



Towards an interceding congregation: A practical theological engagement

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DECLARATION

I, JJ Joubert, declare herewith that the thesis entitled, **Towards an interceding congregation: A practical theological engagement**, which I herewith submit to the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, in compliance with the requirements set for the PhD degree, is my own work, has been language edited and has not already been submitted to any other university.

JJ Joubert

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“Jesus my Friend (John 15:15), I appreciatively admire you for this part of our journey to which these pages bear witness. Your emphasis on the supportive unity in (Y)our family of fellow believers (John 13:35), found expression through the patient and strategic guidance of my mentor Prof. Gert Breed, and the inspiring love & dedicated support of my beloved wife and lifelong companion, Sanette. You sublimely orchestrated it all within the All Saints United Church Somerset East milieu, on the tune of the Holy Spirit, as part of our Heavenly Father’s glorious hymn of life. I am extremely grateful to you all. Amen!”

I also want to express my sincere gratitude to the personal of the NWU theological library for their professional and supportive assistance. Well done.

Then, as the proverb explains, ‘last, but not the least’, I want to thank the examiners for your time and effort, as well as your constructive advice and involvement. You are an inspiration for me.

DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITOR

This is to declare that I,

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ABSTRACT

Christians pray too little. The lack of general prayer and intercessory prayer specifically is the result of insufficient teaching and training by the church. The Christian household consequently lacks the information and method to be involved in prayer. Change initiates with the spiritual leader(s). Spiritually and relationally healthy, the leader(s) will be able prayerfully to lead and guide all the ministry aspects of the congregation to be prayer-orientated. Further equipment by means of teaching involves ensuring a spiritual and relational healthy congregation. In addition, prayer models will be referred to as inspiration and prayer methods will be provided to enable members to participate in prayer. The committed application of teaching and the practice of regular prayer will result in prayerful individuals and consequently in prayerful congregations.

OPSOMMING

Christene bid te min. Die gebrek aan algemene gebed en voorbidding spesifiek, is die gevolg van onvoldoende onderrig en opleiding deur die kerk. Die Christenhuishouding het gevolglik 'n gebrek aan voldoende onderrig en wyse van gebedsbetrokkenheid. Verandering begin by die geestelike leier(s). Geestelik en verhoudingsgesond, sal die leier(s) in staat wees om biddend al die bedieningsaspekte van die gemeente te lei tot 'n gebedsgeïntegreerde benadering. Verdere toerusting deur middel van onderrig behels die vestiging van 'n geestelike gesonde gemeente. Daarmee saam sal verwys word na gebedsvoorbeelde as bemoediging en gebedsprogramme word voorsien om lede in staat te stel tot gebedsbetrokkenheid. Die toegewyde toepassing van onderrig en die beoefening van gereelde gebed sal lei tot biddende individue en gemeentes.

PROPOSED TITLE AND KEYWORDS

Towards an interceding congregation: A practical theological engagement

Key words: Andrew Murray; All Saints United Church Somerset East; interceding congregation; equipping; intercession; practical theology.

Sleutel terme: Andrew Murray; All Saints United Somerset East Church; voorbiddingsgemeente; toerusting; voorbidding; praktiese teologie.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

“We pray too little!” (Murray 1982:13).

Andrew Murray (1828-1917) uttered these words more than a century ago, words from his book, *The Ministry of Intercession*, (Murray,1982). Murray characteristically began the chapter with reference to three Biblical texts. ‘You do not have because you do not ask God,’ Murray quoted James 4:2 (NIV Bible, 1989), Isaiah 59:16 (NIV Bible, 1989): ‘He saw that there was no one, he was appalled that there was no one to intervene,’ as well as ‘No one calls on your name or strives to lay hold of you,’ Isaiah 64:7 (NIV Bible, 1989). These texts are all a lament for the neglect to pray, of the absence of an intermediary and of no effort to pray [to take hold of is to pray (Matthew Henry)]. Murray then expressed his wish in a prayer that God would give him the words that might help to direct attention to the problem of the lack of prayer and to stir up faith, awakening that assurance that God, by His Spirit, will enable us to pray as we should, (1982:14). Several illustrations then follow to direct attention to his assertion of the universal extent of the failure of prayer; that prayer does not have the place it should have in our ministerial and Christian life.

An erroneous understanding of the priority of study and preparation of sermons over and above that of prayer; a misconception of ministerial chores at the cost of time for prayer; an inaccurate conception and practice of general prayer, but with no knowledge of intense, definite, importunate prayer; and a misapprehension of permitting the distraction of business at the cost of fellowship with the Father. These illustrations unambiguously bear witness of Christians who perhaps saw the importance of much prayer, but whose lives did not leave room for it, because they allow what appear to be legitimate or necessary duties to enjoy priority over time set aside for prayer, which is the spontaneous expression of a new and healthy life. (Murray 1982:14-18).

In like manner Oswald Chambers (1874-1914), whose time period overlaps with that of Murray, laments the lack of prayer by the church: “God grant that in time of perplexity we may get back again to the watch-tower, back again to inspired waiting, back again to the wide-eyed wonder of a child at God’s answers to our prayers” (Chambers, 2000:617). Even as a teenager Chambers was noted for his deep spirituality and gifts in both music and art. Though he studied art, he felt called to the ministry and went to study theology at the Dunoon College, where he also later taught. There he met Richard Reader Harris, a prominent barrister and founder of the Pentecostal League of Prayer. Chambers founded and principled the Bible Training College, but suspended the operation of the college to be appointed as a YMCA chaplain in Egypt during World War 1. There he spiritually tended to

the soldiers and was remembered for numerous messages, such as “What is the Good of Prayer?” [Wikipedia, 7/10/2019. 20h30}

E.M. Bounds (1835-1913), also of the same era as Murray and Chambers, expresses the danger of prayerlessness:

“So exacting and imperative in its import and power is prayer, that it stands first among spiritual values. Those who pray not are not at all. They are nothing, less than nothing. They are below zero as far as Christ and God and Heaven are concerned”(Bounds, 2001:726)*.

It is further explained that God’s ability to give and people’s ability to ask are the principles of bringing God’s work to completion. Failure of either will ruin the whole process. God has never failed to do or to give, whereas people have often failed to ask. Therefore the slow progress that is being made towards realization of a world won for Christ lies entirely with people’s limited asking or lack of prayer ability. God is restrained in doing because we are restrained by reason of our non-praying, our failure to pray. (Bounds 2001:422-423).

Against the dark and bloody backdrop of the USA civil war, in a country torn apart by moral issues, Bounds shared the necessity, the possibility and the methods of prayer. Eight books were written in a series of prayer in order to attain these objectives of him. He also personified what he taught in joining the Confederate Army in order to pray for the soldiers and the war; a life of prayer evident in everyday circumstances.

The present writer’s personal devotional times involve making use of the study material of Andrew Murray, Oswald Chambers and EM Bounds. The regretful neglect of intercessory prayer in the present writer’s personal life, as well as in the congregation he serves, was emphasised through references of Murray, and confirmed by Bounds and Chambers who experienced the same reality of prayerlessness in their times. The times of these three authors overlap. Lack of knowledge concerning prayer, and intercessory prayer in particular, is identified as the root cause for this phenomenon. Murray’s book: *With Christ in the school of prayer* was an effort to rectify this lack of knowledge. Contributing to this derelict spiritual situation – and in part as a result of this ignorance concerning prayer and intercessory prayer in particular– the expertise to actually pray is waning in the lives of individual Christian believers and subsequently in the church at large. Murray’s book: *The ministry of intercession*, with several guiding models of intercessory prayer to assist the believer in getting involved, was an effort to address this neglect of intercession in the lives of believers. Knowledge is the basis of praxis and the source of confidence to put it into practice.

**Note: Straight-forward way of writing in the late 19th century culture.*

The present writer grew up in a structural and traditional reformed context, in terms of religion. The religious liturgy was extremely formal, with the tacit understanding and servile practice of the congregation's minister always taking the lead, and in terms of the present study, especially with prayer. At times an elder member or council member (always men in both cases!) would occasionally partake in prayer, but not as a rule. Prayer was taught and practiced at church and at home, but with no or little emphasises on intercession. Childhood days bring to memory the personal family and local congregation enjoying the focus and brunt of prayer. Prayer was in general experienced rather as a duty of the minister and a private and impersonal ritual which was expected from people attending church and who call themselves Christian. This tradition lamentably played an important role in the misapprehension of prayer as a shunned task rather than a privileged and participatory dialogue with God.

With regard to the understanding and practice of prayer, the current situation in the congregation of the present writer resembles at large that described of his childhood days. There are two main reasons for this occurrence. Firstly, the congregation is old, with formal and tacit rigid traditions, spanning centuries. The church exists since 1859. Secondly, the congregation consists of only middle-aged to elderly members, who all grew up in an era of formal traditions and the impersonal understanding of prayer as a duty rather than a conversation with God.

Negligence of involvement in intercessory prayer spans the ages. In biblical times it was rampant, as it is also mentioned in the Old Testament. The classical occurrence is recorded in Ezekiel 22:30: "I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before Me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not destroy it, but I found none". It is reminiscent of accounts in the lives of Isaiah (59:4, 16; 63:5; 64:7) and Jeremiah (8:6). Ezekiel gives an account of God's lament for the absence of a prophet, whose office of prayer is part of the calling, to intercede with God on behalf of the people. The extent of God's lament is only properly conceived when it is seen within the context it was uttered. Ezekiel lived during a time of international upheaval. The Assyrian empire responsible for defeating the northern kingdom of Israel was overthrown by Babylon. Egypt also entered the scene, but after it was overcome by Babylon, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon laid siege of Jerusalem and after conquering it, took into exile its inhabitants, including Ezekiel. (NIV Bible, 1989:1226-1229). The account of God's lament in the absence of an intercessor is part of Ezekiel's oracles explaining divine judgment. Nobody is found to intercede for the city of Jerusalem, even though it was already taken into exile due to her grievous sin:

³ and say: *'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: You city that brings on herself doom by shedding blood in her midst and defiles herself by making idols, ⁴ you have become guilty because of the blood you have shed and have become defiled by the idols you have made. You have brought your days to a close, and the end of your years has come. Therefore I will make you an object of scorn to the nations and a laughingstock to all the countries.(Ezekiel 22:3-4, NIV Bible, 1989).*

The prominent New Testament incident of the negligence of prayer is the infamous account of the disciples fast asleep when they were supposed to be praying in the garden of Gethsemane at Jesus' request. Three of the four gospels refer to this occurrence, viz. Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:39-46. The degree of negligence to pray by the disciples is exacerbated by Jesus' command recorded in Matthew 26:37: "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with Me." (NIV Bible,1989). Jesus was at a very critical stage of his ministry. He knew that it was the end of his public appearances. What was to follow, his trial and death, he could only take to his heavenly Father in prayer, and yet, he called upon his disciples for support in prayer. Jesus' overwhelming sorrow is testified to by Luke 22:44 'And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.' (NIV Bible, 1989). But it is recorded that twice he came upon his disciples fast asleep, instead of praying, notwithstanding the dire circumstances in Jesus' life which drove him to ask for prayer support.

⁴⁰ *Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. ⁴¹ "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Matthew 26:40-41. NIV Bible, 1989).*

Jesus reproached the indifference of the disciples which manifested as a lack of prayer (Calvin, 1993:235). At His darkest hour, at the most critical circumstances in His life, Jesus called on His disciples for prayer as the only remedy, but they forsook Him, they neglected to pray as they were asked to do.

This absence of prayer in the modern church and the lives of modern Christians is also referred to by numerous contemporary writers:

Jack Taylor, in his book, *Prayer: Life's limitless reach* (2005:34) states:

Despite all that has been written, preached and taught about prayer, the failure of the Church is the failure of prayer and the failure of the individual Christian is the failure of prayer. Prayerlessness is the source of a host of problems that we battle with today.

Jamin Goggin (2014) experienced the lack of any idea of what prayer is among his students and many Christians. As a remedy he proposes that congregations need to be offered a vision of life with God in their day to day experiences. People need to know what it means to commune with God in reality – at work, on the freeway and at the dinner table. Goggin calls for a richer and more dynamic vision of prayer that invites people to practice the presence of God wherever they find themselves.

Ellis(2009:vii,x) concludes that the lack of power in the modern day church is due to the lack of prayer, a reality experienced by the majority of spiritual leaders with whom he conversed, and yet, sadly, prayer today is often dismissed as unnecessary or ineffective. His intention (and also his prayer) with his book is to inspire the reader to pray more and often with great confidence.

Potts'(2002) ultimate aim with his research, was to measure the effects of an eight week course on intercessory prayer on the spiritual well-being, prayer practices and the understanding of prayer evangelism of eight prayer intercessors at Trinity United Methodist Church, Merchantville, New Jersey. The results afterwards show that prayer impacts on church growth, enhances lives, and that mainline laity is open to spiritual warfare prayer.

Seok (2008) as senior pastor developed intercessory prayer training material and trained eleven volunteers of his congregation for 12 weeks. The effect on their growth in faith was then measured and compared with their measure of faith before receiving the training. The result showed that the faith of those who had received the training had greatly increased.

The Hour That Changes the World (2002) is a classic book on prayer by Dick Eastman that offers practical suggestions on how readers can revitalise their prayer lives. Eastman challenges Christians to spend one hour each day in prayer. He outlines a twelve-step prayer programme to help them accomplish the task. By dividing one hour into twelve five-minute "points of focus," such as praise, waiting, confession, and Scripture praying, believers will develop a more consistent habit of daily prayer.

One of several guides on prayer written by Bennie Mostert, *Praying with purpose* (2008), was written to help put prayer into practice. The 70% focus on practicing prayer is evident from the fact that the majority of its 40 chapters all share part of the title: '*How to pray...*'

1.2 Problem statement

The problem that the study wants to address is the lack of intercessory prayer within All Saints United Church Somerset East and how the congregation can be led to grow towards becoming an intercessory congregation.

Malan Nel in his book *Identity driven Churches* (2017) says about the place of prayer in the planning of renewing a congregation:

One cannot force reformation and the effective fulfillment of one's calling, not even with the best planning. Through prayer the congregation should, as it were, enter into the plans that God has for his people..... Prayer is a continuing discipline of the faithful to ensure that God maintains his authoritative say in his congregation (p.327).

Nel then places dependence through prayer in the centre of the planning process of a congregation (327).

Literature on the topic will now be reviewed to indicate what has already been done on the research field and what the lacuna is that will be addressed by this study. It is in the first place a study in a local congregation with the objective to address a problem in that congregation, as Osmer (2008) indicates in his book, with a practical theological study. That places this research in the field of congregational ministry and practical theology.

1.2.1 Book Reviews

Brümmer, V. 2008. What are we doing when we pray? On prayer and the nature of faith.

G.K. Chesterton asserts that faith 'is not a thing like a theory but a thing like a love affair.' Since prayer is the expression of this 'love affair' it is also the clue to understanding the nature of faith. Brümmer's analysis of prayer helps us to understand the nature of spirituality, of faith and religious belief, and of theology. Spirituality is primarily aimed at attaining the religious form of life and at coming to see the world in the light of faith. Religious belief cannot be divorced from spirituality and the life of faith, and is therefore fundamentally existential. All forms of prayer (including petition) presuppose a personal relation of fellowship with God and affect the relation between God and the person who prays. (44) Petitionary prayer establishes and develops a personal and free relationship with God, penitence (and asking for forgiveness) restores a relationship with God and thanksgiving and praise are involved in acknowledging a relationship with God (89, 171-172). Prayer and the life of fellowship with God are impossible without each other. We enter through prayer into

fellowship with God which is manifested in the life we live. This fellowship needs to be established and re-established again and again, and this fact acknowledged in praise and thanksgiving. This is what we do when we pray. (131)

God is able to adapt his plans to take account of what we do and in this way allow our infinite human agency to contribute significantly to both the final outcome and the route by which it is reached. 'For God, being infinite, there is an infinity of bests, so that the very loss of one makes possible the achievement of another.' To the extent that we refuse to co-operate with him in realizing one plan, our non-co-operation is instrumental in making a new plan possible (81).

The Double agency aspect of prayer signifies God's action as primary cause is realizing his will through the actions and cooperation of human agents as secondary causes, who freely intend to further the purposes of God, seek God's grace to enable them to do so, and in fact achieve their intended goal.' (75) God has abandoned his absolute control over the way things go and granted his human partners freedom as personal agents co-operating with him and their agency contributes significantly to the outcome of their co-operative endeavours. (80) God answers prayer by bringing about contingent events within the order of nature and by enlightening, enabling and motivating human agents to realize his intentions (82). Corporate prayer is more effective than individual prayer, because it enlists more people in the realization of God's will (66). As collaborators in God's purposes, the petitioners will bring their will in line with God's will (67).

The ability to recognize God's actions by looking at the world through the eyes of faith requires training, in which petitionary prayer has an important function. Petitioning God entails that the petitioners expect an answer. This expectation causes them to be on the look-out for God's responses and in this way sharpens their ability to recognize the providential action of God when the answer comes. When praying, the believer is repeatedly making himself seeing the world in a certain way and endeavours to live accordingly. In this way prayer becomes what John Drury calls 'the school of seeing.' Petitionary prayer influences God; it persuades God to do things he would not have done had he not been asked. It also influences the person who pray; they make themselves available to co-operate with God in realizing God's intentions. And petitionary prayer influences the world in which the petitioner exists as well; this world can now be recognized as the sphere in which God's providential action takes effect (87). Prayer becomes an 'exercise of faith' (John Calvin) within this 'triangulation' of God, the believer and the world (128). The whole of the Christian life is a life of fellowship with God, therefore, 'a time of prayer can be like the Christian life in

miniature,' (Ramsey) where prayer is an explicit expression of what is implicit in the whole of the Christian life (129).

Hodge, C. 1989. Systematic Theology. Volume 3, p 692-709. Grand Rapids. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Hodge postulates that prayer is the soul conversing with God, expressing to him our reverence and love for his divine protection, our penitence for our sins and hope in his forgiving love, our gratitude for all his mercies and our submission to his authority, our confidence in his care and our desires for his favour, as well as for the providential and The personality of God is assumed, with him being addressed and him responding saying I. In addition, God is assumed to be near to us, being able and willing to hear and answer in his intercourse with us; knowing our thoughts afar off and our unuttered aspirations are intelligible to him. It is further assumed that God created all things, he is present everywhere. God reigns and orders all the operations of nature so as to accomplish his own purpose. This doctrine is presupposed in prayer. Man asks a favour, God bestows it. Prayer also supposes that the government of God extends over the hearts and minds of men, and that He can turn it even as the rivers of water are turned. The control of God over the operations of nature and the character and conduct of men, are therefore consistent with prayer: presupposing someone to pray to and something to pray for. It is also consistent with Scripture, teaching both foreordination, as well as the efficacy of prayer. God has determined to accomplish his purpose by the use of means; and among those means, the prayers of the people have their suitable place. If God has foreordained to bless us, He has foreordained that we should seek his blessing. Prayer is appropriately considered and presented as a means of grace (699), by means of which God has ordained for the end of communicating the life-giving and sanctifying influences of the Spirit to the souls of men (708). Conversing with God includes a broad spectrum of forms of prayer: praise, thanksgiving, confession, petition, glory to him as well as supplications addressed to him. (701) Requisites of acceptable prayer are sincerity, reverence, humility, importunity, submission, faith and praying in the name of Christ, pleading his merits and worth (705). The recommended format of public prayers is a truly devout spirit of the one praying, saturated with Scripture, well ordered, suited to the occasion, simple, solemn and correct language and short. (708) Social prayer includes family prayer and prayer in the assemblies of the people for social worship. As man's nature is social, he must have fellowship with his fellow men. As the family is the most intimate bond of fellowship among men, it is of the utmost importance that it should be set apart by religion. All the relations of parents, children and domestics are purified and strengthened, when the whole family is stately assembled, morning and evening, for the worship of God, through reading the Scriptures and prayer.

The character of the church and the state depends on the character of the family, it cannot elsewhere be maintained. Where this religious service in the family is lacking, the church should stand in, but only temporarily. It is not wise to make a church ordinance the substitute for a divine institution (706). Prayer is also a power. Through prayer Moses, Eliah, Samuel and others roused God into action (709). Once one admits the doctrine of theism, that is of the existence of a personal God, and of his constant control over all things out of himself, and all ground for doubt as to the efficacy of prayer is removed, it remains to us, as it has been to all the people of God in all ages, the great source of spiritual joy and strength, of security for the present and confidence for the future (709).

Hodge, C. 1989. Systematic Theology. Volume 2, p 592-595. Grand Rapids. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

With regard to the intercession of Christ, referral is first made to the old dispensation, by Hodge. The high priest, after he offered sacrifices for sin in the outer court, on the Day of Atonement took the blood of the victims and a censer with burning incense and entered within the veil, where he presented the blood before God, sprinkling it upon the mercy seat. In like manner, Christ, having offered himself on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, has passed through the heavens, there to appear before God in our behalf. His priestly office is now exercised in heaven, where he lives to intercede for us. It involves firstly, him appearing before God for us, presenting himself as our representative. His presence – signifying his perfect manhood, his official character and his finished work – is a perpetual and prevailing intercession with God on behalf of his people, and secures for them all the benefits of his redemption. Secondly, he draws near to/ meets with/ talks to God on our behalf. To meet or approach one for another is to intercede on his behalf. Christ speaks to God on our behalf, he prays for us (John 17:9). Thirdly, Christ is called our Paraklete, signifying invoked, called upon for help. He pleads our cause as sinners before a holy God, presenting his work of obedience and suffering as the ground of our justification. It is especially in passages which speak of justification, and of judicial process, that Christ's intercession is brought into view (Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1).

The intercession of the believers is taught and understood within this context of Christ's intercession. Christ is the only Mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5); and also the only High Priest through whom we draw near to God (Hebrews 7:11-28). Believers in Christ are called a holy priesthood (1 Peter 2:9) and as intercession is a priestly function, it follows that the saints pursue Christ's example and intercede or pray to Christ for others. He is ever willing to hear and answer the prayers of his people, as he is the only and sufficient mediator between God and man.

Wiles, G.P. 2008. Paul's Intercessory Prayers. The significance of the intercessory prayer passages in the letters of St Paul.

Wiles examined Paul's intercessory prayer passages in order to determine their function within his letters, the important role they played in his pastoral and priestly office and in his total apostolic strategy, as well as how much he relied upon a widespread practice of mutual intercession among the churches. Intercessory prayer is presented as a recognizable type of prayer, in which the one who prays is concerned as mediator and intercessor before God, principally for the needs of others. With regard to the functioning of prayer passages in each letter, the wish-prayers and prayer-reports expressed Paul's currently central interests of his deeply responsible love, his vital anxieties and his burning hopes. Each of the prayers was evoked by and adapted to a particular context, while the lines of concern flowed together through each threatening occasion, through the letter composed for that situation, and through the prayer passages that reflected it. The strategic location in the introduction and conclusion or at important transitional points, of the wish-prayers and prayer reports in addition expressed Paul's currently central interests. They focus the letter itself by drawing attention at intervals to its underlying themes, and they served a liturgical purpose. The prayers were related to a liturgically oriented closing pattern in such a way as to adapt the letter for use in the further corporate worship of the readers. It was noted that all the prayers were grounded in the gospel. They were made possible because of the love of God revealed in the gospel and all the requests must be according to the will of God revealed in Christ. Love was the matrix in which Paul's constant intercessions were nurtured and maintained. His heightened eschatological and adventist perspectives added increased urgency to his thanksgiving and intercessions. He understood himself in a special way as priestly intercessor, sharing in the intercessions of the exalted Christ and the Holy Spirit. So he prayed for nothing less than the complete sanctification of his fellow believers and agonized in supplication for his fellow Jews. The wish-prayers and prayer-reports also contributed directly to the practice of mutual intercession. As examples of actual prayer by the apostle, and through their emphasis on the frequency of his praying, these passages would invite the readers to view their own lives and activities prayerfully and in turn intercede for the apostle and for one another. Thus, Paul's own prayers, when written to be read by others, would have edification in view and would be composed partly as pattern prayers. Therefore he would encourage the readers to imitate him, composing or adapting prayers suitable for their services of worship, teaching them how to pray and what to pray for. Paul's exhortations and his requests for prayer underlined his hope that the believers would grow into maturity by accepting responsibility for one another. This central passion of his life, to bring reconciliation and unity throughout the church, found expression through the believer's

prayerful concern for himself, for his wider mission work, and for one another. Paul longed for a wide-ranging network of prayers spanning the divided segments of the fragmented church, but going even beyond to include in their scope the salvation of Israel and the good of those outsiders who threatened and persecuted them. As one way of aiding his scattered churches, Paul wrote pastoral letters, which he intended and saw as a continuation of his intercessory activity. Taken together, then, the intercessory prayer passages offer impressive documentation of Paul's unfailing reliance upon the ministry of supplication, his own and that of his fellow believers. Within the very centre of the apostle's existence lay an intercessory element, profoundly affecting his understanding of the gospel and the exercise of his ministry.

Campbell, E. 2006. Ephesians, childhood guidance. Train up a child...(Proverbs 22:6a): Role of Society and Church?

Campbell starts off with disturbing statistics of commercial sexual exploitation of children in Jamaica. According to UNICEF reports, approximately 22 000 children work in Jamaica and about 2 500, mostly boys, live on the streets. UNICEF is also quoted in giving the reason for this occurrence. Among other factors, UNICEF names "weakened family structures, weak community support systems and poor parenting" as "the key underlying causes." In the light of this dysfunctional family life, Campbell emphasizes that the truth remains that it is in the family that human socialization and development primarily takes place and no matter what the State or Church does, family generally plays the greatest role in determining our core values – values that last beyond the moment. Campbell refers to Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go" and argues that the institutions of the family, State and Church should take this truth seriously as they seek the child's development. Though each has an important role to play, the State and Church should do all they can to equip parents to carry out this function effectively, because training a child is the best done within the family. The family is the primary agent of socializing. Training children is seen as imperative, with reference to Samuel (1 Sam 3:10) and Jesus (Luke 2:40; Hebrews 5:8). "Train up a child in the way he should go" to prepare them for what they are designed for, according to his ability and potential. The wise parent will discern the natural bent of the child and train it accordingly (Gaebelein) at a rate and in a way the child is capable of learning, with respect for the child's individuality but not his self-will; according to his particular traits, capacities and characteristics (Carter). Training involves discipline and then the bestowal of status and responsibility at the appropriate time on the individual in training. Discipline in the sense of guidance and of exemplification, to inculcate instruction in wise behaviour through a process of discovery learning. It involves, according to Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 17-25, telling what is required through constant reminders, explaining why it is necessary and answering their

questions as how it should be done. And in verse 17 it says parents should exemplify what is being taught. Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20 expressed similar sentiments that Moses did in Deuteronomy 6 and his interactions with His disciples reveal at least one more: Jesus sent out His disciples to practise what had been taught verbally and by example (Matthew 10:1-11; Luke 9:1-6). They were to be prepared for independence through practical experience, while some supervision could be administered. This nurturing environment with their maturity as goal resulted from Jesus' instruction, Him modelling correct behaviour and as a result of His interaction and relationship with them. It is analogous to the attachment theory, where the child begins to develop cognitive models of relationship with others based on interactions with caregivers; resulting in models of the self as competent, models of others as trustworthy and models of relationships as potentially rewarding and worthwhile...these children also experience a sense of security and readiness to explore the environment, while maintaining the parents as a secure base to whom they can return if necessary (Bolger, Patterson and Kupersmidt). The types of relationships children foster are directly related to the nature of their relationships with their parents, a reminder of parents exemplifying what they taught (Bolger). In fact, good parent relationships engender good peer relationships which, in turn, promote the development of moral reasoning, cooperation, and reciprocity (Bolger, Patterson and Kupersmidt). Social skills are learnt from home. 'Socialization by conversation and communication, talking 'with' rather than 'at' children appeared to be virtually non-existent' (Barett). As children mature, they should be given more and more responsibilities to prepare them for adulthood. There must be age-appropriate expectations. "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). This is advice that transcends time and culture and every generation, every society understands that intentional instruction of children is necessary.

Towards an understanding of strategic intercessory prayer: Implications for mission practice. DT Baetz. 2018.

In his insightful treatise: *Towards an understanding of strategic intercessory prayer: Implications for mission practice*, Baetz presents the findings which reveal an emerging consensus pointing to effective practices and approaches to intercessory prayer as it relates to missions. A praxis theoretical model is developed, with the goal of seeing intercessory prayer increasingly 'strategic' for gospel proclamation, the birth and strengthening of the church and the transformation of civil society.

Relevant to the present study, is Baetz's research with regard to prayer, which he defines as seen in its simplest form of communion with the deity or transcendent other (58). New Testament praying is based on close communion with God. Transformation is sought

through the New Testament standard of 'have mercy on me a sinner' and 'not my will but Yours be done'. The doctrines on God differ a great deal between the Christian God and other religions and affect how one prays. In Christianity the object of prayer is God Himself, and through prayer God works by His Spirit to transform us (Uenua). Christian prayer is encouraged and is based in what has already been done through Christ and is therefore seen as a response to God's work. Fasting is understood as a voluntary biblical form of prayer.

Baetz then provides the foundation of the theology of prayer for the dissertation as all prayer is gospel-centred, connected to the gospel and linked to God's covenant and focused on reminding God of His promises and the need to fulfil them...God's promised and provided solution to the problem of human rebellion and its consequences. Trinitarian involvement in our prayers and New Covenant teachings and examples of intercession made under the guidance of the Spirit is a fuller expression of intercession in the New Testament realities when compared with the Old Covenant where intercessory prayers feature individuals close to God interceding for the nation and situations

Prayer in the Old Testament appropriately starts off with Abraham, as recorded in Genesis 18. When Sarah laughed, the visitor exclaimed (in verse 14) 'Is anything too hard for the Lord?' (NIV Bible, 1989). It is asserted that the rhetorical question directed to Sarah regarding God's capacity and power sets the stage for the drama of intercession to come. Abraham was standing before the Lord, a posture specific to intercession. This passage teaches the graciousness of God evident in the invitation to enter into intercession with the understanding that God may be open to changing judgments or delaying the timing of judgment based on intercession. Also, portrayed by Abraham is the courage to ask boldly, based on the assurance of a personal relationship, as well as the understanding that there is a limit to what one can ask. Moses is next referred to in terms of three events of intercession. The first, as recorded in Exodus 32:7-14, involves the rebellious people of Israel fabricating a golden calf in Moses' absence. God rhetorically saying to Moses to leave him alone (:10a), is suggested to be God challenging Moses to intervene rather than commanding him (Stuart). God threatened the ultimate sentence, but nonetheless, God is asking permission of His prophet (Ryken). Moses' second record of intercession is according to Exodus 32:30-35. Moses interceded on behalf of the people to avoid their extermination by God. Moses boldly asks for forgiveness and then leverages his relationship with YHWH by saying, 'But if not, then blot me out of the book you have written' (verse 32; NIV, 1989). The third intercession of Moses is detailed in Exodus 33:12-23. Verses 12-17 is an intercession for the renewed presence of God among the Israelites (Dozeman). The Lord

grants Moses' requests, because He is pleased with Moses and 'knows him by name.' Friendship is the foundation for the restoration. These passages present God as a gracious and forgiving God, who at times invites negotiation or dialogue about His judgements. Also, His answered prayer can be a several-layered process.

Next, with regard to prayer in the New Testament, Baetz delineated Jesus' practice of prayer in relation to the Trinity. His private prayer life, His public prayers and His teaching on the subject all heavily reflect on and are influenced by his profound and yet intimate relationship with the Godhead. 'Everything proceeds from the Father by the Son in the Spirit' (Cyril of Alexandria). The interplay and relationships of the Godhead comes into focus through prayer. Jesus sought the Father's will through prayer on multiple occasions. He sought the will of the Father in choosing the 12, spending the night before in prayer (Luke 6:12-13). Then, raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11). The third intercessory prayer of Jesus is in the garden of Gethsemane. First Jesus seeks an alternative to sin bearing via the cross by asking for the cup to pass Him. The second time the words 'If it not be possible,' suggests that He has been wrestling in prayer and is now closer to accepting that it is God's will for Him to drink the cup. The progress of His soul is evident, while his prayer is progressively answered as He continues. Jesus' intercession teaches that answer can be granted before the answer is actually seen and the answer to prayer is sometimes a process. Jesus' role in intercession is clear according to Hebrews 7:25, 'He always lives to intercede for them.' With Jesus as advocate for us, we can ask the Father directly in the name of the Son. Jesus' teaching on prayer includes, firstly, showing and expecting an intimate relation with the Father/ Abba as basis for the prayer that follows in the Lord's Prayer. Secondly on prayer and command of faith, Jesus' teaching focuses on the importance of prayer and faith in the story of the father who brought his son to be healed after Jesus' transfiguration (Mark 9:24, NIV Bible, 1989). Thirdly Jesus' teaching on persistence and prayer found expression with the parables of the friend in need at midnight (Luke 11:1-13) and the persistent widow (Luke 18:1-8). Both parables present prayer as continual and persistent: hurling petitions against long periods of silence.

With regard to prayer in the early church, prayer as the basis for the work of the Spirit in Acts is a common theme. There was a growing emphasis on meeting/praying in believers' homes, with the household-based church seemingly taking on increasing importance as an equivalent for synagogue worship and prayer.

Prayer and the birth of the church are also discussed. The church was birthed in prayer, with the disciples obeying Jesus' command not to leave Jerusalem but to stay there until they received 'power from on High' (Acts 1:4). Their confidence and unity in prayer are obvious

marks of the Spirit's presence in their midst. James writes three significant discourses on prayer: prayer for wisdom (James 1:5-8), hindrances to prayer (James 4:1-3) and keys to effective prayer (James 5:13-16). The common thread for these three passages is the importance to pray without doubting and with confidence.

The message of 1 Peter makes it clear that any hindrances to prayer have significant impact on the fulfilment of God's purposes in gospel proclamation, the birthing and strengthening of the church, as well as in civil society.

In between the opening and the benediction of his letters, we see Paul's teaching on petitions and intercessions and the Trinity's role in prayer. We also see Paul giving general exhortations to pray and his personal modelling of prayer. This is particularly true in the book of the Ephesians, with three prominent intercessory prayers: 1:17-23, 3:14-19 and 6:10-20. These exhortations to pray include the following: pray in the

Spirit on all occasions (with all kinds of prayers and requests); be alert and always keep on praying for the saints and a personal prayer for boldness for Paul as he faces the Roman leaders. Paul prayed to the Father on behalf of the Ephesians and modelled for them how to approach God in intercession for others.

Being heard is a profound aspect of the Johannine prayer.

Prayer in the period of the Apostolic Fathers: The Apostolic Fathers thus remind us that the Lord's Prayer and the Lord's Supper were treasures given to us by the Lord.

The result of this persecution was a refined church that derived its strength from the Lord through prayer, fellowship and worship gathering on the Lord's Day and throughout the week.

In terms of theological challenges and concepts with regard to prayer, the question arises as to prayer and the Sovereignty of God: Does God Limit Himself? Spurgeon, who was asked how to reconcile these two great truths and said 'I never reconcile friends' and suggests that there are two equal but opposite dangers: one focusing on an exclusive concern with human responsibility, and the other focusing on an exclusive concern with divine sovereignty.

An historical and Biblical/ theological consideration of prayer as a means of grace by Keith V Anweeren. 1980.

In Chapter 4 of his thesis Warren (1980:56) answered the question: What is prayer?

He started with the meaning of prayer in the Old Testament and explained that in the sphere of prayer there are several words used for prayer. The most commonly used for prayer fall into two categories of to ask God (Gen 12:8; 21:33) and praising, glorifying, giving thanks (1Chron. 16:9). The covenant God was perceived as being present in their midst and acting on their behalf, which justified prayer and gave a solid basis for asking. It was as a member of God's people that the Israelite prayed for temporal prosperity (Gen 27:28) as well as spiritual matters (Ps 25:4-5). Prayers of praise and thankfulness stemmed from the realization of their privileged position of being in covenant with God (Gen 14:27), as well as His being the Creator and Sustainer of the world (Ps 8) and judge of the nations (Gen 18:25).

Warren (1980:60) further mentions other aspects of prayer: prayers of penitence (Ps 6); prayer of intercession (Ex 32:11-13, 31 ff.; 33:12-16; 34:9); prayers of sacrifice (Gen 13:4); prayers and ministry of the prophets (Is 6:5 ff.); prayers of fasting (Ezra 8:23) and prayers of cultus (Deut 12:11).

An increased deterioration of prayer in general is observed towards the latter part of the Old Testament, characteristic of where a form of prayer prevailed without any accompanying spiritual power (1 Sam 13, 15). The exile and the consequent separation from the temple, gave prayer a specific orientation, for it is only regular prayer which could take the place of the former regular worship. It was thus to be expected that prayer was given an increasing formality (Warren 1980:61). This formality of coercive prescriptions resulted in prayer becoming a superficial, external exercise only to seek the merit acceptance of God, by the time of the inter-testamental period.

Warren (1980:62) then mentions some NT aspects of prayer: asking (Matt 7:7); calling on God (Acts 22:16); intercession (Matt 5:44); petition to God (John 14:16); appeal to God (Matt 8:5); to bless (Matt 14:19); to give thanks (Mark 8:6) and confession (Rom 10:13). The intercession of the Holy Spirit on behalf of the believer (Rom 8:26, 27) and the intercession of the heavenly High Priest (Heb 7:25) are also referred to in addition to intercession of the believer (Matt 5:44).

Prayer with regard to the NT is further delineated by Warren (1980:63) with reference to Jesus' prayer life. Prayer was paramount in Jesus' life: He prayed in the morning (Mk

1:35); He withdrew to the wilderness and prayed (Luke 5:16) and He prayed all night (Luke 6:12) and He withdrew to pray when important decisions were to be made (Luke 6:12 ff.) and situations of crisis arose (John 11:41).

Important about Jesus' prayer life, according to Warren (1980:63-64), is He adhered to the Jewish devotional practices of praying three times a day. But Jesus also brought in a new dimension of prayer, by breaking through these established practices and traditions. Jesus went far beyond this pious practice of liturgical prayer three times a day as mentioned above. In addition, when the disciples asked Him to teach them to pray, He taught them a prayer in Aramaic: the Lord's Prayer, whereas the Jewish 'Shema' (Deut. 6:4-9) is a Hebrew prayer. The Gospels then give a picture of Christ, used to pray in His native tongue, teaching His disciples a formal prayer expressed in the spoken language. In doing so, He removed prayer from the liturgical sphere of sacred language and placed it right in the midst of everyday life. In particular that is seen in the use of 'Abba', which little Aramaic word may be regarded as the epitome of the new way of praying, which was ushered in by Jesus, Who talked to His Father as naturally, as intimately, and with the same sense of security as a child talks to his father. (Warren 1980:64). In the Old Testament God is only 15 times spoken of as Father (Deut. 32:6), whereas 170 times in the sayings of Jesus alone in the New Testament. It is in the New Testament that this ushering in of a new reality takes place, a reality of which thus far only a shadow had testified to the things to come. There occurs a transformation of the doctrine of God which centres in Him as Father, and prayer is not only one of the indications, but also one of the implements to bring this change about (Warren 1980:65). Christ's sonship, though on a level altogether unique, was the basis of the disciples' sonship. They too now pray: "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6). The early church did no longer call upon the 'God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,' but upon the 'God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;' He is 'one God and Father of us all' (Eph. 4:6) (Warren 1980:67-68).

