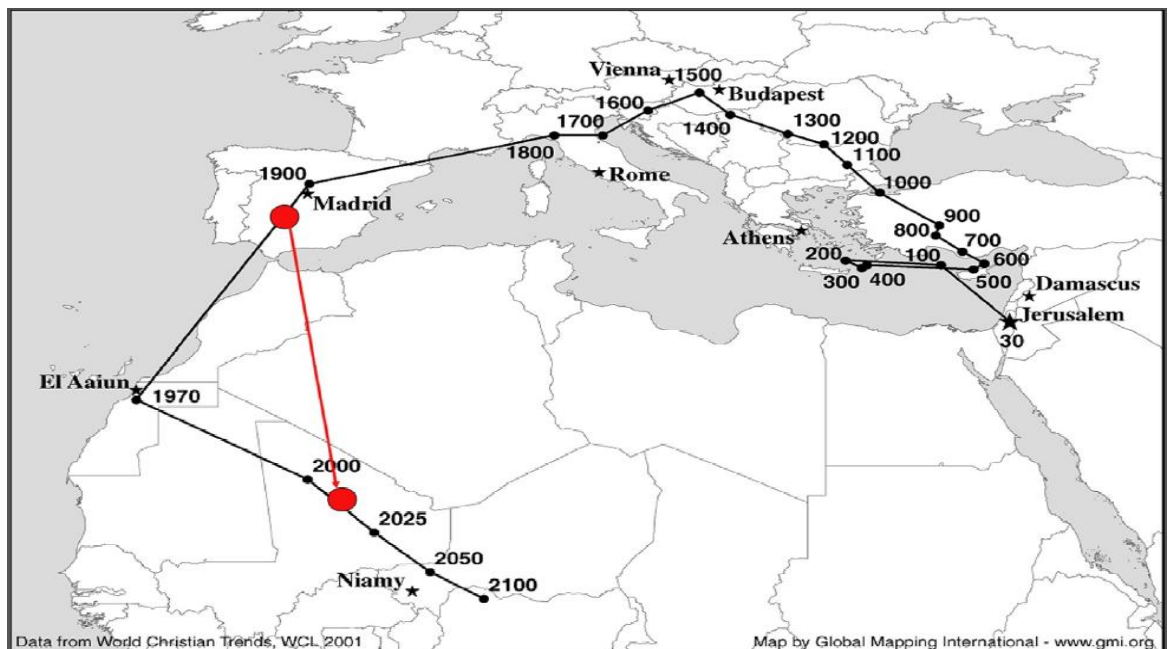
Figure 2: Trajectory of the Statistical Center of Gravity of Global Christianity, AD 33-AD 2100 (Johnson and Chung, 2004: 167)

and west of that point.

Figure 4 is a graphical representation of this point from AD 33 to AD 2100 (projected). As expected, the statistical centre of gravity was centred on Jerusalem at the time of Christ. It steadily moved north-west as the church spread into Europe. A dramatic shift started around 1900 as Christianity spread into the Southern hemisphere, particularly Africa, and since 1970 in the East. Figure 4 gives an indication of the distribution of Christians around 1900 and the distribution around 2010. The growth in Africa and the East is prominent.

Currently, 67% of Christians live outside the Western world (Tennent, 2010: 34) and 61% live in the Global South (Pew Research Centre, 2011b: n.p.)

An example of the decline of Christianity in the developed world is statistics from the Netherlands. In a recent publication by Bernts and Berghuijs (2016: loc. 225) the church membership numbers form 1966 until 2015 in the Netherlands are as follows:

Table 1 Church membership numbers form 1966 until 2015 in the Netherlands

	1966	1979	1996	2006	2105
Roman Catholic	35	29	21	16	11.7
Protestantse Kerk in Nederland	25	22	19	14	8.6
Smaller faith groups	7	6	7	9	11.9
Not involved	33	43	53	61	67.8

Source: (Bernts and Berghuijs, 2016: loc. 225)

A strong decline in the number of people involved with organized Christianity since at least 1966. These statistics are even more pessimistic if taken into account that only 18% of these church members attend church services on a weekly basis. An analysis of the ages of those that are currently involved in organized Christian religion does not bode well for the future. While 19% of those born before 1940 belong to the PKN, only 6% of those born after 2011 belongs to

the PKN (Bernts and Berghuijs, 2016: loc. 234;256). The decline in church membership will continue.

It is not only the cultural, socio-economic, and geographical complexions of the church that are changing, but also the denominational and theological makeup. For many years, the church landscape was dominated by the three major Christian movements: Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Eastern Orthodox. Many of the younger churches can no longer be identified as any of these; they belong to independent church movements with a strong Pentecostal and prophetic influence (Tennent, 2010: 39). These independent churches are the fastest-growing segment within the Christian religion today. There are some characteristics that these independent churches have in common, for example, they are often led by laypeople with a strong prophetic influence, informal structures, and their worship experience are frequently Pentecostal and charismatic. Apart from these commonalities, they differ in many other aspects such as their theology and ecclesiology. Despite the difficulty in defining these churches, they will be a major factor in the church of the 21st century (Tennent, 2010: 41). At the beginning of this century, there were 1.1 billion Roman Catholics, 423 million independents, 386 million Protestants, and 252 million Orthodox Christians[61], according to the World Christian Database (WCD) (Barrett, Johnson and Crossing, 2008: 30). It is clear from these statistics that the independent churches should be taken seriously as the fourth major branch of Christianity. Categorising them as the fourth major branch of Christianity does not however help in defining their historical and theological background.

These statistics are important for a missional leader to recognise that the face of Christianity will look different for future generations. Christianity will no longer be defined from a Western,

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61 Pew Research Centre (2011: n.p.) data concurs on the number of Catholics (1.1 billion) and the number of Orthodox Christians (260 million). Their number of Protestants, however, is 800 million, which is substantially higher than the WCD figure. When the definitions of the two research projects are compared, the reason for the different numbers becomes clear. Pew divides Protestants into three groups: firstly 'historic Protestants who belong to churches originating (or reformulated) at the time of the 16th-century Protestant Reformation in Europe, as well as other denominations that came later, such as Methodists'; secondly Anglicans; and lastly 'independent Christians'. The WCD has separate categories for Anglicans and independent Christians. When the numbers for Protestants, Anglicans and independents are added together, the WCD total is 890 million, which is closer to the PEW number.

first world, and white perspective, but it will be enriched by diverse cultures, from all six continents and from different socio-economic backgrounds.

Among these different Christian groups a new unity will be needed in a postmodern, globalized world. Christian church history is marred by bitter divisions and even sectarian hate among different groups. The current reality is characterised by two dialectical movements: on the one hand, the post-denominational Christians, and on the other the emergence of thousands of new denominations (Tennent, 2010: 47). Postmodern Christians are generally not loyal to a specific denomination; they only have loyalty to people within their local Christian community or network. Then there is further fragmentation of the church because many independent churches are planting new congregations and forming smaller denominations. The current context calls for a new and profound unity, since unity is central to church's witness in the world. Tennent (2010: 49) argues for a 'deep ecumenism: an ecumenism that finds its roots in the historic Christian confessions, in other words, an ecumenical unity that goes deeper than a few joint projects or a single structure. To do this, Christians will have to differentiate between kerygmatic truths that unite all Christians, and *adiaphora*, which is closer to the periphery. The aim is a church that finds unity in the confession of the apostolic faith, but also has respect for the rich diversity within the Christian tradition.

For many centuries, some churches defined themselves by how their tradition differed from other Christian traditions. This was only possible within a Christendom-predominant context. The church as an institution was protected, and the only threat to the church was the sectarian groups in its midst. Now, in a post-Christendom context, the church finds itself at the periphery of society, and Christians are in the minority. The different Christian traditions no longer have the luxury of seeing other Christian traditions as a threat (Tennent, 2010: 49). They now have to deal with the threats of radical secularism and atheism, as well as the contextual challenges of helping the poor and bringing about world peace. As long as the churches define themselves according to their unique perspective on the Christian tradition, a deeper ecumenism will not be possible (Tennent, 2010: 47).

Tennent (2010: 49) views a deeper ecumenism not as one grand universal church structure, but as churches finding their unity in the historic Christian confessions. Confessions like the

Apostles' Creed[62], which were developed before the Christian tradition became dominant, are still widely accepted in Western Christian traditions (Johnson, 2008: 6) [63]. Tennent (2010: 49-50) pleads for a Christian community that sees itself 'firstly and foremost as Christians proclaiming the apostolic faith and only secondarily as Reformed Christians, Pentecostal Christians, Dispensational Christians, Armenian Christians, or independent Christians.' The dream of deeper ecumenism must, however, be held in a creative tension with the cultural and spiritual diversity within the Christian tradition.

Another dimension of the change from a modern to a postmodern world is in the style of communication (Gibbs and Bolger, 2006: 20; Sweet, 2012: 110-111). The Reformation was driven by, and contextualised in, the print era. Modern church liturgy was dominated by the text. By contrast, the postmodern world is predominantly image-based and driven by social media. Postmoderns learn and experience their spirituality mainly through sound, sight, smell, and touch (Niemandt, 2007: 19). The use of rituals, symbols, narrative and mystic experiences is essential to the communication of the gospel in a postmodern world. Communication is becoming much more than just the transmission of facts.

During modernity, the power of knowledge was in the hands of those who could print: the church and the elite. The era of print reinforced the hierarchal nature of society. Social media, in turn, has a democratising influence, levelling society and giving everyone a voice. Leonard Sweet (2012: 110-111) is of the opinion that this democratisation could further the Reformation's doctrine of the priesthood of all believers by taking religion out of the hands of the 'gatekeepers and enabling more open-sourced, self-organising connections with God'.

Reflecting on this discussion it becomes clear that Christianity can never escape the context it functions in. The religious and spiritual landscape the DRC function in differ however widely from the context that formed the church. If the DRC wants to be incarnational, it will have to understand its context. The reformed tradition and specifically the DRC will have to learn from

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62 Early versions of the Apostles' Creed appeared around 200 A.D. The theologian Hippolytus of Rome (approximately 170-236 A.D.) mentions early forms of the Creed in his treatise The Apostolic Tradition (Johnson, 2008: 6).

63 The prominent use of the Apostles' Creed is not without controversy. See Adolf von Harnack's criticism on the creed as being theology of the early church which goes beyond the theology found in Jesus' preaching, as well as among the Apostles (Swete, 2011: 17).

the others traditions (RKK, liberation theology) how to be an incarnational church. An ecclesiology that developed during Christendom is not relevant to a post-Christendom, postmodern context. The face of Christianity has also changed in the last 100 years. The church in the West is in decline while the church of East and global South is flourishing. The DRC context is even more complex, because the church function in two worlds. The first is the white Afrikaans community that reflects a secularising western culture, while the broader population of South Africa reflects an African culture that is more resistant towards secularisation. The Afrikaans speaking community in South Africa are also only around 7 million out of the 50 million population of South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2011: 27). As long as the church remains focused on white Afrikaners its growth potential will be limited. If the church wants to grow it will have to rethink its white Afrikaans identity. Other challenges to the church is includes the following: Pervious attempts in the DRC at navigating the post-Christendom context like the megachurch movement had some success at reaching the boomer generation, but is not that successful in reaching the subsequent generations. Postmodern children tend not to follow the denominational loyalties of their parents and are exposed to a wide range of spiritual traditions. Secondly, church membership in a secularised western context is declining. Thirdly, one Christian grouping that is growing is the independent churches that tend be more charismatic. Fourthly, The reformed tradition that the DRC are part of developed in the print era. The church is strong in its emphasis on the Bible, truth and confessional orthodoxy, while the postmodern person experience their spirituality through ritual, their senses, images and social media. A last challenge is that despite the reformation's reaction to the hierarchical structure and the clergy/laity dichotomy of the Roman Catholic Church, the Reformed tradition (and the DRC) still reflect hierarchical tendencies with the power invested in the clergy and church polity. Postmodern people are incredulous towards any power structures.

2.3 Conclusions

Chapter 2 dealt with research question 1 (a), namely: *What is the macro-philosophical and historical context of the DRC?* The discussion was limited to the European, British and American contexts.

The chapter started with the historical context of the Reformed tradition since the Enlightenment. As background to the Enlightenment, a short introduction was giving to the premodern worldview. A period that was characterized by, a strong hierarchical social structure that was validated by the predominant Christian view of seeing God as the final authority, expressing his authority through the church and the Kings and Nobles.

During the 15th and 16th century, the Renaissance, Protestant Reformation and the Age of Revolution and Science challenged this worldview. The hierarchical society was deconstructed and ordinary people became the primary agents of God in the world. These events lead to a period called the Enlightenment. The aim of the Enlightenment had been to emancipate humans from slavery to the supernatural and to the power structures of society. As this chapter showed, the Enlightenment had a profound influence on the Christian religion for centuries thereafter. There was also a reciprocal relationship between the Enlightenment and the Reformation. The Reformation was made possible by some specific changes in society during the Enlightenment; among them was the breakdown of the pre-modern hierarchical society and, the transition from feudalism to capitalism. The Enlightened project was also strengthened by the Protestant theology disdain for hierarchies. The footprints of the Enlightenment and modernity was clear in the development of the Protestant faith. Christians could not escape the rationalizing, objectifying, individualizing, and anthropocentric influence of the Enlightenment. The influence of the Enlightenment is especially evident in the evangelical tradition that were strongly influenced by the age of reason. These aspects of the Enlightenment and the Reformed traditions created fertile soil for the later development of a secular society.

The basic tenants of the Enlightenment and modernity was eventually challenged by events in the early 20th century. Society lost confidence in the modern project's central tenants. Modernity was further challenged by advances in physics that highlighted the inexactness of some aspect of science (exp. theory of quantum mechanics).

Two decryptions of the era that followed modernity are found in the missional literature. The era is described as either late modernity (or liquid modernity) or postmodernity. The late modernity theory was advanced by theorist like Antony Giddens (1991) and Bauman (2005) who argues that the period that followed modernity was not as a new era, but a radicalised

form of modernity. Bosch (1993b) and Van Gelder (1996) are among the theorists that define the era following modernity as postmodernity. The certainty of the modern era was replaced by relativity and uncertainty of postmodernity. The metanarratives of modernity were deconstructed, and personal and temporal truth became the norm.

Globalisation, consumerism, and secularisation, three prominent characteristics of late and post-modernity, were also dealt with. One example of the influence of globalization on the DRC is the contact Christians are having with a multitude of other faiths and philosophical traditions. The influence of globalization became acute in South Africa after the fall of Apartheid. The Apartheid government and sanctions limited the influence of these traditions, but after 1994 the country was flooded with a variety of influences. New missional ecclesiologies will have to understand the impact of globalisation and guide Christians to deal with the impact of a globalised world. Congregations will have to deal with their glocal character. Being influenced by global trends while still embodying the gospel a specific local context. The other prominent characteristic of the era is consumerism. Consuming has become a way of to give meaning to life in a secular society. The church has been drawn into consumerism by members that were brought up on a diet of consumerism. This transformed churches into need satisfying institutions. New missional ecclesiologies will have to deal with the consumerist DNA of Christians and the broader population. The challenge is to bring the gospel in a relevant way without bowing the knee to the holy consumerism of a moralistic therapeutic deism. The influence of secularisation on the western church is also prominent. There are however differences in the understanding of secularisation. The mainline secularisation theory argues that modernization of society leads to the secularisation of society. Theorists like Peter Berger 2000 and Charles Taylor (2007) disagree with this assessment. Taylor sees the secular age as an age not of unbelief but of different beliefs, an age where belief is one possibility among other to find significance and meaning. Taylor also argues that the transcendent dimension of humans did not only disappear but had to be replaced by something, and it was replaced by exclusive humanism. Exclusive humanism is a human condition that is self-sufficient and offers significance without transcendence. The secular age is however not only known for its secular forces but also for its 'cross pressures'. Cross pressures describe the interaction between forces that draw atheist towards faith and believers towards unbelief. During the last fifty years a unique era in the secular age has developed. The age is called the Age of Authenticity, a society that is growing ever more affluent, where individuals are under

little pressure to conform to social values and are able to express their individual tastes and need through the use of consumer goods. Individuals needs are have become paramount and the only reference point for those living in the Age of Authenticity.

Globalization, consumerism and secularisation present difficult challenges to the institutional church. The years of social and intellectual isolation had slowed the impact of these three forces on the South African Society. For the last twenty years South Africa was however exposed to their full force. Will the religious landscape in South Africa look the same as Europe in twenty years, with empty cathedrals and full commercial districts? There are some aspects that could the secularisation in South Africa. Firstly, South Africa has the advantage to learn from the trajectory Europe has been on; secondly, the proportion of South Africans that have a Western European orientation are relatively small. The African proportion of South African are less secularised than the European counterparts. Thirdly, the many existential challenges like political and economic uncertainty, droughts etc. tend to inhibit secular forces.

The challenge for the DRC is that its members are from a variety of philosophical backgrounds. The internal philosophical framework *of Christians* might be premodern, modern or postmodern. The cultural context these *Christians function in* rage form modern to postmodern, and they are reading the gospel written in pre-modern times. The challenge is to create a missional ecclesiology that can navigate these disparate contexts.

The chapter concluded with discussion of the importance of understanding the current context. It was argued that a missional ecclesiology should be incarnational, embodying the gospel with a concrete context. A missional ecclesiology for the DRC will have to take the unique context of South Africa seriously. The chapter dealt only with European heritage of the traditional DRC membership, but the principle of incarnational ministry remains the same regardless of the context. The church will also have to incarnate the gospel within an African context if the church wants to reflect the demographic of South Africa. Incarnation with an African context was however beyond the scope of this research.

Chapter 2 aimed to create a sensitivity in the researcher for the complex macro philosophical context of the DRC. The context provided in Chapter 2 will help the reader to understand the

context: firstly, in which the DRC theology and missiology developed (Chapter 3); secondly, in which the DRC decisions on missional ecclesiology (Chapter 6) were made, and ultimately, in which a missional ecclesiology for the DRC will be developed (Chapter 7).

CHAPTER 3

CONTOURS IN THE HISTORICAL, THEOLOGICAL AND MISSIOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRC

The question of describing the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa is a complex one. The DRC has roots in the Reformed movement of John Calvin, but it is much more than purely Reformed. The DRC has Evangelical leanings, but at stages, the church was dominated by neo-Calvinists and Liberal movements. Some practices in the history of the church remind the observer of Pietist and Puritan traditions. A description of the DRC has socio-cultural, theological and historical dimensions. First the socio-cultural influences on the DRC will be dealt with, then the focus will shift to the historical and theological influences.

The chapter will answer research questions 1 (b) *What was the socio-cultural, historical and theological influences on the DRC?* and 2 *What was the historical development of the missiology of the DRC?* The theological and missiological developments in the DRC will be related to broader philosophical and theological developments internationally. The chapter will also lay the groundwork for the evaluation of the decisions by the General Synod on a missional ecclesiology to follow in Chapter 6.

The context of the DRC will be discussed first. To understand this context, the influence of the New South Africa and the DRC's struggle for a new identity needs to be understood, especially in terms of political and social transformation. The post-Apartheid demographics of the DRC will also be dealt with. Lastly the cultural context of the DRC will be addressed.

3.1 The Birth of the New South Africa and the DRC's Struggle for a New Identity

Since 1994, momentous changes have occurred in South Africa. Du Rand (2002: 9) identifies two of these changes that were pivotal in shaping the future of South Africa: firstly, the aim of

transforming South African society into an equal society, and secondly, the transition to a liberal democracy.

Transformation to an equal society was to be the most challenging aspect of the New South Africa, as years of inequality had to be corrected within the framework of sound economic policy and social systems. Transformation was impatiently and eagerly awaited by those who had been disadvantaged by the Apartheid system, and equally feared by many of those who had been beneficiaries of the previous regime. This transformation also had a profound impact on the DRC. There was internal and external pressure on the DRC to be more inclusive and to strive towards church unity with the Uniting Reformed Church, the Reformed Church in Africa and the DRC in Africa. On the other hand, the DRC became, arguably, the last social structure where the Afrikaner community was still dominant. A large portion of its members suffered from transformation fatigue and resisted change in the church (Durand, 2002: 18-19). Hermann Giliomee (2004: 665) writes that the history of the Afrikaners was dominated by the dialectic relationship between the fatalistic expectation that they would be annihilated at any time, and a mysterious vitality. This narrative could also be seen in the Afrikaners' reactions to the changes in South Africa. Those who felt threatened by the changes became more introverted and emigrated into their personal sphere where they felt they had control. Others got involved in public life to work for the protection of Afrikaner rights (Du Toit et al., 2002: 43). Both of these reactions were internally focused on self-protection. There was, however, a third category: those Afrikaners who believed in the future of South Africa and who wanted to be part of building the Kingdom of God in South Africa. These Afrikaners can still be found in schools in impoverished areas, or in rural medical clinics. This impulse can also be seen in the poverty relief budget (R1035 million for 2013/2014[64]) of the DRC (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2015).

The second major change was the transition to a liberal democracy (under The Constitution), which also had a significant impact on the DRC because it resulted in the democratisation of

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[64] Of these funds, 40% is state subsidies, 10-20% is paid services, and the rest comes from DRC churches and members. From this budget, 1 031 477 children received statutory services because of family trauma; 3542 children are in the care of DRC children's homes; 30 591 elderly people are cared for in retirement homes; 297 796 people received poverty relief and development help; and 90 366 (2012) persons received help for substance abuse, HIV or disability. In total services were delivered to 1 472 684 people in 2013/2014 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013a: 66-67; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2015: 309-310).

the whole of society[65] (Durand, 2002: 15). This created a worldview that had individual freedom – freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom from discrimination, etc. – as one of its central tenets (cf. Republic of South Africa, 1996: n.p.). The prominence of individual freedom led to a re-evaluation of social and religious values. The global trend toward secularisation found fertile ground in the democratisation processes in South Africa. During Apartheid, the isolation created by the sanctions imposed by international governments and the control by the South African government on the media had created an environment where South Africans were shielded from global secular and spiritual trends. Now, the democratisation of South Africa flooded the country with a smorgasbord of new (new to South Africa) spiritual and philosophical traditions. For the first time, South Africans had a variety of religious and philosophical influences to choose from (Spies, 2004: 1065-1066). Spies (2004: 1066) argues that South Africa had to play catch-up to the debates that had been happening in Europe for the last 60 years. Paradoxically, it was not only secularisation that gained momentum, but also the interest in other spiritual traditions.

3.1.1 The Impact of the Political and Social Transformation Process on the DRC

Two processes in post-Apartheid South Africa weakened the influence of the DRC on public discourse and governmental processes. The first was the political, social and economic transformation process, and the second, the secularisation and influence of other spiritual traditions. All churches were influenced by these processes, but it was the traditional white Reformed churches that found it especially difficult to navigate these new circumstances (Durand, 2002: 21). The fact that the DRC was the biggest church among white, Afrikaans-speaking South Africans meant that it had a disproportionate influence on the white nationalist government. Transformation meant that the church lost this position, and there was now great suspicion of the role that the church had played in support of Apartheid.

Since the end of Apartheid, the church has experienced many contextual change (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007d: 44-45). Significant differences are seen between the different generations within

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65 Chapter two of the South African constitution is called the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights enshrines the human rights of each individual within the constitutional law of South Africa (The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development , 2015).

the church; they speak the same language, but have little understanding of each other's views. The church has to minister to a younger generation that feels differently about concepts like 'confession' and 'orthodoxy' - a generation that is more interested in orthopraxy than orthodoxy. Taken with the deconstruction of prominent systems and structures, these anti-institutional sentiments have serious implications for traditional churches, like the DRC. Its members operate in a context dominated by materialistic and consumerist values. On the other end of the spectrum is the established and older membership of the DRC that are intensely experiencing the growing pains South Africa's young democracy. The economic realities of post-Apartheid South Africa have detrimental effect on them, and racism, bitterness and the experience of loss are common. Pre-1994, the church managed to isolate herself within a white, developed-world context, but now the church has to learn to function within a developing-world. The church minister within a paradoxical society were pre-modern, modern, and postmodern ideas live together. For some, the church is 'dead', albeit not Christianity, other see the church as a movement of disciples and not an organisation with membership. The dominant and powerful position the church had pre-1994 made the church also vulnerable to criticism about it role in society. The DRC has to be sensitive in dealing with power within the church and society as a whole.

These changes present many challenges to the leadership and ecclesiology of the DRC. Firstly, they are so diverse, exp. the need for structure and familiarity among the established older members are dialectal opposed to the deconstructionist needs of a younger generation. Secondly, the ministers trained before 1994 were trained to minister in a different context and to a different membership. Thirdly, those that are in the leadership of congregations and synods are from a generation that are protectionist and satisfied with the *status quo*.

3.1.2 Post-Apartheid Demographics of the DRC

A look at the demographic changes in the DRC[66] yields trends that the church should be cognisant of. The first indicator of the health of the church is the total membership of the church.

The adult membership (confirmed members) of the DRC stayed more or less the same between 1981 and 2006, at around 900 000. The number of children, however, declined at around 10 000 per year between 1985 and 2006 (Schoeman, 2011: 479). Schoeman (2011: 480) believes this is related to the increase in the average age of the Afrikaner community and the declining birth rate. From 2006 until 2014 the decline in membership was more pronounced. The adult membership declined from 874 959 in 2006/7 to 760 599 in 2013/4, the children from 257 195 in 2006/7 to 203 694 in 2013/14. An interesting anomaly to the decline in membership was the rise in income of the church in general. From 2006/7 until 2013/4 the income rose by 43.66%, this number is more significant if the decline in membership is considered. The average contribution per member rose with 65.26% from 2006/7 to 2013/4.

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66 Research on the demographic changes in the DRC has been done internally and published as Kerkspieël ('church mirror') since 1981 (Schoeman, 2011). It is important to note that these statistics reflect the opinion of church attendees in the DRC and not the total church membership (Van Wyk, 2013: 8).

Adult Age Profile of DRC (+15)

| | 2014 | 2010 |

	15-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80+
2014	8	6	10	19	16	20	16	6
2010	5	6	11	18	20	20	15	5

% OF TOTAL

AGE
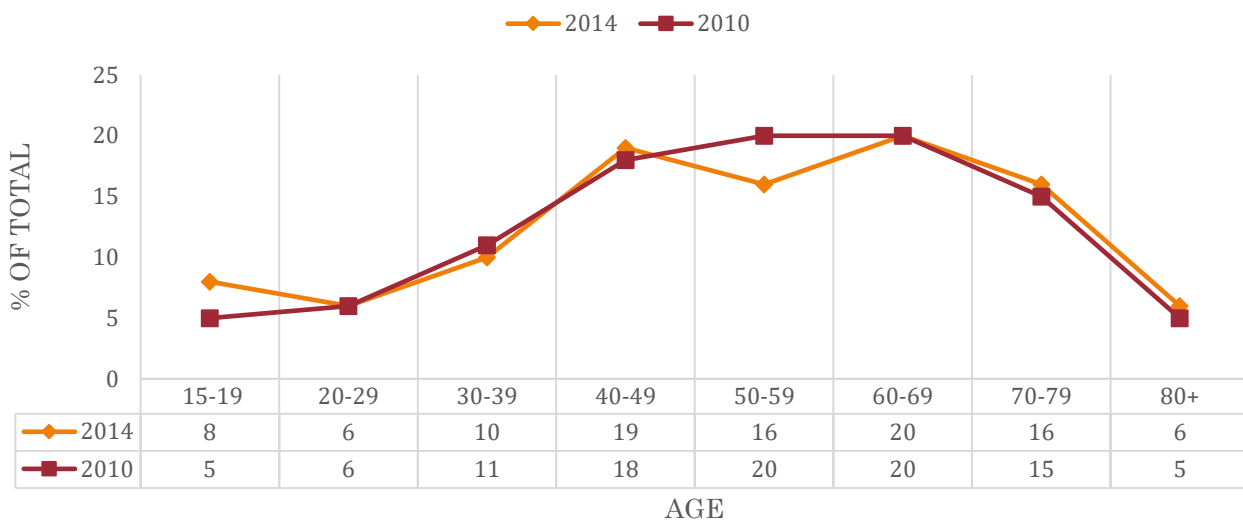
Figure 3: DRC Adult Age Profile 2014 (NCLS Research, 2015: 22)

The adult age profile of the DRC (Figure 6) points to alarming statistics for the DRC. Firstly, children attend DRC churches up to confirmation (age 16-18), after which their numbers decrease. This number could also be indicative of young adults attending specialised ministries at their tertiary education institutions. Secondly, the average age of attendees is high (53 years), and will increase as the majority of attendees grow older.

As far as social challenges are concerned, the South African Christian Leadership Assembly has identified seven major challenges facing South African churches, namely poverty and unemployment, family crises, crime and corruption, violence, HIV/AIDS, racism and sexism (Bisschoff, 2008: 10). In the 2006 *Kerkspieël*, DRC congregations were asked about their involvement in these seven challenges. The results were as follows (Bisschoff, 2008: 10):

Table 2:DRC Congregations' Involvement in Social Issues

Issue	%
Poverty and unemployment	80
Family crises	71
Crime and corruption	42

Violence	38
HIV/AIDS	35
Racism	33
Sexism	14

Other noteworthy trends from this edition include:

- As far as cultural transformation is concerned, the DRC still has a long way to go. According to the 2006 statistics, 99% of church attendees at DRC congregations were still white (Van Wyk, 2013a: 14).

- 88%[67] (88.4% in 2010) of those who attend church do so more than twice a month (Van Wyk, 2013b: 6).

- 61.9% (2010) of those surveyed are involved in activities that reach the broader community (Van Wyk, 2013b: 6).

- Only 25.5% (down from 32.1% in 2010) feel that the leaders of their congregation 'greatly encourage them' to use their gifts (Van Wyk, 2013b: 10; NCLS Research, 2015: 5).

- On the question 'Do all religions help people to find the ultimate truth?'[68], 29.7% (2010) felt that it was true, 57.7% deemed it not true and 13.6% were unsure (Van Wyk, 2013b: 7). On the statement 'Only followers of Jesus are saved'[69], 67.6% agreed.

- 81% (82.8% in 2010) found it relatively easy to talk about their faith (Van Wyk, 2013b: 7; NCLS Research, 2015: 17).

- The Bible still plays an important role in the lives of DRC church attendees. 94.4% (2010) believe the Bible is the 'Word of God', and 73% (81.1% in 2010) read their Bible daily (Van Wyk, 2013b: 7; NCLS Research, 2015: 10).

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[67] Unless otherwise stated the data is from the 2014 Church Life Survey done by the DRC in conjunction with NCLS Research (NCLS Research, 2015). Some indicators from the 2010 research were not reflected in the 2014 research, and thus only the 2010 statistics will be given.

[68] The researcher's own translation of 'Al die verskillende godsdienste is ewe goed om 'n persoon te help om die absolute waarheid te vind?'

[69] The researcher's own translation of 'Slegs volgelinge van die Jesus Christus kan gered word'.

- 75% (74.2% in 2010) agree that their congregation is ready to move into a new direction (Van Wyk, 2013b: 11; NCLS Research, 2015: 15).
- The opinion of the role the congregation should play, shows some movement (Van Wyk, 2013b: 11), as can be seen from Table 3 below:

Table 3: The role of the congregation

Role	2006	2010
Spiritual direction of members	53%	41.2
Evangelisation	22%	27.6%
Member care	18%	18.9%
Support everybody in need	8%	12.2%

There is some movement towards more engagement with those outside the congregation – this can be seen in the decline of the role of spiritual direction of members, and the rise in the role of evangelisation and caring for everybody in need.

- The role that the minister should play has changed (Van Wyk, 2013b: 11), as shown in this Table:

Table 4: The role of the Minister

Role	2006	2010
Sermons and worship services	82%	72.9%
Spiritual direction to members	56%	59.4%
Spiritual leadership	39%	41.7%
Home visits	42%	31.1%
Training	14%	11.2%
Catechism	11%	11.1%
Small-group ministry	5%	3.4%

Church members still deem sermons and worship services as the first priority of ministers, although this expectation is declining. Interestingly, there is an increasing need for spiritual direction and a decreasing need for home visits.

- The NCLS research has identified 9 core qualities of a vital church (NCLS Research, 2015: 4-5). These point to the strengths of a denomination, as well as its areas of growth. The core qualities are grouped into three areas of church life, namely internal core qualities (faith, worship, belonging); inspirational core qualities (vision, leadership, innovation); and outward core qualities (service, faith-sharing, inclusion). The results for the 2010 and 2014 surveys were as follows:

Core Quality	Key Indicator Question	2010	2014
Faith	**Faith** I have experienced much growth in faith at my church	40%	40.2% ↑
Worship	**Worship** I always/usually experience inspiration during the service here	81.0%	84.2% ↑
Belonging	**Belonging** I have/strong & growing sense of belonging here	43.0%	46.7% ↑
Vision	**Vision** I am strongly committed to the vision, goals & direction here	32.0%	28.3% ↓
Leadership	**Leadership** Our leaders encourage us to a great extent to use our gifts here	32.0%	25.5% ↓
Innovation	**Innovation** I strongly agree our church is always ready to try new things	25.0%	31.3% ↑
Service	**Service** I have helped others informally in at least three of named ways		43.7%
Faith-Sharing	**Faith-Sharing** I invited someone to church here in the last year	39.0%	36.1% ↓
Inclusion	**Inclusion** Certain I would follow up someone drifting away from church		9.8

Figure 4: Core Qualities of the DRC (NCLS Research, 2015: 5)

The positive areas in this research are high satisfaction with the worship, an increased experience of belonging, and openness to innovation. Worrisome areas are the relatively low number who are experiencing growth in their faith, and the decreasing number of attendees who are committed to the vision of the church and who feel that the leaders are encouraging them to use their gifts.

The changes in the commitment of member to the vision of the church could be as a result to changes in the strategies church leaders employed to plan. Before 2010 the DRC was still strongly influenced by church growth model that emphasized

strategic planning and having clearly defined vision, mission and strategies for the future. The shift to spiritual discernment as a strategy for change has the result that congregation members can experience more liminality and uncertainty about the direction of the congregation.

In a similar vein the decline in the experience of leadership that encourage member the use their gifts could be a result of a change in the use of programs to identify members gifts. Before 2010 programs like *Ondek jou gawes* (Discover your gifts), Network (from Willow Creek Church), Three Colours of Ministry (Christian Swartz) and the Pilgrimage Project (John en Adrienne Carr) were very popular (Basson, 2003: 32-33). Since then the use of these programs have declined. The focus of these courses was on ministry within the congregation. New material is need in equipping member for the missional calling.

These changes in the demography of the DRC need to be seen against the background of the broad South African religious landscape. The percentage Christian of the total population was 45% in 1911 and increased to 77% in 1980, since then there was a decline to 74.5% in 1991 and 74.1 in 1996 (Hendriks, 1995: 38). The next census data on religion was the 2001 census that showed an increase to 79.9%. The increase was due to a strong growth in Christian affiliation among the black population in South Africa (Schoeman, 2017: 2). A Pew Forum report in 2010 report that 87% of the population are Christian, a significant increase since 1996 (Lugo and Cooperman, 2010: 20). The General Household Survey 2013 found that 85.6% of those questioned identified themselves as Christian. The general level of observance in South Africa is also high, 77.9% of Christians indicated that they attend religious ceremonies at least twice a month (Statistics South Africa, 2014: 33). Schoeman (2017: 6-7) argues that these high levels of Christian affiliation are confirmed by the prominence of Christian values among South Africans, four out of five South African trust churches, six out of ten pray daily, 64% believes the Bible is the literal word of God and 76% that Jesus is the answer to the problems of the world.

3.2 The Cultural Context of the DRC

In the discussion of the current context of the DRC, the research will focus on two aspects. Firstly, the philosophical currents dominant in the South African context (with special focus on the Afrikaans community), and secondly the existential challenges and opportunities the church has.

First, the philosophical currents dominant in the South African context. Jurgens Hendriks (1996) argues that the DRC membership functions mainly within a worldview influenced by modernity. He describes the DRC membership as having the following typically modern characteristics:

a. Individualism: The modern phenomenon that God is replaced at the centre of the universe by the autonomous individual.

b. Rationalism: The confidence of humans that they are in control of their world with their cognitive and technological abilities.

c. Secularisation: Individualism and rationalism leads to the third characteristic that is secularism. Secularisation of the, especially of the White and Coloured communities in South Africa (Hendriks, 1995: 41).

d. The subject-object split: The belief that humans can emancipate themselves from nature and become neutral observers of creation.

e. The belief that scientific knowledge is factual, value-free, and neutral: The modern man lives in a world of dualism where they differentiate between facts and values. Facts are public, measurable knowledge and values are private, personal and subjective.

f. The 'cause and effect' explanation of all reality: God as the immanent reality no longer controls the lives of humans. The fate of humans is the result of causality.

Despite his characterization of the DRC membership as having a predominantly modern worldview, Hendriks (1996: 498-499) ends his article by referring to the postmodern worldview. He is of the opinion that the end of modernity is in sight and that traditional mainline churches will have the following challenges in a postmodern society:

a. Traditional mainline churches have a strong institutional structure that makes it difficult to adapt to a changing context (Hendriks, 1995: 42). Research by Sophia van Helden (2013: 7-8) on the Reformed Church in South Africa (with similar demographics to the DRC) found a high satisfaction of the *status quo*; resistance to change; high value on dogmatic orthodoxy, low value on missionary engagement.

b. The Reformed churches DNA developed during the height of modernity and have to find a new identity in a late-modern and postmodern era (Hendriks, 1995: 42).

c. The intellectual individualism of modern Reformed churches does not serve the needs of postmodern people in need of emotion, social concern and fellowship (Hendriks, 1995: 41).

d. Member of traditional Reformed churches in South Africa struggle do deal with the guild resulting from the church's role in colonial and apartheid times. The guild is intensified by a feeling of disillusionment in the church and its leaders for supporting apartheid (Hendriks, 1995: 43).

Ben du Toit (2002: 57), argues that South Africa was insulated from the postmodern influences of the rest of the world by the authoritarian rule of the National Party, which was supported by the Afrikaans Reformed Churches. After 1990, the National Party lost its grip on power and the influence of the churches went into in decline. The country was suddenly flooded by the various debates that had been happening for the past century in the rest of the world. There was a compression of time in the transformation of culture from modernity to postmodernity.

To make matters more complex it could be argued that the suburban Afrikaners show strong signs of the late modern era. In a post-Apartheid South Africa white Afrikaners has reacted to the loss of power by immigrating to ghettos, where they feel physically, economically, and emotionally safe. High walls of private estates, with schools, medical centres, and churches give them the illusions of a South Africa they knew. Their focus is on materialistic success, and they live consumerist lives were identity is built on social status. They are strongly individualistic with superficial social bonds. Indication of a society that has gone far down the road of developing a self that reflects Charles Taylor's exclusive humanism and is highly secularised (cf. Chapter 2).

The conclusion is that the DRC is church in a context were its members come from different generations, with different worldviews. Niemandt (2013a: 60) uses the typology of Leonard Sweet to describe the worldview of many of the DRC members. The Guttenberg generation is a generation with a modern worldview formed by the knowledge revolution that started with invention of printing. They emphases objectivity, individualism, logic arguments, factual and dogmatic correctness and structure. Most of the current leaders of the church comes from this generation and their influence can be seen on the ecclesiology of the DRC (the strong organisational structure of the church, the historic emphasis on Reformed orthodoxy, and a liturgy that emphasises the Word of God; the sermon; knowledge; and a liturgy that is geared towards introverted individualism). The DRC has traditionally had a strong Bible-study culture where members get together to study the Bible with little interaction and *koinonia*.

On the other end of the spectrum the Google generation has a postmodern worldview that was formed by the digital revolution and social media. This generation values contextual truth, interaction, relationships and connection. Johann Rossouw (in Niemandt, 2013a: 62-63) says this generation wants to integrate their emotions and all their senses into their spirituality; they want to practice their faith communally. The challenge the DRC is currently facing is a situation where the policy makers are from a Guttenberg generation, and those they want to reach is from the Google generation.

The spectrum of worldviews is certainly more complex than this typology would suggest, but it helps to draw a broad outline of the context of the DRC. In the broader South African context there is also people with a pre-modern worldview, as evident from the growth in the African Independent Churches that are characterised by their members' need for protection and deliverance from the (evil) spiritual world, a support group, symbols and rituals, direct and authentic communication with God through an intermediary (usually the leader or prophet), for authentic indigenous spiritual models and a holistic spirituality (Loewen, 1976: 412-424).

The Afrikaners is also no more homogeneous that the rest of the country. In a typology by the eminent Afrikaner historian Giliomee (2004: 215-227) differentiates between colonial Afrikaners and the republican Afrikaners. This is a typology that has its origins in the time of the two Boer republics (ZAR: 1852-1903; Orange Free State: 1854-1903). At the time, the Cape was still under colonial rule and the Afrikaners in the Cape were mostly loyal to the British

Crown. The Afrikaners in the Boer republics, on the other hand, created an Afrikaner identity emphasising their independence, and Afrikaans language and culture. Despite the fact that the Republic of South Africa was created in 1961 and that Afrikaners have been moving across provincial boundaries ever since, Giliomee (La Vita, 2015: n.p.) still sees the different colonial and republican DNAs among Afrikaners in South Africa today. He argues that the popularity of Afrikaner organisations like AfriForum and Solidariteit in the Northern parts of the country is evidence of this. This split between colonial and republican Afrikaners could explain the fact that the drive for church unity and the acceptance of the Confession of Belhar came from the DRC Synod of the Western and Southern Cape rather than from one of the Northern Synods.

Due to this multidimensional context, the DRC is challenged to discern the specific context and worldview where God wants them to be a sign, foretaste and instrument.

The DRC also currently faces various existential challenges. Many of these challenges are opportunities to be a missional church and to live a *kenotic* life. In 1998, the General Synod of the DRC formed a Commission for Reconciliation, Poverty and Moral Restoration, which identified three key problem areas, namely:

    a. declining moral values;

    b. poverty and the consequences of poverty (social challenges like inequality in the economy, unemployment, crime, inequalities in education, rapid population growth and HIV/AIDS); and

    c. reconciliation in South Africa (Du Toit et al., 2002: 41;128).

Other sources state the following issues relevant to the DRC:

    a. The declining birth rate among the traditional membership of the DRC, namely the white Afrikaner population (Hendriks, 1995: 41; Giliomee, 2004: 540).

    b. The growth in the number of Christians attending independent churches (Hendriks, 1995: 41).

    c. The serious decline in the (mainly white) membership of rural congregations. In a study of 10 rural congregations in 2011, Hendriks (2012: 3) found that one congregation had only 17% of its membership left, compared to that of 1977. A

decline in membership leads to a lack of funding to pay a full-time minister, which in turn leads to a lack of ministry.

d. The DRC will have to find its prophetic voice towards injustice in society and in government. The DRC has a long history of not having a prophetic voice, but the guild of the past must not inhibit the church in preaching the gospel (Du Toit et al., 2002: 39).

e. Coexisting and having dialogue with other faith traditions (Du Toit et al., 2002: 41)

f. An ecclesiastical identity crisis. The history of the DRC during the Apartheid years can create an identity crisis for the church in the New South Africa. The other major social structure during the Apartheid years, the National Party has disappeared after 1994. Will the same happen to the DRC? The reaction of the members of the DRC will influence future of the DRC. Du Toit et al. (2002: 43-44) name three traps that the church can fall into in searching for a new identity. Firstly, joining the negative chorus in predicting doom for South Africa. This will result in a 'circling of the wagons' mentality and a retraction from public discourse and involvement. The second trap is a focus on Afrikaner survival, and the protection of the cultural group. The third trap is to grab onto the first available alternative for the DRC.

3.3 Reformed, Evangelical, Pietist or Liberal?

The DRC's identity is a unique confluence of many spiritual traditions. To get a sense of this identity, it is important to look at the various streams that have influenced the DRC (Durand, 2002: 32). The discussion will have to be broader in scope than the post-Apartheid timeframe of the rest of the research because the current theology of the DRC is a confluence of various theological streams that influenced the church during the last 350 years.

The DRC's members are mostly from the Afrikaner cultural group, but Olivier (2006: 1480) believes it is impossible to speak of an Afrikaner spirituality because of the strong-minded individualism of the Afrikaners. What can be done is to identify the various influences within

the Afrikaner and specifically DRC spirituality. This will be done by looking at the history, spirituality and socio-economic context of the Afrikaner.

The aim of this discussion is not to evaluate these different philosophical and theological influences, but to describe their influence on the DRC. In the discussion of a missional theology for the DRC, these influences should be considered to evaluate the current missional theology. The discussion will be limited to the most prominent influences, namely the Reformed theology, the Evangelical-Pietist tradition, the Liberal tradition, Neo-Calvinist theology, and lastly the influence of Karl Barth.

3.3.1 The Reformed Theology

The Reformed heritage (Protestant Calvinists) is the most prominent part of the DRC identity and is reflected in the name of the denomination. It is however not that easy to capture the identity of the Reformed tradition (Brinkman , 1995). A theological tradition's identity could be deduced from the history and development of the tradition, a certain doctrinal system, ethos, spirituality and rituals, as well as the social organization of the group. Likewise, faith traditions are also not static and objectively observable. The researchers own perspective influences the characteristics observed (Venter, 2004: 753). Have said that, I would argue that the DRC's Reformed tradition could be described as follows:

It has its roots in the Swiss-French-Dutch Reformed tradition (Du Toit et al., 2002: 5). The Reformed faith centred around two important questions: 'How are humans saved?' and 'What are the sources of authority in the church?' The Reformed tradition emphasised that salvation came through faith in Jesus Christ, and that faith is a gift from God. Justification is thus an act of grace, by God. The only source of authority in the Reformed tradition is the Bible as the Word of God. Traditionally, Calvinists place a high value on the sovereignty of God. The Reformed faith is articulated in terms of the Five Solas: *sola Scriptura*, *sola fide*, *sola gratia*, *solo Christo*, and *Soli Deo Gloria* (Tennent, 2010: 447; Niemandt, 2015: 4). The Reformed dictum *ecclesia reformata semper reformanda* is important because a Reformed church should constantly rethink its theology and ministry in the changing context (Niemandt, 2015: 4).

The Reformed faith came to the Cape in 1652 with the VOC (Dutch East India Company), who saw to it that the spiritual work in the Cape was done by the Dutch *Gereformeerde Kerk* (Van

der Watt, 1986: 4). The *Gereformeerde Kerk* was at this stage strongly influenced and organised by its newest confession, the Canons of Dort, and the Church Order of Dort, adopted during the Synod of Dort held from 1618 to 1619 (Hofmeyr, 2002b: 12). The early ministers in the Cape Church were all from the Dutch *Gereformeerde Kerk* and they structured the Cape Church along the lines of the Dutch church (Van der Watt, 1986: 8).

Although the Cape Church was founded on the church order and confession of Dort, it was soon enriched by other influences, the first of which was the arrival of more Protestants – the French Huguenots in 1688. The French Huguenots were also Calvinist Protestants who brought their unique culture and traditions to the developing Afrikaner culture. Because of the dominant position of the Dutch, the Huguenots were soon assimilated into the Dutch culture and church (Van der Watt, 1986: 20).

As the settlement in the Cape began to develop, the needs of the local church in the Cape became more and unique to the Cape context. The needs of the local church could no longer be supported by the Dutch churches in the Netherlands. There was an ever-growing yearning for an independent church. This yearning was, however, stifled by the political rulers of the Cape Colonial government and the dominant influence of the church in the Netherlands (Hofmeyr, 2002b: 28). It was only in 1824 that this dream became a reality with the first Synod and the creation of an independent DRC[70] denomination in the Cape (Brown, 2002: 86). At this stage, the two major influences in the formation of the church were the Dutch Reformed tradition from the Netherlands and a growing Scottish Presbyterian influence (Du Toit et al., 2002: 11).

The Scottish Presbyterian influence came to the Cape because of the political changes in Europe. In 1795, the Cape was occupied by the British, which ruled the Cape Colony until 1910 (except for a short interlude of Dutch rule from 1803 to 1806) (Hofmeyr, 2002b: 20-21). The British did not only take over political rule, but also influenced the cultural and spiritual development of the Cape church. Officially, there were no links with the Dutch church during

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70 Cape Church will be used to describe the church during the first 200 years of its history. Before the Synod in 1824, there was much confusion about the name of the new church. Documents from the time referred to the church as the Reformed Church, Gereformeerde Kerk or the Hervormde Kerk. Synonyms like Dutch Reformed Church, the Nederduitsche Hervormde Kerk and the Hollandsche Gereformeerde Kerk were also used (Coertzen, 2002: 103). For the purposes of this paper, Dutch Reformed Church will be used from 1824 onwards.

this period, but the Dutch spiritual and theological traditions were still nurtured by the Afrikaner ministers who had studied theology in the Netherlands. There was, however, not enough Afrikaner ministers to supply the needs of the growing church, and more were recruited from Scotland.

3.3.2 The Evangelical-Pietist Influence

The Evangelical-Pietist character of the DRC theology was the result of three related traditions, the Evangelical, Puritan and Pietist traditions. The broad Evangelical movement has its roots in the Second Reformation of the 16th and 17th centuries (Du Toit et al., 2002). The Evangelical Pietism that influenced the DRC came mainly from the Scottish Evangelical Pietism and the Utrecht apologetic school (Coetzee, 2013: 154)[71]. Evangelical theology is recognised by the following characteristics (Treier, 2011: 173-175): firstly, conversionism -the expectation that a person must experience a turning away from sin towards God, under the influence of the Christian message and Spirit; secondly, activism - individuals, including laypeople as well as clergy, start to spread the gospel via evangelism and good works; thirdly, biblicism - a high view of the scriptures and their authority over the believer's life; fourthly, crucicentrism - emphasis on the cross as the central theme in the gospel; lastly, dualism - the separation of the sacred and the profane, and a dualistic view of humans (Ariel, 2011: 295)

The Utrecht apologetic school also had a strong influence on the first two professors of the newly founded Stellenbosch seminary, namely John Murray and Nicolaas Hofmeyr (Coetzee, 2013: 155). The Utrecht school was founded in reaction to the modernist theologies of the 19th century. They emphasised (Brummer, 2013: 128-130; Coetzee, 2013: 155-158) the following:

- the reality of the supernatural world;
- the historical truths in the gospels; and
- drawing organic inspiration from the Bible.

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71 Saayman (2007: 41) validly argues that the first seeds of Evangelical Pietism could already be seen in the work of Rev. van Lier and Rev. de Vos in the late 18th century, which was strongly influenced by the Moravians.

In an attempt by the British to Anglicise the Cape and to relieve the shortage of ministers, Scottish Presbyterian ministers were called to serve the congregations in the Cape. By 1837, half of the ministers in the Cape Synod were from Scottish Presbyterian background. The Scottish Presbyterian, Andrew Murray Sr. and his family would later have a prolific influence on the development of theology in the DRC. Together with the Scottish Presbyterian church, the Wesleyan Methodist church would also have an influence on the DRC, although to a lesser degree (Hofmeyr, 2002a: 79). Despite the hope of the British rulers that these ministers would promote the Anglicisation of the Cape, most of the Scottish ministers became Afrikaans-speaking, although they did not lose their Evangelical Pietism.

The evangelical tradition in the Cape Church was further influenced by the Puritan and Pietist traditions. These three influences (evangelical, puritan and pietist) should be viewed as three tributaries to the same river. Although these three traditions should not be confused, the Pietist tradition, the Puritans and the Evangelical theology had a strong influence on one another (Coffey, 2005: n.p.). One example of this is the life of Andrew Murray jr. that played such a pivotal role in the early history of the DRC. In his life, all three these influences (Evangelical, Puritan and Pietist) were prominent. He was well known for his evangelical, revivalist drive but also placed great emphasis on personal holiness up to the point of being legalistic (Mahne, 1999: 369-374).

The Puritans influenced the Evangelical pietist traditions in Britain and in the DRC (Bebbington, 1989: 35; Durand, 2002: 34-35). The Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology (Trueman, 2011: 421) is of the opinion that it is difficult to define the Puritanism because of its diverse forms. The Puritan movement, started in the 16th century as a Reform movement within the Anglican Church. The movement exhibited 'over-scrupulous consciences' in theology and life (Trueman, 2011: 421). It also emphasised simplistic aesthetic in worship (in reaction to the extravagant Anglican and Catholic clerical robes and church symbols), a strict legalistic view on the Sabbath, and a radical and experiential piety. The Puritan movement had a literal, fundamentalist interpretation of Scripture (Du Rand, 2002: 34). These aspects of spirituality influenced the development of a DRC piety and could be seen in DRC spirituality (Durand, 1985: 35). The Puritan heritage of the DRC also includes the close relationship between nation and church. Durand (2002: 37) believes this heritage opened a door in the DRC for the idea of

a national church. Although the DRC was never officially a national church, the close relationship between the church, the nation and the state was clear during the Apartheid years.

The Puritan tradition did not influence the Cape only via the English, but also through the Dutch Pietists because of their close contact with the English Puritans (Du Rand, 2002: 36). In the end, the Puritan spirituality strengthened the Pietistic tradition in the DRC. In contrast with European Puritan and Pietist movements that met resistance from and were tempered by the secularism of the Enlightenment, the Christians on the Southern tip of Africa were isolated from these influences, and Pietist and Puritan influences gained strength – especially among the later members of the *Groot Trek* inland (Du Rand, 2002: 37).

The third influence on the Evangelical tradition was the Pietist tradition. Pietism in Europe came as a reaction to the sterile Lutheran orthodoxy and the related doctrine of 'double predestination', or the belief that God, in his sovereignty, elects man to eternal life or eternal death (Durand, 2002: 33). Pietism reacted to this by emphasising the pious life of the believer and the need for emotion as part of the religious life (Paas, 2016: 235). The movement started in the early 1600 in Germany and soon spread to the neighbouring Protestant countries. Steven Paas (2016: 235) identified protestant groups like the Anabaptists, Spiritualists and Quakers as pietist and the Jesuits, Molinists and Quietist as pietist movements within the Roman Catholic Church. Movements within the mainline churches of the Reformation that had strong pietistic leaning were the English Puritanism (e.g. Anglicans like William Perkins 1558-1602 and Nonconformists like John Bunyan 1628-1688), the *Nadere Reformasie* in the Netherlands (e.g. Jean Taffin, 1529-1602 and Jacobus Koelman, 1632-1695) and the *Pietismus* in Germany (e.g. Philip Jacob Spencer, 1635-1705 and August Hermann Francke, 1663-1727). These movements were perpetuated in the 18th century by the Evangelical Revival and the Great Awakening, originating in the British Isles and America (Paas, 2016: 235).

Pietism emphasises practices of Christian life: personal repentance, regeneration and sanctification; close fellowship with other like-minded Christians (*ecclesiola in ecclesia*); the importance of emotion in faith; a strong responsibility for witness which is driven by a living expectation of the return of Christ; and an often literalistic view of scripture as the Word of God (Saayman, 1996: 203; Strom, 2011: 389; Paas, 2016: 235). Saayman (1996: 203-204) adds an important characteristic of the Pietists, namely that they always kept the whole world in the

focus of their missionary vision. This was an important reaction against the national focus of the nationalistic Protestant churches. Du Rand (2002: 32-33) believes Pietism was already present in the Calvinism that came with the Dutch settlers to Southern Africa, and was furthermore stimulated by the English Puritans.

The Pietist influence can also be seen in the lives of John Murray and Nicolaas Hofmeyr. They were strongly influenced by the various revivals happening in the British Islands during this time. Scottish Evangelical Theology broadly traces its origins back to the 18th century revival movements of John Wesley and George Whitefield. The spiritual revival in Britain led to the creation of various mission societies that sent out missionaries throughout the world, also to the Cape (Du Toit, 1984: 618-619). These mission societies were driven by a strong Evangelical theology, which they also brought to the Cape Church (Beck, 2013: 54,61). The London Missionary Society (LMS, founded in 1795) sent its first missionary to the Cape in 1797 (Crafford, 1982: 25; Bosch, 1993b: 330). Many of the congregations planted by the LMS were later incorporated into the DRC. The LMS was followed by the Wesleyan Missionary Society (arriving in the Cape in 1814), the Glasgow Missionary Society (arriving in the Cape in 1820), the American Board (1935), the Church Missionary Society of the Anglican Church (arriving in Port Natal in 1835), the United Rhenish Missionary Society (1829), the Berlin Missionary Society (1834), the Paris Evangelical Society (1829), and the Roman Catholic Mission (1882) (Du Toit, 1984: 619). With the arrival of these missionaries, the revival movement in Britain, with its Evangelical theology, was starting to influence the DRC in the Cape Colony (Crafford, 1982: 25;27-28). The influence of the revivalist spirit was so strong that the Wesleyan Church with its Methodist theology complimented the DRC in the Cape Colony and the Orange Free State, and described the church as the 'slapende reus' (sleeping giant) (Hanekom, 1951: 494).

Pietism played an important role in the development of the Protestant mission movement. Saayman (1996: 202) believes the modern Protestant mission movement 'is unthinkable apart from the contribution of Pietism, and especially that of Count von Zinzendorf and the Moravians.' Stephen Neill (1986: 194) argues in his work *A history of Christian Missions* that '[t]he history of missions supported by Churches on the European continent begins only with the emergence of the movement called Pietism'.

The early Pietist seeds were planted by the Moravians in the Cape (Saayman, 1996: 202). The Moravians started with missionary work among the indigenous people, and made the local church more aware of the need for missionary work in the Cape. The Moravian George Schmidt started work among the Khoi Khoi people in 1737 and brought with him the Moravian Pietist spirituality that emphasised the formation of small groups which were inspired by the Holy Spirit to be instruments in the Kingdom of God (Crafford, 1982: 18; Beck, 2013: 54). Schmidt had to work under the auspices of the VOC and the Dutch *Gereformeerde Kerk*, because of the control they had over spiritual work in the Cape. Despite the tension between Schmidt and the establishment in the Cape, the Schmidt's work strengthened the Pietist tradition in the Cape. These Pietist seeds were further nurtured when the Moravians returned to the Cape in 1792 and continued the work that Schmidt started. One of the later stalwarts of mission in the Cape, Rev. M.C. Vos, was influenced by and supported the work the work of the Moravians (Crafford, 1982: 20,22). His predecessor, H. R. van Lier, also had a strong Pietist influence in the early days of the DRC (Du Toit et al., 2002: 10; Saayman, 2007: 40-41).

Any discussion of the Evangelical-Pietist influence in the Cape would not be complete without reference to the Murray brothers as well as Nicolaas Hofmeyr (Hofmeyr, 2002a: 79). Andrew Murray Jr, his brother John, and Nicolaas Hofmeyr would play a pivotal role in the development of the young DRC. Andrew Murray Jr, six-time moderator and author of many works, played a great leadership role in the Cape Church during this period. John Murray and Hofmeyr were the first two professors at the Stellenbosch Seminary. All three of these men were influenced by the Réveil,[72] Scottish Pietism, as well as the Utrecht apologetic school (Hofmeyr, 2013: 4; Brummer, 2013: 129; Coetzee, 2013: 158). The Réveil was a collective name for the various revival movements happening on the European continent during the 19th century, and was a reaction to the rationalism of the Enlightenment. The Réveil was also heavily influenced by the Pietism of the Moravians (Brummer, 2013: 20-21).