The apostle Paul presented a wide range of directives. Prayer is to be with understanding (1 Cor. 14:13-15); it is to be continual (Rom. 12:12) and mutual (Heb. 1:18). Prayer is to be 'in the Spirit' (Eph. 6:18) and must be encouraged (Phil. 4:6). Prayer is to be coupled with holiness and self-discipline (1 Cor. 7:5). An outstanding feature is Paul's emphasis on thanksgiving (Phil. 4:6). The apostle emphasizes intercession: for believers, even for all people (Eph. 6:18; 1 Tim. 2:1) and for himself and his specific ministry (Rom. 15:30-31; 2 Cor. 1:11; Eph. 6:19; Phil. 1:19; Col. 4:3, 18; 1 Thes.5:25; 2 Thess. 3:1, etc.). 'Intercession has a place in early Christian prayer...The epistles of the New Testament make it obvious

how the bond of brotherly love is vital and strong in prayer. To crown the conquest of self, Jesus even demands that we should pray for our enemies' (Warren 1980:68).

The letter to the Hebrews is clear on why prayer is a possibility and a reality: the believers have a great High Priest (4:14-16); when they pray, pleading on the atoning work of Christ, they will 'receive mercy and grace' (4:16). There is also an emphasis upon corporate prayer in Hebrews 10:19-25.

The epistle of James moves within a very practical realm: the believers are to pray for wisdom (1:5); for justice (5:4-8; for healing and forgiveness (5:13-20). Prayer can also be 'asking wrongly' (4:3) and can be negated by double-mindedness (1:7 ff.), but prayer, for a true believer, will accomplish much (5:15-16).

Praying in Jesus' name (John 16:24) sets prayer directly in the context of Christ's atoning work. The first believers understood that their relation to God found its exclusive centre in the person and work of the interceding High Priest. His kingly rule, our Advocate and Mediator, Intercessor(Heb. 7:25): "entuganein" more than simply to intercede. It has a wider meaning, and would include the whole series of transactions in which one person may engage with another on behalf of a third (Warren 1980:72). The epistle to the Hebrews teaches that Christ's intercession is an uninterrupted activity of the enthroned High Priest at the right hand of God as high priestly Mediator of his covenant people, through which He invokes from God the Father the blessings of salvation for them (Warren 1980:73).

The Holy Spirit and prayer.

It is clear from Scriptural evidence that there is a very close connection between the Holy Spirit and prayer. God poured out at Pentecost the Spirit of prayer when He poured out the Holy Spirit. Prayer finds its very origin in the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer (Warren 1980:74). The Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are children of God (Rom 8:15, 16) and cries "Abba, Father" (Gal.4:6). The Holy Spirit further instructs us in the right pattern of prayer (Rom. 8:26, 27). The intercession of the Holy Spirit is continuous, the same as that of Christ (Heb 7:25). Where there is a Christian, there the Holy Spirit is, who is always engaged in prayer.

About the apostolic injunction that God's people ought to pray in the Spirit (Eph. 6:18) Warren (1980:81) can be quoted: 'The Spirit is the atmosphere of the Christian's life, and as he lives in the Spirit, grace will be given to watch and power to continue in prayer'.

Taking the Scriptural evidence into account, it appears indeed that prayer is best discussed under the heading Soteriology,...it is clear that prayer is primarily a human response to the

saving acts of the God of the covenant: through the work of Christ and the Spirit, man – by faith – is restored to the privileged level of being God’s covenant partner.

The need for a potential equipping model as an introduction and guide to intercessory prayer for the individual Christian and the local congregation is evident from the above-mentioned references. These references accentuate the importance and prominence of intercessory prayer in the believer’s life and in the church, as well as the lamentable absence of it. They further justify the researcher’s proposition of developing an intercessory prayer model in two ways:

- (a) The insufficient involvement in and absence of focused and much needed prayer by individuals as well as congregations and
- (b) Providing a potential intercessory prayer model with reference to the literature of Andrew Murray specifically, to assist and guide individuals and congregations to answer just this need.

Murray has in focus two distinct groupings of people involved in prayer in his time, which correspond with the references mentioned above and with the present situation in the congregation of the present writer: those who do not pray at all or very little and those who do pray, but without the power of prayer being evident.

The intention of the current research has in common with the focus of the authors referred to above, that it identifies intercession as a prominent form of prayer and in addition, the problem of prayerlessness and neglect of intercession in particular. The current research in addition, endeavoured to contribute to the present academic discourse with regard to prayer, a distinctive potential intercessory prayer model; distinctive in the sense that:

- (a) The potential guiding model for intercessory prayer, having the capacity to develop into something universal in the future for the benefit of all individual Christians and congregations, is based on the findings of a study exclusively implemented with the All Saints United Church Somerset East congregation, and
- (b) This model will be distinctly designed and fashioned with reference to Andrew Murray’s teaching on intercessory prayer specifically. Murray’s teaching, the ministry of intercessory prayer, together with a Biblical interpretation of intercessory prayer according to the Apostle Paul’s letter to the church of Ephesus, will form the basis of the proposed and distinctive intercessory prayer model.

1.2.2 Andrew Murray

Andrew Murray (1828–1917) was born in South Africa. After receiving his education in Scotland and Holland, he returned to South Africa and spent many years here as a pastor and missionary. He is the author of 240 devotional books. One important aspect of spiritual life on which Murray focused in his writings is prayer.

Early in 1912 a ministerial conference was called at Stellenbosch. It was attended by about 200 ministers, missionaries, and theological students. The purpose was to explore the reasons for the low state of spiritual life which marked the church – universally and locally. Murray came out strongly with the conviction that one of the deepest roots of the weakness of the Church and its leadership was the sin of prayerlessness:

The question may be raised: 'Why a study on intercessory prayer specifically according to Andrew Murray, especially in the light of so much literature on prayer presently available?'

Murray, in similar context in his time, himself gave the answer: There is no desire in publishing this invitation to intercession *to add another to the many existing prayer union or praying bands.*

The first object is to stir the many Christians who practically, through ignorance of their calling or unbelief as to their prayer availing much, take but very little part in the work of intercession; and then to help those who do pray to some fuller apprehension of the greatness of the work and the need of giving their whole strength to it. (Murray, 1982:159-160).

Murray (2002:617) unambiguously clarifies the true objective he endeavoured to accomplish with his books on prayer, promoting intercessory prayer in particular: 'Quality is more important than quantity...Our hope lies in the new intensity of the prayer of those who already pray...that His believing children who have known what prayer is may be stirred to a new intensity.' Murray (2002:616) lamented the prayerlessness of the church manifested in her weakness and utter inability to strive in prayer for the conversion of the world. This deplorable spiritual state of the church, according to Murray (2002:615), is due to 'how little the church knows how to pray and how unfit most of its members are to pray effectively.' Murray (2002:614) then in confirmation of his statement quoted from the reports of a World Missionary Conference, stressing the need of education in prayer:

It is our conviction that none can pray his best, and few can pray with any fullness of effect, who has not received some careful training in the practice of prayer and has not acquired as well the grace of holy perseverance in

it...Effectiveness and power in prayer cannot be obtained without patient continuance and much practice. The primary need is not the multiplication of prayer meetings, but that individual Christians should learn to pray. The secret and art of prayer can be learned only from the teaching of the Master Himself and by patient study of the best books on the subject.

With his initial two books on prayer: *With Christ in the school of prayer*, and *The ministry of intercession*, Murray has in focus two distinct groups of the Christian Church: those who do not pray at all or very little and those who do pray, but without the evident power of prayer.

With the former group his intention with his books on prayer mentioned above, was to make them aware of their expected participation in praying for others and to assist them in doing so; and with the latter group, Murray endeavoured to assist them in grasping the importance of their work and the necessity to continue committing themselves to it. Murray's reference to prayer models and his provision of the prayer methods were to help those praying to improve on the quality of their prayers.

The present writer's observation in the congregation that he serves is the probability that there are two major groups when it comes to prayer: those who pray little or only out of habit and those who do not pray at all—the latter group being the majority of the membership. This observation was tested with an empirical study as recorded in Chapter 2 of the present study. Murray's prayer literature suits the purpose in addressing the same problem.

The power of the Church to truly bless rests on intercession – asking and receiving heavenly gifts to carry to men. Because this is so – owing to lack of teaching or spiritual insight - we put the trust in our own diligence and effort – to the influence of the world and the flesh – and work more than we pray, the presence and power of God are not seen in our work as we would wish. Such thoughts have led me to wonder what could be done to rouse believers to a sense of their high calling in this, and to help them to take part in it. (Murray, 1982:9)

The present writer, observing the same situation in his context; personal and in the congregation in which he is involved, confidence in our own diligence and effort, and consequent endeavour to work more than we pray, finds Murray's literature on prayer outstanding in two ways: first he theoretically gives the answer as to the foundation, mode, and motivation for prayer and secondly, Murray provides several practical guides to assist and to enable these two prayer groupings amongst Christian believers, to participate in prayer:

Bid sonder ophou: 'n Oefen skool vir voorbidding, (Murray Deel 4, 1944: p389-425), A 31-Day Guide to Prayer—based on his teaching, to assist all who are convinced of their lack of prayer to learn to pray ;

Here, leer ons bid! (Murray Deel 4, 1944:177-220), another 31-Day meditative teaching on prayer;

'n Voorstel – 'n week van gebed (Murray Deel 8, 1944:189-205), Murray's call upon the church for mission involvement and a 7-day prayer proposal as a guideline.

In calling upon the churches of his day for prayer commitment and participation, and in providing numerous practical guides to prayer to assist them, Murray distinguishes himself from other writers, as a writer whose writings will serve the purpose of informing believers about intercessory prayer and subsequently getting them involved in intercessory prayer. "And so this book (*The ministry of intercession*) differs from the former one in the attempt to open a practicing school and to invite all who have never systematically taken part in the great work of intercession to begin and give themselves to it" (Murray, 1982:9).

Moreover, Murray's Biblical framework with regard to intercessory prayer, which forms the basis of his 31-Day Prayer Guide, and further qualifies him as being selected for this study, is explained by him in his introduction.

Murray explains that if the spiritual life is healthy, that is under the full power of the Holy Spirit, praying without ceasing will be natural; involving set times of prayer as well as continual prayerfulness; which matures into prayer for others apart from prayer for oneself.

Murray further provides a prayer guideline, consisting of subjects and hints for prayer for a month, in order to assist the person praying 'until we know more fully to follow the Spirit's leading,' (Murray, 1982:12). This '*How to pray*' Murray supplements with his '*What to pray for*,' as a further instrument to determine where prayer is needed. Time and commitment is ensured and consequently a prayer focus will result. '*Answers to prayer*' is Murray's call to the person praying, to look for and expect the answers prayed for: "It is of extreme importance that we should prove that God hears us, and to this end take note of what answers we look for and when they come," (Murray, 1982:13).

The biblical principle of unity in purpose, finds its expression in Murray's highly recommendable advice to form prayer circles. "...it is suggested that it may be found helpful to have small prayer circles to unite in prayer,...with the view of strengthening each other in the grace of intercession," (Murray, 1982:14). Murray then faithfully maintains the reality of human fallibility with the cry "Who is sufficient for these things?" when one becomes overwhelmed by his or her insufficiency to participate in this great work of interceding for others. 'Our sufficiency is of God,' is Murray's answer, referring to 2 Corinthians 12:9: "My

grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” In the preface of the collective works of Murray about prayer, the following was stated:

About no other subject did Dr. Andrew Murray write with so much enthusiasm as about prayer. The more than thirty writings he wrote in Dutch and in English provide enough evidence about the important place he allocated to prayer in the life of the believer, the congregation and the church. Especially in the latter years of his life did prayer enjoy a more predominant emphasis in his work and preaching (Murray, 1943: Preface; FJL.) (Translated from the Afrikaans).

Murray expressed his strong conviction, that in spiritual work everything depends on prayer, through the printed page, in order to reach a larger audience (Choy, 1978: 267-8). Some of the books Murray wrote on prayer are: *With Christ in the school of prayer; The ministry of intercession; The prayer life; Andrew Murray on Prayer; Power in prayer; The prayer life and Prayer's inner chamber*. Books were also written about Andrew Murray, for example: *The life of Andrew Murray of South Africa* by J du Plessis (1919) and *Andrew Murray apostle of abiding love* by Leona Choy (1978).

1.2.3 Toward an interceding congregation

The present study was exclusively conducted in the context of the All Saints United Church Somerset East. The proposed potential prayer model will notwithstanding be accessible and to the advantage of any other congregation who also identifies the negligence of prayer and who is determined to rectify it. The researcher has done an in-depth research on this one congregation, due to the fact that as the residing pastor, he first observed and identified the dereliction of prayer amongst individual members and subsequently of the congregation at large. In addition, he also has free access to all its members to conduct an empirical research, which, as will be evident, proved his initial observations. Creswell and Creswell (2018:184) mention occasions when studying the researcher's own organization, friends or immediate work setting is essential. They refer to Glesne and Peshkin (1992), coining the term “Backyard” research, to describe this occurrence, and further propose multiple strategies for validation to ensure the accuracy of the information. Two of the strategies discussed by Creswell and Creswell (2018) are applied by the present writer to safeguard that data was not compromised: a) Use a rich, thick description to convey the findings (Creswell and Creswell 2018:200) and b) Spend prolonged time in the particular field (Creswell & Creswell 2018:201).

The second reason for the uniqueness of this research was a literature study of Andrew Murray's *The Ministry of Intercession*, in conjunction with an exegetical study of prayer in the Apostle Paul's letter to the church of Ephesus. The results of the empirical research were

considered in the light of Andrew Murray and the Apostle Paul's views on prayer. The proposed prayer model is the culmination of this deliberation.

The objective is to formulate, in the light of the results of this study, a potential equipping model for intercessory prayer as a preliminary guide to assisting individual Christians and congregations in order to initiate involvement in intercessory prayer. The proposed model could be altered to suit each context if necessary as deemed appropriate. Osmer (2008:43) speaks about how congregational leaders frequently need to deepen their understanding concerning issues that arise in the ministry. In the present situation, the issue at hand is the dereliction of intercessory prayer in the lives of individual members and of the congregation at large, which is supposed to be integral to their calling and identity as the body of Christ. The purpose of this research, therefore, is to emphasize the importance of intercessory prayer as part of a congregation's ministry and to provide guidelines to address this need as it was verified.

1.3 Terms explained

The following terms are relevant to this study to present a model, based on the prayer literature of Andrew Murray, in order to enable any Christian community to become involved in intercessory prayer:

Intercede – Pleading on behalf of another; making intercession.

Intercession – The act of interceding between two persons; entreaty on behalf of another; a prayer, or series of prayers.

Intercessor – One who intercedes; a mediator (Funk & Wagnalls: *Standard Dictionary* 1970).

1.4 Research questions

Which model can be offered for equipping a congregation to grow as an intercessory congregation, consisting of interceding members?

Sub questions that arise from this:

- What is prayer and in particular intercessory prayer?
- What is the present intercessory prayer status of the All Saints United Church Somerset East and why?

- What ought to be going on in connection with intercessory prayer, with reference to the works of Andrew Murray and others?
- What ought to be going on in connection with intercessory prayer, with reference to the Bible?
- What model can be offered for equipping a congregation to become an intercessory community?

1.5 Aim and objectives of this research

1.5.1 Aim

The aim of this study is to formulate and present a model for equipping a congregation to grow as an intercessory community.

1.5.2 Objectives

- to do a literature and biblical study to determine what prayer is;
- to do an empirical study and evaluation of the present state (why) of intercessory prayer in the All Saints United Church Somerset East;
- to do a literature study on Andrew Murray to determine what is expected from a Christian congregation in terms of intercession;
- to do an exegetical study of the book of Ephesians to determine what is expected from a Christian congregation in terms of intercession according to the Bible; and
- to formulate and present a model to show how to equip a Christian congregation to grow as an intercessory community.

1.6 Central theoretical argument

The central theoretical argument of this study is that the use of an intercessory prayer model, based on the concept of intercessory prayer according to Andrew Murray and the Bible, can contribute to developing a Christian congregation into an intercessory community.

1.7 Research Methodology

Mouton (2001:56) is of the opinion that the focus of research methodology should be on the procedures, tools and steps that will be followed in the research process. Bless, Higson-

Smith & Kagee (2006:44) describe basic research as the gathering of facts and information which can be used to challenge or develop theories. In order to comply with both of these focuses and to address the research question effectively, the researcher chose to do a combination of empirical, literature and exegetical studies.

This study is a practical theological investigation. According to Swinton and Mowat (2016:v) human experience plays an important role in practical theological research and reflects theologically on these experiences. It seeks to explore the complex dynamics of these situations to enable the “development of transformative and illuminating understanding of what is going on” (Swinton & Mowat 2016:v). According to Heyns and Pieterse (1990:7,10) practical theology seeks to understand the theories underlying religious actions, in order to develop new theories to improve religious actions.

Unique practical theological methods have been developed for the unique focus of the field of study (Heyns & Pieterse, 1990:10). Different models for doing practical theological research were developed. In recent years the models of Zerfass (1974), Cochrane, De Gruchy and Peterson (1991), Muller (2005) and Osmer (2008), amongst others, were developed.

A systematic means of investigating a particular phenomenon is described in the models and a researcher chooses a specific model because of its potential to address the objective of the research and aid the researcher in answering the research question.

The practice of the church is the starting point of practical theology (Bennett et al., 2018:19). The research should combine relevant insights, methods and perceptions in order that different understandings of practice, experience and the world can emerge (2018:22). Swinton & Mowat (2006:v) say practical theology also starts with human experiences and reflection from a theological perspective on these experiences.

Ballard & Pritchard (2001:77) describe the following phases of research exploration, reflection, and action. They use these phases as a way of understanding, discovery and action while also being busy with a theological activity (Pritchard, 2001:79). The model of Swinton (Swinton & Mowat, 2016:55) make use of a hermeneutical and interpretative paradigm and it seeks to interpret various dimensions, such as situations, Scripture, tradition, and Christian practices while drawing on different hermeneutical perspectives to understand God and human experiences.

Van der Ven describes dialogue within various research fields in three ways, namely multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and intradisciplinary (1993:89). In the multidisciplinary

model the theologian reflects theologically on the empirical description and analysis offered by the social scientist. The interdisciplinary model seeks to produce an interactive form of cooperation between disciplines (Van der Ven, 1993:89). The intradisciplinary model “takes up and critically assimilates new methods and techniques developed in other areas of science, with a view to their theological development by theologians themselves” (Van der Ven, 1993:89).

While there are advantages and disadvantages in other models, this study will employ the practical theological research method of Osmer (2008). The four tasks of practical theology offered by Osmer is descriptive, interpretive, normative and pragmatic and can be used to interpret episodes, situations, and contexts theologically (2008:4).

The following questions based on Osmer’s description of practical theological interpretation are aligned with the goals of this study and will be addressed in the various chapters of the research report.

An empirical study and evaluation of the present state of prayer in the All Saints United Church Somerset East answers to the descriptive and the interpretive task.

The normative task is fulfilled by both the literature study on Andrew Murray in terms of intercessory prayer and the exegetical study on what is expected from a Christian congregation in terms of intercession according to the Bible.

Finally, the pragmatic task was carried out by formulating a prayer model to equip a Christian congregation to grow into an intercessory community.

While the researcher is aware of different ways that prayer is seen and practiced today, the focus of this study is on spoken prayer as interceding, as Murray also has written on prayer, and the investigation of alternative forms is not deemed to be relevant to this study.

The first step taken in terms of the procedures, tools and stages for this research, was to provide the biblical background and foundation of prayer, and intercessory prayer specifically, thus describing how prayer will be seen in this study.

Subsequently an empirical study was conducted. The mixed method approach was used, focusing on qualitative (contexts) questions and quantitative (facts) questions. The empirical study was done to determine the present state of understanding and of involvement in prayer, in the All Saints United Church Somerset East. Members were individually interviewed, and the results were analysed with the assistance of the statistical services of

the NWU. During the process of drafting the questionnaire for the interviews and analysing the data, an independent data-coder was involved to ensure validity.

Next, a literature study on the writings of Andrew Murray concerning intercession was conducted.

In the wake of the literature study, an exegetical study of the book Ephesians in terms of prayer, determined what is expected from a Christian congregation in terms of intercession according to the Bible.

An intercessory prayer model was formulated and offered for equipping a congregation to grow as an intercessory congregation, with the insight gained from the above-mentioned steps.

The focus was on the theoretically determined principle of intercessory prayer. The results of the literature study on Andrew Murray and the exegetical study of what the Bible stipulates according to the book Ephesians form the basis of a model to equip a Christian congregation to grow into an intercessory community.

The results of this study will be accessible to, and for the benefit of the broader community of Christian believers.

1.8 Ethical considerations

The importance of ethical considerations in scientific research is stressed by Grinnell (2001:56):

A variety of professional organizations and interested lay groups have also focused on insuring the physical safety and emotional well-being of research participants taking part in biomedical, behavioral, and social research.

1.8.1 Avoidance of harm

An important ethical rule of research is that it must not harm participants in any way (Babbie, 2007:27& Creswell, 2003:64) as cited by Strydom in De Vos et al. (2011:115). This fundamental rule was adhered to during the process of research. Participants were given assurance of strict confidentiality. All information provided for the objectives of the research was treated as strictly confidential. Participants were respected at all times. They had the freedom to withdraw from the research at any time and their wish would be granted immediately.

1.8.2 Informed consent

Bremborg (Stausberg and Engler, 2014:319-320) states that the main ethical issue comes before the interviews start: the respondent must be aware that the situation is an interview. The best way to clarify the ethical issue is to get the interviewee to sign an informed consent, with all the information.

Informed consent was obtained by providing all possible or adequate information on the following:

- the goal of the investigation;
- the expected duration of the participant's involvement;
- the procedures which will be followed during the research;
- the possible advantages, disadvantages and dangers to which participants may be exposed; and
- the credibility of the researcher.

This information was given to potential participants or their legal representatives before the onset of the research project (Strydom in De Vos, 2011:117).

Participants must be legally and psychologically competent to give consent (Strydom in De Vos et al., 2011: 117). A letter providing detailed information regarding the research as well as a letter for informed consent are added as addenda to this research proposal.

1.8.3 Violation of confidentiality

Bremborg (Stausberg & Engler, 2014:320) emphasises that anonymity should be aimed at in the report.

During the research the identity and privacy of respondents were handled with strict confidentiality. Steps taken to ensure that no breach of this principle will take place were discussed with participants (Strydom in De Vos et al., 2011:119). Participants were informed of limits to this principle, such as in the case when a participant may be a danger to himself or when the researcher is under legal obligation to report something to government authorities.

1.8.4 Release or publication of findings

Data need to be reported in such a way that it cannot be associated with a particular individual in any way (Mertensin Lapan et al., 2012:36).

The findings were formulated and presented clearly and unambiguously to avoid misappropriation by anyone (Strydom in De Vos et al., 2011: 126).

1.9 Literature review

The initial empirical study revealed the limited understanding and practice of intercessory prayer. The doctrine of prayer in general was considered as the foundation of intercessory prayer. The literature of Andrew Murray was analyzed and specifically his book *Intercessory Prayer*, followed by an exegesis of what the Bible teaches in terms of prayer, according to the book of Ephesians in particular.

The researcher made use of national as well as international scientific resources. There are various search engines available on the NWU library that assisted in this process. These are examples of search engines that were used: Nexus; SACat; EBSCO HOST; ProQuest; Google Scholar; ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials; Academic Search Premier.

1.10 Outline of the chapters

List of tables

List of appendices

Definition of key terms

Introduction

The biblical background

Intercessory prayer in All Saints United Church Somerset East empirical and literary evaluation

Intercessory prayer according to Andrew Murray

The biblical foundation of intercessory prayer according to the book Ephesians

An equipping intercessory prayer prototype for Christian congregations.

References

Appendices

1.11 Schematic Presentation

Research question	Aim and objectives	Research method
What model can be offered for equipping All Saints United Somerset East to become an intercessory congregation?	The main aim of this study is to formulate and present a model for All Saints United Somerset East Church to grow into an intercessory congregation.	Empirical, literature, and exegetical studies were done.
What is the present state of prayer in the All Saints United Church Somerset East?	To determine to what degree prayer features in the All Saints United Church Somerset East.	An empirical study was done by means of a questionnaire.
What is intercessory prayer according to Andrew Murray?	To determine characteristics of intercessory prayer according to Andrew Murray.	A literature analysis was done.
What perspectives does the Bible give on intercessory prayer?	To study and determine the Biblical basis of intercessory prayer.	An exegetical study was conducted.
What does an intercessory prayer equipping model look like for All Saints United Church Somerset East?	To present an intercessory prayer equipping model for ASUCSE.	The empirical, literature and exegetical results were brought together in an analysis.

CHAPTER 2 BASIS THEORETICAL POINTS OF DEPARTURE FOR PRAYER FROM THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT PERSPECTIVES WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Mr. Moody was once addressing a crowded meeting of children in Edinburgh. In order to get their attention he began with a question: "What is prayer?" – looking for no reply, and expecting to give the answer himself. To his amazement scores of little hands shot up all over the hall. He asked one lad to reply; and the answer came at once, clear and correct, "Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God for things agreeable to His will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins and thankful acknowledgement of His mercies." Mr Moody's delighted comment was, "Thank God, my boy, that you were born in Scotland." (An Unknown Christian: 1973:53)

2.1 Introduction

Prayer is defined in multiple ways by various faith orientations. The broad spectrum of understanding and concepts about prayer, even within the Christian faith alone, is evident as stated by Versteeg (1976):

In een enkele jaren geleden verschenen boek van H Schmidt over gebed – Bidden onderweg – wordt een bibliografie gegeven die niet minder dan 1221 titels van boeken en artikels over het gebed omvat. De bijzondere belangstelling voor het gebed, zoals die duidelijk uit deze bibliografie blijkt, is zowel verblijdend als verontrustend. Het is verblijdend, dat door zo velen aandacht gegeven wordt aan wat het gebed is. Het is tegelijk verontrustend, dat het blijkbaar voor zo velen niet meer duidelijk is wat gebed is, zodat een veelheid van literatuur over het gebed noodzakelijk is (p7).

(In a book of H Schmidt about prayer – Pray Along the Way - which appeared a few years ago, a bibliography is presented which includes no less than 1221 titles of books and articles about prayer. This special interest about prayer as is evident from the bibliography is both exiting, as well as disturbing. It is exciting that so much attention is given to what prayer is. It is disturbing that it is apparently still unclear for so many what prayer is, and consequently it necessitates such a vast amount of literature about prayer.)

The present introductory concept of prayer makes use of the delineation of prayer by Bruce et al. (1974:1019 - 1023). It is according to the Bible as interpreted by the Reformed Protestant faith tradition. Prayer in the Bible, which is composed of adoration, confession, praises and supplication, is introduced by Bruce et al. (1974:1019) as worship, as well as communion with God, depending on God taking the initiative, in the context of it not being a natural human response. The distinctive aspects of prayer are explained by Bruce et al. (1974:1019) as follows:

The biblical doctrine of prayer emphasizes the character of God, the necessity of a man's being in saving or covenant relation with Him, and his entering fully into all the privileges and obligations of that relation with God.

Different/alternative definitions of prayer will be referred to later on.

2.2 Prayer in the Old Testament

2.2.1 The patriarchal period

During this time prayer was calling upon the name of the Lord (Gen 4:26), which reflects directness and familiarity in prayer. Sacrifice was also associated with prayer (Gen 13:4), implying the submission of man to God and the subsequent union of man's will with God's will. (Bruce et al. 1974:1020). Abraham's intercessory prayers for Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 18:22 ff.) are the classical example and evidence of the important reality of intercessory prayer from the beginning of God's dealings with humankind. Abraham is introduced as early as Genesis 11 in the Bible, is referred to as the son of Terah, descendant of Sem. The very next chapter, Genesis 12 (NIV Bible, 1985), gives an account of God calling Abraham as a recipient of his blessings and as a conduit for blessings to all the peoples of the earth:

¹The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

²I will make you into a great nation,
and I will bless you;

I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.

³I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth

will be blessed through you.'" (NIV Bible 1985).

Baetz (2018:68) postulates an understanding of the unprecedented and counter-cultural audacity of Abraham interceding for Sodom and Gomorrah detailed in Genesis 18. The context of Abraham daring to approach God with a request contrary to God's revealed will, is enhanced by Abraham's obedience to God's demand of the covenant circumcision of both Abraham and his entire family detailed in Genesis 17. Abraham's obedience bears witness to the increasingly intimate relationship of trust between God and himself established with their mutual covenant delineated in Genesis 12:1-9 and 15:1-21. Subsequently, Baetz (2008:70), referring to Fretheim (1994:465) claims that God asked a rhetorical question in Genesis 18:14: 'Is anything too hard for the Lord?' (NIV Bible, 1985), in response to Sarah's laugh of unbelief in answer to God informing Abraham about Sarah bearing a son within a year. On the contrary, it seems, Fretheim (1994:465) postulates that God's question is difficult to understand and "The text probably presents a genuine question designed to continue the conversation, not a rhetorical question, which would declare that nothing is too hard". Fretheim (1994:464) further explains the Hebrew term (*pāle*), translated "to be wonderful" or "to be hard/ difficult", claims God's promises will not fail, that God will always find a way into the future. Nevertheless, with regard to Moses, Stuart (2006:670) asserts that 'In saying "Now leave me alone" (Ex 32:10) God made a rhetorical demand. He was challenging Moses rather than commanding him' Baetz 2018:74). Important to the correct comprehension of intercessory prayer in principle is recognising the significance of this rhetorical aspect evident in the question 'Is anything too hard for the Lord?' (Gen 18:14) and in the demand 'Now leave me alone.' (Ex 32:10). Not only is it giving a hint regarding God's capacity and power, but it is also setting the stage for the spectacle of intercession to come (Baetz 2018:70). 'Is anything too hard for the Lord?' is uttered as an invitation and an appeal to approach God with a request. This appeal to Abraham is similar to God's rhetorical demand to Moses to leave him alone. God is creating the opportunity for intercession as well as inviting and challenging believers to intercede on behalf of others. It is important to keep in mind the context of the exceptional covenantal relation between God and Abraham with its reciprocal loyalty and obligation as detailed in Genesis 12:1-9 and 15:1-21. This relation is evidently due to God taking the initiative. God not only called Abraham to be the recipient of his blessings, but also binds himself to Abraham by means of the promise of a multitude of descendants, as well as all the nations to be blessed through him.

2.2.2 The pre-exilic period

One of the most prominent aspects of prayer in this period is intercession, although it is also referred to in the patriarchal period with regard to Abraham's prayers for Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 18:22 ff.) as mentioned. According to Bruce et al. (1974:1020), two

distinctive attributes of intercessors are mentioned to explain their peculiar power in prayer as mediators between God and men: Their status or ranking as being called by God as prophets, priests and kings: Moses (Ex 32:11-13) and Samuel (1 Sam 7:5-13); and the stable and intimate personal relationship between God and them: Lot (Gen 19:17-23:17) and Job (Job 42:8, 10). Notwithstanding these attributes, the Lord always remains free to execute His will and therefore the Bible also mentions unsuccessful intercession (Gen 18:17-23; Ex 32:30-35). Also during this interval, a prayerful relation with Yahweh was indispensable for receiving the revelatory word from God. Prayer therefore was an essential reality and condition in the ministry of the mentioned prophets, priests and kings. The prophet Daniel for example received a prophetic vision during prayer (Daniel 9:20 ff.). In the Psalms formal as well as more spontaneous prayers are encountered.

The call as a prophet by God and their intimate personal relationship, characteristic of an intercessor interceding on behalf of others before God, is also obvious in the life of Moses, as with Abraham mentioned earlier. Moses' definitive intercessory performances are detailed in Exodus 32:7-14, 30-35, 33:12-23. During Moses' absence of 40 days in receiving the Ten Commandments from God, the people turned from God and worshipped a golden calf as their god who brought them out of Egypt (Exodus 32:1-6). Moses was standing before the Lord on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 31:18) as the Lord spoke to him face to face (Exodus 33:11) in their customary way. God informed Moses about the people of Israel's corrupt temperament and their rebellious conduct (Exodus 32:7-9). He further instructed Moses to leave Him alone (Exodus 32:10) and not to interfere, resembling preferences of God in 1 Samuel 2:25 and Jeremiah 7:16, 11:14 & 14:11. God's wish to be left alone is interpreted by Stuart (2006:670) as rhetorical and explains that God was rather challenging Moses than commanding him not to interfere. It is as if God is saying to Moses 'Here is what I will do unless you intervene,' as Moses had no power at all to stop God. This significant dialogue with regard to a rebellious people, and God who is provoking a prayerful response in the sense of intercession from Moses to attempt changing God's decision to destroy the people, is truthfully conveyed in Hymn 501 in The Methodist Hymn-book with tunes (1904:429):

O wondrous power of faithful Prayer!

What tongue can tell the almighty grace?

God's hands or bound or open are,

As Moses or Elijah prays:

Let Moses in the Spirit groan,

And God cries out, - Let Me alone!

Let Me alone, that all My wrath

May rise the wicked to consume!

While justice hears thy praying faith,

It cannot seal the sinner's doom;

My Son is in My servant's prayer,

And Jesus forces Me to spare!

O blessed word of gospel grace!

Which now we for our Israel plead,

A faithless and backsliding race,

Whom Thou hast out of Egypt freed:

O do not then in wrath chastise,

Nor let Thy whole displeasure rise!

Father, we ask in Jesus' name,

In Jesus' power and Spirit pray;

Divert Thy vengeful thunder's aim,

O turn Thy threatening wrath away!

Our guilt and punishment remove,

And magnify Thy pardoning love.

Father, regard Thy pleading Son!
Accept His all-availing prayer,
And send a peaceful answer down,
In honour of our Spokesman there;
Whose blood proclaims our sins forgiven,
And speaks Thy rebels up to heaven.

The replete significance of God habitually using the rhetorical manner of speech is obvious, either as a question as with Abraham or as a statement, as with Moses. As mentioned above, it set the stage for the intercession to come, the intercession for what is desired and expected from God, and invites people called by God to intercede. God revealed His capacity and power to make a difference when He asked Abraham the rhetorical question: 'Is anything too hard for the Lord?' God's question was also understood as an invitation and assurance to Abraham of God being approachable and communicative.

In addition, God, with His statement to Moses to be left alone, was interpreted above as Moses being challenged to intervene and change God's decision to destroy the people of Israel. This invitation of God to Abraham and of God challenging Moses to get involved is understood within the context of intercessory prayer. Baetz (2008:74) further suggests, in reference to Ryken (2005:987), that although God threatened the ultimate sentence, He nonetheless is asking permission of His prophet in being open to be persuaded not to annihilate the people of Israel. Stuart (2006:670) disagrees: 'Moses had no power to stop God from doing anything, so there would have been no need whatever for God to ask permission of Moses to do something through the statement "leave me alone." Rather, it was a rhetorical way of saying to Moses: "Here is what I will do unless you intervene."' Moses as mediator stood between God and his people and only the neglect of Moses praying for them, will allow God to destroy his people. Whether God is challenging Moses or asking permission, Moses' intercession was crucial for the survival of the people of Israel.

He further refers to Jerome, as quoted by Lienhard (2001:145), who perceive the prayers of God's servants as hindering God's power. (cf. also Baetz 2018:75). Authoritative models of intercessors hindering God's power are Moses, 'But now, please forgive their sin – but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written,' (Exodus 32:32) as well as the Apostle Paul who addressed God, 'I could wish that I myself were cursed for my brothers. (Romans 9:3). (NIV Bible, 1985).

Baetz (2018:71) clarifies the standing posture of Moses before the Lord as specific to intercession and their conversation resembles a courtroom drama. In a similar way to Abraham's intercession in Genesis 18, Moses' negotiation includes a judicial tone and question in Exodus 32:11 'But Moses sought the favour of the LORD his God. "LORD," he said, "why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand?"' (NIV Bible, 1985). God expressed His favour towards Moses with whom He stood in a relationship of acceptance and friendship, speaking to him face to face. He relented to bring upon the people the disaster He had threatened. (Exodus 32:14).

2.2.3 The exilic period

Absent from their country, capital and temple, the synagogue emerged where the Word was read and expounded and prayers were offered, according to Bruce et al. (1974:1020). At the centre of this exilic religious community, and as part of other religious obligations, prayer was important. Being a Jew during this time was by choice and not being born into a Jewish community. Important is the fact that after the exile, the synagogue remained alongside the temple a place where the presence of Yahweh was sought in fellowship, listening to and contemplating the written word and through prayer.

To intercede with God on behalf of the people is part of a prophet's task, as seen above in the designation of selected prototypes of Abraham in Genesis 18 and Moses in Exodus 32. The prophets Ezekiel and Jeremiah conformed to this prophetic task of intercession during the exilic period. Though treating the exilic prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel individually, Harrison (1975:852-853) emphasized certain similarities as well as differences of their respective messages. When considered holistically, these aspects provide the context and format of prayer – and intercessory prayer in particular – during the exilic period. It also subsequently contributes to a norm for intercessory prayer.

Jeremiah and Ezekiel both announced the initiation of the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31ff. Ezek. 36:26ff.). The corporate character of the Mosaic Covenant, characterised by heredity and environment, as well as past religious and historical influences, is now replaced (Ezek. 18:1ff.; 33:10ff.). (Harrison 1975:853).

Jeremiah proclaims in its place a personal religion, which involves the spiritual regeneration and moral purification in the lives of the Chosen People. (Harrison 1975:820). The moral law (human heart and will) is subsequently the feature of true religion, instead of the ceremonial law (tablets of stone). Ezekiel is credited with his emphasis upon personal responsibility,

according to Harrison (1976:853), which echoes Jeremiah's personal religion, signifying that true obedience to God could be engendered entirely independently of either Temple or cultus (Harrison 1975:819).

Personal responsibility in the context of The New Covenant proclaimed by Jeremiah and Ezekiel is also spelled out in terms of a new comprehension of sin. Traditionally the doctrine of inherited guilt was dominant. This belief in corporate solidarity based on a wrong understanding of texts such as Ex. 20:5; 34:7; Nu 14:18, found expression in the proverb 'The fathers eat sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.' (Ez.18:2ff.; Jer. 31:29ff.) (NIV Bible 1985). It teaches that a person's sins can negatively impact the descendants and within the exilic context of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, many Israelites erroneously believed that God's judgment against them was due to the sins of the fathers and not of their own. Jeremiah, according to Harrison (1975:853), rectifies it by proclaiming that the forgiveness of sin and as a consequence individual access to God is feasible (Jer. 31:34). Ezekiel corroborates and unambiguously declares that each individual was responsible for his own sin (Ez. 18:4, 20).

Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's messages confirm and contribute to the central doctrine of God's presence in the midst of His people. Whereas Jeremiah had emphasized the divine immanence of God, Ezekiel drew attention to divine transcendence (Harrison 1975:852). God was still present in their midst during their absence from their land, but still demanded implicit obedience to his divine will. God promised to restore and return to Israel the exilic remnant, with the consequence of repentance on the part of the faithful minority among the exiles (Ezek. 36:16ff.). This reminder and assurance of the faithful covenantal God comforted and encouraged a demoralized and confused remnant in exile. Harrison (1975:853), with reference to the final words of Ezekiel's prophesying: 'The Lord is there,' further explains the manner of restoration for the exilic community in terms of the immanent awareness of God's presence in the midst of his people and his subsequent accessibility.

Three prominent texts in the book of Jeremiah refer to occasions of intercession. According to Harrison (1973:115), both Jeremiah 21:1-14 and 37:1-10 deal with the same incident. King Zedekiah sent Jehucal and the priest Zephaniah to Jeremiah with the request to intercede in asking the Lord to make permanent the temporary withdrawal of the Babylonians in 588 B.C. They withdrew when word reached them of Pharaoh's army approaching from Egypt, in response to King Zedekiah's doomed attempt asking for military aid, Ezek 17:15 & 17. Jeremiah conveyed God's answer of irreversible destruction of the city of Jerusalem, (37:10). Harrison (1973: 153) opines that Jeremiah's reply deals with King

Zedekiah's self-deception, of which the coming calamity was the logical, if unfortunate, conclusion.

Concerning Jer. 42:1-22, the people may be asking the Lord to confirm what they sincerely believe to be their only option: flight to Egypt (42:17, 41:17). On the surface the people approaching Jeremiah, requesting intercession to God with regard to guidance where to go and for advice, in terms of what to do, seems admirable and praiseworthy. On the contrary, Harrison (1973:163) poignantly pointed out the people's deceitful self-interest. Notwithstanding asking for so-called guidance and advice with regard to their preconceived idea and decision, they still act contrary to God's answer in response to Jeremiah's intercession and go to Egypt (37:17, 43:4-7). The erroneous and sinful conduct of self-deception and self-interest underlines the required vibrant spiritual life, characteristic of a life of prayer.

Ezekiel 22:30 is a substantial precedent to guide any discussion with regard to intercession: 'I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one.' This appeal of God for an intercessor is preceded by a report of a godless society (Ezekiel 22:29), and followed by God's assurance of pouring out his wrath upon them (Ezekiel 22:31).

2.2.4 The postexilic period

Ezra and Nehemiah introduce this period. While a formal framework of devotion was maintained, freedom was secured for the individual within it. Subsequently, "In the postexilic period, then, one finds a blending of orderliness of temple ritual, the simplicity of the synagogue meeting, and the spontaneity of personal devotion (Bruce et al. (1974:1021). The latter ensured that the contents and ritual of certain patterns of prayer in the Old Testament were not controlled or systematized. Bruce et al. (1974:1021) makes it clear that it is only towards the end of the inter-testamental period that mechanical prayer, prayer restricted or confined by coercive prescriptions, became prevalent.

2.3 Prayer according to the New Testament

2.3.1 The Gospels

Jesus Christ's own doctrine and practice regarding prayer is considered the original source of prayer in the New Testament. While He maintained the act of prayer as it is part of his Jewish culture and background, the spiritual factor in devotion is central to His prayer life.

Therefore, the request for an advanced way of praying from one of his disciples who was accustomed to prayer:

‘One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples” Luke 11:1 (NIV Bible, 1985). Even though Jesus responded by teaching the well known Lord’s Prayer: “Our father...,” His earthly life and teaching – especially by means of some of His parables – explain clearly His own understanding, belief and conduct concerning prayer:

Persistence in prayer Jesus taught with the parable of a friend who borrowed three loaves at midnight (Luke 11:5-8); and the Father’s generosity is taught as the foundation of persistent prayer (Matthew 7:7-11.) With regard to tenacity in prayer, the parable of the unjust judge (Luke 18:1-8) is a lesson about persistence, as well as continuity, with the objective to develop and deepen faith. Christ’s desired humility and penitence in prayer is expressed in the parable of the publican and the Pharisee (Luke 13:10-114), in order to avoid self-exaltation in prayer. The parable of the unjust servant (Matthew 18:21-35), on its part, refers to prayer offered by a forgiving spirit which God answers. Simplicity of prayer without pretence is emphasized in contrast to the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, who prayed only to be seen in public (Mark 12:38-40). With the parable of the landlord departing on a journey, and leaving all responsibility in the hands of his servants (Mark 13:32-36), Jesus earnestly advised the principle of intensity of prayer to His disciples. Watchfulness and alertness is important in the context of not knowing when the Lord will return or act. The importance of unity in prayer as a prerequisite for corporate prayers to be answered is emphasized with Jesus’ instruction in terms of mutual agreement (Matthew 18:19-20). But, importantly, according to Bruce et al. (1974:1021) prayer must also be expectant (Mark 9:23), being ‘the sphere where faith operates in surrender to God’s will.’

Concerning the method of prayer, Jesus teaches two principles, namely prayer is to be prayed to Himself, as it was prayed to Him when He was on earth (Matthew 8:2 & 9:18); and prayer is also to be prayed in the name of Christ (John 14:13). It signifies, according to Bruce et al. (1974:1021) “a new access to the Father which Christ secures for the Christian, and prayer in harmony with the Father’s will, because it is offered in Christ’s name.”

With regard to Jesus’ practice of prayer several aspects are evident, which are praying in secret (Luke 5:15ff.); praying in times of conflict (Jn. 12:20-28); and praying on the cross (Matt. 27:46). He also expressed His gratitude in His prayers (Luke 10:21); sought guidance (Luke 6:12ff) and communed with the Father (Luke 9:28ff.). Relevant and important with regard to the present study, is Jesus’ high regard for, and practice of intercessory prayer

(John 17:6-19, 20-26; Luke 22:31-32; Mark 10:16). On several occasions Jesus' disciples observed Him interceding during His ministry according to the texts. The renowned temple cleansing incident after Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, detailed in Mark 11:12-19, initially had an obscure significance for the disciples. 'My Father's house shall be called a house of prayer...for all nations' (Mark 11:17), were the words Jesus uttered in disgust after he had cleansed the temple. He was offended by the commercial use of the court of the Gentiles, which according to Stein (2008:518), conflicted radically with its intended purpose of prayer and worship. Jesus' declaration shifted the emphasis of the sacrificial system to intercessory prayer (Stein 2008:531).

In answer to the disciple requesting Jesus to teach them to pray, Jesus taught the model prayer for Christians of all ages, which is known as the Lord's Prayer. It contains as an example all the requisites and essentials of true prayer as taught by himself. Jesus uses the Lord's Prayer as an example of how to pray, as well as a definite prayer; for in Luke 11:2 he states: "When you pray, say..." (Bruce et al., 974:747) further explains that the shorter version of the Lord's Prayer according to Luke 11 signifies praying in spirit and in truth and not just a mechanical or formal repetition. The composition of the Lord's Prayer according to Matthew 6:9-12 is as follows: The invocation (9b), 6 petitions (9c-13b) – the first three referring to God's name, kingdom and will, and the last three to man's need of bread, forgiveness, and victory; closing with a doxology (13c) consisting of a threefold declaration concerning God's kingdom, power, and glory. (Bruce et al., 1974:1021). The invocation "Our Father," (9b) reminds all Christian believers of their unity in Christ, as well as brings about the desired attitude and spirit of love and faith required from us to pray to a God of love and grace. (Bruce et al., 974:747). The believer's declaration of holy reverence for Him who is the Almighty Ruler over heaven and earth finds expression in the words 'which are in heaven' (9b).

Subsequently, the glory and divine purpose of God as heavenly Father is sought after with the first three petitions. The first petition 'Hallowed be thy name' (9c) has as objective that God will be recognized and honoured as holy and almighty. God's divine rule and sovereignty, which was first introduced to mankind with Jesus' first coming, and which is at present still continually coming, is asked of God to 'come in full glory and divine perfection through the second coming of Christ as Lord of lords,' with the second petition 'thy kingdom come' (10a). (Bruce et al., 974:747). The third petition, 'Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth,' (10b) is primarily meant for the present age. The request is for God's rule to be unconditionally accepted and His will gladly obeyed on earth, as it is occurring in heaven. Bruce et al. (974:747) further explains the future implication of this third petition; 'Then the

end will come, when Christ hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he destroyed all dominion, authority and power,' (1 Corinthians 15:25-28).

The second group of three petitions are about believers, and specifically their physical and spiritual well-being; covering all aspects of earthly life. The fourth petition 'Give us this day our daily bread,' (11) is the request for the material necessities of life. In utter dependence upon God to provide for the physical and spiritual earthly survival, the believer is able to endeavour to fulfil the first three petitions regarding the glory and divine purpose of God (Bruce et al. 1974:747). 'Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors,' (12) is both a prayer and a confession, as the fifth petition. Bruce et al. (1974:748) explains: "For he who prays for forgiveness at the same time admits that he has sinned and is guilty." Free of insincerity and hypocrisy, the believer can approach the father with boldness for a remission of his moral and spiritual debt. The sixth and final petition, 'And bring us not into temptation,' (13) is an urgent appeal to God not to allow the believer to be brought into situations where he is exposed to grave temptation to sin. The believer therefore reiterates his plea 'but deliver us from the evil one,' (13b) for – in the light of the previous petition for forgiveness – he 'longs to be enabled not to sin again' (Bruce et al., 1974:748). The doxology is not part of the original Matthew text.

Versteeg (1976:30-50), in reference to prayer according to the New Testament and in answer to whom prayer relates, distinguishes three important aspects: Prayer with regard to the one praying; Prayer with regard to other people and Prayer with regard to God. All three are crucial to the present study and are also reflected in the Lord's Prayer.

Prayer with regard to the one praying accentuates the importance of a vibrant spiritual life as a precondition for effective prayer. [The principle of spiritual and relational vitality of the one praying will be elaborated on later in the present study.] Versteeg (1976:30) explains the priority of forgiveness of sin given and received, as well as the safeguard from sin, as a prerequisite for the one praying. Sin is an offence to God, which results in separation from God, described by Paul in Ephesians 2:1 as death. The sinner's life misses its purpose of communion with God; which is the definition of sin: 'to miss the target.' In reference to Mark 11:25 "And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins," Versteeg (1976:101-102) postulates that it involves not only prayer for forgiveness, but prayer in general. Without a disposition of forgiveness, all prayer is in vain. "Wanneer de weg tot de naaste geblokkeerd is, betekent dat ook een blockade – over de hele linie – van de weg tot God." (When the way to the neighbour is blocked, it also signifies a blockade – over the entire line – of the way to God) (Versteeg 1976:102).

Obvious is the equal and interdependent importance of one's vibrant relation with God as well as one's vibrant relation with your fellow human being, which is especially evident in the sphere of prayer. I am able to forgive, because I comprehend and experience God's initial and merciful forgiveness of my sin. I am forgiven; I forgive my neighbour; I forgive my spouse. Therefore, there is no impediment to prevent God to answer my prayer according to his will. Equal are we human beings as sinners; equal are we in need of God's forgiveness; equal are we depending on God's undeserved grace.

The message of the gospel takes effect in the life of the individual believer and is expressed through mutual relations, and my communion with my fellow human beings is reflected in my communion with God. Consequently I have confidence to approach God in prayer, expecting an answer. Bounds (2001:585-586) adds to this stream of thought by saying that

Everything depends on the spiritual character of the preacher...The person, God's person, is made in the closet. A Christian's life and profoundest convictions are born in secret communion with God...when alone with God. Prayer makes the Christian; reciprocally, prayer is infused and saturated by the life of the one praying. A life of humility and self-deprecation as taught by Jesus: 'Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."' (Mark 8:34 NIV).

Therefore, a healthy spiritual life and character of the one praying is the essential and preparatory basis of praying for others.

In terms of prayer with regard to other people, Versteeg (1976) states that it is characterized as intercession and

Dat het bij de voorbede om een uiterst belangrijke vorm van het gebed gaat, is met name uit de brieven van Paulus duidelijk. Wanneer de voorbede voor Paulus niet van het grootste belang geweest was, zou hij niet zo veelvuldig en indringend bij verschillende gemeenten om de voorbede voor hem en zijn werk gevraagd hebben, terwijl hij ook niet – omgekeerd – de gemeenten nadrukkelijk van zijn eigen voorbede voor haar verzekerd zou hebben (p.33).

(That intercession is an extremely important form of prayer, is evident from the letters of Paul. If intercession was not of the utmost importance to Paul, he would not have asked the different churches so frequently and urgently for their intercession for him and his work, while he reciprocally, would not emphatically have assured the churches of his intercession for them.)

Versteeg (1976:34, 36) opines that Paul's request for prayer from the churches for himself and his ensuring his readers of his faithful prayers for them, signifies that they are related and joined to one another, and to Paul, particularly in their mutual intercession. The foundation of this interrelated and mutual intercession is delineated by Versteeg (1976:40):

Het is onbetwisbaar, dat voor het Nieuwe Testament de voorbede onlosmakelijk aan het gebed verbonden is. Waar het gebed gekend wordt, kan de voorbede niet gemist word. Het is ook in te zien, waarom dit het geval is. Een mens is nooit een op zichzelf staand individu. Ieder mens leeft in tal van relaties. Wie in het gebed tot God komt, kan en wil zich van deze relaties niet losmaken.

(It is indisputable that in the New Testament intercession is inextricably linked to prayer. Where prayer is known, intercession cannot be absent. It is also evident, why this is the case. No man is an island. Every person lives in numerous relationships. Whoever comes to God in prayer can and does not want to detach themselves from these relations.)

Every person is part of a network of relations in being a member of a family, which forms part of a community within a specific culture or subculture and within a country. In addition, church membership, language, preferences, dislikes, talents or being gifted, friends and colleagues, and more, set one within diverse networks of relations.

De werkelijkheid van ons leven is immers te zeer met al deze relaties verweven. Aan de inbreng van al deze relaties in het gebed wordt nu gestalte gegeven door de voorbede. Net zo min als we onszelf kunnen isoleren van de relaties waarbinne we leven, kunnen we het gebed isoleren van de voorbede. De werkelijkheid van ons leven in zijn verwevenheid met tal van relaties stelt ons voor de klem en de noodzaak van de voorbede (Versteeg 1976:40).

(After all, the reality of our lives is too much interwoven with all these relationships. Making all of these relationships part of prayer is now shaped by intercession. Just as we cannot isolate ourselves from the relationships we live in, we cannot isolate prayer from intercession. The reality of our lives being interwoven with numerous relationships presents us with the importance and the necessity of intercession.)

It is evident that as everyone is inextricably part of a bigger whole, intercession is inextricably part of prayer. I belong, therefore I intercede; I intercede, because I belong. The key to discernment in terms of intercession is relationships. All of life is about unavoidable relationships, which serves as the mandate for intercession within the sphere of prayer. As I am unable to distance myself from others, in like manner I am (theoretically) unable to distance myself from intercession. Versteeg (1976:99 - 100) further explains and clarifies this consequent other – person – centred characteristic of prayer, as it is expressed through intercession:

Als echte “gave” is de gave van het gebed niet van onszelf en daarom niet bedoeld voor onszelf... ‘Naar onszelf toebidden’ is een contradictio in terminis. Bidden is immers alleen maar mogelijk in een houding waarin we niet meer egoïstisch op onszelf gericht zijn, omdat het echte bidden een stuk Gods-dienst is.

(As a true "gift", the gift of prayer is not of ourselves and therefore not meant for ourselves... 'Praying to ourselves' is a contradiction in terms. After all, praying is only possible in an attitude in which we are no longer selfishly concentrated on ourselves, because real prayer is service to God.)

Praying for oneself is advised and encouraged. Mostert (2002:241) states that it is essential for the intercessor to pray for him or herself. Apart from forgiveness sought and given, personal prayer for spiritual power, equipment and growth should not be neglected. For the intercessor it ensures a preliminary vital spiritual life as the required platform and the right to pray for one's neighbour, which signifies service to God. Serving God, which entails God's interests and also involves the concerns of one's neighbour, needs to be paramount and to be reflected in one's prayers, better known as intercession.

Concerning prayer with regard to God, Versteeg (1976:40) refers to prayers directed to God and prayers pertaining to God and his work in particular. Where the former prayers are from a human point of view: praises to and requests from God, the latter prayers are from God's point of view: God accomplishing His preconceived sovereign plan. The objective of the latter prayers is for the work of God to continue in the church and the world and with establishing his kingdom on earth. The one praying, as the fellow worker and colleague of God (1 Corinthians 3:9) takes up God's cause as his own. Versteeg (1976:41) explains: "Wanneer we voor Gods werk en de komst van zijn rijk waarachtig bidden, kunnen we daartegenover niet meer onverschillig staan." (When we pray for God's work and the coming of his kingdom, we can no longer be indifferent towards it.)

The praying believer through prayer participates in God's undertaking and is committed to make it a priority to be part of its realization. The believer participates with God in his glorification being fulfilled when his kingdom will be finally established with Christ's return. It is an important fact that God, in turn, makes the prayers of all the believers part of his work. This reciprocal and participatory prayer-work relation between the praying believer and God at work is delineated by Versteeg (1976:150-151) in reference to Revelation 8:3-4. The prayers of the believers are mixed with incense to make them acceptable by and for God himself and then are placed on the altar by the angel. Subsequently the judgment goes out from the altar in answer to the prayers placed on the altar. The crucial importance of prayer is evident. The completion of and fulfilling of God's work on earth in establishing his kingdom is dependent on the prayers of the believers. Versteeg quoting R.J. van der Meulen (1976:150) corroborates this dependence as follows:

"God kan niet verder, als de Kerk nog niet haar taak heeft vervuld. De Kerk zingt zo graag: Ik blijft de Heer verwachten, mijn ziel wacht ongestoord. Het

is juist andersom, de Kerk wacht niet op de Heer, de Heer wacht op de Kerk."

("God cannot go on, if the church has not yet fulfilled its task. The church likes to sing: I continue to expect the Lord, my soul waits undisturbed. It is the other way round, the church does not wait for the Lord, the Lord waits for the church. ")

Therefore, God, the future fulfilling of his work and His reign determine the prayer life of the believer and consequently of the church. Every prayer and answer to prayer is taken up in the prayer for the triumphant return of the Lord Jesus Christ at the end of time and the subsequent consummation of God's plan of salvation 'so that God may be all in all.' (1 Corinthians 15:28).

Furthermore, in terms of Paul's ministry, God will provide in answer to their prayers, the boldness Paul needs to accomplish his task of preaching the gospel and therefore the work of God is taken up in the prayer of the church. As confirmation of this crucial, reciprocal dependence of God's work and the church's prayer, more intercessory examples are cited in the New Testament in particular, of prayer for one another and for others. Where James 5:14 is mentioned with regard to prayers for the sick in the congregation in particular, Matthew 5:45, to pray for your enemies, is pointed out as a breakthrough with the object of prayer being outside of one's intimate and related circle. Both Jesus on the cross (Luke 23:34) and Stephen when he was stoned (Acts 7:60), who prayed for the forgiveness of their enemies, are definitive examples of this ever broader prayer spectrum. The importance and true character of this all-inclusive prayer finds expression in a text like 1 Timothy 2:1-2, with Paul's call upon the church to pray for a Godless and oppressive government (Versteeg 1976:39).

Examples from The Living Bible, first with regard to Paul asking for prayer, and secondly of Paul assuring the churches of his prayers for them, are: Romans 15:30-31 ³⁰ 'Will you be my prayer partners?'; 2 Thessalonians 1:11 ¹¹ 'And so we keep on praying for you,...' and Rom 1:9 ⁹ 'God knows how often I pray for you. Day and night I bring you and your needs in prayer to the one I serve with all my might...'

2.3.2 The Acts of the Apostles

The church was born in the atmosphere of prayer (1:4), and prayer continued to be the Church's native air (2:42, 6:4), according to (Bruce et al., 1974:1021). The Acts of the Apostles is a record of the first believers putting into practice the Lord's teaching and modelling of prayer, and is therefore a link between the Gospels and the Epistles. And through their experience of prayer and receiving the Holy Spirit, there developed a close

relation for the believers between prayer and the Holy Spirit's presence and power (2:2, 4:31; 12:6-10, 12; 16:26). The Church leaders were men of prayer (9:40, 10:9) who persuaded the Christians to pray with them (20:36, 21:5).

Hamman (1971:233-237) eloquently describes the continuation of the act and format of Jewish prayer by the apostles, yet with a difference. They continued to frequent the temple (Acts 3, 5:12-42) and, like Jesus, repeated twice a day the Shema – the confession of faith in the one and only God – the traces of which are still found in Christian prayer. Complying with this daily rhythm of prayer, the Apostles and early Christian community were conscious of their Jewish inheritance and repeated the familiar prayers. The Psalms and the songs of the suffering Servant in particular, served as models and themes of Christian prayer.

The difference and advance in terms of the believers' understanding and practice of prayer 'lies in the mediation of Christ, the hinge of the two Testaments. All prayer from now on must lean on Him if it is to rise to the Father.' (Hamman 1971:234). This newness gradually found expression through the process when the believers moved from the synagogue to their own private houses for the breaking of bread and prayer:

'They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer...Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.' (Acts 2:42-47). (NIV Bible:1985).

Christ substituted the temple as the place to meet with God and is now the very centre of the Christian community, the only mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5). Believers believe in His name and pray through Him to the Father, are baptized in His name and celebrate the Eucharist in His invisible presence (Hamman 1971:235). Jesus, according to Hamman (1971:236), continued to live in the heart of the community, as He who unifies prayer and who is the soul of both communal and private prayer.

2.3.3 The Pauline Epistles

The conversion incident of Paul on his way to Damascus is remarkable. Paul is mentioned as praying in Damascus after Christ's revelation of himself to Paul. Subsequently Paul was a man of prayer with regard to the spiritual growth and well-being of the believers who were part of the churches which came into existence as a consequence of his missionary journeys. For example, he assures the church in Rome of his intercession (1:9b) and prays that the church in Ephesus may receive the Spirit (1:17, 18a) in order that they 'should receive knowledge and power issuing in the love of Christ, through which as individuals and as a group they should achieve perfection' (Bruce et al., 1974:1022). In his prayer for the

church of the Colossians, he prayerfully petitioned God for knowledge of his will (1:9) and their ensuing lives in agreement with their faith (1:10). But, according to Bruce et al. (1974:1022), Pauls' possible greatest contribution to a Christian understanding of prayer 'is in establishing its connection with the Holy Spirit.' It is explained that prayer is a gift of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 14:14-16). In addition, because the believer prays in the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18), 'prayer is a co-operation between God and the believer in that it is presented to the Father, in the name of the Son, through the inspiration of the indwelling Holy Spirit' (Bruce et al., 1974:1022).

The dynamic intercessory ministry of the Apostle Paul finds expression in 'a triangular relationship between God (known in Christ and through the Holy Spirit), himself as commissioned apostle, and for the churches for which he was responsible (whose members had been called by God for salvation in Christ).' (Wiles 1974:2). Paul being called by God and assigned as mediator between God and the churches in his care, constituted 'his self-understanding, a basic consequence of the intercessory act of God in Christ, an extension of the intercessory ministry of the exalted Christ (Rom 8:34) and of the indwelling Spirit (Rom 8:15f. 23)' (Wiles 1974:5). The continual intercession of the Trinity is the preliminary execution of mediation which served as the starting point for the Apostle Paul's intercession, which implied approaching God on behalf of others, and also urging others to join him in recurring intercessions. Brümmer (2008:128) mentions this triangulation as well, referring to God, the believer and the world. Intercession initiates with the Triune God, the believer is taken up into it as a participant with the church and world (others) as object.

2.3.4 Hebrews, James and John

The urgent appeal of the book of Hebrews for prayer, is based on the assurance of Jesus – both human and divine – as High Priest who 'made atonement for the sins of the people' (2:17) and who is presently in the heavenly place (4:14) at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven (1:3). Reference is also made to Jesus' own prayer life (5:7-10) and therefore believers are called upon to be involved in corporate prayer (10:19-25)(Bruce et al., 1974:1022). The exulted and glorified Christ is a High Priest of superior qualifications to any other, and attains the two fundamental requirements of sympathy and divine appointment, according to Guthrie (1990:718). The former as is evident through Christ's agony in the garden and the latter with reference to the order of Melchizedek by which Christ was declared designated 'to appear before God as our Mediator' (Calvin1993:236).

In terms of prayer the book James mentions three important aspects: faith (1:5-8), asking God (4:2c) and asking with the right motives (4:3b) and 'the prayer of a righteous person is

powerful and effective,' (5:13-18). Concerning the latter two aspects with regard to prayer in the book of James, note the following. The first: 'When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with the wrong motives.' (4:3) (Bible, NIV 1989). Hall (1991:286-287) explains prayer as thought-in-relationship, which is characterized by the acceptance of, and being in a relationship with, a personal, transcendent partner. This co-respondent is approached with persistence for the courage to seek his inherent qualities of wisdom, meaning and coherence. It is contrary to the modern world in which the human agent considers itself the prime mover, and prayer becomes a technique through which the human agent attempts to achieve certain results beneficial to himself or herself. James gives an appropriate answer: "When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures" (James 4:6, Bible, NIV 1989).

The second: 'And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven,' (5:15) (Bible, NIV 1989). In his monumental work on healing, Louw (2008:175-176) refers to the holistic understanding and practice of prayer, Scripture and the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist. They are ways of communicating with God (Louw 2008:194), as well as being evidence of God's involvement through His loving care and support (Louw 2008:207). This integrated approach is confirmed by Louw (2008:220): 'Therapy is linked to the fulfilled promises of God as described in Scripture and represented in the sacraments, prayers, liturgical rituals and the fellowship of believers (koinonia).' Prayer is just an interdependent part of the 'liturgy of healing.' All the other aspects of therapy have to be taken into consideration when praying for the sick.

On its part, 1 John 5:14-16 teaches the importance of prayer and the will of God, as well as 'shows that efficacy in prayer is especially relevant in intercession.' (Bruce et al. 1974:1022). True prayer – the prayer that must be answered – is the personal recognition and acceptance of the divine will (John 14:7). Our acceptance of God's will signifies our subjecting our own wishes to God. According to Calvin (1993:266), God provides a dual solution to ensure we pray according to what His own will prescribes. Firstly, He teaches us by His word what He wants us to ask and secondly, God also gives us His Spirit as our Guide and Ruler to assist us in our weakness. "We ought also to ask the mouth of the Lord to direct and guide our prayers; for God in His promises has fixed for us, as it has been said, the right way of praying" (Calvin 1993:266).

Dominant and guiding themes with regard to the understanding and practice of prayer in the lives of Jesus Himself and of believers are prevalent when considering the above-mentioned

holistic overview in terms of prayer in the Bible: Revelation. Relationship. Response: Prayer/ Participation/ Co-operation/ Intercession.

2.4 Different forms of prayer

A question arises with regard to different forms of prayer. Kamstra (1999:24) stated that prayer has been a fundamental component of the Christian life and worship since the disciples asked Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray." Believers give thanks for their daily meals, confess their sins and ask for forgiveness, intercede for their spouses and children, pray for the healing of the sick, ask God to protect missionaries, pray for the needs of the world, and request the intervention of God's Spirit for the lost. But, according to Vander Griend (1999:4) many Christians today, it seems, are thirsting for something more than they have found up to the present. Tired of learning about God, they want to experience God, and one of the ways they're seeking to experience God is through prayer – all kinds of prayer. These kinds of prayer are then defined and explained. Praise prayers occur at present at multitudes of summits which are arranged annually with the main focus on worship, praising and thanking God. In addition, frequent individual, congregational and denominational gatherings are organized for repentance prayers to address corporate sins. This thirst for something more, also finds expression in intercessory prayers, with unprecedented numbers of Christians praying for individual and corporate spiritual awakening and world evangelism.

Worship as a form of prayer is referred to by Van der Griend (1999:4-5). He explains the reciprocal character between worship and prayer: 'Worship is at the heart of what the church is and does...And prayer is at the heart of worship. De Klerk, for his part, (2005:352) declares that praise-giving is at the heart of prayer and can be defined as the central aim of all prayer. Edith Bajema (1999:6) further explains that prayer is not one activity among many in which we are to engage. Rather, it is the central action through which all other ministries – worship included – receive power and direction. The aspect of intercession is located and explained in this integrated prayer milieu by Van der Griend (1999:4-5). During worship prayer, about 90% of praying that occurs during a service is for the people of the church itself, reflecting the "me-first" mentality of modern culture. This inward focus is the reason why believers have difficulty in entering meaningfully into corporate prayer during worship. He further explains the importance of keeping an inward/outward balance in worship prayer in order to pray for both the congregation and to intercede for the kingdom to advance and the church to be built. Examples of outwards-directed prayers are mentioned: 1 Timothy 2:3-4; Jeremiah 29:7 & Romans 10:1.

Authors use the words 'types' and 'forms' interchangeable to describe different forms of prayer. Baetz (2018:66) in reference to many types of prayer mentions prayers of confession, lament, petitionary prayers, blessing prayers, imprecatory type prayers and prayers of worship such as adoration, thanksgiving and praise. For his part, Hodge (1989:701) touches on praise, thanksgiving, confession, petition, glory to God as well as supplications as forms of prayer. Fasting is also considered as a form of prayer (Baetz 2018:62).

Then Van Marion (1999:22) puts forward for consideration several kinds of prayer. He mentions 'the prayers of the people,' 'congregational prayers,' 'pastoral prayers,' 'intercessory prayers,' 'common prayers' and 'public prayers.' He also mentions priestly prayers, consisting of lament and adoration, as well as confessions and thanksgiving; but with intercession as its main element.

'Sung prayers' adapted from Asian hymns are utilized in order to teach individuals and congregations to pray in new ways, according to CM Hawn (1999:30). Even with existing and familiar prayers, according to De Moor (1999:22-23), believers are assisted to participate in intercessory prayer. Short sung prayer refrains are sung at the beginning and end, and between sections of prayer, when moving for example, from thanksgiving to petition. Boersma (1999:27) gave an account of their attempt to encourage participating in praying. We left time after each prayer for anyone to add their own prayers aloud or silently (for prayers of confession). Each prayer ended with a sung prayer. A high school senior led the singing on her guitar; all the songs were familiar, with texts provided on the printed worship sheet.

2.5 Alternative ways of prayer

Although the focus of this study is on spoken prayer (aloud and in the mind) an example of four alternative ways to pray will now be described.[www.christianitytoday.com/article/4-alternative-ways-to-pray/89592.htm Date of access: 18 October 2019.]

Many of us find prayer a challenge at times – it can be difficult to know where to begin, or perhaps you're stuck in a rut with a single way of praying, and might need to try something new to hear from God in a fresh way.

Miranda Threlfall-Holmes' *The little book of prayer experiments* (2016) aims to help people think outside of the box when it comes to prayer.

"As conversation is to human friendship, so is prayer to divine friendship with God," writes Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby in the foreword to the book.

"Whatever form it takes, prayer is essential for living and breathing and engaging with God – not just politely but also honestly and passionately, ideally with every part of our being... The Bible teaches that prayer is the most powerful transformational force in the lives of individuals, churches and even nations.

"History shows us that whenever and wherever people have turned to God in prayer, they have rediscovered their purpose and been renewed and empowered."

With that in mind, here are four alternative ways of praying that may help you in your walk with God:

2.5.1 Colouring the Bible

Adult colouring books are enjoying a surge in popularity, so why not combine it with prayer?

By spending time writing out and illustrating Bible verses, Threlfall-Holmes (2016:8) says "your conscious mind will be occupied with the drawing and colouring, leaving your subconscious to meditate on the passage and allowing it to sink into you. Approach this activity deliberately as a prayer, not just as decoration, and expect the words to become part of you and speak to you."

2.5.2 Breathing meditation

Christians have been engaging in contemplative prayer for hundreds of years, but it is a practice that has arguably been lost in more charismatic traditions.

"Meditation is about setting time aside to be calm and at peace," Threlfall-Holmes writes. "It is very different from most other types of prayer in that it is not about talking to God, or even listening to God, but simply about being. The idea is simply to sit there and let your mind be free from thinking about anything in particular. You are not trying to achieve anything, or say anything, or do anything; you are just taking time to be."

If you're unused to sitting in silence for prolonged periods of time, she suggests focusing on your breathing and/or repeating the same word or phrase to help you concentrate. The 'Jesus prayer' may help, or a favourite Bible verse. Don't worry about any distractions or thoughts that pop into your head; acknowledge, but don't dwell on, them, and refocus.

2.5.3 Prayer den

Another suggestion is to create a 'prayer den' somewhere in or around your home. This is essentially a small enclosed space dedicated to prayer – think of a pop-up tent or similar – and decorated with fairy lights, photos of people or countries you want to pray for, etc. Having a smaller space to pray in can help you to feel intimate with God, especially when you arrange it so it's personal to you.

2.5.4 Praying with your body

Our minds, bodies and spirits are intricately connected, and "what we do with our bodies can shape our thinking", Threlfall-Holmes says. Instead of sitting still while you pray, why not adopt your posture as a way of physically expressing your prayers?

There are endless positions you could try, but a few suggestions include lying down face down as a form of prostration before God; reflecting on his majesty and our comparable weakness, standing with arms raised in a posture of worship, kneeling, or sitting on a chair – imagining Jesus pulling up a chair and sitting next to you.

Take time to reflect on how each of these positions makes you feel in relation to God, and allow that to move you to worship.

2.5.5 Conclusions from Chapter2

Prayer depends on God taking the initiative, because it is not a natural human response. The biblical doctrine of prayer emphasizes the character of God, the necessity of a man's being in saving or covenant relation with Him, and his entering fully into all the privileges and obligations of that relation with God (Bruce). These three aspects of prayer with regard to the one praying, with regard to other people and with regard to God (Versteeg) constitute a triangular relationship (Wiles). Within this triangulation (Brümmer) intercession initiates with the Triune God (Hodge; Wiles), is taken up by the believer, with the world/church (others) as object. God invites the believer to intercede (Abraham – "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" Gen. 18:4) and creates the opportunity for intercession (Moses – "Now leave Me alone" Ex. 32:10) (Baetz).

A personal intimate relationship between God and the one praying is associated with prayer, bearing witness to God's presence in the midst of His people and to His subsequent accessibility. The believer is called by God into a personal religion (form of worship) and responds in obedience to personal responsibility.

The spiritual character of the believer is paramount with regard to effective praying. 'Prayer makes the Christian; reciprocally prayer is infused and saturated by the life of the one praying' (Bounds). In the New Testament intercession is inextricably linked to prayer. Where prayer is known, intercession cannot be absent. Every person lives in a network of relationships. Whoever comes to God in prayer can and does not want to detach themselves from these relations. Making all these relationships part of prayer is now shaped by intercession (Versteeg).

Praying for your enemies (Matthew 5:45) – as Jesus did on the cross (Luke 23:34) and Stephen when he was stoned (Acts 7:60) – and praying for the sick (James 5:14), are examples of a broader developing prayer spectrum. It initiated a revolutionary new focus of attention on the object of prayer being outside of one's intimate and related circle, with a truly inclusive character. (1 Timothy 2:1-2 for example, with Paul's call upon the church to pray for a Godless and oppressive government.)

The completion of and fulfilling of God's work on earth in establishing His kingdom is dependent on the prayers of the believers. "God cannot go on, if the church has not yet fulfilled its task. The church likes to sing: I continue to expect the Lord, my soul waits undisturbed. It is the other way around, the church does not wait for the Lord, the Lord waits for the church." (Versteeg).

Prevalent and guiding themes with regard to the understanding and practice of prayer in the lives of Jesus Himself and of believers were verified in Chapter 2 with the holistic overview in terms of prayer in the Bible. God's gracious and voluntary revelation of Himself to people develops into a Relationship. Within this relationship people are called to get involved in establishing God's kingdom on earth and they subsequently respond. The manner of response within the context of the present study is through Prayer, which gives expression to an aspect of their Participation in God's mission on earth. This act of obedience enables people to Co-operate with God and join Him in fulfilling his will by means of Intercession.

CHAPTER 3 THE PRESENT STATE OF KNOWLEDGE OF AND INVOLVEMENT IN INTERCESSORY PRAYER IN THE ALL SAINTS UNITED CHURCH SOMERSET EAST

3.1 Introduction

Osmer (2008) wrote his book on the methodology of practical theology in the first place from the perspective of the local congregation (2008:5, 175-183). Osmer speaks about congregational change and for this he suggests an open systems perspective on congregations (2008:201). According to him (Osmer, 2008:201-203) perspectives can be opened on the situation in the congregation as well as the way towards change by asking the following questions:

- *“What vision of congregational change best captures the mission of the congregation in its particular context?”*

The vision to lead the All Saints United Church Somerset East towards being an intercessory congregation is the main focus of this study and chapter. When the status of the congregation in terms of intercessory prayer is determined the congregation can move forward from there.

- *“What sort of process of change is needed in my congregation: revolutionary or evolutionary change?”*

In the last chapter of this study a process of change that fits the congregation’s movement towards an intercessory congregation is suggested.

- *“How might I support change at different levels of the congregation?”*

This question is also answered in the last chapter of the study.

In line with Osmer’s focus on the local congregation and research that seeks to find the way towards change in a local congregation, this chapter focuses on a specific aspect in the All Saints United Church Somerset East. The objective is to find out what is going on in this specific congregation in connection with intercessory prayer. Therefore the empirical work is only done in this congregation and not in other congregations.

What is the present intercessory prayer status of the All Saints United Church Somerset East and why?

An empirical study and evaluation of the present state of prayer in the All Saints United Church Somerset East will be the descriptive and the interpretive task

Chapter three is the result of an empirical study and evaluation of the present state of prayer in the All Saints United Church Somerset East and will fulfil both the descriptive and the interpretive task within the practical method of Osmer (2008).

The objective of Chapter 3 is to determine the understanding of intercessory prayer (Qualitative data) and consequent degree of intercessory prayer involvement (Quantitative data) of the All Saints United Church Somerset East and then to ask the question what can contribute to this state of affairs or what causes this situation.

Tice (2005:111-112) says:

Prayer has a diverse significance; it is for some people the last resort in a crisis, when nothing else will work, they pray. Others see prayer as a formula; they were brought up to recite a certain prayer, usually at the end of the day before going to bed. Then the aspect of superstition also finds its way as being part of the definition of prayer, with sportsmen, for example, crossing themselves and saying a prayer upon entering unto the field or court. Tending to a more negative or pessimistic understanding or experience of prayer, are the disappointed who understand prayer as being ineffectual; it's what frail people do while others get the job done.

Within this broad context of prayer, this chapter focuses on comprehension and application of intercessory prayer by the members of the All Saints Church's, either intercession as being a component of the general practice of prayer, or intercessory prayer as being a prayer on its own.

3.2 Selection of a research strategy

Fouché & Delport (2011:63) state that:

When deciding on the strategy of inquiry that will guide the research of this study, the two main categories of empirical research need to be considered. There is a clear distinction between the sampling techniques of data collection and the techniques of data analysis of quantitative and qualitative research, each with their own purposes, research methods, data collection and data analysis strategies as well as quality criteria.

Quantitative research differs from qualitative research in three ways: data collection, type of analysis and objective. Where quantitative research gathers data in the form of numbers, qualitative research collects data in the form of written or spoken language. Quantitative research then uses statistical types of data analysis. Qualitative research, on the other hand, analyses data by identifying and categorising themes. In terms of their distinct objectives,

quantitative research endeavours to determine broad statistical patterns and relationships between variables to obtain general comparisons. Qualitative research, on the contrary, strives ‘to understand the actions and practices in which individuals engage in everyday life and to determine what the meanings are that they ascribe to their individual experiences’ (Durrheim, 2006:47, cf. Fouché & Delport, 2011:63, 65; Osmer, 2008:50).