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72 See the Brummer's (2013:20-24) work for an in depth discussion of the contact between the Murrays, Hofmeyr and the Réveil.

An example of the Evangelical and Pietistic influence on the DRC at this time, was the decision by the Synod in 1862 to institute a colloquium doctum for the Dutch trained ministers. The decision by the Synod read as follows:

> '[a]t the *colloquium doctum* a special enquiry shall be instituted as to the opinions on regeneration by the Holy Spirit and the personal experience of God's grace, and also as to fidelity to the doctrine of our Church, which the Synod desires to be understood as being indispensable requirements in all who offer themselves as ministers' (Du Plessis, 1919: 230-231).

The decision limited the influence of the liberal ministers who could not agree with the statement in the *colloquium doctum* in good conscience (Brummer, 2013: 56). The 1860s was the high-water mark for the revival movement in the DRC – a movement that was strongly influenced by the revivals in America, Canada, Ireland, Wales, England and Scotland during this time. The influence of Andrew Murray Jr was galvanised by the various Evangelical conferences that were held during this time. At the end of one such conference in Paarl on Pentecost Sunday in 1861, the local DRC congregation had an intense experience with the Holy Spirit that would start a movement that is still prominent (Du Toit et al., 2002: 10-11). To this day, the Pentecost prayer service movement holds special prayer services between Ascension Thursday and Pentecost Sunday. During these services, emphasis is placed on prayer, and congregations pray for revival in their church and community (Giliomee, 2004: 208-209).

The influence of Evangelical Pietism on the theology and spirituality of the DRC can still be seen today. Prominent examples of this are (Mahne, 1999: 381; Crafford, 2002: 120-121):

a. The Evangelical-legalistic spirituality of many members and ministers of the DRC.

b. The Pentecost prayer services that are still being held from Ascension Thursday to Pentecost Sunday.

c. The active prayer life and Bible study of members. Regular prayer meetings and groups in congregations.

d. Personal piety and a strong emphasis on the central truths of the Christian faith as found in the scriptures.

e. A long history of missionary fervour with many successful long-term mission projects.

f. The *Kinderkrans* movement that aimed to evangelise children. Until recently, children's groups were held in most DRC congregations on a weekly basis.

g. The use of Evangelical hymns in the liturgy.

h. The Evangelical character of the sermons.

There are arguments that the Evangelistic-Pietist theology (Murray-evangelical wing of the church) had a strong influence on the lives of theologians that would challenge Afrikaner Nationalism and Apartheid (Kuyperian – Neo-Calvinist wing) (Bosch, 1985b: 68). Among these theologians were Prof. Johannes du Plessis (1868-1935) and Prof. B.B. Keet (1885-1974) both from the Stellenbosch University, Prof. Ben Marais (1909-1999) from University of Pretoria and later Dr. Beyers Naudé (Brummer, 2013: 223;234; Maritz, 2004: 166; Durand, 1985: 45). The problem with the argument is that a very small number of theologians that were influenced by the Evangelical-Pietist tradition became critical of the Afrikaner Nationalism and Apartheid. Saayman (1985: 56) argues that the difference between those who challenged apartheid and those who did not, was that the anti-Apartheid theologians all had an evangelical-pietist theology *and* a real encounter with the 'black world' and the influence government policies had on the black population of South Africa.

The Achilles heel of the Pietist tradition has always been its dualistic worldview and political naïveté. The Pietist tradition differentiates between the spiritual-religious realm and the worldly. According to the Pietism, what happens in the spiritual-religious realm has very little to do with the worldly, and a Christian's focus should be on the spiritual-religious. Regrettably, this worldview would later open the door for Afrikaner nationalism and the Apartheid ideology to dominate public life. Naudé (2015: 330) also argues that the Scottish evangelicalism coupled with neo-Calvinism formed and sustained the Afrikaners' civil religion.

3.3.3 Liberal Theology

The third major influence on the Cape Church during the 19th century was that of liberal theology. Andrew Murray Jr and Nicholas Hofmeyr's Evangelical theology was not practised within a vacuum in the DRC. They were in reaction to so-called 'Modern Thought' in the DRC. The Modern Thought movement was a liberal movement within the DRC, inspired by liberal theologies in Europe (Brummer, 2013: 55). Hanekom (1951: x) writes in his prominent work on Liberalism in South Africa *(Die Liberale Rigting in Suid-Afrika)* that at the heart of the liberal movement was, not a search for freedom, but a total rejection of all authority.

The tension between the Evangelical and Liberal schools of theology reached its peak in the 1860s. Just as Murray and Hofmeyr were influenced by the Réveil and Utrecht apologetic school, so others were influenced by the Rationalism of the Tübinger Schule (Tübingen school). Prominent exponents of liberal theology were JJ Kotze, TF Burgers and DP Faure[73] (Brummer, 2013: 55). The Dutch theologian J.H. Scholten had a strong influence on the development of the Modern Thought movement in the Cape (Zuiddam, 2009: 276; Brummer, 2013: 55). The official voice of the liberal movement in the Cape was the periodical *De Onderzoeker* and the movement was also supported by *Die Volksblad* (Giliomee, 2004: 208). In *De Onderzoeker*, they argued for the following (Brummer, 2013: 57-65; Hofmeyr, 2013: 5):

- A worldview that did not differentiate between the natural and supernatural world – the only reality was the natural world. God was not outside natural reality, but could be found in nature. Every aspect of creation was part of the divine.

- Humans are part of the divine; they do not need a revelation outside of natural phenomena. Revelation comes from within, from the reason and the conscience. Religion must be formed by the revelation from within every human being and not by an external source like the Bible or tradition. The Bible is not *'The Word of God'* and should be judged by human reason.

- God can also be found in other faiths and traditions.

- Because the natural world is part of God, it was not created and is eternal just as God is. 'Creation' is the proses through which humans reach their full potential.

- The denial of the total depravity of man. Humans are able to free themselves from sin through reason.

- The denial of the existence of the Devil.

- As humans progress through the use of reason, they free themselves from their primitive ways.

- Human progress will continue after death. Life after death is a continuation of life on earth.

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73 For more on DP Faure theological development se the article by Benno Zuiddam (2009).

- God will draw everyone to Him after death. God has no free will. It was part of His being to create and draw all of creation closer to Him. God cannot act to save the world, because human history and God's presence in it are predetermined. This deterministic view of reality leaves no room for prayer as a way to influence God's will. The only use of prayer is to have communion with God.

- It is not only God who has no free will, but all humans as well. Human sin and evil are predetermined.

- Sin is part of human development to full potential and does not need to be forgiven.

- Jesus was not the Son of God who had to die for human sin, but a 'perfect human' without any sin who was inhibiting His growth to His full potential. Jesus was an example of the highest form of human development. Humans can follow Jesus in His development.

- The virgin birth, resurrection and miracles are only myths and scientifically impossible.

The influence of the Enlightenment and Rationalism of modernity can clearly be seen in the development of the 'Modern Thought' in the Cape during the 1860s.

These tenets of this movement were obviously in conflict with the Evangelical-Pietist movement of the 19th century. The tension was resolved in favour of the Evangelical-Pietist movement because of their dominant position in the Cape Church during this time. This was done mainly through the aforementioned *colloquium doctum* that was instituted in 1862, and pressure from the DRC Synod. Some of the liberal ministers left the DRC and started new churches, for example DF Faure, who planted the *Vrye Protestantse Kerk* (Brummer, 2013: 56). Although Liberal theology was dealt a heavy blow by the dominating Evangelical theology and Pietism in the DRC, it would surface again in the later history of the DRC.

Evangelical theology had the upper hand in the Cape Church during the latter part of the 19th century (Giliomee, 2004: 210). The dominance of Evangelical theology would, however, soon be challenged by political and theological forces from outside the church. The influence of the British, the Anglicisation of the Dutch Afrikaners in the Cape, the annexation of the independent Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (later the Transvaal), and the First and Second

South African Wars (1880-1881 and 1899-1902) led to the growth of nationalism amongst Afrikaners (Hofmeyr, 2002b: 22). The DRC did not only play a central role in supporting the Afrikaners through these difficult times, but was also drawn into the nationalistic ideals of its members (Olivier, 2002b: 158).

3.3.4 Neo-Calvinism

The theology in the DRC would be steered into a new direction by Neo-Calvinism and the influence of Dutch theologian Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), who filled a theological void in Afrikaner Nationalism. Neo-Calvinism was primarily an attempt at recovering the Reformed theological heritage and at combatting liberalism (Ellingsen, 1999: 268).

In Europe, the first 30 years of the 1900, was a time when the certainties of the 1800s were replaced with a wave of uncertainty. This spirit of questioning old certainties was brought to South Africa by students studying in Europe as well as by European literature. But the Afrikaner people, who were still recovering after two South African wars (1880-1881; 1899-1902), Spanish influenza (1818), the Great Depression (1930s), poverty among many, and migration to cities, were not open to the uncertainty accompanying the liberal movement spilling over from Europe[74] (Deist, 1991: 368). The Afrikaners and the DRC were looking for certainties and fought against any doubt or uncertainty coming from outside their borders.

Abraham Kuyper founded the *Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam* (VU) to develop a 'Calvinist science' and worldview (Brummer, 2013: 145). It was at the VU that the next-generation DRC theologians were trained and influenced by his Neo-Calvinism. Dutch Neo-Calvinism found fertile ground in the nationalistic yearnings of the Afrikaners, and was adapted to suit the Afrikaners' socio-political ideals (Olivier, 2002b: 159). Ellingsen (1999: 268) is of the opinion that Afrikaner nationalism was closely linked to the rise of Dutch nationalism and the influence of Kuyper. During this period, Afrikaners lacked an indigenous intellectual class and were dependant on immigrants to fill the positions of ministers, lawyers and so forth. Neo-Calvinism was imported through these intellectuals coming over from the Netherlands, and its ideals were warmly welcomed by the DRC. Ellingen (1999: 268) gives several reasons for Neo-Calvinism's

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74 For more on the socio-economic context of the DRC during this time, see Deist (1990).

positive reception in South Africa. Firstly, the theological conservatism of Neo-Calvinism was welcomed because of the DRC's history of resistance to liberal theology. Secondly, Kuyper had praised the South African church's commitment to the Reformed principles and their construction of a society governed by it[75]. He had a special affinity for the Afrikaner nation and supported them in their conflict with the British and the indigenous tribes. Thirdly, the DRC identified with the concept of *gemene gratie* ('common grace'), the idea that God's grace is not only for a select few, but for all beings throughout creation. Durand (1985: 41) adds a fourth reason: Neo-Calvinism was able to accommodate the fast-growing ideology of Afrikaner nationalism.

One of the strongest proponents of Neo-Calvinism in the DRC was Rev. SJ du Toit (1847-1911) (Lubbe, 2013: 181). He felt strongly about the Afrikaner nation and the Afrikaans language. He developed a strong empathy for Abraham Kuyper and his theology. He worked to introduce Neo-Calvinism into the cultural and religious spheres in South Africa, helped by his position as editor of various publications that propagated Neo-Calvinism. His followers planted 10 Reformed congregations, which later left the DRC and joined the Reformed Church in South Africa *(Gereformeerde Kerk)*. The work of propagating Neo-Calvinism was taken up by S.J. du Toit's son, J.D. du Toit, who joined the Reformed Church after completion of his theological studies (Brummer, 2013: 163-179).

The aftermath of the Du Plessis case[76] created an uncritical hermeneutical vacuum that opened the door for Neo-Calvinism. Prof. Johannes du Plessis was accused by fellow ministers of heresy. Du Plessis had an evangelical and missionary heart and an affinity for the work of Andrew Murray Jr that is evident in his autobiography of Murray (Du Plessis, 1919). As an academic, however, he was influenced by the 'Higher Critique'. Much of what he wrote during that time is widely accepted today, but growing Afrikaner nationalism, confessionalism, and fear of liberalism made him vulnerable to accusations (Olivier, 2002a: 173). He was barred from lecturing by the Synod in 1932 (Brummer, 2013: 273), the case against him was a serious blow to Evangelical Pietism in the DRC (Botha, 1984: 170; Coetzee, 2013: 160). The Du Plessis

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75 See Abraham Kuyper's work De crisis in Zuid-Afrika (Kuyper and Elout, 1900) for more on his affinity for the Afrikaners and sympathy for their struggle.
76 Prof. Johannes du Plessis was accused by fellow ministers of heresy.

case allowed the theology from the Amsterdam conservative-confessional school and Princeton fundamentalism to gain ascendancy in the DRC (Coetzee, 2013: 160).

Neo-Calvinism was propagated by various theologians and publications of the time. Vosloo (2010: 429) is of the opinion that a sympathetic attitude toward Neo-Calvinism could be seen in the editorials of the theological journal *Die Gereformeerde Vaandel*, was founded in 1933 by Stellenbosch professors E. E. van Rooyen, D.G. Malan and D. Lategan as editors. The same sentiments were reflected in the *Die Kerkbode* (still the DRC mouthpiece today) from 1934 onwards (Deist, 1991: 369). Later theologians like Prof. F.J.M. Potgieter and B.B. Keet (Stellenbosch) would be exponents of Neo-Calvinism in the DRC, although it must be said that Keet was not as narrowly Neo-Calvinist as Potgieter was (Engdahl, 2011: 207). Despite being strongly confessional and a supporter the Doleantie church order, he was also the national chairperson of the Christian Student Association, with a strong evangelical history, and did not openly take sides in the Du Plessis case (Strauss, 2010: 172).

Although many have argued that Abraham Kuyper provided the theological and philosophical foundations for Afrikaner nationalism and Apartheid[77] (cf. De Klerk, 1975; Moodie, 1975), this might be an over simplification. Lubbe (2013: 183-184) and Strauss (1983: 335) argue that South African Neo-Calvinism was a characterisation built on only parts of Abraham Kuyper's theology and worldview and adapted to suit the South African context. It would be safer to talk about the influence of Kuyperian theology. Whatever the case may be, it is clear that from 1930 to 1974, Neo-Calvinism as practiced in South Africa was heavily influenced by Kuyperian theology (Conradie, 2011: 15).

Neo-Calvinism emphasised the following aspects (Durand, 1985: 42):

a. the sovereignty of God (Brummer, 2013: 141)
b. orthodox theology (i.e. Neo-Calvinism) as opposed to 'heretical' theologies like Methodism and liberal theology (Vosloo, 2012: 427)
c. the inerrancy of the Bible. Neo-Calvinists believed that the Bible is the Word of God and infallible. The writers of the Bible had very little or no contribution in

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77 See the work of Andries Botha (1984) for more on the theological development of and the relationship between theology and the Apartheid ideology.

writing the Bible. Any 'possible contradictions' in the Bible were the result of mistakes in reproducing the texts throughout the years (Britz, 2002: 355-356; Engdahl, 2011: 209; Brummer, 2013: 147). Engdahl (2011: 209) argues that exponents of Neo-Calvinism like F.J.M Potgieter '[held] a view that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. It is more precisely a doctrine of verbal inspiration that he advocates, but an organic verbal inspiration rather than a mechanistic inspiration'

d. literal interpretation of the Bible (Engdahl, 2011: 209). Deist (1991: 369) is of the opinion that this was a fundamentalist hermeneutic

e. a close link between Word of God, the confessions and the Afrikaner nation (Deist, 1991: 371)

f. confessions forming the ideological basis for the unity of the church (Vosloo, 2012: 425; Brummer, 2013: 142) – true church unity is found in a common confession of orthodox faith and not in visible church structures[78] (Jonker, 1989: 14)

g. diversity as a principle was part of the creation order and racial segregation was biblically justifiable (Deist, 1991: 372)

h. God reveals Himself in His Word and in nature. The cultural differences revealed in nature were normative because they were confirmed by the Neo-Calvinist interpretation of certain biblical texts (for example, Deuteronomy 7 on Israelites marrying other tribes) (Deist, 1991: 370)

i. the prominent role of the Covenant theology (Brummer, 2013: 167)

j. the differentiation between 'common grace' *(gemene gratie)* and 'particular grace' *(pro rege)*. 'Common grace' is God's sustaining work in the lives of non-believers and His reign over all spheres of life (Naudé, 2009: 609-610). 'Particular grace' is given to the elect and is what redeems them[79] (Brummer, 2013: 147)

k. double predestination and unconditional election (Vosloo, 2012: 428; Brummer, 2013: 167)

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78 See the article by Willie Jonker (1989) for a thorough discussion on Abraham Kuyper's views on church unity and how these views were interpreted within the South African context.

79 For more on Abraham Kuyper's perspective on grace, see his three-volume work *De gemeene gratie* (Kuyper, 1902; Kuyper, 1903; Kuyper, 1904), as well as *Pro Rege* (Kuyper, 1911-1912), also in three volumes.

l.   the total depravity of man

m.   mission must be done by Christians as part of church life, and not by para-church mission organisations. There was suspicion of para-church organisations doing evangelisation (Brummer, 2013: 144)

n.   faith is primarily intellectual, a belief system that the redeemed elect share with each other. This belief system is revealed to the elect through the 'particular grace' – hence the importance of the confessions as a systematic representation of the beliefs of the redeemed (Brummer, 2013: 144-145)

o.   separate spheres of life, such as church, state and family, are part of the order of creation.

A problem with Neo-Calvinism in South Africa was that the lines between the Word of God, the confession, and Afrikaner nationalism faded. Anyone who criticised Neo-Calvinism was viewed as anti-Afrikaner and a heretic with liberal tendencies (Durand, 1985: 41; Deist, 1991: 371). Resistance against Neo-Calvinism were viewed as treason against the Afrikaner nation and of liberal tendencies (Durand, 1985: 41). The result was that very few voices were critical of the way Neo-Calvinism was practised in South Africa. The Du Plessis case sent a clear message that those who are deemed critical of the dominant theology would not be tolerated. Having said this, it is by no means true that there were no critical voices of Neo-Calvinism. Among others, Prof. Johannes du Plessis, Prof. B.B. Keet, Prof. Ben Marais, and later Dr. Beyers Naudé sounded the alarm about Neo-Calvinism's weaknesses (Brummer, 2013: 223;234; Maritz, 2004: 166; Durand, 1985: 45).

While liberal theology was still very active in Europe, South Africa was shielded first by Evangelical theology and Pietism, then by the rise of Afrikaner nationalism, and later by the Apartheid system. Most South Africans were unaware of the theological debates that were going on in Europe after the World Wars. The fear of liberal theology in the DRC would, however, have more victims in the later history of the DRC. One of the most prominent was the so-called Du Plessis case (1928-1932).

3.3.5 The influence of Karl Barth

Karl Barth was a famous German theologian, known for his opposition to the Nazi doctrine. In fact, Willie Jonker (in Smit, 2009: 275) claims that '[t]heologically speaking, our generation was dominated by Barth'. Barth emphasised

> that Christian faith rests solely on the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, and that the task of theology is to allow that revelation to shine in its own light and stand on its own authority as Word of God to us. The theology lives out of the Word; and the name of the Word is Jesus (Heron, 1980: 74).

The First World War and the German church's support for the Kaiser's war policy had a profound impact on Barth's theology. He was especially critical of the *Kulturprotestantismus* ('cultural Protestantism') – the close identification of Protestant Christianity with the German culture – and the Second World War reinforced this position of his. He resisted identifying the eternal biblical Kingdom of God with a cultural and political movement within history. Barth also came to the realisation that liberal theology was unable to deal with the challenges the church was facing during this time. His disappointment with the liberal theology was deepened by his liberal teachers' support for and justification of the First World War[80] and liberal theology's view of scripture (Tshaka, 2009: 501-502). Barth also broke with the dominant Enlightenment approach to theology (Bosch, 1993b: 390). In the words of Hans Kung (1988: 189):

> Barth's "theology of the crisis," later called "dialectical theology," demanded [...] a paradigmatic shift: away from subjective experience and pious feelings, towards the Bible; away from history, towards God's revelation; away from the religious discourse on the concept of God, towards proclamation of God's word; away from religion and religiosity, towards Christian faith, away from religious needs of the individual, towards God who is to "totally Other", manifested only in Jesus Christ.

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80 'One day in early August 1940 stands out in my personal memory as a black day. Ninety-three German intellectuals impressed public opinion by their proclamation in support of the war public policy of Wilhelm II and his counselors [sic]. Among these intellectuals I discovered to my horror almost all my theological teachers who I had greatly venerated. In despair over what this indicated about the sign of the time I suddenly realized that I could not any longer follow either their ethics or dogmatics or the understanding of the Bible and of history' (Barth, 1960: 14).

Karl Barth's theology was important to the DRC because of the influence it had on many of its prominent theologians during the second half of the 20th century[81]. This influence was evident among anti-Apartheid theologians[82] such as Nico Smit, Jaap Durand, Willie Jonker, Beyers Naudé, Dawid Bosch, Takatso Mofokeng, Allan Boesak and Russel Botman, although to various degrees (Smit, 2006: n.p.; Laubscher, 2007: 1550; Smit, 2009: 275). Barth's influence was further expanded through the impact of the Barmen Declaration, of which he was the main author (Koopman, 2009 : 63). Finally, his contribution in defining the *mission Dei* makes his influence on the development of the missional theology especially important. He was one of the first theologians to define mission as integral to God's being, and not only a secondary characteristic. The following aspects of Barth's theology were important in the development of the DRC theology[83]:

- The focus of faith is God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ (Barth and Bromiley, 1962: 87; Heron, 1980: 74).

- God is the 'wholly other', the transcendent God, and there is no continuity or similarity between God and man. The gap between man and God was bridged by Jesus Christ in order to claim man as His friend and partner (Barth and Bromiley, 1962: 131; Heron, 1980: 81; Metzger, 2005: 72). Because of the 'wholly otherness' of God, He cannot be known directly but only through His self-revelation to people through faith (Groenewald, 2007: 1617).

- Barth's rejection of 'natural theology'. Despite this rejection, he still believed that creation does bear objective witness to God, but God can only be known through his self-revelation in Jesus Christ (Metzger, 2005: 72; Flett, 2010: 172-173).

- Although Barth differentiates between the divine and secular realms, he sees a close relationship between divine justification and human justice (Metzger, 2005:

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81 The prominent DRC theologian Prof. Johan Heyns (1955) wrote a book on Barth in 1955 which he called Karl Barth: Wie is hy en wat wil hy? ('Karl Barth: Who is he and what does he want?'). In the introduction, Heyns wrote that little had been written in Afrikaans about Karl Barth up to that point.

82 See the article by Martin Laubscher (2007) on Barth's influence on the theology and development of the Beyers Naudé Centre for Public Theology at the Stellenbosch University theological faculty.

83 The research was guided in this process by the work of George Hunsinger (1991), who identified six major motives in Barth's theology.

163-164). The Christian faith has profound implications for the world we live in and the church's social concerns.[84]

- Barth warned against seeing the church as an invisible phenomenon. When the Holy Spirit assembles the faithful, a visible Christian congregation arises. If the church's unity is seen as invisible and turned inward, it devalues the visible church (Barth, 1947: 142).

- For Barth, the gospel has concrete and political relevance for the oppressed and those who suffer. There is a clear link between God's righteousness and his mercy (Barth, 1964: 387). In Barth's own words:

> God always takes His stand unconditionally and passionately on this side and on this side alone: against the lofty and on behalf of the lonely; against those who already enjoy right and privilege and on behalf of those who are denied it and deprived of it. (Barth, 1964: 386)[85]

- Barth sees mission not as an activity of the Church, but the very nature of God himself. Mission is no longer an aspect of the ecclesiology or the soteriology but of the Trinity (Bosch, 1993b: 389-390; Flett, 2010: 198-199;284).

- For Barth, the Word of God is central to theological reflection. Barth has a threefold understanding of the Word of God: the primary form is God's self-expression through His eternal Word in Jesus Christ; the secondary form is the Bible's witness on the primary Word, which witness is mediated by the Holy Spirit. The tertiary form is the proclamation of Jesus Christ in the church as the Word of God (Heron, 1980: 82). The Bible is humanity's witness about the Word of God (Jesus Christ) and becomes the Word of God through the work of the Holy Spirit (Heyns, 1955: 25-26).

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84 See Article 2 of the Barmen Declaration for this sentiment: 'We reject the false doctrine, as though there were areas of our life in which we would not belong to Jesus Christ, but to other lords – areas in which we would not need justification and sanctification through him.

.85 George Hunsinger (2000: 53) puts this aspect of Barth's theology within his soteriology when he writes: 'It is precisely because God has acted once for all apart from us, against us, and for us in Jesus Christ – doing for us that which we most needed but were in no position whatsoever to do for ourselves – that we are in faith made responsible for all those who are poor and oppressed, that we are summoned to espouse the cause of those who suffer wrong. For in them it is manifested to us what we ourselves are in the sight of God.'

There is no doubt that Karl Barth had a significant influence on the DRC's theology during the second half of the 20th century. Du Toit et al. (2002: 225-228) argue that Barth's theology can be seen in the document accepted by the watershed 1986 General Synod called *Kerk en Samelewing* ('church and society'). The Synod was balanced on a knife-edge with the Neo-Calvinists on one side and those influenced by Barth on the other. In the end, the balance swung away from the Neo-Calvinists and started the DRC's change of heart about Apartheid and reintegration into the ecumenical ecumenical bodies. Barth's influence on the theological development within the DRC will become clearer as the understanding of the impact of the anti-Apartheid theologians and the Confession of Belhar grows.

3.3.6 'Nuwe Hervorming Beweging': Liberal Theology Reincarnated?

After the end of Apartheid, new voices were being heard in South Africa. Most prominent in the DRC context were the voices of the 'Nuwe Hervorming' (New Reformation) movement[86]. The New Reformation movement started with the publication by a group of South African theologians and intellectuals (some of them members of the DRC) called *Die Nuwe Hervorming* (Muller, 2002), which set out the worldview and theology of the movement. The movement was heavily influenced by the Jesus Seminar, a group of New Testament scholars who aimed to distil the historical Jesus from the accounts found in the Bible (Muller, 2002: 16). According to these scholars, the biblical account of Jesus's life was a mythical construction of who Jesus was and did not reflect a factual portrayal of the historical Jesus (Viljoen, 2003: 18). One of the prominent voices in the 'Nuwe Hervorming', Hansie Wolmerans (2002: 63), writes that the movement wanted to imagine and reinterpret God within the prevailing worldview in order to distance themselves from the primitive doctrines and confessions regarding God that the orthodoxy was built on. The 'Nuwe Hervoming Netwerk' (2012: n.p.) state their aim as follows:

> *Ons visualiseer 'n nuwe era waar die nuwere wêreldbeeld en mensbeskouing aanvaar word; waar inligting vrylik kan vloei, sonder vrees vir marginalisering, verkettering of vervolging. Alle mense het die reg om toegerus te word om in 'n positiewe verhouding tot hulleself, hulle medemens, die omgewing en die goddellike te leef. Ons sien die goddelike in die onbegryplike misterie van die lewe*

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86 The 'Nuwe Hervorming Beweging' was the broader discussion between people who have difficulty following the orthodox Christian faith as represented by the traditional churches in South Africa. The 'Nuwe Hervorming Netwerk' is an organisation that was formed by people in the 'Nuwe Hervorming Beweging'. They have a constitution, membership and regular meetings (Nuwe Hervorming Netwerk, 2012: n.p.).

en maak nie aanspraak op ewige waarhede nie. Ons koester die beste van ons erfgoed in die Bybel en ons Christelike tradisie, asook ons kulturele erfenis op die gebied van musiek, kuns, letterkunde en die wetenskap. Ons droom van 'n kultuur wat bevorderlik is vir ware selfverwesenliking.

The 'Nuwe Hervorming Beweging' developed around the following values:

- Although they accommodate many realities within a postmodern worldview, not all these realities are equal. A modern, scientific, verifiable reality is preferred over an ancient, prescientific reality (Craffert, 2002: 81).

- They question the idea of a personal God and the existence of the Devil, although the metaphorical idea of a personal God is of value to those who are experiencing personal trauma (Craffert, 2002: 82).

- They are of the opinion that the Bible never had a monotheistic view of God – at most it advocated monolatry (i.e. only one God can be served).

- They question the inherent sinfulness of man (Craffert, 2002: 83).

- They argue that the virgin birth and resurrection of Jesus should be taken seriously, but against the background of the pre-modern world where these miracles were ascribed to prominent people. From a postmodern perspective, these narratives are accepted as valid views within the ancient context, but not necessarily an accurate view of reality (Craffert, 2002: 85,172).

- They do not accept the Bible as the 'Word of God', but as the perspective of ancient believers on God (Craffert, 2002: 86).

- The aim of the 'Nuwe Hervorming' spirituality is to help people to live in harmony with each other and not to gain eternal salvation (Craffert, 2002: 86).

The 'Nuwe Hervorming Netwerk' wants to create an alternative space for people who struggle to identify and align themselves with the orthodox Christian faith. They purport to do this from a postmodern perspective that values relativity. They do not, however, view all perspectives as equally valid; for example, the orthodox Christian discourse of Jesus being the only way to redemption is rejected (cf. Craffert, 2002: 87).

Currently, the New Reformation movement is largely functioning outside the DRC and has become organised and structured in the 'Nuwe Hervorming Netwerk'[87], which has a website, organising committee, and regular events. They advertise liturgies that are available for the '*viering van nuwe lewe*' ('celebration of new life'), '*huwelikseremonies*' ('marriage ceremonies') and '*afskeid van die lewe*' ('parting from life') (Die Nuwe Hervorming Netwerk, 2014: n.p.). It is important to note that the New Reformation's website is only available in Afrikaans and the members are predominantly Afrikaans-speaking.

Zuiddam (2009: 284-285) and Hofmeyr (2013: 8) argue that the 'Nuwe Hervorming' movement is the spiritual child of the 'Modern Thought' movement discussed earlier. Evidence of this can be seen in the prominence of human reason in their epistemology; doubts about the divine nature of Jesus; seeing the Bible as only human opinions about God, and not the reliable and revealed Word of God; and doubts about the existence of the Devil and the miracles of Jesus (Zuiddam, 2009: 285). Although the 'Nuwe Hervorming' wants to relate to a postmodern world, their theology and worldview are reflective of the modern era. Durand (2005: 75) is of the opinion that the 'Nuwe Hervorming' wants to be postmodern, but they are not prepared for the relativism of postmodernity. They acknowledge human subjectivity, but are not prepared to follow through with its ontological implications of human subjectivity. They leave no room for the orthodox Christian worldview that still believe in the miraculous and transcendental.

3.4 Mission Awakening in the DRC

To understand the current missional impetus, it is useful to look back on the mission history of the DRC. The DRC has, after all, had a strong missionary inclination since the planting of the church. For example, in 1648, when a Dutch ship stranded at the Cape of Storms, among those on board was Jan van Riebeeck. He reported to the Dutch East India Company (Du Toit, 1984: 618):

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[87] http://www.nuwe-hervorming.co.za

dat men enige van de inboorlingen in de Christelyke religie kan optrekken waardoor, als God Almagtig deze goede zaak belieft te zegenen - vele zielen tot de Gereformeerde religie en God toegebracht kunnen worde[88].

This missionary focus and fervour ebbed and flowed during the history of the church. Willem Saayman (2007) describes the mission upsurges in the DRC in four waves[89] or 'periods of extraordinary mission endeavour' (Saayman, 2007: 9). These waves were not only religious phenomena, but were closely related to the socio-political context of the country.

The first wave occurred from 1779 to 1834 and was linked to the ministry of Rev. HR van Lier and Rev. MC Vos. According to Cronje (1982: 18),

> Vos [...] held it as his duty to preach to slaves and Hottentots too and stressed the responsibility of slave-owners for their slaves' moral and spiritual welfare. He also prepared a simple catechism for the instruction of slaves and Hottentots.

This wave was concerned with so-called 'home missions' (in the Cape Colony) and developed into missions in the Orange Free State and Natal (today named the Free State and KwaZulu-Natal). The second wave started with the events surrounding the Great Trek (1867-1939) and was linked to the ministry of Dr. Andrew Murray Jr and, to a lesser extent, that of Rev. Stephanus Hofmeyr, Rev. AC Murray and Rev. Andrew Louw. The second wave was concerned with 'foreign missions' in the Northern Transvaal (today the Northern Province), then outside the Cape Colony, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia. The third wave lasted from 1954 to 1976 and here the focus turned more inwards, towards the Bantu homelands. The fourth wave was from 1990 onwards, with a strong focus on international mission (Saayman, 2007: 12-13). At the end of this discussion, the question will be asked if a fifth period can now be discerned.

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88 Translation: 'that some of the natives can be Christianised with the result, if God Almighty chose to bless this beneficial action a– many souls could be brought to the Reformed religion and God' (Du Toit, 1984: 618).

89 Krizinger, Saayman and Smit (2004) argued for a three-wave model, but Saayman (2007: 12) extended their research, and presented his four-wave model.

3.4.1 A First Wave (1779-1834): The Early Dutch Reformed Mission

3.4.1.1 Socio-Political Context

During this time, the Cape Colony was changing from a refreshment post to a colonial society. This led to many changes in the administration, population, and economy of the Cape. Saayman (2007: 16) argues that economic changes were the most important drivers of the development of the Cape Colony, and two factors led to population growth in the Colony. The Cape became self-sufficient as far as wheat and wine production were concerned, and settlements spread beyond the coastal mountain ranges.

Population growth and the consequent need for more land and resources led to the *trekboer* phenomenon. The *trekboere* were colonial famers who settled further away from the capital. There were serious administrative shortcomings in dealing with the needs of these farmers, as well as a lack of schools and churches to serve them. The administration in the Cape was designed to deal with a refreshment station, not a growing colony. All these factors led to a growing rift between the *trekboere*, the more prosperous bourgeoisie (administration officials and business men) in Cape Town, and the colonial administration (Saayman, 2007: 18-19).

There was a growing dissatisfaction with the colonial rulers. In Cape Town, the richer bourgeoisie came under the influence of the Dutch Patriot movement, a resistance movement against the Dutch rulers in line with the European revolutionary spirit at the end of the 18th century. The *trekboere*, on the other hand, were influenced by the French Revolution, which was carried inland by discharged French soldiers who were acting as temporary teachers (Saayman, 2007: 17-18).

By the end of the 18th century, the white colonists no longer saw themselves as European, but as Afrikaners. Saayman (2007: 20) argues that the early Afrikaners had no explicit racial categories, although there were strong colonial stereotypes. Colonial society regarded Western civilisation and Christianity as superior to indigenous cultures and religions.

The socio-economic structure of society in the 18th century was interwoven with the practice of slavery. Slavery was generally accepted and not questioned, even within Christian circles. The whole economy was in fact dependent on the existence of the slave system. During this period, mission was also primarily conceived as mission to the slaves. The Cape congregations focused

on evangelisation and providing educational opportunities to the slaves. The evangelisation of the slaves was closely linked to their education because of the Reformed focus on the believer's ability to read God's Word and the relationship between Christianity and Western civilisation.

3.4.1.2 Missionary Revival

Central to the missionary revival in the DRC was the work of Rev. Helperus Ritzema van Lier and Rev. Michiel Christiaan Vos. Both were heavily influenced by the continuing Reformation and described their conversion experiences in typically Pietist terms (Gerstner, 1991: 95-96). Their ministry was also marked by a strong Pietist spirituality and calling for mission work. Van Lier and De Vos started the first organised mission work within the DRC. Van Lier started his ministry in 1786 and worked until his death in 1792, while de Vos followed van Lier in 1794 and worked until he left the Cape in 1802. The missionary work of Van Lier and de Vos came to fruition as a missionary fervour that was deeply embodied in the DRC church structures. Despite the different attitudes towards missionary work, it was clear that the DRC felt a calling to reach non-Christians. While there was a missionary awakening among the Cape Town congregations, the same was not true among the *trekboere* on the Eastern frontier (Saayman, 2007: 31). Racial prejudice and slavery lead to resistance against mission among the *trekboere*.

Before 1843 the DRC was not very active in missionary work apart from individuals like van Lier and Vos. Possible reasons could be that up to that stage, the DRC in the Cape were under ecclesial and political control of, first the Dutch and then the British who did not encourage missionary work by the Boer churches; secondly the shortage of ministers and the fact that many of those that were available, were liberal. Lastly, the Boers had a negative perception of the local missionaries due to their criticism of slavery (Paas, 2016: 352). During this period, mission was conceived as mission to the slaves. The slaves were the most obvious group of non-Christians that the missionaries came in contact with. The Cape Town congregations focused on evangelization and providing educational opportunities to the slaves. The evangelisation of the slaves was closely linked to their education because of the Reformed focus on the believer's ability to read God's Word and the relationship between Christianity and Western civilisation.

The Synod of 1824 – the first Synod of the DRC – formulated a plan for educating non-Christians living within the boundaries of congregations. Another important decision was to ordain lay members (evangelists) of the DRC working among non-Christians. Their ordination

made it possible for these evangelists to administer the sacraments. The success of their work led to a new challenge for the church – inter-racial worship. Because of the growing number of black converts, the subsequent Synod of 1829 had to deal with the question of inter-racial worship. The Synod made a clear decision that no-one could be excluded from worship. Despite this decision, many congregations continued to have separate worship services. A second important decision by the Synod was that non-white members who were baptised and catechised by ordained ministers would become full members of the local DRC (Saayman, 2007: 34-37).

The missionary work of van Lier and de Vos came to fruition as a missionary fervour that was deeply embodied in the DRC church structures. Despite the different attitudes towards missionary work, it was clear that the DRC felt a calling to reach non-Christians.

3.4.2 A Second Wave (1867-1939): Crossing Borders

In the period between the first and second missionary wave, the Great Trek took place. The Great Trek was a north-eastward migration of around 15 000 Dutch farmers from the middle of the 1920s to the end of the 1930s. The main reasons for the migration were political marginalisation, lack of security, and the need for more agricultural land and workers for the farms (Giliomee and Mbenga, 2007: 108-110). The Trek had a marked influence on the missionary fervour of the DRC. The Trekkers would come into contact (mostly confrontational) with large numbers of indigenous Africans, and true to the reigning colonial understanding saw them, like all non-white people, as objects of mission. Another effect of the Great Trek was that the Afrikaners saw themselves, in terms of the Old Testament covenant, as God's chosen people who had to promote the Christian civilisation among the heathen.

The second wave started after the settlement of the Trekkers in their new homeland and the discovery of diamonds. This period was crucial in the formation of an Afrikaner identity (Saayman, 2007: 46), and early traces of Afrikaner nationalism could already be seen. Economically, the landscape was changed forever by the discovery of diamonds in 1867, because it brought interest from mining capitalists and foreign governments, and led to industrialisation and urbanisation, which Afrikaners had to deal with.

This period was a crucial time in the formation of the Afrikaner identity. The Afrikaners also had to deal with urbanization, industrialisation, and poverty during this time (Saayman, 2007: 45). The second wave was marked by a focus on 'foreign mission'.

3.4.2.1 Socio-Political context

Economically the landscape was changed forever by the discovery of diamonds in 1867. The discovery of this natural resource brought renewed interest from mining capitalists and foreign governments and led to industrialisation and urbanisation.

This period was crucial in the formation of an Afrikaner identity (Saayman, 2007: 46). Firstly, because the early traces of Afrikaner nationalism could be seen during this period. Secondly, religiosity became a strong feature of the Afrikaners. Lastly, the Afrikaner's experience of being called on a divine mission to bring the gospel and civilisation to Southern Africa.

This was also the time of the *taalstryd* ('language struggle'): the struggle to have Afrikaans recognised as an official language to be used in churches, and to obtain an Afrikaans Bible translation. Because of the strong link in the Reformed tradition between faith and the written word, there was also a strong link between faith and language. The language struggle was therefore an integral part of the development of Afrikaner nationalism.

3.4.2.2 Missionary Revival

By the time of the second wave, the DRC had become a national church, spread throughout the whole of South Africa. The Cape Colony government had stopped paying the salaries of ministers, and individual congregations were forced to accept responsibility for the remuneration of their ministers. The influence of the Cape Colony government on ministers and the church decreased significantly and the DRC became closely identified with the Afrikaner people (Saayman, 2007: 46). The Afrikaners furthermore saw a strong link between their future survival and their faithfulness to their calling to bring faith to their new homeland.

This period was thus the official start of the DRC's missionary work. The Synod of 1857 appointed a mission committee to organise missionary work inside and outside the borders of the Colony (Saayman, 2007: 50). Dr. W. Robertson was sent to Europe in 1860 to recruit foreign missionaries. The first foreign (European) missionaries were sent to work in a *'foreign'* country,

the present Pilanesberg and Soutpansberg[90] areas. From 1877 missionaries were sent to work in the current Botswana (1877), Malawi (1889), Zimbabwe (1891), Zambia (1899), Nigeria (1908), Mozambique (1909) and Kenya (1944) (Du Preez, 2002: 138-140). It must be said that it was not only congregations in the Cape Colony that was active in missionary work but also congregations throughout the rest of South Africa. The church in the Free State decided during their first Synod in 1865, to contribute towards the Cape Synod's missionary work until they were able to start their own (Saayman, 2007: 55).

It was during the second wave that John and Andrew Murray Jr and NJ Hofmeyr[91] started their ministry and further developed the Evangelical-Pietist DNA of the DRC. These three ministers had a strong influence on the second wave of missionary work. The growth of a revivalist spirit in Britain and America in the 1880s, brought to South Africa by European ministers and missionaries who had been exposed to it, also influenced the DRC's fervour for foreign missions. Various organisations with a missionary aim were formed, such as the *Predikante-Sendingvereniging* (Ministers' Mission Association) in 1886. Among these organisations were two that would have a significant impact on youth ministry in South Africa. The first was the *Christelike Jonglieden Vereniging* (1874), which later developed into the *Kerkjeugvereniging* (Church Youth Association). The second was the *Christen Studente Vereniging* (Christian Students' Association), formed in 1896 with the aim of ministry to scholars and students (Heyns, 2002: 132-133). The Afrikaners saw a strong link between their future survival and their faithfulness to their calling to bring faith to their new homeland.

During this period woman would play a major role in the DRC's mission work. Robert (1993: 103) argues that without women's encouragement, fundraising, organisational ability, and eagerness to work as missionaries, the DRC's mission work would not have been possible. The moral, intellectual, and spiritual foundations of these women were laid in the girls' schools founded during this period. One example is the Huguenot College (opened in 1874) in Wellington, founded by Andrew Murray Jr. to raise the educational standards of Afrikaner

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90 These areas are currently part of South Africa, but at the time, they were part of the South African Republic (independent of the Cape Colony) and were deemed foreign by the DRC in the Cape Colony (Saayman, 2007: 51).

women. The first teachers at this institution were all recruited from the famous Mount Holyoke seminary [92] in the USA which trained teachers and missionaries. The founder of Mount Holyoke, Mary Lyon, said that the 'purpose in education was to bring her pupils to saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and then to channel their lives into self-sacrificial Christian service' (Robert, 1993: 105). The Mount Holyoke teachers instilled in the girls a Christian ethos and a strong calling to work in the Kingdom. By 1897, 51 of the Huguenot College alumni were active in the mission field. In 1890, the Vroue Zending Bond (Women's Mission Association) was formed (Saayman, 2007: 52), which started doing ministry work among children that later became the '*Kinderkrans beweging*' (Landman, 2002: 154). After the Second South African War, women were also active in the *Transvaal Vrouesendingvereniging* (Transvaal Women's Mission Association), formed in 1905 (Saayman, 2007: 58).

The Second South African War between Britain and the Orange Free State and Transvaal Republics (1899-1902) had a profound influence on the Afrikaners' self-understanding. Politically and economically, the Afrikaners were brought to their knees. Despite the trauma and the lack of financial and human resources it brought, the war also brought spiritual depth and increased mission fervour into the hearts of Afrikaners. Notably, 200 of the prisoners of war in India, Ceylon, and St. Helena volunteered for mission service after the war. Because many of them did not have the academic credentials to attend the seminary at Stellenbosch, a special institute for mission, the Boer Mission School, was opened in Worcester and attended by 175 ex-prisoners. The renewed spiritual commitment of the Afrikaners during the war led to increased involvement in and contributions to mission work (Saayman, 2007: 61).

According to Saayman (2007: 63), the missionary enthusiasm of the second wave would subside during the early 1930s because of various factors, including the urbanisation of black Africans, the start of the black trade union movement, the development of the African indigenous churches, the drought of the 1930s, world economic stagnation, poverty among white Afrikaners and the split among the Afrikaners on the decision to join the Second World War as part of the Allies against Germany. Between 1939 and 1945, the DRC was transformed from a rural to an urban church, with 71% of its members now living in urban areas. Urbanisation had a

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92 For more on Mount Holyoke seminary, see Robert (1993).

detrimental effect on the involvement of DRC members. By the 1940s, only 30% of DRC members still attended church and Holy Communion in Johannesburg. The Afrikaners also felt increasingly threatened by Anglicisation and the increasing number of black Africans.

3.4.3 A Third Wave (1954-1976): Crossing Inner Boundaries

When writing about this period, the first difficulty the writer encounters is to differentiate between the socio-political and the ecclesial context of the time. The lines between these two aspects of life in South Africa were so blurred that you start writing about the one and end up writing about the other. During this period, the National Party government's idea of separate development and the Dutch Reformed Church's strategy of homogenous churches were closely related[93]. The Afrikaner people still experienced a divine calling to bring Christianity and civilisation to the Southern tip of Africa, but this calling was balanced with the ideal of preserving the racial purity of the Afrikaner nation. These aims played out in new Apartheid laws and the mission fervour of this period.

3.4.3.1 Socio-Political Context

Afrikaner nationalism gathered steam between the second missionary wave and the third, and became institutionalised with the victory of the National Party in 1948. The apartheid system was nothing new in 1948, Saayman (2007: 70) is of the opinion that the Apartheid was rooted in 300 years of Western colonialist ethnocentrism. It was however true that the apartheid ideology became entrenched in politics and law after 1948. The idealistic dream of Apartheid was the separate development and self-determination of each cultural group in South Africa (Livingston, 2014: loc. 288). Apartheid was not only a political ideology, but also part of the DRC's theology. The 1880 decision of the DRC to form separate churches for Coloureds (the Dutch Reformed Mission Church, founded in 1881), for Black Christians (the DRC in Africa,

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93 The DRC was by no means the only church that supported the NP government and Apartheid system. A church like the Reformed Church (Gereformeerde Kerk or Doppers) were even more influenced by neo-Calvinism. They emphasised the Afrikaners as a covenant community who are set apart from the other nations (Livingston, 2014: loc. 393).

founded in 1951) and for Indian Christians (the Reformed Church in Africa, founded in 1968)[94] is an example of this (Naudé, 2005: 165-166). The close link between politics and religion came from the influence of Abraham Kuyper, who saw Calvinism as an all-encompassing life system. Within the Neo-Calvinist understanding of theology, the line between service to the nation and service to God was difficult to distinguish. Livingston (2014: loc. 433) states that:

> Every dimension of life exists under the common grace of God, and has its own unique "sovereignty." Because the various spheres exist under God's common grace, rooted in the creation order itself, Kuyper discerned a theoretical basis for "Christian Nationalism," a Christian ordering of society and culture.

The socio-political attitudes of the majority of DRC members were reflected in the mission policy of the church. The DRC was, however, not unique in its handling of cultural issues in mission. The work of the prominent German missiologist Gustav Warneck[95] (1834-1919) was used to justify and entrench the theology of separate churches[96] (Du Toit, 1984: 622). Warneck believed that the aim of mission was *Volkschristianisierung* ('Christianising of whole nations') (Bosch, 1983: 26-27). It was only a short leap from Christianising a whole nation to Christianising a whole nation on its own (Naudé, 2005: 166).

This period was the height of the Apartheid system, and the government and church had full confidence in their project. The DRC had a lot of power and influence, and was in a financially healthy position. During this period, two commissions were appointed by the Apartheid government that would have a fundamental influence on the missionary work of the DRC. The first was the Eiselen commission (on Bantu education) and second was the Tomlinson commission (on the socio-economic development in the proposed black homelands). The government believed that education was central to the long-term success of the Apartheid system. The Eiselen report was implemented as the Bantu Education Act of 1953[97], and the

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94 Naude (2005: 166) indicates the dates for the start of the DRC in Africa as 1911 and for the Reformed Church in Africa as 1951. Cronje (1982: 51) and Livingston (2014: 24) use 1951 for the first Synod of the DRC in Africa. Cronje (1982: 79), Hofmeyr (2002: 24) and Livingston (Livingston, 2014: 24) agree that the first Synod of the RCA was held in 1968. The difference in dates seems to be between the date of the DRC Synod 's decision to start a new church, and the date of the new church's first Synod, which is the date used in this thesis.

95 Warneck's view was popularised in Afrikaans through the work by J. du Plessis, Wie sal gaan (Bosch, 1983a: 27).

96 For more on the relationship between Warneck and the DRC missiology, see Naude (2005).

97 Saayman (2007: 73) makes a valid argument that the farm school system played an important role in the economic and educational disparities in South Africa.

Christian National Education system was created (Du Toit, 1984: 625; Saayman, 2007: 73). The Tomlinson report (1953) had an even bigger impact. The report dealt with all aspects of the proposed black homelands, which included a prominent section on Christian missions. The report highlighted the need for more missionaries in the black homelands. With the support of the National Party government, there was a large increase in missionaries being sent to the homelands. Mission stations, church buildings, institutions for the blind and deaf and hospitals were built with government subsidies (Saayman, 2007: 76).

The 1960s was also the time when the black resistance movement started to the influence the apartheid system. The Sharpeville and Langa demonstrations were met by draconian security measures. Tension within South Africa and resistance against the apartheid system were on the rise. There was also increased criticism from ecumenical bodies on the DRC and government (Saayman, 2007: 79). There were also many dissenting voices within the DRC and in the DRC family of churches, that were critical of the DRC's support for the Apartheid system. Early voices from within the DRC were that of professors Johannes du Plessis, Bennie Keet, and Ben Marias and the very prominently, rev. Beyers Naudé. Among later strong voices against the prevailing system were professors Jaap du Rand, Ben Marias, Nico Smith[98], Johan Heyns and Dawid Bosch. These individual voices were soon supported by many other minsters and members of the DRC. The dissenting voices followed two strategies, sympathetic critique and confrontation, the first strategy was followed by the majority of dissenters. During the 1980's the resistance against these voices grew and many were pushed out of the church. It would later emerge that their efforts were not in vain, but the pace of change were very slow (cf. De Gruchy, 1979; Serfontein, 1982; Lubbe, 2001).

3.4.3.2 Missionary Revival

The influence of the Tomlinson report could be seen in the upsurge in the missionary work of the DRC in Southern Africa (Van der Watt, 2003: 216). The areas that specifically benefited

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[98] These theologians published various works that articulated the belief that the Apartheid system was not in line with the biblical imperative. Among these were the *Hervormingsdaggetuienis* (31 October 1980) *Stormkompas* (Smith, O'Brien Geldenhuys and Meiring, 1981) and the Ope Brief (8 June 1982) (Pauw, 2007: 145-155).

from this upsurge were the Transkei, Ciskei, Northern Cape (Phororo), the Goldfields and the homelands in the Northern Transvaal (Van der Watt, 2003: 215). Various congregations were planted for Christians from an Indian background, and they also worked among the Muslim and Hindu communities (Van der Watt, 2003: 217). The emphasis in the DRC's mission work shifted from crossing international borders to crossing internal boundaries in South Africa. Incidentally, the Apartheid system had created these internal boundaries between the privileged whites and the poor blacks and other races. The mission policy developed from the same frame of reference as the Apartheid system, namely the separation of cultures.

The aim of the mission of the DRC was to win souls for the Kingdom, planting of churches and organizing of denominations (Van der Watt, 2003b: 215). A commendable aim, but with the undeniable small print – as segregated churches. White South Africans rarely crossed into a black world except for the missionary work that was done. It is no surprise that many of the missionaries that were confronted with the realities of the black community became champions of the anti-apartheid movement.

The approach to mission was holistic. Not only was evangelism done, but social services were also delivered by the church. At this stage, there were 3000 mission schools educating 220 000 children, 38 mission hospitals with 8000 beds, 7 schools for the blind, 6 for the deaf, and 8 theological seminaries[99] (Van der Watt, 2003: 217). The church became one of the main partners of the National Party government in delivering social services to the homelands (Saayman, 2007: 77). It remains one of the ironies and tensions within the Apartheid ideology that a system that was so harsh and inhumane on the one hand could also be a system that invested so much in bringing the gospel and delivering better social services. The idea of holistic mission must be qualified in light of the fact that mission was still very much within Andrew Murray Jr's Evangelical-Pietist tradition, which emphasised personal conversion. Providing social services was seen as auxiliary to this main aim (Durand, 1985: 42-43; Saayman, 2007: 88).

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99 One for the Dutch Reformed Mission Church in Bellville, four Stofberg Seminaries (Pietersburg, Dingaanstat, Decoligny and Witsieshoek), and three elsewhere in Southern Africa (Nkoma, Morgenster and Madzimoyo) (Van der Watt, 2003b: 217-218).

Another reason for the strong growth in mission projects during this period was a better organisational structure within the church, and mission secretaries who were appointed to coordinate the mission projects of the church. Mission was driven and largely organised by the various Synods and not by local congregations (Van der Watt, 2003: 219). More money was also available because of the economic boom (Saayman, 2007: 90).

Mission was seen as something done by white DRC members to and for blacks. The DRC's involvement in social services was also driven and funded by the government's need to have partners in delivering services in the homelands.

The 'foreign' mission projects (Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, and Namibia) of the DRC did not experience the same explosive growth as that in the homelands, but continued on the same level as during the previous wave (Saayman, 2007: 77).

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The third wave off the DRC's missionary activity was filled with disparities and ambivalence. A biblical commandment to mission was mixed with racist ideologies (Saayman, 2003: 2010). Authentic mission fervour was coloured by attempts to protect the Afrikaners' political and economic interests. Mission history tells the story of successful mission projects in Southern and Central Africa of which many have grown into mature churches and that are still successful even today, despite the fact that they were started in a period of mixed motives.

3.4.4 A Fourth Wave (1990 Onwards): To the Ends of the Earth

Saayman (2007: 100) dates the start of the fourth wave as the end of the 1980s, during the dying years of the Apartheid system. It was a time of fundamental changes in the self-understanding of the Afrikaners. Power was slipping from their hands, and this created serious questions about the future of the Afrikaners and the DRC in Africa. Was there still a need for

a white church to bring faith and civilisation to Africa? The sea change of 1994 forced the Afrikaners and the DRC to reflect on their own identity and the role in Africa.

3.4.4.1 Socio-Political Context

During the 1980s, the National Party government was still firmly in control through the military, police, and the state of emergency, but economically, South Africa was hurting, and sanctions were taking their toll. Violence and demonstrations made parts of the country ungovernable. The government and the anti-Apartheid movement were in a stalemate and another way out had to be found. Secret negotiations were started with the ANC in 1986; these negotiations led up to the announcement by Pres. FW de Klerk in February 1990 that liberation movements would be unbanned and political prisoners released. Saayman (2007: 103) argues that neither the National Party supporters nor liberation movement supporters were prepared for the announcement made that day. The members of both of these parties were still heavily invested in protecting their own interests. The announcement especially came as a shock to many DRC members.

The 1994 democratic elections and the New South Africa had mixed consequences for the Afrikaners. On the one hand, they were relieved about the smooth, violence-free transition to a democratic South Africa. The world opened up to them, and they were now able to travel and work abroad. The end of sanctions also brought economic relief to the country. On the other hand, the reality was that it would mean the end of the privileged position of white South Africans. The urgent need for equality among all the people of South Africa resulted in black economic empowerment and affirmative action. Although it would take many years to correct the imbalances caused by the Apartheid system, these new laws and actions created uncertainty among Afrikaners.

3.4.4.2 Missionary Revival

The end of Apartheid came so suddenly that the DRC was not prepared to offer adequate pastoral leadership to its members. DRC members, along with most Afrikaners, had to digest the fact that 'communists' would now govern their Christian country (Saayman, 2007: 104). The church that had given them spiritual leadership for so many years was discredited in many people's eyes for its support of the Apartheid system (Lategan, 1999: 409). The National Party

capitulated and disappeared shortly after the end of Apartheid. Would the same happen to the DRC, was a question in many people's minds.

The feelings of confusion, vulnerability, and uncertainty about the future had a definite impact on the mission enthusiasm of the DRC. Saayman (2007: 106) claims that this led to a complete loss of mission fervour for Africa among DRC members. The mission focus of the DRC during the first three waves was closely linked to the Afrikaner's self-understanding as being called by God to bring faith and civilisation to Southern Africa. The uncertainty surrounding the DRC's role in South Africa caused by the end of Apartheid now made the DRC turn its focus to mission further afield.

Since the previous mission wave, the number of full-time missionaries in Southern Africa had declined significantly. In the four years from 1973 to 1977, the number of DRC missionaries had decreased from 1078 to 551[100] (Van der Watt, 2003: 222). There was a number of reasons for this, among them the tension between the old South African government and the other governments in Southern Africa. This led to the rejection of many visa applications by white South African missionaries (Van der Watt, 2003: 221). Saayman (2007: 109) makes an interesting argument regarding the decrease in mission fervour for Africa among DRC members. According to him, the first three waves were driven by a colonial mindset of bringing faith and civilisation to Africa. Within this mindset, white South Africans were in a position of power and were able to create a European environment within an African context. The end of the colonialist mindset and a new, democratic South Africa brought home the reality that they were a white minority within an African context. The result was that their vision turned inward and they started focusing on self-preservation.

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[100] The intensity of the missionary decline is reflected in the following statement by the chairman of the Commission for Mission of the General Synod, Rev. Dawid Snyman: *'Dinge loop vinnig baie skeef in Zambië. Ek vrees ons sal binne afsienbare tyd miskien net 'n paar sendelinge in diens daar hê. Die kanse om 'n visum of werkspermit vir nuwe sendelinge te kry, is haas onmoontlik. Die politieke spanning teen Suid-Afrika laai blykbaar volgens gegewens by die dag op. Ons stel die jong kerk daar plus die paar personeellede se lewe en arbeid in die hande van die Koning van die kerk'.* It is also palpable in the call by the Genral Synod: *'Die sinode roep kerkrade en ringe op om met die oog op die faktore wat al groter weerstand teen die sending opbou en al moeiliker omstandighede waaronder sendingwerk gedoen word, die geloof en die entoesiasme vir die saak van die Koninkryk nie te verloor nie'* (Van der Watt, 2003: 221).

Between the third and fourth waves, there was still much confusion about the difference between mission and evangelisation. Traditionally, mission was seen as work across cultural boundaries and evangelisation as work within the same cultural group, i.e. white people in this case (Van der Watt, 2003: 223). These definitions had reached the end of their useful life and the need for a new understanding of mission and evangelisation arose. In 1986, a conference of the Dutch Reformed family of churches helped to mould a new understanding of mission, and a new definition of mission was formulated that was incorporated into the official mission policy of the DRC. Mission was formulated as God's mission (*missio Dei*), from which the church's mission (*missio ecclesiae*) would flow. The mission of the church would have different dimensions, namely: *kerygma*, *diakonia, koinonia, leitourgia*, and *maturgia* (Van der Watt, 2003: 223-224). The concept of the *missio Dei* was now starting to become more prominent in the discussion of the church's calling.