Evans (2013:103-104) appropriately explains:

In determining a research model it was taken into consideration that there are two well-established and recognised approaches to research, namely the quantitative approach and the qualitative approach, which differ in some very basic ways (Henn, 2009:11; Neuman, 1997:14; Schurink, 1998:242; Streubert, 2006:177). The differences between these research paradigms could, according to Mouton and Marais (1993:163), be reduced to differences in composition, control and scope. Berg (2004:2) notes that quantitative research refers to the number values of things. On this matter Burns and Grove (2009:22) signify that quantitative researchers believe that all human behaviour is objective, purposeful and measurable. However, they see it in another light and indicate that qualitative research as a method can be used for understanding the unique, dynamic, holistic nature of human beings which are not always measurable. Burns and Grove (2009:23) further assert that the two methodologies differ in character. They indicate differences in the following characteristics: philosophical origin, focus, reasoning, basis of knowing, theory, researcher involvement control, methods of measurement data, analysis and findings (Table 3.1).

Evans (2013:120) also provides a table (Table 3.1) explaining the difference between these two major approaches.

Table 3-1 Identity table: Comparison between Quantity and Quality research.

Characteristic	Quantitative approach	Qualitative approach
Philosophical origin	Logical positivism	Naturalistic, interpretive, humanistic
Focus	Concise, objective, reductionist	Broad, subjective, holistic
Reasoning	Logistic, deductive	Dialectic, inductive
Basis of knowing	Cause –and-effect relationship	Meaning, discovery, understanding theory
Theory	Test theory, develops theory	Shares interpretation
Researcher involvement control	Structured interviews, questionnaires, observations, scales, or instruments	Unstructured interviews and observations
Methods of measurement data	Numbers	Words

Characteristic	Quantitative approach	Qualitative approach
Analysis	Statistical analysis	Individual interpretation
Findings	Generalisation, accept or reject	Uniqueness, dynamic, understanding theoretical propositions of phenomena, and new theory

With the present research the qualitative approach was initially followed, by means of structured personal interviews. It enabled the researcher to develop a general and objective theory in answer to the descriptive question: *'What is happening?'* A logical approach resulted from the numbers provided by the statistical analysis, which enabled the researcher to develop and test and explain the theories which emerged.

Pretorius (2016:19) justifies and emphasises the subsequent use of quantitative research in explaining that it is descriptive and exploratory. The researcher was able to identify the ignorance of prayer (in general and intercessory prayer in particular) and the absence of prayer as emerging categories of information for the data from the initial qualitative approach and was allowed to study these issues further in depth, openness and detail with the subsequent and complementary qualitative approach. As a result, the quantitative approach enabled the researcher to reach a broad, dialectic and interpretive interpretation of what is happening. The initial theory is shared, in answering the question: *'Why it is happening?'*

Creswell and Creswell (2018:213) explain in detail the mixed method procedure. Quantitative data (close-ended) and qualitative data (open-ended) is collected and mixed or combined in a study. The strengths of each type of data collection are combined to develop a better and more complete understanding of the research problem. More insight into the problem is gained when drawing on both qualitative and quantitative research, and it also results in overcoming the limitations of each.

Three prominent mixed method designs are mentioned and explained by Creswell and Creswell (2018:217-226): the convergent design, the explanatory sequential design, and the exploratory sequential design.

Three Core Mixed Methods Designs

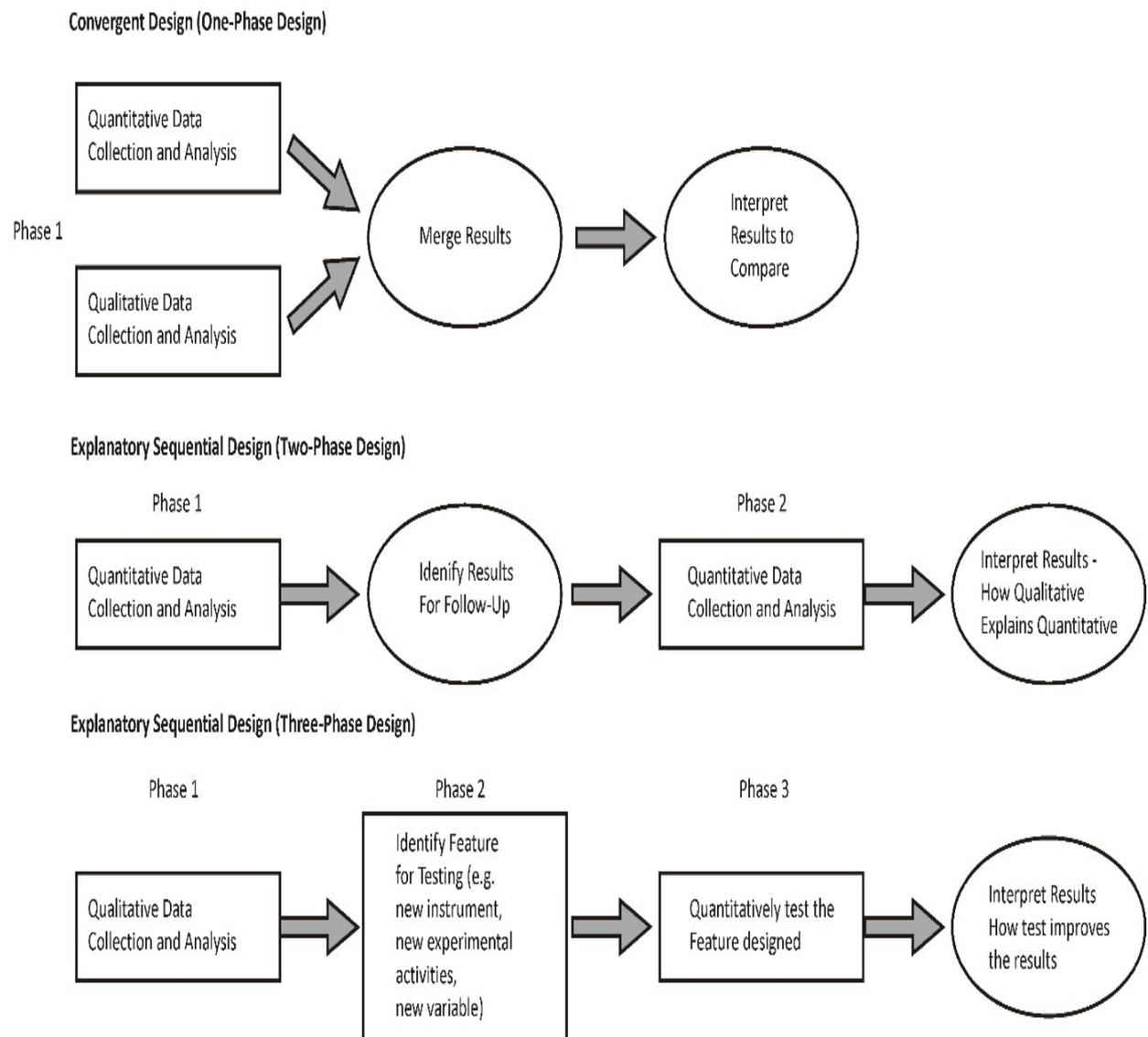


Figure 3-1: The Three Mixed Methods Designs Figure (Creswell and Creswell 2018:218)

The convergent mixed method design is a single-phase approach of collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, analyzing them separately, and then comparing the results to see if they confirm or disconfirm each other (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:217).

The explanatory sequential mixed method design involves a two-phase data collection approach of collecting quantitative data in the first place, analyzing the results, and then using the results to plan or to build on to the second, qualitative phase. The quantitative results inform the type of participants to be selected and the types of questions that the participants will be asked. The main intent of this design is to have the qualitative data help explain in more detail the initial quantitative results (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:222).

The exploratory sequential mixed method design is a three-phase design which, contrary to the explanatory sequential mixed method design, starts with a qualitative phase followed by a quantitative phase. However, both these two designs are built on the results of the initial database. The exploratory sequential design involves collecting focus group data first, analyzing the results, developing an instrument and then administering it to a sample of the population. The objective of this design is to explore with a sample first so that a later quantitative phase can be tailored to meet the needs of the individuals being studied. (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:224). The true significance of the term 'Exploratory sequential' design is correctly understood with the explanation of Creswell and Creswell (2018:225) that 'a researcher can analyze the qualitative data...to form categories of information that will be explored further in a quantitative phase.' By means of individual, in-depth personal interviews with a carefully selected sample of participants, the researcher of the present study attempted to explore their knowledge and experience in terms of prayer.

Empirical research was done by making use of the mixed method approach, which include both the qualitative approach and the quantitative approach and to interpret them as a continuum, as recommended in principle by Osmer (2008:50). The exploratory mixed method design was utilized as explained by Creswell and Creswell (2018:224-226).

Sample size is determined as explained by Creswell and Creswell (2018:225):

The question arises if the sample for the qualitative phase is the same for the quantitative phase. This cannot be, because the qualitative sample is typically much smaller than a quantitative sample needed to generalize from a sample to a population. Sometimes mixed method researchers will use entirely different samples for the qualitative (first phase) and quantitative components (third phase) of the study. However, a good procedure is to draw both samples from the same population but make sure that the individuals for both samples are not the same.

Patton (2002:237) explains that there are key informants in the process of generating outcomes from interviews. Purposeful sampling is used to obtain as much information as possible in the interviews with specific persons. The strength of the methodology used in qualitative research as Patton extensively describes it, is to look at the situation holistically (2002:228). As there are no rules for the sample size in this kind of research according to Patton (2002:244), only 6 selected church members were interviewed, but the interviews were conducted with the aim of obtaining as much information as possible. The six members were made up of 3 couples: one couple of which both husband and wife attended church regularly; one couple of which only the wife attended church regularly and one couple of which neither the husband nor wife attended church at all. The objective was to determine what the present state of understanding and of involvement in intercessory prayer of the All Saints United Church Somerset East members is. The congregation consists predominantly of middle-aged to elderly members at present. Therefore, the study indicated what influence the church had in the past on their contemporary state of understanding and involvement of prayer, and intercessory prayer in particular.

All Saints United Church Somerset East is a small rural congregation, which consists of three denominations which amalgamated in 1999; due to the modern day universal trend of the depopulation of the country side. These denominations are the Anglican denomination, the Methodist denomination and the Presbyterian denomination. The majority of the members of these congregations grew up in Christian homes, having been Christians for generations. Historically, within the South African context, Christian education was part of the public school curriculum. Children in general, therefore all received Christian education, even where it was absent in individual families and homes. At present the All Saints United Church congregation consists of only middle-aged to elderly members. The general understanding of Christianity as Bible reading, prayer and attending church, is the foundation of their Christian upbringing, education and comprehension. These interviews were conducted with the six members according to a predetermined set of 8 questions. The data collected were analysed making use of the grounded theory approach.

3.3 Data Collection

Eight questions were asked to a selected group of church members as explained above. In analysing their responses, a conclusion was formulated for each question with quotations as proof.

Grounded theory is a research form that uses a general methodology. A set of procedures for analysing data leads to the formulation of a theory that will throw light on the subject matter being researched (Strauss and Corbin 1990:275).

Research Questionnaire & Open Coding

Question 1: What is your understanding of prayer?

Question 2: How often do you pray?

Question 3: Why do you pray?

Question 4: What do you pray for?

Question 5: What is your understanding of intercession?

Question 6: What prevents you from praying?

Question 7: Do you doubt whether God answers prayer?

Question 8: Do you doubt God's existence?

The Grounded Theory approach is an inductive approach in the paradigm of social constructionism as described by Charmaz (2006) in Sociology. This method of empirical analysis is applied in this study to determine the understanding, and measure of involvement of intercessory prayer, by a strategically selected and represented core group of the All Saints United Congregation Somerset East.

Pieterse (2010:116) states that:

Grounded theory research in the social sciences was introduced by Glaser and Strauss (1967). They turned away from verification by means of quantitative research of current, already developed theories. Their methodology aimed at the generation of new theories through the formulation of new concepts out of raw material in qualitative research. They made use of theoretic sampling, coding of the texts of interviews, documents, etc., to find concepts with their properties, and by means of constant comparison of codes and concepts, they discovered relations between the concepts that led to abstract categories and consequent hypotheses.

Coding as the analytic aspect of inquiry is the initial step and pivotal link, in the process, between collecting data and the development of an emergent theory to explain these data in the Grounded Theory approach. According to Charmaz (2006:113) the researcher by means of coding, defines what is happening with regard to the data and begin to grapple with what it means. The process involves studying the data and allowing the ensuing learning to be

guided by the initial grounded theory coding. Through it, the researcher begins to make sense of the data, which shapes the ensuing analysis (Charmaz 2006:114). The researcher defines what (s)he sees as significant in the data and describes what (s)he thinks is happening. Charmaz (2016:116) explains that the researcher by means of coding enters into an interactive space, which pulls him/her deeper into the data. New analytic questions merge the subjective with what appears to be the objective as the researcher interacts with the data, in an effort to understand the issue/question at hand. Through comparing data with data, the researcher learns what the research participants view as problematic and begin to treat it in an analytical way. Evans (2013:104) explained that qualitative research findings have to be refined so as to comprehend the full extent of the experience of the participants and this is done through the process of coding. Coding consists of the initial, shorthand defining and labelling (Charmaz 2016:115) and speed and spontaneity help in initial coding. Charmaz (2016:118) further explains that words are chosen that constitute the codes and are reworded when necessary, in order to improve their fit with data, with the objective to capture and condense meaning and actions.

According to (Charmaz 2016:116), during initial coding the following are asked:

- What subject is the data a study of?
- What do the data suggest? Pronounce? Leave unsaid?
- From whose point of view?
- What theoretical category does this specific data indicate?

The field of study is practical theology, with the focus on prayer as it is part of the everyday experience of the believer, the worship service and the pastoral ministry within the context of the All Saints United Church Somerset East.

Research Questionnaire & Open Coding

Concerning the initial coding process of 'shorthand defining and labelling,' the raw data was read with speed and spontaneity soon after the recorded interviews were put into a printed version. To capture the condensed meaning and actions, the appropriate words were at first made 'bold'. The process was repeated several times to ensure that the words chosen constituted the codes (in red) and when necessary, was reworded. This interactive and repetitive process of defining descriptive words (in bold) and labelling appropriate codes (in red), resulted in the final descriptive codes in red as verified by this coding process.

Respondent 1:

Question 1: “ What do you understand prayer to be? How would you define it in your own words?

Strauss that's rather a sudden one on me, **difficult**. You know I often have to say when I say a **private** little prayer that I must apologize for always asking for something instead of rather giving something or being thankful or being gracious about things. So **I think** there really are **two sides** to each prayer, a prayer **asking** for something like forgiveness, safety or for protection or something like that. **Or** a prayer saying that you are very **grateful** for what is being done and that you are conscious of it and so forth. Those are the **two** things I think that you find most prayers are **divided** into. I may be wrong but that is how I see it.

Uncertain; dual purpose: ask and thank.

Question 2: “ How often do you pray?

I don't think that I have consciously or sub-consciously made a note of when I pray, I think it is when the need arises and you pray **sometimes** not so much for yourself but for your loved ones. I know that often I pray for my children and grandchildren to keep them **safe**, jy weet as hulle op die pad gaan en daai tipe ding. But ... I had **once upon a time** a big prayer and I've **never** maintained my undertaking. But I would say I don't regulate it elke Donderdag of elke maand of elke aand. I will basically when the **mood**, not the need so much, but the mood arises I would. So it is **not a regulated thing** at all. I remember **once** when I was on the sea in a big storm en ek het gedog die einde het nou gekom, and I **prayed** very hard and I made certain **promises** which, in the back of my mind I thought hell if you keep these promises it is going to be wonderful. Maar dit was **nie lank nie** en I did things which were **contradictory** to all my promises hey. But the big thing is, Strauss is that I was aware of my **short-comings**, my doing things that I should'nt have done and my omissions so much, not doing things that I **should** have done. Maar dit is nou 'n side-line daai.

Irregular; inconsistent.

Question 3: “ Why do you pray?”

You know, you make me think now. Ahh I don't pray from a sense of duty and **I think** you are quite right that this overlaps with previous question. And not for personal gain. **Why** do I pray? And not because it is the done thing. **I don't know**, it is just **a feeling** that arises that it would be good to say a prayer now. **I think so**.

Don't know.

Question 4: “What do you pray for?” The contents of your prayer

Yes that is probably easier, because I've actually **done** it, I have said a prayer. I will pray to actually try and **make the world a better place** to have happiness and family. In other words I would say, without really mentioning any of those things. If I could just **make the world** a better place I would be very **happy**. And it is actually quite easy, the worst people in the world are the bloody politicians. **The old fashioned thing** where you had a baker, tailor and a tinker and things like that where there was some **natural happiness** in the world. That's the whole thing, not all this terror and unhappiness and all **the consequences** of people doing things which **they ought not to do**. I think that is basically it.

Certain; world a better place.

Question 5: “What is your understanding of intercession / to intercede for others?”

Praying **on behalf of** someone else? To intercede whether it be a conflict or to **try and correct** something that you perceive to be wrong with someone else. (Like in a court you would present somebody before the Lord – interviewer explain) Yes that would be the intercession.

Don't know.

Question 6: “What prevents you from praying?”

Man I think possibly **moedeloosheid**. If you go to hell, isn't the world so bloody rotten or those aspects that you are involved in that it is not really going to help. Yet not, because you can still. That is why you get to those things just in case, you pray just in case it can help you.

Hopeless.

Question 7: “Do you doubt whether God answers prayer or are you sure?”

No I think whether it's God doing it or whether it's managed by God answering it. Like God created certain things, He said there is going to be so many people, unfortunately there will be those that make and those that get hurt and those that get killed in a motor accident. It's just like that. You sort of pray that things will come right and then lo and behold they do come right hey. **Now that is answering the prayer, that is the Lord**. I think to some extent it is, it must be.

Surprise; uncertain.

Question 8: “ Do you doubt God’s existence?”

No, no because now you come to another aspect. Who or what is God? Is it a big... I’ve often think about God. Maybe that is why God sent His Son to earth so that people could what is the word... could relate to Him as a physical being. So God I think is a combination of a hell of a lot of things. I don’t know if He is just an invisible cloud, **but there is definitely someone who regulates our lives, oh yes definitely.**

Uncertain; Certain; Don’t know.

Respondent 2:

Question 1: What is your understanding of prayer?

My understanding of a prayer is to be nearer my God, to actually **talk** to Him and to feel Him. I feel Him and it’s amazing Strauss that I have had **answers**, you won’t believe it but He has answered me and He gives me so much peace in my prayers, it’s unbelievable. To me He is the beginning and end of my **life**. He gave me life and He will take my life again. So I just **adore** Him, He comes first in my life.

Certain; Confident

Question 2: How often do you pray?

Strauss I pray **at night**. I read my Bible and I have long, and I don’t even call it prayer, I talk to Him, I have **a conversation** with Him, which is absolutely fantastic. And I pray in the **mornings** to thank God. Here I am again this morning, another day of my life that He has given me. I ask Him to just be with me, guide and protect me and to guide my family. My health has been so much better. He has given me so much to be thankful for.

Relation; Conversation; Experience; Deviate.

Question 3: Why do you pray?

Strauss, I pray because I **need** God, I could never be without Him. He is so **part of my life** that I mean what I’ve got and what I am today is because of what He has given me. And He has **blessed me**, I’ve missed on somethings but they are not important to me. What is important to me is what I have and what He has given me is important and I thank Him for that and He has blessed me many, many a times.

Certain; Help; Thank

Question 4: What do you pray for?

What do I pray for? **I pray for peace, love, understanding and compassion.** And just that He must **look after me**, He must put His arms around me and **hold me** because without that I won't exist. I pray for Him **to look after my family.** And He is just so important in my life. I actually feel like crying. (I can see that you are very emotional, that is beautiful.)

Well-being; Care; personal.

Question 5: What is your understanding of intercession?

What is intercession? (To intercede for somebody, it is a kind of prayer.) Strauss, you know you come and you find a difficult patch in your life and it is sometimes very difficult to get across to somebody and somebody very close and dear to you that does not understand you that well. It takes up your answers or your way you ask for things differently and incorrectly and I just ask for the strength to help me to understand that he does not understand. You know, it's not, how can I say. Married life you stand before God and you promise to go through the difficult and easy times together, but Strauss it's not, you got to work at it. You got to pray to God and say please hold me, hold me in that situation, please. You know, it is just so wonderful, that I realize even though I am degraded at times I still know that I stand before Him and He is my Lord. Ja.

Don't know; deviate

Question 6: What prevents you from praying?

Nothing, nothing, nothing can prevent me from praying and I don't just pray when I am in bedroom on my knees. Sometimes we travel and I look at the clouds and I don't know whether it's my imagination but I see God's face. You know that it fills me with so much joy, I can't tell you Strauss. (emotional) And that's when I pray and I pray when I'm in the garden. Often someone says **but you pray all the time**, I said probably, probably. I said but it is just too wonderful because I am talking, I am having a conversation, you know.

Certain; confidence; personal

Question 7: Do you doubt whether God answers prayer?

No, He answers.

Certain; sure

Question 8: Do you doubt God's existence?

No, no God is there. Look what we have around us, where did it come from? It's from Him. With all our travels and whatever is happening around us in this world, God is in control. He is there, He is in control.

Observant;

Respondent 3:

Question 1: What is your understanding of prayer?

Ahhm My definition of prayer? **Escapism**. Klaar.

Stupid; 'Don't waste my time.'

Question 2: How often do you pray?

Never. I can qualify that. There are times when I think Oh things are not right and I think now that is what one should say now, but no direct prayer.

Senseless

Question 3: Why do you pray?

Ja, like I said, Praying is ..., I think it is really fantastic for those who believe, because it is **an outlet** to them to be able to express themselves to a "second personal third person" who can't answer back and who just listens. So I think it is great for those people who get satisfaction from that and encouragement.

Speculate; objective view

Question 4: What do you pray for?

Well, **I don't**.

Uninvolved

Question 5: What is your understanding of intercession?

Now intercession, **I do know the word**, what does it actually mean, I am not sure. To be close with God or something like that. I don't know the definition, if you could tell me.

(To be like a lawyer representing someone in court in the same way to present before God or pray on behalf others...)

In my case if somebody is poorly off I wish them well or try to do what I can for them to ease the situation. But I don't think of prayer.

Don't know; No part of frame of reference

Question 6: What prevents you from praying?

I think it is ... **I don't believe in it** in the first place so basically I don't believe in it.

Unbelief

Question 7: Do you doubt whether God answers prayer?

I think God is something or someone that is in your brain but, no I don't think so.

Uncertain

Question 8: Do you doubt God's existence?

Yes.

Unbelief

Respondent 4:

Question 1: What is your understanding of prayer?

Traditional prayer?(No what do you understand prayer to be?) I suppose prayer is **talking or having a conversation with God**. And in a prayer **you either give thanks** for things that have happened **or you ask God** to give you things or help you with things that you are having problems with.

Tradition; Uncertain

Question 2: How often do you pray?

Strauss, I used to pray a lot but the last while **infrequently**. I use to pray a lot but now not often.

Infrequently

Question 3: Why do you pray?

Probably because I would feel that I needed help. Maybe something that I am not coping with perhaps and you feel I need help with that.

Uncertain; don't know

Question 4: What do you pray for?

I think it is usually something to do with **my family**. That is almost always what it is. The **well-being** of my family and my children and me.

Uncertain; self centred

Question 5: What is your understanding of intercession?

That is a more formal type of prayer I think from what I understand. I won't say that I have a very good understanding of it, but it is more formal type and it usually happens within the church and the service when you have that period for that type of prayer.

Don't know

Question 6: What prevents you from praying?

I think possibly **I am thinking it is not going to help me**.

Unbelief

Question 7: Do you doubt whether God answers prayer?

Ja that is the reason why I stop praying because there were two particular things that I prayed about for a long, long time, but it was never answered.

Unbelief

Question 8: Do you doubt God's existence?

Strauss I think, what I have come to believe is that there is a Higher Person. I can call Him God or whatever the other religions call Him. But there is **Somebody Spiritual out there**.

General agreement; uncertain

Respondent 5:

Question 1: What is your understanding of prayer?

I suppose there are **different levels**, but I would say it is **conversation with God** and the time where ...ja a time of **supplication and asking** and also a time of **listening**. But basically just a time where you can speak your heart to the Lord and maybe not only asking for answers or requests but just ah ...**open conversation with a friend**.

Certain; a living reality

Question 2: How often do you pray?

Ahh... I think **sub-consciously through the day**, you know in every aspect you know when I am busy doing things and then kind of praying like a sounding board, quietly without saying anything, just consciously being with Him. Special times obviously in the **mornings** to commit the day to Him and in the **evening** just to thank Him and lay the day before Him.

A way of life; specific times

Question 3: Why do you pray?

One of the big things is because you want to **ask for** things to be given, you know for healing or requests that you have but also just a time to **appreciate God and to thank Him** for who is and the important role, because it is a conversation and He is a friend and it is a relationship. Sometimes it does tend to be a one thing board but sometimes it is **a sounding board too** for laying issues in front of Him to hopefully get answers and responses.

Ask, thank, spend time, confirmation

Question 4: What do you pray for?

For family, for direction, for friends and to determine purpose for myself and maybe for what I am doing. Ja, to determine a purpose that I have in a specific situation. Sjoë, maybe for at school I pray **for kids** who I know that are within a situation to pray for their home life or needs that they specifically have and for guidance on how to best handle them. And to pray for **wisdom**, and family members and friends to lead them and for decision-making.

Family, others, guidance

Question 5: What is your understanding of intercession?

To stand in the place of other people, to pray for them and things that they need and for a difficult experience people may have. **To pray on behalf of them**.

Stand in, represent

Question 6: What prevents you from praying?

Business of life and just not consciously making time to pray. You let **circumstances** get the better of you. Not giving it **priority**.

No priority

Question 7: Do you doubt whether God answers prayer?

No, but maybe sub-consciously I get impatient for the answers I think I should be getting.

Certain no

Question 8: Do you doubt God's existence?

No

Certain no

Respondent 6:

Question 1: What is your understanding of prayer?

I would say it is a **communication** method with God. To communicate directly with Him, to ask Him questions, requests, answers, ja how we get to communicate with God.

Communication. Requests.

Question 2: How often do you pray?

During **my quiet time**, but also depending, **at any time of the day**, if something happens or I think of something, then I just pray while I am walking or talking or whatever.

A way of life; specific times

Question 3: Why do you pray?

As I said, I think to **communicate with God** and to put our **requests** and sometimes our **thanks** etcetera directly to Him.

Communicate, request, thanks

Question 4: What do you pray for?

Ahmm, it depends. Sometimes it would just be **thanksgiving** or it would be **requests** for certain answers or **on behalf of people that are struggling** etcetera.

Thanks, requests, intercede

Question 5: What is your understanding of intercession?

Praying for on behalf of somebody.

On behalf of

Question 6: What prevents you from praying?

Distraction, ahm, I suppose guilt sometimes if you think of something that I am not qualified to pray or whatever. Ahm sometimes **procrastination**, I'll do it just now or I'll do it during my quiet time.

Distraction, ignorance, procrastination

Question 7: Do you doubt whether God answers prayer?

Not at all.

Certain no

Question 8: Do you doubt God's existence?

Not at all.

Certain no

Attachment 3: Coding Table 3.2: Respondents A-F horizontal: Questions 1-8 vertical.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Uncertain; dual purpose: ask and thank.	Certain; Confident	Stupid; 'Don't waste my time.'	Tradition; Uncertain	Certain; a living reality	Communication. Requests.
2	Irregular; inconsistent.	Relation; Conversation; Experience; Deviate.	Senseless	Infrequently	A way of life; specific times	A way of life; specific times
3	Don't know	Certain; Help; Thank	Speculate; objective view	Uncertain; don't know	Ask, thank, spent time, confirmation	Communicate, request, thanks
4	Certain; world a better place.	Well-being; Care; personal.	Uninvolved	Uncertain; self-centred	Family, others, guidance	Thanks, requests, intercede
5	Don't know.	Don't know; deviate	Don't know; No part of frame of reference	Don't know	Stand in, represent	On behalf of
6	Hopeless. Unbelief	Nothing; Certain; confidence; personal	Unbelief	Unbelief	No priority	Distraction, ignorance, procrastination
7	Surprise; uncertain; confused.	Certain; sure	Uncertain	Yes	Certain no	Certain no
8	Uncertain; Certain; Don't know, confused	No; Observant	Yes	General agreement; uncertain, confusion	Certain no	Certain no

Continuing with this initial open coding, which was characterized by the introductory shorthand defining and labelling, and speed and spontaneity, Charmaz (2016:137) states that codes then need to be studied, sorted and selected. The whole process is dynamic and open-ended, to ensure, according to (Charmaz 2016:118), that ‘the codes fit the data you have, rather than forcing the data to fit them.’ Charmaz (2016:120) then provides ‘a code for coding’ to secure this objective. As the researcher studies, sorts and selects the codes, (s)he needs to remain open and close to the data. It is important to confirm that the codes are short, simple and precise and if necessary, codes need to be reworded. A helpful and practical manner is making use of colour coding.

Initial colour coding:

Uncertain; dual purpose: ask and thank	Uninvolved
Irregular; inconsistent	Don't know No part of frame of Reference
Don't know.	Unbelief
Certain world a better place	Uncertain
Don't know.	
Honest; self-	Unbelief
centred uncertain rational Objective Deviate	Senseless unbelief
Hopeless.	Deviate 'Beat about the bush'; Judgmental
Surprise Uncertain	Tradition Uncertain
Uncertain Certain Don't know	Infrequently
Factual doubt	Uncertain don't know
Deviate confused	Uncertain self-centred
Certain Confident	Don't know
Relation Conversation Experience Deviate.	Unbelief
Certain Help Thank	Unbelief
Well-being Care personal	General agreement uncertain
Don't know Certain confidence Personal	General agreement/ knowledge
Deviate	Ignorance misunderstanding
Certain sure	Certain
Observant;	A living reality
Influential	A way of life
Deviate	Specific times
Stupid Don't waste my time	Ask
Senseless	Thank
Speculate objective view	Spend time

Confirmation	Specific times
Family	Communicate
Others	Request
Guidance	Thanks
Stand in	Thanks
Represent	Requests
No priority	Intercede
Certain no	On behalf of
Certain no	Distraction ignorance procrastination
Experiential, Biblical	Certain no
Experiential	Certain no
Communication	Biblical
Requests.	Experiential
A way of life	

Subsequently, codes then need to be studied, selected and sorted, according to Charmaz (2016:137). The three chosen colours of green, yellow and red represent the three major tendencies and their significance is elaborated with the words 'hot', 'lukewarm' and 'cold':

Category 1 - green / hot - know and practice prayer regularly

Category 2 - yellow / lukewarm - knowledge of, but no practice of prayer.

Category 3 – red/cold: do not know/care about or practice prayer.

Colour codes sorted and selected Table 3.3

Certain	World a better place.	Irregular
Honest	Rational	Inconsistent
Certain	Objective	Don't know
Dual purpose: ask and thank	Factual	Don't know
Certain, confident	Objective view	Self-centred
Requests, intercede	Tradition	Uncertain
Relation	Self-centred	Deviate
Conversation	General agreement	Hopeless
Experience	General agreement/ Knowledge	Uncertain
Certain	Surprise	Uncertain
Help		Don't know
Thanks		Doubt
Well-being, care		Deviate
Thanks		Confused
Personal		Deviate
Certain, confidence		Deviate
Biblical		Don't know
Personal		Deviate
Certain, sure		Stupid
On behalf of		Don't waste my time
Observant		Senseless
Influential		Speculate
Certain		Uninvolved
A living reality, a way of life		Don't know
Requests, intercede		No part of frame of reference
Specific times		Unbelief
Ask		Uncertain
Thank		Unbelief
Spend time		Senseless
Confirmation		Unbelief
Family		Deviates

Others		Beat about the bush
Guidance		Judgmental
Stand in, represent		Uncertain
Experiential		Infrequently
Certain no		Uncertain
Certain no		Don't know
Experiential		Uncertain;
Biblical		Don't know
Experiential		Unbelief
Communicate, requests		Unbelief
Certain no		Uncertain
A way of life		Ignorance
Specific times		Misunderstanding
Communicate, requests		No priority
Certain no		Distraction
Thanks		Ignorance
		Procrastination

Charmaz (2016:116) explains that coding is the link between data and developing an emergent theory explaining the data. The theoretical data initially coded are subsequently further sorted and ordered into concepts and categories. It is evident from the above colour coding that three prominent categories exist. The categories are expressions of the relationships between the different codes and are the culmination of an interactive sorting process of comparisons and connections.

Category 1 - green light/ hot - know and practice prayer regularly.

Category 2 - orange light/ lukewarm - knowledge of, but no practice of prayer.

Category 3 – red light/cold: do not know/care about or practice prayer.

The analysis of the answers to the questions for the interviews were as follows:

Question 1: What is your understanding of prayer?

The questionnaire begins with question one as a measurement of the respondents' general understanding of what prayer means to them.

The majority of respondents seem to have a clear, general understanding of the significance of prayer, according to their responses. A total of 83% respondents (referred to as the '[Yes-group](#)' below) personally seem to know prayer as conversation with God and reflecting a good comprehension of prayer according to their responses.

'My understanding of a prayer is to be nearer to my God, to actually talk to Him and to feel Him,'- Respondent A.

'But basically just a time where you can speak your heart to the Lord and maybe not only asking for answers or requests but just ah... open conversation with a friend.'-Respondent B.

They give the impression of being positive and clear about their understanding of prayer and experiencing it as a living reality. According to their responses, for them communication with God occurs with confidence. They feel confident enough to approach God with requests and expressions of gratitude.

'And in a prayer you either give thanks for things that have happened or you ask God to give you things or help you with things that you are having problems with.'-Respondent C.

Charmaz (2006:124) advises intentional users of the grounded theory, to 'code data as actions, thinking in actions and processes.' Therefore, the descriptive codes selected in analysing the data emerging from the answers given to question one, for the '[Yes-group](#)' are: conversation, communication, confidence, real, a living reality, requests and expressions of gratitude.

The other 17% (referred to as the '[No-group](#)' below) appear on the contrary, to have no or only partial comprehension of prayer. They either have no interest in prayer, or prayer has no priority for them.

'Ahm My definition of prayer? Escapism. Klaar.' –Respondent D.

This '[No-group](#)' is descriptively coded as don't waste my time, ignorant, beat about the bush and indifferent; whereas those with a limited understanding, who are also part of the 17%, are described by codes like procrastination, infrequently, inconsistent, and doubt.

'But I would say I don't regulate it 'elke Donderdag of elke maand of elke aand' (each Thursday or each month or each night). I will basically when the mood, not the need so much, but the mood arises I would. So it is not a regulated thing at all.' –Respondent E.

Question 2: How often do you pray?

Question 2 sets out to determine to what degree the respondents give expression in their lives to their general understanding of prayer.

A change, however, is to be observed in terms of those having the knowledge of what prayer involves and applying it and those not applying what they know. Contrary to the ['Yes-group'](#) theoretically understanding what prayer involves, only 50% of them admit to praying often (referred to below as the ['Yes-Yes group'](#)). According to their responses, their prayer conduct is coded as 'relation, conversation, a way of life and specific times,' with the focus on action, in those being personally involved in prayer.

'Ahh. I think sub-consciously through the day, you know in every aspect, you know when I am busy doing things and then kind of praying like a sounding board, quietly without saying anything, just consciously being with Him. Special times obviously in the mornings to commit the day to Him and in the evening just to thank Him and lay the day before Him.' –Respondent B.

On the other hand, the lack of being personally involved in terms of prayer of the other 50% of the initial 83% respondents (referred to below as the ['Yes-No group'](#)) who nevertheless have the correct knowledge with regard to prayer, but to whom regular prayer is uncommon, is descriptively coded as 'irregular, inconsistent, and infrequently.'

'Strauss, I used to pray a lot but the last while infrequently. I used to pray a lot but now not often.' – Respondent C.

Question 3: Why do you pray?

Question 3 determines the motivation for praying of those respondents answering 'Yes' to praying often. It gives a better indication of their understanding of prayer.

The having confidence trend of the 'Yes-Yes group' is continued and confirmed in giving the reason for prayer. Their responses to the question, 'Why do you pray?' are descriptively coded as 'help, assistance, requests, giving thanks, spend time and communicate.' They seem to be sure of their relation with God as confirmation and motivation to prayer.

'As I said, I think to communicate with God and to put our requests and sometimes our thanks etcetera directly to Him.'—Respondent F.

The opposite '[Yes-No group](#)' is coded as don't know, speculate, objective view and uncertain. Prayer proves to be a foreign practice because of their objective point of view with regard to it. Their theoretical knowledge of prayer, but lack of practical involvement and experience with prayer, results in uncertainty and speculation.

'Ja, like I said, Praying is ..., I think it is really fantastic for those who believe, because it is an outlet to them to be able to express themselves to a "second personal third person" who can't answer back and who just listens. So I think it is great for those people who get satisfaction from that and encouragement.'—Respondent D.

The absence of a clear reason and motivation for prayer is reflected in infrequent participation in prayer by this '[Yes-No group](#)'.

Question 4: What do you pray for?

Question 4 further defines the understanding and application of prayer of the distinguished '[Yes-Yes group](#)'. Their objective with prayer contributes to a better comprehension of their understanding of prayer.

The distinction that emerged between the '[Yes-Yes group](#)' and the '[Yes-No group](#)', due to the previous two questions about frequency and motivation for prayer, points to their being equal in number. However, a further change is noticed in terms of the numbers of the '[Yes-Yes group](#)' with the subsequent question, question 4, addressing the contents of their prayers: What do you pray for?

Only 33%, a third of the '[Yes-Yes group](#)', is praying for other people apart from themselves (referred to below as the '[Yes-Yes- Others group](#)'). They understand and practice intercessory prayer as part of prayer as such. 'Family' and 'others', which is central to and characteristic of intercessory prayer, were descriptive codes selected for the 'other person-centred' action of this 33% of respondents.

'Ahmm, it depends. Sometimes it would just be thanksgiving or it would be requests for certain answers or on behalf of people that are struggling etcetera.'—Respondent F.

The opposite prayer distinguishing traits of the other 67% of the respondents (referred to below as the '[Yes-Yes-Self group](#)') were coded with codes to express their more self-centred,

traditional and general understanding of prayer and actions: 'world a better place'; 'well being'; 'care'; and 'personal.'

'I will pray to actually try and make the world a better place to have happiness and family.' – Respondent E.

'What do I pray for? I pray for peace, love, understanding and compassion. And just that He must look after me, He must put His arms around me and hold me because without that I won't exist. I pray for Him to look after my family.' - Respondent A.

These respondents came across prayer in a traditional cultural context, as a family custom handed down from the ancestors. They were expected to adhere to it, to ensure prosperity and good health. It seems as if prayer to them generally signifies personal prosperity and safety.

With Question 2, a downward trend has already been observed: contrary to the 83% of respondents ['Yes-group'](#) theoretically understanding what prayer involves, only 50% ['Yes-Yes group'](#) admit to praying often. Question 4 reveals a further decrease to 33% of respondents who understand intercessory prayer ['Yes-Yes-Others' group](#) praying for the concerns and benefit of others as a key part of prayer and also practicing it specifically.

Question 5: What is your understanding of intercession?

Question 5 is more specific in terms of the respondents' understanding of intercessory prayer. It determines whether intercessory prayer is any part at all of their understanding and practice of prayer or not.

Respondents with a clear understanding of intercession, which accounted for 33% of the ['Yes-Yes -Other' group,](#) gave account of their intercessory prayer understanding and conduct:

To stand in the place of other people, to pray for them and things that they need and for a difficult experience people may have. To pray on behalf of them. – Respondent B.

On the contrary, the majority of respondents did not know about or practiced intercessory prayer:

'Now intercession, I do know the word, what does it actually mean, I am not sure. To be close with God or something like that. I don't know the definition, if you could tell me.' –Respondent D.