Although the motivation for more mission work within Africa waned, the missionary DNA of the DRC was still strong, and the church started to look further afield for mission opportunities. Opportunities that was not a threat to their position in Africa. The focus of many congregations shifted to the ends of the earth, so to speak. Projects in ex-Soviet countries, the '10/40 window', India, Pakistan, and even Western Europe were started (Van der Watt, 2003: 226). Other significant changes in the missionary work of the DRC also took place, such as (Van Niekerk (1997: 414):

a. a shift from work done by Synods to work done by congregations;
b. the role of ordained ministers as missionaries taken over by lay members;
c. a move from central control by Synods to decentralisation and a variety of approaches; and
d. a change from work within the church structures to partnerships with para-church organisations.

The fourth mission wave was a time of much uncertainty and turbulence for the members of the DRC. The focus on missionary activity in Southern Africa was replaced by a focus on mission fields further away. These international projects were started by individual congregations, with less coordination from the various Synods. Lay members were becoming more prominent in the mission activities, being sent as missionaries, as well as supporting the

missionaries. A new conceptualisation of mission as the *missio Dei* was gaining ground and would impact the next mission wave.

3.4.5 A Fifth Wave: Missional Awakening – 2003 Onwards?

Niemandt (2010: 93-93) argues convincingly that Saayman's typology of the fourth wave as reaching 'to the ends of the earth' does not take into account all the facets of the DRC's mission. The reasons given centre around the development of a missional ecclesiology in the DRC. Furthermore, the missional self-understanding of the DRC developed into a global and a local focus (glocal), in other words, 'to the ends of the earth' but also in Jerusalem. The current research would like to build on the opinion of Niemandt, amongst others, in looking at the possibility of a new fifth wave of mission within the DRC.

3.4.5.1 Socio-political context

Much has changed in the socio-political context of South Africa since the start of the fourth wave. Young adults that are currently part of the DRC were born in the dying years of the Apartheid system or early in the New South Africa, and thus grew up in a multi-racial society. Being white in the New South Africa, they may be experiencing some pessimism about their economic future. At the other end of the spectrum, the cohort of members that grew up under Apartheid and retired around the beginning of the New South Africa era are growing older and are playing a smaller role in society and the church.

Cross-cultural dialogue in everyday life is increasing (Hofmeyr and Kruger, 2009: 384). In some situations, it leads to conflict, but Robert Schreiter (in Taber, 2002: 191) argues that cross-cultural dialogue helps to expose ethnocentric thought patterns and to deconstruct culture. These two aspects are helping to create an openness towards and acceptance of other cultures.

The impact of secularism in South Africa has also become more prominent. According to a WIN-Gallup poll (WIN-Gallup International, 2012: n.p.), there has been a drop in religiosity in South Africa. According to the poll, 83% had indicated that they were religious in 2005, but this figure dropped to 64% in 2012. There could be many reasons for this, one being a greater openness to disclose being non-religious. Still, the implication is that DRC members are now living in

communities where their neighbours are no longer necessarily from the Reformed tradition, Christian, or religious at all.

3.4.5.2 Missionary Revival

In the last 20 years, two prominent movements within the DRC have helped congregations discover their calling. The first was the *Gemeentebou* ('congregational development) movement, and the second the Congregational Studies movement. The *Gemeentebou* movement became organised around the *Gemeentebou* programme, which started in the mid-80s with the work of Malan Nel (Nel, 1986), and later Jurgens Hendriks (1990) and Jan Bischoff (1991).

Nel (in Ungerer and Nel, 2011: 2) defines *Gemeentebou* as '*die bediening waarbinne die gemeente opgelei en begelei word om:*

> a. *haar eie wese en bestaansdoel te verstaan;*
> b. *self, as gemotiveerde gemeente, haar eie funksionering te evalueer, doelwitte vir haar doelgerigte funksievervulling te formuleer en op beplande wyse te bereik;*
> c. *self, soos nodig, op 'n voortgaande basis strukture, wat die heilshandelinge van die drie-enige God in kerk en wêreld dien, vir die gemeentelike funksionering te ontwikkel.'*

Although the *Gemeentebou* programme was influenced by the Church Growth Movement in the USA, the programme was given more theological depth in South Africa by Malan Nel (Naudé, 2004: 36; Burger, 2014: n.p.). The programme was set on two main pillars: helping individuals to accept Christ and to have an effective testimony, and developing a stronger sense of community among the members of a congregation (Burger, 1991: 15). The programme had mixed success, but created an awareness that congregations are not only spiritual entities, but also have sociological aspects to them (Burger, 1991: 16). The programme brought about a shift in the ecclesiology of the DRC, as congregation members were starting to realise that ministers and elders were not the only people called to bring the gospel to the world. Recent research by Ungerer and Nel (2011) indicated a slight to moderate improvement in mission activity in congregations involved in the '*Gemeentebou*' program. Ungerer and Nel (2011: 10) is however of opinion that the '*Gemeentebou*' programme had little success in helping congregations to develop a missional identity.

Another approach that aimed to help congregations to be more effective was Congregational Studies (1989). This field was developed in South Africa by Coenie Burger (1991) and the institute led by him called Buvton (later Communitas). Their aim was to understand how congregations function, and to use that understanding to help congregations be more effective. This approach wanted to distance itself from the Church Growth movement because of its 'ingrown conception of the church' (Burger, 2004: 310). Congregational Studies had the following aims (Burger, 2004: 310-312):

a. 'As a group we want to do "church theology". This implies a double commitment: a commitment to good theology and a commitment to the Church, the Body of Jesus Christ.'

b. 'We believe that the primary unit in and from which we are called to live our lives as Christians are local congregations (or faith communities). Therefore, we believe that good research on congregations is of vital importance for our work in the church. This is one of the primary aims of the group.'

c. 'We believe that members must be helped to understand that the life of the church is directed at the world. Being a Christian often has more to do with our lives outside the congregation than inside.'

d. 'We hope to work towards ministerial structures and categories that respect and facilitate the ministry of the laity as the real ministry of the church.'

e. 'We believe that the vertical and horizontal dimensions of the Gospel belong together. Biblical spirituality demands not only a new way of living with God but also concern and compassion for all people, especially those in need.'

f. 'We commit ourselves to theological reflection done from an ecumenical point of view. For us this means, in the first place, that we need the help of brothers and sisters from the DRC family in this enterprise. It means secondly that we all commit ourselves to work towards the structural unification of the DRC family of churches.'

g. 'We believe that the acceptance of the true catholicity of the church on a congregational level is an important issue for the DRC. This means that congregational structures should make positive allowance for variety as far as gifts, cultures, and styles of spirituality, etc. are concerned.'

h. 'We want to do all this as a Bible believing theologians equally committed to our Reformed tradition and the ecumenical church.'

Congregational Studies programmes have helped churches to be more effective through the training of ministers, research, and the facilitation of processes of change in congregations. Whereas *Gemeentebou* was strongly focused on evangelisation and helping congregations grow, Congregational Studies went a step further in helping congregations develop a Kingdom focus.

The DRC General Synod called for a 'Year of Hope' in 2001 that focused on the church's calling to make a difference in the local community (not only at the 'ends of the earth'). Missionary diaconate was now becoming a focus area for the church, and there was a growing realisation within the DRC that the integrity of the witness of the church was dependent on the church's involvement in aspects like poverty relief and service to the community. As far as church polity were concerned, the General Synod's Commission for Mission and the Commission for Diaconal Services were now also moving closer together in their work (Van der Watt, 2003: 227).

The latest movement that would impact the DRC and form the basis of the current research is the missional church movement. The origins of the movement are discussed in detail in Chapter 4; what is provided here is a discussion of how the DRC was influenced by the movement.

Around the late 1990s, the work of David Bosch was becoming well known in academic circles in South Africa. His emphasis on the missionary nature of the church, the Trinity, the *missio Dei* and more was starting to influence the theology in the DRC. The work of the Gospel in Our Culture Network was also starting to have an influence on South African theologians. Coenie Burger (2014) recalls how he received an as yet unprinted manuscript of *Missional Church: A vision for the sending of the missional church in North America* (Guder, 1998) from Guder while doing research at the Princeton Theological Seminary, and realised that this was the theology that was needed in South Africa. At that stage, the external task of the DRC was still seen as missionary (*missionêr*) in nature, defined as bringing the gospel to non-believers. Many in the church had started to realise that the gospel also had implications for the church's involvement in social justice issues. During the same visit, Burger met Patrick Keifert and invited him to visit South Africa. Keifert spend a sabbatical in South Africa during 2001/2002 and introduced the Partnership for Missional Church (*Vernootskap vir Gestuurde Gemeentes*) to South Africa.

The Partnership for Missional Church (PMC) differed from previous approaches in that it saw the church as a cultural system and not an organisation (Keifert, 2006: 39). The aim of the PMC was to bring missional transformation to congregations through 'spiritual discernment that focuses on cultural change and mission confirmation' (Keifert, 2006: 39). They focus not only on behavioural change, worship style, leadership, or organisational structure, but also on real, deep cultural change. Because the PMC takes the *missio Dei* seriously, spiritual discernment is central to their process. Spiritual discernment starts by asking the question: 'What is God's preferred and promised future for our local church?' (Keifert, 2006: 64). Spiritual discernment is done through dwelling on the Word, as well as in the world, and listening to where God is sending the church to become part of His mission.

The arrival of the PMC was an important step in developing a missional ecclesiology within the DRC. It helped congregations to make the transition from focusing on church growth to focusing on Kingdom growth, i.e. from having a mission to being missional. This transition was also reflected in the decisions of the General Synod of the DRC[101]. The official mission policy of the DRC adopted in 1998 reflected the growing realisation that everything the church does is built on the *missio Dei*. Mission was defined in this policy as follows:

> *"Sending is die heilshandeling van die Drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees met die wêreld waardeur Hy uit die ganse menslike geslag vir Hom 'n gemeente deur sy Woord en Gees vergader.*
>
> *Deur die gemeente:*
>
> - o *laat God sy Woord aan die gevalle wêreld verkondig;*
> - o *bring Hy die gemeenskap van heiliges uit alle nasies totstand;*
> - o *laat Hy diens aan die wêreld in nood lewer;*
> - o *laat Hy sy opdrag om die skepping te bewaar en te bewerk sigbaar tot uitdrukking kom;*
>
> *en word sy reg aan die nasies verkondig.[102]*
> *So laat God sy koninkryk kom tot by die voleinding van die wêreld. Daarom aanvaar die Ned. Geref. Kerk dit as die sin en bestemming van sy bestaan om deur God gebruik te word in Sy handelinge met die mens en die wêreld.*

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[101] The decisions of the General Synod will be dealt with in detail in Chapter 6. For now, only cursory references will be made to these decisions.

[102] The last two aspects were left out by mistake of the Church Order document of 1998 (Van der Watt, 2003b: 227).

Gelowiges uit elke taal en nasie wat sodoende vergader word,
vorm saam met al die gelowiges 'n eenheid in ware geloof in Christus'.

Church Order 1998 (in Van der Watt, 2003: 227-228)

The Statement of Calling 2002 *(Roepingverklaring 2002)* (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013e) of the General Synod laid the foundation for the development of a missional theology within the DRC. The document had the following commitments:

1. The church is committed to God who planted his church in Southern Africa.
2. The church is committed to the continent, especially Southern Africa.
3. The church is committed to unity with other churches.
4. The church is committed to getting involved in the healing of the country.

At this stage, the missionary involvement of DRC congregations was still very much directed at the 'ends of the earth' (Saayman, 2007: 112). Within this context, the Statement of Calling 2002 was leading the DRC back to its roots in having a vision for building the Kingdom in Southern Africa (Van Niekerk, 2014: 4). The Statement helped the church to see the need and the pain in Africa, as well as her calling to bring healing in Africa (Mouton, 2007: 4). Danie Mouton (2007: 4-5) indicates the following ways in which the statement gave new direction to the theology of the DRC:

- The statement highlights the fact that God is a loving God who is actively involved in needs of the world, and that God is in perpetual movement into the world and is calling the church to join Him. There was also a growing emphasis on the missio Dei (Niemandt, 2010: 97).
- The statement highlights a growing movement within the DRC of wanting to worship God through acts of service to those in need.
- The traditional negative view of humanity (inherent sinfulness and total depravity) is softened by a change in perspective. From a Trinitarian perspective, man is viewed as the one being called to join God in his mission in the world. He (or she) is able to join God on his mission because of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. God is the one that call, redeems and equips the believer to join him in his mission.

- The statement emphasises human dignity and equality, and the church's calling to work towards the restoration of dignity for all humans. People are no longer only viewed as sinful objects of the mission, but also as broken, marginalised, oppressed, and victims of social and political systems.

- The statement furthermore sees redemption as not only deliverance from sin and the gift of eternal life, but holistically also in terms of deliverance from suffering, illness, need and oppression.

In hindsight, it is becoming clear that the Statement of Calling 2002 would indicate a new direction for the DRC, a move in the direction of becoming a missional church. The statement was a clear move away from a focus on the 'ends of the earth'. The commitment of calling *(Roepingverbintenis)* of the General Synod 2004 followed this direction in emphasising that the DRC are called as a community to join God in His mission. Emphasis was furthermore placed on discernment – to be a community that is constantly discerning God's will and mission in the world. A church that takes the *missio Dei* seriously will want to discern where God is already working. Renewed emphasis is placed on the church's calling to bring healing to those who suffer because of the brokenness in creation.

The 'Season of Listening' (*Seisoen van Luister*) launched in 2005 is an example of the transformation within the DRC to being a more discerning and serving church. This initiative by the General Synod encouraged congregations and Synods to listen to God, each other, and the context they are in. This listening attitude created an awareness of where God is working and of the broader needs of the world (Niemandt, 2010: 100). The Season of Listening climaxed in a programme launched in 2009 called 'Growth across borders' *(Groei oor grense)*. The aim of this programme was to help congregations to react to what they heard during the Season of Listening and to cross borders in following God where he was already at work (Niemandt, 2010: 100).

The Statement of Calling (*Roepingsverklaring*) by the General Synod of 2007 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013d) reconfirmed the DRC's calling to focus on the local community in bringing healing and building the Kingdom. It was emphasised that the local congregation was the embodiment of God's mission to the local community, and every member of the congregation was a missionary, not only those officially sent out by the church. Congregations were encouraged to focus on the

Kingdom of God. The fact that church was literally starting to move out of the building and the position of the church as a servant to the world were emphasised. A clear message was sent that the church had given up any pretension of power in striving to be a missional church.

The 2013 General Synod continued the trend in developing a missional ecclesiology for the DRC. Critical to this trend was the report 'Raamwerkdokument oor die Missionale aard en roeping van die NG Kerk' (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013d). Nelus Niemandt (2015: 4) highlights the formulation of the acceptance of the report by the Synod as an indication of the context and the future role of the document in the development of a missional ecclesiology for the DRC. The formulation was as follows:

> 21.1 The General Synod received the policy document as a document that expresses the discernment processes over the last ten years in the Dutch Reformed Church. These processes paid attention to the essence and nature of the church and its witness in the world. The General Synod accepted the document as part of a conversation that assists the denomination to create new (missional) language, facilitating new conversations and imaginative new possibilities for the future of the church. (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013c: 8)

The report was the most comprehensive report on a missional ecclesiology for the DRC yet. It was strongly influenced by the World Council of Churches document *Together towards life: Mission and evangelism in changing landscapes* (Niemandt, 2015: 4). The document was an integration of, among other things, the following important discussion documents on missional ecclesiology by previous Synods:

a. Document on the Reformed identity of the DRC (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007b: 11-13)
b. Document on a practical congregational ecclesiology for the DRC (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007b: 44-56)
c. Document on Missional Ecclesiology for the DRC (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2011a: 130-141).

Some highlights of the report were the following:

- The being of the church is found as having a kenotic ecclesiology, or an ecclesiology that follow Jesus in His self-emptying life on earth. The church has to shed any pretense of power and become a servant to the world.

- A kenotic ecclesiology is always relational. It means being a church firstly within the economy of the Trinity (*imago Trinitatis*), secondly in relationship with other Christians and lastly in relationship with the rest of creation.

- The point of departure of the work of the church is the *missio Dei* and the *missio ecclesiae* – with the clear implication that the church exists because of the *missio Dei* and that the essence of the church is found in its missionality (Niemandt, 2015: 4).

- The mission of the church has a holistic nature that is articulated in the report as the following dimensions of mission: *leitourgia* (worship), *koinonia* (communion of the faithful), *kerygma* (proclamation) and *diakonia* (service).

- Recognition of the change in context from Christendom to post-Christendom.

- The Holy Spirit leads the church in discerning God's call in the world.

- Changing the church is more than structural change, it is new language, new culture and a new imagination.

- A missional church is a listening church – listening to God, listening to the diversity within the church, and listening to the needs of the world.

- The church has a Kingdom focus (a 'Kingdom-shaped church'). The church is never an aim in itself but strives to be a sign, instrument, and foretaste of the Kingdom.

- In following Christ, the church exhibits the following four dimensions of the life of Jesus: presence, proximity, vulnerability and proclamation.

- To be a *missio ecclesia* implies that the church's missionary and diaconal activity must function as a unity.

- Emphasis is placed on every believer's calling to be part of the *missio Dei.*

- Community formation or church planting as a strategy in being a missional church.

- The report suggested various changes to the Church Order of the DRC that will reflect the missional character of the church, starting with a new Article 2 that reads as follow:

   Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk is deur God Drie-enig geroep om deel te neem aan die missie van God in die wêreld. Die Kerk word deur die Heilige Gees opgebou om God se eer te dien en verkondig die bediening van versoening en die heil van Christus.

The missional awakening was not an isolated phenomenon limited to the DRC. A global missional awakening was gathering momentum during the first decade of the 21st century. This is evident in the missional language of statements by Edinburgh 2010, the World Communion of Reformed Churches 2010, the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches in calling partner churches to get involved in God's transformation of the world (Niemandt, 2010: 94-95). The whole trajectory within the ecumenical community is towards emphasising the *missio Dei* and seeing the church as missional in nature (Kim, 2010). On denominational level this trajectory can also be seen, for example in the Mission Shaped Church Report (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004) of the Church of England and the '*Missionair werk en Kerkgroei'* programme of the Protestantse Kerk (PKN) in the Netherlands (Protestantse Kerk in Nederland, 2014: n.p.).

3.4.5.3 Arguments for a New Fifth Wave

The current research wants to suggest the following arguments for identifying a fifth wave in the missionary development of the DRC:

a. Contextual changes between 1994 and 2000:

The illusion of a white Christian South Africa was fading fast after 1994. The reality of a post-Christian context was becoming clearer to Christians in South Africa. The 'lost' was no longer only found at the 'ends of the earth' but in the home of the next-door neighbour. There was a growing realisation that the future of the DRC and white South Africans lay rooted in the future success of a democratic South Africa and Christianity in Africa as a whole. From 1994 the needs of the poor started creeping closer to the everyday lives of the DRC members. Informal settlements were now on the doorsteps of middle-class neighbourhoods, and there could be no doubt about the need of many in South Africa.

b. Loss of influence and money:

Between 1994 and 2000, the DRC still had some residual influence and money from before 1994, with DRC members were still occupying prominent positions within government and industry, and financial stability following years of growth. This would soon change because of affirmative action and black economic empowerment. The DRC lost its previously held position of power and influence, and had to look for new ways to bring change to South Africa. New ways were found in the realisation that white Christians need to follow Jesus in serving their communities. The influence of congregations no longer lay in their ability to wield power, but in their ability to serve and to love – a characteristic that is central to a missional church. The finances for sustaining international mission projects were also decreasing. Congregations had to rationalise their involvement in many international mission projects because they were no longer sustainable. The energy, focus, and finance that went into international projects were now starting to shift to local projects.

c. Growth in the church's missional identity:

A shift came about in the identity of the DRC from a church with a mission to a missional church, seeing mission not as something the church *does* but something the church *is*.

A shift from a Christocentric theology to a Trinitarian theology that sees the church as part of the Trinity movement towards creation.

A shift towards a holistic view of mission that sees personal salvation as one aspect of God's Kingdom. The ecology, justice, equality, and freedom from poverty and discrimination are all important aspects of God's Kingdom.

A commitment within congregations to bringing healing to South Africa and Africa. Congregations are no longer just sending missionaries to other mission fields, but they are getting involved in mission work in their local environment (Van Niekerk, 2014: 4).

The success and influence of the *Gestuurde Gemeentes* network and, more recently, Mission Shaped Ministry training.

The missional influence of ecumenical bodies and other church denominations.

Against this background, there are clear indications of a shift in identity within the DRC. Up to 2000, the church was still predominantly within a Christendom mindset, seeing mission as something the church does to convert the heathen. Attie van Niekerk (2014: 4) argues that this new fifth wave of mission 'is a continuation of the focus on the African context of the first three waves, but it is also a paradigm shift to a new understanding of the content and character of mission'. Congregation are not only sending missionaries to Africa, but are also understanding themselves as being sent to their local context.

A missional transition can be seen in the writings of theologians during the 1990s and the decisions of the Synods during the first decade of the new millennium. These influences were steadily diffusing down to congregational level, and congregation members started to realise that the Spirit was doing new things through the church. Many congregational leaders are now interested in developing a missional ecclesiology in their congregations and are looking for strategies to do so. Some congregations are also starting to tell hopeful stories about what God can do in congregations once they start to have a missional imagination.

3.5 Conclusions

The aim of this chapter was to answer research questions 1 (b) *What was the socio-cultural, historical and theological influences on the DRC?* and 2 *What was the historical development of the missiology of the DRC?* In answering these two questions, the following aspects became clear. The theology of the DRC and thus its ecclesiology were formed by various theological streams. Most prominent was the Reformed theology in the tradition of John Calvin. The DRC got its Evangelical-Pietist leanings from the Scottish Evangelical tradition and the Utrecht apologetic school. The church was also influenced by the Puritan tradition which was prominent in Britain and the Netherlands.

Influenced by liberal theologies from Europe, a movement called Modern Thought developed in the Cape. Yet the movement lost its influence because of the dominant influence of the Evangelical-Pietist theology, and although liberal theology remained a strong movement in Europe, South Africa was insulated against further influences by Evangelical theology and

later Neo-Calvinism. The latter, a nuanced form of Reformed theology developed by Dutch theologian Abraham Kuyper, entered South Africa at the beginning of the 1900s and became the dominant theological paradigm during the development of the Apartheid system. The last prominent influence on the theology DRC was the influence of Karl Barth.

The chapter also dealt with the birth of the New South Africa and the DRC's struggle for a new identity within a post-Apartheid South Africa. The DRC has lost the prominent position and influence it had under the Apartheid system, and the demographics of the church is also changing.

The last section of the chapter discussed missional awakening in the DRC in terms of four waves of heightened mission fervour identified by Willem Saayman (2007). A fifth wave was then suggested, which had started around 2003 and had a unique focus, missiology and context. During this wave, the DRC is starting to get to grips with the implications of the *missio Dei* and living in a post-Christendom society. The evidence of a fifth wave was found in various policy documents and decisions of the General Synod.

This chapter provided a framework for the development of a missional ecclesiology in the DRC. This missional ecclesiology will have to build on the Reformed roots of the church, but also on the mission fervour anchored in the Evangelical-Pietist tradition. The social concerns and the prominence of the *missio Dei* that developed from the Barthian theology will be central to a missional ecclesiology.

CHAPTER 4

BROAD ECUMENICAL CONSENSUS ON MISSIONAL ECCLESIOLOGY

Every congregation and church leader functions within a specific theological framework, and is influenced by the tradition they come from. This theology and tradition determine the practices they will engage in. Todd Billings (2010: 305) calls these things the church 'does', and the things a church 'does not do', the church's 'functional theology'. These frameworks, traditions, and methodologies may not be articulated, but they influence the congregation's and the leader's ecclesiology. These aspects might not have significant short-term impact on what congregations and leaders do, but in the long run these aspects will become clear (Murray, 2001: 39). Leaders and congregations embody what they believe (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011: 5). It is critical for leaders and congregations to have a good understanding of, and perspective on, the theology and tradition that formed them.

Van Gelder (2007: 17) accentuates the important link between the nature or essence of the church and the purpose of the church as follows:

> The church is – 'The church's nature provides the framework and foundation for understanding the essential character of the church.'
>
> The church does what it is – 'The nature of the church establish the foundation for understanding the purpose of the church and its ministry and determines their direction and scope.'
>
> The church organises what it does – 'The ministry of the church introduces strategies and processes that require the exercise of leadership and the development of organization within the church.'

The reciprocal relationship between these three aspects is critical in understanding the church. It is the argument of this chapter that if the church is missional in its essence, it will have a missional focus, i.e. if the underlying ecclesiology is missional, the functional theology will also be missional. To understand what a missional congregation does, we first need to understand what a missional congregation believes.

This chapter will deal with the third research question: *"What are the broad contours of themes within ecumenical missional ecclesiology?"* The five essential contours of a theology for a missional congregation will be dealt with. These contours arise from a 'missional consensus' that came about through the work of Lesslie Newbigin and David Bosch, and were further developed by the Gospel in Our Culture Network (GOCN) book *Missional Church: A vision for the sending of the missional church in North America* (Guder, 1998: 3-4). These might not be the only contours, but they are important contours on the missional journey. These contours will form the basis for the evaluation of the DRC's ecclesiology, which will follow in Chapter 6.

The first contour is the *missio Dei*, which entails that the Creator God is a missionary God who sends his Son to inaugurate his Kingdom on earth, and his Spirit to bring humans into the Kingdom. The contributions of Bosch and Newbigin will receive special attention here. Secondly, there is a holistic view of the Trinity. The traditional Western focus on the Trinity helps the church to see itself as part of God's movement into the world. This perspective is enriched by the Eastern perspective on the Trinity that focuses on the interrelated (*perichoretic*), relational character of the Trinity. This perspective helps the church to understand its communal character as well as its calling to live in communion with the rest of creation. The understanding of the Trinity will be further developed by the Economic and Immanent descriptions of the Trinity. A third contour is the church's calling to be a sign, agent and a foretaste of the Kingdom of God. Church growth is not the primary calling of the church, but rather to be part of God's work in realising His Kingdom. The fourth marker on the missional journey is a holistic view of salvation. God's mission on earth is not only the 'saving' of souls, but also the redemption of the whole of creation. Lastly, all these contours inform a congregation's hermeneutic, i.e. the way a congregation reads the Bible. It will be argued that a missional hermeneutic could be a valid lens through which a missional congregation can read the Bible.

4.1 Missio Dei

The development of the *missio Dei* theology was the most important shift in missiology in the last century. The *missio Dei* theology modified the colonial theological worldview that was still dominant at the 1910 Edinburgh conference (Matthey, 2010: 21-22). The roots of the *missio*

Dei concept can be traced back to the Willingen Conference of the International Missionary Council (IMC) held in 1952 (Sundermeier, 2003: 560; Flett, 2009: 5). Although the term itself was not used at the conference, its theological foundation was laid there, and Karl Hartenstein developed it further in his report on the conference (Bosch, 1980: 240). The conference was influenced by a new theological paradigm that was a reaction to a modernistic approach to theology. Karl Barth was one of the major exponents of this new paradigm (Fensham, 2008: 148). John Flett (2010: 11) writes that the origins of the concept can in fact be traced to a lecture by Karl Barth gave 20 year before Willingen where he argued for a connection between mission and the doctrine of the Trinity. What is known is that after Willingen the concept became part of the theological discourse on mission. The origins of the concept in dialectical theology is however important for understanding the shadow of the concept. The tension between God's mission and human activity has been a shadow that has followed the development of the concept (Flett, 2010: 11-12)[103] -was the *missio Dei anchored* God's being or his acts in history? Flett (2009: 8) argues that it is a false dichotomy to differentiate between God's being and his acts of creating, reconciling and redeeming. If the dichotomy is maintained is has fateful consequences for our ecclesiology, because mission become an act of the church and no longer part of the being of the church.

Within the *missio Dei* discourse, mission is no longer seen in relation to ecclesiology or soteriology, but as derived from the doctrine of the Trinity (Bosch, 1993b: 390). Our view of the Trinity will inform our missiology. God's sending of his Son and Spirit cannot be separated from who God is in his being (Flett, 2009: 12). God does not have *a* mission, but God *is* Mission (Bevans and Schroeder, 2011: 10). The classic doctrine of the *missio Dei*, which stated that God the Father sent his Son, and the Father and the Son sent the Spirit, was now expanded and developed to include the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit sending the church into the world. Mission was no longer primarily an activity of the church, but an attribute of God (Barram, 2007: 43). Mission included the activity of the church but was also much more. Bosch (1993b: 390) states that mission can be 'seen as a movement from God to the world; the church is viewed

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[103] There were a division in the Willingen conference on was the 'missionary obligation of the church to be "understood primarily as derived from the redemptive purpose and acts of God or as derived from the nature of God Himself?"' (Goodall cited in Flett, 2009: 6). The final report was a compromise between these two factions that led to a later ambivalence in the development of the *missio Dei* theology.

as an instrument for that'. The mission of the Church is not only participation in the acts of God, but also in the being of God (Flett, 2009: 12).

The two missiologists who had the biggest impact on the development of missional theology and the *missio Dei* in the second half of the 20th century were David Bosch and Lesslie Newbigin (Saayman, 2010: 10). Bevans and Schroeder (2005: 69), two prominent Roman Catholic missiologists, write that 'after the twentieth century, any missiology can be done only as a footnote to the work of David Bosch.' Newbigin (in Kreider, 2005, 59) describes Bosch's book *Transforming Mission* (1993b) as a '*summa missiologica*'. Newbigin was in his own right 'one of the leading mission and theological thinkers of the 20th century' (Goheen, 2002: 254). He was active in the ecumenical movement and was elected to the International Missionary Council (IMC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC), as well as being the editor of the *International Review of Missions*. His influence was further fermented by the work of the Gospel in our Culture Network, which was inspired by his work (Guder, 1998: 5). Apart from being outstanding academics and theologians, Bosch[104] and Newbigin[105] also had extensive experience in missionary contexts. Any discussion of the *missio Dei* will therefore need to be informed by the work of Bosch and Newbigin.

The *missio Dei* was central to the theology of Bosch and Newbigin. Bosch (1993b: 10) defines *missio Dei* as:

> God's self revelation as the One who loves the world, God's involvement in and with the world, the nature and activity of God, which embraces both the church and the world, and in which the church is privileged to participate. Missio Dei enunciates the good news in that God is a God-for-people.

Bosch (1993b: 10) differentiates between mission (singular) and missions (plural). Mission (*missio Dei*) is God's loving involvement in the world. Missions (*mission ecclesiae*), on the other hand, are the presentation of the church's missionary activity, i.e. the ways in which the church

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104 After returning from his doctoral studies in Basel, Bosch worked as a missionary from 1957 for nine years among the Xhosa people in the Transkei (a rural part of the Eastern Cape in South Africa) (Livingston, 1999: 26).

105 Newbigin worked as a missionary in the rural villages of Tamilnadu and in the city of Madras from 1963 to 1974 (http://www.newbigin.net/general/biography.cfm).

does missionary work at a specific time and place, through specific methods and by specific people.

The church is seen as essentially missionary by Newbigin (1958a: 22). The church is not the sender, but the one being sent. Being a missionary community lies at the heart of the church, since God is a missionary God. God's people are missionary people, and the inverse of that is that 'mission is essentially ecclesia', but ecclesiology does not precede missiology (Bosch, 1993b: 372). Jürgen Moltmann (1993a: 10) writes:

> The theological interpretation of the church today must absorb these germs of a missionary church in the decay of the corpus christianum. What we have to learn from them is not that church 'has' a mission, but the very reverse: that the mission of Christ creates its own church.

The *raison d'etre* for the church is to be missional (Barram, 2007: 43). Mission is not part of the calling of the church, it *is* the calling (Engelsviken, 2003: 482). It is not possible to have a church without a mission, or a mission without a church. The church has a long tradition of seeing mission as obedience to the Lord's command, but this is not the picture we get in the New Testament. The New Testament sees mission as the overflowing of joy about the good news of the risen Christ (Bevans and Schroeder, 2011: 10). Not even Paul calls the church to be active in mission; he sees the believer's witnessing of the gospel of Jesus Christ as a natural response to a relationship with Christ (Newbigin, 1989: 116).

Newbigin (1958a: 21,43) states that the church has a missionary *dimension* and a missionary *intention*. The missionary *dimension* of the church is evident in the worship and liturgy of the church. The church is a welcoming community that equips its members to be more than just objects of pastoral care but disciples joining in God's mission. The Holy Spirit equips the church with gifts to preach, worship, care for the sick, feed the hungry, etc. All these activities have a missionary *dimension*. The church must also engage in certain activities that have a specific missionary *intention*. Church activities that have a missionary *intention* are directed toward people outside the normal circle of influence of the church. If there is no missionary intention, the missionary *dimension* of the church is lost. The missionary *dimension* describes what the church is, and the missionary *intention* describes what the church does.

There have been differences is the conceptualisation of the *missio Dei*. One such difference was between the theologians with evangelical leanings and those with ecumenical leanings. Those

with evangelical leanings were exemplified by the perspectives of Newbigin and later Bosch. On the ecumenical side was the Dutch Missiologist J.C. Hoekendijk (Engelsviken, 2003: 487-488). Hoekendijk reacted to the church-centred views of mission in the early 1900s, and wanted to remove the church from centre stage in relation to mission. He did this by arguing firstly that Christ is the subject of mission, and secondly that Christ's aim was to establish *shalom* in the world. Hoekendijk understood *shalom* as 'at once peace, integrity, community, harmony, and justice' (in Engelsviken, 2003: 488). There was a strong focus on social justice and little on salvific nature (Matthey, 2010: 22). The problem of this approach was that 'propaganda' and church planting were rejected as methods of evangelism (Engelsviken, 2003: 488). The church had very little emphasis in Hoekendijk's view of God's dealings with the world. Hoekendijk was not isolated in his view: through his influence in the WCC, the ecumenical view of mission featured strongly during the 1960s.

In reaction to Hoekendijk's perspective was an almost exclusive emphasis on the salvific aspects of the *missio Dei* by the German theologian Werner Krusche (Engelsviken, 2003: 489). Jacques Matthey (2010: 22) takes a more holistic and balanced approach when he argues for the recovery of the vertical element as equal to the horizontal elements of Christian spirituality. Matthey also argues for the third aspect, which he calls the circular dynamic – the relationship with God's creation (Matthey, 2010: 23).

The current research follows the perspective of Newbigin and Bosch in understanding the *missio Dei*, namely a balanced and comprehensive view of the subject (Trinity) as well as the aim of mission. This perspective argues that the Trinitarian God *is* mission and his 'love which binds together the Holy Trinity overflows to all humanity and creation' (World Council of Churches, 2013: 52). As *Ad Gentes 2* (Vatican Council II , n.d.) puts it: God 'generously poured out, and does not cease to pour out still, His divine goodness'. Thus, he who created all things may at last be 'all in all' (1 Cor. 15:28), bringing about at the same time His own glory and our happiness. The church of Christ has the privilege of participating as an instrument in God's mission to the world. In doing so, the church also become missionary by her very nature.

4.2 The Centrality of the Trinity

Having a Trinitarian point of departure in theology is central to our understanding of God, ourselves, the church and the world (Small, 2009: 58). In the words of Kärkkäinen (2009: 253), 'just as each person is made according to the image of the Trinity, so the church as a whole is an icon of the Trinity'. In the last century, there has been a renewed emphasis (trinitarian renaissance) (Venter, 2004: 756) on the doctrine of the Trinity in the Orthodox, Protestant, and Roman Catholic theology (cf. Orthodox advisory group to the WCC-CWME, 1992: 203; Bosch, 1993b: 289-293; Bevans and Schroeder, 2009: 286-304). All three of these traditions influenced the Reformed view of the Trinity because the development of any theological doctrine is never a linear process, but is enriched, nuanced, and coloured by the interaction of the various Christian traditions.

The 2012 document of the WCC, titled *Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes* (World Council of Churches, 2013) is a good example if this. This ecumenical document confesses the centrality of the Trinity as the point of departure of all theology: 'We believe in the Triune God who is the creator, redeemer and sustainer of all life' (World Council of Churches, 2013: 51).

In Western theology, the classic Augustinian formulations on the Trinity is well known, but in recent years, the Western perspective on the Trinity has been enriched by perspectives traditionally held by the Eastern Church and exemplified the perspective of the Cappadocian fathers[106][107]. The Western Augustinian perspective focused primarily on the one substance of the Trinity (*tres personae, una substantia*), and secondly on the Trinity sending the church into the world (Cunningham, 1998: 27). According to Zizioulas, 'there is an ontological priority of substance over against personal relations in God in Augustine's trinitarian theology' (Zizioulas, 2006: 33). Leene (2013: 46) is of the opinion that the relational aspect of the Trinity is not

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[106] The Cappadocian fathers were Gregorius van Nazianze (329/30- ca. 390), Basilius van Caesarea (330-379) and Gregorius van Nyssa (331/40-394). Despite being grouped together, there were also nuance differences between them concerning the trinity (Leene, 2013: 46-47).

[107] For a detailed discussion on the relationship between the Trinitarian perspectives of Augustine and the Cappadocian fathers, see the work of Leene (2013).

completely absent in the thoughts of Augustine, but very difficult to define because of his emphasis on the *una substantia.*

This Augustinian perspective on the Trinity was developed further by Karl Barth and Karl Rahner in the 20th century (Small, 2009: 58). The Trinity was no longer just a philosophical doctrine but became grounded in the practice of Christian life. The Father sending his Son, Father and Son sending the Spirit, and the Son sending the church became the fundamental point of departure for a missional church.

Discussions about the historical development of a Trinitarian theology revive thoughts on the divergence between Western and Eastern theology regarding the *filioque*[108]. The Eastern Church's perspective on the Trinity is about much more than just the *filioque.* The Cappadocian fathers laid the foundation for the theological perspective of the Eastern Church. They developed a Trinitarian theology that placed more emphasis on the relational aspect of the Trinity than on the one substance. Their perspective on the Trinity focused on the interrelatedness of the three Persons in the Trinity (Van Gelder, 2007b: 29). The nature of the Trinity is revealed through the *perichoresis* among the Trinity. *Perichoresis* is the communion or interpenetration among God the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, that calls the members of the Church to reflect on their communion and interrelatedness as the body of Christ (Guder, 1998: 82). In this regard, Kallistos (Timothy) Ware (1995: 27) writes: 'He is tri-unity: three equal persons, each one dwelling in the other two by virtue of an unceasing movement of mutual love'.

A church that is anchored in the *perichoresis* of the Trinity reflects the loving, self-giving character of the Godhead in unity (Fensham, 2008: 147-148). Miroslav Volf (1998: 173) emphasises this when he writes that

> because the Christian God is not a lonely God, but rather a communion of three
> persons, faith leads human beings into the divine mission. One cannot, however,
> have a self-enclosed communion with the triune God – a 'foursome', as it were – for

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108 Filioque, the Latin for 'and the Son,' was added to the Nicene Creed to confirm the doctrine that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son. This became a major theological difference between the Eastern and Western church. The filioque had already been in parochial use in the Western church since the early fifth century, but became a major point of dispute between 808 and the Great Schism in 1054 (Guretzki, 2009: 6-8).

the Christian God is not a private deity. Communion with this God is at once also communion with those others who have entrusted themselves in faith to the same God.

Although the *perichoretic* principle was more popular in the Eastern Church, Western theologians like Jürgen Moltmann (2007: 171,327) incorporated the concept into their theology of the Trinity. Moltmann's (2007: 327) view of the Trinity even resonated with that of his Eastern Orthodox colleagues. Moltmann wanted to make a correction to the dominant view of the Trinity in the Western church. He (2007: 327) writes that

> these archaic structures of superiority and subordination in God and world, heaven and earth, soul and body – and man and woman – reach right down to modern Church Dogmatics of Karl Barth. For, according to Barth, the super-ordination and subordination of the commanding father and the obedient son are already to be found in God.

If God is seen as a heavenly monarch, the church will reflect this image, and will thus be comfortable having a hierarchical structure within a hierarchical society (Fensham, 2008: 16). A theology of superiority and subordination created an environment in which authoritarian rule and dominance over women and minorities were more acceptable. In contrast to this theology, Moltmann promoted the *perichoretic* principle that sees God as a God of community; community within Trinity, between God and his people and among the body of Christ. The communion within the Trinity and the world is contrasted with the dominant, unbridled individualism of Western culture, where the individual took precedence over relationships and society (Moltmann, 1993b: 199).

The relational character was further developed by contemporary theologians like the Orthodox theologian John Zizioulas (Cunningham, 1998: 26-27). LaCugna (1993: 1, 260) articulates Zizioulas's[109] relational view of God as follows: 'Only in communion can God be what God is, and only as communion can God be God at all' and 'a trinitarian theology is par excellence a theology of relationship'.

A holistic (i.e. incorporating both Eastern and Western perspectives) Trinitarian view of God, needs to be fundamental to the development of a missional ecclesiology. Leene (2013: 46) argues

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109 For a critical discussion of the relationship between the Trinitarian theology of Zizioulas and the Cappadocian father's see Rostock (2010).

that the Eastern and Western perspectives are not mutually exclusive, but their differences are rather a question of priority. The Cappadocian fathers gave priority to the relational aspect of the Trinity, while still maintaining its unity; whereas the Western perspective gave priority to the unity of the Trinity while maintaining its three persons. Elton (2007: 147) states that this holistic view of the Trinity leads to two impulses for the church. The first impulse is to be a sent church: as God has sent his Son, and the Father and the Son have sent the Spirit, so we as a church are sent into the world. The second impulse is to live as a church in community with God, each other and the rest of creation, similar to the Triune God who is three persons existing as a social community within the Godhead. It is important to remember that a change in the view of the Trinity would have 'profound implications both for constitution of Christian communities and for society as a whole' (Fensham, 2008: 16).

Two widely used concepts in Trinitarian theology are the Economic Trinity and the Immanent Trinity. The Economic Trinity denotes God's outward involvement in creation and acts of salvation in the world (Leene, 2013: 68). The Immanent Trinity, on the other hand, describes God's 'internal and external' (Hoffmeyer, 2001: 108) existence as three persons in relation to one another. Both the Economic and the Immanent Trinity are closely related to God's intra-Trinitarian relations (Leene, 2013: 68). Augustine as well as the Cappadocian fathers focused on the immanent Trinity. The clear differentiation between the economic and immanent Trinity became less so in modern theology, however. The question arose whether there was in fact a clear difference between the economic and the immanent Trinity. Could God only be known in his economy – that is, acts of creation and redemption – and was his immanent reality therefore only speculation?

Rahner's *grundaxiom* states that '[t]he "economic" Trinity is the "immanent" Trinity and the "immanent" Trinity is the "economic" Trinity'. For Rahner, it is impossible to distinguish between who God is and what God does. God is love and he does acts of love. The church must hold on to this duality (economic and immanent) in the intra-Trinitarian processions that form the basis of the presence of God in the church (Hill, 2012: 15). If that is the presence of God in the church, and the church reflects the image of its God, then the church should reflect this duality of internal loving relations and external acts of love (Kärkkäinen, 2002: loc. 175). In a context where people are objectified, isolated and lonely, the local church becomes a loving community that embodies the love of God in their internal and external relations. The church

is challenged to embody the *kenotic*, self-sacrificing character of God. The image of the Trinity also has implications for leadership in the church. Leadership in the image of the Trinity should be characterised by loving, self-sacrificial, authentic relationships that lead to servanthood.

The concept of kenōsis comes from the Greek word for 'emptying'[110] – ἐκένωσεν – used in the hymn found in Philippians 2:7. Jesus is presented as the one who did not cling to his status as the son of God, but emptied himself and took the form of a servant for the salvation of humankind (Migliore, 2004: 415). It is important to note that this does not imply that Jesus emptied himself of his divinity in humbling himself. It is precisely because he *is* God that he humbled himself (Gorman, 2009: loc. 245). His 'whole life speaks of serving not grasping, as one whose way to exaltation was only through death' (Dunn, 1998: 288). It can also be argued that the kenotic life of Christ was not limited to Christ, but is also true for how God has revealed himself through the ages. In the words of Emil Brunner (2002: 20): '[t]he κένωσις, which reaches its paradoxical climax in the Cross of Christ, began with the Creation of the world.' Gorman (2009: loc. 38,97, 119-123) sees Philippians 2:6-11 as Paul's master story, where Christ's kenōsis reveals God's character.

Despite some exegetical issues, is seems clear that Paul is presenting Christ as the one who had a position of privilege but chose to be a servant and was exalted by God (Dunn, 1998: 288). Paul calls on his readers to cultivate 'the same mindset as Christ Jesus in striving to cruciformity (conformity to Christ)' (Dunn, 1998: 281). For Gorman (2009: 57), being 'in Christ' also implies being 'in God/in the Spirit', conforming to the Trinity, to, like Paul, be imitators of Christ that live kenotically and cruciformly.

A Trinitarian understanding of God has always been part of Reformed orthodoxy. However Venter (2004: 756) ask a valid question when he writes: "does the confession of God as a triune God, fully orientate and inform our theology, our understanding of ourselves, our world, our vocation, our spirituality? Or have we in practice forgotten it?" In the development of a

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110 There has been much debate on Philippians 2:1-11. One contentious aspect is the argument for preexistence of Christ in Philippians 2:6-11. For more on this, see Dunn (1998: 281-288). See also the monograph of Martin (1983) and the commentary of Migliore (2014) on the debates surrounding Philippians 2:5-11.

missional ecclesiology, this question will have to be taken seriously because the trinity is the Christian way of speaking about God (Venter, 2004: 756).

4.3 Kingdom of God[111] and the Church

For centuries, the church saw itself as the exclusive locus and *telos* of God's work in the world. It was set apart from the evil world outside the church. The church's calling was to preach to and care for the flock – those who were part of the church. The people outside the church were seen as the 'lost' that needed to be reached. The aim of the church was to create more churches (Bosch, 1993b: 376).

After the Second World War, the light of the *missio Dei* could again be seen in the Protestant churches. Bosch (1993b: 334-339;377) states that before the war, the church (as seen in the IMC in Edinburgh 1910) was so impressed by the technological, social and spiritual achievements of the West that it saw its calling as bringing the blueprint of the Western church and culture to the unreached world. The two wars fought between Christian nations (WWI and WWII) shattered this confidence in Western culture and achievements (Pierson, 2009: 249). The awareness of the brokenness of the world around the church led to stronger solidarity with the rest of the world. The same shift in orientation came to Catholicism after Vatican II. This is evident in the first paragraph of *Gaudium et Spes*[112] (Pope Paul VI, 1965):

> The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts. For theirs is a community composed of men. United in Christ, they are led by the Holy Spirit in their journey to the Kingdom of their Father and they have welcomed the news of salvation which is meant for every man. That is why this community realises that it is truly linked with mankind and its history by the deepest of bonds.

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111 In the biblical text 'Kingdom of God' (exp. Matthew 12:28; Mark 4:26; Luke 9:2) and 'Kingdom of heaven' (exp. Matthew 5:3; 13:44) have the same meaning – the sovereign rule of God (Wright, 2007: loc. 3742).

112 Gaudium et Spes, also known as the 'Pastoral constitution on the church in the modern world', was the last document approved by the Second Vatican Council (Bevans and Schroeder, 2005a: 66).

Bosch (1993b: 377-378) articulates six implications of this newfound solidarity between the church and the suffering of the world:

a. The church remains a vehicle in the redemptive work of the Trinity in the world, but can never be the basis or the goal of the *missio Dei*. Newbigin (1989: 118) sees the church as the 'locus' of the Lord's mission.

b. The church does not encompass the Kingdom of God, but the church is a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom. The Kingdom becomes a reality where Christ overcomes the power of evil, and this triumph should be seen most clearly in the church, although also in the world outside the church.

c. The aim of the church's missionary activity involves more than just a personal faith. It needs to be holistic, bringing social, economic, political and spiritual redemption.

d. The church is a community led by God the Spirit towards involvement in the world.

e. Christians are called to be 'Kingdom people' and not 'church people' (Snyder, 1983 in Bosch, 1993b:378). The church as an institution should be organised in such a manner that believers can serve society. Any structure that prevents believers from engaging with the world should be recognised as heretical.

f. The church must never be fearful of the world, but needs to live a life of mission in the world.

Inspired by the renewed missionary zeal of the early 20th century, movements like the Church Growth movement had a strong influence on many Western churches' view of their role in the Kingdom. The father of the Church Growth movement was Donald McGavran. McGavran was a third-generation missionary in India before moving to the USA to start the Fuller Theological Seminary School of World Mission (McIntosh, 2004: loc. 132-42). McGavran and the Church Growth movement inspired a generation of church leaders to be agents of missionary change in their congregations. The main question at the heart of the Church Growth movement was: Why do some churches grow and others not? Apart from their theological understanding of mission, the movement drew on the social sciences to help answer this question (Van Gelder, 2007b: 26).

Unfortunately, their focus on, and passion for, the work of the church went too far and the purpose and basis of mission became the church itself, as can be seen from the following

statement by McGavran (1990: 22): 'The chief and irreplaceable purpose of mission is church growth'. The narrow focus of the movement on personal faith and numerical growth insulated the church from the world, especially its involvement in issues of 'justice, peace and equity' (Bosch, 1993b: 381-382). The Kingdom agenda of the *missio Dei* was obscured by its passion for the missionary activity of the church.

The Church Growth movement did have worldwide influence (McIntosh, 2004: loc. 206-64), which was further increased by prominent churches like Willow Creek in South Barrington, Chicago and Saddleback in Lake Forest, California. Both these churches were rooted in the theology of the Church Growth movement. However, the result of the movement's emphasis on church membership was an ecclesiology that was temporal, geographically located and confined to the identity of the specific congregation. The primary orientation of the church towards the Kingdom of God was thus lost (Guder, 1998: 86). By the 1980s, the Church Growth movement had been largely discredited in academia because of its questionable theological grounds (Shenk, 2010; Van Gelder, 2007b: 26). One example of this was the fact that they had the German theologian Gustav Warneck's *Volkschristianisierung* (the principle of Christianising people as a nation) as the aim of their missiology. McGavran followed Warneck in arguing that Jesus had a homogeneous unit in mind in Matthew 28:19 (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη) (Bosch, 1983: 27). Despite these serious questions about the theology of the Church Growth movement, the movement still have considerable influence among congregations, especially those from an evangelical background (Van Gelder, 2007b: 26). The result of the Church Growth movement was thus a church-centred view of the Kingdom. A recent work by Scott McKnight (2014) also argues for a view of the Kingdom of God that is equal to the church. The Kingdom of God is not defined as the rule of God but rather the presence of the children of God – i.e. the church. The church has an 'already' and 'not yet' perspective (McKnight, 2014: 86-87). The eschatological ('not yet') church is also an eschatological ('not yet') Kingdom. McKnight goes further and equates Kingdom mission with the church's mission; a mission with a narrow focus mission as personal redemption.

The Kingdom of God is central to Old and New Testament theology and must be the central focus of any missionary endeavour. (Roxburgh and Boren, 2009: 34; Guder, 1998: 90-91). Guder (1998: 34) states that if we do not understand the Kingdom of God we cannot understand Jesus. It is clear that a good understanding of the Kingdom of God is essential in the development of

a theology for missional ecclesiology. Yet through most of the history of the church, it has struggled to come to a full understanding of the Kingdom of God (Wright, 2007: 3768). One reason why Christians have difficulty understanding the Kingdom of God is because they do not use the 'Kingdom language' of the Bible. How often do church leaders speak about the church's role in 'building', 'establishing' or 'extending' the Kingdom of God? These words are not found in the Bible in reference to the Kingdom of God. The New Testament uses the words 'receive' or 'enter into' the Kingdom. The Kingdom is described as a realm you 'inherit' or 'move into', a gift, by the grace of God, to be received with trust and open hands (Guder, 1998: 93-95). The Kingdom of God is a gift that has been given here and now, but it will also be inherited on the final day of judgement.

To define the Kingdom of God is not an easy endeavour. Not even Jesus tried to define his father's reign. Throughout his ministry it remained a mystery and an open secret, conveyed by Jesus through the use of parables whose aim was to open the curtains on the mystery, just enough to make the reader realise that the Kingdom is about much more (Guder, 1998: 90). Roxburgh and Boren (2009: 36) warn against containing the Kingdom in a static definition. The Kingdom of God can only be explained in terms of metaphors and comparisons, as done by Jesus in the gospels. This 'openness' in the view of the Kingdom invites us to risk being a sign and a foretaste it is about imagining a new reality for an alternative world created by God.

There is an integral link between the Kingdom of God and the person of Jesus Christ. Central to Jesus' preaching was the Kingdom of God (Ridderbos, 1962: xi). According to Moltmann (2001: 103) the 'life, words and actions of Jesus' focused not on himself, but on the Kingdom of God. Jesus' whole ministry was devoted to the realisation of the immanent Kingdom, which was only possible through his death and resurrection (Dunn, 1998: 45; Wright, 2007: loc. 3777-89). The Kingdom of God does, however, receive less attention in the writings of Paul. This could be a question, not of interest, but *terminology*, because Dunn (1998: 190) suggests that Paul used 'righteousness' as a parallel concept to Jesus' use of the Kingdom of God. What is noteworthy is that when Paul refers to the Kingdom of God, this Kingdom 'lack[s] all national features and […] [has] become a universal expression of God's rule' that was manifested in the present through the Holy Spirit (Dunn, 1998: 45,191). Paul follows Jesus' tradition in that the Spirit is the first taste of the Kingdom to come (Dunn, 1998: 191). Another parallel between Paul's and Jesus' tradition is the emphasis on the link between the Kingdom, the Spirit and

table fellowship. Table fellowship between 'clean' and 'unclean' were seen as foreshadowing of the Kingdom to come (Dunn, 1998: 685).

 Bosch (1993b: 31-35) cites the Kingdom of God as the point of departure for Jesus' ministry. He underlines the 'already' and 'not yet' aspects of the Kingdom. This is in line with Lesslie Newbigin's (1989: 108) idea of the hidden and the manifested Kingdom, but according to Newbigin the hidden Kingdom is only known by those who have 'converted (and) have been turned from false gods to the living God'. The hidden Kingdom became a reality through the vulnerability of Jesus, but the total Kingdom will manifest in God's power. The Spirit is given as a 'foretaste, first fruit and pledge (Greek: *arrabon*)' of the Kingdom that, which inspires the church to become a sign, agent and a bearer of the first fruit of the Kingdom (Newbigin, 1989: 128).

The church has always existed in this tension between 'already' Kingdom and 'not yet'. There is a temptation to resolve this tension in favour of either; Bosch (1993b: 32) argues that 19th century liberal theology resolved the tension in favour of the 'already', reducing the Kingdom of God to an ideal moral order. At the other end of the spectrum, theologians like Albert Schweitzer saw the Kingdom of God as an eschatological event, without any real implications for the here and now (Ridderbos, 1962: xiv). The comprehensive reality of the Kingdom of God was reduced to a humanly comprehensible entity, without any significance for either the present or the future. Bosch (1993b: 32) summarises the importance of being a church in both the 'already' and the 'not yet' by asserting that 'it is precisely in this creative tension that the reality of God's reign has significance for our contemporary mission'.

NT Wright (2007: 216) argues that to grasp the fullness of the 'already' and the 'not yet', we have to reintegrate Jesus' Kingdom-inaugurating earthly work and his redemptive death and resurrection. Jesus' death and resurrection are just as much part of his Kingdom work as his miracles and teachings. Wright (2007: 216) describes God's Kingdom as

> the story of God's Kingdom being launched on earth as in heaven, generating a new state of affairs in which the power of evil has been decisively defeated, the new creation has been decisively launched, and Jesus' followers have been commissioned and equipped to put that victory, and that inaugurated new world, into practice.

Another important contribution by Bosch (1993b: 32) to our discussion of the Kingdom is that in his ministry, Jesus made an all-out attack on 'evil and all its manifestations': pain, sickness, death, demon-possession, personal sin, immorality, and loveless self-righteousness. This coming of the Kingdom is most pertinent in Jesus' healing miracles and exorcisms. Jesus' contemporaries believed that Satan was able to prove his power through the demon-possessed. When Jesus exorcised demons, he thus he proved himself Lord of this world. In his ministry there is a strong link between saving and healing[113]. Bosch (1993b: 33) indicates that there is at least 18 cases where the gospels uses 'to save' (Greek: *sozein*) in reference to a healing miracle. Jesus did not only bring deliverance from sin, but also deliverance from the effects of sin. The Kingdom could only come after God had dealt decisively with the problem of evil through the death and resurrection of Jesus (Wright, 2007: 216).

The third way in which Jesus inaugurates the Kingdom of God is to welcome those on the margins of society into his Kingdom. Through God's love, the second-class citizens of the world become first class citizens of the Kingdom of God. In God's reign, there is a special place for those on the periphery of society – the poor, widows, sinners, tax collectors and children (World Council of Churches, 2013: 2). Jesus becomes a living symbol of the reign of God. Bosch (1993b: 35) concludes his discussion of the Kingdom by stating:

> We know that our mission will not usher in God's reign. Neither did Jesus. He inaugurated it but did not bring it to consummation. Like him, we are called to erect signs of God's ultimate reign – not more, but certainly not least either.

A missional ecclesiology needs to be clear on the fact that the church exists for and through the Kingdom of God. The church does not exist for itself or its members, but is a sign, agent and foretaste of the Kingdom of God. The church will not be able to be a faithful witness to the gospel if it is indifferent to the poor, the sick, the hungry and those living on the margins of society (Newbigin, 1989: 136). William Temple (Bosch, 1993b: 375) wrote that 'the church is the only society in the world that exists for the sake of those that are not members of it'.

God builds his Kingdom himself, but he ordained that his children can build 'for' the Kingdom. Wright (2007: loc. 3834-55) uses the analogy of stonemasons building a cathedral to explain the

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113 Example: See Mark 2:1-12.

relationship between the church and the Kingdom. God as the architect has the complete plan for the Kingdom. He is building the cathedral (Kingdom), but he delegates individual tasks to the stonemasons and carpenters to create a pillar or a statue. All these different parts are brought together and ennobled by God into the final product. Each individual stonemason and carpenter is building 'for' the Kingdom, but God is ultimately building his Kingdom. Newbigin (1989: 120) uses another metaphor to describe the church as the locus of the realisation of the Kingdom of God. He sees the Kingdom as the rays of the rising sun that shine on the faces of a group of travellers. From the moment the travellers turn to the light (conversion), their faces begin to reflect the light of the living God. They are not only experiencing the warmth and light of the sun, but are also reflecting it into a dark world.

This relationship between church and Kingdom should be pertinent in a missional ecclesiology. A view of the church as the purpose and the goal of the *missio Dei* will result in an inward focus for the church's vision and activities. The church's DNA will be geared towards maintaining the status quo and looking after the flock. There will be no urgency to work as a sign and a foretaste of the Kingdom of God. There will be no burning desire to witness to the light and the love and the freedom that Jesus brought in his inauguration of the Kingdom. The church must be an incarnation of God's story with the world, a community regularly rehearses and re-enacts the hope of the Kingdom of God through worship, the use of sacraments, communal eating, and gathering around the Word of God (Newbigin, 1989: 120).

4.4 Salvation in God's Kingdom

Salvation can be defined as 'a comprehensive term for all the benefits that are graciously bestowed on humans by a benevolent deity or supernatural powers' (Parushev, 2007: 353). The message of salvation cannot be an optional extra in the discussion of a missional ecclesiology. An ecclesiology that has the Christian scriptures as a reference point must deal with salvation, because the message of salvation is not only central to the New Testament, but also to the self-understanding and identity of the early Christians (Van der Watt, 2005: 1). Also, at the heart of any missionary endeavour is the need to mediate salvation to people. Yet there are differences in the understanding and scope of salvation. This section will not cover all aspects of salvation, but will focus on evidence for a holistic view of salvation.

How the church defines salvation will be influenced by their understanding of God and the aims of the *missio Dei*, and will influence the missional practices they engage in (Parushev, 2007: 353). A theology of mission is always closely linked to a theology of salvation (Bosch, 1993b: 393). Wright (2006b: 264) adds that '[t]he scope of our mission must reflect the scope of God's mission, which in turn will match the scale of God's redemptive work'. A thorough and comprehensive understanding of salvation is therefore essential for the development of a missional ecclesiology.

The language of salvation differs so much among the different biblical texts that a coherent view of salvation remains an unreachable vista. The most any missional ecclesiology can do is to have a comprehensive understanding of the various perspectives of salvation found in the Bible (Green, 2003: 12). This discussion of salvation will start with an Old Testament perspective.

According to Brueggemann (2002: 184-185), there is a perception that salvation in the Old Testament is limited to concrete, immanent, and material saving acts, where Israel was saved from the existential difficulties it experienced (draught, war, captivity, illness, etc.). The truth is that the Old Testament knows no material-spiritual dualism. YWHW's rescuing presence was known in every aspect of life: in the personal and public spheres, in the present and the future. There was no big chasm between the saving work of YWHW in existential perils (famine, enslavement) and in the more spiritual perils such as spiritual hunger and enslavement to sin. In the Old Testament, however, the context of YHWH's rescuing acts was the daily, lived reality. YHWH acted on Israel's behalf to rescue, deliver, and emancipate them, sometimes using humans to enact this salvation. Israel's deliverance from oppression in Egypt stands out as a highlight of YHWH's redemptive work (Brueggemann, 2002: 185). What happened in Exodus became a framing narrative for the role of YHWH in the life of Israel. These saving acts of YHWH were usually in response to Israel's cries, and the ritual re-enactment of these events kept YHWH a reality in their day-to-day life. A comprehensive view of salvation in the Old Testament includes political, economic, social, and spiritual dimensions (Wright, 2006b: 268-270).

Political: After the famine in Palestine, the Israelites came to Egypt as immigrants and were an ethnic minority. Unfortunately, their refuge was short-lived and they soon became the object

of unjust discrimination. They had no political power, influence, or voice. The exodus became an act of liberation from the political oppression they experienced, and was the beginning of the process of becoming a nation in their own right (Wright, 2006b: 268).

Economic: The Israelites did not own the land (in Egypt) they lived on, and their labour was exploited to benefit Egyptian agriculture and infrastructure. Their liberation from Egypt therefore also meant acquiring their own land, which they could cultivate for their own economic benefit.

Social: The Exodus liberated the Israelites from the social evils they suffered, such as the state-sponsored persecution of the Israelites, which culminated in the attempted genocide of baby boys. Their family and social structure was broken down through fear and hardship (Wright, 2006b: 269).

Spiritual: The Israelites' service to God was replaced by their service to the Pharoah. Their cultic practices in service of YHWH were overwhelmed by the socio-economic and emotional hardships they experienced. The redemptive presence of YHWH became only a vague memory. Part of God's aim with the liberation from Egypt was for them to worship him again (Wright, 2006b: 269). The increases in their cultic practices (Passover, Festival of the unleavened bread, receiving of the Law on Sinai, etc.) just before and after the exodus are clear examples of their re-engagement with God.

With the Exodus, God brought comprehensive redemption to Israel, as seen in the fulfilling of their political, economic, social and spiritual needs. This narrative becomes a theme for the redemptive work of God in the Old Testament context. Another example is the Jubilee (Leviticus 25) that extended the sabbatical principle so that after 49 years the land should be rested, and land that was lost due to economic hardship should be returned the original owners. Brueggemann (2012: 97) emphasises that this was not only an economic and social discipline, but that the Jubilee was firstly a discipline of holiness (Leviticus 25:12).

Although salvation is a familiar theme in the New Testament, it is used with different meanings and implications. Some similarities or trends are, however, found among the different New Testament perspectives on salvation. Van der Watt (2005: 505) describes these as different rooms in the same house. Dunn (2006: 30) agrees that it is not possible to speak of *the* kerygma

of the New Testament, but only to identify the core of the post-Easter kerygma. The three components of this kerygma core are: firstly, 'the proclamation of the risen, exalted Jesus'; secondly, 'the call to faith, for acceptance of the proclamation and commitment to […] Jesus'; and thirdly, 'the promise held out to faith, in terms of the promise of the Spirit, of salvation or of a continuing relationship with the exalted Christ or the community of faith' (Dunn, 2006: 30-31). The focus on this post-Easter kerygma is clearly on faith in the resurrected son of God. After a cursory reading of the New Testament texts on salvation, it becomes apparent that salvation is generally understood in terms of the spiritual dimension and the task of evangelism (Wright, 2006b: 303). Yet this does not nullify the strong, holistic vision of the Old Testament perspective on salvation.

There are also arguments for a holistic view of salvation that can also be supported by New Testament texts. There are at least three pillars that support this argument. Firstly, the Bible should be read as a coherent whole. A common thread in the gospels is that salvation was understood within the context of the promises of salvation in the Old Testament (Van der Watt, 2005: 507). Wright (2006b: 304,305) argues that it would be a false hermeneutic that maintains that the kerygma about Jesus cancelled what the early Christians knew about the mission of God's people found in the Old Testament. A missional hermeneutic will therefore have to deal with the Bible as a whole.

Secondly, Jesus and the early church presented a challenge to the dominant political system. In the New Testament, as in the Old Testament, it could be argued that Jesus and his followers did not have a dichotomy between politics and religion. Their whole lives were lived in the presence of God, and God was equally involved in affairs of the state and of the soul (Wright, 2006b: 306-307). Although the Kingdom of God that Jesus preached was not a geographical and political kingdom, the principles of the kingdom he preached were juxtaposed with those of the earthly kingdom. To confess that Jesus is Lord was to deny that Caesar is Lord (Dunn, 1998: 247-248). In fact, Jesus was so much of a threat to the dominant political hegemony that they executed him (Wright, 2006b: 308-311).

Thirdly, there are some instances in the New Testament where salvation has a holistic meaning. Because of the limited scope of this discussion, only one gospel (Luke) and Acts will be discussed[114].

Hermie van Zyl (2005: 146-147) makes the argument that *salvation* is semantically related to *benefaction* in the Greco-Roman world. He quotes Green (in Van Zyl, 2005: 146):

> As such, salvation had to do with the exercise of beneficent power for the provision of a variety of blessings, a general manifestation of generous concern for the well-being of others, with the denotation of rescue from perilous circumstances. This might include the health of the state, including its internal safety and the security of its borders; being rescued from a disaster at sea; the healing of physical malady; and more.

In Luke, Jesus performs the function of a benefactor. This is in line with the Old Testament concept that YHWH is the great protector of Israel who delivers them from their enemies. In the Hellenic context, benefaction implies that people share in the good things the kingly figure grants them, for example gifts, security, protection, etc. This also has political implications, because Jesus was juxtaposed with Emperor Augustus, who was known as the benefactor and saviour (Van Zyl, 2005: 147).

In both Luke and Acts, there is a comprehensive understanding of salvation. The infancy narrative in Luke 1:67-80 has some undertones of political liberation (Bosch, 1993b: 107), whereas in the narratives of the prodigal son (Luke 10:11-32) and Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10), salvation implies 'acceptance, fellowship [and] new life' (Bosch, 1993b: 106-107). Together with the strong apocalyptic implication of salvation in Luke and Acts, there is also emphasis on the present reality of salvation (Van Zyl, 2005: 148). In Luke and Acts, σώζω is used in the context of physical healing (Luke 8:48; Act 4:9) as well as within a religious context (e.g. Acts 2:21). In Luke 6:9, 8:36, 8:48, 8:50, 17:19 and 18:42, the coming to faith of the person is associated with the restoration of the whole person, i.e. healing or exorcism (Steyn, 2005: 77-81). Because sin corrupted the whole of creation and every dimension of humanness, every human in creation needs salvation. Physical healing is an example of that. Disease not only affects the body of

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[114] For more on a holistic view of salvation, see the work of Van der Watt (2005).

the individual, but also their social relationships (e.g. leprosy). When Jesus heals the lepers (Luke 17:11-19), he does not only restore their bodies but also their social dimension. The realized aspect of salvation in Acts is closely linked to the coming of the 'Spirit of Jesus' (Acts 5:9; 8:39) or the 'Spirit of the Lord' (Acts 16:7). Jesus' past work of saving and healing will continue in the future through the work of the Spirit (Van Zyl, 2005: 148).

This section did not discuss every single text about the holistic character of salvation in the Bible, but indicated only the most prominent contours. This holistic character of salvation, which was firmly established in the Old Testament, in turn became an important motif in the New Testament, and must therefore be part of a modern view of salvation as well (Barram, 2007: 43).

Having dealt with some biblical contours of salvation, the historical development of the doctrine will be discussed next. The theological reflection of the church on the doctrine of salvation can be traced back to the theology of Augustine. While wrestling with the doctrine of original sin and justification, Augustine turned to Paul for the answer to the question: 'How do we get saved?' From his reading of Paul, he developed the doctrine of salvation by faith that was 'otherworldly' as well as 'individualistic'. His doctrine of salvation by faith alone was an important correction of the theology of Pelagius, who had a definite optimistic view of human nature and human capacity to attain perfection. Reacting to Pelagius, Augustine unfortunately lost the 'realised' as well as the 'communal' aspects of salvation that we find in the Old and New Testament (Bosch, 1993b: 215-216). The influential Augustine's view of salvation became ingrained in Western Christianity. As a result, salvation became a private and personal matter in a dualistic world, which emphasised an ethical life.

After Augustine, the development of the doctrine of salvation took an ironic turn. During medieval times the focus on the 'personal-ethical' was externalised and replaced by a 'cultic-institutional' focus (Bosch, 1993b: 217), and the church became the main agent and facilitator of salvation. Cyprian of Carthage's famous dictum, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* (there is no salvation outside [Catholic] church), became the official doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church in 1302. Salvation was no longer anchored in the Christology, but subordinated to the ecclesiology (Bosch, 1993b: 218).

The reaction to this dominant doctrine of salvation became one of the major driving forces behind the Reformation movement, which saw justification by grace through faith as pivotal in a biblical understanding of salvation. The doctrine of salvation followed a discernible trajectory from Augustine to the Reformation. For Augustine, salvation had a 'personal-ethical' focus, but developed to 'cultic-institutional' in the Roman Catholic (1300s) tradition, which was firmly embedded in the ecclesiology of the church, to Reformation's view that salvation was a sovereign act of God who 'by grace, took the initiative to forgive, justify and save human beings' (Bosch, 1993b: 241). Unfortunately, the narrow individualistic character of salvation as understood by Augustine could still be seen in the Reformation's view of salvation. This individualistic Augustinian view was developed further to include a subjective experience of salvation that primarily focused on a personal relationship with God. In this, the spirit of the Enlightenment can be seen. More emphasis was placed on the individual's relationship with God and their personal experience of his salvation than on an impersonal, detached God who can only be revealed through the intervention of the church and the clergy (in the Roman Catholic tradition).

Throughout the history of Christian missions, a lot of effort has gone into healthcare and education and agriculture skills (Pocock, Van Rheenen and McConnell, 2005: 261). Unfortunately, these activities were not seen as missionary activities, but as ways to win the favour of the community where the missionary was working (Bosch, 1993b: 395). These activities had a missionary dimension but not necessarily a missionary intension. These missionary activities had a narrow view of salvation, as a vertical relationship with God. Salvation was seen as a sovereign act of God that had no or little bearing on the reality and immanent struggles of the individual. This conceptualisation of salvation could only be maintained as long as people live within the pre-modern Christendom context, where God was the source and explanation for the whole reality. During the Enlightenment, humans became active participants in their salvation. They used science and technology to improve their socio-political circumstances, and salvation was radically redefined to mean 'liberation from religious superstition, attention to human welfare, and the moral improvements of humanity' (Bosch, 1993b: 395).

The theology of salvation and Christology have always been closely linked. Before the Enlightenment, the Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions had a high

Christology – emphasising the atoning death and resurrection of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. The Enlightenment, on the other hand, had a low Christology, viewing Jesus as an ideal person who should be followed in order to live a moral life (Bosch, 1993b: 395; Bevans and Schroeder, 2009: 229). The reaction of the church to the challenges of the Enlightenment was twofold. Most Protestant and Catholic churches held on to their high Christology and viewed salvation in traditional terms as the atonement for man's sin. Others were influenced by the Enlightenment to the point that they were more interested in the *cause* of Jesus than in the *person* of Jesus. Sin was no longer an issue between God and man, but between humans themselves. Human relationships and oppressive structures, and not the souls of humans, needed to be redeemed (Bosch, 1993b: 396). The Social Gospel movement was developed within this context to address the social evils in society (Bevans and Schroeder, 2009: 217).

A later development was liberation theology, which saw salvation in terms of freedom of the oppressed and the marginalised (Bosch, 1993b: 397). This reaction gained ground to the point where the Commission for World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches (CWME) held in Bangkok in 1973 characterised salvation as entailing these four struggles (Bosch, 1993b: 396):

1. the struggle for economic justice against exploitation
2. the struggle for human dignity against oppression
3. the struggle for solidarity against alienation; and
4. the struggle for hope against despair in personal life.

The Enlightenment made an important correction to the narrow vertical and spiritual definition of salvation, but went too far. The eschatological and transcendent character of salvation was lost, and Jesus was reduced from the Son of God to simply a sage or a moral example to man.

It soon became clear that the Sixties dream of world peace and the eradication of hunger and disease was an impossible one. The hope for the world did not lie in technological advances or freedom for the oppressed. God's plan for the world includes much more than an individual inheriting the new heaven and new earth – it is about the redemption of all of creation. Salvation is the transformation of the whole person, starting with the forgiveness of sin, but also the healing of illness, and liberation from political and spiritual bondage (Balia and Kim, 2010: 26). Salvation is not only liberation *from* (sin, oppression, self-centredness, etc.), but also

liberation *to* (love God and our neighbour) (Bosch, 1993b: 107). Salvation is the welcoming of the sinner at the earthly table in preparation for the banquet that he will have with God in eternity. Believers are not only saved as individual souls, but as a whole being and part of a community of believer in order to become part of God's Kingdom that is breaking into the current reality (Wright, 2007, loc. 3689-93). In summary, salvation is not only about the coming to faith and being raised from the grave on the final judgement day; it is also about the reality of healing in the midst of brokenness; prayers being answered, and deliverance from evil (Wright, 2007, loc. 3718-23). When God brings people to faith through his Spirit, they not only become a sign, agent and foretaste of the Kingdom of God, but also a part of God's plan in establishing his Kingdom. Transformed individuals become part of God's transformation process in the world (Wright, 2007: loc. 3724-40). The *telos* of salvation is not only about moving into the Kingdom, but also about being an active sign of God's work in creating the Kingdom.

4.5 Missional Hermeneutic

How do we read the Bible as faithful followers of Christ? This very basic question has sparked fierce debates in Christian communities through the ages. In fact, much of the conflict in Christian circles can be traced back to this question (Barram, 2007: 42). The answer will influence the vision of the missional church, as well as the way believers see God's presence, themselves, and their calling in the world.

Protestants have always prided themselves that their theology is anchored in the Bible as the Word of God (*sola scriptura*). It is ironic, then, that the early Protestant missionaries, the Pietists and the Moravians, made remarkably little of the biblical foundation for mission. William Carey (1761-1834) was one of the first missiologists to spell out a biblical mandate for his work. This mandate was built on the one text, namely that of Matthew 28:18-20, the Great Commission. This approach left Carey's mandate open to criticism about the authenticity of Great Commission as the words of Jesus (Bosch, 1978: 33-34).

A firm biblical mandate for mission needed more than just one evidential text (Balia and Kim, 2010: 25). After Carey, the famous dictum 'Die älteste Mission wurde zur Mutter der Theologie' ('the old Mission is the Mother of theology') by Martin Kahler (1835-1912) (1971: 190) emphasised that the driving force of the early church was the *missio Dei*, and through the

practice of the *missio Dei*, theology developed. Early attempts at developing a missional hermeneutic were limited to a few missionary texts and were heavily influenced by a colonial expansionist paradigm.

A more grounded missional hermeneutic developed later because of three developments: the growth in the Majority World church, the decline in the Western church, and the missionary conferences held at Tambaram (1938) and Willingen (1952) (Goheen, 2010: 2). From 1950 until the early 1970s, thinking on missional hermeneutic was dominated by the works of Joachim Jeremias (1958), Johannes Blauw (1962), and George Vicedom (1965) (Sheridan, 2012: 24). Since the 1970s, there have been a significant number of contributions to the discipline of missiology and missional hermeneutics. Two names that stand out are that of David Bosch (1978) (1985a) (1986) (1993a) (1993b) and Lesslie Newbigin (1978) (1983) (1986) (1989).

Recently works by DuBose, F. (1983); Brownson, J. (1996); LeMarquand, G. (2002); Wagner, R. (2002) (2002); Guder, D. (2007); Wright, C.J.H. (2006b); Yuckman, C.H. (2005a) (2005b); Barram, M. (2006) (2007) (2009) ; Goheen, M. (2008a) (2008b) (2010) (2010) (2011) and Cerny, P. (2010) (2010) made a rich contribution to the field by suggesting a range of perspectives on missional hermeneutics.

4.5.1 The quest for a missional hermeneutic?

The etymology of the word 'hermeneutic' is found in Greek mythology. Hermes was the messenger between the gods and the people (Fensham, 2008: 23). His task was to translate and deliver divine messages to mortal beings. Anthony C. Thiselton (2009: 1) defines hermeneutics as follows:

> Hermeneutics explores how we read, understand, and handle texts, especially those written in another time or in a context of life different from our own. Biblical hermeneutics investigates more specifically how we read, understand, apply, and respond to biblical texts.

Bosch (1986: 65) adds that '[h]ermeneutics is the never-ending discipline of attempting to make the foundational events of the Christian faith relevant to every new generation of believers'. A church that wants to be true to its calling will have to engage with the Bible in every new context, under the faithful guidance of the Holy Spirit (cf. Barram 2007: 42).

Biblical hermeneutics is more than just a few foundational rules for reading a biblical text. It is instead an 'honest and self-critical' engagement with the text to discern its relevance to the current context (Brownson, 1996: 231). Schleiermacher and Gadamer (in Thiselton, 2009: 3) conveyed part of the deep character of hermeneutics when they defined it as '[t]he art of understanding'. It is more than just a few steps in a process that must be followed, but an *'ear'* that needs developing, to hear the *'voice'* of the text, as it speaks into the reader's life and context. There is, of course, an inherent risk in using hermeneutics to read a text. Does this hermeneutic do justice to the text? Does the hermeneutic exercise so much control over the text that the text is distorted (Wright, 2006b: 26)? The quest is to find a hermeneutic that lets the text speak, consistent with the context it was written in, to the context it is read in.

The concept of pre-understanding[115] becomes relevant here. Pre-understanding itself is not a danger to a responsible hermeneutic, but rather the denial[116] of, or the lack of self-reflection on, pre-understanding (Brownson, 1996: 232). As was with the incarnation of Jesus, the gospel come and 'inhabit' a specific culture. That does not mean that because the gospel inhabits a specific culture uniquely, that this will lead to relativism. The gospel is always simultaneously inhabiting and critiquing cultures (Billings, 2010: 1463). The reader of the Bible engages with the Bible, not as a neutral observer, but as a person with a pre-understanding that is influenced by their theology, previous experiences with the Bible, as well as the current context of interpretation (Billings, 2010: loc. 1444). When Christians read scripture, they are not objective outsiders but active participants in the developing Trinitarian drama of salvation (Billings, 2010: 2580). They are reading about the Trinitarian God's, creational and redemptive work in building his Kingdom, simultaneously being objects of creation, benefitting from God's redemptive work, while being called to be active as signs and instruments of the Kingdom.

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115 Pre-understanding (preliminary and provisional understanding) is a term used in the context of hermeneutics. It is an English translation of a German term (*Vorverständnis*) used by Schleiermacher and others to describe the initial understanding that a reader brings to a text. This pre-understanding is corrected or confirmed as the reader becomes more familiar with the text (Thiselton, 2009: 13).

116 Peter Berger (1990: 51) articulates the double standard often found in historical-critical hermeneutics where the Biblical text is scrutinised with a critical eye, but the modern analyst is uncritical about his own pre-understanding and influences. 'The past, out of which the tradition comes, is relativised in terms of this or that socio-historical analysis. The present, however, remains strangely immune from relativisation. In other words, the New Testament writers are seen as afflicted with a false consciousness rooted in their time, but the contemporary analyst takes the consciousness of his time as an unmixed intellectual blessing.'

In the next section, it will be argued that there is a dialectical relationship between the reader's hermeneutic and his/her theology – more specifically, how his/her pre-understanding of a text is influenced by their theology. His/her understanding of the *missio Dei,* Trinity, the Kingdom of God and the context of the church will influence the questions they bring to the text.

4.5.3.1 Missional Context of the Bible:

Thiselton (1980: 445) states the aim of hermeneutics as the fusion of the two horizons of the texts. The first horizon is the historical, social, and literary context of the text. In addition to this horizon, Thiselton (1980: 11) emphasises a second horizon, namely that of the reader and interpreter of the text. Thiselton's second horizon is the horizon of the reader, in this case is the modern-day Christian. Most Western churches today function within a post–Christendom context, and live out their own identity as part of a specific secular community, at a specific time in history (Fensham, 2008: 46).

Thiselton (2006: 451) warns against drawing conclusions of what the text 'says to me', before adequate care has been taken to explore horizon of the text in detail. A horizon is not a 'rigid boundary', but a dynamic perspective that moves with the viewpoint of the observer (Gadamer, 2004: 238), and the challenge to the reader is to relate the horizon of the text to his own. When these two horizons begin to merge, understanding of the ancient text becomes possible in modern circumstances. In order to merge the two horizons, a new 'world' needs to be created (Thiselton, 2006: 475). To create this new 'world', the reader first needs to be aware of the difference between his/her world and the world of the text. There needs to be a creative tension between the world of the text and the present. Hermeneutics is not a naïve denial of these tensions, but a purposeful bringing of them to the surface (Thiselton, 2006: 445).

In the calling and blessing of Abraham we see God is invoking his people to cross boundaries and to be a blessing to all nations, a theme that could be seen right through the Old Testament (Wright, 2006b: 236). God's particular involvement in the life of Israel does have universal implications. This is a brave statement in the light of the fact that David Bosch (1993b: 17) states, 'There is, in the Old Testament, no indication of believers of the old covenant being sent by God to cross geographical, religious, and social frontiers in order to win others to faith in Yahweh.' Bosch however qualifies this statement in saying that, we do not find mission as

'understood in the traditional sense' (one person being sent to another group to bring them to faith in Yahweh).

Contrary to Bosch's view, Christopher Wright (2006b: 27) dedicates a significant portion of his work on missiology, to mission in the Old Testament. He writes that the covenant with Abraham, the Exodus from Egypt, their covenantal relationship that started in Sinai, and Israel's ethical distinctiveness is 'rich in missional significance.' Brownson (1996: 234-235) discusses Abraham's call in Gen. 12 and indicates that '[...]the particularity of Israel's call moves out towards a universal salvific purpose.' Guder (2000: 32-35) agrees with Brownson and goes on to discusses the story of Jonah as a negative example of Israel's calling, indicating the lack of compassion in the hearts of the Israelites for other people. He sees the compassion of God as the motivation behind his mission. Israel was elected and called, not for their own benefit and wellbeing, but to be a blessing to the whole of creation. Unfortunately, God's compassion for the world did not grow in the hearts of his people and God sent his Son to show hís compassion for the world (Guder, 2000: 33).

As in the case with the Old Testament, a dialectical relationship is seen in the New Testament between God's focus and particular involvement with certain people (OT – Israel; NT – disciples), and the universal implication for the 'other nations' (OT – Other nations; NT – Gentiles). Throughout the Bible, God uses specific humans or groups to be a blessing to the others, across familial, social, cultural, and geographic boundaries (Yuckman, 2005a: 10).

The early Christian church also had a distinct missionary character. This aspect of the early church is abundantly clear in the way that the early Christians crossed cultural and geographical boundaries and spread the gospel through the known world (Kirk, 1997: 50). It was within the context of crossing boundaries that the New Testament was written and early biblical interpretation was started. Mission was a natural and inherent part of the early church, a way of life, a natural reaction to hearing the gospel (Kahler, 1971: 190; Brownson, 1996: 232-233).

The Bible is the self-revelation of God to his people. Not any god, but the God who reveals himself as Trinitarian God that is in a divine procession towards the world – the *missio Dei.* The *missio Dei* remain key to a missional hermeneutic of the Bible (Fensham, 2008: 27). If God

is missionary God in his core, then it would be expected that his Word would reflect that missionary character.

In this section it was argued that the missional character of the Bible is not limited to a few missionary proof texts, but to the Bible as a whole[117], and God's intension with His Word (Barram, 2007: 43). It is clear that a hermeneutic that will be useful for a missional congregation needs to take seriously the missional context in which the Bible was written and first interpreted. The Bible was a result of God's involvement in the world, and tells the story of His people taking part in His redemptive work in the world (Barram, 2007: 43). It will be anachronistic to disregard the fact that the New Testament was written in a missional context. The recipients of the New Testament texts were also Christian communities that owed their very existence to the missional impulse in the early church. Lastly, the purpose of the New Testament texts was to instruct the early church in their missionary task (Barram, 2007: 49).

4.5.3.2 The Current Context of Missional Hermeneutics

The second horizon is the horizon of the reader. The reader in this case is the modern-day Christian reading the biblical text in his or her context. Most Western churches today function within a post–Christendom context. To be a missional congregation in a post-Christendom context, the congregation needs to understand that their message is very closely related to their context. They live out, function, and find their own identity in being part of a specific secular community, at a specific time in history (Fensham, 2008: 46). At the heart of the missional congregation lies its calling to join God in his mission to the world. The local congregation is not a passive partner in God's mission but becomes the hermeneutic of the gospel. In the words of Newbigin (1989: 227), 'the only answer, the only hermeneutic of the gospel, is a congregation of men and women who believe it and live by it.' The community become the authentic

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117 'All true theology is, by definition, missionary theology, for it has as its object the study of the ways of a God who is by nature missionary and a foundational text written by and for missionaries. Mission as a discipline is not, then, the roof of a building that completes the whole structure, already constructed by blocks that stand on their own, but both the foundation and the mortar in the joints, which cements together everything else. Theology should not be pursued as a set of isolated disciplines. It assumes a model of cross-cultural communication, for its subject matter both stands over against culture and relates closely to it. Therefore, it must be interdisciplinary and interactive' (Kirk, 1997a: 50).

interpreters of gospel for the world they live in. Fensham (2008: 26) states that mission is not only the mother of theology, but also the mother of hermeneutics. The aim of hermeneutics in the missional church is to interpret a missionary God's Word in a missional context, and the local congregation is best equipped for this task (Yuckman, 2005a: 14-15).

A risk in the modern context of Bible interpretation is to read the Bible only as individuals and not collectively as a faith community. Todd Billings (2010: 38) argues that biblical interpretation[118] should primarily be done in a *'community of faith'*. Our Enlightenment heritage had predisposed us to an individualised hermeneutic, which in conflict with the argument that the congregation becomes the hermeneutic of the gospel.

The modern community of faith should also read the scripture with the church of all ages, holding on to the conviction that the Holy Spirit had always revealed God's will, through his Word, to his people (Billings, 2010: 2030). Reading scripture with the modern and historical communities of faith will help the individual believer to break through the limitations they impose on the text.

4.5.3.3 Plurality of Interpretation

Plurality and coherence of interpretation are two important aspects of interpretation for the missional church to discern God's will while reading the text faithfully in a specific context. Can the centuries old text of the Bible remain relevant to each new missional context? The answer lies within the tension between the plurality and coherence of interpretation of the biblical texts.

The contextual nature of hermeneutics leads to plurality of interpretation (Bosch, 1993a: 179-180; Kritzinger and Saayman, 2011: 160). Brownson (1996: 233) deems this not as a failure of the hermeneutical process, but rather as a sign of its effective use, reflecting the convergence of the two horizons of hermeneutics. Wright (2006b: 38-39) notes that hermeneutical variety

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[118] Billings' (2010: loc. 38) definition of biblical interpretation: 'In brief, the theological interpretation of Scripture is a multifaceted practice of a community of faith in reading the Bible as God's instrument of self-revelation and saving fellowship'.

goes back to the early days of the Christian movement. He discusses how the Greek and Jewish contingents of the early church interpreted the Old Testament scriptures in different ways. In spite of the fact that Wright (2006b: 39) still holds dear the 'historical and salvation-historical context of the biblical texts and their authors' he acknowledges that the context and culture of the reader plays a pivotal role in the hermeneutical process. Cross-cultural and contextual reading of biblical texts enriches the reading for the broader church, because each culture and context has a specific perspective on a text (Van Gelder, 2007: 63-64). Bosch (1986: 76) quotes Hugo Echegaray[119] when he writes that

> Jesus has not left us a rigid model for action; rather, he inspired his disciples to prolong the logic of his own action in a creative way amid the new and different historical circumstances in which the community would have to proclaim the gospel.

The plurality of interpretation is however not an open door for an anthropocentric gospel. The Holy Spirit remains the primary agent in leading the church to discern God will in each new context (Van Gelder, 2007: 65). The church that is discerning God's will, will have the responsibility to remain sensitive to the work of the Spirit. The Spirit revelled plurality of interpretation remain within the bounds of the coherence found in Spirit revealed broader narrative of the Bible.

4.5.3.4 Coherence in Interpretation

Plurality in hermeneutics without boundaries can lead to pluralism and relativism of interpretation (Cerny, 2010: 108). The fact that interpreters of the Bible work with a common text, as well as a shared humanity, enhances the possibility of some coherence in interpretation. On the other hand, such coherence is challenged by the fact that the Bible consists of diverse perspectives on the *'Heilsgeschichte'* (Brownson, 1996: 240). Each writer of the Bible had his perspective, within his context, of God's presence in the world.

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119 The Bosch quote come from Echegaray, H (1984: xv-xvi).

Brownson (1996: 240-241) approaches the question of coherence in the biblical text by looking at the New Testament as a whole. He argues that the canonization of twenty-seven books of the New Testament was influenced by the following assumptions:

Firstly, that the early church recognized these books as part of a coherent narrative and ascribed meaning to this coherent whole. A responsible hermeneutic will have to ask the question, how a particular portion of scripture relate to the rest of Scripture?

The second assumption is that coherent meaning indicators are found in the New Testament. One of these important meaning indicators is 'the gospel', and needs further investigation (Brownson, 1996: 241).

According to Wright (2006b: 40) the search for coherence in the understanding of 'the gospel' starts with the careful use of grammatico-historical tools in discovering the intended meaning of the writers and editors in their respective contexts. A comprehensive understanding of the intended meaning of the writers of the texts will create boundaries for the interpretation of the texts in a current context.

There are certain structural features that every use of the term gospel exhibits, namely:

a. Where *the gospel* is preached, it makes a claim and requires acceptance of the truth and transformation in the hearer's life. *'The gospel is always that which is preached, the kerygma* (Brownson, 1996: 253).*'*

b. The focus of the gospel is always broader that the church. The gospel presupposes that God is engaging the whole world.

c. At the heart of the Gospel lays the birth, life, suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. The gospel is not only about Jesus Christ, but he becomes the interpretive matrix for the rest of the gospel (Brownson, 1996: 253-257).

What then is the gospel? Brownson (1996: 254) answered as follows:

a. 'In simplest terms, it is the proclamation of God's soteriological purpose and claim on this world, a purpose and claim extended paradigmatically through the crucified and risen Christ. Yet in the final analysis this is not so much **what** is

preached but rather the structure that delineates **how** the entire tradition is to preach and interpreted.' (Brownson, 1996: 254)

b. The 'gospel' becomes one of the important meaning indicators that bind the message of the New Testament. The 'the gospel' forms part of what Todd Billings (2010: 341) call the *'rule of faith'* - a summary of the received teachings of the Christian church. The rule of faith is a narrative that helps the reader of the biblical text to have a reference to the centre of the Christian faith when he/she is reading individual texts. The rule does not only help to have reference to the centre but also helps in defining the boundary of the possible readings of the text. The rule of faith is also a description of the Trinitarian drama of salvation. Due to the limited scope of this study, other possibly meaning indicators are not discussed.

In summary, the following arguments could be made in favour of the use of a missional hermeneutic to interpret the Bible:

a. The Bible is read with 'n pre-understanding of what the Bible is and want to do. The readers pre-understanding is informed by their theology and context.

b. The missional character of the Bible originates in the missional character of God. The Bible is the communication of a missionary God.

c. The Bible was written within a missionary context. Despite differences in the Old and New Testament, God is constantly calling his people to cross boundaries. It was essentially a missional context.

d. The Bible is read by the modern Church who function within a post-Christendom context, and is called to be missional.

e. Despite the diverse contexts in which the Bible developed, there are coherent themes that bind the text together. One of the central themes is 'the gospel'. The gospel makes a claim on the lives of the recipients of the message. The message of the gospel is not directed towards a small group only, but the whole of creation. This broad vision of the gospel is clearly seen in the life of the central figure in the gospel Jesus Christ. During his lifetime, he engaged with the whole spectrum of people. He was also recognized as saviour by people from all walks of life and different cultures.

If all these aspects are taken into account, it becomes clear that if the church wants to be true to its calling, it will have to take this missional character as a 'lens' for interpreting the Word of God. This 'lens' is a missional hermeneutic that will help a missional church and its leaders interpret the missional Word of a missional God, for a missional context.

4.6 Conclusions

The theology and tradition a congregation functions in will determine the practices they will engage in. In this chapter, the main contours of a missional theology were identified, namely the *missio Dei*, a holistic view of the Trinity and holistic salvation, a focus on the Kingdom of God and a missional hermeneutic. These contours developed from the work of Lesslie Newbigin and David Bosch and were elaborated on in the work of the GOCN. In dealing with these contours the third research question was answered: *"What are the broad contours of themes within ecumenical missional ecclesiology?"*

These five contours of a missional ecclesiology will be used in chapter 6 to evaluate the missional theology of the DRC. These contours will not only be used to evaluate the DRC's theology but will themselves also be evaluated in the light of the developments in the missional theology of the DRC.

CHAPTER 5

THE FRESH EXPRESSIONS MOVEMENT

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MISSIONAL ECCLESIOLOGY IN A MAINLINE CHURCH

The researcher's interest in the fresh expressions movement [120] started while leading a congregation[121] in London from 2007 to 2012. In Britain, the movement seems to be making a significant impact. A church with a burning desire to reach those that are not currently reached by mainstream churches should learn from the work done by the fresh expression movement.

Throughout Britain the influence of the fresh expression movement could be felt. It was talked about in church circles and a lot of energy could be experienced around these new expressions of church. During the summer holidays[122] the congregation's teenagers would visit a Christian youth festival called 'Soul Survivor'[123] attended by 28 000 teenagers at two venues over a period of three weeks (Soul Survivor, 2013). Other festivals organized by the fresh expressions movement, included the Greenbelt festival[124] that is attended by 20 000 adults and celebrates Christian music and art (Greenbelt, 2013) and the Spring Harvest festival[125] that attracts 25 000 people during Easter (Spring Harvest, n/d). Various churches[126] were planted in coffee

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120 This study will differentiate between the Fresh Expressions organization and the fresh expressions movement. 'The Fresh Expressions organisation exists to encourage and support the fresh expressions movement' (Fresh Expressions, 2012a). The Fresh Expression organization was started by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York with the Methodist Council in 2004 (Fresh Expressions, 2012a).
121 A South African Congregation in Britain. For more information, see: www.sagemeente.com
122 Usually from around the last week in July to the end of August.
123 http://www.soulsurvivor.com/uk/summer/what/what.html [Retrieved: 7 February 2013]
124 http://www.greenbelt.org.uk/ [Retrieved: 7 February 2013]
125 http://www.springharvest.org/ [Retrieved: 9 May 2013
126 Fresh expressions of church within the Anglican tradition took on many forms and they are still evolving into an ever-growing number of expressions. Some of the main categories are a) Rural fresh expressions (Smith A. , 2008) exp. Emmanuel Church Bicester http://www.emmanuelbicester.org.uk/aboutus.htm; b) Urban fresh expressions (Williams E. , 2007) exp. Hartcliffe and Withywood Lighthouse, http://www.bristol.anglican.org/wordpress/?p=132; c) Café church (Anglican Church Planting Initiatives, n.d.) exp. Taste and See Café Kidsgrove, Stoke-on-Trent, http://wm-cc.org/about-us.html; d) Workplace

shops, pubs, businesses, and among interest groups. It is clear that the Fresh Expression movement is not only making a significant impact on reaching people in Britain, but in many other countries as well. Despite the pessimistic church membership numbers in Britain, the membership of fresh expressions churches have increased by 210% in the last 5 years. It should be noted however that this is from a very low base, the number in 2010 was still only 61 000, in reference to the 1,457,598 total Anglican membership (Brierley, 2011: n.p.).

The influence of the fresh expression movement is also present in other countries[127], with partnerships currently working in Australia, New Zealand and the United States, and informal communities developing in Germany, Sweden, Denmark, The Netherlands, Barbados and Chile (Fresh Expressions, 2012b). Relevant to this study is the influence of Fresh Expressions in South Africa[128]. Bishop Graham Cray of the movement, invited to South Africa by Professor Nelus Niemandt[129], visited South Africa in June 2011 and held various lectures on fresh expression of church. He visited South Africa a second time during 2012 and a formal agreement was signed with Ekklesia (the ecumenical centre for leadership development)[130] to present the official training of Fresh Expression UK in South Africa (Niemandt, 2013b). Rev. Phillip Botha was appointed Cape Synod to a position for New Congregation Development, and

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church (Lings, 2004) exp. Oasis Edinburgh, http://www.oasisedinburgh.com/; e) Under 5s and their families (Moore, 2006), exp. The Wesley Playhouse, http://www.thisisit.me.uk/; f) Fresh expressions for older people (Lings, 2008), exp. Molly's Church Ravenshead Estate Nottinghamshire, http://www.acpi.org.uk/stories/6%20Mollys%20church.htm; g) Online fresh expressions (Estes, 2009), Church on the net, http://www.church-on-the-net.com/; h) Fresh expressions among other faiths (Sudworth, 2007), The Springfield Project, Birmingham, http://www.springfieldproject.org.uk/; i) New monastic fresh expressions (Claiborne, 2006), exp. Moot London http://www.moot.uk.net/; j) Fresh expressions for adults with learning disabilities (Dalpra, 2009), exp. Rainbow worship at the St Birinus & St John's church, High Wycombe. http://www.banjos.org.uk/

127 Australia – Fresh Expressions Australia:
http://www.anglican.org.au/content/community/Task_Forces/Fresh_Expressions_Australia.aspx
Canada – Fresh Expressions Canada: http://www.freshexpressions.ca/ United States – Fresh Expressions: http://freshexpressionsus.org/ New Zealand - Fresh Expressions Aotearoa New Zealand: http://anglicanlife.org.nz/Magazine/Lifestyle-Fresh-Expressions-Launched

128 http://communitas.co.za/taakspanne/vbo/kursusse-2013/2899-fresh-expressions-of-church-kursus-kom-na-suid-afrika-in-2013

129 Niemandt is a professor in Department of Science of Religion and Missiology at the University of the Pretoria in South Africa. He was elected moderator of the General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa in 2011. Niemandt played an instrumental role in bringing fresh expression of church to South Africa.

130 An ecumenical centre focussing on practical ministry of the Faculty of Theology at Stellenbosch University. The faculty is training students for the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa and the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa.

played an important role in the development of Fresh Expressions of church in the DRC. During 2013, the first one-year course on fresh expressions of church for the Dutch Reformed and the Uniting Reformed Churches in South Africa was organised by Ekklesia [131] in partnership with Fresh Expression UK (Communitas, 2013).

Fresh expressions bring a unique perspective of an historical mainline church that is process of developing a missional ecclesiology. This chapter will focus on the unique lessons on missional ecclesiology learned from the fresh expressions movement. These aspects will form part of a matrix to be used in chapter six to evaluate the missional ecclesiology of the DRC.

The chapter will start by positioning the fresh expressions movement within the broader discourse on missional ecclesiology. Then a historical overview of the development of the movement will be given. The chapter will then progress to create an understanding of the relationship between the context and the development of the movement. The theology underlying the movement will then be articulated. Lastly the theology of the fresh expression movement will be evaluated in the light of the broader missional consensus.

5.1 Positioning the Fresh Expressions (FE) Movement

The theory of John Williams (2011) will be used to position the FE movement within the broader ecclesiastical movements of the same era. Williams (2011: 109-110) identifies six approaches to dealing with what he calls the 'popular postmodernity diagnosis'. The popular postmodernity diagnosis is the socio-cultural evaluation of society that identifies it as postmodern. For Williams, postmodern society is characterised by secularisation, decentralization, deconstruction into fluid networks, individualization, and the rejection of oppressive metanarratives and institutions (Williams, 2011: 110). These six approaches have different relationships with, and different missiological strategies in approaching, the so-called popular postmodernity. The first approach resists the analysis of society as postmodern, the second and third approaches represent a tentative adoption of the analysis, and the last three approaches

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131 http://communitas.co.za/

embrace postmodern analysis, albeit with different strategies for dealing with a postmodern society.

The first approach identified by Williams, he calls 'retrieving tradition' (Williams, 2011: 111). This approach resists the analysis of society as postmodern and propagates a church-in-the-community strategy akin to the parish church model. This approach is found in the work of Platten (2007), Avis (2005), Davison and Milbank (2010) and some aspects in of the work of Percy (2001).

The second approach he calls the 'local ministry' (Williams, 2011: 111) approach, and it focuses on regeneration of the local church life by mobilizing and maximizing the gifts of the whole church, and by fostering patterns of collaborative ministry. This approach is more than 25 years old and is open to some aspects of the postmodern epistemology by resisting institutional hierarchies, as well as to encouraging greater diversity on congregational level. For more on this approach, see the work of Bowden and West (2000), Greenwood (2002) and Bowden (2003).

The next two approaches are closely related. Both developed from the work done by the Church of England that resulted in the Mission-shaped Church report (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004). The first approach he calls simply the 'mission-shaped church approach'. This approach was strongly influenced by a postmodern analysis of the context in the initial theoretical sections. Williams (2011: 111) is, however, of the opinion that in the practical implications of this analysis the report suggested a mission agenda for the whole of the church rather than developing an alternative to the current ecclesiology. Williams' position could be challenged in light of the fact that the Mission Shaped Church Report does deal with planting churches among the de-churched and un-churched (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 105-120). Better examples of this approach are the work of Bayes and Sledge (2006), Croft (2008), Tomlin (2004) and Nazir-Ali (2001).

The fourth approach is an extension of the mission-shaped church approach. The report developed into the fresh expressions movement and the Fresh Expression organization. The Fresh Expressions approach focuses on new, innovative patterns of church life alongside the traditional expressions of church. The concept of pioneer ministers that are trained to plant new ministries is one of the important developments within this approach, which is also found in the work of Nelstrop and Percy (2008), Croft and Mobsby (2009), and Cray (2012).

The fifth approach, which Williams (2011: 111-112) calls the 'post-Christendom approach', argues for a church that looks like and embodies the values of the early church. This approach sees the church as a small minority that lives an alternative lifestyle with countercultural values. Exponents of this approach are Murray (2004) and Bartley (2006).

The last approach identified by Williams (2011: 112) is the Emergent Churches. This approach identifies fully with a postmodern epistemology, and is very sceptical about traditional ecclesiology. They use worship and liturgy to relate to postmodern people's need for spiritual experiences. Gibbs and Bolger (2006) did a comprehensive study of these churches. Examples of this approach are also found in the work of Riddell (1998) and Rollins (2006). Nell and Grobler (2014: 764-765) group the FE movement. They then assign characteristics to this group, such as starting without central planning and exhibiting anti-institutional sentiments. These characteristics might belong to the Emerging Church movement, but not necessarily to the FE movement. The FE is started as a result of work done by a prominent institutionalised church, and is supported by the church as an institution. This is in fact a prominent difference between the FE and the Emerging Church: the Emerging Church started as a reaction to the shortcomings of the institutional church, whereas the FE started because a mainline church understood the importance of the mixed economy of church. Central planning was and is still important to the development of the FE movement, and there remains a close link between the institutional church and the FE churches.

Williams' analysis is not perfect, but helps to position mission-shaped ministry and the fresh expressions movement within the broad spectrum of ecclesiastical movements of the time. The next discussion will focus on approaches three and four in discerning the lessons learned from the Mission Shaped Ministry Report and the fresh expressions movement for a missional ecclesiology for the DRC.

5.2 History of the Fresh Expressions Movement[132]

The term 'fresh expressions' is derived from the Preface to the Declaration of Assent of the Church of England, which states:

> The Church of England is part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church worshipping the one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It professes the faith uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds, **which faith the Church is called upon to proclaim afresh in each generation** (Church of England, 2013).[133]

The aim of fresh expressions of church is defined as follows:

- A fresh expression is a form of church for our changing culture, established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church;
- It will come into being through principles of listening, service, incarnational mission and making disciples;
- It will have the potential to become a mature expression of church shaped by the gospel and the enduring marks of the church and for its cultural context. (Fresh Expressions, 2013e)

This definition highlights four characteristics of successful fresh expressions of church, namely:

- They are missional – they aim to reach those outside the church with the gospel through the power of the Spirit.

- They are contextual – they immerge themselves in the culture they aim to reach.

- They are formational/educational – they place high emphasis on making disciples.

- They are ecclesiastical – they strive to be 'fully church' for the people they reach within their context (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 196; Fresh Expressions, 2013e: n.p.).

Moynagh (2012: loc. 100-185) sees fresh expressions of church as one stream of a bigger movement towards forming new contextual churches in Britain that aim to serve people outside the church. He identifies four streams that contribute to the movement:

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132 For a synopsis of the history of church planting in Britain, see Moynagh (2012).
133 Emphasis by the author.

The Church planting movement

Church planting can be traced back to the Industrial Revolution, but the movement had new impetus during the seventies. The church growth missiology of the 1990's led to the formation of the DAWN (Disciple a Whole Nation) strategy, which further encouraged church planting. Although the church planting movement tried to move beyond a *come* to a *go* evangelism, it still saw the church in terms of a Sunday worship.

The Emerging Church conversation

The Emerging Church conversation was a diverse group of experiments in bringing the church to the Gen X and Gen Y cohorts. There was no centrally organized strategy, but rather a network of new expressions of church with a strong online presence. An extensive study by Gibbs and Bolger (Gibbs and Bolger, 2006: 43-45) identified the core practices of these emerging churches, namely: identifying with the life of Jesus, transforming secular space and living as a community. These three practices were further developed into six sub-practices, namely: welcoming the stranger, serving with generosity, participating as producers, creating as created beings, leading as a body, and merging ancient and contemporary spiritualties. In the United States, Emerging Churches developed outside the mainline denominations and were generally critical of these denominations. Moynagh (2012: loc.135) states that emerging churches were also suspicious of fresh expressions of church because they emerged from within mainline congregations.

Fresh expressions of church

This stream is discussed at length in the rest of this chapter.

Communities in mission

Communities in mission describe groups that do not fit in with the other three groups. These groups sought 'to combine a rich life in community with mission'. They placed less emphasis on having a radical theology than on being a radical church (Moynagh, 2012: loc.169). This stream included the simple church (small

home churches with minimal structure and strong relational bonds), the organic church (similar, but with more emphasis on belonging to a larger movement), and mid-sized communities formed within well-established churches.

The official start of the fresh expressions moment was the 2004 report from a working group of the Church of England's Mission and Public Affairs Council called 'Mission-shaped Church: church planting and fresh expressions of church in a changing context'[134], which was published under the same title (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004). This was the culmination of work that started for a report on 'unauthorized plants'[135] (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: xi) in the Anglican Church, which was published under the name: 'Breaking new ground: church planting in the Church of England' (Church of England, 1994). The report opened the door for church planting as a valid missional methodology in the Anglican Church. This report was however, 'permission-giving, not future-looking' (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 19) and further study was needed.

5.3 A fresh vision for a new context

The context of the Anglican Church has changed significantly between the 1970s and the early 2000s. The Mission-shaped Church report of 2004 reflects on the changes in the context of the church in this period. In the following discussion, the focus will be on statistical changes during the period 1970-2004, because that was the context that influenced the report and gave momentum to the fresh expressions movement. More recent statistics (2004 and onwards) will be given later.

The fresh expressions movement identified the following changes in the cultural, social, and spiritual environment during the period (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 1-4):

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134 From here on, the 'Mission-shaped Church: church planting and fresh expressions of church in a changing context' report will just be called the Mission-shaped Church report.

135 The Anglican Church was faced with a situation where new Anglican Churches were planted within the boundaries of existing Anglican Churches. This created a lot of tension between the historic churches and the new plants. In 1991 a working committee was formed to study the situation. The report of this committee was called 'Breaking new ground: church planting in the Church of England' (Church of England, 1994).

Housing changes

The number of individual homes was growing much faster than the population. Home ownership rose by 38% between 1981 and 2002. Families were paying more for their homes and spent more time doing repairs, especially on Sundays.

Employment changes

Men and women worked for longer hours. 25% of employed men and 11% of employed women worked more than 50 hours a week. Furthermore, the proportion of single women with children under 5 years who had to work full-time rose from 21% in 1992 to 34% in 2002. The result of this was a decrease in free time, and Sundays were seen as family time.

Mobility

British people became more mobile during this period. The total number of miles travelled in Britain rose from 313 billion to 624 billion miles per year. In 1971 there were 12 million cars on the road; by 2001 there were 26.5 million. Families travelled more, especially on weekends. People were also willing to travel to churches further afield at the expense of the local parish church. An increase in professional employment meant that people moved with new employment – in many cases further away from their families and traditional social cohesion.

Divorce and changes in family life

The divorce rate more than doubled during this period (from 62,857 divorces in 1970 to 154,628 in 2001). This statistic is compounded by the fact that fewer people got married as cohabitation increased (in 1971, 24% of men were single; in 2001, 34%). More than 1 in 10 children lived in stepfamilies in the early 2000s. These changes in family life led to less stability within communities over weekends. The fact that children from divorced families visited their fathers on weekends made church attendance problematic.

Free time and television

Sport and leisure activities became more popular. Many of these activities took place on Sunday mornings. Watching television took up a large part of leisure time; by 2000, adults watched an average of 3 hours of television per day.

Considering all the above factors, the report (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004) concluded that:

- British society is becoming more fragmented. At the same time, people are connecting, but in different ways.
- Society is becoming less community- and more network-based. The experience of community was becoming less dependent on locality or geography.
- The work, hobby, sport, etc. networks that people are part of, were starting to play a bigger role in their social cohesion than the community they live in or the local church. The report quotes Ulrich Beck (2000: 74): '[t]o live in one place no longer means to live together and living together no longer means living in the same place'. Sundays became more focused on family and leisure activities, and less on the local and church communities.
- Information flowed more along networks and less within a community or geographical setting.
- The gap between the socially mobile (educated, professional) and those that were less mobile (unemployed, poor, manual labourers and elderly) was becoming more pronounced. The report (2004: 6) stated that '[m]obility has become a major marker of inclusion or exclusion.'

Other changes in the context of the church that have been identified by more recent sources are:

Decline in church membership and low church attendance numbers

In the 2011 census, 59.3% of British people identified themselves as Christian, but only 15% attended church at least once a month (Office of National Statistics, 2011; Ashworth and Farthing, 2007: 6).

The proportion of the British population that are church members has decreased from 34% in 1900 to a projected percentage of less than 15% in 2010 (Figure 8) (Brierley, 2011: n.p.). Research done by the Tearfund in 2007 indicated that 66% of adults had no connection to a church, and only 15% attended church once a month or more (Ashworth, Matters and Farthing, 2007: 6). The
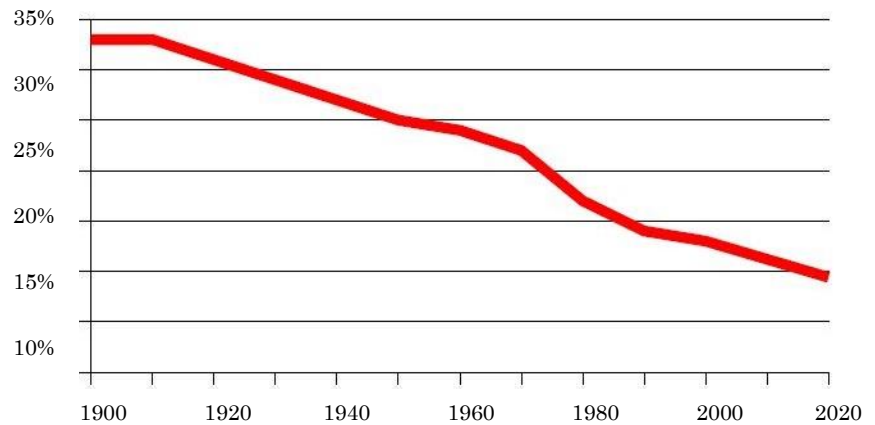
Figure 5: Percentage of the British population who are church members 1900-2020

reasons those leaving the church gave are especially important in order to understand this trend. Research by Francis and Richter in 2007 (in Moynagh, 2012: loc. 1803) reported that 50% of those leaving the church:

- found it hard to believe,
- did not feel part of the church,
- experienced hypocrisy from other churchgoers, or
- felt that the church failed to connect with the rest of their lives.

For two out of five people, participation in church activities became a chore which they found boring, and they were not interested in the activities these churches offered. Of those leaving their churches, 75% believed that church attendance was not a prerequisite for Christians.

The church is getting older

Another part of this reality is that the median age of the existing members is increasing year by year. In 1998, 31% of churchgoers were over 60; by 2010 it was 41%. The percentage of those younger than 45 was 50% in 2000 and will decrease to 27% by 2050 (Ashworth,
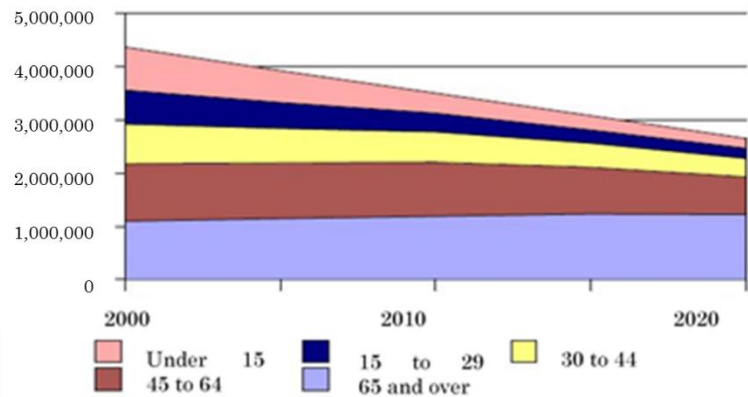
Figure 6: Age of British churchgoers 200-2020

Matters and Farthing, 2007: 1,4; Brierley, 2011: n.p.). The proportion of 16- to 34-year-olds that belong to other religions (11%) is higher than the national average (6%) for all age cohorts (Ashworth and Farthing, 2007: 4). Figure 9 indicates the decline in the under-44-years age cohort attending church services, compared with the over-44-years age cohort, which stayed the same. It is clear that the traditional expressions of church are reaching an ever-smaller number of younger people.

More women affiliate themselves with the Christian faith than men

Compared with men, a higher percentage of women affiliate themselves with the Christian faith. Of those sampled in the Tearfund study (Ashworth, Matters and Farthing, 2007: 4), 60% of the women were Christian, compared to 47% of men.

Great diversity in religious affiliation throughout Britain

There is great diversity in religious affiliation in the United Kingdom. In London, 20% of adults belong to a faith other than Christianity and only 49% of adults are Christian. In Northern Ireland, on the other hand, 81% of adults are Christian and only 0.4% belong to other religions (Ashworth, Matters and Farthing, 2007: 5). It is clear that there was a growing unease with the Church in Britain during this period.

5.3.1 'The map no longer describes the territory'

'The map is not the territory[136] denotes a principle first used by the Polish-American scientist Alfred Korzybski in 1933 (Korzybski, 2000: 248) to describe the phenomenon that a description of an object is not equal to the object itself. For example: a map of London made in the 1900 does not accurately describe the current road system in London in 2013.

In the case of the Anglican Church, the 'map' (ecclesiology and missiology) they created in the Christendom era was dominated by the parish church system. Every square mile of Britain was covered by a local parish church whose responsibility it was to minister to those living within the boundaries of that parish. Those parishioners were predominantly Christian and attended the parish church.

It is clear from the above-mentioned statistics that the 'territory' (context) had changed. The map''' was no longer accurately describing the 'territory'. In the words of the Mission-shaped Church report (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 12), A new "map" was needed:

> A geographical approach alone is not sufficient. Parish, by itself, is no longer adequate as the Church of England's missionary strategy. 'One size fits all' will not do. A mutual partnership of parochial and network churches, using traditional and fresh approaches, and sharing ministry in larger areas is necessary.

5.4 Mission-Shaped Church: church planting and fresh expressions of church in a changing context

The Mission-shaped Church report (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004) was trying to give some direction to a church with an old 'map', lost in a new 'territory'. It is important to understand that the report did not suggest novel ideas about church but was rather describing experiments by various churches. Bishop Cray (2011: n.p.) writes:

> This is primarily a report on what the Church of England is already doing in many dioceses, rather than a recommendation that it begins something novel. There is good news to tell, and our recommendations come from a review of actual practice.

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136 For more on this principle, see Korzybski (2000).

The purpose of the report was 'to help dioceses, deaneries, and parishes discern appropriate forms of mission for their varying contexts' (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: xii). The report is structured along the following lines:

- The social, cultural and spiritual context of the Church of England's mission is examined. This section also deals with the social trends from the 1970s to the early 2000s, with special emphasis on consumer culture and post-Christendom.

- The history of church planting in England, with special emphasis on the developments and lessons learned since the publication of 'Breaking new ground' (Church of England, 1994). Whereas 'Breaking new ground' tried to answer the ecclesiological question of *how* to develop new churches, the Mission-shaped Church report asks the Christological and missiological questions of *why* new churches need to develop.