The results of the majority of the respondent's limited to no understanding of the significance of intercessory prayer were the same as, and reflected the objective of their prayers, Question 4: What do you pray for? It gives the impression that their lack of knowledge and perception of the

importance of intercessory prayer specifically, is the reason for them not considering it a priority and therefore not participating in intercessory prayer at all. These respondents' answers revealing their limited understanding of intercession were coded as 'don't know', 'no part of frame of reference', and 'evasive/ wander in answering.'

Notwithstanding 83% of the respondents, the ['Yes group,'](#) who initially proved to have a traditional and general knowledge of prayer, only 33%, the ['Yes-Yes-Others group,'](#) personally know about and participate in intercessory prayer. It seems that their lack of the essential knowledge in terms of intercessory prayer is the cause of their indifference to intercessory prayer and further restrains them from their crucial involvement in intercessory prayer.

Question 6: What prevents you from praying?

Question 6 indirectly sheds more light on the respondents' understanding and practice of prayer. The consequent priority of prayer in their lives is determined.

According to the responses, nothing prevents 17% of the respondents from praying. In understanding and practicing prayer regularly, they form part of the ['Yes-Yes group.'](#)

'Nothing, nothing, nothing can prevent me from praying and I don't just pray when I am in bedroom on my knees.' – Respondent A.

They are certain and approach God with confidence through prayer.

On the contrary, unbelief is stated by 50% of the respondents as reason for not praying.

'I think it is ... I don't believe in it in the first place so basically I don't believe in it.' – Respondent D.

The remaining 33% explain their disposition at times prevents them from praying. They are often procrastinating, distracted or ignorant about the pre-eminence of prayer and their conduct is accordingly coded as 'ignorant', 'distracted' and 'procrastinating'.

'Distraction, ahm, I suppose guilt sometimes...Ahm sometimes procrastination...' – Respondent F.

The indispensable requisite for proper teaching, information and practical guidance with regard to prayer, and intercessory prayer specifically, is confirmed and emphasised by this 33% of the respondents whose ambiguous understanding and practice of prayer could be altered in such a way that they will be more committed to regular and meaningful prayer. Lacking the knowledge

of and being uninformed about the meaning and purpose of prayer, more specifically intercessory prayer, result in believers being indifferent to and uninvolved in intercessory prayer.

Question 7: 'Do you doubt whether God answers prayer or are you sure?'

Question 7 determines the place of prayer in the respondents' general frame of reference. It explains their conduct in terms of prayer.

God does answer prayers according to 50% of the respondents. They pray with confidence, expecting an answer. In answer to the question whether they doubt that God answers prayer, they were coded a 'certain no.'

"No!" – Respondent A.

The aspect of uncertainty is referred to by 33% of the respondents. No expectation of an answer if they pray is expressed by them. Infrequent prayer is more out of habit, than with a purpose. They were appropriately coded as 'uncertain' and 'confused.'

"No, I think whether it's God doing it or whether it's managed by God answering it... I think to some extent it is, it must be." – Respondent E.

The remaining 17% seriously doubt whether God answers prayers, and were coded as 'yes' with regard to doubting whether God answers prayer.

"Yes!" – Respondent C.

Question 8: 'Do you doubt God's existence?'

Question 8 seeks to confirm whether a living relationship exists with God as the foundation of a vibrant, intimate and committed prayer life.

An emphatic no is the response of 50% of the respondents. Their everyday experience and observation is provided as proof of God's existence. They are coded as 'certain' and 'confident.'

'No, I do not doubt God's existence.' – Respondent F.

Experiencing confusion about God's existence, accounts for 33% of the respondents. They either fluctuate between accepting and doubting God's existence or they are completely confused. Codes selected for this group are 'confused', 'uncertain' and 'don't know.'

'Somebody spiritual out there' and 'So God I think is a combination of a hell of a lot of things. I don't know if he is just an invisible cloud.' – Respondent E.

The remaining 17% do doubt God's existence, and have been coded as 'yes'.

"Yes!" – Respondent D.

With reference to [the above set of questions](#), the range of prayer involvement of the All Saints United Church Somerset East members was established as follows with the Grounded Theory approach:

Category 1 - green light/ hot - know and practice prayer regularly.

Category 1 is symbolically described as a 'green light/ hot,' signifying respondents qualifying for category 1, knowing prayer personally, the ['Yes – Group'](#), and personally practising it regularly, the ['Yes-Yes-group'](#). The term 'hot' is a symbolic term used in addition to 'green,' emphasising/ confirming respondents' correct understanding and practice of prayer.

Respondents categorised as category 1 experience prayer as a conversation, in a living relationship with God. Prayer is a living reality, a way of life. The biblical basis of prayer is understood and confirmed with concepts such as 'requests', 'gratitude', 'spend time' and 'communicate'.

Category 1 also includes respondents, a third (33%) of those categorised as category 1, who have the best knowledge of and are active regarding intercessory prayer specifically, the ['Yes-Yes-Others group'](#). Proof is given by the use of concepts such as 'prayer for family', 'other people', 'represent other people in prayer', 'intercede' and 'prayer on behalf of'.

Charmaz (2006:136) suggests capturing fleeting feelings and views and reflecting on an interview shortly after conducting it. Subsequent observations applicable to each category were made accordingly.

Respondents, who were classified as part of Category 1 with the analysis, were observed during the interviews as 'hot,' confident, certain, sure and honest. The personal aspect of prayer as a way of life is reflected in their spiritual well-being and being other-person-centred. They are evidently involved in intercessory prayer. The present writer as pastor also observed that they are in general observant, influential and daring in the congregation, as well as in society. Their church attendance is frequent and they are involved in congregational ministries.

With the analysis, Category 1 ranks second in terms of numbers.

Category 2 - orange light/ lukewarm - knowledge of, but no practice of prayer.

'Orange light' is symbolically describing Category 2 in terms of the 'in between' or 'lukewarm' in understanding and practice of prayer. Respondents categorised as category 2, know about prayer, but do not practice prayer regularly, ['Yes-No group'](#).

In the present study, Category 2 refers to those respondents who know of, but do not really understand what prayer involves and are not involved in the practice of prayer either.

Knowledge of prayer was handed down to them through tradition in their home or at school. They know the correct terminology, but prayer does not make sense to them and they were never personally interested or motivated to get involved in prayer. These respondents are characterised by concepts such as general agreement and knowledge, tradition, factual, rational, objective and self-centred.

The Category 2 range has no understanding and consequently no involvement in intercessory prayer, the ['Yes- No - Self group'](#).

Category 2 respondents during the interviews were 'lukewarm', in between, unsure, uncertain and without confidence. Therefore, the colour yellow symbolises their limited understanding and acceptance of prayer and limited involvement in prayer as well as no involvement in intercessory prayer at all. Their church attendance and involvement in the congregational ministries is also limited and often non-existent.

With the analysis Category 2 ranks 3rd in terms of numbers.

Category 3 – red light - Cold: do not know/care about or practice prayer.

Prayer is non-existent for respondents classified as Category 3. They are indifferent in terms of prayer; it is not part of their frame of reference and has no priority at all. As a matter of fact, prayer in their estimate is seen as 'stupid, senseless, a waste of time, and hopeless.' They are appropriately classified as the ['No-group.'](#)

In terms of intercessory prayer, Category 3 respondents had no idea what it signifies. Answers such as '*I do not know the word, what does it actually mean?'*'; '*What is intercession?'*'; '*I won't say that I have a good understanding of it,'* were common to this ['No-No-self group'](#).

With Category 3 respondents, a common self-centred orientation and existence, together with their ignorance in terms of intercessory prayer, was evident during the interviews. Category 3 includes those who were judgmental, outspoken against and rejecting the practice of prayer.

Their unbelief and doubt were expressed not only in words, but also through their body language. They were indifferent to prayer and further ignorant in their responses to the questions. A disposition of indifference and uncertainty characterised them all. Consequently, they were often evasive in answering and lost the focus of the questions. No church attendance and involvement in congregational ministries to be mentioned.

With the analysis Category 3 ranks 1st in terms of numbers.

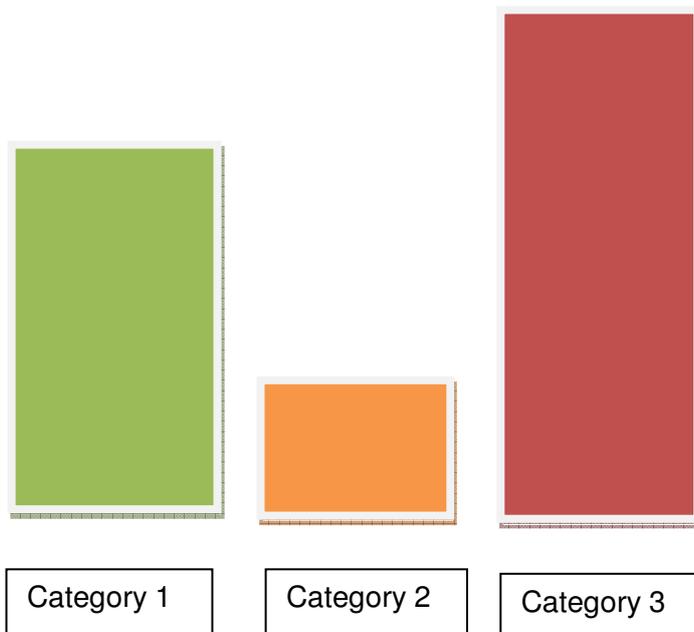


Figure 3-2: The bar diagram gives a graphic representation of Categories 1, 2 and 3.
Subsequent Data Collection

Research was initiated with qualitative (contexts) questions and subsequent data analysis by identifying and categorising themes. The aim was to determine the degree of understanding and practising of prayer and what prayer means to a selected group of members as representing the All Saints United Church Somerset East. The objective was to answer the question: *'What is happening?'*

The Explanatory Sequential Design (Three-Phase Design) utilized in the present study involves the successive quantitative (facts) questions to explain and describe the qualitative determined theory: The negligence of prayer and intercessory prayer in particular as a result of the lack of knowledge with regard to prayer and intercessory prayer in particular was determined. The subsequent quantitative approach enabled the researcher to reach a broad, dialectic and interpretive interpretation of what is happening with regard to the determined theory.

Follow-up data collection was done by means of questionnaires handed out at random to ten (10) members of All Saints United Church Somerset East with the help of a volunteer (to ensure validity), with the objective to answer Osmer's subsequent interpretive task: *'Why is it going on?'*

In the present study, it means determining and explaining members' action or lack of action in relation to intercessory prayer, according to their understanding and practice of prayer as determined by the preceding qualitative research. The results are set out in Table 2.

Charmaz (2016:121) states that coding also gives the researcher leads to pursue in subsequent data collection. The initial qualitative research provided answers to two of four questions asked with initial coding, as suggested by Charmaz (2016:116). Firstly, 'prayer' as the answer to the question 'What is the data a study of?' A general comprehension and practice of prayer as such and a subsequent understanding and involvement in intercessory prayer specifically was established. Secondly, from the researcher's point of view, in answer to the question 'From whose point of view?' The researcher initially approached the study subjectively as pastor of the All Saints United Congregation Somerset East. An unexpected inferior comprehension of prayer and a consequent inadequate practice of prayer were observed. He subsequently verified his initial conclusion with objective data from his interconnected qualitative research and quantitative research. Steps had been taken according to Creswell & Creswell (2018:299-201) to verify validity. With the codes studied, sorted and selected, they were categorized in the three different categories:

Category 1 - green light/ hot - know and practice prayer regularly.

Category 2 - orange light/ lukewarm - knowledge of, but no practice of prayer.

Category 3 – red light/cold: do not know/care about or practice prayer.

The category codes of green/ hot for regular prayer, orange/ lukewarm for irregular prayer and red/ cold for no prayer, guided the researcher with regard to the question asked, as well as with the explanatory options, in the follow-up data collection. The categories established are in answer to one of the objectives of initial coding: 'What theoretical categories do this specific data indicate?' according to Charmaz (2016:116). Also, the broad spectrum of both participation and ignorance of prayer is evident, in answer to the question: 'What do the data suggest?' (Charmaz 2016:116). Therefore the explanatory sub-options are an effort to obtain answers to the question: *Why is it going on?* The subsequent quantitative (facts) research endeavours to explain the initial qualitative (tendencies) research.

The question asked: **‘How often do you pray?’** has the option of three (3) possible answers which correspond to the three verified categories, and with each answer further options were provided in order to define/clarify the reason for that choice.

The first option: *Regularly*, with its defining options of:

Brought up in a Christian home.

Receive(d) guidance at church.

Was taught at school.

With a friend/ family member’s help/ encouragement.

Other.

The second option: *Irregularly*, with its defining options of:

I don’t really know how to pray.

It is not a priority for me.

I don’t have the time to pray.

I don’t always see the answers to my prayers.

Other.

The third and final option: *Never* with its defining options of:

I don’t want to pray.

I don’t know how to pray.

Prayer doesn’t make sense.

Hypocritical Christians are the reason.

Other.

The answers are set out in table 3.2 below.

Respondents 1 to 10 are indicated horizontally at the top of the table.

The individual responses of each respondent are indicated vertically with an ‘X’ underneath each respondent, indicating his or her choice.

When Category 1 is considered, although being 1st in terms of numbers in the understanding of and involvement in prayer, it further became evident through the interviews that only 33.3% [‘Yes-Yes-Others group’](#), a third of the respondents, understood and practiced intercessory prayer specifically. In the light of upbringing at home and instruction at the church as the foundation of a proper understanding of and involvement in regular prayer, it then seems evident that intercessory prayer, as a crucial part of prayer in general, is not presently an essential part of the church’s understanding, teaching and practice of prayer.

A similar situation was addressed by Andrew Murray in the beginning of the 20th century with his two prominent courses on intercessory prayer: *With Christ in the School of Prayer* and *The Ministry of Intercession*. Murray’s objective was to provide both the general knowledge as well as the format of prayer with his first book, *With Christ in the school of prayer*.

*It is on prayer that the promises wait for the fulfilment, the kingdom for its coming, the glory of God for its full revelation. And for this blessed work, how slothful and unfit we are. It is only the Spirit of God can enable us to do it aright. How speedily we are deceived into resting in the form, while the power is wanting. **Our early training, the teaching of the Church** (present writer’s emphasis), the influence of habit, the stirring of the emotions – how easily these lead to prayer which has no spiritual power, and avails but little. True prayer, that takes hold of God’s strength, that availeth much, to which the gates of heaven are really opened wide – who would not cry, **Oh for someone to teach me thus to pray?** (present writer’s emphasis), (Murray, 2007:3)⁵.*

Murray stresses the importance of additional/ further teaching and training on prayer, apart from the initial teaching and training by the church.

In his second and subsequent book, *The ministry of intercession*, Murray reiterates the importance of prayer and the Church’s failure to realise and practice it:

Christ actually meant prayer to be the great power by which His church should do its work, and that the neglect of prayer is the great reason the Church has not greater power over the masses in Christian and in heathen countries. (Murray, 1982:7).

Murray then focuses specifically on the more advanced understanding and practice of intercessory prayer:

*The second truth which I have sought to enforce is that we have far too little conception of the place that intercession, as distinguished from prayer for ourselves, ought to have in the Church and the Christian life...The power of the Church to truly bless rests on intercession – asking and receiving heavenly gifts to carry to men. Because this is so, it is no wonder that where – **owing to lack of teaching** (present writer’s emphasis) or spiritual insight – we put the trust in our own diligence and effort – to the influence of the world and the flesh – and work more than we pray, the presence and power of God are not seen in our work as we would wish. (Murray, 1982:8-9).*

Chapter 2 came to a conclusion with Osmer's initial descriptive stage of this study: What is going on? What is the present state of understanding of and involvement in intercessory prayer of the members of All Saints United Church Somerset East? It proves that insufficient knowledge about prayer and intercessory prayer specifically, is the reason for members' indifference to and lack of involvement in prayer.

The subsequent interpretive task of Osmer, asking the question: Why is it going on? determined and emphasised the importance of teaching and providing information and guidance with regard to intercessory prayer to the All Saints United Church specifically and the church in general, where the church is not involved in intercessory prayer. The church is the source of prayer information and training for the Christian home according to Table 2.

At home, this information of prayer and intercessory prayer specifically, is taught and practiced. This will do justice to 'Received guidance at church' and 'Brought up in a Christian home' as the foundation for information on and involvement in intercessory prayer.

Parents and guardians are (supposed to be) trained and equipped by the church with regard to prayer in general and intercessory prayer specifically, in order to train and equip the children.

3.4 Assurance of validity

Under 1.2.3 *Toward an interceding congregation*, it was mentioned that apart from giving a thick description of the empirical process to assure the validity of the study (Creswell & Creswell 2018:200), to spend prolonged time in the field is another way to attain it. (Creswell & Creswell 2018:201). The present writer has been the pastor of the All Saints United Church Somerset East since November 2009. During the past 10 years of ministry, his initial observation of an unexpected inferior comprehension of prayer and a consequent inadequate practice of prayer, and intercessory prayer in particular, was made. His initial observation that individual members and corporately the congregation as such, proved to have little knowledge and subsequent little participation in intercessory prayer have been confirmed by the outcome of the empirical study.

3.5 Why is it going on?

This part of the chapter aims to answer the second question of Osmer "Why is it going on?"

Different possible reasons will now be explored why the prayer life of the congregation maybe in the state that was determined in the first part of Chapter 3.

3.5.1 Modernism, Postmodernism and post Christendom

To understand the attitude of members of a congregation towards prayer and intercession it is important in the first place to understand the essence of Modernism, Postmodernism and post Christendom and the relationship between these meta-narratives.

3.5.1.1 The development from Modernism towards Postmodernism and post Christendom

The foundation of modernism can be described as trusting reason and scientific methods (Olivier 2006: 79). Together with this came the acknowledgement of presuppositions which are at work in all research and research results. From these two factors and others developed a tolerance towards pluralism. Through transport and media different worldviews, cultures and religions came into contact and challenged each other. "Humanity became part of a global village" (Olivier 2006:79; cf. Dut Toit, 2000:58). This led to a questioning of an ultimate truth and relativism and incredulity toward meta-narratives. "T(t)hus the idea of Christianity as a defining normative Truth would need to be rejected as well" (Griswold 2006:13).

Whitworth (2007) says:

Modernism came into the world at the same time as many of the mass media familiar to us today: the mass-market newspaper first arrived in Britain with The Daily Mail in 1896; the identity of the 'yellow press' in North America emerged at about the same time; wireless telegraphy was invented in the 1890s; in the USA, the Westinghouse radio station KDKA began broadcasting in Pittsburgh in 1920; (p.142).

Whitworth (2007:272) places the terminal date of modernism around 1945, but point out that there are different opinions about this (cf. Papazof 2013: 69). I agree that definite lines cannot be drawn. In some circles modernism still exists and even developed towards a "high modernism" or "late modernism" (Whitworth 2007:272), especially in some denominations (churches). "'Late modernism' has been used to denote both a transitional period between high modernism and postmodernism, and the continuation of a distinct modernist tradition alongside postmodernism" (Whitworth, 2007:276). I can agree with Crockett (2003: 512) in his following conviction: "...I am suggesting that the borders of the modern and the postmodern are also "too multiple, too polyvalent, too irreducible, too uncontainable to identify, define or determine," It is therefore important that when we discuss postmodernism and post-Christendom that we remember that societies and churches differ in the influence and processes they go through.

The literature on postmodernism and post-Christendom shows that these two trends go together. It would be impossible to determine which one of the two is the leading factor.

Because of different profound happenings in the world there is an idea that there is no overarching meta-narrative as a lens through which reality is interpreted (Lyotard, 1996:482). Grenz (1996:19) says about post-modernity that the postmodern ethos is centre-less “No clear shared focus unites the diverse and divergent elements of postmodern society into a single whole. There are no longer any common standards to which people can appeal in their efforts to measure, judge, or value.”

Rationalism as the philosophy of modernism was undermined by different traumatic events which in itself questioned the power of the human mind - events like the two world wars, nuclear weapons being used to destroy whole cities with dire long-term consequences, the nuclear disasters of Chernobyl and the 9/11 attack. In South Africa the unmasking of the apartheid philosophy and practice and the long-term influence of the border war on people (fathers), the change of regime and the corruptions that came with the Zuma era, also discredited the possibility of an overarching truth (Olivier 2006: 74). Through these events people were convinced that the logic of the human mind is not the only way of dealing with life, a distrust in the capacity of the human mind developed and it is sometimes seen as the very source of the problems we have to deal with (Du Toit 2000:51-52). “Where modernism thus trusted in reason and science to show the way to truth and fulfilment, postmodernism distrusts these rational fields” (Olivier 2006: 74).

The distrust in the human mind and one central meta-narrative also brought distrust in the Bible, the creeds and the church in general. A number of theologians are of the conviction that the Western world is moving from a Christendom towards a post-Christendom era. Some think the move was completed long ago (Nikolajsen 2012:366). The implications of this transition are that the church and the Bible gradually lost its influence and prominent position in society (Whitfield 2004:4). Nikolajsen (2012:364) says that a common thread through discussion on the history of the western church is that the history is divided into three eras: the pre-Christendom era, the Christendom era and the post-Christendom era. The era of Christendom began with the legalisation of Christianity in the Roman Empire in the fourth century. Previously, the Christian Church had been persecuted, but over time it obtained a powerful position in the Roman Empire (Nikolajsen 2014:162). The Christendom era lasted towards the 18th Century when the Enlightenment started. During the 20th century the transition towards post-Christendom started gradually (Papazov 2013:x, 4). This entails two major shifts, the first from being marginalized in the pre-Christendom era to the influential and expanding era of Christendom, the second from Christendom to post-Christendom where the church is becoming more and more marginalized and is shrinking (Nikolajsen 2014:162).

Griswold (2006:14) points out that the position of the church in today's culture is much the same as the culture in which Christianity emerged in the first three centuries –different religions competing with each other, a marginalized church and rampant pagan values (cf. Crockett 2003:500).

3.5.1.2 The meta-narrative of post-Christendom and post-modernism and prayer

Andrews (2003) describes the process of the shift towards post-Christendom and postmodernism as follows:

Along with the disintegration of the Christendom Paradigm comes the collapse of Modernity. The new world is not only post-Christian, but it is postmodern. The culture is pluralistic and embracing increasing diversity in thought, belief, value and practice. Truth is no longer absolute and generalized for all, but personal and subjective with the individual providing the guidelines for what qualifies it as truth. Since truth is subjective, then it must also be relative. The old world of logical determinism is gradually being replaced by a search not for truth but for authenticity, and where authenticity is present, post-moderns declare it to be truth (p. 37).

Papazof (2013:69)says that “People now accept religion in terms of its sociological and psychological significance, discounting any claims to divine revelation and absolute truth.” Hasheni (2017:37) points out the inversion that took place in the relationship between God and man – “i.e. man became the creator of God”.

When the above worldview is taken into account, the dilemma of ministry and prayer as part of ministry is brought to the fore when the essence of what prayer entails is considered. Moser (2008:18,32) says that the word, “God”, “signifies an authoritatively and morally perfect being who is inherently worthy of worship, that is worship as wholehearted adoration, love and trust”. In the same way it can be said that a being to whom your prayers are directed must be an omnipotent and omnipresent, personal being who can understand your feelings, desires and motivations. He must also be omniscient to know what will be the best for everyone, now and in the future.

To pray to God is to make a decision, a commitment to place your trust in this God as the only one who can help you. Especially when interceding for somebody or something that is out of the reach of your direct influence (cf. Moser 2008: 30,3). Moser (2008:101) speaks about “volitional, filial love of God as authoritative Lord over God's obedient children”. Out of trust flows love and that feeds certainty in faith. But on the other side, sometimes God is silent, not answering prayers. This silence, brings some people to doubt God's existence and to stop praying (cf. Korpel and de Moor, 2012:2-17; Chopra, 2014: 27-37).

When this seemingly irreconcilable contrast between the postmodern and post Christendom worldview is taken into consideration Andrews (2018) says the following:

I suggest there are three possibilities facing evangelicals in a post Christendom society. First is to retrench: to fight for the historic privileges of Christendom and a revival of scriptural values. This seems unlikely. Second is to retreat: to form Christian enclaves and leave the nation to its own devices. But this seems irresponsible. Third is to radicalize: to understand the "signs of the times," and pursue the life of radical discipleship in a culture of unbelief. This will require a commitment to the formation of radical Christian communities that are capable of making disciples who are willing to stake everything on the truth of the gospel and the kingdom of God (p.39).

The question how a congregation should be led towards an interceding congregation should be answered in the following chapters in the light of this suggestion of Andrews. The answer can maybe be found in the plea of Hashemi (2017) that reason and faith should not be separated from each other as it is sometimes done by "New Atheists" and also Biblical fundamentalists.

This will be further discussed in later chapters.

3.5.2 Narcissism and entitlement

3.5.2.1 Narcissism

The age we live in is frequently called the age of entitlement and narcissism (Charnes & Lithwick, 2018; Montanye, 2016:63; Zondag & Van Uden, 2011:20). The American Psychiatric Association (2013) says that a person with narcissistic tendencies has a strong focus on the self, a need of admiration, fantasies of omnipotence and grandeur, accompanied by a lack of empathy. Cashwell *et al.* (2010) connects narcissism with an "I'm enlightened and you're not" syndrome. This can also be combined with spiritual bypass which "essentially involves a disavowal of at least some aspects of 'what is'" (Cashwell *et al.*, 2010:164). Cooper, Pulling and Dickens give the following definition of narcissism: "Narcissism is 'an orientation toward seeking out self-enhancement experiences from the social environment to satiate need for admiration and recognition'" (Cooper, Pulling and Dickens, 2016:42). Frequently narcissistic persons will feel small and vulnerable in themselves and have a need of the confirmation of self-worth from other people.

It is important to integrate the balanced perspective of Zondag (2007:80):

I understand narcissism to be a strong, psychologically tinted interest in oneself. It can also be defined as "mental care for oneself." So defined, everyone is to some extent narcissistic. A certain degree of narcissism is necessary for a person to have a positive self-image, stability, and a perception of their person as a whole. It is only at the extreme end of the

narcissistic spectrum, for instance in cases where this trait is associated with antisocial behaviour, that it becomes meaningful to speak of dysfunctionality or pathology (p. 80).

Narcissistic people may try to force God to help them by means of prayer (Zondag & Van Uden, 2011:24).

3.5.2.2 Entitlement

Entitlement is closely related to narcissism (Breed, 2018:3). 'Entitlement, the state of mind that believes one deserves special treatment, is an important symptom of narcissism' (Twenge and Campbell, 2009:879). 'At the core of entitlement is the belief that one deserves or is entitled to more than other people' (Grubbs, Exline and Campbell 2013:193). 'Entitled persons do not only seek the satisfaction of a need but in their minds, they demand it. They are convinced that they have the right to expect their needs to be met, even at the cost of other people's well-being' (Breed 2018:4). Highly entitled people will frequently feel that they do not receive what they deserve, what should rightfully be theirs (Grubbs, Exline and Campbell, 2013:193). Anger towards God may be the result of these feelings because God is seen as the one who ultimately decides who gets what.

Chatrkul and Smithson (2016) challenges the assumption that the attitude of 'Millennial generation', also known as 'GenMe' is more entitled than previous generations and say that entitlement should not always be negative. From a Christian perspective on prayer we can agree with them that entitlement can be positive because the believer received the confidence to ask in prayer what we received because of the work of Christ:

Hebrews 10:19: Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, 20 by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.(ESV)

This is an entitlement that does not take something away from people and it is honouring the Father because we ask of Him what he already promised to us.

From the above discussion it becomes clear that narcissism and entitlement can contribute towards prayerlessness in a congregation. The narcissistic entitled person can have anger towards God because he does not receive the things he thinks he deserves, and therefore stops praying. The focus of the narcissistic entitled person maybe so fully on himself that there is no place for intercession for other people. This then is one of the possible answers to the question, why the situation is like it is in the All Saints United Church Somerset East.

3.5.3 Internet

The internet has a huge influence on people's lives. A lot of time is spent on the internet by a lot of people even towards the point of addiction. Only two phenomena that can have an influence on people's prayer lives will now be discussed.

3.5.3.1 Pornography addiction

The following definition of pornography addiction can be given:

Pornography addiction can be described as the compulsive and escalating use and production of explicit sexual material, which includes images and actions, for purposes of the viewer's sexual arousal and frequent climaxing in orgasm (Breed, 2017:2; cf. also Karaga et al., 2016; Ford, Durtschi, and Franklin, 2012:338).

The increasing problem of pornography and cybersex addiction are being recognized in different studies as well as its harmful effect on the addicted persons and the people close to them (Carnes, 2013:15–9; Morgan, 2008: 7; Schneider, 2003; Struthers, 2010: iii; Toronto, 2009:120).

The Christian addict can experience high levels of guilt and shame. "This can lead to focussing on the self, reacting to the self and punishing the self by physically hurting and/or rejecting the self as unworthy of God's love or other people's acceptance" (Breed 2017; cf. Howard 2007, 88).

From the literature it is clear that a large part of the population – also members of churches and even ministers (Carnes, 2013:15–19) – are addicted to pornography. When the results of the empirical study are interpreted this cause of prayerlessness should be taken into account.

3.5.4 Social Media

People interact daily with one another online on Social media, of which Facebook is a part. It has become a fundamental means of communication (Doorley & Garcia, 2011: 114). Kandroudi and Bratitsis (2014: 63) believe that Facebook, with its millions of active users and ever-growing numbers, is one of the most popular social networking services at this time. Grudin (2014: 45: 17) says Facebook's popularity is reflected in the more than 80% of all age groups who had a Facebook profile by the end of 2012. Rainer and Rainer (2011: 202) describe social media as the most powerful form of media and Zhang et al. (2010: 218) believe that this has in all likelihood permanently changed the way individuals communicate with each other. Drago (2015:

13-15) emphasizes that social media changed the way of communication to such an extent that in many cases there is a large decrease in face-to-face communication.

Christians who spend too much time on social media can isolate themselves in the process from the Lord, which can lead to prayerlessness (cf. Morse, 2013: 59-60). The use of Facebook can encourage its users to talk more about themselves and think less about others, or go into competition with others for popularity (Tennant 2012: 67-69). The worldly values that are rampant on social media do not further a close relationship with God and frequently question biblical values (McMurtry, 2012: 87-90).

From the short discussion above it is clear that the need to talk to God and talk to God about other people, doing intercession for them can be dulled by the use of social media. In the pastoral care to people in the congregation the influence of social media should be taken into account. People should be equipped to come into the presence of God and speak to him openly about their and other people's needs and joys.

3.5.5 Persistent shame

To experience shame is now and then part of everybody's life. It is normal to experience shame for a moment or short time because of a blunder or a deliberate wrong you did to somebody. But when shame becomes part of your identity, a dominant characteristic of how you view yourself it will influence all your relationships, including your relationship with God (cf. Pattison, 2000:93). It then can be described as shame-bound, shame-ridden, shame-prone, or toxically or chronically shamed.

Shame is studied from various perspectives, such as the development of identity (Elmore, Oyserman, & Smith, 2012:69), how thoughts influence feelings (McKay, Fanning & Davis, 1997:17) and how convictions are formed (Silver & Updegraff, 2013:237).

Persistent or chronic shame can develop because of various factors in the life of a child.

A family where there is no affirmation for the child of his/her identity can bring shame to a child. For a family to bond requires spending time together, sharing feelings, warmth and touch and in this way affirm to the child the desire to be with him or her. If that is absent children can come to the conclusion that they are not worthwhile and shame can grow in their minds (Bradshaw, 2005:66). Parents can also actively shame a child because they were shamed somewhere (Wilson, 2002:38).

By not accepting the child, parents can convince the child that he or she will never meet the approval of other people and that can bring crippling shame to the child (Yancey, 2008:320).

Any type of abuse can have the same effect on children. When shame becomes a part of your self-identity you are not only ashamed about things you did or that was done to you, but you yourself is a shame and that shame influences every part of your life (cf. Howe, 2005:84).

Children who are not reassured or actively shamed learn to repress emotions because it is too painful for the child to stay in touch with his or her emotions. They view their feelings as irrelevant and unimportant (Boulle, 2010:6). When the need of the child to be loved, motivated, cared for and inspired is not met, it can lead the child to go inward with their anxiety and hurt. Howe (2005:113) says “the link between different types of neglect is chronic parental failure to meet some developmental need, either physical or psychological.” The neglected or abused child can grow up to become an adult with persistent shame.

In the current society there are a lot of dysfunctional families with broken, abusive or absent parents (cf. Bradshaw, 2005:62; Evans & Keenan, 2010:241) and therefore a lot of people with persistent shame.

For a person with persistent shame, it is difficult to perceive of a loving attentive Father who cares even about the minor details of your feelings and hurt. The conviction in the heart of persons for whom shame is part of their identity is that God is absent, non-caring, cruel and impotent, He does not keep his word, does not hear or answer, and people are expendable to him (Langberg, 2005:418).

When we ask why people does not pray or intercede, the answer is not quite simple, the answer to each person’s neglect of prayer or interceding can be unique and can only be found through thorough pastoral conversation, becoming part of a person’s narrative.

3.5.6 Conclusion

The above-mentioned possible contributors to the state of the commitment or non-commitment to intercessory prayer in the congregation can be seen as exemplary factors. There can be many more, but these examples are enough to indicate that there can be no quick decisions on what causes apathy towards prayer in the individual. With pastoral care each individual’s narrative of life should be investigated to understand what lies beneath his/her attitude towards intercessory prayer. When a congregation wants to move towards change the current worldview will have to be taken into account and be accommodated while building on the principles from Scripture.

3.6 Conclusions from Chapter 3

Chapter 3 determined the present status of the All Saints United Somerset East congregation in terms of intercessory prayer by means of Osmer's research method. The first descriptive stage asked the question: 'What is going on?' This qualitative approach identified the tendencies of both prudence and ignorance with regards to prayer, and intercessory prayer in particular. A third of the study group (33%) personally knew about and was prudently participating in intercessory prayer (Green light/ Hot Category – know and practice prayer/ intercession regularly). While conversely, the remaining two thirds of the study group (66%) lacked the essential knowledge in terms of intercessory prayer and were subsequently ignorant with regard to it (Yellow light\ Lukewarm Category – knowledge of but no practice of prayer). It also includes those who were in every respect indifferent with regard to prayer (Red\ Cold Category – do not know/ care about or practice prayer at all).

The second interpretive stage asked the question: 'Why is it going on?' This quantitative approach explained the established lack of knowledge with regard to intercessory prayer. The church and home were identified as the primary source of education and information relating to prayer, and where this calling is neglected, the resulted lack of interest in and involvement in intercessory prayer is the unwanted consequence. Parents and guardians are to be trained and equipped by the church in order to assist the church to train and equip the children.

With the status of the All Saints United Church Somerset East determined, the vision to lead the congregation towards being an intercessory congregation can be addressed. The proposed intercessory model will be the means by which members will be educated, enabled and guided to become personally involved in the ministry of intercession. Consequently, the congregation will be obediently fulfilling its mission, its calling of participating in the triangular intercessory prayer relationship with God the Father and the world.

CHAPTER 4 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERCESSORY PRAYER ACCORDING TO ANDREW MURRAY

4.1 Introduction.

Chapter 4 is about the works of Andrew Murray and sets out to answer the question: What ought to be going on in connection with intercessory prayer? The normative task will be answered by both the literature study on Andrew Murray in terms of intercessory prayer (Chapter 4 of this research) and an exegetical study on the book of Ephesians (Chapter 5 of this research) to determine what is expected from the Christian believer and the Christian congregation in terms of intercession according to the Bible.

4.2 Andrew Murray in his time and today

In order to gain a perspective on Murray's teaching on intercession, it is first necessary to take a closer look at the different streams of thought in which he was involved.

Andrew Murray was born in 1828 and died in 1917. This time is characterized by different streams of thought coming together. In response to the Reformation and moving away from the monistic way of life of the monasteries, mysticism had gained growing ground in Europe and the Netherlands. Brümmer (2013: 21) shows that mystical spirituality was a reaction to theological intellectualization and rationalism under the influence of enlightenment. De Villiers (2015: 643) states that mysticism was not a temporary or sudden event, but that it was part of a movement that "via Orthodox Reformed Scotland also goes back to long-established non-Reformed traditions."

Andrew Murray is the son of a Scottish minister (Andrew Murray Sr.) from the Scottish church called "Old Light Presbyterians" whose Calvinism is described as "broad Catholic liberal" by Coetzee (1986: 12,13). Andrew Murray Sr. was one of the Scottish ministers who came to South Africa. The young Andrew Murray was sent to Scotland for his studies as a minister.

Scottish ministers emphasized meeting God, inspirational worship services and preaching, music and singing. Their services were characterized by a revivalist (opwekkings) atmosphere with an emphasis on living the faith in disciplined prayer life and also mission work (Bradley, 2005: 567). Murray's involvement in this movement is illustrated by the revival that took place in his congregation in 1860 (De Villiers, 2015: 645). During Andrew Murray's study in the Netherlands, there were several people (including William C. Burns) and movements that influenced Andrew. When he studied further in the Netherlands he became involved with the

Réveil (Brümmer 2018: 217) and joined the society known as Sechor Dabar. The influence of these streams of thought is evident from Murray's emphasis in his ministry. Murray's personal library shows that he has thoroughly studied the works of famous mystics, even authors such as Eckhart, Tauler and Süss whom Brümmer (2013) describes as representatives of a type of unitary mysticism that should be unacceptable in Reformed circles (cf. Du Plessis, 1919: 453). The fact that Murray translates several books of the controversial figure William Law as well as his appreciation for the equally controversial Jacob Böhme, shows how strongly he was also influenced by mystical thinking (cf. McGinn 1992, 2008 and Waaijman, 2002 for describing the features of the mystical approach).

In Cape Town, Murray was dealing with liberal theologians or modernists as Brümmer (2018) calls them:

The modernists defended a worldview that today is known as pan-entheism, which sees the world as part of the Divine. According to the modernists this entailed that the natural order is immutably fixed, because God is immutable. This determinism excludes the possibility of miracles because this would violate the immutable natural order (p. 202).

In his debate with the modernists Andrew Murray first of all wanted to argue for the possibility of miracles. But after that he also wanted to show that they really happened. To this end, he wanted to show that Jesus really rose from the dead (p. 204).

However, the most important characteristic of Murray's theology, life and ministry is mysticism (De Villiers 2015: 639).

Another trend that Murray was involved with is Methodism. He states that he learned much from one of the fathers of Methodism, John Westley (Coetzee, 1986: 24) where strong emphasis was placed on feeling in the religion. The Methodism of John Westley and George Whitefield was a reaction to the rationalism and deism of the eighteenth century. Murray refers to Methodism as an example of a revival in holiness needed in the church (Coetzee, 1986: 24). Murray also echoes fundamentalist Keswick theology in America (Ostrand, 1996: 42). Van de Vyver (2009: 310, 317) discusses the Pentecostal influence on Murray regarding miracle healing as part of the Keswick movement's view. Murray viewed illness as punishment for sin or negligence in religion (Van de Vyver, 2009: 315,316).

When comparing the current different world views with that of Murray's time, great similarities can be noted. On the one hand, there are also theologians today who deny the truth of the Bible, question miracles, and reject the resurrection from the dead. On the other hand, postmodernism and post Christianity, in response to modernism, do not accept that reality can be encompassed and explained by the intellect, there is no longer an ultimate truth and each

individual can create his own truth from his own experience. In response to and in conjunction with the relativism of postmodernism, a “great variety of mystical and semi-mystical spiritualities is very popular today” (Van der Walt, 2015b: 1). Several authors investigate the phenomenon of mysticism (cf. McColman 2010; James 2010; Van der Walt 2015a, c; 2016).

Waaïjman, as a recognized and authoritative researcher in the field of mysticism, says that spirituality has evolved into an independent theological discipline (Waaïjman, 2010). Van der Walt (2015b: 2) shows that there is an unending stream of publications on mysticism at present. Works on alternative spiritualities appear frequently (cf. Forster & Beebe; Nicol, 1989, 2002; Oosthuizen, 2005; Rohr, 2011; Cox, 2010).

If this perspective on the comparison between the times of Andrew Murray and today is accepted, it can be concluded that the study of Murray’s reaction to the need of his time can possibly give valuable guidelines for the church in its ministry today.

The study does not want to evaluate the theological thinking of Murray and also does not want to look at every aspect addressed in his writings, but will focus on his teaching about intercessory prayer as way to growth in faith.¹

4.3 The Practical Approach of Murray.

Andrew Murray addressed the lack of prayer in general and intercessory prayer specifically in his time with two prominent books that he wrote: *With Christ in the School of Prayer* (2007) and *The Ministry of Intercession* (1982). His primary objective was to provide applicable information on prayer for the church to be taught to its members. Murray’s practical approach with his focus on action and experience as the only way to learn to pray is evident from the prayer methods he provides and the Christian believers he refers to as prayer models or examples, in order to put teaching on prayer into practice. This theory and practical guidance provided in the church was to be the primary source of knowledge and involvement with regard to prayer for members in order to practice and lay the foundation of prayer individually and at home:

It is under a deep impression that the place and power of prayer in the Christian life is too little understood that this book has been written. I feel that as long as we look on prayer chiefly as the means of maintaining our own Christian life, we shall not know fully what it is meant to be. But when we learn to regard it as the highest part of the work entrusted to us, the root and strength of all other work, we shall see that there is nothing that we need to study and practise as the art of praying aright” (Murray, 2007:vi).

¹For a critical discussion of Murray’s theology see Coetzee (1986)

Murray is outstanding in this practical approach. In the first place he sets out to provide theoretical information on the character and practice of intercessory prayer with these two prominent books on prayer. In the second place, he also provides practical methods and models of prayer as guidelines by which to be guided to learn to pray. The methods are day by day guides as a help to learn to pray systematically. As models Murray refers to the narratives of Christian believers in history as examples for whom prayer was central to their lives and ministries. Murray's intention by means of the prayer methods and human models as examples, is to encourage and assist Christian seekers to get involved in a life of committed, faithful prayer. Ordinary Christian believers are enabled to put it into practice by applying what they were taught and believed. Chapter 4 of this research, being defined by the domain of practical theology, is an overview of Murray's practical approach of prayer methods and human prayer models on teaching to pray.

In *Helps to Intercession: Pray without ceasing*, Murray (1982:155-157) asks the question: 'How can I learn it?' and subsequently answers: 'The best way to learn how to do a thing - in fact the only way - is to do it...be assured that if you begin, God will help you. God cannot help you unless you begin and keep on.' Murray (1982:180) again stresses the importance of practical involvement in prayer as the best way to learn to intercede: 'As we pray, we learn to pray, to believe, and to expect with increasing boldness.' Theory on prayer that has been learned is put into practice and effective prayer is the result. His first introductory book on prayer, *With Christ in the school of prayer*, Murray (2007) structured in a way that introduces to, and leads the reader with his 'As we pray, we learn to pray' approach. Every chapter is ended with the call: 'Lord, teach us to pray,' and a prayer, approaching God actively with the lesson learned. The book itself concludes with notes on the prayer life of George Muller and the secret of his power in prayer as a prayer model; prayer methods and prayer models characteristic of Murray's practical approach of teaching.

With Chapter 3, *Pray to thy Father, which is in secret: Alone with God*, the importance of the act of praying as the means of learning to pray, is explained:

And so we are taught at the very outset of our search after the secret of effectual prayer, to remember that it is in the inner chamber, where we are alone with the Father, that we learn to pray aright...just shut the door and pray to thy Father which is in secret (Murray, 2007: 18-19).

This urgency of actually praying is expressed with the term 'in the inner chamber.' Murray used several descriptive words to explain further this 'in the inner chamber': 'some solitary spot,' 'the fixed spot,' 'that solitary place,' 'that secret place,' and 'closet-prayer' (Murray 2007: 17-18). According to Murray (2007:17), God wants each one of us to choose for himself the fixed spot

where He can meet him daily. That inner chamber, that solitary place, is Jesus' schoolroom. That spot may be anywhere; that spot may change from day to day if we have to change our residence; but that secret place there must be, with the quiet time in which the pupil places himself in the Master's presence, to be prepared by Him to worship the Father. There alone, but there most surely, Jesus comes to us to teach us to pray. 'Dwell much in the inner chamber, with the door shut – shut in from men, shut up with God; it is there the Father awaits you, it is there Jesus will teach you to pray' (Murray 2007:21).

Murray is outstanding in emphasising the act of praying as the means of increased prayer involvement, by means of his practical approach of providing several prayer methods or exercises and referring to praying Christian believers as prayer models, in order to assist and to direct the believer to get more practically involved in intercessory prayer. Murray's emphasis on the importance of a regular, disciplined prayer habit, is characteristic of his 'as we pray, we learn to pray,' teaching.

4.4 Prayer Methods:

4.4.1 A 31 Day School of Intercession

Murray applauds the numerous systematic Bible study classes, but suggests: 'Let all the leaders of such classes try to start prayer classes - helping their students to pray in secret, and training them to be, above all, men of prayer' (Murray 1982:10).

...what could be done to rouse believers to a sense of their high calling in this (intercessory prayer), and to help and train them to take part in it? And so this book (The Ministry of intercession) differs from the former one in the attempt to open a practising school and to invite all who have never taken systematic part in the great work of intercession to begin and give themselves to it. There are tens of thousands of workers who have known and are proving wonderfully what prayer can do. But there are tens of thousands who work with little prayer. There are many more who do not work at all because they do not know how or where they might all be added to the host of intercessors who are to bring down the blessings of heaven to earth. For their sakes and for the sake of all who feel the need of help, I have prepared helps and hints for a school of intercession for a month at the end of this book (Murray, 1982:9).

True to his practical orientation and approach, Murray (1982:157-200) structured each day with two objectives: What to pray for? and How to pray, to help the one praying.

What to pray for? helps the intercessor to know how to follow the Spirit's guidance. Not only does Scripture call believers to pray for many things, but the church is also much larger than in New Testament times. The greater variety of types of workers and kinds of church work to be done may cause confusion and necessitates the intercessor to discern what to pray for.

Consequently, *What to pray for?* is a guideline to follow until the intercessor is able to make, within this potentially overwhelming need for prayer, his/her own list of prayer items according to his/her own field of interest (Murray, 1982:157-158).

In terms of the importance of the practical guideline of *How to pray*, Murray (1982:157) explains: 'If the subjects were only given, one might fall into the routine of mentioning names and things before God, and the work would become a burden.' This practice of *How to pray?* focuses on the spiritual nature of prayer; depending on God's help to pray according to his will and his promise to answer prayer. In time boldness in approaching God results and the intercessor pursues the conduct of letting 'these words about how to pray enter your heart and occupy your thoughts at other times too,' (Murray 1943:158). Therefore, the objective of intercessory prayer, to pray without ceasing, is accomplished; following the Holy Spirit's guidance. Both the life of spontaneous and continual acts of prayer and the spirit of prayerfulness find expression in prayers for one self and for others.

4.4.2 Lord, Teach Us to Pray

Murray made available to the believers and church of his era and beyond another practical 31 day exercise to prayer, *Here, leer ons bid, (Lord, teach us to pray)*. Appropriately, as with the school of intercession for a month, with this practical approach to learn to pray, each day involves a theme, a biblical text, a short exegesis and a prayer, (Murray, 1943:179-219). On the third day, *Die Binnekamer, (The Inner Chamber)* Murray's principle of 'as we pray, we will learn to pray,' is explained:

He who wants to learn something from his teacher, has to attend his school and use his books. Where does the Lord Jesus conduct his school? In the inner chamber. The child who does not attend the school, cannot be taught. The Christian who does not enter his inner chamber, can never be taught to pray by the Lord. (Murray, 1943:181-182) (Translated from the Afrikaans).

'The inner chamber' is the term used by Murray to explain the undertaking to pray, as well as acquiring complete skill in praying. Murray (1943:31) emphasises the important physical and spiritual milieu in preparation for the act of praying. He retains perspective in stressing the fact that Bible reading and prayer are a means to having fellowship with God.

Christian, there is a terrible danger to which you are exposed in the inner chamber. You are in danger to substitute a living fellowship with God with prayer and Bible study (Murray, 1943:25) (Translated from the Afrikaans).

Murray (1943:31-33) then suggested preparation for prayer, with the purpose of having fellowship with God:

First go to the right place. Enter your inner chamber, lock the door and pray to your Father who sees the unseen. Solitude and privacy, in expectation to meet God personally, is required. Secondly, take the right position. Be humble as one forgiven, acknowledging your unworthiness as a stepping stone to trust God and being assured that the forgiving God will see and hear you. Thirdly, come into the right disposition, the attitude to listen.(Translated from the Afrikaans).

Murray (1943:31) explains:

Let us enter the inner chamber and commit ourselves to prayer, with a heart that humbly waits upon God to speak; we read the word; we shall for sure hear the voice of the one who speaks to us(Translated from the Afrikaans).

In the subsequently correct ambience and attitude for prayer, the Bible is read in expectation, patiently contemplating what God is saying. The sought after living fellowship with God finds expression in a continuous, living interaction of listening and speaking, between God and the one praying.

Murray (1943:33) explains:

Prayer and the Word are inseparably bound to each other: power in the use of one depends on the presence of the other. The Word gives me prayer fuel and informs me what God will do for me. It indicates to me the way of prayer and teaches me how God wants me to do it. It gives me the power for prayer, the courage of the assurance that I will be heard. And it brings me the answer to prayer through teaching me what God will do for me. And then on the other hand prayer prepares the heart for the reception of the Word from God himself, for the education of the Spirit to give it spiritual insight, for the faith through which we participate in his mighty action.

The inner chamber, Murray's term for solitude, for choosing to set time apart, is a place and disposition of interaction. God is the primary objective of both prayer and the Bible, His Word. Where prayer seeks after God, the Word reveals God. In prayer people seek after God and in the Word God answers people. Prayer on its part raises people to heaven to live with God and in the Word God comes to live with people. The sought after fellowship in the inner chamber finds fulfilment with people in prayer giving themselves to God and God on His part reciprocally in the Word giving himself to people.

It is a summary of Murray's approach to learn to pray: 'As we pray, we learn to pray'; the required inner chamber as a solitary place for prayer, the Bible as the textbook for prayer and Jesus as teacher for prayer. During this time of devotion in solitude, a piece of Scripture is read, meditated upon and used by Jesus as prayer fuel in His lesson of prayer.

4.4.3 The Week of Prayer

The third method of prayer encountered in the literature of Andrew Murray, is a proposal for a week of prayer for foreign mission. The question and challenge experienced after a certain mission conference, was how to get all the churches involved in establishing the kingdom of God on earth through missionary work. Murray was aware of the magnitude of the challenge in terms of logistics and time, when he remembered the following:

At that moment I was reminded about an international organization being ready with all its machinery. There is the Evangelical Alliance, and the "Week of Prayer" during a whole week in January. Would it not be something wonderful and blessed if the whole church during a whole week could gather at the feet of Jesus and commit itself to this one matter – the expansion of the kingdom by means of mission? ... It is not to be doubted that it would create the opportunity to emphasise Christ's last command and provoke the children of God to prayer and commitment, which would have been difficult to achieve otherwise (Murray, 1943:190). (Translated from the Afrikaans).

Murray consequently approached the Evangelical Alliance with this request to pray for foreign mission on a daily basis. He was informed that notwithstanding being unable to change the contents of the Week of Prayer, they were willing to add to each day the appeal: 'Ons bid elke dag van die week ook in besonder vir die buitelandse sending,' (Every day of the week we also pray for foreign mission in particular.) (Murray, 1943: 200). Murray adopted and adapted the method of structured prayer practised by the evangelical Alliance during their week of prayer; structured in the sense of a specific time set apart for prayer and with a defined focus identified. In addition, prayer information provided further advance the specific centre of attention of prayer, which is characteristic of intercessory prayer. Murray's teaching and method of informed, focused, practical, persevering and systematic prayer on a daily basis resembles much of the format of that of the Evangelical Alliance's week of prayer.

The three prayer methods of Murray are all of the same framework: inner chamber, Scripture, explanation/ contemplation and applicable prayer. The goal and result, when they are adhered to, is the desired systematic, progressive, persevering and informed prayer as an expression of an intimate and perpetual fellowship with God.

4.5 Prayer models

As prayer models, to be imitated as a pattern of prayer, Murray refers to the narratives of Christian believers in history as examples for whom prayer was central to their lives and ministries.

4.5.1 Biblical Models

Die Binnekamer, (The Inner Chamber) is also the title of one of Murray's books on prayer: *Die binnekamer en die innerlike lewe*, (*The inner chamber and the inner life*) to which this 31day prayer method and exercise is an attachment (Murray, 1943). Murray's approach of models and methods of prayer to learn to pray confirms his principle of 'as we pray, we learn to pray.' He refers to the life and example of the prophet Elijah, as a prayer model, with the last chapter: *Die Voorbidder* (*The Intercessor*). In the Bible God gives the example of saints (skrifheiliges) for our education and encouragement to model a life of powerful prayer for us. The wrong perception that what is seen in them as an example or model could not be expected from every one, nullifies God's purpose (Murray, 1943:171).

'The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. Elijah was a human being, even as we are'(James 5:16-17). Murray explains that the man Elijah is distinguished as a man who prayed with power, because he gave himself to God and lived in communion with Him. *Om goed te bid moet ek goed lewe*, (To pray effectively I need to live a good life) (Murray, 1943:172). A good life means a life of total surrender to God with one's prayers all in relation to one's work for God and of trusting in God to answer one's prayers. Murray (1943:174) teaches that all those who desire to pray likewise with power, need this disposition of Elijah, a personal interactive relationship with God which is acquired in the inner chamber, alone with God.

Abraham, Moses and Elisha are models of prayer used in addition by Murray to bring home the importance of the lesson also embodied by Elijah: '*Soos 'n mens lewe, so bid hy*.' (As a person lives, in like manner he prays) (Murray,1943:172). The image of the vine and the branches was used by Murray to refer to a life devoted to God. Abraham, Moses and Elisha in obedience not only left everyone and everything close to them, but they also left their own wisdom, competence and ability to find their lives in God alone. Then, in dependence on Him, they were able to pray with power and bear fruit (Murray, 1943:276-279).

On yet another occasion, Murray's approach of using biblical human models as an example and an encouragement, is evident. The aspect of perseverance in prayer is dealt with by referring to Luke 18:1-7: 'Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.' Abraham's example of relentlessly interceding for the cities of Sodom and Gomorra is referred to; Jacob's wrestling with the angel the night before meeting with his brother Esau and refusing to let go before receiving a blessing; Moses' persistent intercession for Israel on several occasions after they had disobeyed God and Elijah's perseverance in praying for rain seven times before God answered. Murray introduced each model with the words: 'Dink maar aan die heerlike voorbeelde wat ons by die ou heiliges aantref...' (Think of

the wonderful examples we encounter in the lives of the old saints) and Elijah as the last model: Nog een voorbeeld. Dink aan Elia en sy gebed... (One more example. Think of Elijah and his prayer) (Murray, 1943: 263-271).

Murray appropriately started with Biblical models of intercessors. The importance of this strategic step is apparent. Prayer is communion with God and this fellowship constituted an intimate and personal relationship with God, which is the accomplishment of God's graceful salvation in Jesus Christ. The Bible is a record of historical Christianity and what Murray intended to accomplish – teaching and guiding believers to intercede with an intimate relationship with God as foundation – is an extension, a continuation of the Biblical narrative. With the biblical foundation of prayer models laid, Murray continues by referring to more modern day prayer models. Present day intercessors who through their lives of intercessory prayer are a continuation of the Biblical record of intercessors.

4.5.2 George Muller

Part of Murray's practical approach to get Christian believers involved in prayer, and intercessory prayer specifically, is referring to prayer models. The final chapter of Murray's first book on prayer, *With Christ in the school of prayer*, is about such a model, George Muller (Murray, 2007:255-274).

*When God wishes anew to teach His Church a truth that is not being understood or practised, **He mostly does so by raising some man to be in word and deed a living witness to its blessedness.** [present writer's emphasis] And so God has raised up in this nineteenth century, among others, George Muller to be His witness that He is indeed the Hearer of prayer. I know of no way in which the principal truths of God's word in regard to prayer can be more effectually illustrated and established than a short review of his life and of what he tells of his prayer-experiences (Murray, 2007:255).*

George Muller was an ordinary pastor, with an extraordinary faith. In the cause of his ministry, George Muller experienced frustration with the lack of proof to believers that the God of today is the same faithful and living God to all who have faith in Him as He has been in the past. Murray (1982:270) quotes George Muller:

The first object of the (Orphan) work was, and is still: that God might be magnified by the fact that the orphans under my care are provided with all they need, only by prayer and faith, without any one being asked; thereby it may be seen that God is faithful still, and hears prayer still.

George Muller consequently recorded all prayers and answers to prayers relating to his ministry and left behind a legacy of more than 50 000 answered prayers. He explains that the assurance

of prayers to be answered is the result of prayers being according to the will of God; and that implies 'definite petitions made known to us by the Spirit through the word' (Murray, 2007: 260).

It is evident why Murray refers to the disciplined and faithful prayer life of George Muller in emphasising the importance of prayer. George Muller explains that with the will of God thus confirmed, the one praying 'ought to continue in believing, expecting, persevering prayer until the blessing is granted' (Murray, 2007:272).

And these things have happened for an example to us. God calls us to be followers of George Muller, even as he is of Christ. His God is our God; the same promises are for us; the same service of love and faith in which he laboured is calling for us on every side. Let us in connection with our lessons in the school of prayer study the way in which God gave George Muller such power as a man of prayer: We shall find in it the most remarkable illustration of some of the lessons which we have been studying with the blessed Master in the word. We shall specially have impressed upon us his first great lesson, that if we will come to Him in the way He has pointed out, with definite petitions, made known to us by the Spirit through the word as being according to the will of God, we may most confidently believe that whatsoever we ask it shall be done (Murray, 2007:260).

George Muller, referred to as a prayer model by Murray, is renowned as a man of prayer, who set apart specific times for continual prayer and his life was consequently characterised by the spirit of prayerfulness. Frequent, prudent and faithful prayer, bearing testimony to an intimate and personal relationship with God.

4.5.3 Hudson Taylor

Murray (1944a:100-122) makes use of Hudson Taylor as yet another prayer model in his practical-oriented effort to teach the church to pray.

Murray (1944:121-122) says:

We endeavoured to learn from them whom God used and blessed in an extraordinary way what the secret of their power was. God presented Hudson Taylor as an example of what He can do for a young man who gives himself completely to live through faith in God, while he endeavours to do the work of God...It is convenient to say it is due to conquering prayer in faith. But how could each believer be trained for this? The lesson is evident. We follow the way he discovered: powerful and faithful prayer. He committed himself wholeheartedly to the work of God; it gave him the assurance that God would provide for him and all his work...a strong desire, personal interest and effort, faith in the power of God to act in answer to our prayer – these are the conditions for conquering prayer of which every believer could be part. (Translated from the Afrikaans).

At a mission conference Hudson Taylor shared the success of waiting upon the Lord during 8 days of prayer and fasting; prayer that God answered with more than was asked for. Taylor

explained God himself being the source of power, mentioning the initial standard of prayer conduct with the disciples waiting for 10 days upon the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit during Pentecost. This power of God, the Holy Spirit, is today as available and actively present as He was during Pentecost. Murray (1944a:103) then asks:

Where and how is the secret of such prayer learned? Was it a gift granted to an elected few through Divine favour – a gift others could not expect to receive – or was it the result of training and practice, the reward for faithfulness in small things, to teach us that we also can walk in this way? (Translated from the Afrikaans).

Murray(1944a:103) then, with reference to Hudson Taylor, confirms prayer as a gift which develops and becomes strong through a dedicated life of trials and afflictions. With Murray's practical orientation in the effort to learn to pray, his words 'the result of training and practice,' are prominent and distinguish Murrays' approach. Hudson Taylor's dedicated and surrendered life, his faith tested and developed and his total dependence on God in everything is an example and encouragement that effective prayer is possible for everyone. And the school of effective prayer is the required disciplined and personal inner chamber where 'as we pray we learn to pray.' The resulting powerful and effective prayer apparent in public, as with Hudson Taylor's life of prayer for example, bears witness to the required private and disciplined training in the school of the inner chamber. Hudson Taylor's life of committed prayer was the fruit of disciplined time alone with God and proved the priority of prayer in God's relationship with him.

4.5.4 New York Revival

Thirdly, Murray (1944b: 1-51, 145-165), in his teaching on prayer and practical guidance to assist Christians and churches to start to pray, mentions yet another prayer pioneer as a model who was influential in the New York revival of 1857 that commenced in the Gereformeerde Hollandse Noorderkerk. Instrumental in the start of this revival was their praying missionary Jeremiah Calvin Lanphier.

Murray (1944b:149) quotes one of the ministers of this church:

We are now experiencing the fourth large revival since the coming of Christ on Earth. The first started on Pentecost and lasted hundreds of years. The second started in the time of Luther, and still exists in the Church today. The third was in the days of Whitfield in England and Edwards in America. The one that is now going through our country is the fourth and it is also starting to spread to other parts of the world. Each of these four great revivals had to witness to a particular truth that the Lord wanted to reveal to his congregation with power (Translated from the Afrikaans).

Murray (1944b:149-152) consequently gives an account of this minister's explanation of his statement:

The lesson of the first revival was the divinity and kingly glory of Jesus which the Holy Spirit confirmed with Pentecost; the fundamental truth of the hope of the church and the world.

Justification by faith in Jesus Christ alone was the lesson of the second revival during the reformation in answer to the Roman Catholic error of merit to earn salvation.

The third revival during the time of Whitfield and Edwards taught the Christian principle of repentance by the sinner and being born again through the Holy Spirit.

Unity in the church notwithstanding the apparent division of different denominations is God's message to the church with this 4th revival beginning in New York. Filled with the Holy Spirit all Christians rejoiced with the awareness of their unity with one another in Christ Jesus.

Murray (1944b:150-151) then puts the New York revival in perspective:

In this regard the last revival was completely different from all the other preceding ones. The united prayer meeting that started in the United Dutch Northern Church, was a prediction of the main characteristics of the whole revival, and it now became an established attitude across the whole of America... The unity of the congregation is also proved in other ways. It was not only the work of ministers; but the laity also equally took part in the labour. Indeed, the work initiated with them. (Translated from the Afrikaans).

Christians from across the whole denominational spectrum came together, unified by the awareness of their unity in Christ, to pray in power to God, and this unity found expression in prayer and purpose. 'Alle Christene het die reg gehad om te bid, was geroepe om te bid. Waarom sou hulle dan nie?' ('All Christians had the right to pray, were called to pray. Why should they not?') Murray (1944b:29).

With emphasis on this New York prayer revival and the move to the prayer involvement and responsibility of laymen, further account is given of strangers from elsewhere who visited New York to attend the prayer meetings. These practical prayer experiences were shared with each and everyone on their return and in this manner the prayer revival spread throughout the country, reflecting Murray's principle of 'As we pray, we learn to pray.'

Christians in the countryside heard about this, and they also prayed with commitment for these prayer meetings. They visited the city, and the prayer meetings were the first they visited. On their return they brought together their friends to pray. In this manner the work was continued and the Spirit of the Lord progressively descended from heaven with power and spread across the whole country the work that was started in New York. A love for prayer and a unity in prayer received from God through personal effort and commitment characterised the New York prayer revival. Believers learned to pray as they went out, attended prayer meetings and prayed. It was

at the prayer meetings that their faith in God, who answers prayer, found expression and was rewarded by God adding each day to the prayer meetings more people to pray.

4.6 A summary of Murray's viewpoints:

- **Life and prayer**

The spiritual state of the one praying is of fundamental importance, with reference to the prayer models that Murray uses as illustrations for a life of prayer. Murray (1943:6) in different ways stresses this important truth: '*Om goed te bid moet ek goed lewe,*' (To pray effectively I need to live a good life), and '*Soos 'n mens lewe, so bid hy.*' (As a person lives, in like manner he prays.) Murray (1982:6) referring to John 15:5: 'If you abide in Me,' explains the condition:

The power to pray the effectual prayer of faith depends upon the quality of the believer's life: 'A life completely devoted to, and dependent on God, living in and for God as the branch in the vine and for the vine.' 'Abide in Me,' as the union of the branch with the vine is one of growth, never-ceasing growth and increase, so our abiding in Christ is a life process in which the Divine life takes ever fuller and more complete possession of us. The abiding of the branch in the Vine is a life of never-ceasing growth. (Murray, 2007:162, 165).

Murray (1943:36-37) further focuses attention on this relationship-oriented life and ministry which is characterised by prayer as an outflow of this relation with Christ:

Above all I notice that prayer is an indication of the spiritual life and that the power of prayer depends on the relation with God and of my awareness that I am his representative. He entrusts his work to me and the simpler and more wholehearted my commitment to His interests, the more natural and confident is the conviction that He answers me. (Translated from the Afrikaans).

The believer's relation with God determines the well-being of his/her spiritual life and prayer is the measure of his/her commitment to God and His will. The committed life is able to pray with the expectation to be answered.

- **Learn to pray**

In *Helps to intercession: Pray without ceasing*, Murray (1982:156-157) asks the question: 'How can I learn it?' and subsequently answers: 'The best way to learn how to do a thing - in fact the only way - is to do it...be assured that if you begin, God will help you. God cannot help you unless you begin and keep on.' Murray (1982:180) again stresses the importance of practical participation in prayer as the best way to learn to intercede: 'As we pray, we learn to pray, to believe, and to expect with increasing boldness.'

Murray then sets out to assist the one praying with prayer methods as prayer guidelines and these guidelines are based on Scripture, with a short explanation and prayer. In addition, the lives of prayer models or examples are provided as an aid and encouragement. Fellow believers who prayed effective prayers are mentioned, as well as time set apart for, and the practice of prayer, as reasons for their success.

Murray (1982:10) in addition advised church leaders to supplement their teaching on intercessory prayer from the pulpit with prayer classes, training believers to be people of prayer. Teaching and education is the central approach for Murray to involve church members progressively in the ministry of prayer which will eventually incorporate intercessory prayer. Believers are Murrays' target group. Therefore, it is unreasonable to expect Murray's 'practical method and model prayer approach' to get someone, who considers prayer as ridiculous at the outset, to start to pray. Murray's approach will rather help and benefit Christians already praying in various degrees of commitment, to get more involved in praying in the first place and to move on to the next stage of prayer, namely intercessory prayer.

No other method than actual praying, to acquire the skill in praying, is taught by Murray.

There alone (in the inner chamber), but there most surely, Jesus comes to us to teach us to pray. Dwell much in the inner chamber, with the door shut – shut in from men, shut up with God; it is there the Father waits you, it is there Jesus will teach you to pray. (Murray 2007:21).

Apart from his own life, evident in his writing with authority with regard to praying, and the three prayer models he mentions, Murray refers to no other examples of effectual prayer in his own ministry, due to applying his practice-oriented teaching.

4.7 Guidelines from this chapter

The 'bold' question could be asked to the believer in pursuit of praying effectively: 'Are you serious about learning to pray?' The believer needs to be honest with him/ herself with regard to the truthfulness of his/her aspiration to learn to pray and with the measure of commitment to attain it.

The vibrant personal relationship with God is the prerequisite for a life of devoted and effectual prayer. Prayer is the outflow and fruit of intimate fellowship with God and in God's economy, the sequence cannot be turned around. Therefore, the quality of the believer's personal relationship with God needs to enjoy priority and be addressed as the first step. This relationship involves sacrificially choosing to worship the God of the Bible and perpetually maintaining fellowship with Him through growth and dependence on Him. It is only possible to converse with God, when one knows Him. Therefore, the pastor and council members as leaders of the congregation are

to verify their vibrant and intimate relationship with God as model to be taught to and to be emulated by the congregation.

The measure of the believer's commitment to be able to pray effectively is important as well. "You cannot plough through a field by turning it over in your mind." (Author unknown). Murray unambiguously made it clear that 'As we pray, we learn to pray,' and 'The best way to learn how to do a thing - in fact the only way – is to do it...be assured that if you begin, God will help you. God cannot help you unless you begin and keep on.' The pastor and leadership need to educate the members and provide training classes in order to inform and guide them in a manner to enable them to become active and participate in intercessory prayer. But on the members' part, faithfully attending the classes and sacrificially participating in intercessory prayer is expected. The consequent decision is asked of the trainee frequently to set time aside for the 'inner chamber,' and in solitude to give expression to one's vibrant relation with God. Reading God's word, contemplating it and responding in prayer in pursuit of God's will is the private training required for public effective prayer. It is important to know and to stress the fact that it is not an easy decision to make and it will not come naturally. The inspired believer resolutely decides to do it and chooses to follow diligently the recommended steps. In addition, the leaders of the congregation need to create opportunities for participation in public prayer with church services, meetings, visits, etc. in order for training members to apply and practice what they were taught. It will be helpful to provide prayer methods suitable for various occasions and as members utilize them, they will gain confidence to pray in public and with time initiate using their own words.

CHAPTER 5 AN EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK EPHESIANS TO DETERMINE ITS PRACTICAL CONTRIBUTION TO A BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF INTERCESSORY PRAYER

5.1 Introduction

The normative question, “What ought to be going on?” will be answered with both the literature study of the works of Andrew Murray in Chapter 4 above, and an exegetical study on the book of Ephesians. Chapter 5 of this study consists of intercessory prayer perspectives according to the book of Ephesians, which will contribute to a better understanding of the biblical foundation of intercessory prayer. It is the last step, as part of the normative task. This is in preparation for the pragmatic task, to present intercessory prayer guidelines based on the concept of intercessory prayer according to Andrew Murray and the Bible, with reference to the book of Ephesians. The suggested intercessory prayer guidelines, in answer to the pragmatic task question: ‘How might we respond?’ will contribute to developing Christian believers as intercessors and consequently Christian congregations into intercessory communities.

5.2 In what manner and to what extent does prayer feature and play a part in the letter to the Ephesians?²

This letter presents itself as a Pauline letter. Some researchers doubt the authorship of Paul (Fowl, 2012:13,14; Heil, 2007:4) while others defend it (Mbennah, 2009:37-40; Hoehner, 2002:2-59). It is not important for the subject of this chapter to make out who the author was.³ The name Paul will be used as indication for the author of the letter (Breed, 2018:1).

The major part of the letter to the Ephesians deals with the calling and conduct of the church (Hoehner, 2017:134). The apostle Paul sets out to educate the members of the Ephesian church with regard to their identity as believers and consequently, their task by using their God-given gifts in and outside the church (Petrenko, 2011:81,81). Prayer is central to Paul’s approach. ‘He is praying for them (1:16)¹ and asks for their prayers (6:19-20)’ (Hoehner, 2017:5). Jordaan (1990:52) explains Paul’s purposeful and educational arrangement of his prayers⁴ with the following structure:

² Unless otherwise stated, all Bible quotations are from the New International Version (NIV).

³ See Petrenko (2011:1-34) for a historical overview of research on Ephesians.

⁴ All Bible references where the specific book is not indicated is to Ephesians. In all other references the Bible book will be indicated.

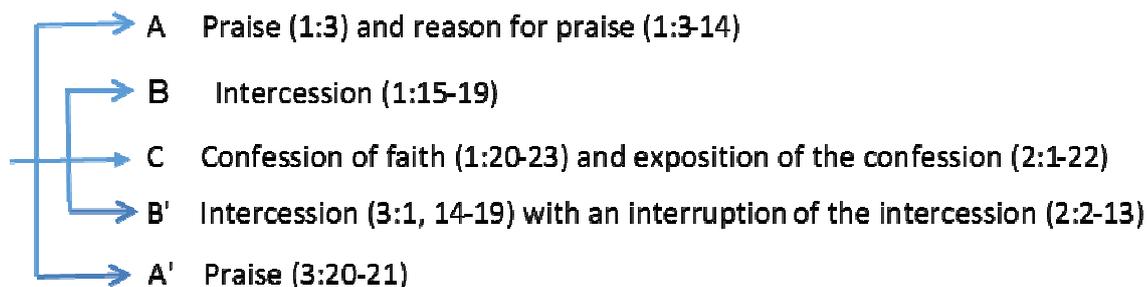


Figure 5-1 Structure of Ephesians 1-4 (Jordaan,1990)

If the structure as presented by Jordaan (1990) is accepted, it can be deduced that intercession plays an important role in Paul's pastoral education of the congregation(cf. Petrenko, 2011:17).

'1:3-3:21 is ... a prayer according to the form of a Jewish *berakah* and is arranged in such a manner to come together in a central confession of faith'(Translated from the Afrikaans).

Jordaan (1990:51) explains that in recognising the Jewish *berakah* prayer characteristics with regard to the first part of Ephesians,(1:3-3:21), does not necessarily signify it as being a prayer as such. He refers to the *berakah* prayer format, which resembles the structure of this first part of Ephesians:

Considering 1:3 – 3:21, certain intercessory principles and guidelines are evident. They are: a) the Jewish *berakah* prayer format, which consists of b) praise and c) intercession and d) primarily of a confession of faith, proclaiming Jesus as the *Head* of creation.

The proclamation of Jesus Christ as *Head* of the church and the cosmos, and the church as His body (1:10, 22-23) proves to be the great indicative or signal, not only of the *berakah* prayer in Chapters 1 to 3, but also of the entire letter, according to Jordaan (1990:49, 53). It implies that from this confession and proclamation of the *Headship* of Jesus Christ arise the praise and intercession of the *berakah* prayer (Jordaan, 1990:57). This importance of the *Headship* of Jesus Christ in the letter to the Ephesians, is confirmed and remains in the foreground with Van Aarde (2016:3) stating that 'it is his (God's) intention to sum up all things in Christ. This is the key text of the letter and central in the context of the letter as a whole' (cf. O'Brien, 2004:219).

Jordaan (1990:58)then further acknowledges the important correlation between the primary suggestion of Jesus as *Head* and the Trinitarian motive in which it is presented: 'The letter to the Ephesians indeed proclaims the spiritual blessings which the Father brings about in the lives of his elected, in Christ through the Holy Spirit'(Translated from the Afrikaans) (cf. Floor, 1982:78). The assurance of [the Triune God's](#) presence and involvement in the act of intercession is crucial to a correct understanding of intercession. The apostle Paul appropriately

refers to the involvement of the Triune God in each section of the *berakah* prayer format. The Jewish *berakah* prayer usually begins and ends with praise and often reasons for praise are given. Reference to and the act of intercession is also repeated as with praise. Intercession is mentioned twice in the *berakah* prayer format: 1:15-20 and 3:1-19 as intercession for the readers. The *berakah* prayer format therefore is often referred to as prayers of praise. ('Lofprijzendegedede'; Jordaan, 1990:51.) Lincoln (1990:10) confirms this prayer and praise characteristic of the *berakah* prayer. He refers to the blessing or *berakah* form and explains its development from initially being used by individuals as expressions of praise to God for providing, to being part of corporate worship in rabbinic Judaism as the most characteristic formula for prayer. Jordaan (1990:60) also mentions Eph.4:25-32 and 5:3-5 of the second part of Ephesians, which consists of 4:1-6:24, as being educational in nature. It further creates and confirms, in part, the educational or 'catechism format' (cf. Doty, 1972:59).

Taking into consideration Paul's intention to teach the members and praying for them to understand, the importance of his strategic use and implementation of the *berakah* prayer format on the basis of an educational approach and understanding of their faith is recognised and understood. Paul, in other words, is creating an educational ambience to teach and model to the believers in Ephesus, amongst other things, the principles and guidelines of intercessory prayer through word and example. Paul approaches the multicultural situation in Ephesus, renowned for their lack of confidence due to an uninformed and consequently erroneous comprehension of their new identity. He sets out to teach them concerning their new identity, and prayer forms an integral part of it. Paul as a believer and a leader who prays and directly calls for prayer, is a model and an example to be emulated by believers, and especially pastors who want to bring about prayer and intercessory participation and involvement in their congregations. Paul as a Jew, making use of the standard Jewish *berakah* prayer format, sets out with a strong educational approach to teach the predominantly non-Jewish congregation of Ephesus about prayer, amongst other issues. And central to Paul's approach is prayer. Paul is therefore making use of instruction as well as demonstration for guidance and his appeal for prayer invites the reader to follow suit and participate. His approach is beautifully explained in the modern day definition of 'on-the-job-training': 'A method of preparing an employee during the initial stages of employment, to perform a task by providing them with information about the task, a demonstration of its performance by a professional trainer or an experienced employee, and an opportunity for the employee to imitate the demonstration.' Education is evidently very important in an effort to teach a congregation to pray. It seems as if the Jewish *berakah* prayer format is used by Paul in 1:3-3:21 to serve as an underlying structure to guide the readers in (interceding) prayer and praising God (Petrenko, 2011:141-143). Petrenko (2011:143) says about the two prayers in Ephesians 1-3:

Once again the theory of the construction of reality is applicable in Ephesians. The continuing reinforcement of the knowledge of God's plans of salvation enables the believers to internalize this new reality whereby their experiences will mirror what they have internalized.

As mentioned above, the major part of the letter to the Ephesians deals with the calling and conduct of the church (Hoehner, 2017:134). The Apostle Paul sets out to educate the new believers in the church and prays for them.

Breed (2018) presents the following structure of the book (structure 5.2). If this structure is accepted, it can be deduced that Chapter 1 describes the work of the Triune God that he does according to his plan (*oikonomia*) without indicating the place of people in this plan. In 3:2 the word *oikonomia* is repeated for the first time and Paul's prayer is interrupted by the description of the apostle's role in the plan as well as the task of the church in this plan. Chapters 1 and 3 are thus closely connected by the content as well as semantically. Both chapters stress the praise of God by the church. Both chapters speak explicitly about the *oikonomia* of God and both chapters emphasize the power of God that works in the believers.

Jordaan (1990:57-58) explains:

Although the whole first part of the letter has a prayer character, it is therefore grounded on a disposition and understanding which is inherently educational.... Formally this whole part of the letter manifests characteristics of the berakah prayer (Translated from the Afrikaans).

The aim of this section is to determine in what manner and to what extent prayer features and plays a part in the letter to the Ephesians. Breed (2018:16) teaches nurture and prayer as one of the guidelines for pastoral ministry in the congregation. Reference is made above to the *berakah* prayer format as well as to Paul's two prayers as evidence of his involvement in his readers' lives. In addition, it is stated that Paul involves the readers by asking them to pray continuously in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. They are further exhorted to be alert, to remain on their posts, and to persevere in praying for all God's people as well as for Paul himself to be able to declare the gospel with boldness and confidence (6:18). Breed (2018:16) gives a concise explanation of the prominence of prayer: 'The prayers of the congregation for their own nurture can never be separated from prayers for those still outside the body.'