- Chapter 3 of the report asks 'What is church planting and why does it matter?' (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 29). Church planting is then defined, and emphasis is placed on the fact that church planting must be seen as a process. It is, however, important that Fresh Expressions not only focus on new church plants, but also on 'existing churches that are seeking to renew or redirect what they already have' (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 34). Church planting and church renewal are seen as part of the calling of the Anglican Church in a context that is becoming ever more secularised.

- The next chapter deals with different expressions of church: alternative worship communities, Base Ecclesial Communities[137], the café church, the cell church, churches arising out of community initiatives, multiple or midweek congregations, network-focused churches, school-based congregations, the seeker church, traditional church plants, monastic communities and youth congregations. The list is not exhaustive, but gives an idea of some forms of fresh expressions of church. Each of these expressions is briefly discussed and examples are given. The most

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137 Base Ecclesial Communities (BECs) are small groups of Christians that gather with the intention of social and community transformation. They were popular in Roman Catholic circles in Latin America in the 1950s and were inspired by the liberation theology (Haight, 2005, p. 416). Although BECs were cited in the 2004 report, they remain very rare in Britain (Goodhew, Roberts and Volland, 2012: 64).

important part of this chapter is the last two pages, which deal with the five values of missionary churches. These values introduce the theology behind Fresh Expressions and will be discussed later in more detail.

- The fifth chapter deals with the theology of fresh expressions of church. The following themes are dealt with (the theology will be discussed in further detail later):

  - o A Trinitarian perspective on missiology
  - o Salvation history
  - o Incarnation
  - o Missional ecclesiology

- The sixth chapter is a very practical chapter, dealing with the methodologies of church planting or church renewal. The point of departure is discerning the need of the community and the methodology that will best suit that need. The relationship between fresh expressions of church and the existing church is discussed. The discussion is structured according to the following questions (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 115):

  - o Who is the mission for? (mission goal questions)
  - o Who is the mission by? (mission resource questions)
  - o Who is the mission with? (mission partner questions)

The need for the fresh expression of church to grow into mature churches is explained through the use of Henry Venn's 'three self' formula[138] – namely, that a mature church is self-supporting, self-governing and self-extending.

- The last chapter deals with the role and responsibility of the organizational structure of the Anglican Church in Britain in nurturing and enabling the fresh expressions movement. A new structure is proposed to propagate and support fresh expressions of church in Britain. The relationship between fresh expressions and the parochial system is also dealt with.

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138 For more on the "three self" formula, see Bosch, 1993b: 331-332.

The challenge that the Church of England and the Methodists of Great Britain faced was that, as mainline churches, they were perfectly adapted to do what they had always done, i.e. to keep the parochial system stable (Van Gelder, 2007: 18). Within the respective church systems, there were forces that would have wanted to keep the status quo. Their church structures were developed to facilitate a specific ecclesiology (that was failing), and the fear was that these structures (the old systems) would not be able to facilitate the changes that were needed – changes that they were not adapted to deal with.

Under the leadership of Archbishop Rowan Williams, Bishop Graham Cray and others, this threat was kept in check. The report wanted to open up the respective church systems to change by permitting and facilitating change (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 1863). As the report was endorsed by the Church of England's Synod and the British Methodist Conference, it opened up institutional blockages to change.

5.5 The Theology underlying the Fresh Expressions Movement

The Mission-shaped Church (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 81) states that the foundation of the report is in the first instance Scripture and the Anglican Church's creedal basis[139]. Build on that foundation, the Anglican missiology was guided by the 'five marks of mission' first tabled at the 1984 meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) held in Badagry, Nigeria, and later confirmed by the Anglican Communion at the Lambeth Conference in 1988 (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 81; Anglican Communion, 2013c). The five marks are as follows[140]:

1. to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom;
2. to teach, baptise and nurture new believers;

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[139] The Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed (Anglican Communion, 2013). For details on the doctrinal basis of the Anglican Church, see 'The canons of the Church of England' (General Synod of the Church of England, 2008).

[140] The marks are also included in the Anglican Covenant that was, at the time of writing this thesis, in the final stages or ratification by the provinces of the Anglican Communion (Anglican Communion, 2013).

3. to respond to human need by loving service ;

4. to seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation[141];

5. to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

In translating the orthodox faith and the tradition of the Anglican church into relevant fresh expression of church, they held onto the tension between the two principles of mission defined by Andrew F. Walls (2006) in his work *The missionary movement in Christian history* (Harrold, 2010: 4-5). Walls (2006: 6-9) describes the success of the church in the tension that the church held between the 'indigenizing' and 'pilgrim' principles.

5.5.1 The 'Indigenizing' Principle

The 'indigenizing' principle describes how God reaches out to his children where they are, irrespective of their cultural conditioning and history. God accepts humans for who they are through the grace found in Jesus Christ. Through the ages, the gospel has managed to come home in every context and culture. God resolved the tension that existed between wanting to be a Christian and at the same time being part of the socio-cultural context. The 'indigenizing' principle is rooted in Scripture, as can be seen in the way the gospel was indigenized into the Jewish context of Jerusalem, as well as into the gentile context of Antioch, and is still being indigenised today in pubs in Britain and under trees in Africa.

5.5.2 The 'Pilgrim' Principle

The 'indigenizing' principle is kept in check by an opposing force: the 'pilgrim' principle. God not only accepts humans for who they are and where they are, but he also wants to transform them into who he wants them to be. The gospel reminds the Christian that he/she has now become a pilgrim whose discipleship of Christ will put them out of step with their society. There has never been and will never be a culture that is able to integrate the gospel without some

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141 Mark 4 was revised in late 2012 to reflect 'mission in peace, conflict transformation, and reconciliation' (Anglican Communion, 2013). The previous version read 'to challenge injustice and oppression'.

degree of tension. The faithful are on a pilgrimage that transforms their minds and hearts to reflect the heart and mind of God.

The 'pilgrim' principle is firmly rooted in Scripture. Joubert (2012) emphasizes this when he says that if a missional spirituality is not a spirituality of people 'on the road', it is not a biblical spirituality. He roots this opinion in the importance of the ὁδὸς (road) in the book of Luke. The believer becomes part of a new family and culture - the body of Christ. They become part of a family that is a continuation of the 'tribe' of the faithful and has been since Abraham. The church through the ages shares a common ethos and hope that are found in the Christian scriptures. Christian practices, for instance breaking bread, drinking wine and reciting the Lord's Prayer, have a strong universalizing character.

True to these two principles, the Mission-shaped Church report built on the "five marks of mission" and identified five values of a missional church:

1. a missionary church is focused on God the Trinity;
2. a missionary church is incarnational;
3. a missionary church is transformational;
4. a missionary church makes disciples;
5. a missionary church is relational.

These five values of the missional church are central to the success of the fresh expressions movement. The movement functions best where it is able to function within the tensions of the diversity of expressions (café church, school-based congregations, seeker church, etc.) and the 'constants' of the five values (Harrold, 2010: 5).

5.5.3 Mixed economy of church

The term 'mixed economy of church' was first introduced by Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, to describe what the church might look like if it followed the fresh expressions path (Mission and Public Affairs Council, 2010). Williams realized that the answer to the problems of the church would not be one-dimensional. He used his personal experience of diverse and imaginative church plants while he was Bishop of Monmouth to enrich the fresh expressions story with the need for diversity and novelty (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 1845).

The term 'fresh expressions' was used against the background of the Church of England's ecclesiology, describing church in terms of a parochial system that covers the whole of the United Kingdom. The concept of mixed economy describes a new church system 'in which new forms of church and inherited church (churches with inherited structures and patterns of life) exist alongside each other in relationships of mutual support' (Moynagh, 2012: 333).

The traditional Anglican mission strategy was to incarnate the gospel through local parishes that had both a geographical and a local character. This ecclesiology was, however, no longer able to fulfil the church's missiological mandate due to various reasons discussed earlier – housing, employment, mobility, etc. (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: xi).

The implication of the fresh expressions strategy was an ecclesiology that would embody the gospel differently. This fresh expressions ecclesiology would see traditional parishes functioning parallel to network churches, crossing the boundaries of parishes, deaneries and even political boundaries (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: xi). The Mission-shaped Church report (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 8) states it eloquently:

> Only a mixed economy of neighbourhood and network, collaborating together over a wider area (perhaps a deanery), can both adequately fulfil the incarnational principle and demonstrate the universality of Christ's lordship in all expressions of society.

The strength of the mixed economy of church lies in the ability of the traditional parish church and the newer network churches to work in partnership to bring the timeless 'old' gospel into a new context. Support for a mixed economy of church can be found in the 'indigenizing' and 'pilgrim' principles discussed earlier. God starts the journey with people emotionally, socio-economically, spiritually and spatially. This is the beginning of a journey where, as pilgrims, they journey deeper into the mystery and implications of a relationship with God.

The mixed economy is also theologically grounded. Michael Moynagh (2012: loc. 11561-11717) identifies five theological motivations for the mixed economy. Firstly, from a Trinitarian perspective, the church should reflect the **otherness and the unity found in the Trinity** (Zizioulas, 2006: 5). The only way to resolve the tension between this otherness and unity is through relationships. Zizioulas (2006: 5) says that the otherness of the Father, Son and Spirit are inconceivable apart from their reciprocal relationships. The church should reflect this otherness in unity. The image of the Trinity becomes more than just something the church

copies – it becomes a life in which the church participates, i.e. a part of God's overflowing love in the world that presents itself as diversity in unity.

Secondly, the mixed economy can also be **seen in creation** (Fresh Expressions, 2013f: n.p.). God created diversity in culture, language, and history, but also in universal, social, emotional, spiritual, and existential needs. Despite the diversity in culture, there is only one human race. In Christ, it became possible for different people to coexist in unity (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 11616). The church needs to reflect this diversity and unity that is fundamental to creation. Moynagh (2012: loc. 11598) says that creation echoes the Trinity. The mixed economy can also be seen in God's relationship with creation – God gave creation freedom of will, while still staying intimately involved.

The third rationale comes from the **New Testament**. In the New Testament, there are many examples of the creative tension between the centre (the mainline, existing church) and the periphery (church plants, pioneer work of the apostles). The tension is never resolved in favour of the one or the other, but only to the benefit of the Kingdom and church as a whole. There is also feedback between the centre and the periphery, for example when Peter and Paul return to Jerusalem (Acts 15.5–18) to dialogue with the leaders there about the new challenges of the spreading gospel. These feedback circles are mutually enriching to the whole system.

The fourth is a **sacramental perspective**. Moynagh (2012: loc. 11675-11691) says that the catholicity and the unity of the church are signs to the whole of creation that all cultures are united in Christ. This Catholicity and unity are enacted in the sacraments of the church. People in their uniqueness, with unique names, are baptized into the one body of Christ, in the name of the one God. When they celebrate Holy Communion, they celebrate the same unity in diversity; a group of diverse people eat from the same bread and drink from the same cup (sacramentally).

The last perspective, Moynagh (2012: loc. 11698-11714) calls a **prophetic perspective**. The prophetic perspective is the notion that all believers are part of the 'theodrama' that is God's unfolding plan for the world. Because we are all part of this drama, no person or group can step outside the drama to have an objective view. We need each perspective on God's plan to have the full picture. The church must be especially open to those new to the church, and those

on the periphery of the church, to hear their voices. All these different voices create conflict, but conflict is part of the discerning process.

Validation for the mixed economy of church was also found in the **management sciences and systems theory**. The mixed economy principle resonates well with the research done by Margaret Wheatley and Deborah Frieze at the Berkana Institute[142]. They developed a model that describes changes in living systems (Wheatley, 2002). All systems go through seasons of conception, birth, growth, decline

Figure 7: The two loops model of change A (Frieze, n.d.)

and death (See Figure 10). The two loops model of change describes how a new system can develop while an old system is in decline, as well as the interaction between the pioneers trying to create a new system and 'old guards' trying to preserve the existing.

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142 http://www.berkana.org/

Wheatley and Frieze (Frieze, n.d.) noticed that at the height of an established system, the seeds of a new system are sown by pioneers. These seeds are easily inhibited by the old system, because of the challenges they present the old system with. Stable systems are inclined to dampen innovation (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 1845). The hope for change in the broader system, however, lies in these new seeds. The challenge for the leaders of the old system who still want to play a transformational role, is to nurture these pioneers and let them develop a new system. These transformational leaders (i.e. old-system leaders with new-system understanding) need to facilitate a protected and creative environment in which these pioneer leaders are protected from the old system and given the freedom to explore and take risks.

Old-system leaders who act as change agents must (see Figure 11):

1. identify pioneers in the old system,
2. connect these pioneers,
3. nurture these pioneers and provide them with resources from the old system, and
4. illuminate the ideas of these pioneers by increasing exposure to the old-system followers and telling the success stories (amplification).
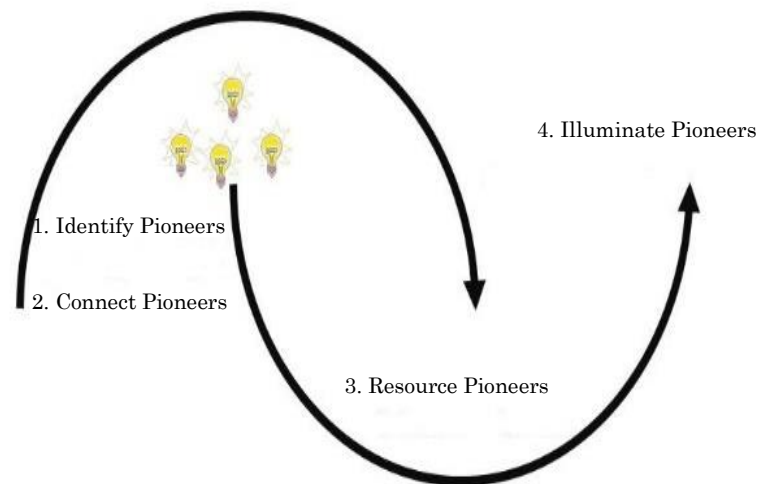
Figure 8: The two loops model of change B (Frieze, n.d.)

The old system will only change when it becomes unstable (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 1859). This happens when these novel ideas are amplified. Amplification happens through positive feedback in the system (Lichtenstein and Plowman, 2009: 620).

Excursion

In the case of the Fresh Expressions movements, their novel ideas and successes where fed back into the system through storytelling, printed media (*Encounters*

on the Edge), the use of video clips and their website[143] (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 1845-1863). The Church Army's Sheffield Centre [144] has played a pivotal role in amplifying the Fresh Expressions successes through the resources on their website. These include:

- a database of fresh expressions of church;

- publications, online and in print;

- a quarterly journal called *Encounters*, which shares research done by the centre on fresh expressions, focusing on emerging trends, identifying good practice and offering strategic thinking from church planters;

- 'Letters from home', which shares the experiences of church planters;

- twice-yearly bulletins with research on missional topics;

- transcripts, audio and video files of talks on fresh expressions;

- SCOLER, an academic database with research papers on missional topics (among others);

- various links to fresh expressions resources;

- further resources on the Mission-shaped Church report.

Although the old system is becoming increasingly impotent, there are still people who are served by the old system. It is therefore necessary to 'hospice' the old system. A good hospice worker will give comfort to the old system, as well as prepare it for the transition into a new system. Skilled transformational leaders will have to play these dual roles, hospicing the old and at the same time giving pioneers the freedom to explore and prepare for the new system. The transition to the new system is, however, not a blind leap of faith into the future. The values of the old system and the lessons learned are carried forward into the new system.

Moynagh (2012: loc. 1989) argues that each ecclesiastical system has an attractor that holds it together. An attractor is a way of organizing the system that gains support over time. The amplification of new behaviour, ways of organizing the system or novel practices create a new attractor. The tension between this new attractor and the old attractor creates instability in

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143 See http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/stories
144 See http://www.churcharmy.org.uk/sheffieldcentre/

the system. Individuals within the system could experience this instability as uncertainty about the future. This tension that exists between the old and new attractor can be resolved in three possible ways:

- the old attractor could still dominate,
- the new attractor could gain ascendancy,
- or the system could slide into chaos (Lichtenstein and Plowman, 2009: 620).

If the new attractor wins, the system goes through a process called 'self-organization' (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 1984). As the new attractor becomes stronger, a new way of organizing the system emerges. Despite the uncertainty that follows, this is a very creative phase where the church experiment with new ways of being. If, however, this phase continues unabated, the system could spin out of control (Lichtenstein and Plowman, 2009: 620). This is why there needs to be some dampening of the feedback when the new attractor has gained ascendancy. With less amplification, the system will reach a more stable condition. The stability now lies within in a new system that is able to deal with the new challenges and context.

As the old system declines, it ends up in a state of 'dis-equilibrium' (Lichtenstein and Plowman, 2009: 620), a state that reflects a major disruption in the system. In the case of the church, this disruption could be created by the decline in church attendance, a lack of resources, a lack of trust and a lack of impact. Despite the decline, the old system still holds an attraction for people familiar with the old ways of doing. When the decline becomes the dominant narrative in a church, innovative thinking becomes very difficult. Dealing with the effects of the decline is often higher on the agenda of the struggling church than dreams of starting a new ministry or a fresh expressions church (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 2006). Churches need to deal with this inertia created by the narrative of decline. Research by Moynagh (2012: loc. 2022-2108) suggests five ways in which a church that is caught up in the narrative of decline could discover new attractors. These are:

- Mixed economy of church – experimenting with new ways of being a church, without neglecting the tradition model of church.
- Corridors – semi-autonomous corridors that are created within traditional church structures. Corridors like the Church of England's BMOs (Bishops' Mission Orders) create opportunities for local churches to create networks of new churches that cross

traditional church boundaries. These corridors help church planters to start new communities in places where it is difficult to find an existing congregation to share the vision.

- Regional and local cooperation – groups of churches can work together in forming new communities and planting fresh expressions.

- 'Temples', 'Synagogues' and 'Tents' – a growing number of faith communities are being formed in an everyday setting. Churches at leisure centres, in the workplace, or among people who share specific interest like fishing or skateboarding, are being formed. Some of these groups are closely affiliated with an existing church, and others are more loosely connected. These smaller communities are not in opposition to the established churches, but function in a symbiosis with each other. This church configuration is described in terms of 'Temples, 'Synagogues', and 'Tents'. Temples are when people connect with the broader church at conferences, on websites or during celebrations. Synagogues are the local churches that serve a specific community – where Christians get together around the Scripture and Christian tradition. The Tents are the church in everyday life, where the small faith communities focus on practical living, discipleship and serving each other and the community.

5.5.4 Denominational Support for the Fresh Expression Process

A great deal of the success of the fresh expressions movement can be attributed to the official support the movement had from the very beginning. The movement was not the vision of only a few individuals or committees but gained the support and official endorsement of whole denominations (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 1895).

In the Church of England, the support of prominent leaders like Archbishop Rowan Williams and Bishop Graham Cray lent ecclesiastical and theological weight to the movement (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 1850). The Mission-shaped Church report was initiated and written by a committee of the Archbishops' Council called 'The Church of England's Mission and Public Affairs Council' (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: ix; The Church of England, 2013: n.p.). The 2004 General Synod of the Church of England recommended the report to the whole of the church (Sentamu, 2013: n.p.).

The Methodist Church of Britain was an important partner in Fresh Expressions from early on. In 2004, the Methodist Council identified 'fresh ways of being church' as one of its five priorities. A Fresh Ways Working Group was formed to advance the fresh expressions of church. Since then, Fresh Expressions have gained the support of successive presidents of the Methodist council (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 1906). Recently, the 'Venture FX' program was created by the Methodist church. The program aims to identify pioneers to form missional communities among under-40s who have no connection with a church (The Methodist Church in Britain, 2012: n.p.). Thus far, 13 such communities have been formed[145].

The Fresh Expressions organization was started by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Methodist Council, with the aim of supporting the fresh expressions movement (Fresh Expressions, 2012a: n.p.). Since then, the organisation has formed formal partnerships with:

- 24/7 Prayer;
- Anglican Church Planting Initiatives;
- the Church of Scotland;
- the Church Mission Society;
- the Congregational Federation;
- CWM Europe (the Council for World Mission: European region);
- the Ground Level Network;
- the Salvation Army; and
- the United Reformed Church (Fresh Expressions, 2013d: n.p.).

An import barrier to church planting was removed in 2007 with the creation of a new legal device called the Bishop's Mission Order (BMO). A BMO could be issued by a bishop to allow a fresh expression to be created across parish, deanery or diocesan boundaries (Fresh Expressions, 2013a: n.p.). This was an important step, especially if seen against the background of the strong parochial system that characterized the Church of England.

In 2009, Graham Cray was appointed as the first Archbishop's Missioner and Leader of the Fresh Expressions team (Fresh Expressions, 2013b: n.p.). He was succeeded by Canon Phil

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145 See http://www.methodist.org.uk/mission/venture-fx for FX communities.

Potter in April 2014 (Fresh Expressions, 2013: n.p.). This position leads a 21-member Fresh Expressions team consisting of members from the different partners in the Fresh Expression organization (Fresh Expressions, 2013c: n.p.). The aim of the Fresh Expressions team is to:

> encourage new forms of church for those who are not already members of any church, we also want to consolidate all that has been achieved in terms of major projects and policy changes at national level.
>
> [Their] work revolves around four aims:
>
> - renewing vision;
> - gathering news;
> - supporting growth;
> - and developing training (Fresh Expressions, 2012a).

Much of the success of the fresh expressions movement can be attributed to the official sanctioning by the various churches that form part of the movement. These churches not only supported the movement institutionally but removed institutional barriers to fresh expressions of church. The vision and theological foundations set down by prominent church leaders and theologians were also critical. What could have been just an interesting project became and international movement through the official support of the partner churches.

5.5.5 Fresh Expressions Training

Early in the Mission-shaped Church report, training was identified as crucial to leadership development. The training of pioneering missionary leaders became one of the priorities for the Church of England (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 134). The report also concluded that fresh expressions of church and church planting should be part of the training curriculum for ordained ministers (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 24-25). It was also determined that the current training for ministers focused on middle-class English values that were foreign to many in the population that the church wanted to reach. New training modules needed to reflect the changes in British society; for example, modules on cross-cultural ministry became essential as part of theological education (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 108).

An important new development in Fresh Expressions training was the focus on lay leadership. It became important for the Church of England to recognise the contribution of lay leaders in planting and developing new ministries. These leaders had to be identified, trained and

empowered to lead to these ministries. Lay leadership became important because many of the new ministries developed from grassroots level, and were not planned or orchestrated by the institutional church. These lay leaders should be trained in their vocational setting rather than taking them away from their ministry to a university (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 134-135). The Archbishops' Council developed guidelines for selection and training of lay and ordained pioneer ministers. Various courses were developed, and training centres were accredited for the training these pioneer ministers (Fresh Expressions, n.d.; Fresh Expressions, 2013c: n.p.).

The flagship training in Fresh Expressions is the Mission-shaped Ministry course (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 1898). The aim of the course is defined as follows:

> Mission-shaped Ministry is a one-year, part-time course which takes people on a
> learning journey as part of a supportive community, training them for ministry in
> fresh expressions of church (Mission Shaped Ministry, 2015: n.p.).

The course has been presented 115 times and has been attended by 3 600 individuals in Britain alone (Mission Shaped Ministry, 2015: n.p.). It consists of 24 modules that are usually presented over a one-year period. There are currently 34 modules available to choose from[146] (Fresh Expressions UK, 2014: 22).

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[146] The available modules are divided into four categories:
Stream A - Preparation for planting a fresh expressions of church
A01 Introduction to the course*; A02 Mission context and the mixed economy*; A03. The mission of God*;
A04 Vision and call*; A05 Missional values; A06 Starting something new*; A07 Listening for mission*;
A08 What is church?*; A09 Gospel and culture*; A10 Reflecting back and sending out
Stream B - Christian formation in fresh expressions of church
B01 Team roles and behavior*; B02 Leadership matters; B03 Spirituality for mission*; B04 Discipleship*;
B05 Prayer for mission; B06 {module unavailable}; B07 Evangelism strategies - part one*; B08 Evangelism
strategies - part two; B09 Evangelism strategies – combined; B10 Personal evangelism
Stream C - Sustaining a fresh expression of church
C01 Worship and sacraments*; C02 Lessons from weaknesses; C03 Ongoing learning and support; C04
Small-group church; C05 Global:local; C06 Engaging with community; C07 Handling opposition, setbacks
and failure; C08 Strategic finance for mission; C09 Healthy relationships: quality community; C 10
Growing a fresh expression to maturity*
Stream D - Specialist units
D01, Children and all age; D02 Fresh expressions for you; D03, Fresh expressions and young adults; De
04, Rural fresh expressions.
Modules with a * are compulsory.

5.5.6 Church Planting

As Fresh Expressions developed, church planting became one of its prominent features. Williams (2011: 111) is of the opinion that the emphasis of the Mission-shaped Church report was more on the idea that the church should be missional in its core, and that the later development of Fresh Expressions began to emphasise the planting of new churches. His opinion may be challenged in light of the fact that the subheading of the Mission-shaped Church report was 'church planting and fresh expressions of church in a changing context' and the fact that the report stated clearly: 'We understand church planting to refer to the discipline of creating new communities of Christian faith as part of the mission of God to express God's Kingdom in every geographic and cultural context' (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: i;xii). In its third chapter, the report deals extensively with church planting as something that is central to the development of a mission-shaped church.

Regardless of how the role of church planting developed, what is certain is that church planting plays a prominent role in the missional strategy of Fresh Expressions of Church. Church planting should also be seen in the context of a mixed economy of church. It is within a mixed economy that there is room for new network-based expressions of church alongside the established parochial expressions of church. Because the context of the church has changed so much since the establishment of the parochial system, new forms of church are needed. The report emphasizes that new churches should be planted and not cloned, unique to a specific context and group (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: xii).

An important question in the dream of planting churches is whether or not it was allowed by the church polity given the fact that the whole of England as covered by parish churches. The 1994 report 'Breaking new ground' argued that the current structures and Canons of the Church of England are flexible enough to allow church plants across the boundaries of parishes, deaneries and dioceses (Church of England, 1994: v).

Much of the success of Fresh Expressions is due to its church planting strategy. A study called 'Church Growth Research' (Church Army's Research Unit, 2013), done among 10 of the 42 deaneries of the Church of England, found that the number of fresh expressions started per year was 19 in 2004, and had grown to 88 per year by 2010. In 2011, the number declined to 76 per year. By 2012, 518 fresh expressions churches were planted in the 10 deaneries, of which

477 are still alive (Church Army's Research Unit, 2013: 28). Moynagh (2012: loc. 2172) reports that by 2010, 941 fresh expressions churches had been planted in the Methodist Church of Britain; the Church of England had had at least 1000 by 2011. The success of these church plants among people from non-Christian backgrounds is remarkable: the religious backgrounds of the members of the new plants were made up of 25% Christian, 35% de-churched[147] and 40% non-churched (Church Army's Research Unit, 2013: 6).

The leadership among new church plants also shows interesting trends. 51.8% of the leaders in fresh expressions are female; this includes lay and ordained ministers. Men are more likely to be in paid, full-time positions (70.5%) and women in part-time, unpaid positions (71.2%) (Church Army's Research Unit, 2013: 63-64). There is strong evidence that the church planting strategy of Fresh Expressions is making a significant impact on the church in Britain.

5.6 Fresh Expressions of Church and the missional consensus: an evaluation

The theology of the fresh expressions movement will now be discussed in the framework of the missional consensus and the five markers of a missional theology presented in Chapter 4. The movement will also be evaluated in light of other perspectives on missional theology.

5.6.1 The Missio Dei

The Fresh Expressions movement has been criticised for having a narrow view of the *missio Dei* – a view that sees God working only through His Church (Walton, 2008: 42). Roger Walton (2008: 42-43) claims that the 'Mission-shaped Church' report sees mission as a one-dimensional movement of the church towards the world, making the church, not God, the agent in mission. Furthermore, the 'Mission-shaped Church' report's ecclesiology seems to have too high a view

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[147] 'De-churched' is defined as those individuals who attended church at some stage of their life, but do not anymore.
'Non-churched' is defined as individuals who have never attended church, apart from the occasional funeral or wedding.

of the church as the realised Kingdom of God. Walton (2008: 48) argues that the Church is not *the* body of Christ in the world but *a* body of Christ. If he is correct, the report misses the heart of the *missio Dei*, in that God is the active agent in his Mission to the world and the church is a partner in this movement. Because of the substantial focus on church planting, Fresh Expressions of church are vulnerable to criticism for having a narrow view of the *missio Dei* and having a church-shaped Kingdom view. The alarm that Walton sounds should be heeded in order to protect the church from becoming self-absorbed.

Yet the first theological theme identified by the 'Mission–shaped Church' report (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 20) as being present in examples of Fresh Expressions is 'The Church derives its self-understanding from the missio dei [sic], the ongoing mission of God's love to the world'. The *missio Dei* was thus clearly central to the development of Fresh Expressions, and also the point of departure of the report's discussion of the salvation history, for example:

- the Trinity is revealed in the *missio Dei* as relational in being and in perpetual movement of generosity – creating life and also redeeming life (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 85);
- it is not the church that has a mission in the world, but God has a Mission and that Mission has a Church. The Church joins God in His work in the world (Anglican-Methodist Working Party, 2012: 1178);
- the Anglican-Methodist Covenant states that: 'Mission is grounded in God: it is always God's mission. Its content and unsurpassable expression is Jesus Christ himself. God purposed in Christ to reconcile the world to himself and was incarnate in Christ to bring this about' (Colossians 1:20; 2 Corinthians 5:18), and that God is at work 'in all their social, economic, political and cultural relationships' (Methodist Church and the Church of England, 2001: 29-30);
- the fresh expression movement sees Christ as present in the world through the work of the Holy Spirit, as foundational to the Church" mission. The Church follows Christ and the Spirit in their work in the world. God's work in the world, however, is not restricted to the work of the Church (Anglican-Methodist Working Party, 2012: 2650);

- Roger Walton's assertion that the Church is not *the* body of Christ but *a* body of Christ has no biblical basis (Anglican-Methodist Working Party, 2012: 2660);[148]
- the focus of the *missio Dei* is the realisation of the Kingdom of God (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 86).

There are, however, statements by the Anglican-Methodist working party that leave them open to criticism, such as: '*missio Dei* is necessarily church-shaped' (Anglican-Methodist Working Party, 2012: 2636); 'that Fresh Expressions practitioners are fully aware of the need for fresh expressions to be orientated to the Church' (Anglican-Methodist Working Party, 2012: 2686); 'insofar as fresh expressions are concerned to proclaim the Gospel and incorporate people into the body of Christ they can be said to fulfil the mission of the Church' (Anglican-Methodist Working Party, 2012: 2683).

These statements are problematic in the context of broader Protestant thinking on the *missio Dei*. Guder (1998: 86) contends that the church needs to be orientated towards the Kingdom of God, not the church. The assertion that the *missio Dei* is church-shaped contradicts Jesus' intentional orientation towards the Kingdom of God (Ridderbos, 1962: xi; Moltmann, 2001: 103; Wright, 2007: 3777-89).

Any evaluation of the Fresh Expression perspective on the *missio Dei* therefore needs to be nuanced. On the one hand, there is strong evidence that the Fresh Expression movement see God as the primary agent in building his Kingdom, and that he works through the Church *and* outside the Church in reaching this goal. There is, however, also evidence that they see the *missio Dei* as Church-focused, working only through the church with the aim of growing the church – a perspective that is not popular within the broader missional conversation.

5.6.2 The Trinity

Fresh Expressions view worship of the Trinity as the heart of the missional church (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 888). Worship of God as 'Father, Son and Spirit is its chief inspiration and primary purpose' for the church (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 81). The Church shares in the

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148 See: Romans 12.3–8; 1 Corinthians 12.12–31; Ephesians 4.4–16; Colossians 1.18.

mission of the Holy Trinity (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 1176). The Trinity becomes the framework for the theological self-understanding of the church, and the revelation of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is 'the foundation of any authentically Christian understanding of the Church' (Anglican-Methodist Working Party, 2012: loc. 2171). Anglicans and Methodists both affirm the World Council of Churches' statement from 'The Nature and Mission of the Church' (World Council of Churches, 2005: paragraph 13) that

> the Church is not merely the sum of individual believers in communion with God, nor primarily the mutual communion of individual believers among themselves. It is their common partaking in the life of God (2 Pet. 1:4), who as Trinity is the source and focus of all communion. Thus the Church is both a divine and a human reality.

The Trinity is furthermore understood primarily as relational, not closed in on itself but in a constant flow of generosity towards the world (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 85). The 'Mission-shaped Church' report (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 84-85) describes this as 'Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who mutually indwell one another, exist in one another and for one another, in interdependent giving and receiving.' The fresh expressions movement uses the term *perichoresis* to describe this interrelationship between the Father, Son, and Spirit. (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 96).

This relational understanding of the Trinity is foundational to a church that wants to reflect the image of the Trinity. Being relational to its core became an important characteristic of fresh expressions of church. The Trinity furthermore exemplifies the relational unity, as well as the diversity within the unity of the Church (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 21,99). Within the Kingdom, there is room for unique movements of the Spirit, different spiritualities, as well as a variety of gifts of the Spirit, but always within the safety of the unity that the Spirit creates through love.

5.6.3 A Kingdom of God

The relationship between the Church and the Kingdom of God is one of the more controversial aspects of the 'Mission-shaped Church' report (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004). The report received criticism from two opposing views on the relationship between the Church and the Kingdom. John Hull (2006: 36) criticises the report for leaning towards a church-shaped Kingdom. The emphasis on church planting and the extension of the church makes the report

vulnerable to the view that God's Kingdom is built by advancing the church. Roger Walton (2008: 42-43) agrees with Hull, and sees the church-shaped Kingdom focus even in literature flowing from the 'Mission-shaped Church' report. In a comprehensive section on the mission-shaped church and the Kingdom of God, Moynagh (2012: loc. 2952) discusses the risk in the 'Mission-shaped Church' report of viewing the Church as the 'gateway to and vehicle of the Kingdom'. Moynagh (2012: loc. 2952) fears that the horizon of the Kingdom might be lost if too much emphasis is placed on God's work thought his Church. Although the report affirms a holistic mission, Moynagh (2012: loc. 2945) is of the opinion that not enough attention is given to the Kingdom. God's work outside the Church is lost in this perspective, and the positive influence of outside pressure groups that inspire the church to be, for example, more sensitive towards the environment, is lost.

Contrary to Hull, Walton and Moynagh's view, Andrew Davison and Allison Milbank (2010: 47) argue that the Church is the goal of salvation. They criticise the report for deviating from the 'centre of gravity of the mainstream churches and from the explicit teachings of the Church of England' (Davison and Milbank, 2010: 50). They also criticise the report for its distinction between Church and Kingdom, and argue that the 'Church is the principle form that the coming Kingdom takes' (Davison and Milbank, 2010: 51). It must be said that in the spectrum of criticisms of mission-shaped church, Davison and Milbank's work is an outlier[149].

Graham Cray (2012: loc. 359) reacts to these criticisms by affirming the two sides' respective fears: the fear that the Church will become so consumed by its own agenda and that it will lose sight of the Kingdom of God (Hull et al.), as well as Davison and Milbank's fear that the Church's role in God's salvation will be negated. Cray (2012: loc. 370) clarifies the Fresh Expressions' perspective on the relationship between the Kingdom of God and the Church by firstly emphasising the interconnectedness of the Kingdom and the Church. The Church is the body of Christ and the Kingdom is the 'active and redemptive sovereign rule' of Christ (Cray, 2012: loc. 391). Christ is the ruler of his Kingdom, and the Church chooses to submit to the rule of Christ. Both share in the present rule of Christ, as well as in the eschatological hope of experiencing the eternal rule of Christ. The Church is already the body of Christ, although

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149 See Graham Cray's reaction to the work of Davison and Milbank on the Fresh Expressions website. http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/news/cen/201011parish

imperfect and in the process of becoming like Christ. The Kingdom is present in creation, but the whole of creation is not yet part of the Kingdom. Cray (2012: loc. 380) also distinguishes between the Kingdom and the Church by affirming the 'Mission-shaped Church' report's position that the Kingdom is a divine activity and the church a human community (cf. The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004:86). The Church is a community of the Kingdom, but not the Kingdom itself. The Church functions within the tension between the 'already' and 'not yet' reality of the Kingdom. In line with Volf[150], this differentiation continues in the eschatology (Cray, 2012: loc. 386): 'Despite their relationship with one another, the glorified children of God and the glorified world of God (see Rom 8:21) are to be distinguished' (Volf, 1998: 267). The Kingdom needs to be understood in terms of God, acting as King, and restoring His Kingdom through Christ. The Kingdom of God is not merely replacing the old, fallen reality, but invading it. The Church's role in the Kingdom's invasion of the world is described in classical terms as being a sign, instrument, and foretaste:

> The church does more than merely point to a reality beyond itself. By virtue of its participation in the life of God, it is not only a sign and instrument, but also a genuine foretaste of God's Kingdom, called to show forth visibly, in the midst of history, God's final purposes for humankind. (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 95)

Cray (2012: loc. 445-565) uses the Fresh Expressions journey (figure 12) – a model that describes what the development of a fresh expression of church looks like in practice – to describe the practical implications of the relationship between Church and Kingdom of God. He believes that this process will lead to the planting of communities with a Kingdom focus.

Listening → Loving and serving → Building community → Exploring discipleship → Church taking shape → Do it again

Underpinned by prayer, ongoing listening, and relationship with the wider church

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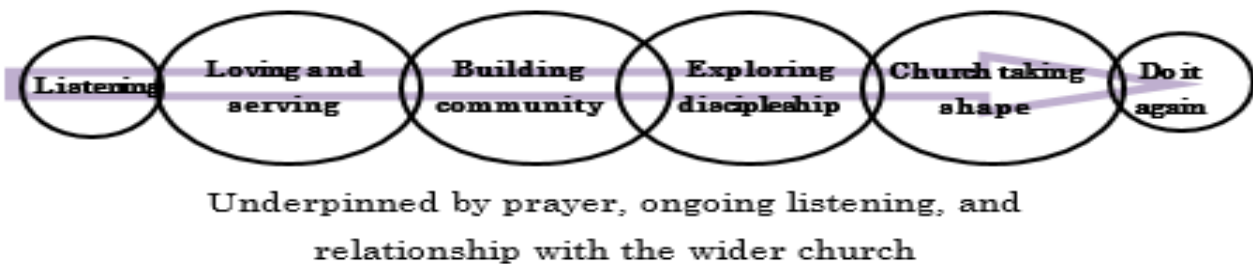
[150] 'Despite their relationship with one another, the glorified children of God and the glorified world of God (see Rom. 8:21) are to be distinguished, which is why the catholicity of the people of God remains not only constitutively related to something greater, namely, to the triune God, but simultaneously integrated into something greater, namely, into the new world of God. The eschatological catholicity of the people of God is to be conceived as a particularity that has been opened up both to God and to the entirety of creation.' (Volf, 1998: 267)

Figure 9: The Fresh Expressions Journey

The process entails the following phases:

a. The journey towards a fresh expression of church starts with listening to the Spirit that is already at work in the world, and also listening to the needs and longings of the community.

b. In contrast to many older paradigms of evangelism and church planting, a fresh expression does not start with worship, but with serving. The risk of a 'worship first' strategy is that the fresh expression may be seen as an event to attend, rather than a community of disciples to join. A second risk is that an event could be designed for people with whom there is not yet a relationship, and lastly that a culture of 'come to be served at church' could develop.

c. Ways to serve the community are gleaned from the listening process. The serving is done without any hidden agendas or manipulation. The serving has a Kingdom focus, bringing healing to the world.

d. In the process of serving, a community is formed. Relationships are built, which form the basis of a new community. Those who gather around the initial serving group join in the ministry of serving and a ministry is build. For many people a relationship with a Christian is the first step in their journey toward a relationship with God. Acceptance by the people of God comes before they are able to understand and receive God's acceptance (Cray, 2012: loc. 522).

e. Evangelism becomes a natural progression in the building of relationships. Furthermore, evangelism and discipleship cannot be separated. The initial group that is serving the community is already modelling discipleship while doing so. Through their being and their work, they radiate their relationship with God as well as their discipleship.

f. A worshiping community becomes part of the community's journey with Christ. The worship event must not become the central focus of the fresh expression, but the worship must serve the purpose of the community and be contextually authentic.

The relationship between the Church and the Kingdom can be seen in this journey. It starts by serving the Kingdom, and a church develops as a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom that is being realised.

The Fresh Expressions view of salvation was not without critique. The 'Mission-shaped Church' report's view of salvation was criticised by Davison and Milbank (2010: loc. 1152-1554) for negating the mediating role of the Church in salvation in describing the Church only as an instrument of God's Kingdom. They (Davison and Milbank, 2010: loc. 1348) also criticised the report for 'pushing the Church to the margins of thinking about mission'. Davison and Milbank's view of the role of the church is strongly influenced by Catholic ecclesiology, which puts the Word and the Church in a tension as two ways of mediating salvation. This dichotomy is foreign to the Reformed tradition. If a church is busy with the Word of God, studying, praying, meditating and sharing it, it is busy mediating salvation and staying true to its calling to be a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom.

A weakness of the Mission-shaped Church report was that is extensively dealt with the Church as an 'instrument', but said very little about being a 'sign' and deals with being a 'foretaste' in only one paragraph (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 95). It is however true that with the limited scope of the Mission-shaped Church report, not every aspect of missional theology could have been covered comprehensively. As argued in the section on the fresh expressions view of the Kingdom of God, it is clear that the movement affirms the Church as an instrument, sign and foretaste of the Kingdom. Being an instrument and sign and foretaste are al crucial to building a holistic view of salvation.

The Fresh Expressions of church perspective on the relationship between the Church and the Kingdom of God has developed since the initial 'Mission-shaped Church' report. A clue to understanding this ambivalence in the relationship between the Church and the Kingdom can be found in the following excerpt from the report (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 86): 'The Kingdom is a divine activity whereas the Church is a human community.' The Fresh Expressions of church are mainly concerned with the human activity that is directed towards the church. That does not negate the divine activity, which is God's work. The church is a sign, instrument and foretaste of this divine activity. Churches that are influenced by the Fresh Expressions theology and processes must not lose sight of the Kingdom in their fervour to plant

churches. The church must be constantly reminded that it is God that is busy invading the world with His Kingdom and that the Church has the task to be a sign, instrument and foretaste of the coming Kingdom.

To help churches stay Kingdom-focused, they must remain in 'perpetual conversation about the Kingdom and with the world' (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 3430). If this conversation is maintained, God's presence and work in the world will become clear. This conversation, together with the specific church's conversation with the Trinity and the wider Church, and between the members of the specific church, will focus the church on God's calling for them.

5.6.4 A Holistic View of Salvation

Historically, the Church of England defined the aim of the parochial system as follows:

> The Church of England establishes parishes, plants churches and licenses ministers because of its commitment to the eternal salvation and pastoral well-being of the whole nation. Ministers share the bishop's cure of souls. (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 102)

This was a classic Christendom ecclesiology with a very narrow view of salvation. The adoption of the five marks of mission (see Section 5.5) in 1988 by the Anglican Communion (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 81; Anglican Communion, 2013) was a definite broadening of the church's view of salvation. The Anglican-Methodist covenant (Methodist Church and the Church of England, 2001) also emphasised a holistic vision of salvation in stating that '[t]rue mission considers humankind not as a collection of disembodied souls, but as embodied, social persons. Mission addresses the whole person, that is people in all their social, economic, political, and cultural relationships'.

Still, not every fresh expression of church will be able to deal extensively with all five of the marks of mission, but they must have a holistic salvational intention. The Anglican-Methodist working party (2012: loc.2565) adds that in the training of pioneer ministers, greater emphasis needs to be given to making disciples and working for justice. Fresh Expressions view of salvation is summed up well in the words of Stuart Murray (2001: 39) quoted in the Mission-shaped report:

> 'God's missionary purposes are cosmic in scope, concerned with the restoration of all things, the establishment of shalom, the renewal of creation and the coming of the Kingdom as well as the redemption of fallen humanity and the building of the Church'.

5.6.5 A Missional Hermeneutic

According to the 'Mission-shaped Church' report, '[a]ny theology of the church must ultimately be rooted in the being and acts of God: the church is first and foremost the people of God, brought into being by God, bound to God, for the glory of God' (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 84). This reflects the heart of the fresh expression movement, namely to be rooted in the being and acts of God. In light of this, a more in-depth discussion of hermeneutics would have been helpful as part of the report. Being rooted in the being and acts of God, after all, implies being rooted in the Word of God.

Davison and Milbank (2010: loc. 2494) criticise the 'Mission-shaped Church' report's lack of reference to hermeneutics. They state that 'doctrine is noticeably absent, not least in the propensity to jump straight from biblical texts to applications with no reference to centuries of interpretation'. This criticism must be read against Davison and Milbank's Anglo-Catholic background, which has a high view of the role of tradition in hermeneutics.

Searching through secondary sources for Fresh Expressions yielded many instances where Lesslie Newbigin is quoted in arguing that the congregation is the 'hermeneutic of the gospel' (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 3927), but to the researcher's knowledge no systematic discussion on hermeneutics exists within the Fresh Expressions material. The influence of a missional hermeneutic can be seen in the work of the Fresh Expression organisation, but a more explicit delineation would definitely benefit the movement.

5.7 Conclusions

This chapter traced the history and development of the Fresh Expressions movement, after which the Fresh Expressions theology was evaluated in light of the broader missional consensus. It was found that: the primary documents of the Fresh Expressions movement are not consistent in their view of the *missio Dei*; Fresh Expressions view worshipping the Trinity as central to the purpose of the missional church; the Trinity becomes the theological framework

for the self-understanding of the church and its mission; the movement may be erring on the side of a church-shaped Kingdom view; the five marks of mission, adopted in 1988, provide the Church of England (and thus the Fresh Expressions movement) with a more holistic perspective on salvation; and, no concise discussion of a missional hermeneutic or any hermeneutic could be found in the primary literature of Fresh Expressions.

Five lessons that were learned from the development of Fresh Expressions that will be used in evaluating the missional ecclesiology of the DRC in chapter six:

    a. The support of the denomination is essential.

    b. A mixed economy of church is necessary for the development of a missional ecclesiology within a well-established church. The mixed economy makes room for fresh expressions as well as the inherited forms of church.

    c. A church has to be context sensitive to be able to develop a missional ecclesiology.

    d. Training of existing and new ordained and lay missional leaders is essential.

    e. Church planting is a very effective strategy in reaching cohorts of society that is not reached by the established church.

CHAPTER 6

EVALUATION OF THE DECISIONS OF THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH GENERAL SYNOD ON A MISSIONAL ECCLESIOLOGY

This chapter uses the insights gained from the macro-philosophical context of Christianity (Chapter 2), the local-theological context of the DRC (Chapter 3), the broad consensus on missional ecclesiology (Chapter 4) and the fresh expressions movement (Chapter 5) as a theoretical basis from which to evaluate the development of a missional ecclesiology for the DRC from 1990 until 2013.

This chapter will use deductive qualitative analysis to develop a hierarchical coding schema for evaluating the DRC General Synod documents on missional ecclesiology. In this chapter, research question 5 will be addressed: *What is the Dutch Reformed Church's position on missional ecclesiology as reflected by the decisions of the General Synod? How would these decisions be evaluated in terms of what was learned from research questions 1-4?*

The results from this chapter will be used in Chapter 7 to draw contours for a missional ecclesiology for the DRC. The various strategies that were identified in Chapter 1 to improve the reliability and rigor of the research will be implemented in the research process.

6.1 Deductive Qualitative Analysis[151]

The detail of the research process and codebook is contained in Addendum A. In this section the results of the deductive qualitative analysis will be reflected.

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[151] Abbreviated reference codes used to describe the different documents in the main text.

Reference code	Document	Year	Reference code	Document	Year

ROW 1990	The Rule for the Missions/Witness of the Church	1990	DCE 2007	Document on a practical congregational ecclesiology	2007
CO 52 1990	Church Order Article 52	1990	CO 10 2007	Church Order Article 10	2007
CO 53 1990	Church Order Article 53	1990	CO 52 2007	Church Order Article 52	2007
CO 52 1994	Church Order Article 52	1994	ROW 2007	The Rule for the Missions/Witness of the Church	2007
CO 52 1998	Church Order Article 52	1998	CO 53 2007	Church Order Article 53	2007
CO 53 1998	Church Order Article 53	1998	CO 53 2007	Church Order Article 53	2007
CO 52 2002	Church Order Article 52	2002	CBS 2011	Confession by the Synod	2011
CO 53 2002	Church Order Article 53	2002	CO 2011	Church Order Article 9	2011
ROW 1998	The Rule for the Missions/Witness of the Church	1998	CO 10 2011	Church Order Article 10	2011
SOC 2002	Statement of Calling '	2002	CO 52 2011	Church Order Article 52	2011
ROW 2002	The Rule for the Missions/Witness of the Church	2002	CO 53 2011	Church Order Article 53	2011
CC 2004	Calling Commitment	2004	ROW 2011	The Rule for the Missions/Witness of the Church	2011
CO 9 2004	Church Order Article 9	2004	DME 2011	Document on Missional Ecclesiology	2011
CO 10 2004	Church Order Article 10	2004	CO 9 2013	Church Order Article 9	2013
CO 52 2004	Church Order Article 52	2004	CO 10 2013	Church Order Article 10	2013
CO 53 2004	Church Order Article 53	2004	CO 52 2013	Church Order Article 52	2013
ROW 2004	The Rule for the Missions/Witness of the Church	2004	CO 53 2013	Church Order Article 53	2013
SOC 2007	Statement of Calling	2007	ROW 2013	The Rule for the Missions/Witness of the Church	2013
CO 9 2007	Church Order Article 9	2007	FDMC 2013	Framework document on the Missional nature and calling of the Dutch Reformed Church	2013
DRI 2007	Document on the Reformed Identity	2007			

6.1.1 Theological Influences on the Theology of the DRC

6.1.1.1 Reformed Theology

There is strong evidence of the Reformed roots and values of the DRC in the documents studied. DRI 2007 focuses exclusively on the Reformed identity of the church and in most of the documents, the Reformed values were clear. The later documents, like DRI 2007:11, DCE 2007:50, DME 2011:39, CBS 2011: n.p. and FDMC 2013:202-203, 209 argue for a Reformed identity that is able to facilitate diversity. This can be seen as a reaction to an older paradigm of seeing the Reformed church as part of a monolithic church. In CBS 2011: n.p., the church states that she wants to be '*n ruim huis [...] sonder die prysgawe van ons Gereformeerde identiteit*'. This is a clear move away from a church polity that wants to control the identity and spirituality of the church.

Some of the documents describe the Reformed identity in terms of the *Five Solas* – Sola scriptura, Sola fide, Sola gratia, Solus Christus, Soli Deo Gloria (DRI 2007; CBS 2011; FDMC 2013). Examples can be found below.

Sola scriptura

'*Deur dié gemeente: laat God sy Woord aan die gevalle wêreld verkondig*' - CO 53 1990:13; C0 53 1994:12; CO 53 1998:18; CO 2002:21-22; CO 53 2004:23; CO 53 2007:23; CO 53 2011:11; CO 53 2013:14 (2013 dropped '*aan die gevalle wêreld*')

CC 2004:ii: '*Om getrou aan ons Gereformeerde tradisie, die Bybel as gesagvolle Woord van God te handhaaf en te gehoorsaam. Ons verstaan ook al hoe beter dat om in die Bybel te glo, nie beteken om in 'n klomp reëls of beginsels te glo nie, maar in die lewende Drie-enige God self.*'

SOC 2007:n.p.: '*God roep die NG Kerk deur sy Woord en Gees om aan Hom te behoort.*'

Sola scriptura refers not only the fact that the Bible is central to the Reformed tradition, but also to the way the Bible is read. A good exegetical process and hermeneutic are critical for the theology of the church (FDMC 2013:205)

Sola fide

DRI 2007:14: '*Geloof is nie 'n verskuilde poging om die mens weer aandadig aan sy verlossing te maak nie. In die geloof ontvang die sondaar wat die genadige God skenk. My geloof dra niks daartoe by dat God my genadig is nie. Dit is slegs die weg waarlangs ek ontvang. Moet ek dus iets doen om gered te word? Ja, ek moet ontvang wat God skenk. Ek moet rus in God se genade. Die uitgestrekte hand ontvang die nuwe hart wat God skenk (Esegiël). Die uitgestrekte hand dien dan as simbool van geloof.*

Hierdie verstaan van wat geloof is, het 'n duidelike invloed op die identiteit van die mense in gereformeerde kerke. Wie Jesus met al sy verdienste in die geloof omhels, leef dan uit hierdie nuwe verhouding en verstaan die sakramente in dié lig.'

Sola gratia

CC 2004:ii: 'Om die integriteit van die Gereformeerde geloof te herwin, sodat God se genadige liefde vir sondaars bekend sal word.'

FDMC 2013:206: '8.4 Omdat die wêreld deur sonde geskend is, staan elke konteks onder God se genadige oordeel.'

Solus Christus

SOC 2007:n.p.: 'Ons is daarvan oortuig dat slegs die evangelie van Jesus Christus mense op die pad van verlossing, versoening en lewende hoop plaas.'

Soli Deo gloria

FDMC 2013:199: 'Die NG Kerk dank God dat ons in so 'n uitdagende tyd, binne 'n Suider-Afrikaanse konteks saam met ander kerke, God se kerk mag wees. Sy liefde en genade is sonder twyfel groot.'

6.1.1.2 Evangelical-Pietist Tradition

The Evangelical and Pietist streams in theology both had a strong influence on the DRC (see Chapter 3). Various of the documents studied still reflect this influence. The following characteristics of an Evangelical-Pietist influence were discernible:

The world as missionary focus

CO 53 1990:13; C0 53 1994:12; CO 53 1998:18; CO 2002:21-22; CO 53 2004:23; CO 53 2007:23; CO 53 2011:11: '53.1 Sending is die heilshandeling van die drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees met die wêreld, waardeur Hy uit die hele menslike geslag vir Hom 'n gemeente deur sy Woord en Gees vergader.'

CO 53 2013:14: '3.1 Die missie van die Drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees is om lewe en volheid aan die wêreld te gee, en die kerk is in diens van God se missie.'

CBS 2011:n.p.: 'Die Drie-enige God stuur ons sy wêreld vol as getuies van sy liefde vir sy hele skepping.'

Fervour for witness

SOC 2002:i: 'Daarom wil ons as Kerk die Woord van die Here tydig en ontydig verkondig en orals getuienis aflê van die hoop wat in ons leef.'

SOC 2007:n.p.: 'Daarom wil ons die Woord van die Here tydig en ontydig verkondig, as profete optree en oral getuienis aflê van die hoop wat in ons leef.'

FDMC 2013:205: ''n Inkarnasie-lewenstyl beteken juis dat gelowiges altyd gewillig sal wees om die Goeie Nuus met ander mense te deel.'

Personal piety

DCE 2007:51: '8.5.5 Dit is ons diepe versugting dat die NG Kerkfamilie in die jare wat voorlê meer en meer 'n biddende kerk sal word. Oor die vraag hoe dit moet lyk en gebeur, word die antwoord dalk ten beste gevind in die eenvoudige opmerking van Henri Nouwen: "There is only one way to pray and that is to pray. There is only one way to pray well and that is to pray much!"'

DCE 2007:48: '[…] die taakspan [is] van oordeel dat die volgende waardes en die vestiging daarvan ook ernstige oorweging behoort te geniet:

'n Lewe voor die aangesig van God – coram Deo;
'n Voortdurende oriëntering en gerigtheid op die Skrif;
'n Strewe na groter geestelike dissipline en 'n lewe vervul met gebed;
'n Strewe na egtheid en eenvoud;
'n Strewe na groter liefde en eenheid;
'n Strewe na vroomheid, reinheid en integriteit;
'n Strewe na gehoorsaamheid en getrouheid'

A strong emphasis on personal piety is also found in CC 2004:ii and CBS 2011:n.p.

Activism

DCE 2007:48: 'n Strewe na groter diensbaarheid'

CC 2004:ii: '[…] ons roeping en bereidheid as kerk om diens te lewer aan die mense van ons lande.'

DME 2011:137: 'DIENSBAAR AAN DIE GEMEENSKAP […] 10.2 God se sending behels die woord en die daad. […] Tradisioneel is die woord- en daadbediening in die NG Kerk van mekaar geskei as twee afsonderlike bedienings – sending en diens van barmhartigheid. In 'n missionale ekklesiologie is dit egter onhoudbaar, gewoon omdat God se sending woord én daad behels. 10.3 Die missionale kerk is deur God geroep om in hierdie wêreld diensknegte te wees, agente van God se missio Dei.'

FDMC 2013:205: 'Nabyheid – die kerk word nie net uitgedaag om teenwoordig te wees waar mense is nie, maar om dit op so 'n manier te doen dat mense dienend vir mekaar beskikbaar is.'

Evangelistic events

DCE 2007:49: '8.2.2 Laat gebeurtenisse soos Week van Gebed, Pinkster en kerkraadvergaderings vir ten minste vir 'n deel fokus op verootmoediging, waar die Here se wil vir die gemeente en ook individue opreg gesoek word.'

DCE 2007:55: '3. Kleingroepe – in verskillende vorme – is nie net 'n nuwe gier nie. Dit behoort 'n basiese dissipline van onderlinge sorg en dienslewering te wees. 'n Interessante tendens is dat kleingroepe al meer en meer uitgedaag word om binne die geografiese area van waaruit die meeste lede kom, 'n verskil

te maak. Dit raak die uitreik na en ondersteuning van mense in die omgewing, maar ook konkrete aksies soos evangelisasie.'

6.1.1.3 Barthian Theology

The following evidence was found of the influence of Karl Barth on the theology of the DRC:

A close relationship between divine justice and human justice

CO 53 1990:13; C0 53 1994:12; CO 53 1998:18; CO 2002:21-22; CO 53 2004:23; CO 53 2007:23; CO 53 2011:11; CO 53 2013:14: 'Deur dié gemeente [...] laat Hy diens aan die wêreld in nood lewer; [...] word sy geregtigheid aan die samelewing en wêreld verkondig.'

CBS 2011:n.p.: 'Ons erns t.o.v. eenheid, versoening en geregtigheid word versterk deur die Belydenis van Belhar as deel van ons belydenisskat by gemeentes aan te beveel.'

FDMC 2013:203: 'Die kerk bring versoening en transformeer die gemeenskap in die lig van God se geregtigheid.'

FDMC 2013:207: 'Daarom is die diakonnaat [sic] van die kerk meerkantig en kan verskillende tipes diakonaat onderskei word, soos die bediening van God se barmhartigheid en omgee vir mense en die natuur, die bediening van God se versoening en vrede, die bediening van God se geregtigheid.'

Caution against seeing the church as an invisible phenomenon

SOC 2002:i: '(c) verbind ons ons tot groter eenheid met ander kerke. Ons wil graag herenig met ons Kerkfamilie, soos ons glo God dit wil hê. Ons wil ook graag ons ekumeniese bande bevestig en uitbrei en met alle ander Christene hande vat om ons lande op te bou en pynlike omstandighede te verlig.'