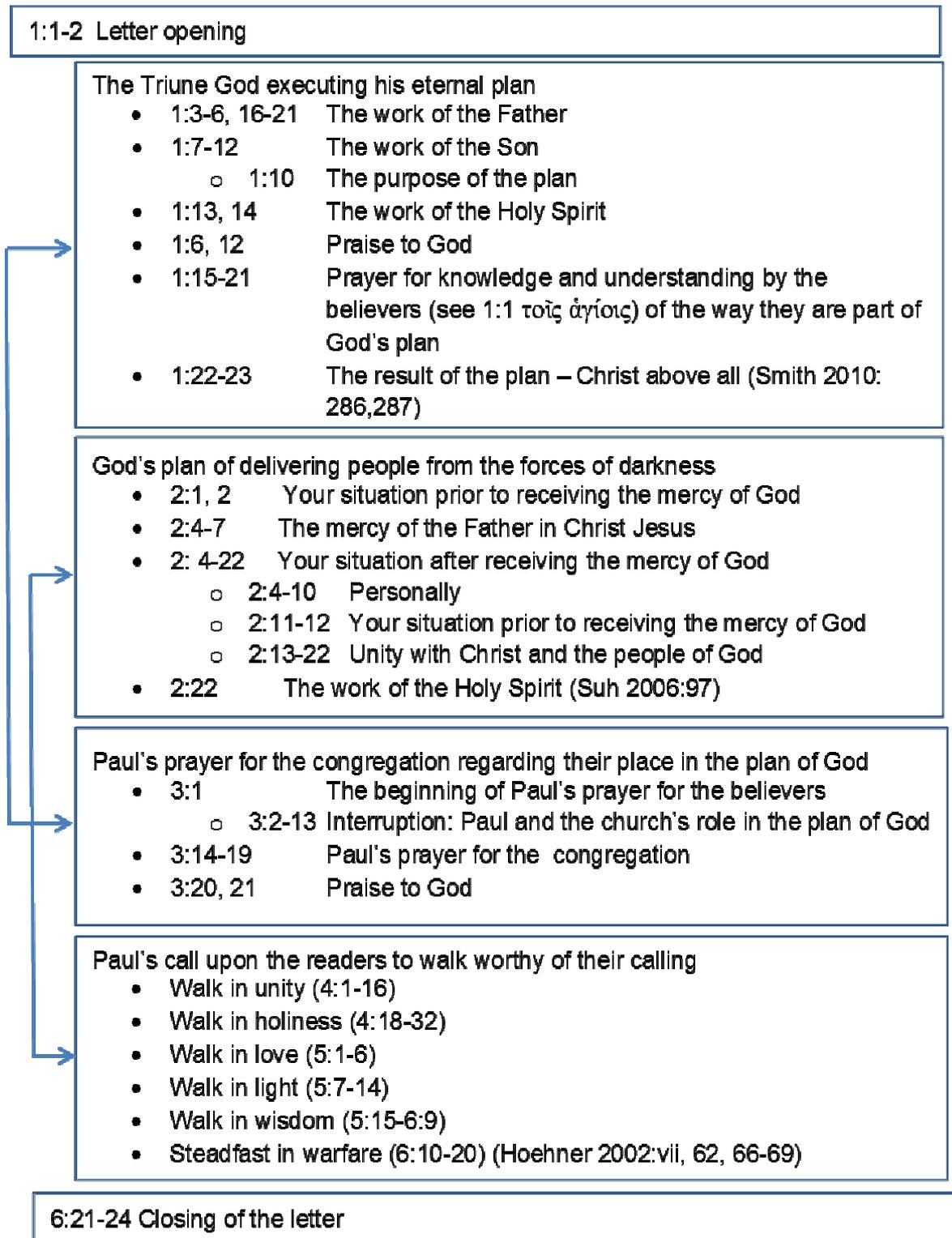


Figure 5-2: The structure of Ephesians (Breed, 2018:28)

5.3 What is the content of Paul's prayers?

Having considered the more general part that prayer plays in the letter to the Ephesians in section 5.1, the content of the apostle Paul's personal prayers will be contemplated more specifically in section 5.3.

5.3.1 Paul's first prayer for the individual believer

Paul's first prayer for the believers mentioned in 1:15-23, 'was for a deeper relationship with the God who had enriched them with every spiritual benefit, and that they would experience those benefits in a deeper way' (Hoehner, 2017:72).

The apostle Paul, in gratitude, initiates his prayer by expressing warm approval and admiration for the believers' spiritual progress. This progress was evident in the believers' persistent faith in Christ Jesus and found expression in their love for fellow-Christians the world over. Paul informs the believers of Ephesus, who already received the Holy Spirit on responding to the gospel, of praying for their spiritual wisdom and insight. Hoehner (2017:42) explains that Paul's prayer request signifies 'praying for a specific manifestation of the Spirit so that they would have insight and know more of God as a result of the Holy Spirit's revelation.' This revelation, Hoehner (2017:40) argues, 'is not the understanding of hidden things but the disclosing of them;' Only the Holy Spirit is able to give revelation, which 'is knowledge of God himself.' (Hoehner, 2017:42).

With the scene of God set in assigning to the Holy Spirit his rightful place and ministry as coach, and mentioning their subsequent spiritual progress as the fruit of this ministry, Paul progresses in his prayer for them. The objective of Paul's prayer is expressed in 1:17 '...so that you might grow in your knowledge of God.' Cohick (2010:57) states that 'the basis of growth in the Christian life is to understand who God is and who we are in Christ.' Hoehner (2017:42-43) reasons that this knowledge of God is explained by means of Paul's threefold prayer request. The believers already possess these concepts of 'hope' and 'inheritance' and 'power' which Paul prays for. Paul's desire is for the believers to understand them better 'as a result of knowing God more intimately' (Hoehner, 2017:43). In other words, Paul is assisting the believers to realize their true identity as being called by God, in the past, being his 'glorious inheritance or possession' to be carried through in the future and being equipped with the power of God in the present. A more intimate relationship with God will result and they will experience every spiritual benefit in a more powerful way.

With regard to their new identity, Breed (2018:15) explains that

Ephesians 1-3 may also be read as a description of the identity of the readers (Fowl 2012:125). They are people who have undergone a drastic change in their identity (2:1-10); their life and world view have changed radically (2:11, 12); they have become part of a totally different community (2:11-20), and they have a new purpose in life (2:21, 22). Twice Paul prays that they would understand what this new identity comprises (1:15-23; 3:13-21).

Paul's desire for his readers is to comprehend, within the context of God's will for their lives, their new identity and uniqueness as believers in Christ Jesus. In 1:1-14 Paul portrays them, the saved and sealed by the Holy Spirit (1:13), as the blessed, elect, pardoned, adopted children and heirs of God to His praise and glory.

Breed (2018:12) further clarifies this new identity, of being in Christ, as the new position of believers as well as the way in which they receive God's blessings (1:1, 3, 10, 20; 2:6, 7, 10, 13; 3:6, 11, 21, 32; cf. Kangas, 2009:12). It is also considered as a calling from God, which will influence their lifestyle 'and their calling may introduce hope, wisdom and God's power of resurrection into their lives' (1:16-23; Breed, 2018:16).

Considering the rest of Paul's prayer, (1:19b-23) he explains the proof of God's power. He raised Christ from the dead and seated him at God's right hand in the place of honour, 'far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else-....' (1:21). Why? Paul clarifies it in 122: 'God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him Head over all things for the benefit of the church.' Lincoln (1990:70) describes this conduct of God as follows: '...the writer has taken a confessional formulation about Christ's cosmic lordship and subordinated it to his interest in the Church's welfare. All the supremacy and power God has given to Christ he has given to be used on behalf of the Church.'

The decisive context is the relationship between Christ and the church. The authority and reign God has given to Christ is available to the church, 'since God has given this exalted Christ to the Church' (Lincoln, 1990:79).

The contents of Paul's first prayer in the context of teaching the church about intercessory prayer, is having authority to pray. The Church's new position in Christ signifies their new identity and consequent calling, which are inseparable. Breed (2018:16) explains: 'Reaching out to unbelievers and leading them to discover their identity in Christ is part of the identity of the body of Christ.' This authority is due to the Church's relation to the resurrected and ascended Christ (1:20) whom God has given to the Church, who is seated with Christ (2:6) as Head over all things. Therefore, with regard to Paul's first prayer, having authority to pray is the first aspect of a biblical understanding of intercessory prayer according to the book of Ephesians.

5.3.2 Paul's second prayer for the individual believers as a unity

Paul's second prayer (3:14-21) is for the body of Christ, the one new person of united Jews and Gentiles, to be united experientially. 'He desired that they would experience the power of Christ's love in them and through them in their love for one another' (Hoehner, 2017:72). Cohick (2010:56) confirms Paul's focus on, and the significance he attaches to unity: 'Paul prays (that) God will accomplish his will in each believer's life as they experience life in the community of the faithful...where their gifts are exercised and their good works are realized by God's power.'

Hoehner (2017:71-76) maintains that Paul's second prayer consists of three sections: The approach to prayer (3:14-21); the appeal in prayer (3:16-19) and the ascription of praise (3:20-21).

In the approach to prayer (3:14-21), Paul announces the Father as the One to whom he prays and explains who He is. 'He is the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth,' (3:15) is the description of the direct translation 'from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.' Consequently God the Father is introduced as 'a God who is alive and acting in the present time' (Hoehner, 2017:72).

Next, with the appeal to prayer (3:16-19), Paul prays to this sovereign Father for the believers to be empowered with inner strength through his Spirit (3:16). The Holy Spirit strengthens believers with God's power (Hoehner, 2017:74), which is evident in true reconciliation between Jews and Gentiles in 'Christ Jesus, the person in whom the reconciliation was accomplished' (Hoehner, 2017: 76). Paul's objective with his prayer, as part of formalising their erroneous understanding of their identity, is for each believer to be convinced 'of God's power in their inner person, the Spirit working and Christ dwelling...' (Cohick, 2010: 94). Overwhelmed by the involvement of the Trinity in the lives of believers, Paul, in the ascription of praise (3:20-21), calls upon his readers in (3:20): 'Now, all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.'

The united character and conduct of the Triune God is the foundation of Paul's explanation of the believers' new united identity as the body of Christ and of his appeal to them to love one another in practice. Lincoln (1990:220) explains this progressive understanding of the Trinity in the context of Ephesians 3: 'God, Christ and the Holy Spirit all receive mention in this section...But, as in other sections of this first part of the letter, the triad that dominates the writer's perspective is that of God, Christ and the Church.'

At this point it is important to remember the context of Lincoln's statements: 'Further Prayer – for the Completeness of the Reader's Experience of God – with Doxology' (3:14-21). The urgency,

for Paul, of the experienced unity in Christ, between the believers from different racial and cultural backgrounds, is explained by Lincoln (1990:220):

Even greater than knowledge of the incomprehensible love of Christ, for which the writer can ask, is the participation on the fullness of God himself. This pattern of relationship between God, Christ and the Church is summed up by the doxology.

Why is it of paramount importance that, according to Hoehner (2017:72), 'they would experience the power of Christ's love in them and through them in their love for one another?' Hoehner (2017:75) answers: 'It is important to keep in mind that this vast love cannot be fully experienced by any single individual; it takes all the believers to appreciate the fullness of Christ's love (see also 1:23; Colossians 2:9-10).'

Lincoln (1990:213) in like manner states that 'the grasping of His all-embracing love is an activity shared with other believers...the whole Church, 'with all the saints.' The unity of all believers that God already accomplished in Christ his son, now needs to be exhibited in love for one another as one in him. It exhibits the fundamental unity of the Triune God.

Paul, with his second prayer, is emphasizing the important corporate identity of the believers; an aspect of their identity as the body of Christ which resembles the corporate identity of the Triune God. Their understanding of this corporate identity, resulting in experiential loving of one another, guides believers to be other-person-centered. Individually and corporately in Christ, the subject of believers' attention is of Christ the Head, of one another and of the world outside. Knox (1988:52-53) states it as follows: 'God is Trinity; Trinity is relational. The relationships are good and personal and other-person-centered...We have been created in God's image for relationship and this relationship must be other-person-centered.'

Lincoln (1990:23) refers to God's call of Abraham to be blessed and be a blessing for others 'and Israel's election was not for her own self-indulgence, but for the blessing of the nations: it was a privilege but also a summons to serve.'

The 'united congregation' in Ephesus of Jews and Gentiles is a prototype or model of God's intention 'to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ' 1:10. But for both Jews and Gentiles it involves sacrificing their own individual, dividing, cultural identity and accepting one another within this new, God-created identity and unity. Lincoln (1990:219) explains: '...Christians who in the company of fellow believers know themselves, because they know the all-encompassing love of Christ.' The request in 3:19: '...in order that you be filled up to all the fullness of God,' signifies God's part in enabling them to live in unity, because it refers to God's life and power they experience 'in the redeemed life' (Cohick, 2010:93).

Breed (2018:11-12) mentions the Trinity's involvement to accomplish the plan of bringing all things in unity under the Headship of Jesus Christ; a 'unity which is grounded in the unity within the Trinity...' (cf. Smith, 2010:288). Breed (2018:11-12) further explains: 'This unity and maturity is based in the unity within the Trinity and flows out of the work of the Trinity in the eternal plan of God (cf. George, 2009:404).' Breed (2018:12) then draws attention to the important *diakonia* (works of ministry) of the saints (church) as contribution to the growing unity of the Church and to their maturity in Christ (4:15). This unity is given prominence, with Christ referred to as the Head of the church and the church explained as the body of Christ. Consequently, an important responsibility rests on the saints in their role to fulfill God's plan to unite all things in Christ, through their *diakonia*. Cohick (2010:98), in referring to Paul's doxology in 3:20 - 'His power that is at work in us,' states that 'the plural used here reflects Paul's conviction that God chooses to work through his people.'

This focus in Paul's second prayer on unity amongst the believers, resembling the unity of the Triune God, is the second aspect of a biblical understanding of intercessory prayer according to the book of Ephesians. Along with reminding believers of their authority to pray according to Paul's first prayer, Paul prioritizes the urgency of unity amongst the believers as a prerequisite for effective intercession with his second prayer.

5.3.3 Paul's third reference to prayer as an exhortation to stand and for involvement

Paul's third reference to prayer in (6:18-20), forms part of Paul's exhortation to stand in warfare (6:10-20).

With regard to the theme of the Epistle to the Ephesians, Breed (2018:1) states that

'a great variety of opinions is found on what the purpose and central themes of the letter would be, because several themes are continuously addressed cf. Lloyd-Jones (1980:12-14); Floor (1981:37-212); Stott (1991:29, 87, 143, 211); Bhae (2000:176-184); Hoehner (2002:106); Pretorius (2006:256); Barnard (2009:167); Petrenko (2011:79); Kangas, (2009:4).

5.3.3.1 A crisis of confidence

The theme of the letter to the Ephesians sets Paul's exhortation to stand in warfare, in the required setting for its correct understanding and effectiveness within the context of the headship of Christ over all things (1.10). Lincoln (1990:440 -441) states: '...this pericope, (6:10-20), like the letter as a whole, reflects the writer's response to what he perceives to be a crisis of confidence on the part of the readers'.

In support to his statement, Lincoln (1990:219) mentions several needs amongst the readers, which he perceives as the reason for Paul's subsequent prayers and exhortation for prayer on behalf of the readers, to counteract it. 'Weakness or vacillation (doubt/indecision) gave rise to Paul praying for their strengthening (:16 & 18, 'in order that you might be empowered'. In addition, 'an instability and an insufficient sense of their identity and security' lead to Paul's prayer for their being rooted and grounded in love and for their knowledge of Christ's love (:17b, 'being rooted and established in love,' and :18b 'to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ'). Furthermore, the reader's 'inadequacy and insufficiency' is understood as motivating Paul to pray for the readers to be filled up to the fullness of God Himself (:19 'that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.').

Lincoln (1990:441) further explains Paul is setting out to strengthen his readers' confidence in making use of particular military imagery and being victorious in battle. Paul also encourages them in emphasising God as the source of their power and reminding them of their God-integrated identity. His own bold and open example in proclaiming the good news as a prisoner has as its objective 'the fearless living out of Christian existence in the midst of a hostile world.'

To the present writer this suggested response of Paul, to what he perceives as a crisis of confidence on the part of the readers (cf. Lincoln, 1990:440-441) will serve as the primary theme of the letter within the context of the headship of Christ over all things (1.10) with 'unity' and 'love' as secondary themes.

Breed (2018:15) states:

Despite the radical change brought about by the blessings with which the Triune God blesses believers, the church remains an immature church in distress. The church must, for example, seriously strive to keep the unity (4:3), and if the church does not grow towards maturity, she will still be 'tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming' (4:14 – NIV). The church is involved in a 'wrestling match' (6:12 – GWA) against evil powers, and she needs God and his strength to survive (6:10-13). Therefore, the church needs both nurture and equipment.

Appropriately, with Paul's exhortation to stand in warfare, he urges the readers: 'Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power,' (6:1). Twice Paul called upon his readers to put on the full armour of God: 'Put on the full armour of God...' (11) and 'Therefore put on the full armour of God...' (13).

In his exhortation Paul used several imperatives: 'put on' (6:11, 14); 'stand'(6:14-16); 'take' (6:17-20) and 'pray' (6:18-20) (Hoehner, 2017:127, 129). According to Hoehner (2017:128), the

active imperative 'put on' signifies the believers' own accountability to act in accordance with Paul's appeal to put on the armour of God in order to resist or withstand in the evil day.'

Hoehner (2017:132) also emphasizes the important fact of the exhortation directed both to the individual and the corporate body, as he did in referring to the vast love of Christ which is only to be experienced by all the believers corporately and not by a single individual:

The entire armour is absolutely necessary in spiritual warfare against the devil and his angels. As in other parts of this book, the exhortation is directed both to the individual and the corporate body. This is in keeping with the dominant theme of the book: the unity of believing Jews and Gentiles in one body. Thus, the church, the body of believers, is in this warfare together. As Roman soldiers did not fight alone, so also believers as a body, united under their commander-in-chief, stand against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places (Hoehner, 2017:75).

5.3.3.2 Works of Ministry

Breed (2018) provides a more in-depth understanding of the individual believers being part of the corporate body, in terms of Ephesians, with his article: *The place of diakonia in God's eternal plan according to Ephesians*. God's eternal plan involves the unity of all things under the headship of Jesus Christ, (1:10). The ministry of Paul and that of the church, according to Breed (2018:6), is part of God's eternal plan. Breed (2018: 6) states that God exercises his power through the ministry of Paul and that of the church who will take the ministry of Paul forward (cf. Rudolph, 2007:70). God evidently uses people to execute and accomplish his eternal plan.

Breed (2018:17) then further clarifies *diakonia* as the way the triune God communicates the mystery and wisdom of His grace and love in this world and exercises power, thereby conquering the powers of evil in and through the believers. This work of the triune God in fulfilling his eternal plan is described in Chapter 1; (The Father [1:3-6, 12, 16-23]; The Son [1:7-12]; The Holy Spirit [1:13-14,17-18]) (Breed, 2018:2).

The apostles and the prophets are referred to as the foundation on which the church is built in 2:20. It serves as a transition to how God involves people in accomplishing his plan (Breed 2018:17). Paul's *diakonia* (and that of the other apostles) is the instrument through which God laid the foundation for the executing of his plan through the church (Breed, 2018:10). This *diakonia* of Paul, according to Breed (2018:7) is the God-given gift to bring the gospel to the Gentiles, for them to be brought to faith through the preaching of Paul. This gift God gave Paul after He revealed it to him and brought Paul into his plan.

The transition of focus from God's *diakonia* to that of Paul continues as the focus on Paul's *diakonia* progresses to the focus on the *diakonia* of the church. Breed (2018:17) states that

Paul's *diakonia* is described as the way the church is formed. It involves the church being equipped 'through the *diakonia* of the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers.' This equipped church, consisting of members who received grace and grace-giving-gifts then consequently builds itself up in Christ through the *diakonia* of every believer in everyday life (4:17-6:20). It enables them to do their work of ministry which is referred to in (2:10) when it is said that they were created by God in Christ for good works so that they should walk in them (as described in 4-6). It thus can be said that the *diakonia* of the saints is the final outlet of God's grace to the body of Christ and to the world (Breed, 2018:13). The *diakonia* of the saints therefore has a significant role to play in the fulfilling of God's plan to unite all things in Christ, according to Breed 2018:12 (cf. Floor, 2011:476-477). Members are equipped with special gifts so that God then works effectively in and through them according to these gifts (Breed 2018:16).

The corporate and unifying characteristic of the book Ephesians is clearly communicated through Paul's *diakonia*. It is done by the proclamation of the gospel, as part of God's eternal plan to unite Jews and Gentiles in one body through Christ, the *diakonia* of God, and has as its purpose a church that can display the wisdom of God by the way they live, which is the *diakonia* of the church.

The background of Paul's exhortation to pray always and to stand in warfare is set by Breed's (2018:10) description of Paul's *diakonia* as a *diakonia* in dependence on God and Lincoln's (1990:452) statement of the constant need for calling on divine aid, subsequently to the battle circumstances. Keeping in mind Paul's objective to strengthen his readers' confidence, he reminds them that they are fighting from a position of victory, having already been seated with Christ in the heavenly realms 2:6 (Lincoln, 1990:445). They need not fear the conquered evil powers. On the contrary, according to Lincoln (1990: 443) the readers only need to make the assured outcome of the battle their own by standing and maintaining the ground that has been won, taking possession of what has already been gained for them.

5.3.3.3 Armour of God and Prayer

In addition to their victorious position, assurance is given by Paul of all the resources available for a successful resistance. These divine resources are summarised as the 'full armour' of God and the readers only need to take up this armour to take hold of the resources (Lincoln, 1990:445). Paul strategically calling attention to the armour of God, sets God in the right perspective for his readers. God provides all equipment to the believers necessary for battle, in order to stand 'through the protection and power of God himself' (Lincoln, 1990:442, 447). Therefore, Hoehner (2017:133) argues the setting as a defensive stand, with believers being

urged 'to hold their ground and not retreat' (Hoehner, 2017:129) and being 'able to resist or withstand in the evil day' (Hoehner, 2017:128). The battle has already been won. Believers are already victoriously seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. God already supplied all equipment to enable believers to take their stand. They only need to, confidently, take up the armour of God, to take their stand and defend the conquered territory; participating in establishing and proclaiming the headship of Christ over all things (1:10).

Lincoln (1990:452) explains the required attitude of dependence on God for the putting on, taking up and receiving of God's armour. 'Prayer for strengthening from God can be seen as a major way in which believers appropriate the divine armour and are enabled to stand.' The attitude of prayer which frames the first half of the letter, (according to Lincoln, 1990:439) is now underlined by the call to constant prayer at the end.'

'Nothing less is suggested than that the life and strife of the saints be one great prayer to God, that this prayer be offered in ever new forms, however good or bad the circumstances, and that this prayer not be self-centered but express the need and hope of all the saints' (cf. Barth, 778).

'Pray always in the Spirit at all times.' (6:18). The obvious importance of prayer is made clear with the four times repeated words 'prayer and petition,' and the four times mention of the words 'every' and 'all': 'To emphasise the vital importance of prayer for every believer on every occasion' (Hoehner, 2017:132).

As mentioned above, the book Ephesians reflects the Apostle Paul's response to what he perceives to be a crisis of confidence on the part of the readers. Consequently, he is setting out to strengthen his readers' confidence in making use of particular military imagery and being victorious in battle. He reminds them that they are already, victoriously, seated with Christ in the heavenly realms (Lincoln, 1990:441). Prayer is central to Paul's approach, according to Hoehner (2017:5): 'He is praying for them (1:16) and asks for their prayers (6:19-20)'. The Apostle Paul's objective, through this reciprocal prayer, is to educate his readers about the prominence of the church as being part of God's eternal plan and accordingly sets out to involve them. Therefore, he prays for knowledge and understanding of the believers to the way they are part of God's plan (1:15-21), and subsequently for the congregation to recognize their place in the plan of God (3:14-21) (Breed, 2018:2). The believers, in response, are urged to take up, consciously and with increasing confidence, the divine armour through prayer that will enable them to stand. Important is the fact that they already have all the armour through their relationship with Christ: truth, stability, righteousness, salvation, faith and the word of God. By means of the act of prayer believers acknowledge God as the source of armour and they radiate

their God-integrated identity. It also signifies their recognising being part of God's eternal plan and as a result presenting themselves to God to be part of fulfilling His plan.

Therefore, addressing the readers' lack of confidence, Paul instructs them to put on the armour of God. Hoehner (2017:129-130) notably emphasises the resulting spiritual stability from 'For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared'(6:15). Tranquility of the mind and security of the heart also characterise this spiritual stability and enable them to stand against the devil and his angelic hosts (Hoehner, 2017:130).

Furthermore, the helmet, according to Hoehner (2017:131), protects the head of the soldier, giving him assurance of safety, resulting in self-confidence. In like manner the awareness of the believers' salvation gives them confidence of the utmost safety in battle. Confidence, assurance, security, stability and tranquility of mind is the required spiritual experience the Apostle Paul sought to achieve in his readers' Christian lives. For that reason he prays for them and urges them to pray with authority and in unity for God's armour and for him; all this with the objective for them to become confidently involved in God's secret eternal plan 'to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ' (1:10 NIV).

5.4 Paul's guidance of the Ephesians to maturity in Christ

5.4.1 The calling of the Church

The final part of this chapter gives an account of the Apostle Paul's manner of leading the believers of Ephesus to spiritual maturity in Jesus Christ. Previously reference was made to a progressive understanding of the redeeming involvement of the Trinity in the context of Ephesians, according to Lincoln (1990:220):'God, Christ and the Holy Spirit all receive mention in this section...But, as in other sections of this first part of the letter, the triad that dominates the writer's perspective is that of God, Christ and he Church.'

The readers are addressed as the Church 'with a calling to fulfill' (Lincoln, 1990:220). Their particular way of life has as its objective God's glory, but as determined by the glorification of God in Christ Jesus, according to the doxology: 'To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen.' (3:21). God's glory is the ultimate end that the church in Christ Jesus endeavours to express. It testifies with regard to a relationship which is distinguished by 'a participation in the fullness of God himself' (Lincoln, 1990:220). A fullness perceived 'as his presence and power, his life and rule, immanent in his creation, that has been mediated to believers through Christ, in whom the fullness was present bodily' (Lincoln, 1990:214). God is experienced by the church in the person of Christ.

5.4.1.1 Diakonia and Oikonomia

This experience or participation finds expression through the *diakonia* principle discussed above, which involves the corporate and unifying ministry of God, with the aid of the Apostle Paul and the Church, as presented by the book of Ephesians. The Apostle Paul's *diakonia*, which is done by the proclamation of the gospel, is part of the eternal plan of God, the *oikonomia* of God (that used to be secret, but was now revealed). The Apostle Paul's *diakonia* incorporates the church in the *oikonomia* of God and has as its purpose a church that can display and proclaim the wisdom of God by the way they live, which is the *diakonia* of the church. As mentioned before, the *diakonia* of the saints therefore has a significant role to play in the fulfilling of God's plan to unite all things in Christ (1:10), according to Breed (2018:12; cf. Floor, 2011:476-477).

Van Aarde (2016:1) explains the meaning and purpose of the term *oikonomia* as the plan of God to reach the world. Van Aarde states that the term has a fine missional distinction in Ephesians, outlining the corporate share of all the role players. He then presents Christ in the implementation of God's plan (1:10). Successively the Apostle Paul is mentioned in carrying out this plan as the person to whom 'the stewardship of the grace of God has been given' (3:2). The sequence is maintained, as with the Trinity and *diakonia*, affirming that next 'the *oikonomia* of the gospel is committed by Paul to the church (3:10), marking a new phase in the development of the mission of the church.' (Van Aarde 2016:1). This new phase is 'the progressive development of the task of the stewardship. The responsibility is first given to Paul, and the prophets and apostles and finally to the church' (Van Aarde, 2016:8). In other words, according to Van Aarde (2016:2), 'the term *oikonomia* represents the task and responsibility of Paul and the Church in God's plan.'

The important relation of *oikonomia* and *diakonos* is also appropriately considered. The first term *diakonos* particularly 'involved the equipment of the church to fulfill its task, the stewardship and work of the ministry' (3:7, 9; 4:12) (Van Aarde, 2016:6). This first movement is centripetal, focusing on the church itself, with the objective to equip and enable members to do their *diakonia*. The church is built up for ministry by means of this inward focus and action.

The second term *oikonomia*, follows as a church has been equipped and enabled for ministry. The focus and operation is directed outwards (1:10, 3:2, 9). The task of the *oikonomia* according to Van Aarde (2016:6), specifically involved the revelation of the *mysterion*; the apostle Paul initially and the church subsequently making known the good news of 'Gentiles' or 'nations' being included in the church. This second movement is centrifugal, focusing on the mission activity of God first, and following on that of Paul and the church. *Oikonomia* is directed

outward as the task of the church in its relation to society. Therefore, where διακονία has to do with preaching and ministry in the congregation, *oikonomia* is about preaching and ministry outside and to enlighten all as to what is the stewardship given to the church (3:9) (Van Aarde, 2016:6). Yet, their interactive relation is evident with reference to 3:7-9, with Van Aarde (2016:6) stating that the office of *diakonos* of the church functions within the *oikonomia* of God, (cf. Reuman1967:163). The office of the *diakonos* serves the *oikonomia* of God in that Paul conceives of his role to equip others to serve God's plan. Breed (2017:130, 142) clarifies the significance of transferring Paul's stewardship to the church: 'For these reasons, the *missio Dei* is inherent in the church...' and 'The church in her very being is missional in everything she does.'

According to Van Aarde (2016:2), the core of Paul's assertion is that his stewardship activity is missionary in nature and part of the unfolding of the plan of salvation initiated and sustained by God (cf. Fowl, 2012:107). Therefore, Breed (2017: 141, 142) explains that the *missio Dei* and the *missio ecclesia* are both directed and aimed at bringing all people into the church, and the entire cosmos, together under the headship of Christ to the glory of God. Being part of the eternal plan of God to reunite all things under Christ is an essential part of the identity of the church. It is not just one of the tasks of the church.

Subsequently, Van Aarde (2016:1) then maintains 'that in 3:10 which is a *crux interpretum*, the missional nuance of the term *oikonomia* indicates the role of the Church in the execution of the plan of God and the *missio Dei* is implied.' Van Aarde (2016:7) argues with emphasis regarding the importance of 3:10: 'It is hardly an exaggeration to say that any interpretation of Ephesians stands or falls with this verse' (cf. Caird, 1976:660).

Breed (2018:1), as referred to above, with reason maintains that a great variety of themes are continuously addressed in the book of Ephesians. Keeping in mind the objective of the chapter: An exegetical analysis of the book Ephesians to determine its practical contribution to a biblical understanding of intercessory prayer; some of the hitherto recognized themes are approached in a complementary way. It consequently determines the manner and extent that prayer features and plays a part in the letter to the Ephesians. Paul initially prays for growth in their knowledge of God (1:17), (cf. Hoehner, 2017:42-43), which signifies 'knowledge about the salvation in Christ, the righteousness through faith and the knowledge of the truth' (Breed, 2017: 141). The objective of this growth in the knowledge of God is to recognize and accept Jesus Christ as Head of the church and the cosmos (1:10). Van Aarde (2016:3) recognizes and promotes the conviction of 1:10, the headship of Christ, as central in the context of the letter as a whole (cf. O'Brien, 2004:2014-219).

5.4.1.2 Prayer

Prayer is another complementary theme recognized and mentioned, together with the themes of Christ as Head of the cosmos (1:10) and the united church as a messenger (3:10). Prayer is central to Paul's approach, according to Hoehner (2017:5): 'He is praying for them (1:16) and asks for their prayers (6:19-20)'. It is precisely this exhortation of Paul which bears witness to dependence on God (Breed, 2018:10) and the constant need for calling on divine aid (Lincoln, 1990:439). Prayer to be strengthened by God, then, is taken as 'a major way in which believers appropriate the divine armour and are enabled to stand' (Lincoln, 1990: 452). Through Paul's prayer the believers learn to know their part in God's secret and eternal plan (1:15-21), and to recognize their place in the plan of God (1:15-21)(Breed, 2018:2). They are subsequently exhorted, urged, to become involved (3:10) in fulfilling God's plan of submission of all and everything to Christ as Head (1:10). Thielman (2010:217) explains: 'The powers, however, are conquered and beneath the Messiah's feet (1:20-22). Since the church is one with their risen and enthroned Christ (2:6), the powers are also conquered and beneath the church's feet' (1:20-23).

Paul's guidance of the Ephesians to maturity in Christ reaches its acme with Hoehner (2017:132) explaining 6:18: 'Pray always in the Spirit at all times.': 'The obvious importance of prayer is made clear with the four times repetition of the words 'prayer and petition,' and the four times mention of the words 'every' and 'all': 'To emphasize the vital importance of prayer for every believer on every occasion.'

Paul's guidance of the believers to maturity in Christ is reached with 'prayer for every believer'. Lincoln (1990:453) maintains that 'Nothing less is suggested than that the life and strife of the saints be one great prayer to God, that this prayer be offered in ever new forms, however good or bad the circumstances, and that this prayer not be self-centered but express the need and hope of all the saints'(cf. Barth 778). Breed (2018:16) takes it further in explaining that 'The prayers of the congregation for their own nurture can never be separated from prayers for those still outside the body.' The comprehension of God's plan and their part in it finds expression in their prayer focus expanding from self, to all believers and to others outside the faith community. Therefore, Thielman (2010:433) masterfully puts into words the expanded focus of prayer from a personal to a public focus as follows: 'Prayer should not be reserved only for certain occasions but should be a constant activity of the believer (cf. 1 Thess. 5:17) and therefore as varied in their subject matter as the circumstances of life self.'

Paul was addressing a lack in confidence on the part of the readers and the readers' 'inadequacy and insufficiency' is understood as motivating Paul to pray for them and teaching

them about God's plan and their place in it. The Jewish *berakah* prayer format, according to which especially the first part of the book of Ephesians is structured, creates an educational ambience to teach and model to the believers in Ephesus, amongst other things, the principles and guidelines of intercessory prayer through word and example. In addition, it was concluded that Paul's first prayer revealed the authority believers have in Christ to pray, and his second prayer emphasizes the importance of unity amongst believers as a requirement for effective prayers. Paul's last reference to prayer is his exhortation for equipped believers to pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests, for themselves, for their leaders (Paul), for all the Lords' people and for others (6:18). Praying for Paul would benefit his ministry as well as the recipients of his message.

5.5 Conclusions from Chapter 5

The exegetical study of the book of Ephesians was an effort to determine the answers to Osmer's normative question: "What ought to be going on?" The Apostle Paul strategically implemented the Jewish *berakah* form of prayer as a method to assist the believers in their obedience to his appeal for prayer. The objective of his three consecutivecalculated prayers was to reveal to his readers essential truths to assist them in their adherence to his call on them for participation in intercessory prayer. Paul's first prayer brought home the authority they as believers have in Christ to pray. His second prayer called attention to the required importance of unity among the believers to ensure effective prayer. Then, appropriately to achieve the purpose of his letter to the church of Ephesus, Paul's third prayer was an exhortation for all believers to pray diligently. Through Paul's prayers the believers learn to know their part in God's secret and eternal plan and to recognize their place in the plan of God. Being part of the eternal plan of God to reunite all things under Christ is an essential part of the identity of the church. It is not just one of the tasks of the church. God's glory is the ultimate end that the church in Christ Jesus endeavours to express.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION AND POTENTIAL INTERCESSORY PRAYER MODEL

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 will attempt to answer the research question: 'What model can be offered for equipping the All Saints United Church Somerset East and any congregation to become an intercessory community?' An intercessory prayer model will be formulated and presented for equipping a congregation to grow as an interceding congregation, with the findings and insight gained from the above chapters. It will be accomplished by referring to chapters 2, 3, 4, 5 and in chapter 6 consolidating the results and conclusions reached in these chapters. A summary of each chapter will be presented, followed by suggested guidelines and recommendations to put these suggested guidelines into practice. The proposed prayer model will consist of these guidelines. In addition, the researcher studied the book of Herrington et al. (2000), '*Leading congregational change*,' and made a comparison between the suggestions of the book and the practical recommendations that were gleaned from the research. It seems that the model of Herrington et al. can assist a congregation in becoming an intercessory community. In accordance with Richard Osmer's method of practical theology, this subsequent proposed prayer model in Chapter 6 is an answer to the pragmatic and final task: 'How ought we to respond?'

6.2 Chapter 2

A proper basis theory for prayer from Old and New Testament perspectives with specific reference to intercessory prayer came to the conclusion that prayer depends on God taking the initiative, because it is not a natural human response. The biblical doctrine of prayer emphasizes the character of God, the necessity of a man's being in saving or covenant relation with Him, and his entering fully into all the privileges and obligations of that relation with God. These three aspects of prayer with regard to the one praying, with regard to other people and with regard to God constitute a triangular relationship. Within this triangulation intercession initiates with the Triune God, is taken up by the believer, with the world/ church (others) as object. God invites the believer to intercede (Abraham – "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" Gen.18:4) and creates the opportunity for intercession (Moses – "Now leave Me alone." Ex 32:10).

6.2.1 Guidelines from Chapter 2

A personal intimate relationship between God and the one praying is associated with prayer, according to the Bible. The importance of this prerequisite intimate relationship for a life of prayer is due to it bearing witness to God's presence in the midst of His people and to His subsequent accessibility. The believer is called by God into a personal religion (form of worship) and responds in obedience to personal responsibility. The spiritual character of the believer is paramount with regard to effective praying. 'Prayer makes the Christian; reciprocally prayer is infused and saturated by the life of the one praying.' In the New Testament intercession is inextricably linked to prayer. Where prayer is known, intercession cannot be absent. Every person lives in a network of relationships. Whoever comes to God in prayer can and does not want to detach themselves from these relations. Making all these relationships part of prayer is now shaped by intercession.

6.2.2 Practical recommendations from Chapter 2

Prevalent and guiding themes with regard to the understanding and practice of prayer in the lives of Jesus Himself and of believers were verified in chapter 2 with the holistic overview in terms of prayer in the Bible. God's gracious and voluntarily Revelation of Himself to people develops into a Relationship. Within this relationship people are called to get involved in establishing God's kingdom on earth and they subsequently respond. The manner of response within the context of the present study is through Prayer, which gives expression to an aspect of their Participation in God's mission on earth. This act of obedience enables people to Co-operate with God and join Him in fulfilling his will by means of Intercession.

Praying for your enemies (Matthew 5:45) – as Jesus did on the cross (Luke 23:34) and Stephen when he was stoned (Acts 7:60) – and praying for the sick (James 5:14), are examples of a developing broader prayer spectrum. It initiated a revolutionary new focus of attention on the object of prayer being outside of one's intimate and related circle, with a truly inclusive character. (1 Timothy 2:1-2 for example, with Paul's call upon the church to pray for a Godless and oppressive government.)

The completion of and fulfilling of God's work on earth in establishing his kingdom is dependent on the prayers of the believers. "God cannot go on, if the church has not yet fulfilled its task. The church likes to sing: I continue to expect the Lord, my soul waits undisturbed. It is the other way around, the church does not wait for the Lord, the Lord waits for the church." Obedient response to God's inviting initiative and participation through intercession is expected from every believer.