The same sentiments on seeing the church as a concrete phenomena and church unity was found in SOC 2007:n.p and CBS 2011:n.p.

The concrete and political relevance of the gospel for the oppressed and those who suffer

SOC 2002:i: '(d) roep ons gemeentes op om by die genesing van ons land betrokke te raak.'

CC 2004:ii: 'Om op die mikro- en makrovlak strategieë vir die oorwinning van armoede uit te werk en deur te voer.'

SOC 2007:n.p.: 'Ons wil graag met alle ander Christene hande vat om ons samelewings op te bou en pynlike omstandighede te verlig. Ons wil mekaar as gemeentes en leiers met liefde aanspoor, begelei en toerus om by die genesing van ons lande betrokke te raak.'

DCE 2011:53: '8.10.2.4 Gesondheid: Wanneer armoede en ongeletterdheid hoogty vier, ly mense se gesondheid daaronder. Nie alleen het SA van die hoogste VIGS-statistiek ter wêreld nie, maar gedy ander verwante siektes soos TB by die dag. Sou die infrastruktuur van ons gemeentes, sale ens. nie gebruik kon word om sentrums van hoop daar te stel waar mense op groot skaal in liefde versorg kan word nie?'

Mission not as an activity of the Church, but as the very nature of God himself

DME 2011:132: '4.4 Karl Barth het ook sy bespreking van sending geplaas binne die bespreking van die Triniteit want die kerk se sending is afhanklik en word bepaal deur die feit dat Vader die Seun en die Heilige Gees in die wêreld gestuur het. 4.5 Sending is primêr en geheel en al die werk van die Drie-enige God, Skepper, Verlosser en Saligmaker, ter wille van die wêreld, waaraan die kerk bevoorreg is om deel te neem.'

Although there were strong indications of the influence of the theology of Reformed, Evangelical-Pietist and Barthian traditions, no indication could be found that the Liberal theology, Neo-Calvinism and the *'Nuwe Hervorming Beweging'* had any influence on the policy formation of the DRC <u>in the documents studied</u>.

6.1.2 Contours of Missional Theology in the DRC

6.1.2.1 The *Missio Dei*

There has been a growing emphasis on the *missio Dei* in the DRC since at least 1990. The following extracts from the church order are examples thereof. CO 53 1990:13; C0 53 1994:12; CO 53 1998:18; CO 2002:21-22; CO 53 2004:23; CO 53 2007:23; CO 53 2011:11 starts with:

'53.1 Sending is die heilshandeling van die drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees met die wêreld, waardeur Hy uit die hele menslike geslag vir Hom 'n gemeente deur sy Woord en Gees vergader.'

Co 53 2013:14 has been changed to:

'53.1 Die missie van die Drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees is om lewe en volheid aan die wêreld te gee, en die kerk is in diens van God se missie.'

In the 2013 article, the emphasis changed from what the Trinitarian God <u>does</u> (*heilshandeling*) to what God's mission <u>is</u> (*missie*). The original article was in line with Bosch's argument that '[m]ission is […] seen as a movement from God to the world; the church is viewed as an instrument for that' (Bosch, 1993b: 390). The latest article reflects the agency of God and that the church is joining Him in His eternal movement towards the world. It could be asked if either what God does or what his mission is, has a strong enough emphasis on the important missional principle of the missional being of God. Article 53 reflects the economy of the Trinity, but maybe not enough of the Immanent Trinity. The article could reflect more of the position

that mission of the Church is not only participation in the acts of God, but also in the being of God (Flett, 2009: 12).

Row 1998 – 2011 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1998: 67-71; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2002b: 94-98; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2004: 83-87; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007: 104-107; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2011b: 44-48) also reflects on the *missio Dei* and the church's role in it, stating that:

'2.1.1 Waar sending die heilshandeling van God met die wêreld is met die oog op die koms van sy koninkryk, is die Kerk as sy dienaar wesenlik daarby betrokke'. Row 2013 continues with the sentiment in stating that: '2.1.1 Die kerk is in diens van God se missie.'

The document FDMC 2013 has the strongest emphasis yet on the sending character of God and the fact that the DRC sees herself as being sent by the Trinity. FDMC 2013:199 states: *'Sending begin in die hart van die Drie-enige God en God se liefde stroom oor na die mensdom en die ganse skepping'.*

There are also articles that *lack* any reference to the *missio Dei*, such as Article 9 (office of the minister) and Article 52 (congregational ministry). The 2004 Article 9 only indicates what the minister should do (i.e. preaching, administering of sacraments, praying for the congregation, etc.). From 2007:5-6, however, Article 9 has included a statement that the minister should equip the faithful for participating in the work of God ('[…] *sowel as die toerusting van gelowiges vir die deelname van die kerk aan die werk van God in sy wêreld*'). The 2011 and 2013 articles added that the minister is called to serve God and his church. Article 52 has no reference to the *missio Dei*. The fact that the *missio Dei* leads to the *missio ecclesia* should most probably be reflected in this Article (Niemandt, 2014: 69).

Despite this, the Synod has accepted a discussion document in 2002 that states:

'15. Daar is in die 20ste eeu helderder as ooit tevore besef dat die kerk nie maar vir sigself mag leef nie, maar dat ons gestuur is om ander te dien en te help. Die kerk staan ten volle in die diens van God se missie (ook genoem die missio Dei) in hierdie wêreld. Daarom is elke gemeente 'n missionêre gemeente.' (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2002c: 70).

The 2007 and 2013 Synods continued with this emphasis, in stating that:

'5.5 Die fokus en roeping van die kerk sou op velerlei maniere beskryf kon word. Bo alles glo ons dat die essensie en wese van die kerk in die Missio Dei omskryf word. Die kerk behoort in wese altyd op die wêreldgerig te wees en oppad na die wêreld te wees. Die Kerk bestaan nie ter wille van haarself of haar lidmate nie' (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007b: 47).

and,

'Die kerk en die kerk se sending word vanuit die wese van God self-verstaan. Sending is nie een of ander menslike prestasie nie, maar is 'n geskenk van God self. Ons leer God in die Bybel ken as 'n sturende God. Daarom word daar van die missio Dei gepraat. Die lewe van God is 'n proses van gestuurdheid: die Vader het die wêreld so lief dat Hy sy enigste Seun stuur om nuwe lewe te bring. Die Seun stuur die Heilige Gees. Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees stuur die kerk in die wêreld in (missio ecclesiae). Dit is nie net 'n geval dat God sending doen nie, God is in wese 'n sturende God. Net soos wat ons sê "God is liefde", kan ons sê "God is 'n sturende God". Die N G Kerk se Sendingreglement stel dit só: "Sending is die heilshandeling van die Drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees met die wêreld, waardeur Hy uit die ganse menslike geslag vir Hom 'n gemeente deur sy Woord en Gees vergader' (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013a: 202).

Despite the high prominence of the *missio Dei* in discussion documents accepted by the various General Synods, the same emphasis is not reflected in the church policy documents. Since the church polity reflects the nature of the church (Niemandt, 2014: 73), there is still some work to be done in terms of reflecting the *missio Dei* in the church polity of the DRC. It seems like the synod struggled to translate missional theology into missional policy.

6.1.2.2 The Centrality of the Trinity

The DRC's roots in the Reformed theology are seen in the church's self-understanding as being part of the life of the Trinity (Niemandt, 2014: 69). There is abundant documentary evidence of this fact, starting with Church Order article 53 1990:13:

'Sending is die heilshandeling van die drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees met die wêreld, waardeur Hy uit die hele menslike geslag vir Hom 'n gemeente deur sy Woord en Gees vergader.'

DCE 2007:47: '5.2 'n Gesonde ekklesiologie sal dus altyd met 'n helder trinitariese Godsbegrip werk, maar terselfdertyd bly vashou aan die ondeurgrondelike en misterieuse karakter van God en sy werksaamhede.'

FDMC 2013:201: *'3.3.'n Lewe in die Drie- Eenheid*

Ten diepste is die identiteit van die NG Kerk ingebed in ons verstaan van God self. Ons Gereformeerde identiteit plaas die NG Kerk in die "lewe van die Drie-enige God". Nadenke oor die identiteit van die kerk begin dus by nadenke oor wat dit beteken om in verhouding met die God te lewe.'

It is clear that the DRC has a strong grounding in the life of the Trinity. The implications of this become clearer in other documents, for example DRI 2007:47: *'Die kerk is 'n skepping van God, gebou op die fondament wat Christus gelê het en konkrete gestalte aangeneem het deur die kragtige werking van die Heilige Gees',* and DME 2011:133:

'Deur Christus is die kerk verbind aan die Drie-enige God van die Bybel – Vader, Seun en Gees. Ons glo dat die kerk aan die Drie-enige God alleen behoort en in verbondenheid met Hom bestaan. Die kerk is die volk van God, die liggaam van Christus en die tempel van die Gees. Alles wat ons is en doen – ons identiteit, ons missie en ons bediening – word deur hierdie verhouding bepaal. Dat alles wat die kerk is en doen gedefinieer (behoort te) word deur sy verhouding met die lewende God, is die eerste en mees basiese beginsel van kerk-wees. En die God van wie ons hier praat, is die Drie-enige God wat ons in die Ou en Nuwe Testament leer ken as Vader, Seun en Gees.'

In the documents studied, there were also references to the Christology and Pneumatology of the DRC. In light of the earlier discussion on the role of the Economic and Immanent Trinity in missional theology, some remarks will also be made on the church's understanding of the these.

6.1.2.2.1 Christology

True to their Reformed heritage, the DRC's theology is **Christological** in nature. The heart of the church is found in a living relationship with and faith in Jesus Christ (DCE 2007:50). Faith is grounded in the work, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (DRI 2007:15). Christ is seen as the head of the church, and without him there could be no church (DCE 2007:12). The Christological perspective is further articulated in terms of incarnational living, *kenōsis*, and eschatology.

The incarnational aspect of missional theology is based on the **incarnation** of Jesus (FDMC 2013). The church follows Jesus in incarnating the gospel in the world. Three of the documents devoted significant portions to the incarnation of the Jesus, namely DCE 2007:47, 54, DME 2011:135-136 and FDMC 2013:204.

Incarnation is seen as one of the central values of a missional ecclesiology. It forms part of the theological self-understanding of the church. The incarnation of Christ is indicative of how God is busy with his world. He becomes part of His creation and suffers on their behalf. The incarnation of Christ also helps the church understand what incarnational living is about, i.e. to be with people wherever they might be. To practice incarnational living, the church should understand culture, but should not become one with the prevailing culture. The church should always keep a critical distance from and have a prophetic voice within the culture (DME 2011:137). Incarnation motivates the church to be involved in the everyday lives of people and be there for them. Incarnational living is only possible if the church is able to discern the needs

of the community, and then to do something about these needs (DCE 200747,49; FDMC 2013:204-205).

Central to incarnational lifestyle is **kenōsis.** *Kenōsis* as a concept is a relatively recent addition to the ecclesiology of the DRC. DME 2011 is the first of the studied documents that dealt with this concept. DME 2011:137 defines *kenōsis* as the emptying of the self on behalf of somebody else, to suffer and to sacrifice for the other, as Jesus did for us.

There was also a strong relationship in the documents between *kenōsis* and church planting or the forming of new faith communities. DME 2011:139 and FDMC 2013:210 argues that an existing congregation has to sacrifice on behalf of the new church or faith community. In practice, this implies that resources and members from the existing church are used to start the new church or faith community. *Kenōsis* is critical, but also very difficult for a church that is used to being in power and is in a self-protecting mindset. The development of a kenotic attitude will be very important in the development of a missional ecclesiology in the DRC (DME 2011:139; Niemandt, 2014: 77).

Relatively little reference is made in the documents to **eschatology**. There is reference in the CO 53 1990-2013, and another in FDMC 2013:202,206. CO 53 1990-2011 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1990a: 13; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1994: 12) (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1998: 18; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2002b: 21; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2004: 23; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007c: 23) (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2011b: 11) states: '*So laat Hy sy koninkryk kom tot by die voleinding van die wêreld'*. Interestingly, CO 2013 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013a: 14) dropped the eschatological perspective *'tot by die voleinding van die wêreld'*.

FDMC 2013:202 argues that the mission of the Church does not end with return of Christ and will be part of the eternal life *('Dit is só essensieel dat die sending van die kerk nie ophou met die voleinding nie – om na ander uit te reik en om ander te dien sal deel van die ewige lewe wees')*. This argument is valid since mission is not something God or the church does, but something that is part of who God is, and God's character does not change with the return of Christ (Flett, 2009: 15). This document also emphasises that there is a trajectory to the world and the church: both are moving closer to the return of Christ. Considering the fact that the church remains a preliminary community (Bosch, 1993b: 169) that lives in hope of the eschaton, the eschatology in the theology of the DRC could be developed further.

Christology remains a fundamental pillar of a missional theology. However, Christ can never be seen isolated from His relationship with the Father and Spirit. Christology must always develop within a Trinitarian perspective. This is also true for the importance of incarnational living, *kenōsis* and eschatology. Incarnational living and a kenotic life without a Trinitarian perspective become a sentimental longing for the historical Jesus and the early Church. The Trinity invites us into what God is doing now and wants to do in future. The reality of the past reconfirms His promised future. Christology from a Trinitarian perspective remains a central aspect in the development of a missional ecclesiology for the DRC.

6.1.2.2.2 Pneumatology

In line with the DRC's Reformed theology, the documents studied see a close relationship between the work of the Holy Spirit, that of Jesus Christ and the Word of God. DRI 2007:13 argues:

'3.2.2.1 Betreffende die werking van die Heilige Gees, is daar vir Gereformeerdes 'n enger verbintenis tussen die Gees aan die een kant en God se bekendmaking in Jesus Christus en die Woord aan die ander kant. Gevolglik is daar minder ruimte vir "bonatuurlike visioene" en "vrye profesie" en val die klem op 'n soberder nadenke oor die Woord in elke nuwe konteks.'

God calls his people through his Word and Spirit to belong to him (SOC 2007:n.p.). DRI 2007:13 reminds the church of Calvin's strong emphasis on the work of the Spirit, and that the church can only be missional if it functions within the force field of the Spirit. The church as the people of God is also the temple of the Holy Spirit (DCE 2007:47). The Spirit then equips the church to bring healing to a broken world (CC 2004:ii). The spirit calls, gathers, equips, sends and inspires the faithful with the spiritual gifts to serve each other and the world (DCE 2007:46). The spirit is also constantly renewing the church to be God's sent people in ever-changing contexts (FDMC 2013:200).

Three other aspects of the work of the Spirit in the church emerged from the documents, namely discernment, diversity and the ecumenical nature of the church.

Discernment

Discernment is important in a missional ecclesiology, because the church is constantly discerning where God is moving. Through discernment, the church is able to be involved in the

work God is already doing. Discerning God's will is emphasised in many of the documents (CC 2004:i; SOC 2007 n.p.; DCE 2007:48; CBS 2011:n.p.; DME 2011:134,139; FDMC 2013). Examples are:

CC 2004:i: 'Ons wil naby aan die Here leef om gereeld by Hom te hoor presies wat ons roeping is' ;

DCE 2007:48: 'Elke gemeente behoort 'n diep geestelike proses te ondergaan, ten einde te kan onderskei waar hulle tyd, energie en bronne gebruik behoort te word, om as die Here wil, 'n beskeie bydrae te lewer tot die positiewe herskryf van die geskiedenis van ons land en kerk';

FDMC 2013:210: 'Kerkplanting begin by 'n luisterproses – om te luister na die Gees, om te luister na die kerk en om te luister na die konteks. Die luisterproses word gedra deur gebed';

Discernment has a dual focus, firstly on the Spirit and the Word and secondly on the needs of the world. A congregation's calling is manifested in discerning what God is telling them through the Spirit and the Word, as well as what God is already doing in a community. To discern God's will in the word, the development of a missional hermeneutic is necessary.

Liturgy also plays an important role in discerning process. A missional liturgy helps congregation members to meet God (FDMC 2013:211). The role of the minister is not to entertain or satisfy the needs of the congregation, but to create a space where a divine meeting can take place.

The formation of new faith communities starts with a process of discernment. In the process of discernment, the congregation listens to the Spirit, to each other and to the community (DME 2011:134).

Unity in diversity

The double role of the Spirit becomes clear in the documents: firstly, to equip the church with diverse gifts, and secondly to bring unity within the diversity of the church. A missional ecclesiology is needed that is able to make room for the diversity that the Spirit bring to the church (DRI 2007:11, DCE 2007:50-51, DME 2011:139, CBS 2011:n.p. and FDMC 2013:202-203,209). The emphasis on diversity became prominent from 2007 onwards with DRI 2007:10 reflecting on the diversity that had developed in the DRC and warning against diversity without a common identity. DCE 2007:50-51 focuses on the fact that the DRC is a Reformed church with different spirituality types (see Chapter 3). The document highlights the following points:

- The diversity within the South African context.
- The Reformed tradition making room for diversity. The document goes as far as to argue that within the Reformed tradition, there was room for diverse moralities.
- This is, however, not a relativizing of the truth that sees a relationship with Christ and the Spirit of Christ as central to the Reformed tradition, and God still leads His church through His Spirit and Word.
- Different spiritualities should be evaluated within an understanding of complexity and simultaneity, as well as an attitude of kenotic love, understanding and patience.

The Reformed tradition advocates the following attitudes to embrace diversity:

- Spirituality should be focused on God and a *coram Dei* life.
- Spirituality should motivate and inform a compassionate life towards those on the edge of society.
- Spirituality should take seriously the holiness and otherness of God, but still be contextual and relevant.
- Spirituality should share the following values: simplicity, authenticity, integrity, morality, piety, unity, community, relationships, service, generosity, reliability and trustworthiness. These values create an environment where congregations can deal with diverse spiritualities.

DME 2011:129 sees church planting as a strategy to deal with the diversity in South Africa.

FDMC 2011:203-204 makes the argument that diversity is part of the scriptural evidence on the church and mission, as well as of the richness of creation. The Bible uses various metaphors for the church and its mission. According to FDMC 2011, being missional implies that we have to stretch ourselves to cross boundaries of spirituality, language and culture. A faith community deals with diversity in becoming a listening community. In listening to the spiritual and life narratives of the 'other', we are able value the otherness, not as something to be feared but something to be celebrated as part of God's gifts to the congregation. Stories of congregations that were able to deal successfully with diversity have become beacons of hope for struggling congregations.

The General Synod's perspectives on diversity are critical to the development of a missional ecclesiology and give a firm foundations and direction. The challenge is to realise it in the praxis of the DRC.

The ecumenical nature of the church

The last facet of Pneumatology in the documents studied is the ecumenical nature of the church. Traditionally, Protestants emphasised the internal spiritual unity of the church. Christ is the head, and all believers who share the same confession of faith belong to the body (Berkhof, 1959: 572). However, in a missional ecclesiology, there is emphasis on the visible and concrete expressions of the unity and catholicity of the church (Hill, 2013: 175).

The DRC during Apartheid was a church of isolation (Livingston, 2014: loc. 342). After the end of Apartheid, there was a steady growth in the ecumenical relationships of the DRC. CC 2004: ii states that the church must use its full membership of the South African Council of Churches and The Evangelical Alliance of South Africa to fulfil its calling in South Africa. DCE 2007:56 argues that ecumenical relationships and church unity on congregational level are essential and part of being Reformed. CBS 2011:n.p. encourages the church to develop formal relationships with other Reformed churches, and to work with other Christian churches in building the Kingdom. FDMC 2013: 204 reaffirms these commitments and adds that any ecumenical relationship must have room for and respect the diversity of Christians.

6.1.2.2.3 Perspectives on the Trinity

As discussed in Chapter 4, there are currently two perspectives on the Trinity: the Economic Trinity and the Immanent Trinity. The Economic Trinity describes God's outward involvement in creation and acts of salvation in the world. **The Immanent Trinity**, on the other hand, describes God's 'internal and external' existence as three persons in relation to one another (Hoffmeyer, 2001: 108).

In the documents studied, a development in the relationship between the Trinity and the church is discernible. Traditionally, both the Eastern and Western church emphasised the immanent aspects of the Trinity in describing the Trinity's unity and relational aspects. CO 53 1990-2011 describes what the **Economy of the Trinity** – the Trinity gathers his Church:

'Sending is die heilshandeling van die drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees met die wêreld, waardeur Hy uit die hele menslike geslag vir Hom 'n gemeente deur sy Woord en Gees vergader' (CO 53 1990:13; C0 53 1994:12; CO 53 1998:18; CO 2002:21-22; CO 53 2004:23; CO 53 2007:23; CO 53 2011:11).

From 2007 onwards, the church is not only called to reflect the Economy of the Church in being a send church, but the church is also encouraged to reflect on the relational aspects of the **Immanent Trinity** (DCE 2007:46). See also FDMC 2013:

'Die kerk lewe in die Triniteit, en is daarom imago Trinitatis. Dit beteken dat die kerk 'n gemeenskap is in navolging van die innige en selfopofferende gemeenskap tussen Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees. Die kerk is gemeenskap, nie ter wille van gemeenskap nie, maar ter wille van deelname aan God se sending. Die missio Dei is in wese kommunikaal en gemeenskaplik – en so ook die missio ecclesiae' (FDMC 2013:212).

Although the implications of the Economic and Immanent Trinity for the church are still developing, there is already a clear realisation that a missional ecclesiology for the DRC should reflect the *imago Trinitatis* in a profound way. Ways in which the church can reflect the relational aspects of the Trinity could be developed further.

6.1.2.3 Kingdom Focused

The view of the Kingdom of God as evident in the official documents of the DRC is in line with the view that the church does not encompass the Kingdom of God, but is a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom. The Kingdom becomes a reality where Christ overcomes the power of evil, and this triumph should be seen most clearly in the church, but also in the world outside the church. The *missio Dei* and the Kingdom of God are seen as closely related (Niemandt, 2014: 71). Before 2013, however, CO 53 may have given the indication that the *missio Dei* is church focused when it articulated mission as follows:

'Sending is die heilshandeling van die drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees met die wêreld, waardeur Hy uit die hele menslike geslag vir <u>Hom 'n gemeente deur sy Woord en Gees vergader</u>' (CO 53 1990:13; C0 53 1994:12; CO 53 1998:18; CO 2002:21-22; CO 53 2004:23; CO 53 2007:23; CO 53 2011:11).

The rest of the Article has a broader Kingdom focus when it states:

'Deur dié gemeente laat God sy Woord aan die gevalle wêreld verkondig,
bring Hy die gemeenskap van die heiliges uit alle nasies tot stand en
laat Hy diens aan die wêreld in nood lewer.
laat Hy sy opdrag om die skepping te bewaar en te bewerk sigbaar tot uitdrukking kom, en
word sy geregtigheid aan die samelewing en wêreld verkondig.
So laat Hy sy koninkryk kom tot aan die voleinding van die wêreld.'

A strong focus on the Kingdom is becomes clearer in DCE 2007:

'Binne die gereformeerde tradisie is daar altyd met 'n minimalistiese kerkbegrip gewerk. Dit beteken gewoon dat die kerk nooit belangriker as die Koninkryk is nie en dat die relatiewe plek en posisie van die kerk in die samelewing altyd verdiskonteer behoort te word. 'n Kerk wat te belangrik word, ontwikkel spoedig 'n probleem. Dit mag vir die kerk daarom nooit in die eerste plek gaan om die uitbou van die kerk, tradisie of denominasie nie, maar wel om die uitbou en koms van die Koninkryk. Die implikasie hiervan is dat 'n kerk/gemeente ook sou kon sterf, sonder dat dit die einde van die Koninkryk.'

A new CO 53 2013:14 better articulates the relationship between *missio Dei* and the Kingdom:

'53.1 Die missie van die Drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees is om lewe en volheid aan die wêreld te gee, en die kerk is in diens van God se missie.''

The church is in service of the coming Kingdom of God in being a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom (FDMC 2013:204). The aim of mission or congregational ministry may never be focused on building the church, but rather on joining God in building his Kingdom. The church's involvement in the Kingdom has the following dimensions:

6.1.2.3.1 Public Theology

The DRC's emphasis on the Kingdom makes public theology an essential part of its missional ecclesiology. From a Kingdom perspective all theology are seen as public theology (DME 2011:139). The following aspects of public theology are emphasised in the various documents:

- Communicating with the government and testifying to the government about God's will for the country (CC 2004:ii);
- Praying for the government (SOC 2007:n.p.);
- Being a prophetic voice on the subjects of poverty, crime, education, basic health services, social justice and reconciliation in South Africa (DCE 200753-54; CBS 2011:n.p.).

6.1.2.3.2 Being a Serving Church

Serving the people of the country (CC 2004:ii)

The Calling Commitment of 2004 (CC2004:ii) and the document on a Missional Ecclesiology for the DRC (DME 2011:137) calls the church to begin serving the community. The latter criticises the traditional separation of the ministry of the Word and the ministry of deeds (mission and

diaconal services). God's salvation work is holistic and involves both words and deeds, and the church should be following him in that. The diaconal services of the church are not derived from something God does, but rather who God is – His love, His mercy, His justice, His reconciliation and His peace. In serving the world, the church becomes part of God's transformation of the world.

6.1.2.4 A Holistic View of Salvation

The DRC perspective on salvation has developed since 1990. According to CO 53 1990, the aim of the *missio Dei* entailed ministry of the word, the gathering of the faithful, and service to the world in need (CO 53 1990:13). This third dimension of mission must be seen in the context of the third wave of missionary awakening discussed in Chapter 3. During this wave, social services were seen as auxiliary to the main aim of ministering the word and gathering the faithful (Durand, 1985: 42-43; Saayman, 2007: 88). Later, CO 53 2002-2013 added two more aims. Through the congregation:

1. *'laat Hy sy opdrag om die skepping te bewaar en te bewerk sigbaar tot uitdrukking kom'*; and
2. *'en word sy geregtigheid aan die samelewing en die wêreld verkondig'*. *(CO 53 2002:21-22; CO 53 2004:23; CO 53 2007:23; CO 53 2011:11; 2013:14)*.

This constitutes a broadening of the view of the *missio Dei* to include creation and social justice. An even stronger emphasis holistic mission is found in CO 53 2013:14:

'1.3 Die gestuurde kerk bedien die evangelie in al sy dimensies aan mense wat die evangelie nie ken nie of daarvan vervreemd is'.

Further evidence of the development of a holistic view of salvation is found in the changes made to Article 5.2. and 5.3 of CO 53 between 1990 and 2013. Originally, CO53 1990:13 53.2 focused only on evangelisation:

'53.2 Die Kerk rig hom dmv evangelisasie tot diegene wat vervreemd is van Christus, sy Woord en sy kerk en wat om die rede buite kerkverband geraak het ten einde hulle tot die gemeenskap met Christus en sy gemeente terug te bring.'

CO 53 1994-2011 changed the emphasis in 53.2 to '**Through mission**, the Church brings the gospel **in all its dimensions** to those outside the Church.'

'53.2 Deur sending[152] bedien die Kerk die evangelie in al sy dimensies aan mense buite die kerk.' (C0 53 1994:12; CO 53 1998:18; CO 2002:21-22; CO 53 2004:23; CO 53 2007:23; CO 53 2011:11).

The use of 'mission' indicates a more comprehensive understating of the *missio Dei* than just 'evangelisation'.

C053 2013 went further still, and was changed to:

'53.3 Die gestuurde kerk[153] bedien die evangelie in al sy dimensies aan mense wat die evangelie nie ken nie of daarvan vervreemd is.' (C053 2013:14)

This is only a nuanced change in the phrasing, but still a significant change that carries a stronger emphasis on the different dimensions of the gospel. This argument is strengthened by a change made to the first paragraph of Article 53.1 of CO 53 2013, which now states:

'53.1 Die missie van die Drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees is **om lewe en volheid aan die wêreld te gee**, *en die kerk is in diens van God se missie'. (CO 53 2013:14)*

The aim of the *missio Dei* is not only *'mission'*, but also to bring life in all its fullness.

There has also been development in three specific aspects of holistic salvation, namely social justice, reconciliation and ecology.

Social justice (*'geregtigheid'*) features in the documents of the DRC General Synod from before 1990. A study called *'Kerk en samelewing'* (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1990b) was first presented to the General Synod in 1986 and later revised in 1990. According to Strauss (2011: 511) the document signalled an official change in the DRC's policy towards Apartheid. The document was such a significant change in the policy of the DRC that it was one of the main factors that led to a breakaway of more than 7000 members, who then formed the Afrikaanse Protestantse Kerk. The document emphasised Christian brotherly love, social justice (*'geregtigheid'*), justice (*'reg'*), caring for the poor (*'barmhartigheid'*), and honouring God-given human dignity (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1990b: par. 124-129). This was the start of a new direction for the DRC, which would be developed in the coming decisions of the General Synod.

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152 An interesting deviation in ROW 2004 that uses witnessing ('getuienis'), while CO 53 2004 of the same year uses mission ('sending') like CO 1994-2011 and ROW 1994-1998; 2004-2011.

153 'Gestuurde kerk' could be translated as 'sent church' or 'missional church'. In the context of the 2013 synod, which had a strong emphasis on the missional church, the choice is made for 'missional church'.

ROW 1990:47 dealt with social justice under the heading of *'Uitvoering'*:

'Dit is die plig van die kerkraad om die gemeente te motiveer en toe te rus om as missionêre gemeente betrokke te wees by die heilshandeling van God met die wêreld. Hierdie betrokkenheid sluit in [...] die ywer vir reg en geregtigheid in die samelewing.'

CO 53 was slower to adopt an emphasis on social justice. Only in CO 53 1998 was the following sentence added: *'Deur dié gemeente: [...] word sy geregtigheid aan die samelewing en wêreld verkondig'.* This sentence is still part of CO 53.

An indicative and imperative approach to social justice is discernible in the documents of the General Synod. The indicative approach is in line with CO 53 and talks about preaching God's justice. Examples of this approach are CBS 2011:n.p.:

'Ons is die jeugdige bruid van Christus wat by wyse van ons eredienste, aksies en optredes die toekoms tegemoet dans deur die aantrek van die fyn linne van dade van geregtigheid'.

and FDMC 2013:203:

'Die kerk bring versoening en transformeer die gemeenskap in die lig van God se geregtigheid';

In the imperative approach, churches are called to be actively involved in working towards social justice. Examples of this are:

DRI 2007:17: 'Dit beteken dat ons met ons nuwe status moet leef as mense wat ook lief het, genadig is en geregtigheid soek.'

FDMC 2013:137: 'Daarom is die diakonaat van die kerk meerkantig en kan verskillende tipes diakonaat onderskei word, soos die bediening van God se barmhartigheid en omgee vir mense en die natuur, die bediening van God se versoening en vrede, die bediening van God se geregtigheid'.

While working through the documents, I had a sense that the imperative was growing in importance, and that the later documents try to strike a careful balance between the imperative and indicative. Christopher Wright (2006: 61) argues that both are equally important, and that the one needs to be interpreted in light of the other. The influence of the Confession of Belhar could also be seen in the growing emphasis on social justice, despite the fact that at the time of writing, the confession was not yet a confession of the DRC.

Social justice is also associated that with the Kingdom of God, as in:

DME 2011:134: 'Dit maak moontlik, 'n lewe waar die vernietigende invloed van sonde nie die laaste sê het nie, maar waar God deur sy Gees in beheer is en waar reg en geregtigheid, vrede en vreugde geld' . The same wording found in FDMC 2013:204.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, social justice as is seen in terms of who God is:

DME 2011:137: '10.4 Die dienswerk van die kerk is nie net gegrond in God se sending nie maar is inderdaad gegrond in God self: God se liefde, Sy barmhartigheid, Sy geregtigheid…'

Another aspect of a holistic mission that featured in the documents was reconciliation, in terms of both cultural and political groups in South Africa. *Kerk en Samelewing* (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1990b) dealt extensively with church's responsibility of reconciliation in South Africa. An examples of this is Paragraph 68: *'As mense wat deur Christus se bloed met God en met mekaar versoen is en nou vrede het, moet kerkmense en kerke die bediening van die versoening verder dra en mekaar dien in die gees van broederlike liefde en vrede'* (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1990b: par. 68).

Other documents that also emphasise the church's role in reconciliation in South Africa are:

DCE 2007:54-55: '8.10.2.5 Versoening: Die euforie van 1994 is lank reeds verby en Suid-Afrika worstel steeds intens daarmee om werklik 'n regverdige en nie-rassige samelewing daar te stel. Verskeie sosio-politiese faktore dra ook daartoe by dat vervreemding aan die orde van die dag is en ware versoening steeds 'n droom is. In die opsig moet die kerk die hartklop van die evangelie helder en duidelik laat hoor. 'n Kerk wat opgee op versoening gee op van die kernopdragte in die evangelie. Kerkrade behoort konstant en konkreet die vraag te vra oor hoe hulle op plaaslike vlak hieraan kan meewerk.' The same sentiments are found in DME 2011:137 and FDMC 2013:203;207.

DCE 2007:55 argues that spiritual leaders should be peacemakers and bridge builders. They should also manage conflict and diversity.

Since 1998, ecology has had a prominent presence in the church's view of salvation. CO 53 1998 included the following: *'laat Hy sy opdrag om die skepping te bewaar en te bewerk sigbaar tot uitdrukking kom, en word sy geregtigheid aan die samelewing en wêreld verkondig'*. This sentence is still part of the article. SOC 2007:n.p. called the church to work toward the healing of human, animals and nature. Other documents that also emphasise the ecology as part of a holistic view of salvation are: DCE 2007:53; DME 2007:135 '8.2.7; FDMC 2013:203;207.

6.1.2.5 Missional Hermeneutic

True to the Reformed heritage, the documents studied reconfirm the church's commitment to the Bible as the Word of God (DRI 2007:12). Furthermore, preaching should be anchored in responsible exegetical and hermeneutical principles. DCE 2007:51 pleads for a pneumatological hermeneutic, i.e. that God speaks through his Word.

FDMC 2013:202 states that the Bible talks about God as a sending God:

'Ons leer God in die Bybel ken as 'n sturende God. Daarom word daar van die missio Dei gepraat. Die lewe van God is 'n proses van gestuurdheid...'

and also that the church is a sent community:

'Die Bybel gebruik 'n rykdom van beelde en begrippe om die manier waarop gelowiges in hul konteks gestuur is, te skets.'

There is, however, just one instance where there is a call for a missional hermeneutic. FDMC 2013:212 calls for the Bible to be understood from a consistent missional hermeneutic.

The foundational role of the Bible in the DRC remains important; also the emphasis on a sending God and a send church. As discussed earlier, a missional hermeneutic is very important for the development of a missional church. In the process of the development of a missional ecclesiology for the DRC, more emphasis will need to be placed on the development of a consistent missional hermeneutic.

6.1.2.6 Missional Ecclesiology

In the documents that were analysed, the development of a missional ecclesiology could be discerned. This is in line with research done by Niemandt (2014). Yet this still is a work in progress, transforming the DRC from an institutionalised, inwardly focused church with a colonial view of mission in the early 1990s, to a church that is eager to join God in his movement in in the world. The discussion of a missional ecclesiology must include all the aspects of missional theology discussed in this chapter. This section will focus on ecclesiology and will include all aspects not yet covered.

The documents from the early 1990s are reflective of the church <u>with a</u> mission. At this point, mission was the task of, and ministry within, the church. A church that understood its contexts within the frame of Christendom. Evidence of this is found in ROW 1990:47

'2.1.3 Vir die koördinering, stimulering en uitvoering van die sendingtaak benoem die kerkraad 'n sendingkommissie.'

As argued in Chapter 3, the DRC of the early 1990s was still struggling to get to grips with the realities of the New South Africa. Congregations saw their missionary task as sending missionaries to faraway countries.

The development of missional theology internationally was starting to influence South African theologians as well. This influence was reflected in reports to the General Synod. Niemandt (2014: 67) is of the opinion that the birth of the missional ecclesiology within the DRC was the General Synod of 2002. The Synod asked a commission to write a report on a practical congregational ecclesiology for the DRC. The report was tabled at and accepted by the General Synod of 2007.

The report and those that followed included various aspects of a missional ecclesiology (see DME 2011; FDMC 2013). The 2013 report called *'A Framework document on a missional nature and calling of the Dutch Reformed Church'* (FDMC 2013) is by far the most comprehensive report on a missional ecclesiology in the DRC. Although the church polity has been slow in implementing the various proposals in the reports, there is a definite movement towards a missional ecclesiology within the DRC, as can be seen from the following examples:

- The DRC's call to be a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom:

SOC 2002:i: 'Kom ons wys die wêreld opnuut dat ons as "sout vir die aarde" en "lig vir die wêreld" God se Koninkryk wil laat kom.'

DME 2011:133: 'Die kerk is God se mense wat 'n voorsmaak bied van God se genesende heerskappy.'

FDMC 2013:202: 'Die kerk is word geroep om 'n "teken" van God se koninkryk te wees, om aan die mensdom 'n voorsmaak van God se genesende heerskappy te bied.'

FDMC 2013:204: 'Die kerk kan beskou word as 'n teken, eerste vrug van en instrument van God se ryk.'

- The DRC is called to be a movement, not an institution:

DCE 2007:47: 'Derhalwe moet die Nuwe Testamentiese siening van gelowiges as tempels van die Heilige Gees (1 Kor 3:16; 6:19) opnuut prakties ontgin word teenoor skeefgetrekte sienings rondom kerkgeboue as "die huis van God." Eweneens moet die foutiewe skeiding tussen heilige ruimtes en sekulêre ruimtes opgehef word. […] Vanuit die Nuwe Testamentiese perspektief is alle gelowiges voltydse verteenwoordigers van Christus op elke plek waar hulle hulself bevind. Kerkwees gebeur daarom binne elke lewenssfeer. Formele kerklike byeenkomste is inoefen-geleenthede om God gesamentlik te eer en om toegerus te word om Christus se voltydse getuies te wees.'

FDMC 2013:207: 'Die kerk is nie die formele struktuur, ampte, geboue, ordes of aktiwiteite nie – die kerk is 'n beweging.'

- Members of the DRC are called to be disciples and should make disciples:

DCE 2007:47: '8.1 IDENTITEIT Dit word weer bevestig dat die NG Kerk se diepste identiteit gevind behoort te word in haar oortuiging dat sy deur Christus Jesus aan God behoort. Ons eerste identiteit behoort nie in menslike kulturele uitdrukkingsvorme gevind te word nie, maar in radikale navolgelingskap (dissipelskap) van Jesus Christus.'

DME 2011: '7.9 Die missionale verstaan van gemeentes fokus op die belang van dissipelskap. 'n Gemeente is 'n gemeenskap van dissipels. Dissipels is mense wat Christus volg, wat van Hom leer om nuwe mense te wees en wat, soos Christus, die wêreld nuut maak deur nuwe verhoudings.' The same ideas are also found in FDMC 2013:207.

- Every believer is called to be a missionary:

DCE 2011:46: 'Jesus se roeping tot navolging van Hom (Matt 16:24-26) veronderstel dat alle gelowiges voltydse dissipels is. In die praktyk vra dit gehoorsaamheid aan al sy beginsels en reëls. Navolgers van Christus word gekenmerk deur hul lojaliteit aan Christus en sy plan om die koninkryk van God wêreldwyd te laat seëvier. Alle gelowiges is sodoende sendelinge. Missie is nie die roeping van 'n uitgesoekte groepie gelowiges wat iewers in die wêreld die evangelie voltyds uitdra nie. Alle gelowiges is sendelinge op alle plekke in die samelewing waar hulle hulself telkens bevind.' The same emphasis is found in DCE 2007:52 DCE 2011:52.

The DRC is called to be a 'Kingdom-shaped church'

In the development of a missional ecclesiology, there are two pitfalls the church must avoid. On the one hand, there is the church-shaped Kingdom that collapses the Kingdom into the church, and sees the Kingdom where they see the church. The other end of the spectrum is the world-shaped Kingdom, which emphasises the Kingdom in the world up to the point where the church has no role left. A missional ecclesiology has a balanced or Kingdom-shaped church view. The church joins God in the realisation of his Kingdom as a sign, instrument and foretaste, but the Kingdom is much more than the church. In the documents of the General

Synod, there are different nuances on the Kingdom. CO 53 1991-2011 leaned toward a church-shaped Kingdom view in stating that:

'1.1 Sending is die heilshandeling van die drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees met die wêreld, waardeur Hy uit die ganse menslike geslag vir Hom 'n gemeente deur sy Woord en Gees vergader. Deur dié gemeente;' (CO 53 1990:13; C0 53 1994:12; CO 53 1998:18; CO 2002:21-22; CO 53 2004:23; CO 53 2007:23; CO 53 2011:11)

CO 53 2013:14 made a correction and changed the article to reflect more of a Kingdom-shaped church view:

'1.1 Die missie van die Drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees is om lewe en volheid aan die wêreld te gee, en die kerk is in diens van God se missie. 1.2 Deur die Woord en Gees vergader God vir Hom 'n gemeente.'

The change reflects more of a Kingdom-shaped church view. The 2007 document on the Reformed identity of the DRC (DRI 2007) argues for a balanced view of Kingdom and church. Note the following sections:

DRI 2007:13: '3.2.3 Die kerk. 3.2.3.1 Die kerk speel 'n groot en belangrike rol in die lewe van gereformeerde gelowiges. [...] Dit is een van die kenmerke van gereformeerdes se kerkbegrip dat die geloof nie volledig opgaan in kerkwees nie. Die koninkryk is groter as die kerk. Die kerk kan met reg teken of gestalte van die koninkryk genoem word. Lidmate strewe nie na die verkerkliking van hulle lewens nie, maar na die verChristeliking daarvan. Die konkreetheid en aardsheid van geloof staan op die voorgrond. Wat in die kerk gebeur, moet lidmate met die lewe in die Koninkryk help. [...] Die kerk behoort in wese altyd op die wêreld gerig te wees en op pad na die wêreld te wees.'

FDMC 2013:205: 'Die kerk se lewe word afgelees vanuit die perspektief van God se ryk, wat reeds ten dele in die wêreld en kerk teenwoordig is, maar met Christus se wederkoms volledig sal deurbreek. [...] In hierdie verstaan van die verband tussen die kerk en God se ryk, word twee standpunte afgewys, naamlik dat dit 'n koninkryk is wat deur die kerk gevorm word ("church-shaped Kingdom"), en dat die koninkryk volledig in die wêreld is sodat die kerk nie eintlik nodig is nie ("world-shaped Kingdom"). Daarom kies ons liewer om van 'n kerk te praat wat deur die ideale van die koninkryk gevorm is ("Kingdom-shaped church"). Die kerk se lewe word afgelees vanuit die perspektief van God se ryk, wat reeds ten dele in die wêreld en kerk teenwoordig is, maar met Christus se wederkoms volledig sal deurbreek.'

Despite earlier signs of a church-shaped Kingdom view, the ecclesiology has developed into a much better balance between Kingdom-shaped church and Kingdom-shaped mission.

Spiritual formation is important in the development of a missional ecclesiology.

Spiritual formation as part of a missional ecclesiology is first mentioned in CBS 2011, where congregations are called to prayerful openness to be formed by the word of God, through his

Spirit and to be renewed to reflect the image of God. FDMC 2013 deals more in depth with spiritual formation. Section 11 (FDMC 2013:208) contains new reflections on spiritual formation n the church. The section argues that central to a missional ecclesiology are spiritual formation and spirituality in the church. The document defines a missional spirituality as being conscious of God's living presence. Missional spirituality is also a spirituality of pilgrims. Christians are called to be pilgrims and to join God in his movement in the world. On this pilgrimage, Christians not only change the world, but they are also changed themselves.

Spiritual formation starts with listening to the Word, the Holy Spirit, and the needs of the world. In the process of listening, God's will is discerned. FDMC 2013:207 argues that discernment is the heart of spiritual formation, and the church can only join God and what he is doing if it is able to discern where he is working. In the process of discerning, the church needs to ask the following questions:

- What is God doing? In what way is the Spirit currently working in the world?
- Why does God want to do? What would the world look like if God, through his Spirit, reconciled everything with him?

Youth ministry is an important aspect of a missional ecclesiology

Youth ministry is referred to only twice in the documents studied. CC 2004:ii calls on the church to inspire and lead the youth to be part of the Church in making a difference. DME 2011:139 contains a section 15 *'Missionale kerk en Jeugbediening'* on a missional ecclesiology and youth ministry. This section was also incorporated into FDMC 2013:212 under the heading *'16. Nuwe nadenke oor die jeugbediening en kategese in 'n missionale kerk'*.

Sections 15 (DME 2011:139) and 16 (FDMC 2013:212) call the DRC to:

- have a youth ministry that reflects the missional identity of the church;
- be cognisant of the post-modern context of youth ministry, and that youth workers need to be like missionaries learning a new culture and language. They also need to translate the gospel into this new language and culture;
- teach children the values of a missional church; and
- help them discern where God is working and how he wants to use them.

The values of a missional ecclesiology should be used in developing a missional youth ministry that helps children identify with the missional identity of the church within their own postmodern context.

6.1.3 Essential Aspects of Fresh Expressions of Church Present in DRC ecclesiology

The last section of the evaluation will focus on the lessons learned on a missional ecclesiology that was found in the fresh expressions movement.

6.1.3.1 Denominational Support

The first lesson learned from the fresh expressions movement is that the support of the denomination is essential. Denominational support for a missional ecclesiology implies the following:

- removing barriers in the church polity to develop new faith communities (i.e. church planting);
- supporting, financing and training missional leaders and communities;
- the support of prominent leaders within the denomination for a missional ecclesiology and the formation of new faith communities.

Some, but not all of these aspects of the development of a missional ecclesio0logy fall under the purview of the General Synod, because the General Synod sees its task not as the implementation of a missional ecclesiology, but as the creation of a new language and a new imagination, as well as changes to the Church Order that will reflect a missional ecclesiology (FDMC 2013:200). The aspects that was found in the documents are the following:

New missional language was visible from the use of concepts like *'die wil van die Here onderskei'* (CC2004:ii; DCE 2007:49,50; DME 2011:132,136,139; FDMC 2013:207,209,214); *'Trinitaries'* (DCE 2007:48,; DME 2011:138; FDMC 2013:201,209); *'missio Dei'* (DCE 2007,47; DME 2011:132-133; FDMC 2013:200,202,203,206,209,212); *'onsself prysgee'* (CBS 2011:n.p.; FDMC 2013:199) *'kenōsis'* (DME 2011:137;FDMC 2013:205:209); *'gestuurdheid', 'gestuurde gemeentes', 'gestuurde gelowiges'* (SOC 2007:n.p.; DME 2011:131-134.136,139; FDMC 2013:199-200,202-203,207-208,211,213, CO 53 2013:14; ROW 2013:90-95); *'missionaal',*

'missionale gemeentes', 'missionale ekklesiologie' (DME 2011; FDMC 2013); *'inkarnasie'* (DCE 2007; DME 2011; FDMC 2013). These concepts are not new, but the context in which they are used and their prevalence, create a new language for a church that wants to develop a missional ecclesiology. The current research suggests the birth date of a missional ecclesiology in the General Synod of the DRC between the Synods of 2002 and 2004. This concurs with Niemandt's (2014: 67) opinion that the Statement of Calling (2002) and request by the Synod of 2002 for a commission to study a practical congregational ecclesiology formed the birth of the missional ecclesiology.

Changes to the church polity to reflect a missional ecclesiology

If the DRC wants to develop a missional ecclesiology, the church polity of the church should reflect this (Koffeman, 2009: 191-192). The problem in the DRC was that the church polity of the early 1990s reflected a Christendom church with influence and power. Since then the context of the church changed and the church experience a loss of power and a context change. In what way are these changes reflected in the current church order? DME 2011 asked the Commission for Church Polity (Algemene Taakspan vir Regte) to look into the implications of a missional ecclesiology for the church order. DME 2011 suggested changes to Articles 1, 9, and 10 of the Church Order.

Changes to Article 1[154] '

DME 2011 proposed to the Commission for Church Polity that the heading of the article be changed to *'Die aard, belydenis en orde van die kerk'*, as well as adding the following introduction to the article:

'Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk is geroep om deel te neem aan God se sending in die wêreld. Die kerk verkondig die bediening van versoening en die heil van Christus aan alle mense.'

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[154] Article 1 of 2007:*'Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk staan gegrond op die Bybel as die heilige en onfeilbare Woord van God. Die leer wat die Kerk in ooreenstemming met die Woord van God bely, staan uitgedruk in die Formuliere van Eenheid soos vasgestel op die Sinode van Dordrecht in 1618-1619, naamlik die sewe en dertig artikels van die Nederlandse Geloofsbelydenis, die Heidelbergse Kategismus en die vyf Dordtse Leerreëls.'*

The report on missional ecclesiology wanted to emphasise both the missional and confessional nature of the church. The Church Order of the Hervormde Kerk in the Netherlands (1951) placed the article on the missional nature of the church before the article about the confessional basis of the church because it understood confession as a reaction to the church's call to movement and mission (Niemandt, 2014: 74-75). This recommendation was also in line with articles found in church orders of other Reformed churches, for example the Presbyterian Church, USA (PCUSA) and the Protestantse Kerk in Nederland (PKN) (Niemandt, 2014: 74).

DME 2011 was well received by the Synod and approved as a discussion document. It was also to be integrated into the current policies of the diaconal service. Regrettably, the Synod rejected the proposal for changes to Article 1 after a report from the Interim Committee on Church Order (2011) argued that that the introduction to Article 1 must not change because the article describes the foundations of the DRC and not its calling (Niemandt, 2014: 75). Niemandt (2014: 75) is of the opinion that the committee did not understand the proposed change, because the missional language introduced to Article 1 did not describe the church's missional calling but its missional foundation.

The 2013 General Synod proposed a new Article 1 to make a room for the Confession of Belhar, but still did not include any language about the missional foundation of the church. The Confession of Belhar includes aspect of a missional ecclesiology like social justice, church unity and human dignity, but Article 1 still lacks a clear reflection of the missional nature of church[155].

Changes to Article 9

Between 1990 and 2004, there were no substantial changes to Article 9[156]. From 2004 to 2007, however, there were some prominent changes. Article 9 of 2007 reads as follows:

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155 At the time of writing, the process of accepting the new article 1 was still ongoing.

156 Article 9 of 2004: *'Die amp of bediening van die bedienaar van die Woord is gerig op die Woordbediening in sy verskillende gestaltes en omvat:*
9.1 die prediking;
9.2 die bediening van die sakramente;
9.3 die diens van gebede;
9.4 die leiding van die eredienste;
9.5 die kerklike onderrig, in samewerking met die ander ampte en die gelowiges;

9.1 Die fokus van die amp van die predikant is die bediening van die Woord (in al sy gestaltes) en van die sakramente, sowel as die toerusting van gelowiges vir die deelname van die kerk aan die werk van God in sy wêreld.

9.2 Die predikant is geroep om die Woord van God te bestudeer, onderrig daarin te gee en dit oral te verkondig; om die sakramente te bedien en om saam met en vir die gemeente te bid en 'n navolger van Christus te wees op so 'n manier dat ander hom / haar kan navolg.

9.3 Die amp van die predikant funksioneer binne 'n gemeente of as deel van dienswerk van die kerkverband in die wêreld.

'9.4 In gemeentes aanvaar die predikant veral verantwoordelikheid vir die prediking en die bediening van die sakramente. Die predikant is, saam met die ander ampte, verantwoordelik vir:

- *die diens van die gebede,*
- *eredienste,*
- *onderrig en toerusting,*
- *opbou van die gemeente,*
- *die gemeente se dienswerk in die wêreld,*
- *leiding en organisering van die gemeente,*
- *uitoefening van Christelike liefde en tug,*
- *pastorale versorging*

Kerkrade onderskei, saam met die predikant, oor die wyse waarop dié roeping en verantwoordelikhede, in lyn met bepaalde begaafdhede, uitgeleef word en vervat dit in 'n diensooreenkoms.

9.5 Die predikant neem ook deel aan die gesamentlike bediening van die kerkverband in die onderskeie kerklike vergaderinge en ekumeniese verhoudings.

9.6 As deel van die dienswerk van die kerkverband aan die wêreld tref die kerkverband reëlings oor wyses waarop die predikant deelneem aan die werk wat God in Christus deur sy Gees in die wêreld doen.'

The changes reflected the movement towards a missional ecclesiology that was taking place within the DRC. It was a substantial change to the imagination of the role of the minister within the congregation. More emphasis was placed on the minister's role in studying the word, equipping the congregation and bringing about personal discipleship. The other offices in the congregation were also included in taking responsibility for the ministry of prayer, as well as the church services. There was also a change in the pastoral responsibilities of the minister: *'9.6 die behartiging van die herderlike sorg, veral in die vorm van huisbesoek, saam met die kerkraadslede'* were replaced by *'pastorale versorging'*. The article became less prescriptive of

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9.6 die behartiging van die herderlike sorg, veral in die vorm van huisbesoek, saam met die kerkraadslede;
9.7 die ywer vir die uitbreiding van die koninkryk van God;
9.8 die regering, organisasie, leiding en bestuur van die gemeente saam met die ouderlinge en diakens.

the strategy of pastoral care. *Huisbesoek* (home visits) by ministers had been part of a parochial system that focused on church maintenance.

Between 2007 and 2011, there were two changes that reflected a missional ecclesiology. Section 9.2 was changed to focus solely on the personal discipleship of the minister. A further change was made to 9.4, where educating and equipping the faithful was given a focus with the addition of *'vir hulle dienwerk'.*

During the General Synod of 2011, the important DME 2011 was published. The report suggested that the following should be added to Article 9.4: *'Die predikant is, saam met die ander ampte, verantwoordelik vir: onderskeiding, kerkplanting'.* These capacities are very important in light of other research. Gert Cordier (2014: 219) found that one of the key capacities of a missional leader within the South African context is the ability to discern where God is working, and to lead congregations in discerning processes. Furthermore, Noort et al. (2008: 17) follow Timothy J. Keller's argument that there are three benefits of church planting (*'missionaire gemeenskapsvorming'*). Firstly, church planting is a biblical imperative; secondly, church planting is very effective in reaching new groups of people; and lastly, church planting has a positive influence on the local churches.

In the end, the General Synod 2011 followed the recommendations of the Interim Committee on Church Order 2011 in that these two additions not be accepted. The 2013 church order did, however, add *'kerkplanting'* to the responsibilities of the minister. '*Onderskeiding*' is still not part of the responsibilities of a minister.

Changes to Article 10

Article 10[157] regulates the geographical principle and states:

The Synod of 2004 made changes to Article 10 in line with a policy decision on the softening of congregational borders, which read:

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157 1990-2007 Article 10: *''n Bedienaar van die Woord mag geen ampspligte (Artikel 9) uitoefen binne die grense van 'n ander gemeente sonder die toestemming van daardie kerkraad nie.'*

'Besluit by art. 10

'10b1 Die behartiging van herderlike sorg by ingeskrewe lidmate van 'n gemeente wat in 'n ander gemeente se grense woon, mag wel geskied in ooreenstemming met die besluit van die sinode dat lidmate ook buite 'n gemeente se geografiese grense mag woon.'

DME 2011 argued that in order to facilitate church planting, Article 10 must be scrapped. Article 10 presupposes a geographical, parochial ecclesiology, while the contemporary church functions within a network society. If the DRC is serious about the *missio Dei* and the formation of new faith communities, Article 10 presents a problem, because it ties the hands of the minister (Koffeman, 2009: 201).

The Interim Committee on Church Order amended the proposal to scrap Article 10 and suggested the following formulation of Article 10, which was accepted by the Synod.

'Artikel 10

'n Bedienaar van die Woord mag geen ampspligte (vergelyk Artikel 9 van die Kerkorde) onder lidmate van 'n ander gemeente verrig sonder die toestemming van daardie kerkraad nie.'

The geographical limitation was removed in favour of a focus on permission needed to perform official duties among members of another congregation. Niemandt (2014: 77) believes that the new article makes room for the formation of new faith communities and church planting. Congregations can still prevent the planting of a new congregation with their boundaries.

Since 1990, there has been some movement in the DRC polity towards a missional ecclesiology. Yet there are still deficiencies in the Church Order that hamper the DRC in reflecting its seriousness about the *missio Dei*. Article 1 still only reflects the confessional character of the church, and not its missional nature. Dingemans (1987: 19) makes a strong argument that the apostolate and confessional nature of the church is part of the identity of the church and needs to be reflected prominently in the Church Order. An example of this is the 1951 Church Order of the Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk [158], which deals with the apostolate *('VIII. Van het apostolaat der Kerk')* in Article 8 and the confessional basis *('X. Van het belijden der Kerk)* only in Article 10 (Kerkrecht.nl, 1951: n.p.). Niemandt (2014: 75) agrees with Koffeman (2009: 190-

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158 The Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk joined the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland and the Evangelisch-Lutherse Kerk to become the Protestantse Kerk in Nederland (PKN) in 2004 (Kerkrecht.nl, 2004: n.p.).

191) when he argues that the classical Reformed *notae ecclesiae* was determined in the context of the Reformation and gave little attention to mission. The bigger problem is that the modern church lacks the urgency to change this oversight, even though the church functions in a post-Christendom context and wants to be a missional church.

In spite of the slow process of change in Article 9 and the resistance to the scrapping of Article 10, there is clear trajectory towards a church polity that reflects the church's missional calling. It is to be hoped that the church will be brave enough to follow the *missio Dei* in creating a church polity that will facilitate a missional ecclesiology.

6.1.3.2 Mixed Economy of Church

In the documents studied, there was only one section in DME 2011 (also incorporated into FDMC 2013) which dealt with the mixed economy of church. DME 2011 suggests that much can be learned from the Anglican Church's use of the principle of mixed economy. The reasons for this are that the DRC has a parochial system resembling that of the Anglican Church, as well as the fact that South African society is currently more governed by networks than geography. The mixed economy of church (see Chapter 5), dictates that the future of mainline churches cannot be one-dimensional, and there must be room for diversity and novelty (Moynagh, 2012: loc. 1845). The mixed economy allows for fresh expressions as well as inherited forms of church. The addition to the Church Order of church planting to the responsibilities of their minister in Article 9, and the change to Article 10, both hint at a mixed economy of church.

6.1.3.3 Context Sensitive

Sensitivity towards the context became a prominent feature of documents accepted by the General Synod from 2002 onwards. One of the main catalysts in this process was the decision of the Synod of 2002 to appoint a working group tasked with developing a programme called the Season of Listening (*Seisoen van Luister*). The programme was launched at the general ministers' gathering in 2005. The General Synod of 2007 reconfirmed its commitment to the Season of Listening (Fourie, 2009: 3). The Season of Listening focused on listening to God, fellow Christians and the context of the church. The working group also identified the following values of the season: a teachable spirit (*'leerbare gesindheid'*), trust (*'vertroue'*), compassion

('*deernis*'), openness ('*openheid*') (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007a: 3). Various processes, media products, sermons, Bible studies, and books were developed to propagate the focus and values of the season. These products were aimed at individual Christians, congregations, church boards, presbyteries and Synods.

The influence of the Season of Listening can be seen in a sensitivity towards contexts as well is a focus on discernment. The following evidence of the emphasis on listening and discernment was found:

FDMC 2013: 'Die kerk word dus geroep om 'n luisterende gemeenskap te wees. Een van die wyses waarop diversiteit binne die eenheid gekoester word, is deur stories en verhale te vertel en om daarna te luister. Dié narratiewe oor diversiteit/andersheid skep ruimte vir nuwe begrip en vir hoop in 'n samelewing wat moed verloor het. Verhale van hoop waarin diversiteit verreken is, word bakens van hoop.' The same emphasis was found in CC 2004 and SOC 2007.

Listening or discernment leads to sensitivity towards the context, as can be seen in the following statement:

FDMC 2013: 'Die inkarnasie beklemtoon juis die feit dat die kerk altyd op die wêreld gerig is en op pad na die wêreld is, en dit onderstreep hoe belangrik dit is om die konteks te verstaan.' [...] 'Die kerk inkarneer die evangelie. Die manier en aard van kerkwees word bepaal in ver-houding met die konteks waarbinne die gemeente haarself bevind en waarheen die gemeente gestuur word.' [...] 'Daar is egter nog 'n eksegetiese vaardigheid wat net so belangrik is – die vaardigheid om die konteks (en kultuur) waarbinne die kerk is, geloofsonderskeidend te verstaan.'

The same emphasis on the importance of being context sensitive was also found in SOC 2002; DCE 2007; SOC 2007; CBS 2011; CBS 2011; DME 2011.

During the coding process, two sub-codes for context sensitivity were developed that identified additional themes in the documents. The first sub-code was 'Christendom context' and the second was 'African calling'.

Christendom context

During the coding process, Article 52.2 1990-2013 (congregational ministry) was coded as reflecting a Christendom context:

52.2 Die Kerk rig haar deur intensiewe gespesialiseerde gemeentebediening tot kerkvervreemdes wat formeel nog lidmate is ten einde hulle daadwerklik te bereik en hulle tot gemeenskap met Christus te bring.

The article is reflective of a historical mainline church that showed signs of being a *Volkskirche*, with a large official membership and a smaller active membership. The situation raised three questions:

1. Should a person be a member of the congregation if they are not active in the congregation?

2. Should there be a separate evangelisation strategy for people who are former members and people who have never been members of the church? In other words, should former members be the focus of congregational ministry and never-before members the focus of the mission ministry?

3. Does it reflect a missional ecclesiology if there are separate articles for congregational ministry and mission ministry?

It is my opinion that the great difference between official membership and involved membership is part of the Christendom legacy of the DRC and many Reformed churches. The membership of the congregation should reflect the *active* members of the congregation. Former members should be part of the local community who are served as part of the church's missional focus on the community. It is suggested that Article 52.2[159] and Article 53[160] should form one article in the Church Order, and that the work among former members should form part of the church's missional strategy. Article 52 should deal exclusively with the equipping and teaching of members for their ministry.

Focus on the African context

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159 Article 52.*1 'Gemeentebediening: Die Kerk rig haar deur middel van gemeentebediening tot die lidmate ten einde die gemeente op te bou tot vervulling van sy dienswerk. 52.2 Die Kerk rig haar deur intensiewe gespesialiseerde gemeentebediening tot kerkvervreemdes wat formeel nog lidmate is ten einde hulle daadwerklik te bereik en hulle tot gemeenskap met Christus te bring. 52.3 Waar die omvang en ander omstandighede van die werk dit vereis, word dit in kerkverband onderneem.'*

160 Article 53 *'Gestuurdheid (Missio Dei): 53.1Die missie van die Drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees is om lewe en volheid aan die wêreld te gee, en die kerk is in diens van God se missie. 53.2 Deur die Woord en Gees vergader God vir Hom 'n gemeente. Deur dié gemeente: laat God sy Woord verkondig, bring Hy die gemeenskap van heiliges uit alle nasies tot stand, laat Hy diens aan die wêreld in nood lewer, laat Hy sy opdrag om die skepping en lewe te bewaar sigbaar tot uitdrukking bring, en word sy geregtigheid en versoening verkondig. Só laat Hy sy koninkryk kom. 53.3 Die gestuurde kerk bedien die evangelie in al sy dimensies aan mense wat die evangelie nie ken nie of daarvan vervreemd is.'*

During a discussion of the missional waves in the DRC (Chapter 3), it became clear that there had been an ebb and flow in the DRC's missionary motivation for Africa. Since the 1970s, there had been a decline in enthusiasm for and focus on Africa. However, in the studied documents evidence was found of a renewed focus on Africa, especially Southern Africa. The Statement of Calling 2002 (SOC 2002) clearly stated the church's self-understanding as being part of Southern Africa, and a renewed focus on Southern Africa. The following excerpts (SOC 2002) are cited:

'Tydens die vergadering van die Algemene Sinode het ons as afgevaardigdes al hoe meer oortuig geraak van die liefde van Christus en daarom ook van die NGK se roeping en plek in Suider-Afrika.

Daarom:

(a) verbind ons ons opnuut aan die Here wat ons Kerk 350 jaar gelede hier geplaas het.

(b) verbind ons ons opnuut tot ons kontinent, in die besonder Suider- Afrika. Die tragiese verhale van die allerverskriklike vorms van geweld, die geweldige omvang van armoede en gevolglike hongersnood, die konsekwensies van die vigspandemie, die gebrek aan respek vir mense, diere en die omgewing en ook ons aandeel daaraan, het ons ontstel. Die Sinode betuig sy meegevoel aan die talle slagoffers. Ons wil ook 'n verskil maak. Daarom verbind ons ons om mee te werk aan oplossings vir ons samelewing. Ons stel ons as Kerk beskikbaar om op elke vlak waar ons kan help betrokke te raak. Ons verseker die owerheid van ons voorbidding en ons verbintenis tot diens aan die gemeenskap…

(d) roep ons gemeentes op om by die genesing van ons land betrokke te raak.'

The Statement of Calling 2002 (SOC 2002), Calling Commitment 2004 (CC2004) and Statement of Calling 2007 (SOC 2007) all confirmed this commitment to Southern Africa:

DCE 2007 deals extensively with the calling of the church. The discussion links calling with discernment, and motivates congregations to be constantly discerning God's will for them. In the discerning process, congregations should ask themselves two questions:

- *'Watter een of twee uiters belangrike dinge moet ons doen om God te eer?'*
- *'Watter een of twee uiters belangrike dinge kan en moet ons doen om van my land, kerk en gemeenskap 'n beter plek te maak?'*

FDMC 2013 takes the DRC's African calling as its point of departure and asks what it means to be a church in Africa. How does the church adapt to each new context? In light of the fact that the church wants to be an incarnation of the gospel and live a kenotic life, how can the church serve Southern Africa, a sub-continent that has to deal with poverty, corruption, crime, diseases like HIV, as well as the reality of people living in a network society?

6.1.3.4 Training

Training in the context of this research has a specific focus on equipping Christians for the task of service in the Kingdom. To do that, Christians (both ministers and laypeople) need to understand and live the various aspects of the missional theology and ecclesiology. Examples of emphasis on missional training were found in the studied documents. From 2004 onwards, the focus was on general aspects of a missional ecclesiology, such as getting involved in the healing of the country. CC 2004 focused on the development of a Congregational Services Network that would equip congregations and ministers to make a difference in their context:

CC 2004: 'Om 'n gemeentedienste-netwerk te help uitbou van waaruit ons gemeentes prakties gehelp en ondersteun kan word om op konkrete maniere by die genesing van ons lande betrokke te raak.'

The same sentiments are reflected in SOC 2007.

DME 2007 dealt in more detail with the training of congregations:

"8.7 DIE BEMAGTIGING EN TOERUSTING VAN LIDMATE

Die Skrifkennis, kerkbegrip en breë prakties-teologiese insig van ons lidmate sal verruim moet word. Dit kan alleen deur behoorlike toerusting geskied. […] Gemeentes behoort ernstig na te dink oor 'n omvattende, holistiese en voortgaande onderrigmodel vir alle lidmate.'

DCE 2007 and FDMC 2013 also focused on the importance of training theological students in church planting skills and missional theology:

Despite the fact that principles of church planting are dealt with in DCE 2007, DME 2011, and FDMC 2013, there is only two reference to the training of church planters, and that is in DCE 2007 and FDMC 2013:

FDMC 2013: 'Dit kan nuwe energie en werkkrag tot gevolg hê. Die belang van kerkplanting en teologiese besinning daaroor, behoort ook in die teologiese opleiding te reg te kom.'

The emphasis on training congregations and ministers in missional theology and ecclesiology is only seen from 2007 onwards in the documents studied, although projects like the *Suider-Afrikaanse Vennootskap vir Gestuurde Gemeentes* (SAVGG) had been facilitating and training ministers and congregations since 2004 (Cordier, 2014: 13). A recent development is the Mission Shaped Ministry course which has been offered by Ekklesia from 2014. The processes and target groups of the SAVGG and MSM differ substantially: the SAVGG focuses on inherited

congregations and their ministers, whereas MSM is more focused on church planters and congregations that want to plant new faith communities. Both have value within the development of a missional ecclesiology in the DRC.

The lack of emphasis on church planting in the analysed documents is problematic, and it is an area that the General Synod could pay more attention to. More work could be done in equipping congregations in the development of a missional ecclesiology.

6.1.3.5 Church Planting

It is no accident that two of the most important reports in the development of a missional ecclesiology in the Anglican Church dealt with church planting, namely:

- *'Breaking new ground: church planting in the Church of England'* (Church of England, 1994).
- *'Mission-shaped Church: church planting and Fresh Expressions of church in a changing context'* (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004)

From the very beginning of the fresh expressions movement there was a strong focus on the planting of new churches as a strategy to reach new communities. The same strategy also developed in other contexts, such as the Dutch churches. Noort et al. (2008: 16-19) make a valid case that church planting has an important role to play, even in a country such as the Netherlands, where every square inch falls within the boundary of a congregation, but the majority of inhabitants say that they do not belong to any church (Plaisier and Koffeman, 2014: 36). Noort et al. make the case that church planting has value in reaching those who are currently not reached by the existing congregations.

In the DRC documents that were studied, there was a clear growth in the role church planting plays in the development of a missional ecclesiology. The first cautious mention of church planting as a missional strategy was in a report tabled at the General Synod of 2002, called *'Evangelisasie en nuwe gemeente ontwikkeling (NGO)* (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2002c: 542)*'*. The Synod made the following decisions on the report:

Die Sinode sien NGO as 'n wyse van uitreik na die buitekerklike asook as 'n wyse om aan die groeiende diversiteit binne ons samelewing en kerk ruimte te gee.

Die Sinode sien nie sy weg oop om Nuwe Gemeente Ontwikkeling direk te koppel aan werkverskaffing vir proponente sonder beroepe nie.

Die Algemene Sinode aanvaar dat NGO teoreties 'n alternatief op die patroon van geografies gebaseerde afstigting is.

Die Sinode dra dit aan die AKG op om die volgende sinode te dien met 'n verslag en aanbevelings oor die moontlike praktiese implementering van Nuwe Gemeente Ontwikkeling. Waar sodanige implementering gepaard mag gaan met kerkordelike aanpassings, moet vooraf met die ARK oorleg gepleeg word. (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2002a: 617-618)

The problem was that up to at least the General Synod of 2011, it was against the principles set out in Church Order Article 10 for a DRC minister to perform official duties within the boundaries of another DRC congregation, thus making church planting impossible. The resistance to church planting can also be seen in DRI 2007. When the report deals with the importance of being part of a larger church body in the Reformed tradition, it makes the point that the Reformed tradition normally frowns upon attempts at church planting by charismatic figures within the boundaries of existing congregations.

During the same Synod, a report called 'Congregation Development' (*Gemeente-ontwikkeling Bylaag 5*) (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007a: 75-76) was presented. The report used the term 'new congregation development' (NGD - *nuwe gemeente-ontwikkeling*). The term seems to be understood as meaning the same as church planting[161]. The report encouraged the church to pay urgent attention to church planting as part of its mission strategy. The report raised concerns about the prevailing view on congregational borders which was hampering the development of new congregations. The Synod was asked to form a new strategy, and differentiate between the development of existing congregations and the planting of new congregations. The focus of these new congregations would be firstly on suburban developments that require a new ministry strategy that traditional congregations cannot deliver; secondly on multicultural ministries in areas that have become multicultural; and lastly on subcultures that feel marginalised by the mainstream congregations.

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161 *'[…] NG kerk 'n jaar of wat gelede ernstig begin aandag gee het aan die hele saak van nuwe gemeente-ontwikkeling of te wel ook kerkplanting, soos dit in ander tradisies genoem word.'* (Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, 2007a: 75)

DME 2011 built on the foundations laid by the 2007 *'Gemeente-ontwikkeling'* report with the argument that church multiplication is one of the main aims of a missional ecclesiology. The document goes on in section 13 with a detailed argument in favour of church planting (*'nuwe gemeetestigting'*). The section argues that:

- Church planting is the discipline of forming new faith communities, as part of the *missio Dei,* with a Kingdom focus.
- These new congregations should make room for the diversity in South Africa. Church planting is seen as a way to reach people with the gospel and reflects the growing diversity in South Africa.
- Lessons should be learned from Fresh Expression of Church and the principle of a mixed economy used by the Anglican Church. The shift in South Africa to a network society is emphasised, where 'place' is less important than 'flow'.
- Church planting focuses on people who live in this network culture. The church is encouraged to rethink their church planting strategy. Reference is made to the fact that congregational borders have become relative, and the Synod should reflect this practice in its polity documents.
- The growing importance of church planting should also be reflected in theological training.
- Church planting does not mean church cloning. The principle of incarnation should be taken seriously by each new plant, and motivating the new plant should be relevant to the context of the plant. A new plant can only be relevant if it starts with listening to the spirit, the church, and the context. The whole listening process should be carried by prayer.
- Church planting cannot be limited to ordained ministers, but is part of the calling of each believer.
- Church planting follows the *kenōsis* of Christ in dying and sacrificing that which is familiar and safe to be reborn in a culture where God is at work.

The decision by the Synod of 2011 not to scrap Article 10 (which deals with the geographical principle in ministry), but to only amend it, indicates that some in the church leadership are still wary of the implications of church planting for the DRC.

The 2013 report *'Raamwerkdokument oor die missionale aard en roeping van die NG Kerk'* (FDMC 2013) introduced yet another new term for church planting, namely *'gemeenskapsvorming'*. The new term might have been influenced by its use in the Dutch context and especially by Noort et al. (2008). To complicate matters further, *'gemeente-stigting', 'gemeenskapsvorming', 'geloofsgemeenskap vorming',* and *'kerk planting'* are all used in the report to refer to the same phenomenon. Nevertheless, the report makes a strong case for the important role of church planting in a missional understanding of the church. Church planting is defined as the discipline of forming new faith communities following God's mission, and as a way to build the Kingdom. The report follows the arguments from DME 2011 (stated above) for church planting.

The report goes further and uses the term '*geloofsgemeenskap*' to differentiate between '*nuwe bedieningsontwikkeling* (NBO)' and '*nuwe gemeente-ontwikkeling*' (church planting). The former is defined as:

'die proses waardeur gelowiges of 'n geloofsgemeenskap by God se sending na die wêreld betrokke raak deur die ontwikkeling van 'n bediening wat op grond van verskeie redes steeds 'n bediening van 'n bestaande geloofsgemeenskap is en nie noodwendig as 'n selfstandige geloofsgemeenskap sal ontwikkel nie.'

The latter is defined as:

'die proses waardeur gelowiges of 'n geloofsgemeenskap by God se sending na die wêreld betrokke raak deur die vestiging van 'n nuwe geloofsgemeenskap wat ten doel het om selfstandig te funksioneer en te vermenigvuldig.'

Both are seen as ways for the church to be missional.

There has been a definite growth in the DRC's perspective on church planting. After the Synod of 2013, church planting became a core aspect of the ecclesiology of the DRC. The Synod removed the structural barriers to church planting in the church polity. Training for church planters was started (in the form of the Mission Shaped Ministry course) and congregations were motivated to use church planting as a missional strategy. The MSM course is also part of the training of theological students at the University of Stellenbosch. The Synod of the DRC in the Western and Southern Cape has supported 14 congregations in the DRC and URCSA with funds to start new faith communities (Taakspan vir Gemeentelike ontwikkeling en Kerklike Samewerking (GKS), 2015: 3).

6.2 Peer review of findings

To improve 'credibility' and 'trustworthiness' of the research, the findings was submitted to a peer review process. As stated in chapter one, the findings were submitted to two theologians for evaluation. Apart from some stylistic and language suggestions, Dr. Guillaume Smit concurred with the findings. Prof. Nelus Niemandt agreed with most of the findings but suggested the findings could be more critical of the lack of attention to the missional character of the church in theological training. This suggestion might be valet but is beyond the scope of the current research

6.3 Conclusions

This chapter addressed research question 5: *What is the Dutch Reformed Church's position on missional ecclesiology as reflected by the decisions of the General Synod? How would these decisions be evaluated in terms of what was learned from research question 1-4?* The research strategy used in this chapter was a deductive qualitative analysis of the decisions of the General Synod on missional theology between 1990 and 2013. This chapter used the insights gained from the macro-philosophical context of Christianity (Chapter 2), the local-theological context of the DRC (Chapter 3), the broad consensus on missional ecclesiology (Chapter 4) and the Fresh Expressions movement (Chapter 5) as a theoretical basis from which to evaluate the development of a missional ecclesiology. A strong foundation for a missional ecclesiology was found, but some important deficiencies were also highlighted.

Chapter 7

The Contours of a Missional Ecclesiology for the DRC

An Integration of the Findings

This chapter will endeavour to answer research question 6:

6) Bringing the:
   a) changing context of the DRC;
   b) broad themes within missional ecclesiology;
   c) essential aspects of the ecclesiology of the Fresh Expressions of Church; and
   d) current ecclesiology of the DRC

into conversation, what should the prominent contours within the missional ecclesiology for the DRC be to navigate the changes in its context and to be true to its calling?

The answers to this research question will summarise the findings and contribution of this thesis and serve as suggested contours in the further development of a missional ecclesiology for the Dutch Reformed Church. The chapter will include suggestions for further research.

7.1 Contextual Influences on the Reformed Theology and the DRC

7.1.1 The Macro-philosophical and Historical Context of the DRC

To be able to develop a missional ecclesiology for the DRC, the history of, and cultural influences on the people of South Africa and the DRC need to be understood. The philosophical influences in the DRC, theological influences on the development of the DRC theology, and the socio-political and cultural influences on the members of the DRC have been dealt with. The current research started by looking at the philosophical influences on the DRC since the Enlightenment

(Sections 2.1 and 2.2). This period is crucial to the understanding of the Reformed tradition, because the DNA of the tradition was formed during this period.

7.1.1.1 The Influence of the Enlightenment and Modernity

The rediscovery of a missional ecclesiology became necessary because the current context of the Church is vastly different from the one that formed the Reformed DNA. The Reformation took place during the Enlightenment, and the Reformed tradition developed in a context of modernity and Christendom. There needs to be sensitivity towards the footprints of the Enlightenment, modernity and Christendom in the Reformed tradition to be able to develop a missional ecclesiology for the DRC, especially if a church wants to follow the *missio Dei* within a late modern/postmodern/post-Christendom context. The following footprints of the Enlightenment and modernity are prominent:

- **The dominance of reason:** the confidence in human reason and ability developed the notion that God and the Bible could be studied by pure reason. The Bible was no longer *the* Word of God but became *an* ancient text that was far removed from the current reality. The dominance of reason led to different reactions among Christians that are still prevalent today. Firstly, the Pietists tried to ground faith in personal experience and emotion. Secondly dualism – dividing human existence into private and public domains and relegating faith to the private domain – prevalent in the Afrikaner's understanding of faith (Section 3.2). Thirdly, declaring theology as a science in itself that could be studied alongside other sciences with objective and scientific methods: this reaction is still influential in theological training that is done at universities alongside other scientific disciplines. Fourthly, trying to create a Christian society where Christian values and religion dominated public governance and society, prevalent during the Apartheid era. Lastly, a response from some Christians who wanted to embrace a secular society by arguing that society has outgrown pre-modern belief systems, e.g., the *Nuwe Hervorming Beweging*. All five of these reactions are still prevalent within the South African context. Each of these reactions highlights a weakness in the dominant ecclesiology, for example, Pietism's reaction highlights the lack of emotional engagement in the Reformed

ecclesiology; on the other hand, do they contain risks for the gospel and the Kingdom, in that faith could be characterized by person-centred, emotion-based faith.

- **The separation between object and subject:** The notion that the Bible can be studied objectively with the use of exegetical and hermeneutical methods. The Bible is seen as an ancient text dominated and limited by the context it came from. Orthodox Reformed theologians reacted to this by emphasising the inerrancy of the Bible, while Pietists reacted by privatising and individualising the Word of God beyond public scrutiny.

- **The belief in progress and human ability** could be seen in the idealism of the early 20th century's missionary movement, and the positive evaluation of Western culture. The result was the colonial drive to bring Christianity and Western culture to the rest of the world. In the process, the Church lost its sensitivity towards the domesticating effect Western culture had on the Christian faith. Within the DRC ecclesiology, the Reformed theology and Western culture are still closely related.

- **The separation between facts and values** created a dualistic worldview. Faith belonged to the value domain that is private, and everyday life, work and science belonged to the facts domain. These two domains had little to do with each other. Christians reacted to the dualistic worldview in a number of ways. Firstly, by arguing that faith belongs to domain of facts, emphasising the inerrancy of Scripture, this approach can be seen in the fundamentalist views of Scripture. A second reaction is in line with Platonic thinking in arguing that spiritual and transcendent values are superior to scientific facts. This approach can be seen in some charismatic practices emphasising miracles and divine healing.

- **All problems are in principle solvable.** Confidence in human ability to solve any problem relegated God to a position of 'God of the gaps'. Some Christians reacted to this by seeing science as threat to the Christian faith, while others tried to assimilate the diminishing role of God into their theology.

- **Humans are emancipated and autonomous beings** that do not need clergy or the Church to facilitate their interaction with God. This led to the growth of individualism among Christians and alienation from the Church (see also Section

2.1.1 for aspects of the modern self). This can be seen in the 'Christian outside the Church' and 'spiritual but not religious' movement.

Most of these footprints, if not all, can still be seen in Western culture and specifically the DRC context. It must be said that these influences are seen among South Africans with a European heritage and not so much those with an African heritage. The Reformed tradition cannot escape its Enlightenment and modern DNA. This DNA should *not* be seen in a dichotomy of either good or bad, but its presence needs to be acknowledged. While the Enlightenment and modernity opened the door for the Reformation and was instrumental in the evangelical and modern mission movement, it also had a domesticating effect that led to the Christendom era. The Reformed theology that developed during Christendom needs to be reformed again to be relevant in a post-Christendom era.

7.1.1.2 Christendom to Post-Christendom

The other aspect that necessitated a missional ecclesiology for the DRC was the change from a Christendom to a post-Christendom era (Section 2.2.iii). Christendom was an era of close ties between church leaders and those in secular power (e.g. the Apartheid era) where the law was based on Christian principles (as interpreted by the dominant tradition); and where most members of society were assumed to be Christian. The DRC ecclesiology developed in such a context (Section 3.4). A Christendom ecclesiology was characterised by activities that maintained the Church, e.g. home visits, personal and spiritual development programmes and social activities for members. The missiology was characterised by seeing mission as an activity for a select few that brought the gospel and Western culture to faraway, non-Western places. Because the DRC currently functions within a post-Christendom era, a new missional ecclesiology is needed.

7.1.2 The Current Context of the DRC: Pre-Modern, Modern, Late Modern or Postmodern?

7.1.2.1 Cultural-philosophical Context

Hendriks (1996) believes the DRC membership comes primarily from a modern worldview. He describes this worldview in typical modernistic terms as stated in the previous section. He (1996: 41) does however add secularisation (a late-modern characteristic) as a prominent

characteristic of the DRC membership and is of the opinion (in 1996) that the end of modernity was in sight (Section 3.2). It could also be argued that the Afrikaner population currently shows signs of the late modern era (Section 3:2), especially individualism, materialism and consumerism, features strongly. The church should also be cognisant of the socio-cultural differences among DRC members, for example the different attitudes among Colonial and Republican Afrikaners (cf. La Vita, 2015: n.p.), different attitudes towards other races and opinions on the Confession of Belhar and homosexuality. A missional ecclesiology will also have to help Christians deal with the two major forces of the late-modern era, secularisation and consumerism. Chapter 3.1.1 identified the details of the changes in the context of the DRC.

From the research it became clear that current context of the DRC is multidimensional and complex. The contexts congregations function in could be pre-modern, modern, late modern or postmodern. For example, some inner-city DRC congregation's neighbourhoods are dominated by traditional African cultures. Among these African cultures, a pre-modern worldview is found. This could be seen in their social and religious practices (cf. Mbiti, 1986). Congregations can also function in a late modern and postmodern context in for example new urban developments. Detailed descriptions of these different worldviews are found in section 2:2;2.3;3.2.

A missional ecclesiology will have deal with the influence of these different contexts. The church in a post-Christendom context will have to serve the community they are planted in. For some it would mean giving new contents to primitive belief systems (in pre-modern context); for others it could mean bringing the gospel to people that 'forgot that they forgot about God' and to bring hope in an atheistic-materialistic world were consumerism and the needs of the individual are dominant (late-modern and postmodern context). Because of the diversity in the contexts of DRC congregations, the section on contextual discernment of the context and a missional hermeneutic is critical in developing a contexts-relevant missional ecclesiology. The discussion of the different worldviews (Chapter 2) can be used as frame of reference in discerning the character and needs of a specific context.

7.1.2.2 Socio-political context

After 1994 South Africa faced two major challenges, firstly the transition to a liberal democracy and the more difficult, transforming South Africa into the equal society (Section 3.1). The DRC

experienced tension in its role of transforming South Africa into the equal society. On the one hand as the body of Christ (DRC), wanted to contribute to the transformation process, on the other hand the Church's members experienced the negative effects of this transformation process, for example black economic empowerment and affirmative action. The challenge to the DRC was to guide its members in dealing with a loss they are experiencing, and transform them into disciples of Christ - in following him in his *kenōsis* and serving him and other South Africans. During the history of Apartheid, the DRC functioned from a position of power and influence within a Christendom context. The church will have to develop an ecclesiology that helps her function as a church on the margins in a post-Christendom context. If DRC members are not helped to deal with the loss they are experiencing they will remain in reaction to the changes in South Africa and present resistance to a missional ecclesiology.

7.1.2.3. Existential challenges

To enrich the understanding of the local context, the existential challenges experienced by the South African population need to be understood. These **challenges create opportunities** for a missional church to live a *kenotic* life. Some of the prominent challenges were identified in chapter 3.2. Challenges like poverty, homelessness, unemployment, HIV, crime and corruption and violence will challenge congregations to discern what God wants them to do with their buildings, financial and human resources. To pour-out what they received in service of the Kingdom. In a time period were the Church is one of the few things that Afrikaner people feel they have control over, it will challenge them to give it up in service of the Kingdom.

7.1.2.4. Post-Apartheid Demographics

The adult membership of the DRC remained relatively stable since 1985, while the children membership declined. Worrying trends are the high average age of DRC members (53 years), the decline in membership among the 20 to 29-year-olds and effect of the fact that the Church are still 99% white Afrikaans. Other worrying trends are (NCLS Research, 2015)[162]:

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162 The NLS research talk about attendees because the research was completed by church member attending church survives, not member in general.

- The decrease in attendees that are committed to the vision and goals of the Church. The difference in support for a new Article 1[163] of the Church Order between the General Synod and local congregations might be reflective of this[164]. The 2013 General Synod decided to begin the process of changing Article 1 of the Church Order to make room for the inclusion of the Confession of Belhar in the DRC confessional basis. Despite the General Synod's positivity about the new article, only 29.1% of congregations voted for the article with a two-thirds majority. Lessons could be learned from this in the process of developing a missional ecclesiology. Decisions by the General Synod are not automatically followed by individual members and congregations. Individualism and the resistance to hierarchal structures make it critical that the Church leadership focus on deep (church) cultural and theological change. General Synod decisions

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163 That would have made the Confession of Belhar part of the confessional basis of the DRC..
164 The differences in support for a new Article 1:

Synod	Church Board				Congregations				Church Board final decision			
	Yes		No		Yes		No		Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Western and Southern Cape	181	82.3	39	17.7	129	58.4	92	41.6	129	58.6	91	41.4
Eastern Cape	58	57.4	43	42.6	68	66.0	35	34.0	33	32.0	70	68.0
Northern Cape	5	9.6	47	90.4	1	1.9	51	98.1	3	5.8	49	94.2
Kwazulu-Natal	16	37.2	27	62.8	12	23.1	40	76.9	15	28.8	37	71.2
Free state	30	20.3	118	79.7	19	12.4	134	87.6	27	18.2	121	81.8
Western Transvaal	0	0.0	0	0.0	23	18.0	105	82.0	35	25.9	100	74.1
Northern Synod	27	42.2	37	57.8	13	11.9	96	88.1	15	14.7	87	85.3
Highveld Synod	54	48.6	57	51.4	35	31.0	78	69.0	35	31.0	78	69.0
Eastern Synod	45	52.9	40	47.1	34	41.0	49	59.0	35	41.2	50	58.8
Namibia	0	0.0	0	0.0	14	35.0	26	65.0	14	35.0	26	65.0
Average		43.8		56.2		29.9		70.1		29.1		70.9

are made <u>by</u> elders and ministers who are starting to understand a missional ecclesiology, but the decisions are made <u>for</u> ordinary church members who function from an ecclesiology that are dominated by self-protection and an experience of loss. A 'hermeneutic of suspicion' against the leadership of the Church are detrimental to leading the Church in a new direction (Moderamen van die Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2015: 103;124-130);

- Only 43.7% of attendees are helping others informally.
- A decreasing number of attendees invited somebody to church (39% in 2010 to 36.1% in 2014).
- Only 25.5% of attendees feel that leaders encourage them to use their gifts.
- Only 9.8% will follow up somebody that is drifting away from church.

They are however more hopeful data:

- That most congregations are involved in social issues (80%).
- 81% of attendees found it relatively easy to talk about their faith.
- The Bible still plays a central role in the lives of attendees.
- 75% of attendees agreed that the congregation are ready to move into a new direction.

The data are reflective of a mainline church with a historically loyal membership basis that finds it hard to reach non-believers, other cultures and younger generations. The demographic of the Church does not bode well for the future of the Church. There is a definite need for an ecclesiology that will transform the traditional mainline church into a dynamic missional church.

7.1.3 Contextual Discernment

Contextual discernment will be necessary to develop a context relevant ecclesiology for the DRC. Doctrinal, missiological, and ecclesiological principles from the Gospel in our Culture, Fresh Expressions or Dutch context are all important and useful, but they all developed within a very specific local context that shows similarities to that of the DRC, but also differences. The relevance of these ecumenical principles should be evaluated through the lens of the local context. The context of South Africa as a whole, but also the context of a specific congregation.

A lot can be learned from the fresh expressions movement; in the way they use contextual discernment in the process of developing a missional ecclesiology. From the initial writing of the Mission-shaped Church report (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004) (Section 5.3) to how Fresh Expressions approach (Section 5.5.3) new church plants, an analysis of the context has been central in developing a context relevant ecclesiology. Contextual discernment includes many aspects, among them listening to the needs of the community, discerning where God is already working and doing a demographic analysis of the community, etc. There are also other processes available that are beyond the scope of this research (cf. Keifert, 2006; Rouse and Van Gelder, 2008; Keifert, 2009).

In the evaluation of the General Synod (Chapter 6) documents, it was evident that since the introduction of the Season of Listening programme (Section 2.1.3.3) there was an increasing sensitivity towards the context of the Church. Although the programme is not that prominent currently, the values of the programme, a teachable spirit ('*leerbare gesindheid*'), trust ('*vertroue*'), compassion ('*deernis*') and openness ('*openheid*') are still important and should be part of the culture of every congregation. The newest programme by the General Synod, the Season of Human Dignity (Nederduiste Gereformeerde Kerk, 2015), builds on the Season of Listening with its values of listening, respect, love and embrace. It is, however, not enough that the General Synod is propagating these values; congregations that practise these values will find it easier to develop a context relevant ecclesiology.

7.2 Theological Influences on the Development of the DRC's Theology and the Development in Missiology

7.2.1 Theological Influences

The DRC has a rich theological tradition (Section 3.3). The theology of the church was influenced by many spiritual traditions of which five prominent ones, were identified in the research, namely: the Reformed theology, the Evangelical-Pietist tradition, Liberal tradition, Neo-Calvinist theology and influence of Karl Barth's theology. Although all five these theological traditions had an influence on the development of the DRC theology, only three are currently prominent. The liberal theology was initially suppressed by the dominance of

Evangelical-Pietist tradition and later the by the neo-Calvinist theology. Later, neo-Calvinism became discredited in the dying days of Apartheid and the strong influence of theologians influenced by Karl Barth's theology (Section 3.3.5).

The Reformed tradition still forms the core of the DRC theology. This was also reflected in the documents of the General Synod (Section 6.2.1). A document like the *Document on the Reformed Identity of the DRC* 2007 focused exclusively on the Reformed identity of the DRC. It is, however, a Reformed theology softened by the Evangelical-Pietist and Barthian influences. The Reformed confessions and the Five Solas remain reference points for the DRC theology. The challenge to the Reformed tradition is that its main reference point, the Reformed confessions, were written in the 16th century in a predominantly Christendom context, with little attention to the *missio Dei* and *missio ecclesia*. The aim of the confessions was to settle dogmatic disputes and not to motivate missional engagement (Section 2.2.iii). Because the confessions are so entrenched in the Reformed theology and ecclesiology, Reformed churches find it difficult to accept new and relevant confessions. If the core DNA (i.e. confessions) stays the same, it is very difficult to develop a new ecclesiology and missiology. This is particularly true for the DRC in her struggle to accept the Confession of Belhar as a fourth confession. New articles in church orders and missional documents are not enough to create a missional culture in the DRC; deep fundamental changes to the DNA is also needed. The irony is that part of the Reformed DNA is the famous dictum *'ecclesia reformata semper reformanda';* a church in the Reformed tradition should always be busy discerning wat God is doing in fresh ways in new contexts.

Despite the DRC's strong Calvinist, Reformed roots, the Church was uniquely influenced by the Evangelical-Pietist and Puritan traditions (Section 3:3.2). The mere fact that Andrew Murray Jr was a prominent figure in the DRC's church history says a lot about the influence of this tradition. A Reformed tradition that could become quite stale was infused with a passion for conversionism, activism, crucicentrism, the Bible, personal piety and a lively passion and interest for world mission. This tradition placed a lot of emphasis on spirituality that included an active prayer life, special prayer services, Bible study meetings, and personal piety. The Evangelical-Pietist tradition also included aspects that are less beneficial to a missional ecclesiology such as Biblicism – which inspired a fundamentalist reading of the Bible and a dualistic worldview and legalistic spirituality. There is a risk that this dualistic worldview will

validate the Afrikaner's tendency to immigrate to 'European enclaves' behind high walls in gated communities, were they can practise their spirituality and culture in peace.

The Evangelical-Pietist tradition remains valuable in creating a missional ecclesiology because of its high value on personal spirituality and passion for mission. It is also noteworthy that many of the anti-Apartheid theologians were influenced by the Evangelical-Pietist tradition. The Evangelical-Pietist tradition open a door to a world beyond the rational and immanent, a world where 'ordinary reality is "abolished" and something terrifyingly other shines through' (Berger, 1992: 128-129). These lived experiences are needed is a world where the dominance of the rational has relegated the spiritual to the premodern world (Taylor, 2007: 8). The Evangelical-Pietist tradition could open doors to the postmodern world with its emphasis on experience, the emotional dimension and the transcendent character of God. The tradition also brings an emphasis on prayer, Bible study and the work of the Holy Spirit to a missional ecclesiology. The blind spot is that the tradition could have a church-shaped Kingdom view because of its dualistic worldview.

The following aspects of the Evangelical-Pietist tradition were found in the General Synod documents studied (Sections 6.2.1.2; 6.3.1.2):

- the world as missionary focus;
- a fervour for witness;
- emphasis on personal piety;
- motivation for activism; and,
- encouragement for evangelistic events.

The weaknesses (dualism, emotionalism, church-shaped Kingdom view, etc.) of the Evangelical-Pietist tradition could be corrected by the influence of Karl Barth's theology (Section 3.3.5), by emphasising that the Church is not an invisible phenomenon but that the gospel need to be embodied, and has concrete and political relevance for the oppressed and those who suffer. Barth's 'theology of crisis' emphasised the Bible, rather than experience and pious feelings; the revelation of God, rather than just history; the proclamation of God's Word, rather than just religious discourse; Christian faith rather than religion; God as revealed in Jesus Christ, rather than the needs of the individual. Barth's contribution to the development of the *missio Dei* concept is also crucial to the development of a missional ecclesiology, especially focusing on

mission not as an activity of the Church, but the very nature of God himself.

Aspects of Barthian theology found in the documents studied are (Sections 6.2.1.3):

- a close relationship between divine justification and human justice;
- a warning against seeing the Church as an invisible phenomenon;
- the gospel has concrete and political relevance for the oppressed and those who suffer;
- mission is not an activity of the Church, but the very nature of God himself.

All three of these traditions could have a positive influence on the development of a missional ecclesiology. Yet there is a risk of ideological thinking if one or the other should dominate the process. An awareness of the value and the risks of these traditions would benefit the development of a missional ecclesiology.

7.2.2 A Fifth Wave of Missional Awaking in the DRC

As argued in 3.4, the DRC has gone through various mission awakenings since its planting in South Africa. These mission awakening was firstly influenced by social-political context and the theology of the Church. The current research suggested that from 2002 onwards, a fifth wave of mission awakening could be discerned. This wave was firstly influenced by contextual changes between 1994 and 2000. Examples of this change were a more integrated society; a growing percentage of DRC members being born after the end of Apartheid; the increasing cross-cultural dialogue; and the increasing impact of secularism. The fifth wave was secondly influenced by the loss of the DRC's loss of influence and money. The DRC had to find a new way to influence society and live out its mission calling. Lastly, there were a growth in the missional identity of the Church. The ecclesiology and missiology of the Church were changing due to the impact of various programmes that aimed at helping the Church understand her calling and develop a missional ecclesiology. Programmes like the *'Gemeentebou'* movement, *Congregational Studies*, and the missional church movement that included programmes from *The Partnership for Missional Churches* and *Fresh Expressions* impacted the Church. The General Synod also accepted various policy documents and changes to the Church Order to facilitate the development of a missional ecclesiology. All these aspects facilitated the development of a fifth wave of missional enthusiasm in the DRC. During this wave,

congregations started to focus on the needs of their local context, more specifically a holistic focus that included sharing the gospel as well as relieving the socio-economical needs of the people. The fifth wave is by no means dominant in every DRC congregation, but there is enough evidence to argue for the existence of a fifth wave.

7.3 Ecumenical Themes within Missional Ecclesiology

7.3.1 Defining a Missional Ecclesiology

In an analysis of the various definitions of a missional ecclesiology, the following aspects of a missional ecclesiology were identified:

1. *Missio Dei*: God is the primary agent in mission and is in perpetual movement towards His creation.
2. The Church is called to be missional and is an instrument and agent of the *missio Dei.*
3. A missional ecclesiology is biblical.
4. A missional ecclesiology is Kingdom focused.

The preliminary definition of a missional ecclesiology was: 'A missional ecclesiology is an ecclesiology that reflects the *imago Dei* in being an instrument and agent of the *missio Dei*. This is done by having its roots in the Bible and its focus on the Kingdom'.

The results of this thesis would suggest that other aspects also need to be included in defining a missional ecclesiology. It is suggested that the following aspects describe a missional ecclesiology:

1. *Missio Dei*: **The Trinity** is the primary agent in mission and is a perpetual movement of love towards the creation.
2. The Church is missional in reflecting the ***imago Trinitatis*** through being an instrument and agent of the ***missio Dei.***
3. A missional ecclesiology is **Kingdom focused** and calls the Church to be an instrument, sign and foretaste of the Kingdom.
4. A missional ecclesiology has a **holistic view of salvation**.
5. A missional ecclesiology is **biblical** and uses a **missional hermeneutic** to read the Bible.

These aspects could be integrated into the following definition:

A missional ecclesiology is an ecclesiology that reflects the *imago Trinitatis* in being an instrument and agent of the *missio Dei*. This is done, by having its roots in the Bible, through the use of a missional hermeneutic, and its focus on the Kingdom by being an instrument, sign and foretaste of the holistic salvation in the Kingdom.

7.3.2. Five Contours of Missional Theology

The functional theology of a congregation is those practices the congregation engage in. The functional theology is influenced by the underlying theology of the congregation. The underlying theology and specifically the ecclesiology might not be articulated clearly, but it is still influencing the functional theology of the congregation. Teaching congregations' new missional practices will not be sustainable if the underlying ecclesiology is not missional. The following six contours of a missional theology were identified: the *missio Dei*, the centrality of the Trinity, focus on the Kingdom of God, holistic salvation and using a missional hermeneutic and lastly having a missional ecclesiology.

7.3.2.1 The *Missio Dei*

The point of departure for any missional ecclesiology should be the *missio Dei* (Section 4.1). The Creator God is a missionary God and he sends his Son in the overflowing of his love to inaugurate his Kingdom on Earth, and his Spirit to bring humankind into the Kingdom. The *missio Dei* theology was the most important theological shift in the last century and reformed the colonial missiology of the Christendom church. From a *missio Dei* perspective, mission is no longer seen in relation to ecclesiology or soteriology, but is derived from the doctrine of the Trinity. The classic doctrine of the *missio Dei*, which stated that God the Father sent his son, and the Father and the Son sent the Spirit, was extended to include the Father, Son and Spirit sending the Church into the world. The Church is privileged to join God in his movement towards his world. Venter (2004: 758) sounds a warning that in the development of the *missio Dei* theology, there is a risk that it can relativize the importance of the church as chosen to be a sign, instrument and first-fruit of the Kingdom. The balance is found in that the Church is no longer the one sending missionaries into the world but the one being sent; it is not the Church having a mission, rather the mission of God having a Church.

There is, however, not universal agreement on the specific focus of the *missio Dei*. Theologians with ecumenical leanings emphasise earthly *shalom* as the focus of the *missio Dei*. For them, the *missio Dei* focused at once on peace, integrity, community, harmony and social justice, but they gave little attention to the salvific nature of the *missio Dei*. On the other hand, there are theologians with a radical evangelical emphasis that focused exclusively on the salvific implications of the *missio Dei*. Theologians like Lesslie Newbigin and David Bosch had a more balanced view of the *missio Dei*, arguing that the love that binds the Trinity overflows to all humanity and creation.

The evaluation of the fresh expressions movement view of the *missio Dei* yielded mixed results (Section 5.6.1). On the one hand, there were statements that reflected the view that the Church is the only agent of the *missio Dei* been the world. On the other hand, there was also evidence that that saw mission as grounded in God and that the Church is joining God in his perpetual movement of generosity towards the world. Because of the fresh expressions movement emphasis on church planting, there is the risk that they could overemphasise the role of the Church in the *missio Dei* – a risk that the DRC need to be aware of in using the Fresh Expressions material in developing a missional ecclesiology.

The evaluation of the General Synod's documents reflection of the *missio Dei* also yielded mixed results. Since at least 1990, there was a growing emphasis on the *missio Dei* in the documents studied. Article 53[165] 1990-2011 of the Church Order emphasised mission *('sending')* as an act *('heilshandeling')* of the Trinity. The 2013 version of Article 53 changed the emphasis to 'the mission' ('*missie*') of God is to give 'life and fullness' *('lewe en volheid')* to the world - emphasising what God's mission is. The latest article reflects the agency of God and that the Church is joining him in his movement towards the world, but still not enough of the missional being of God.

Articles 9 (the office of the Minister) and 52 (congregational ministry) lack any reference to the *missio Dei*. These articles should probably reflect the fact that the *missio Dei* leads to a *missio ecclesia*.

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[165] Dealing with the mission of the church.

A stronger reference on the *missio Dei* is found in the various policy documents accepted by the General Synod that focused on the missional calling of the Church. These documents emphasised that mission starts in the heart of the Trinity and that God's love overflows to humankind and the whole of creation.

The weakness in the Church polity of the DRC is that the emphasis on the *missio Dei* in the policy documents is not sufficiently translated into church order articles. In developing a missional ecclesiology these aspects should be dealt with. More emphasis could also be given to the missional being of God in the Church order.

7.3.2.2 The Centrality of the Trinity

Having a Trinitarian point of departure should be central to our understanding of God, ourselves, the Church and the world (Section 4.2). Just as humans should reflect the image of the Trinity, so Church should be an icon of the Trinity. In the theological discourse about the Trinity two complementary perspectives on the Trinity were found. The first perspective is the Immanent Trinity, which aims to describe the internal and external being of the three persons in the Trinity in the relation to one another. The second perspective is the Economic Trinity and describes God's outward movement and involvement in creation and acts of salvation in the world. In the development of the doctrine of the Trinity, most emphasis was on the Immanent Trinity, trying to describe the being of the Trinity, as well as the relationships within the Trinity. Western theology followed the Augustinian perspective that primarily focused on the *'tres personae, una substantia',* emphasising the one substance of the Trinity. This perspective did not deny the personal relations within the Trinity but gave ontological priority to the one substance of the Trinity. This perspective was grounded in the practice of Christian life by Barth and Rahner through their emphasis on the divine procession of the Father sending the Son, and the Father and the Son sending the Spirit, and the Father, Son and Spirit sending the Church. This emphasises the sent character of the Church.

The Eastern Church developed the theology of the Cappadocian fathers in emphasising the *perichoretic* relationships among the Trinity. This view describes the Trinity as a 'triunity: three equal persons, each one dwelling in the other two by virtue of an unceasing movement of mutual love' (Ware, 1995: 27). This perspective called on the Church to reflect the image of the Trinity in their communion and interrelatedness as body of Christ (Venter, 2004: 757). The

perichoretic communion is more than just communion within Trinity, it includes communion with other Christians and the rest of creation (cf. Volf, 1998: 267).

The immanent Trinity cannot be dealt with without reference to the economic Trinity. Rahner's *grundaxiom* states that The "economic" Trinity is the "immanent" Trinity and the "immanent" Trinity is the "economic" Trinity' (Hill, 2012:15). It is through the outward movement of the Economic Trinity that we are able to know the Immanent Trinity.

We know who God is through what God does

If the Church is to reflect the image of the Trinity, the Church should reflect the loving internal relations, as well as external acts of love. The ecclesial communion should reflect the trinitarian communion. A trinitarian ecclesiology will always see the church as a community (Venter, 2004: 759). The church should also embody the *kenotic* self-sacrificing character of God in their internal relations as well as in their external acts of love. The doctrine of the trinity is not only fundamental to our theology but a practical doctrine with radical consequences for Christian life' (LaCugna, 1993: 1). A missional hermeneutic should motivate congregations to sacrifice themselves, their comfort, their buildings and resources in service of the Kingdom. Embodying the image of the Trinity makes a correction to the rampant individualism and consumerism of the current age. In a trinitarian ecclesiology there is no room for hierarchical power structures and struggles. It is a community were al sexes, socio-economic groups and sexual orientations, ministers, elders and ordinary members are equal, as they live in communion with the Trinity (Venter, 2004: 759).   Venter (2004: 769) uses Volf's[166] notion of 'symmetrical reciprocity' to argue that the relationships within the church and among the DRC family of churches should be symmetrical and not be strained by any imbalances for exp. finances. In a trinitarian ecclesiology the church can be a sign, instrument and first-fruit of the Kingdom if they practice perichoretic and kenotic relationships.

The **fresh expressions** movement (Section 6.6.2) places the Trinity at the heart of the missional

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[166] 'The symmetrical reciprocity of the relations of the trinitarian persons finds its correspondence in the image of the church in which all members serve one another with their specific gifts of the Spirit in imitation of the Lord and through the power of the Father. Like the divine persons, they all stand in a relation of mutual giving and receiving' (Volf, 1998: 219).

church, and for them, worshiping the Trinity is the chief inspiration and primary purpose of the Church. They affirm the WCC declaration (World Council of Churches, 2005: paragraph 13) which states that the Church partakes in the life of the Trinity, and that the Trinity is the source and focus of all communion. This implies that the Church is both a divine and the human reality. The fresh expressions movement emphasises the principle that the Church should reflect the relational character of the Trinity that is not closed in on itself but is in constant flow of generosity towards the world. Being relational is key to the missional praxis of the fresh expressions movement. New church plants begin around relationships that are formed in the community. The church should also display the relational unity and diversity found within the Trinity. Within the Kingdom there is room for unique movements of the Spirit, a variety of spiritualties and gifts, but always within the safety of the unity created by the Spirit.

Evaluating the documents of the General Synod (Sections 6.2.2.2; 6.3.2.2) yielded evidence that the DRC understands itself as grounded in the life of the Trinity. This could be a result of the strong Reformed heritage of the Church. The documents also emphasised the Christological nature of the theology of the Church, arguing that the heart of the Church is found in a living relationship with and faith in Jesus Christ. Christ is seen as the head of the Church, and also the one who laid the foundations of the Church. The Christology is articulated in terms of incarnational living, *kenōsis,* and eschatology. The eschatology is, however, an underdeveloped aspect, and could be developed further. The documents call the Church to embody and reflect the incarnation of Christ. It is through incarnational living that the Church becomes a living sacrificing to the Kingdom. Incarnational living implies that the Church knows the needs of the community and reacts to those needs. Incarnational living is also *kenotic* in nature; it is the self-emptying on behalf of somebody else, to suffer and to sacrifice for the other – as Jesus did. There is also a strong relationship between kenotic-incarnational living and church planting. Existing congregations have to sacrifice some of their resources and comfort for the benefit of the new faith community. This challenges congregations that have been used to power and are in a self-protecting mindset.

Although Christology is fundamental in a missional theology, there is a risk that Christology could become an isolated focus within the Trinity. Thus, it is a risk of the Evangelical-Pietist tradition, in their emphasis on a personal relationship with Christ and piety. A Christology without the Trinity could become a sentimental longing for the historical Christ and the early

church. The Trinity calls us to be incarnational and *kenotic* in following Christ, into the world, today, with the eschatological promise of Christ return.

In line with the DRC's Reformed heritage, the General Synod documents emphasise the close relationship between the work of the Holy Spirit, that of Jesus Christ and the Word of God. The following aspects of the Spirit's work are highlighted:

- God calls his people through his Word and Spirit to belong to him.
- The church can only be missional if it functions within the force field of the Spirit.
- The church as the people of God is also the Temple of the Holy Spirit.
- The Spirit equips the Church with the needed gifts to bring healing to the broken world.

Three other aspects of the Sprit's work are also discussed in the documents, namely discernment, unity in diversity and the ecumenical nature of the Church. The Spirit leads the Church in discerning where God is moving in the world. Discernment has a dual focus, on the one hand listening to the Spirit and the Word and on the other to the needs of the world. The Spirit also leads the Church to have unity in diversity. Reflecting the unique unity in diversity of the Trinity, the missional church is able to celebrate the diversity in gifts, spirituality, calling while maintaining the unity in Christ's body. This principle opens the door for the mixed economy of church, church planting as developed in the fresh expressions movement (Sections 5.5.2; 5.6.2). A missional ecclesiology should be able to make room for new expressions of faith, while nurturing the inherited expressions of faith (i.e. the existing church). Although the General Synod's documents make room for the celebration of diversity, the problem is that not much diversity is seen on congregational level. The last aspect of the pneumatology in the General Synods documents is the ecumenical nature of the Church. Traditionally Protestants emphasised the spiritual unity of the Church, through a shared confession, a missional ecclesiology however emphasises the visible and concrete expressions of unity (Barth) and catholicity of the Church. The church is encouraged to develop formal relationships with other churches and work together in building the Kingdom. The planting of new faith communities opens the door for the expression visible unity between different churches.

7.3.2.3 A Kingdom Focus

There has been much development in the Kingdom theology since the Second World War (Section 4.3). The development centred on the fact that the Kingdom cannot be equated with the Church and Western culture. The Church was no longer seen as the locus and *telos* of God's work in the world. This was such an important development because the Kingdom of God is central to the Old and New Testament theology. The focus of Jesus ministry was not the Church, but the Kingdom of God. To develop a missional ecclesiology, a balanced view of the Kingdom of God is needed.

A reason why Christians have difficulty in understanding the Kingdom of God is because they do not use the Kingdom language of the Bible. The Kingdom is described as a realm you 'inherits' or 'move into', a gift, by the grace of God, to be received with trust and open hands. To define the Kingdom is not easy – not even Jesus tried to define the Kingdom. Jesus used metaphors and parables to convey the mystery and the 'openness' of God's Kingdom.

There was, however, an integral link between the Kingdom of God and the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus' life, words and actions were never focused on itself but always on the Kingdom of God. In the process of inaugurating the Kingdom, Jesus made an all-out attack on evil and all its manifestations – sickness, death, demon possession, personal sin, immorality, loveless self-righteousness, etc. Jesus manifested the Kingdom through both his Kingdom-inaugurating earthly work and his redemptive death and resurrection.

The Kingdom needs to be understood in the tension between the 'already' and the 'not yet' of the Kingdom. The Liberal tradition tried to resolve the tension in favour of the 'already', reducing the Kingdom to a moral order and social justice. The Evangelical-Pietist tradition resolved the tension in favour of the 'not yet' and reduced the Kingdom to personal faith and an eschatological event. The fullness of the Kingdom lays in holding on to the earthly miracles and teachings of Jesus as well as his death and resurrection.

Another way in which Jesus inaugurated the Kingdom was in his welcoming of those on the margins of society into the Kingdom. In God's reign there is a special place for those on the periphery of society, the poor, the widows, sinners, tax collectors and children. Jesus erected clear signs of the Kingdom in dealing with these people.

A missionary ecclesiology will need to be clear about the fact that the Church exists for and through the Kingdom of God. Congregations need to equip and motivate Christians for the work in the Kingdom, not only in the church. The Church is a sign, instrument, and foretaste of the Kingdom. God builds his Kingdom, but he ordained that his children can build 'for' the Kingdom.

The relationship between the Church and the Kingdom is one of the more controversial aspects in the fresh expressions movement. Because of the movement's strong focus on church planting, it has been criticised for having a church-shaped Kingdom view, implying that the Kingdom is built by advancing the Church. In this view, the horizon of the Kingdom is lost in the focus on God's work through his Church. It was especially the earlier documents of the movement that were vulnerable to a church-shaped Kingdom view. Later, the documents tried to strike a better balance between the Kingdom and the Church in affirming the 'already' and 'not yet' of the Kingdom, seeing Christ as the ruler of both the Church and the Kingdom, and the Church being a community of the Kingdom and not the Kingdom itself. The fresh expressions documents make a strong argument for the Church being a human[167] activity and the Kingdom being a divine activity. This is in itself problematic because the presence of the Spirit makes the church a divine activity as well.

Graham Cray (2012: loc. 445-565) developed the fresh expressions view of the relationship between Church and Kingdom by explaining it in terms of the church planting process (Section 5.6.3) (c.f. Cray, 2012: loc. 258). The process starts when an existing church starts to listen and discern what God is doing in the Kingdom (listening to God's Word, the Spirit and the needs of the community). The church then joins God in his work by serving the needs of the community. While serving the needs of the community, relationships are built, and within the relationships, people are discipled. In the end, those who were discipled create a worshiping community, i.e. a church.

Lessons can be learned from the development of a Kingdom perspective in the fresh expressions movement. A missional ecclesiology that takes church planting seriously always need to be

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[167] Graham Cray later nuances this view in stating that it does not deny the divine activity of the Spirit in the church (Cray, 2012: loc. 386).

aware of not seeing the Church as an aim in itself.

The view of the Kingdom of God found in the General Synod documents is in line with the viewed at the Church does not encompass the Kingdom of God, but is a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom. The Kingdom becomes a reality where Christ overcomes the power of evil, and this triumph should be seen most clearly in the Church, but also outside the Church. The DRC documents are closely linked to *missio Dei* and the Kingdom of God. The documents referred to the Reformed tradition's minimalist view of the Church in arguing that the Church can never be more important than the Kingdom. The Church's involvement in the Kingdom is developed into three dimensions. Firstly, that of public theology: the documents identify a public theology as an essential part of a missional ecclesiology. The documents argued that from a missional perspective all theology should be public theology. Public theology includes communicating with and testifying to the government about God's world, praying for the government and being a prophetic voice on social issues. The second dimension is that of being a serving church: a missional church serves the people of the community. The church's ministry of the Word and ministry of deeds should complement each other, the one is interpreted in terms of the other. The third dimension is the Church's involvement in social justice: the documents emphasised social justice as both an indicative and imperative. Social justice as indicative is firstly anchored in who God is, his love, his justice, his peace and his reconciliation. The church should heed the indicative in reflecting the character of God (the imperatives) by working towards social justice. The indicative and imperative should always be interpreted in terms of each other.

7.3.2.4 A Holistic view of Salvation

At the heart of any missionary endeavour is the need to mediate salvation to people (Van der Watt, 2005: 1). How the Church defines that salvation is influenced by its understanding of God and the aim of the *missio Dei*, and will itself influence the missional practices the Church engages in (Parushev, 2007: 353). A missional ecclesiology will be closely linked to a theology of salvation. A church that wants to reflect the *imago Trinitatis* will also reflect the scope of God's mission, which in turn will match the scale of God's redemptive work (Wright, 2006b: 264).

The problem is that there is no coherent understanding of salvation in the Bible. First and foremost, there are differences between the Old and New Testament understandings of salvation, as well as among the different New Testament writers. Despite these differences, some common contours of a Biblical view of salvation can in fact be articulated. Van der Watt (2005: 505) describes these contours as a house that contains a Biblical perspective on salvation. In this house, there are different rooms that articulate different aspects of salvation, as highlighted by the different authors. In studying the different conceptualisations of salvation, the following contours of salvation began to crystallise:

1. God's salvation has implications for every dimension of creation. For humans, salvation has apocalyptic, salvific implications, but also political, economic, social and cultural implications (Brueggemann, 2002: 184-185). The holistic narrative of salvation found in the Exodus became a theme for God's involvement in the lives in his people. The Jubilee, for example, had implications for economic, social and holiness disciplines (Brueggemann and Linafelt, 2012: 97). Although the holistic perspective on salvation is more prominent in the Old Testament, there are definite holistic tendencies in the New Testament as well. Examples of this include Jesus challenging the dominant principles of the secular kingdom (Wright, 2006b: 308-311) and the close relationship between healing and salvation (Steyn, 2005: 77-81). The holistic character of salvation that was established in the Old Testament became an important motif in the New Testament, and must thus be part of a missional theology (Barram, 2007: 43).

2. Salvation is not only liberation *from* (sin, oppression, self-centredness, etc.)*,* but also liberation *to* (love God and our neighbour) (Bosch, 1993b: 107)

3. Salvation also has individual and communal dimensions (Wright, 2007, loc. 3689-93).

Throughout history there have been various perspectives on salvation that missed the fullness of the God's salvation. The dominant Augustinian 'individual-ethical' perspective emphasised the individual and eschatological perspectives of salvation, but unfortunately lost the realised and communal aspects. Salvation was a private and personal matter in a dualistic world that emphasised an ethical life. This perspective became dominant in the later Protestant tradition. During medieval times the Catholic tradition had a 'cultic-institutional' perspective salvation,

the Church became the main facilitator of salvation *(exstra ecclesiam nulla salus)*. The Reformed tradition reacted to this and saw salvation as a sovereign act of God, who by grace took initiative to forgive, justify and save human beings, while still holding on to the (Augustinian) individualistic character of salvation. Later the Evangelical-Pietist tradition used 'individual-ethical' perspective and added personal experience of salvation and personal relationship with God as important aspects. This became an 'individualistic-emotional' perspective on salvation. In the liberal tradition a social gospel developed that saw salvation in terms of social justice, a perspective that neglected the salvific, personal and eschatological dimensions of salvation. All these perspective hold some value, but also have a reductionist view of salvation.

A missional ecclesiology needs to steer clear of all these pitfalls, while celebrating salvation in all its grace, richness, and comprehensiveness. People are saved by God's grace, through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, not only as individual souls, but as a whole beings and part of community of believers in order to become part of God's Kingdom that is breaking into the current reality. If God brings people to faith through his Spirit they not only become a sign, agent and a foretaste of the Kingdom, but also part of God's plan in establishing his Kingdom; transformed individuals that are part of God's transformation process in the world. Salvation in the Kingdom also has political, social, economic and cultural dimensions.

Before 1988, the Anglican Church's view of salvation was mainly limited to the salvific implications of salvation. During 1988 they adopted the five marks of mission that broadened the Church's view of salvation. The five marks of mission are:

- 'To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom;
- To teach, baptise and nurture new believers;
- To respond to human need by loving service;
- To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation;
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth' (Anglican Communion, 2013a).

The Anglican Communion saw humankind not as disembodied souls but as embodied, social persons that needs salvation in every dimension of their lives. The ecological implications of

salvation should be noted in the five marks of mission. The Fresh Expressions view of salvation could be summed up in the words of Stuart Murray (Murray, 2001: 39):

> God's missionary purpose are cosmic in scope, concerned with the restoration of all things, the establishment of shalom, the renewal of creation and the coming of the Kingdom as well as the redemption of fallen humanity and the building of the Church.

There was also a development in the DRC's perspective on salvation since 1990. Up to 1990 the DRC's view of salvation still had a colonial influence and service to those in need was seen as auxiliary to the main purpose of gathering the faithful. After 1994 the view of salvation was broadened to include all human dimensions. Since 2002 social justice, reconciliation and ecology dimensions of salvation became part of the DRC documents. Against the backdrop of the Apartheid history, social justice became an important focus of the contribution of the DRC. Although the theology on social justice is clear in the General Synod documents, many ordinary congregation members found it hard to work towards social justice. There could be many reasons for this, among them residual racism from the Apartheid era, or the experience that they themselves are the victims of injustice as a minority in South Africa. A missional ecclesiology will have to deal with these experiences in developing a missional ecclesiology. The second dimension of salvation that came into focus was the importance of reconciliation. During the 1990s, reconciliation was an important focus of the work done by the post-Apartheid government to build a new South Africa. This process is, however, not finished and the Church can play an important role in the future of a Democratic South Africa. The tension in South Africa is not only between black and white but also between the poor/unemployed and to rich ruling class. The DRC could play a reconciliatory role between these parties, as seen in the recent prise awarded by the Worcester Hope and Reconciliation process to the DRC for their work on the reconciliation and restitution in Worcester and surroundings (Netwerk24, 2015: n.p.). Lastly, since 1998 ecology has had a prominent presence in the DRC's view of salvation. Christians were reminded that they are stewards of God's creation.

In summary, a theology of salvation is important to the development of a missional ecclesiology. This theology of salvation will need to be comprehensive, including all the aspects of salvation presented in the Bible. Bringing holistic hope to humankind and the rest of creation and celebrating the fullness of God's Kingdom.

7.3.2.5 A Missional Hermeneutic

How does a missional church read the Bible? In the discipline of hermeneutics, it is generally accepted that there is no objective way to read the Bible. Every reader has a specific pre-understanding of what the Bible is and wants to do. This pre-understanding becomes the hermeneutic of interpreting the Bible. This pre-understanding is informed by the reader's theology and context. This research argued that a missional hermeneutic could benefit a missional church because of the following reasons (Section 4.5):

- Firstly, the Bible is the Word of a missionary God (Section 4.1).
- Secondly, the Bible was written within a missionary context, where God called his people to cross boundaries.
- Thirdly, the Bible is read by a missionary church. The modern church read the Bible in a post-Christendom context were she is called to be a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom.
- Lastly, despite the diverse *sitz im leben* of the development of the Bible, as well as the diverse contexts in which the Bible is read, there are coherent themes that bind the Bible together. One such theme is 'the gospel'. The Spirit guides the Church to read the Bible within the tension between diversity and unity of interpretation.

A missional hermeneutic might not be the only hermeneutic for the Bible, but it is a hermeneutic that will benefit the missional church to follow the *missio Dei*.

Fresh Expressions of church argues convincingly that a theology of the Church must ultimately be rooted in the being and acts of God of the Church. Despite this valid argument, no systematic hermeneutic could be found in the Fresh Expressions material (Section 5.6.5). Studying the theology of the movement gives the indication that a missional hermeneutic was used in the formulation of the theology, it is however not clearly stated. The movement has been also criticised for their lack of a traditional Anglican hermeneutic in the use of proof texts for the movement. A systematic development of a missional hermeneutic could benefit the further development of the movement.

True to the Reformed heritage of the DRC, the documents studied reconfirmed the church's

commitment to the Bible as the Word of God (Section 6.2.2.5). Various documents call for use of a responsible hermeneutic when interpreting the Scriptures. There is however just one instance where a call is made for a missional hermeneutic – in the *Raamwerkdokument oor die Missionale aard en roeping van die NG Kerk* (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013d: 212). The development of a missional ecclesiology could benefit from a clear missional hermeneutic.

7.3.2.6 A Missional Ecclesiology

The initial research done in Chapter 4 on the ecumenical trends in missional theology did not identify missional ecclesiology as a separate aspect of a missional theology. In the analysis of the documents of the General Synod, missional ecclesiology presented as a separate aspect of a missional theology (Sections 6.2.2.6). Unique aspects of a missional ecclesiology that have not been identified in the previous research had to be noted. The following aspects were identified:

a. The DRC should to be a movement, not an institution. Part of the success of the early church was that they were a movement and not an institution. They were not limited by structures, buildings, budgets and detailed and long confessions of faith. They gathered around the common confession about the risen Christ, strong relationships, shared practices and a common mission.

b. Each member of the DRC are called to be a disciple and to make disciples. The most basic practice of the Christian faith is discipleship. Congregations should be communities of disciples, not only communities of believers. This is important for the DRC, a typical mainline-Christendom church that succeeded in gathering the faithful and not necessarily in making disciples.

c. Every believer is called to be a missionary. This aspect is closely linked with the call to be a disciple. Disciples understand the call to be a missionary and are available to be equipped for to the task of being a missionary. To be a missionary is to understand that the Church functions within a post-Christian context, and that the Church's call to bring the gospel is as important in the local context, as it is at the ends of the Earth. In a globalised world, people from different cultures and religions live within the Church's local community, which present congregations with the ideal opportunity to be missional.

d. Spiritual formation is an important part of the praxis of developing of a missional ecclesiology. Congregations are called to prayerful openness to be formed by the Word of God through the Spirit, and to be renewed to reflect the imago Dei. The DRC documents argued that central to missional ecclesiology is spiritual formation. Missional spirituality is defined as to be conscious of God's living presents and that we are called to be pilgrims in following God's movement into the world. Pilgrims that are not only shaping the world, but are also formed in journeying with God. Spiritual formation and discipleship are closely related – spiritual formation happens on the journey of discipleship. Missional spirituality is spirituality of the cross, the cross as a symbol of Jesus' radical identification with the world as well as his transcendence in dying and being raised by God. Spiritual formation starts with listening and discerning God's will through his Word, Sprit and the needs of the world. Central to this discerning process is to questions:

- 'What is God doing in the world?'; and
- 'What does God want to do in this world?'

e. The last aspect of a missional ecclesiology that the DRC documents deal with is the importance of a good youth ministry. It is argued that the youth ministry should reflect the missional identity of the Church and that the children should be taught missional values. Such a ministry should take into account the postmodern context of youth ministry. Youth leaders becomes missionaries that immerse themselves into the culture (i.e. postmodern) of those (i.e. children) they want to reach.

7.4 The Contribution of Fresh Expressions of Church to the Development of a Missional Ecclesiology

In this section the contribution made by the Fresh Expressions of Church to the development of a missional ecclesiology will be noted (Chapter 5). These aspects are more strategic than theological but still important to a church that wants to develop a missional ecclesiology. These

strategies are relevant because they are used by a mainline church that wants to be missional. They deal with barriers mainline churches face in being missional.

7.4.1 Denominational Support

Crucial to the success of the fresh expressions movement was the support of the Anglican Church for the movement. An important moment in the development of the movement was the 2004 report *'Mission-shaped church' by the Mission and Public Affairs Council* to the Anglican General Synod. The acceptance of the report gave official sanction for the development of a missional ecclesiology. The same was true for the development of Fresh Expressions in the Methodist Church of Britain. It was not only the General Synod that gave permission to this new development, but more importantly senior figures like the then Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams[168] and Bishop Graham Cray[169] were personally supporting the movement (Section 5.2). The church supported the movement with financial, infrastructure and human resources. A new position as bishop was created to lead the process. Another contributing factor was that it was not only a process of theological discernment within the church structures but a reciprocal interaction between theology, context and ecclesiastical praxis. It was furthermore not a closed process, but a journey of discovery into what God was doing in Britain. The senior clergy in church structure that understood the new missional ecclesiology played a bridge building and translating role between the existing Christendom and new missional ecclesiology. These leaders protected the new system from the smothering effects of the old established system (Section 5.4). This was critical from a systems perspective, because existing systems are perfectly equipped to keep on doing what they have always done and to resist change. Decisions by the Anglican Church polity created semi-autonomous corridors of growth for fresh expressions of church, for example the creation of new Bishops' Mission Orders[170], ordination of pioneer ministers and the planting of new churches across traditional church and diocese borders. A risk in the development of such a missional movement is that the traditional

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[168] Archbishop Rowan Williams was Archbishop from 2003 to 2012. He was replaced by the current Archbishop Justin Welby on 4 February 2013.

[169] Bishop Graham Cray had the position Archbishop's Missioner and leader of Fresh Expression from 2009 to 2014. In 2014 he retired and was succeeded by Canon Phil Potter.

[170] Bishops' Mission Orders is as Anglican canon law measure that allow church plants cross parish boundaries or collaboration between parishes.

church will do what it does best – control the process. In the case of Fresh Expressions, it seems like the Anglican Church did manage to support the movement without controlling the process to the detriment of the movement. The Fresh Expressions organisation takes the catholic nature of the Church seriously. The organisation has formed partnerships with many other churches and para-church organisations. They also insist that the leaders of the MSM course come from more than one denomination. They encourage new church plants to work trans-denominationally[171].

The evaluation of the DRC's documents yielded mixed results. Since 1990 a trajectory towards a missional ecclesiology can be discerned in the documents of the General Synod. This trajectory was however clearer in reports accepted by the Synod than in the changes to the Church Order.

The General Synod defines its task not as the implementation a missional ecclesiology but as the creation of new language and a new imagination, as well as changes to the Church Order. The documents went far in creating new language and new imagination. Concepts like *'missio Dei', 'kenōsis', 'missionaal', 'onderskeiding', 'gestuurdheid' etc.* found in the documents became part of the general discourse in the church. Congregations are talking about church planting as a valid strategy of reaching people.

There was also progress made in changing the Church Order to reflect a missional ecclesiology. Before 1990, the Church order still reflected a typical mainline Christendom church. Since then, some changes have been made to the Church Order to reflect the missional nature of the church. Most notably, changes were made to Articles 9 and 10. The focus of the minister's office (Article 9) changed from caring for the flock (church maintenance) to studying the Word, equipping the congregation for their task in the world and personal discipleship. More emphasis was also placed on the other offices taking responsibility for the ministry of prayer, as well as church services. An important addition was also that since 2011 church planting became part of the responsibilities of the minister.

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[171] The term trans-denominational is used rather than inter-denominational. Inter-denominational denotes a new plant between churches, FE takes the church seriously and the aim of a new church plant is to include different denominations rather than be between them.

There are still deficiencies in Article 9, *Document on a Missional Ecclesiology for the DRC 2011* argued that discernment should also be added to responsibilities of the minister. This amendment was not accepted by the Synod. This is unfortunate in light of the fact that research suggests that discernment is one of the key capacities of the missional leader (cf. Cordier 2014:219).

Another relic of the Christendom parochial era is Article 10. Article 10 governs the geographical limitations of a congregation and the ministry of the minister. *Document on Missional Ecclesiology for the DRC 2011* proposed that in order to facilitate church planting Article 10 need to be scrapped. The Interim Committee on Church Order argued against the proposal and suggested an amendment to article that was accepted by the Synod. The amendment made church planting possible with the limitation that ministry among members of another congregation might only be done with the consent of that congregation. As more churches are planted it will become clearer if Article 10 is still limiting the development of a missional ecclesiology.

The last but arguably the most important deficiency in the Church Order is the current Article 1. The first article in a church order spells out the foundation of a church. Currently Article 1 articulates the confessional basis of the DRC. *Document on Missional Ecclesiology for the DRC 2011* proposed that it should also include the missional nature of the Church. This would be in line with the church orders of other Reformed churches, like the Hervormde Kerk in The Netherlands, PKN and the PCUSA. The Interim Committee on Church Order 2011 argued missionality is part of the calling of the Church, an Article 1 should not reflect the calling of the Church but only the foundation - i.e. Reformed-Confessional. The current research suggests that the missional calling is the foundation of the Church (cf. Niemandt 2014:75). The 2013 General Synod proposed a new Article 1 to make room for the inclusion of the Confession of Belhar, but still no reference to the missional calling the Church. This cuts to the heart of what the DRC wants to be, and will have to be addressed in the near future.

It is not only the confessional basis of the DRC that has got Calvinistic roots but also the church's Church Order. The Church Order of the DRC written in 1962 used the Church order of Dordt *(Synode van Dordrecht 1618-1619)* as its basis (Strauss, 2008: 105). A church order written in a Christendom era influenced by the spirit of modernity. Changes to the Church

Order will have to be fundamental to reflect the Church's missional calling in a late-modern and postmodern context.

7.4.2 Mixed Economy of Church

The 'mixed economy of church' was a concept introduced by Archbishop Rowan Williams to describe what the church might look like when it follows the Fresh Expressions path. It was a novel but powerful idea for a mainline-traditional church. Williams realised that a one-dimensional church would not be able to deal with the complex nature of the challenges of the church. The mixed economy of church describes a church system in which new forms of church and existing forms, coexist alongside each other in a relationship of mutual support. In practice it meant that new church plants could exist alongside the old existing parochial churches. The DNA of the two churches would be different, as well as the population that they were trying to reach, thus they were not a threat to each other. The *Mission-shaped Church Report* (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: 8) argued that only a mixed economy of parochial and network churches would be able to fulfil the incarnational principle and demonstrate the universality of Christ's lordship in all expressions of society. The mixed economy of church is grounded in the following theological principles:

a. the Church should reflect the otherness and the unity found in the Trinity;

b. the mixed economy is also seen in creation;

c. the rational for the mixed economy is found in the New Testament where there is a creative tension between the centre (main; existing church; Jerusalem) and the periphery (church plants; pioneer work of the apostles; Antioch);

d. the catholicity and unity of the Church are signs to the whole of creation that all cultures are united in Christ -this catholicity and unity are enacted in the sacraments of the Church;

e. the mixed economy is also grounded in the prophetic perspective. Moynagh (loc.11698-11714) argues that all believers are part of the 'theodrama' that is God's unfolding plan in the world. We can only get the full perspective on this drama if we listen to other Christian perspectives. It is especially important that the church listen to those new to the church and those on the periphery of church.

Support for the mixed economy was also found in the work done by Margaret Wheatley and Debora Frieze at the Berkana Institute (Wheatley, 2002). There model explains the system theory behind the mixed economy. They also help to explain how old and new systems interact with each other. Their theory contains a detailed process of system change that the leaders can use in implementing a mixed economy approach.

Only one reference to the mixed economy of church was found in the DRC documents. The *Document on Missional Ecclesiology for the DRC 2011*[172] suggests that a lot can be learned from the mixed economy principle. Like any church, the DRC has a strong parochial system. To deal with the diverse needs in the South African context a mixed economy approach will be needed. Many current members of the DRC fear the loss of their language, identity and spirituality. Trying to change what they hold dear will only heighten their anxiety and resistance to being missional. The mixed economy creates a safe space where existing forms of church can and should continue while new expressions are planted. Because the fear of losing what they hold dear is removed, current DRC members might find it easier to support Fresh Expressions of church.

7.4.3 Training

From the start of the fresh expressions movement training was identified as important to the success of the movement (Section 5.5.5). Training focused on the training of pioneer missionary leaders and the lay leaders. There was a specific focus on the training of pioneer missionary leaders because the normal training of ministers did not equip them to deal with the challenges of planting new faith communities. Many of the new faith communities was also planted by lay leaders with no theological training. These leaders had to be trained and supported. It was also realised that the training should take place within a vocational setting not just at a university. The Archbishop's Council developed guidelines for the selection and training of lay and ordained pioneer ministers. Courses were developed and training centres accredited for the training of these ministers. The flagship training of Fresh Expressions is the Missio-shaped Ministry Course. This course train people for ministry in fresh expressions of church. The

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[172] Also incorporated that into Framework document on the Missional nature and calling of the Dutch Reformed Church 2013.

course has been presented with great success in the Anglican and other churches.

From 2004 various documents of the DRC emphasised the importance of training congregation members for their calling in the Kingdom. The importance of training theological students in missional theology is noted. Only two references to the training of theological students in church planting were found. This is an aspect that could be developed further especially in the light of the experience from the Fresh Expressions that normal theological training does not equipped ministers in planting churches. The training of current ministers in missional theology is also highlighted. Material by the '*Suider-Afrikaanse Vennootskap vir Gestuurde Gemeentes*' (SAVGG) as well as the Mission-shaped Ministry Course are indicated as good material to be used. It should be noted that the target groups of these two courses differ substantially. SAVGG focus on inherited congregations and ministers while MSM is more focused on church planters.

7.4.4 Church Planting

Since the publication of the mission shaped report, church planting has been an important aspect of the fresh expressions movement. Church planting has become important because the context of the church has changed radically since the development of the parochial church system. Communities are organised in networks and interest groups not along geographical lines. The Mission-shaped Report emphasise that these new churches should not be clones of existing congregations but should be context relevant with a unique missional DNA. Interestingly, the Church polity of the Church of England made room for the planting of new churches from the beginning of the movement.

Statistics on the new church plants give an indication of the success of the Fresh Expressions movement (Church Army's Research Unit, 2013). What was noticeable in a study of the statistics was that the plants rarely resemble large traditional congregations with their own buildings and a number of paid staff. The average attendance at these new church plants was 43.7. This number might sound low in the South Africa context, but keep in mind that the same research quotes the average attendance of traditional Anglican congregations as 65. A very important statistic is that of the 43.7 attendees, an average of 25% come from a Christian background, 35% were de-churched, and 40% non-churched. In other words, 75% of those

attending Fresh Expressions were not involved in a church before joining the fresh expression. In 7 out of the 10 diocese studied the numbers added by fresh expressions reversed the decline in the Anglican Church attendance. Fresh expressions made up 10% of the total Anglican Church attendance in 2013.

A successful fresh expression is described as a faith community that are:

- 'missional - they work mainly with people who don't attend church;
- contextual - they fit the situation;
- formational - they make disciples;
- ecclesiastical - they encourage church to emerge among the people they serve (rather than being a stepping stone to church on Sunday)' (Fresh Expressions, 2010: n.p.)

More often the success of these new plants is that they have little structure but are built around relationships in the community. Noort et al. (2008: 16-19) concur with the Fresh Expressions findings on the success of church planting in reaching unreached groups. He makes this point from a Dutch perspective where every square inch falls within the boundaries of an existing church.

Because of the long history with geographical borders within the DRC ecclesiology and bad experiences with church planting by charismatic churches within the boundaries of DRC congregations, a natural resistance against the idea could be expected (Section 2.1.3.5). Where the financial future of congregations are under threat the planting of another congregation next to an existing one would also be met with resistance. There is however a growing sense of the value of church planting in the General Synod document studied. Up to 2011 Article 10 of the Church Order made it impossible or very difficult to plant new congregations within the boundaries of an existing DRC congregation. After 2011 the documents encouraged congregations to use the development of new faith communities as a way of reaching unreached people. The focus of the strategy was on the planting of congregations in new suburban developments, the development of multicultural ministries and the planting of congregations among subcultures that feel marginalised by mainstream congregations. The Synod also accepted that a church multiplication is one of the main values of a missional ecclesiology. The Synod gave the following guidelines for church planting:

- church planting is seen as a strategy of following the *missio Dei*, and having a Kingdom focus;
- church planting follows the *kenōsis* of Christ - dying and sacrificing to the familiar, so that something new can be born;
- new congregations should reflect the diversity of South Africa;
- lessons should be learned from the fresh expressions movement and the principle of the mixed economy;
- church planting focus on people who function in a networked culture;
- church planting is not the cloning of existing congregations;
- and, church planting cannot be limited to ordained ministers but are the calling of every believer;

After the 2013 Synod, church planting became a one of the core principles of a missional ecclesiology for the DRC. A problem found in the documents was the variety of terms used to describe church planting. At the least four terms were identified: *'gemeente-stigting'*, *'gemeenskapsvorming', geloofsgemeenskap vorming'* and *'kerk planting'*. Consistency in the terms used, as well as how they are defined could benefit the process further.

The stated aim of Fresh Expressions is to plant communities of faith that have the potential to become mature churches, not church-light or even a stepping stones into the traditional church. The term used for these faith communities must reflect the fact that the traditional church sees the potential in these communities to become mature churches, exhibiting all the marks of the Church. The term 'church planting' will reflect this aim.

7.5 Conclusions

Chapter 7 focuses on research question 6: Bringing the:

b) changing context of the DRC;
c) broad themes within missional ecclesiology;
d) essential aspects of the ecclesiology of the Fresh Expressions of Church;

    e) current ecclesiology of the DRC

into conversation, what should the prominent contours within the missional ecclesiology for the DRC be to navigate the changes in context and to be true to its calling?

The chapter endeavoured to integrate the findings of the research into some contours of a missional ecclesiology for the DRC. Even though the focus of this research was on the DRC, these contours may also be applicable to other churches and denominations. However, further research will need to be done on the transferability of the findings. The current research is by no means the last word on a missional ecclesiology for the DRC. Each aspect of the suggested missional ecclesiology holds the possibility of more in-depth research. A study on the reasons for the tension between the policy decisions of the General Synod and the Church Order could also yield interesting results. Another research avenue that can be explored is whether or not the decisions on missional ecclesiology that have been made by the General Synod of the DRC have really changed the church on congregational level.

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ADDENDUM A

Codebook

1 Research Process

1.1 Identifying Documents[173]

The first phase in the research process was to identify the documents that would reflect the development in the missional ecclesiology of the DRC as well as its current view on missional

[173] Abbreviated reference codes used to describe the different documents in the main text.

Reference code	Document	Year	Reference code	Document	Year
ROW 1990	The Rule for the Missions/Witness of the Church	1990	DCE 2007	Document on a practical congregational ecclesiology	2007
CO 52 1990	Church Order Article 52	1990	CO 10 2007	Church Order Article 10	2007
CO 53 1990	Church Order Article 53	1990	CO 52 2007	Church Order Article 52	2007
CO 52 1994	Church Order Article 52	1994	ROW 2007	The Rule for the Missions/Witness of the Church	2007
CO 52 1998	Church Order Article 52	1998	CO 53 2007	Church Order Article 53	2007
CO 53 1998	Church Order Article 53	1998	CO 53 2007	Church Order Article 53	2007
CO 52 2002	Church Order Article 52	2002	CBS 2011	Confession by the Synod	2011
CO 53 2002	Church Order Article 53	2002	CO 2011	Church Order Article 9	2011
ROW 1998	The Rule for the Missions/Witness of the Church	1998	CO 10 2011	Church Order Article 10	2011
SOC 2002	Statement of Calling '	2002	CO 52 2011	Church Order Article 52	2011
ROW 2002	The Rule for the Missions/Witness of the Church	2002	CO 53 2011	Church Order Article 53	2011
CC 2004	Calling Commitment	2004	ROW 2011	The Rule for the Missions/Witness of the Church	2011

ecclesiology. In consultation with Prof. Nelus Niemandt, Moderator of the DRC, the following documents were selected:

- Article 53 of the Church Order of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa 1991, 1994 1998, 2002, 2004, 2007, 2011, 2013 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1990a: 13; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1994: 12) (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1998: 18; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2002b: 21; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2004: 23; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007c: 23) (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2011b: 11; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013b: 14). This article describes the office of Minister of the Word.

- *'Reglement vir die Sending/Getuienis van die NG Kerk*[174] (The Rule for the Missions/Witness of the Church) 1998, 2002, 2004, 2007, 2013 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1998: 67-71; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2002b: 94-98; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2004: 83-87; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007c: 104-107) (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2011b: 44-48) (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013b: 90-95). The Rule for the Missions/Witness of the Church of the DRC reflects the mission policy of the church (Van der Watt, 2003: 219). These

CO 9 2004	Church Order Article 9	2004	DME 2011	Document on Missional Ecclesiology	2011
CO 10 2004	Church Order Article 10	2004	CO 9 2013	Church Order Article 9	2013
CO 52 2004	Church Order Article 52	2004	CO 10 2013	Church Order Article 10	2013
CO 53 2004	Church Order Article 53	2004	CO 52 2013	Church Order Article 52	2013
ROW 2004	The Rule for the Missions/Witness of the Church	2004	CO 53 2013	Church Order Article 53	2013
SOC 2007	Statement of Calling	2007	ROW 2013	The Rule for the Missions/Witness of the Church	2013
CO 9 2007	Church Order Article 9	2007	FDMC 2013	Framework document on the Missional nature and calling of the Dutch Reformed Church	2013
DRI 2007	Document on the Reformed Identity	2007			

[174] To improve the readability of the text, the full bibliographical details of the DRC documents will only be given once. Later, a coded reference to each document will be provided. In cases were other DRC documents are used, normal referencing will be done.

documents give a good indication of the DRC's understanding of its missionary calling.

- *'Roepingsverklaring'* (Statement of Calling) 2002 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2002b: 1), 2007 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007c: n.p.); *'Roepingsverbintenis'* (Calling Commitment) 2004 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2004: ii), *'Belydenis van die vergadering'* (Confession by the Synod) 2011 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013e: n.p.). These are mission statements by most of the recent General Synods of the DRC that reflect the focus of the church's calling at a specific stage.

- *'Raamwerkdokument oor die Missionale aard en roeping van die kerk'* (Framework document on the Missional nature and calling of the Dutch Reformed Church[175]) 2013 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013d: 199-215). This important document was drawn up after a decision of the 2011 General Synod that four of the documents (*'Missionale ekklesiologie'*, *'Die Kerk en die konteks'*, *'Oor Evangelisasie'* and *'Diversiteit'*) of the 2011 Synod should be integrated into one document that would be the framework for the missionary (*'missionêre'*) policy of the church (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2011a: 199).

The choice of documents also represents a specific period in the history of the DRC: roughly from the end of Apartheid up to the General Synod of 2013. The Synod of 1990 was held after the unbanning of the ANC (1990) and before the first democratic elections in 1994. This was an important period in the DRC's search for a new identity.
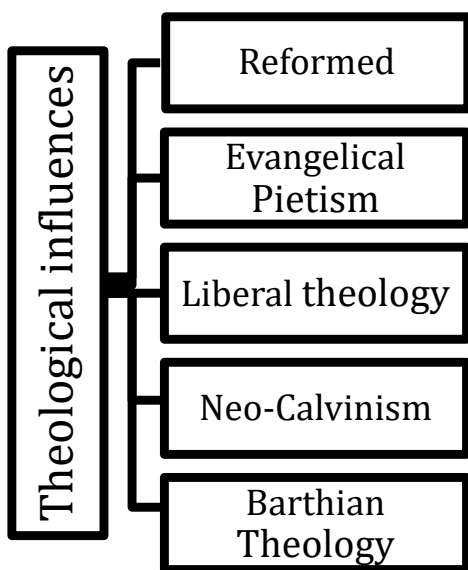
1.2 Theoretical Constructs

The second phase was to identify theoretical constructs of a missional ecclesiology that was developed in the first part of the research, to use in the deductive qualitative analysis. Deductive qualitative analysis is a research method that uses existing theory as a hypothesis to test; as sensitising concepts in developing new theory; or to investigate the transferability of theory to a new context (Lewins and Silver, 2007: 86). For the current research, the last two

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[175] An official translation of this document is currently unavailable. For consistency in coding, and to increase sensitivity to nuanced language, it was decided to use the original Afrikaans edition.

aims are relevant. Research and theory developed on missional ecclesiology are used to evaluate the missional ecclesiology of the DRC as evident in the decisions of the General Synod of the DRC. The core principles developed in prior chapters will be used in developing a hierarchical coding schema to evaluate the DRC General Synod documents on missional ecclesiology. The core principles develop in the literature study will form coding families to structure the codes in the research. The existing theory gives focus to the current research but does not exclude the development of new coding families and codes.
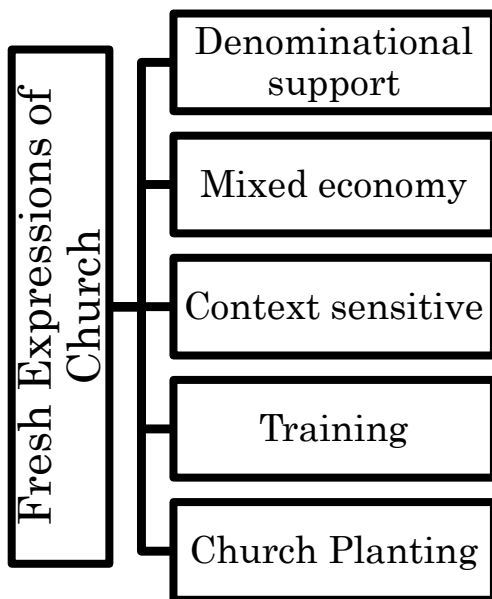
The following constructs (coding families) were identified:

Figure 10: Identified Constructs - Theological Influences
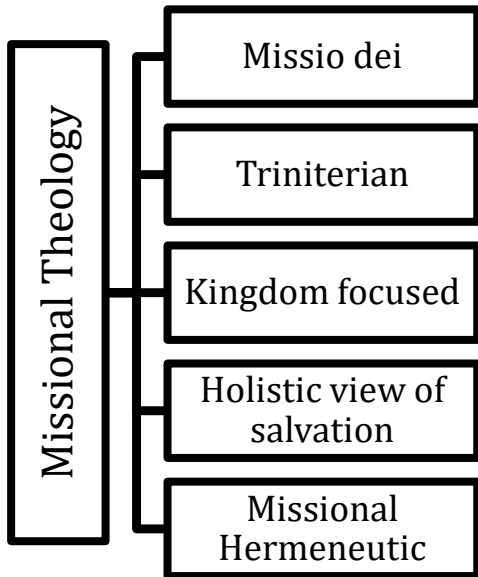
Figure 11: Identified Constructs - Missional Theology

Figure 12: Identified Constructs - Fresh Expressions

Each of these theoretical constructs will be used to identify codes that relate to them. For example, any texts that relate to 'God sending his Son and Spirit to the world', 'God is a sending God', 'God's eternal movement towards the world' and so forth will be coded as examples of *missio Dei.*

1.3 Analysis

The third phase of the research was the analysis. I[176] decided to use QDA Miner 5 for the analysis of the documents. QDA Miner 5 has the functionality for needed coding documents but is not so comprehensive as to prevent the researcher from intimately engaging with the texts. Data intimacy is critical to the qualitative process; the closer the researcher is to the text, the more he/she becomes aware of the subtle nuances in the text (Saldana, 2011: 95). To improve the 'credibility' and 'trustworthiness' of the research a negative case analysis was also done. The strategy that was used to do the negative case analysis was the use a reflexive journal to reflect on the researcher 'self-other' relations and the researchers evolving understanding of the text and the theory. During the data collection and analysis process the researcher tried to be sensitive towards surprises that did not fit the theory. Memos were made of the surprises the researcher became aware of. The results of these reflections will used in this were they are applicable.

1.4 Preparation of Documents

The primary documents were prepared, formatted and imported into QDA Miner 5.

1.5 Coding of the Documents

According to Saldana, '[c]oding is a heuristic – method of discovery – to the meaning of individual sections of data' (Saldana, 2011: 95). A code is a word or a short phrase that assigns an essence-capturing label to a portion of text. This helps the researcher to see patterns in or classify a text, to be reorganised later in further analysis (Saldana, 2011: 95). A group of codes reflects a specific theoretical construct or coding family. I did some preliminary coding using the above-mentioned theoretical constructs as basis for the codes. On some reflection, I realized that the current process had some shortcomings. The documents being studied contained more

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[176] In this chapter, the first-person narrative will be used. Saldana (2011: 140) is of the opinion that the first-person narrative conveys the personal engagement of the researcher with the text.

theoretical constructs on missional ecclesiology than that of the theory and more documents needed to be incorporated into the research.

In dealing with this shortcoming, the following action was taken:

New codes were generated during the coding process. The new codes that arose were group into existing and new theoretical constructs after the coding had been done.

More documents were also incorporated into the research, such as Article 52 1991, 2002, 2004, 2007, 2011, 2013 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1998: 18; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2002b: 21; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2004: 23; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007c: 23) (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2011b: 11; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013b: 14), which deals with congregational ministry. These documents needed to be included because in a missional congregation, the congregational ministry and mission activity of the church are closely linked. I decided to remain open to adding more documents as the analysis progressed.

1.5.1 Generated Codes

Apart from the codes that relate to the theoretical concepts already mentioned, the following additional codes were identified:

Table 5: Additional codes

• African calling	• Innovation
• Being a sign, instrument and foretaste	• Joining mission and diaconal services
• Christendom	• Kenōsis
• Christology	• Kingdom-shaped-church
• Church as a movement	• Liturgy
• Church unity	• Members vs. elders
• Discernment	• Missional Ecclesiology
• Discipleship	• Pneumatology
• Diversity	• Public theology
• Economic Trinity	• Reconciliation
• Eco-theology	• Relationship driven
• Ecumenical	• Serving church
• Eschatology	

• Every believer a missionary • From 'kerkraad' to 'gemeente' • Immanent Trinity • Incarnational	• Social justice • Spiritual formation • Strategy • Youth Ministry

After evaluating the codes, the following codes was eliminated because they represented only one occurrence: From *'kerkraad'* to *'gemeente';* 'liturgy'; and 'strategy'. The following codes were also merged because they were closely related: 'Innovation' into 'pneumatology'; 'Members vs elders' into 'Every believer a missionary'; and 'reconciliation' into 'discernment'.

Having generated the codes, I moved to the next phase of structuring the codes in coding families. Corbin and Strauss (2008: 165) warns the researcher not to get swamped by too many codes and furthermore to differentiate between the different levels of codes. There are lower level descriptive codes (e.g. African calling) and higher level conceptual codes (e.g. Context) (Frieze, 2012: 104-106).

In the light of this, all remaining codes were categorised as codes within the theoretical constructs deduced from the theory, except for one new theoretical construct: missional ecclesiology. The result was the following code structure:
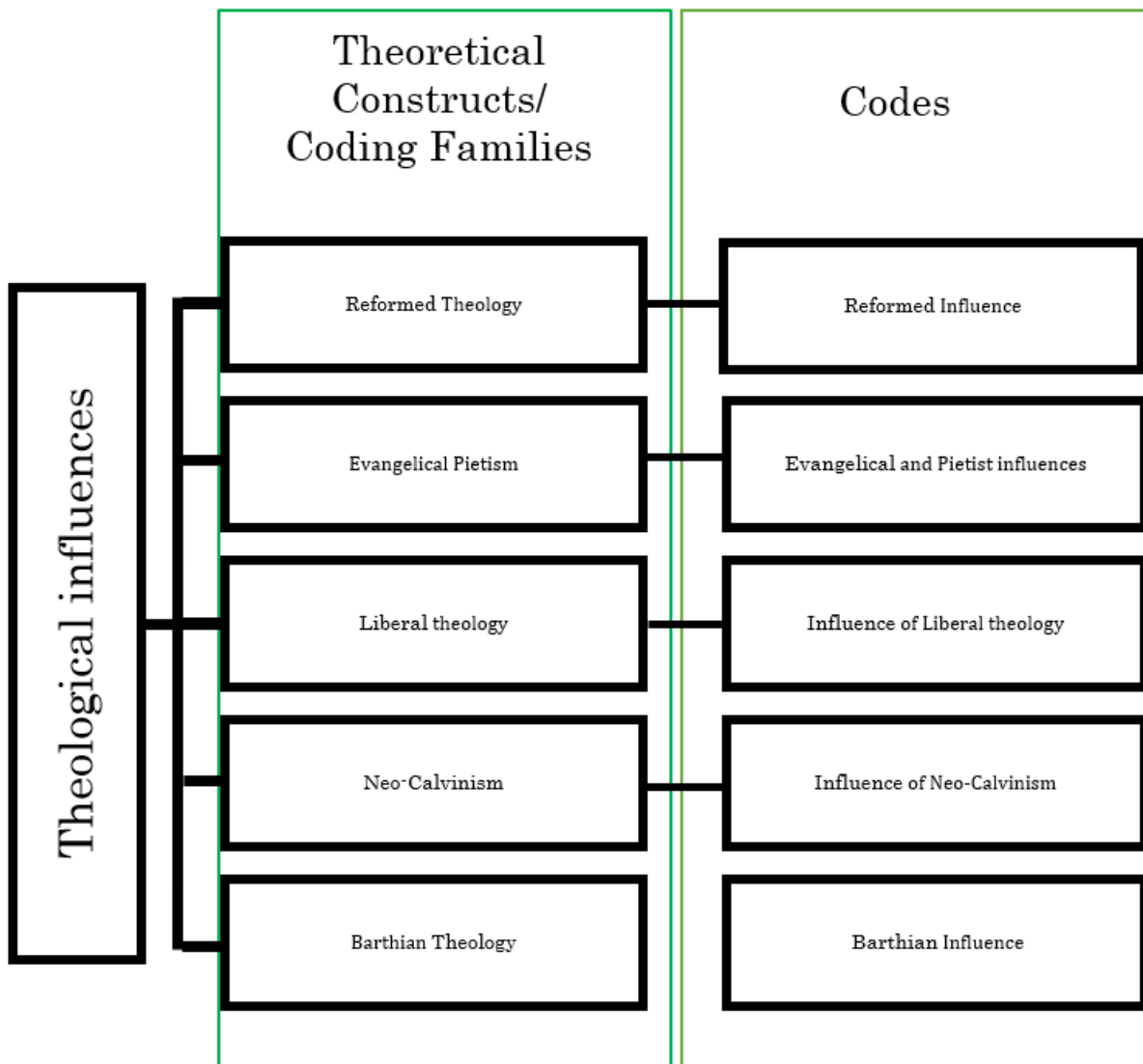
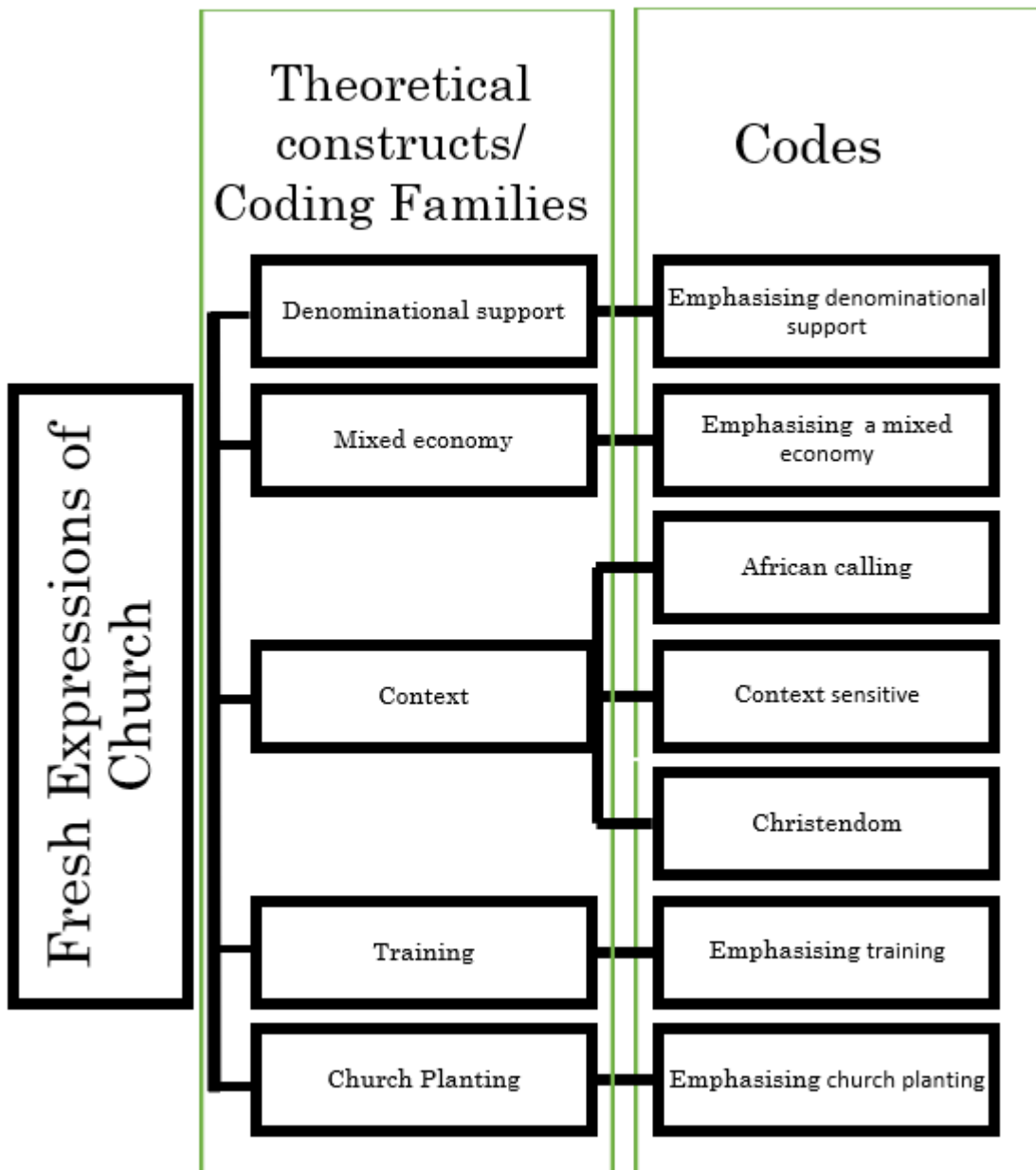Figure 13: Code Structure - Theological Influences

Figure 14: Code Structure - Fresh Expressions

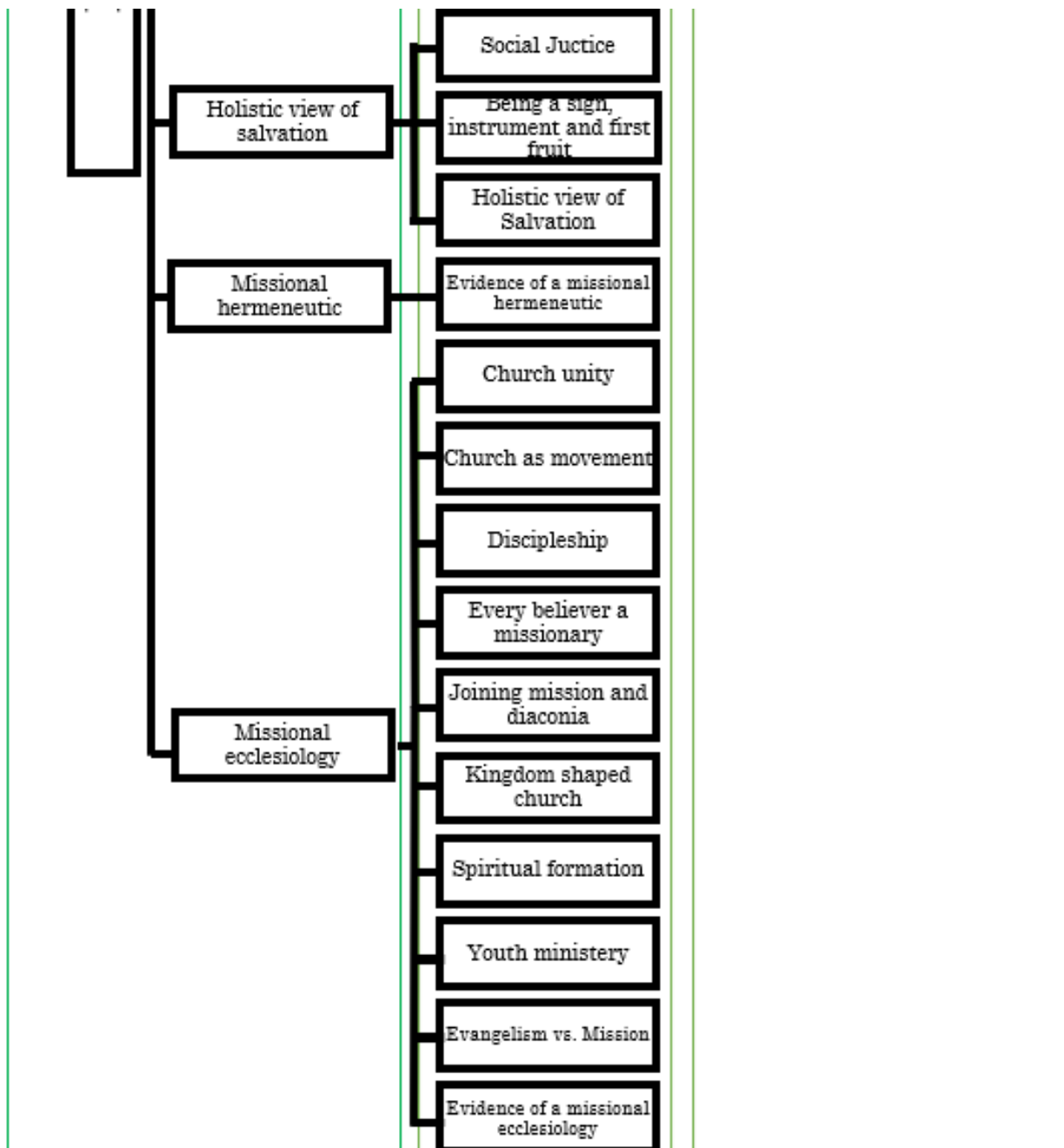| Theoretical Constructs/ Coding Families	Codes	Sub-Codes
	Understanding of the Missio Dei	
Missio Dei	Pneumatology	Dicernment
		Diversity
		Ecumenical
	Economic Trinity	View of the Spirit
Centrality of the Trinity	Immanent Trinity	Relationship driven
		View of the Immanent Trinity
		View of Eschatology
	Christology	Incarnational
	Trinitarian	Kenōsis
		View of Christology
Kingdom focused	Public theology	
	Serving church	
	Kingdom Focused	
	Eco-theology	

Missional Theology

Figure 15: Code Structure - Missional Theology

1.5.2 Code Definitions

Code definitions give a concise definition and draw boundaries for the code. Friese (2012: 78) argues that definitions are not only essential in the case of multiple coders on the same project, but also to help the single coder in being

consistent and transparent in the coding process. The following code definitions was used in the coding process.

1.5.2.1 Fresh Expressions

- o Church planting

    We understand church planting to refer to the discipline of creating new communities of Christian faith as part of the mission of God to express God's Kingdom in every geographic and cultural context' (The Archbishops' Council 2004, 2004: i;xii). The decision reflects the church's view on the importance of church planting in a missional ecclesiology.

- o Context
    - ▪ African Calling

        The decision reflects the church's view on the importance of building the Kingdom in Africa.

    - ▪ Christendom

        Christendom is a period that stretches from roughly A.D. 312, with the conversion of the Emperor Constantine, to the middle of the 20th century (Hirsch, 2006: 58). During this period, the Christian church had a dominant position and influence on all aspects of life, and there was no clear differentiation between Western political and cultural categories and Christianity (McLeod, 2003: 1). Christendom saw Christianity at the centre of Western culture, and Western society as a Christian society (Murray, 2004: 76). The decision reflects the church's understanding that it still functions within a Christendom context.

    - ▪ Context Sensitive

The decision reflects that the church must be context sensitive to be able to develop a missional ecclesiology.

o Denominational Support

Denominational support is the support given to churches - in developing a missional ecclesiology and church planting projects – by the church denomination and structures. This support is not only institutional support, but also the removal of institutional barriers to these projects. The decision reflects the importance of denominational support in the development of a missional ecclesiology.

o Mixed Economy

The concept of mixed economy describes a new church system 'in which new forms of church and inherited church (churches with inherited structures and patterns of life) exist alongside each other in relationships of mutual support' (Moynagh, 2012: 333). The decision reflects the church's view on the importance of a mixed economy of church in the development of a missional ecclesiology.

o Training

The decision reflects the church's view on the importance of the training of ministers and lay members in missional ecclesiology and church planting.

1.5.2.2 Missional Theology

- o Centrality of the Trinity
  - Christology
    - Incarnational

> *God's people must be led by the Spirit to translate the gospel into a specific culture. This decision reflects the understanding that the church should be incarnational.*

- Kenōsis

  > *The decision reflects the understanding of the kenotic character of the Trinity, in that the church empties herself of the need to preserve her own tradition and spirituality and focuses on the Kingdom of God.*

- View on Christology

  > *Christology is the understanding of the doctrine of Jesus Christ's person – i.e., his identity and nature, especially his humanity and divinity. (Higton, 2011: 99-101). The decision reflects the church's Christology.*

- View on Eschatology

  > *The church remains a preliminary community (Bosch, 1993b: 169) that lives in hope of the eschaton. This decision reflects that the church lives in the hope of the eschaton.*

- Economic Trinity

  > *Two widely used concepts in Trinitarian theology are the Economic Trinity and the Immanent Trinity. The Economic Trinity denotes God's outward involvement in creation and acts of salvation in the world. The decision reflects the church's understanding of the Economic Trinity.*

- Immanent Trinity

- Relationship driven

  The decision reflects the church's view of the importance of relationships in a missional ecclesiology.

- View on the Immanent Trinity

  The Immanent Trinity, describes God's 'internal and eternal' (Hoffmeyer, 2001: 108) existence as three persons in relation to one another. The Western perspective was heavily influenced by the focus on the oneness of God and the economic Trinity, as well as on the sending work of God. The Eastern traditions focused on the reciprocal interrelatedness of the Immanent Trinity with emphasis on the perichoretic principal. The decision reflects the church's understanding of the Immanent Trinity.

- Pneumatology
  - Discernment

    Spiritual discernment is the search for God's will for the congregation and is done through dwelling on the Word, as well as in the world, and listening to where God is sending the church to become part of His mission. The decision reflects the church's view of the importance of discernment in a missional ecclesiology.

  - Diversity

    The decision reflects the church's view of the importance of diversity in spirituality and expressions of church.

- Ecumenical

  The decision reflects the importance of the church's relationship and partnership with other Christian churches.

- View on the Spirit

  The decision reflects the church's understanding of the Spirit of God.

  - Trinitarian

    Having a trinitarian point of departure in theology is central to our understanding of God, ourselves, the church and the world (Small, 2009: 58). The decision reflects the church's understanding of the Trinity.

o Holistic Salvation
  - Being a sign, instrument and foretaste

    The decision reflects the church's view that it should be a sign, instrument and foretaste *of the Kingdom.*

  - Holistic view of salvation

    God's mission on earth is not only the 'saving' of souls, but also the redemption of the whole of creation. The decision reflects the church's view on salvation.

  - Social Justice

    The decision reflects the church's view on the importance of social justice in a missional ecclesiology.

o Kingdom Focused

- Eco theology

  The decision reflects the church's concern for the environment, the whole of creation, and the human impact on creation.

- Kingdom Focus

  The activities of the denomination and the congregation is not only focused on developing the church but primarily on the Kingdom of God. The church does not encompass the Kingdom of God, but is a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom. The decision reflects the church's understanding of the Kingdom of God.

- Public Theology

  The decision reflects the church's understanding of the role of theology in general concern within a pluralistic society.

- Serving Church

  The decision reflects the church's view on the importance of servanthood in a missional ecclesiology.

- Missional Ecclesiology
  - Church as movement

    The decision reflects the church's view on the need to be a movement.

  - Church Unity

    The decision reflects the church's view on the need of active efforts to work towards church unity within the DRC family of churches.

- Discipleship

  Discipleship is the act of following the person and teachings of Jesus Christ in inaugurating the Kingdom of God. The decision reflects the church's view of the importance of discipleship in a missional ecclesiology.

- Evangelism vs Mission

  The decision reflects a Christendom tension between Evangelism and Mission.

- Every believer a missionary

  The decision reflects the understanding that every believer is a missionary.

- Evidence of a Missional Ecclesiology

  The decision reflects a missional ecclesiology.

- Joining Mission and Diaconia

  The decision reflects the church's view on the importance of a holistic understanding of being missional in joining mission and diaconia.

- Kingdom Shaped Church

  In the development of a missional ecclesiology, there are two pitfalls the church must avoid. On the one hand, there is the church-shaped Kingdom that collapses the Kingdom into the church and sees the Kingdom where they see the church. The other end of the spectrum is the world-shaped Kingdom, which emphasises the Kingdom in the world up to the point where the church has no role. The biblical ideal is a

Kingdom-shaped church. The decision reflects the church's view on the importance of a Kingdom-shaped-church.

- Spiritual formation

The decision reflects the church's view on the importance of spiritual formation in a missional ecclesiology.

- Youth Ministry

The decision reflects the church's view on the importance of youth ministry in a missional ecclesiology.

o Missional Hermeneutic
  - Evidence of a Missional Hermeneutic

If the church wants to be true to her calling, it will have to view its missional character as a 'lens' for interpreting the Word of God. This 'lens' is a missional hermeneutic that will help a missional church and her leaders interpret the missional Word of a missional God, for a missional context. The decision reflects the church's view on the importance of a Missional Hermeneutic?

o Missio Dei
  - Understanding of the missio Dei

The missio Dei is understood as 'God's self-revelation as the One who loves the world, God's involvement in and with the world, the nature and activity of God, which embraces both the church and the world, and in which the church is privileged to participate. Missio Dei enunciates the good news in that God is a God-for-people (Bosch, 1993b: 10).*' The decision reflects the church's understanding of the Missio Dei.*

1.5.2.3 <u>Theological Influences</u>

- o Barthian Theology
  - Barthian influence

    The decision reflects theology influenced by the work of Karl Barth.

- o Evangelical Pietist
  - Evangelical Pietist influences

    The decision reflects theology influenced by Evangelical-Pietist theology.

- o Liberal Theology
  - Influence of Liberal Theology

    Liberal theology is a form of theology in reaction to the challenges of modern times and is fundamentally determined by the will to mediate between the specific content of Christian religion and the current cultural context. The Modern Thought Movement is an example of a previous liberal movement within the DRC, inspired by liberal theologies in Europe. The decision reflects theology influenced by Liberal theology.

- o Neo-Calvinism
  - Influence of Neo-Calvinism

    Neo-Calvinism was primarily an attempt at recovering the Reformed theological heritage and at combatting liberalism (Ellingsen, 1999: 268). It was strongly influenced by the

theology of Dutch theologian Abraham Kuyper. The decision reflects theology influenced by Neo-Calvinism.

- o Reformed Tradition
  - ▪ Reformed influence

    The DRC Reformed tradition has its roots in the Swiss-French-Dutch Reformed tradition (Du Toit et al., 2002: 5). The Reformed faith is articulated in terms of the Five Solas: sola Scriptura, sola fide, sola gratia, solo Christo, and Soli Deo Gloria (Tennent, 2010: 447; Niemandt, 2015: 4). The decision reflects theology influenced by the Reformed tradition.

1.6 Niemandt's Perspective

After the first phase of coding and categorizing of codes the work of Niemandt (2014) *'Emerging missional ecclesiology in the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa and church polity'* was used to sensitize me to aspects in the documents that I have missed. The result was that I decided to add the following documents to the study:

- Article 9 of the Church Order of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa 2004, 2007, 2011, 2013 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2004: 5-6; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007c: 5-6; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2011b: 3; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013b: 3-5). This article also describes the office of Minister of the Word.
- Article 10 of the Church Order of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa 2004, 2007, 2011, 2013 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2004: 6; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007c: 6; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2011b: 3; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013b: 5). This article describes the geographical limits of the minister's official duties (as stated in Article 9).
- Document on the Reformed identity of the DRC accepted by the General Synod of 2007 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007a: 11-13). A study document on the Reformed identity of the DRC done by the commission that deals with doctrinal issues for the Synod, the *Taakspan Leer en Aktuele Sake* (ATLAS).

- Document on a Practical Congregational Ecclesiology for the DRC accepted by the General Synod of 2007 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007b: 44-56). A study done on a congregational ecclesiology by the Commission for Congregational Development for the General Synod of 2007.

- Document on Missional Ecclesiology for the DRC accepted by the General Synod of 2011 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2011a: 130-141). A study on missional ecclesiology done by the Commission for Congregational Development for the General Synod of 2011.

The contours of a missional ecclesiology became noticeable in these documents. In addition to the analysis done with QDA Miner, it was decided to make a detailed comparison of the following documents in Microsoft Excel:

- Article 9 of the Church Order of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa 2004, 2007, 2011, 2013 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2004: 5-6; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007c: 5-6; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2011b: 3; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013b: 3-5)

- Article 10 of the Church Order of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa 2004, 2007, 2011, 2013 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2004: 6; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007c: 6; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2011b: 3; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013b: 5).

- Article 52 1990, 2002, 2004, 2007, 2011, 2013 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1990: 12; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1994: 11-12) (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1998: 18; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2002b: 21; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2004: 23; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007c: 23; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2011b: 11; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013b: 14)

- Article 53 of the Church Order of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa 1990, 1994 1998, 2002, 2004, 2007, 2011, 2013 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1990a: 13; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1994: 12; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1998: 18; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2002b: 21; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2004: 23; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007c: 23; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2011b: 11; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013b: 14)

- The Rule for the Missions/Witness of the Church) 1990, 1998, 2002, 2004, 2007, 2013 (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1990a: 47; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 1998: 67-71; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2002b: 94-98; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2004: 83-87; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2007c: 104-107; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2011b: 44-48; Ned. Geref. Kerk, 2013b: 90-95).

The outcome of this process will be discussed in Chapter 6.