6.3 Chapter 3

Chapter 3 provides answers to both of Osmer's initial two questions, with the empirical study and analysis, to determine the present state of knowledge and involvement with regard to intercessory prayer of the All Saints United Church Somerset East. The descriptive-empirical task, asking the question 'What is going on?' revealed that insufficient knowledge about prayer, and intercessory prayer specifically, is the reason for members' indifference and lack of involvement with regard to prayer. The question 'What is your understanding of intercession?' confirmed this discovery. Notwithstanding the 83% of the respondents, the ['Yes group,'](#) who initially proved to have a traditional and general knowledge of prayer, only 33%, of the 'Yes-Yes-Others group,' personally know about and participate in prayer in general and in intercessory prayer specifically. The majority of the respondents' limited to no understanding of the modus operandi and significance of intercessory prayer, were the same as, and is reflected in the objective of their prayers, as determined with Question 4: What do you pray for? It gives the impression that their lack of knowledge and perception of intercessory prayer specifically, is the reason for them not considering it a priority and therefore not participating in intercessory prayer at all. These respondents' answers regarding their limited understanding of intercession were coded as 'don't know', 'no part of frame of reference', and 'evasive/ wander in answering.' It seems as if their lack of the essential knowledge in terms of intercessory prayer is the cause of their indifference to intercessory prayer and further restrains them from their crucial involvement in it.

Subsequently the interpretive task, with its second question: 'Why is it going on?' determined that the All Saints United Church Somerset East specifically fails, and the church in general failed to provide information and guidance with regard to intercessory prayer. This is evident when considering that the All Saints United Church Somerset East consists of three different denominations and the majority of the members of these congregations grew up in Christian homes, having been Christians for generations. The general understanding, and experience, of Christianity as Bible reading, prayer and attending church, is the foundation of their Christian upbringing, comprehension and conduct. There appears to be an absence of (sufficient) teaching, guidance and practice of intercession at church during the past and at present. Subsequently members as parents and guardians, lacked, and are lacking, the knowledge and skill to pray and intercede themselves. They therefore fail and are unable to raise their children in a way to be informed about, and involved with, prayer in general and intercessory prayer specifically. As a result, these ignorant believers are indifferent to and uninvolved in intercessory prayer.

The preliminary conclusion was the following: The indispensable requisite for proper teaching, information, knowledge and practical guidance with regard to prayer, and intercessory prayer specifically, will alter this ambiguous understanding and (mal)practice of prayer. God, prayer and the one praying will be recognised and perceived within the divine frame of reference in a way for the praying believer to be more understanding of, and committed to, regular and meaningful prayer. This discernment of informed and rightful praying will further determine the appropriate expectation of an answer to praying. The faithful act of praying will continue nevertheless, even with unwanted or no answers to prayers, and the possible erroneous conclusion of doubting the existence of God will be prevented or eliminated.

The question “why is it going on?” was also answered by research into different factors contributing to prayerlessness in the current age. It was found that the following factors contribute towards the lack of prayer and intercession:

- The postmodern and post Christendom world view
- Narcissism and entitlement
- The influence of the internet
 - Pornography addiction
 - Social media
 - Persistent shame

The above-mentioned possible contributors to the state of the commitment or non-commitment to intercessory prayer in the congregation can be seen as exemplary factors. There can be many more, but these are enough to indicate that there can be no quick decisions on what causes apathy towards prayer in the individual. With pastoral care each individual's narrative of life should be investigated to understand what lies beneath his/her attitude towards intercessory prayer. When a congregation wants to move towards change the current worldview will have to be taken into account and be accommodated while building on the principles from Scripture.

6.3.1 Guidelines from Chapter 3

The following guidelines that can be gleaned from Chapter 3 are an essential component for a proposed model which can be offered for equipping a congregation to become an intercessory community: Teaching and guidance by the church. It will equip, enable and prepare believing parents and guardians to pray and intercede themselves. As the subsequent step they will be

enabled to raise, teach and guide children to pray and intercede in a Christian home or environment, as part of the process of promoting and supporting a life of prayer. The church is (supposed to be) the source of prayer information and training for the Christian home according to Table 2, Chapter 2. At home, this information is provided and guidance in prayer and intercessory prayer specifically, is taught, modelled and practiced. This will do justice to 'Received guidance at church' and 'Brought up in a Christian home' as the foundation for information on and involvement in intercessory prayer.

During pastoral care and counseling it should be determined what the cause(s) of prayerlessness is.

6.3.2 Practical Recommendations from Chapter 3

Recommendations to put the suggested guidelines into practice are as follows: By preaching, constantly focus on the importance of a healthy, living, spiritual and committed relationship with God. Give special importance to a committed relationship with God as the foundation of a vibrant prayer life. Also present a balanced approach with biblical examples of fallible believers (who sometimes disobeyed God and were restored after confession) to establish the truth of a living relationship with God, as the basis of confidence in their approach to God in prayer. Models like Moses, Elijah, Abraham and David were ordinary fallible people who prayed to God because they wanted to and needed to. Follow up and support the preaching with appropriate teaching on prayer. Begin by emphasizing the importance of a regular time of devotion (inner chamber) and supply a format: peaceful, quiet and convenient venue of choice, solitude, a committed and teachable disposition, Bible reading, contemplation and prayer in accordance with the message from the Bible. Enhance the initial teaching with complementary truths from the book of Ephesians. Introduce and explain the headship of Christ, the subsequent authority to pray and the unity of believers as part of the foundation to pray. Explain *diakonia* (prayerful inward and outward service) as flowing forth from, and giving expression to, a life of prayer. Together with the preaching, supplement the teaching by means of preparing and making available appropriate literature on prayer for Sunday schools, Bible studies, small groups, households and individual devotional times. This literature should be according to the information provided with the Sunday service, in order to bring home the truths. Several selected books on prayer could also be recommended and the congregation might have its own library for members to have easy and affordable access to these books on prayer. Preach! Teach! Model! Always and everywhere. Remember, the art of teaching is repetition!

Individual pastoral care and counseling will be of extreme importance.

6.4 Chapter 4

Chapters 4 and 5, in turn, both fulfil the normative task of Osmer in answering the question: 'What ought to be going on?' A literature study with regard to the characteristics of intercessory prayer according to Andrew Murray in Chapter 3 reveals the actual practice of, and involvement in prayer, as the means of learning to pray and to intercede. Murray applauds the numerous systematic Bible study classes, but suggests: 'Let all the leaders of such classes try to start prayer classes – helping their students to pray in secret, and training them to be, above all, men of prayer' (Murray 1982:10).

Murray is outstanding in his practical approach concerning his call for more prayer classes where in the first place, he sets out to provide theoretical information on the character and practice of intercessory prayer with these two prominent books on prayer: '*With Christ in the School of Prayer*' (2007) and '*The Ministry of Intercession*' (1982). In the second place, he also provides practical methods and models of prayer as guidelines by which to be guided to learn to pray. The methods are disciplined day by day guides as an aid to learn to pray systematically. As models Murray refers to the narratives of Christian believers in history as examples for whom prayer was central to their lives and ministries. Murray's intention by means of the prayer methods and human models as examples, is to encourage and assist Christian seekers to get involved in a life of committed, faithful prayer. Ordinary Christian believers are encouraged and enabled to put into practice and apply what they were taught and believe.

Chapter 4 of this research, being defined by the domain of practical theology, is an account of Murray's practical approach of prayer methods and human prayer models for teaching to pray. In the chapter '*Helps to intercession: Pray without ceasing*,' Murray (1982:156-157) asks the question: 'How can I learn it?' and subsequently answers: 'the best way to learn how to do a thing – in fact the only way – is to do it...be assured that if you begin, God will help you. God cannot help you unless you begin and keep on'. Murray (1982:180) again stresses the importance of practical involvement in prayer as the best way to learn to intercede: 'As we pray, we learn to pray, to believe, and to expect with increasing boldness'.

Theory on prayer answered is systematically put into practice, in a disciplined way, and effective prayer is the result. Murray's emphasis on the importance of a regular, disciplined and systematic prayer habit is characteristic of his 'as we pray, we learn to pray,' teaching.

Yet, a committed and personal relationship with God that serves as the essential foundation of an effective life of prayer is also demanded by Murray as a prerequisite for those who desire to become competent in intercession. This relationship finds expression in practical and persistent involvement in prayer/time with God, which eventually develops and grows into intercessory

prayer. Murray appropriately emphasises the context of a vital relationship between God and the one praying, within which this identified need of teaching and guidance by the church is to be understood. Living in a committed relationship with God, firstly creates the reason and need for prayer: 'I know and love God, therefore I want and need to pray.'

Secondly, the characteristic transforming Christian life (read spiritual growth) adapts or makes the believer more suitable to the teaching and guidance of the church concerning intercessory prayer. The believer progressively realises and experiences that there is more to one's relationship with God, than just oneself and one's own interests. Intercession, which requires further teaching and guidance, results from this realisation.

6.4.1 Guidelines from Chapter 4

The following guideline for the proposed model can be gleaned from this chapter: The essential personal and dynamic (read progressive) relationship with God which serves as the foundation for the important act of praying. Murray further advocates this required practical act of praying with reference to the practical prayer models and the prayer methods he recommends. The act of praying, with the help of the prayer methods and motivated by the illustrated prayer models, is an essential component of a prayer model; a model which can be offered for equipping a congregation to become an intercessory community. It signifies the subsequent and evolving practical step of practice, to the first step of teaching and providing knowledge and information.

6.4.2 Practical Recommendations from Chapter 4

Recommendations to put the suggested guidelines into practice are as follows: Preach, emphasise, model and confirm healthy and committed spiritual relationships between church members and God. Provide copies of contemporary prayer methods as guidelines for prayer. Make use of Murray's supplied prayer methods or any other (modified) prayer method suitable to the congregation. Explain the format and encourage members to make use of it often. Prayer methods could regularly be made part of the Sunday services as an example or model of how to practice it. Organize prayer groups logistically acceptable to the people interested to become part of it; e.g. morning prayer groups for the elderly and evening prayer groups for the youth. Identify, appoint, equip and chaperone members already active in prayer initially to take the lead in these small groups and to be role models. Also involve group members to do homework in preparation with regard to specific prayer points or models and to share with the rest of the group at the following meeting. Let them then participate, with confidence, in praying with regard to these prepared prayer points. In addition, inspire the group members to study the lives and autobiographies of biblical and contemporary prominent believers (role models) committed to praying, in order to learn from them and to apply what is applicable to one's particular situation.

Encourage members to start with a prayer journal, like George Muller who recorded more than 50 000 answered prayers. Ask members to share about friends or family members who inspire them and who are contemporary models to them in being devoted to prayer. Motivate members to share personal testimonies of prayers that have been answered. Have regular individual and corporate prayer meetings, making use of the information preached and taught.

6.5 Chapter 5

In Chapter 5 several directives have been identified from the letter to the Ephesians in answer to the normative task of Osmer with the question: 'What ought to be going on?' They are (1) authority of believers to pray (1:10, 20; 2:6); (2) the required unity of believers involved in the execution of (3) God's plan of Christ as the Head of each one and everything (3:6, 10); and (4) Paul's exhortation to believers to pray for others as well as for him (6:18-20). In chapter 5 it was discovered that prayer is central to Paul's approach, according to Hoehner (2017:5): 'He is praying for them (1:16) and asks for their prayers (6:19-20)'. Paul approached the multicultural situation in Ephesus with a strong educational focus. They were renowned for their lack of confidence due to an uninformed and consequently erroneous comprehension of their new identity. He sets out to teach them concerning their new identity, and prayer forms an integral part of it. In praying for them, he both acknowledges his dependence on God to solve the issue and as a leading model for them to emulate. Paul as a leader and prayer model has a dual purpose: first for the members of the (any) congregation to be involved in prayer as he does and secondly for the leaders (then and now) to take part in prayer themselves as well as praying for their congregation as Paul does.

Paul's intention is to teach the members and to pray for them to understand. The importance of his strategic use and implementation of the systematic *berakah* prayer format (read method) on the basis of an educational disposition and understanding of their faith is then distinguished. In other words, Paul is creating an educational ambience to teach and model to the believers in Ephesus, amongst other things, the principles and guidelines of intercessory prayer through word and example. It therefore seems that the Jewish *berakah* prayer format is used by Paul in Ephesians 1:3-3:21 to serve as an underlying structure to guide the readers in (intercessory) praying and praising God. Two major parts or principles of the *berakah* prayer format as 'the most characteristic formula of prayer' (Jordaan 1990:60), are a confession of faith proclaiming Jesus as Head of creation (1:10) and intercession (6:18-20). The centrality of this confession and proclamation of the headship of Jesus Christ is evident in that from it arise the praise and intercession of the *berakah* prayer. (Jordaan 1990:57).

Paul's exhortation for prayer addressed to the believers is the culmination of his preparation of the readers for it. He prays specifically for the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, to act as a coach to instruct, train and direct the believers (1:17). The objective of Paul's prayer is expressed: '...so that you may grow in the knowledge of God'(1:17 NLT). His prayer request follows in the wake of thanking God for their spiritual progress evident in their 'faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints' (1:16). Owing to their more intimate relationship with God, they have a new changed identity, which is a privilege and also a summons to serve. This new position of theirs in addition is recognised as a calling from God, which will influence their lifestyle. Their participation in the fullness of God Himself finds expression in their involvement in the church and with others outside of the church. This *diakonia* (service amongst themselves and others) of the saints (church) is its contribution to the growing unity of the Church and to their maturity in Christ (4:15). Consequently, there rests an important responsibility on the saints in their inward and outward role, by means of participating through their *diakonia* (prayer and conduct as works of ministry), to fulfil God's plan (*oikonomia*) to unite all things in Christ.

With reason the question could be asked: In what manner could even a child's participation in the *diakonia* of the church help him/her to establish and develop the need to pray for others? An established, nurtured and guided intimate relation with God leads to spiritual progress and engagement in the *diakonia* of the church. It is due to, (what he prayed for) the Spirit of wisdom and revelation who makes the new and changed identity of the believer a reality, and recognised as a calling. In response, the believers' involvement in the church, and subsequently with others outside of the church, establishes the growing unity of the church. The believer involved in the *diakonia* of the church experiences the participation in the fullness of God (being indwelt by the presence of God Himself), which is made known through this unity. The experience of the believer's new identity and of belonging will make the participant aware of those outside of this desired unity. It will successively establish a strong feeling with the believer to pray for them, and this prayer for others will further develop as the growing unity of the church matures in recognising and welcoming the headship of Christ over everyone and everything.

6.5.1 Guidelines from Chapter 5

The following guideline for the proposed model can be gleaned from this chapter:

The important act of praying, taught and modelled by Paul as a believer and as a leader, as discerned in Chapter 5, is an essential component of a model which can be offered for equipping a congregation to become an intercessory community.

The confession and proclamation of the headship of Jesus Christ is another suggested essential component of this model. The headship of Jesus Christ serves as the point of

departure for intercessory prayer and it signifies the fundamental authority for believers to pray. The calling and conduct of the church as a major part of Ephesians, finds expression in the required unity of believers involved in the execution of God's plan of Christ as the Head of each one and everything. Believers, with their new identity of being united in Christ, are involved in the lives of one another (4:2-3) and (supposed to be involved) cooperatively in the lives of others still outside the community of believers in conduct(3:10) and prayer (6:18-20). No member of the congregation is exempted, everybody partakes. Therefore, the final guideline determined is the important involvement of each member through their *diakonia* (service amongst themselves and others) as an expression of their new identity and as an outflow or result of their prayers.

6.5.2 Practical Recommendations from Chapter 5

Recommendations to put the suggested guidelines into practice are the following. It is notable that there is a similar approach, making use of a prayer method, used by both Paul and Murray. Paul used the Jewish *berakah* prayer (format) method as a guideline to assist believers in learning to pray, in like manner to Murray's proposed prayer methods. For Paul's approach in the book of Ephesians of making use of the Jewish *berakah* prayer method to be effective, one needs to apply the subsequent determined and enhanced teaching of complemented truths: the headship of Christ, the authority to pray, the unity of believers and the resulting service (*diakonia*) as part of the foundation for prayer. In the Name of Jesus, pray corporately and with authority at church and also at home. In addition, by means of specific courses, assist members in identifying individual and common gifts as a congregation. Then equip and guide members to be involved and to serve others in order to prevent apathy. Perpetually mentor and shepherd the believer's *diakonia* (prayerful inward and outward service) as flowing forth from, and giving expression to their life of prayer. As leaders and members of a congregation and body of Christ, be prayer models, be devoted to praying in all circumstances and at all times. Pray for the congregation and ask for their prayers. Encourage and create opportunities for participating in prayer during services. Ask individuals beforehand to pray for specific issues, providing information and guidelines to assist them and to give them confidence.

Create a specific prayer room or place for prayer in the church buildings. Equip it with prayer literature and prayer symbols to create a prayerful ambience and to make prayer more natural and acceptable to believers. Become part of local/national/ international prayer networks in order to practice the unity of believers in prayer and to help establishing prayer focus beyond the individual's and the congregation's own affairs.

6.6 Leading congregational change

During the above summary, finding of guidelines and proposing recommendations in order to put the suggested guidelines into practice, the question arose of how could a congregation be led and guided by the leaders to move towards an intercessory community? 'What needs to be done?' is the first question Chapter 6 endeavored to answer. Subsequently the question 'How is it to be done?' will be answered. Herrington et al. (2000:100) wrote a book: '*Leading Congregational Change*,' and appropriately begin the chapter of their book, regarding the starting point of bringing about change, with the question: 'Where does one begin?'

The researcher studied the book of Herrington et al. and made a comparison between the suggestions of the book and the practical recommendations that were gleaned from the research – see above – and it seems that the model of Herrington et al. can assist a congregation in becoming an intercessory community. The model of Herrington will now be described and applied to the change process that is needed in a congregation to move towards an intercessory community.

6.6.1 The Congregational Transformation Model

Herrington et al. (2000:12) introduce their suggested [congregational transformational model](#) as consisting of 'three major interdependent and interactive components: spiritual and relational vitality, an eight-stage process for change, and four essential learning disciplines.' It is important to keep in mind that these are interdependent and interactive components. The correct outfit (spiritual and relational vitality), with – for orientation – the suitable plan (the eight-stage process for change) and the appropriate skills/ability (the four learning disciplines) will result in the desired destination of transformation.

6.6.1.1 Spiritual and relational vitality

The first component, spiritual and relational vitality, serves as the heart and centre of the transformation process. A spiritually sound and healthy congregation, whose commitment to love and follow God finds expression in loving one another, will be able to manage, be in charge of and maintain the required change that is the objective of transformation. Spiritual and relational vitality is, in other words, the energy (vitality/ passion) for congregational transformation. Spiritual and relational vitality is at the heart and centre of the transformational model. It is accomplished through four interactive experiences according to Herrington et al. (2000:18-27). Initially, the holiness of God is encountered through the practice of the spiritual disciplines of 'regular time to be still and quiet in the presence of God...Reading Scripture, praying, experiencing prolonged periods of solitude, fasting, studying, resting, and relaxing in

nature are all means that increase our likelihood of encountering the presence of God' (Herrington et al., 2000:20). The deep, personal and continuous encounter with God results in the subsequent forgiveness of sin, experienced as the gift of God's grace, undeserved and unconditional. Then, in humility the unity with fellow human beings is recognised and accepted in being equal as sinners forgiven by the grace of God, grace initially and subsequently offered to one another. Finally, God's plan is fulfilled to change the world in practising authentic Christian communion with each believer using his or her gifts responsibly to the benefit of others. Meaningful and lasting transformation will then be possible.

With regard to the All Saints United Church Somerset East – with reference to Andrew Murray and to the book of Ephesians – a committed and transforming life will be endorsed as the required basis of prayer. Murrays' teaching on the importance of the 'inner chamber' and Paul's instruction on the headship of Christ, expressed in a united and vibrant (*diakonia* – service) relationship with Christ and with one another, will serve as the means for this purpose. The required spiritual and relational vitality will stem from the above-mentioned God-oriented spiritual life. Individual believers and the congregation will be tutored with regard to the resulting authority they have to pray in Christ. The holiness of God will be progressively encountered and experienced in devoted solitude and commitment, and be communicated through beneficial intercessory prayer. It is a reflection of transformed life which is lived from the indicative (Ephesians 1-3), as it is explained by Paul in Ephesians 4-6. Hoehner (2017:77-78) uses the term 'walk' (*peripateo*) in 4:1, 17; 5:2, 8, 15 when referring to the characteristic Christian lifestyle which signifies 'to live out the spiritual realities that have been given to them.' To walk the talk defines the committed, transformed Christian and is the basis of a life of prayer.

6.6.1.2 The eight-stage change process

As the second component, the eight-stage process for change in addition provides a practical way and structure to accomplish the required transformation from the unacceptable present situation to the desired future ideal of God. Form and sequence is given for the transformation ascertained in theory to be accomplished in practice. The eight-stage process for change therefore gives direction (process/approach) to the change that occurs in different stages or steps. The first three stages are important as the preliminary work in preparation for the ultimate success of the change process. Stages 1 to 3 – making personal preparation, creating urgency, and establishing the vision community – 'demonstrate why change is needed and to build support that leads to a state of change-readiness.' (Herrington et al., 2000: 29). They lay the groundwork for change.

Stage 1 deals with making personal preparation. Key terms are preparation, self-assessment, spiritual disciplines, good relationships, analyses of needs, discussions, accountability and finding the right pace (Herrington et al., 2000: 22-34). Time and patience is of the utmost importance to establish the foundation, in order to ensure a healthy personal life and ultimate transformational success, contrary to the tension associated with the identified necessary change and the impatient pressures to move on.

Personal preparation is the essential first act of organisation for the pastor and key leaders of All Saints United Church. Spiritual and emotional fitness is required for the unpredictable journey of change lying ahead. Transformation is always associated with uncertainty, opposition and stress and in the midst of it all the leaders of All Saints United Church need to be determined and unchanging. Personal preparation will proactively enable them to be ready for change and able to discern the specific ways in which God is leading. Personal preparation will be achieved by means of the devoted practice of spiritual disciplines, being reminded and open to God's mission for the church, self-assessment and leadership style, accountability, personal and relational vitality and discovering the right pace.

Stage 2, Creating Urgency, is accomplished by contrasting the congregation's unacceptable present reality and God's ideal (still in the future) to be pursued. Key terms are congregational assessments, feedback, ensuring as principles honesty and constructive criticism and seeking assistance with the comprehensive and quantitative assessments. When people are focused on the future, with the hope and a passion to be right with God, a proper sense of urgency is the desired outcome. Such as John the Baptist sought after, according to Luke 3:10: 'John the Baptist's message created a deep sense of urgency, so much that the people responded, 'What should we do then?'' (Herrington et al., 2000: 36).

Patiently, with discernment and consideration, members will be made aware of the current lack of prayer in the lives of individuals and consequently in the congregation as such. The present unacceptable circumstances will be distinguished, as a frame of reference, in reflecting on the results of the personal interviews, as well as the subsequent individual questionnaires according to Chapter 2. Individuals will be challenged to evaluate and assess themselves in the context of this lack of regular individual and corporate prayer at present. Individual and corporate accountability will be established as well as finding the right pace, by means of the analysis of needs and subsequent informed discussions.

The alternative future ideal of God for believing members, namely a vibrant individual and corporate prayer life which finds expression in intercessory prayer, will be delineated with reference to Murray's inner chamber (Chapter 3) and the Apostle Paul's appeal for prayer

(Chapter 4.) The desired urgency will be the consequence of juxtaposing the unacceptable reality of prayerlessness of All Saints United Somerset East, and God's desired future ideal of a committed life of prayer for individuals and the congregation. 'And as He taught them, He said, is it not written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations? But you have made it a den of robbers' (Mark 11:17). Discussions will continue with frequent, honest and constructive feedback. Examples of renowned friends or family members committed to prayer will be asked for and mentioned as evidence, and encouragement, of being faithful in prayer.

Stage 3 is about establishing a community with a vision. This conduct expresses the importance of team work: first acknowledging that only with God (as part of the visionary team) is transformation possible and secondly, corporately with selected fellow members, to determine and implement God's vision for the congregation. The carefully selected (and trained where needed) members of diversity and cross-representation, motivated by the created tension and resulting urgency, will prayerfully be responsible to 'discerning and shaping the vision, in communicating with the broader congregation, and in designing and carrying out the implementation of specific action plans' (Herrington et al., 2000: 41). Their reciprocal trust-based relationships, constant and mutual support and encouragement is essential in maintaining the ongoing transformational process.

It is recommended that the visionary community should consist of about 10% of the average attendance, but no more than about 25 members. The average attendance of All Saints United Somerset East is 22. It therefore qualifies as a small congregation. The work of a visionary community will then be done through a series of open meetings, with a core group committed to the process (Herrington et al., 2000: 43). The method of selecting the required core group with contemplation will be initiated with prayer. Next, diversity and cross representation will determine the composition. Training will be provided when necessary. Building communion is essential for more effective cooperation and discernment. It will be done with each open meeting by means of praise and worship, corporate and intercessory prayer and sharing of concerns. The selected members of the core group will be asked to give an account of their hopes and ambitions for the All Saints. It will authenticate their involvement as part of the core group and help to shape the vision (Herrington et al., 2000: 47).

When the need for change has been discerned with the first three stages – in preparing the congregation's leaders for the task of understanding God's vision – the next two stages inaugurate the shape and direction of the desired transformation by following this vision.

Discerning the vision and determining the visionary path is what Stage 4 is about. According to Herrington et al. (2000: 49), 'vision is preceded by an understanding of mission and it is

followed by a detailed description of the visionary path.' Where mission is about God's eternal purpose for the (church) congregation, vision entails a clear description of God's ideal to be accomplished in the future by the congregation within the framework and boundaries of mission (Herrington et al., 2000: 50). Vision, understood as originating from God, facilitates the selection of key individuals involved in the transformational process, as well as mobilising the congregation as such. Visionpath, as the third and subsequent step, provides more detail with regard to the meaning of and proposals for vision. Herrington et al. (2000:51) state: 'Vision describes the big picture of where the church is going, and visionpath begins to fill in details of how the church will get there.' Key questions to determine mission, vision and visionpath are: 'For what purpose did God establish the church? What is God's specific call for the congregation? and How will our congregation achieve God's vision?' Through an ongoing process of prayer, seeking input, writing drafts, asking for feedback and developing consensus, a clear picture of God's preferred future is obtained, as well as what God's call is for the congregation and how to accomplish it.

Mission signifies God's general ideal for the church as the body of Christ. God's eternal purpose for the church is primarily spiritual and relational vitality. A good, reconciled relationship with God Himself, expressed by means of good relationships with one another as humans and with the rest of creation. The crucial importance of spiritual and relational vitality is evident, as it serves as the foundation of all church activities and growth.

Vision shows God's specific commission and assignment for the congregation in order to achieve his vision. The present study determined that prayer is central to achieving God's mission. Not only is prayer referred to by Murray as part of a process of being spiritually vibrant, but prayer is also presented by Paul in the book of Ephesians as a means of involvement to achieve spiritual and relational vitality beyond oneself.

Visionpath indicates the method and procedure to accomplish the vision. All Saints United Church's visionpath is firstly centripetal and secondly centrifugal. Inwardly members are to learn to pray and to be committed to a life of prayer, in order to ensure their own and the congregation's spiritual and relational vitality. Subsequently, prayer outward and beyond themselves will be taught, in order to be mastered and practiced.

With Stage 5 the vision, discerned and articulated by the vision community, is communicated to the rest of the congregation. Time and patience is fundamental at this stage, because it is the first time the vision goes public. A strong awareness of the audience is necessary to deliver the message of change with maximum impact. Firstly, it determines the pace or rate at which new information can be absorbed. Secondly, the character of the congregation necessitates an

ongoing communication process. Some people learn and understand with written statements, while others benefit from verbal deliveries. Thirdly, priority means repetition. Follow-up and frequent communication is a direct indication of the importance of the change process (Herrington et al., 2000: 63). Key terms are: develop an explicit communication strategy, creative communications, enlist the entire vision community, develop catchy slogans, repeat and feedback. The final objective is understanding and accepting the vision for change and a long-term commitment to it.

All Saints United Church is a traditional congregation with a majority of middle-aged to elderly members. Consisting of three orthodox denominations with a general and local conservative history, long-established programmes, conduct and lack of conduct – lack of prayer – characterise its personality. Consequently, with patience, repetition and with consideration, the vision will be communicated verbally and with written statements. Various occasions will be utilised: Sunday services, Bible study groups, small discussion groups, prayer groups, and members of the vision community doing personal one to one visitations to explain and answer questions. Appropriate slogans will be considered: 'We used to delay, but now we pray,' or 'A praying church is a healthy church.'

The final three stages, 6, 7 and 8, are about action. Stage 6 attends to the empowerment of the vision community and other key leaders involved. It is about focusing on the vision, finding the right people to do the job, and then removing the obstacles. The commitment and enthusiasm of the vision community is retained and utilised. The resulting adequate leadership base will accelerate long-term transformation and make it more efficient. Leaders are enabled to act pro-actively and to reinforce the vision (Herrington et al., 2000: 77).

Empowerment will begin with the members of the vision community. They are the right people who have been selected prayerfully and with contemplation. The vision of transformation has been and is their focus. These members have been part of the process to identify and give a detailed account of the vision in words. They are already informed and motivated. In addition members already active in prayer will be identified, appointed, equipped, and chaperoned to take the lead in these small groups initially and to be role models. Appropriate training will be given when the need for it is identified, as part of proactively identifying and removing obstacles. They will be empowered to take the initiative, take risks and experiment as they are prayerfully led by the Holy Spirit. It will be ensured that the current structure of All Saints United benefits change, for example if finances are needed, that the procedures to obtain it do not slow or hinder any initiative. Accountability and autonomy will be pursued.

Stage 7 deals with the implementation of change. 'We define implementation as a specific set of coordinated, high-leverage initiatives that move the congregation toward realisation of God's vision' (Herrington et al., 2000: 78). It flows directly from the visionpath and the action plans are the tasks of implementing the visionpath and goals. According to Herrington et al., (2000: 79)

'Successful implementation requires the use of three important skills – systems thinking, planning, and managing – to answer the following questions: (1) What should be done to move toward the vision? (2) How are we going to do it? (3) How can we ensure that we are making progress?'

Systems thinking is also referred to as layers of a congregational system, and entails: Mental models (perceptions and assumptions) at the centre, followed by Structure (patterns of relationship), then Trends (a current direction) and at the outside Events (activities) (Herrington et al., 2000: 146). Coordination and high leverage are two major actions of the implementation stage (Herrington et al., 2000: 79). Key terms are: Prioritise, plan, experiment, measure, align gifts with needs, and support of change leaders. It will enable the vision community, and consequently the congregation, to develop strategically and follow an implementation plan that is based on the vision.

The first crucial step is that of 'diagnosing' the predominant current layer of the All Saints United Somerset East. The 'surface' Event (activity) was discovered and identified as the lack of interceding prayer. The question: 'What should be done to move toward the vision of being active as an interceding congregation?' gives the 'diagnosis'. According to the layers of congregational systems, the Mental Model (perceptions and assumptions) at the centre – as the root or origin of all activity – needs to be addressed in order to ensure a consistent and ultimate transformation in conduct or activity, i.e. the Event of interceding. Planning to accomplish the determined action of changing the mental model of the congregation is next with the question: 'How are we going to do it?' Prioritising, as one of the key actions, ensures that 'our long-term objectives (vision) ... guide our short-term actions' (Herrington et al., 2000: 81). Central to God's ideal or mission, also to determine the All Saint's vision, are 'worshipping God, loving other human beings and making disciples' (Herrington et al., 2000: 35). With this perspective of being God and neighbour-oriented, All Saints United's initial involvement in accomplishing our vision by means of – and initiating with – intercessory prayer, will be introduced and commenced as an experiment or pilot project. Experiments, according to Herrington et al., 2000: 82, 'give people more room to innovate, learn, and improve with less risk of repercussion.'

Managing the implementation strives to assure continuous success. The question: 'How can we ensure that we are making progress?' endeavours to keep the whole project on track. All Saints United Church will constantly measure progress regarding implementation and give feedback as

to where we are en route from our unacceptable current prayerlessness to God's ideal: worshipping God in mutual (with God) intercessory prayer which results in loving our neighbour and making disciples. In addition, the identification and alignment of gifts will be done with regard to the members. More members will be involved in the implementation process, with a higher degree of success as the result. The support and guidance of change leaders is another aspect of ensuring progress. Appointed change leaders will be advised, followed up and prayed with regularly.

The ultimate objective of Stage 8 is reinforcing long-term momentum through alignment with God's vision, according to Herrington et al., 2000: 85, 86:

Alignment is evident when the majority of the people, ministries, and structures of the church are functioning out of a clear understanding and commitment to the vision ... Alignment means that worship, small group activities, ministries and programs, budgets, decision making, organization, and attitudes of individual members all reflect the vision.

Visions need to be revisited and refreshed, because transformation in the congregation is an ongoing process to adjust to the call of God's vision and to the changes in the world around us. It is always an endeavour to preach a relevant gospel message to an ever-changing world, therefore the state of ongoing change needs to become part of the congregation's existence. Key terms are: recast the vision, celebrate wins, align existing ministries with the vision, establish monitoring posts, address resistance, keep an eye on the community, define the ongoing role of the vision community and never stop.

Stage 8, at the end of the day, ensures a clear and consistent vision with God's call, adequate progress to reach the vision, alignment of the congregation's ministries with the vision and clarifying the next set of priorities for continual change ultimately to realise the vision (Herrington et al., 2000: 94).

The vision perpetually moulds the mental model. Therefore, All Saints United Church will continuously (have to) reconsider our vision in the light of God's mission/call as the ongoing process of change advances. Monitoring posts along the way will be: To what degree have we been able to participate in intercessory prayer? Is our (progressive) focus on the community a true reflection of our progress in terms of intercessory prayer involvement, contrary to what it has been? Have we reached the stage of making disciples as a consequence of our intercessory prayers? The vision will accordingly be redefined in order to remain relevant. Consequently, we will respond to the need to re-align existing ministries with the modified vision. The vision of being an interceding congregation will mould the mental model of worshipping God in mutual (with God) intercessory prayer. The ensuing Structure or patterns of

relationships will be loving our neighbour. As a result it will change the general direction of All Saints' ministry with the effect of making disciples as the Event or desired activity. The All Saints vision community will perpetually monitor the transformation process and ensure its being relevant and continuous.

6.6.1.3 Four Learning Disciplines

The third and final component involves a set of learning disciplines which will enable the leader to guide the transformation. These disciplines or skills assist and support the leader in initiating and sustaining transformation. Continued learning and the essential and required disposition of being teachable characterises this component. The leader and the congregation's ability to change will develop and a shift will occur from being an established entity pursuing security, independence and certainty to being a more dynamic transforming entity, being open to risk, interdependence and ambiguity (Herrington et al., 2000:96). The four disciplines of transformational leadership guide (discipline) the leader in order to manage, handle and direct the process of transformed change.

Herrington et al., (2000: 97-99) when preparing discussion of the four disciplines of transformational leadership, mention four leadership paradoxes. It involves the ability to solve the challenge of 'either-or' with the solution of 'both-and,' resulting in effective leadership. Firstly, service and risk: the leaders' healthy spiritual vitality reflected in their willingness to serve, is the basis from which they simultaneously take risks by being creative in thinking, in line with the vision. Secondly continuity and change: from the launch pad of historical and traditional core values and beliefs new ministry approaches and forms are prayerfully considered. Thirdly team learning and personal accountability: the change leader functions better interdependently and achieves far more in a strong team and still retains personal accountability. Fourthly Order (planning) and Chaos (flexibility): order is evident in the transformational model of vitality, process and discipline and change causes (temporary) chaos. Therefore, both planning and flexibility, i.e. order and chaos are part of an effective transformational process.

Discipline one is about generating and sustaining creative tension and was already mentioned with Stage 2 as part of the 8 stage process of change. Herrington et al., (2000: 101) state:

'Three interactive aspects of generating and sustaining creative tension must be exercised at the personal and congregational levels. These components are (1) discerning and describing a vision that comes to be broadly shared, (2) communicating a clear picture of the current reality, and (3) engaging in the process that generate and sustain creative reality.'

This tension or urgency, due to the perceived difference, will have a dual effect. Firstly, it will prepare and organise the congregation to change and to attempt new approaches (Herrington

et al., (2000: 100). Secondly, 'it is also through this tension that generative learning – defined as learning that increases the organization's capacity to achieve the desired results – occurs' (Herrington et al., 2000:107). The tension will be reduced as progress is made towards the vision and therefore the tension needs to be consistently maintained by the change leader.

It has been discovered that the current prayerless reality of All Saints United Church is falling short of God's ideal of being a participating interceding congregation, consisting of individuals participating in the ministry of intercession. The discipline of generating and sustaining creative tension guides, assists and supports the vision community especially to sustain the tension which tends to decrease all the time. The vision community of the All Saints United Church will set out to maintain creative versus destructive tension. Members, especially those opposing the change, will be reminded during services and small groups that tension goes hand in hand with change. Conflict will be dealt with in a creative and appropriate way. Conversations will be conducted in a question and answer format with individuals and/or groups opposing the transformational process. The important fact of simultaneous continuity and change with regard to the congregation's essential core will be emphasised. The vision will be explained continually to reenergise the transformational process. A constant supply of information and feedback with regard to progress will be supplied in order to maintain the hope and passion to be right with God as expressed through the vision.

Discipline two involves harnessing the power of [mental models](#). Mental models are various frames of reference, emerging from assumptions or generalisations we use continually to interpret and understand information we receive. Similarities are recognised and conclusions are made, which determine our responses. Herrington et al., (2000: 115) recommend that

The discipline of mental models requires that we recognize the mental models that we hold, assess them in the light of current reality, and have the courage to adjust them when the available data do not fit.

The congregation is subsequently guided by the leading team to recognise, accept and act upon the new mental models. Several abilities necessitate understanding the implications of the new mental models and help to make the required transition. They are self-disclosure, empathic listening, critical thinking, transformational planning, identifying critical assumptions, identifying key interdependencies, creating a safe environment, developing alternative scenarios, asking questions and treating the plan as a living document. The church and its message will then be relevant in terms of being a dynamic organism in a rapidly changing mission field, contrary to an out of date, stable, historical and traditional institution (Herrington et al., 2000: 115).

The current predominant mental model of All Saints United entails that prayer is not important. It stems from a lack of commitment and ignorance. Of the 83% who have a general knowledge

about prayer, only 50% pray often. In addition, only 33% know about and intercede frequently. The vision community will set out to identify and correct the erroneous mental model which is the cause of these unacceptable statistics. Through 'Empathic listening' the vision community will enter into dialogue with the members with regard to their congregational background. It will be conducted within each individual's narrative of life, in an effort to discover and understand what lies beneath his/her attitude towards intercessory prayer. Has prayer, and intercessory prayer specifically, been taught and practiced in their denominations of origin? Critical thinking will expose incorrect assumptions like 'Only the pastor needs to know about and practice intercessory prayer.' Members will be encouraged to challenge these assumptions. Consequently, with transformational planning, the All Saints United vision community will not only correct the wrong assumptions, but it will also emphasise as alternative the important interdependence among spiritual and relational vitality, the change process and the learning disciplines. A delineation of interceding members being part of an interceding All Saints United Church will be provided as a future possibility. Shortcomings in knowledge will be addressed with proper teaching, and with regard to conduct, with appropriate guidance. Openness in terms of asking questions and adjusting as transformation progresses will be encouraged and maintained with the objective of eventually establishing, and subsequently harnessing, a new mental model of worshipping God in mutual (with God) intercessory prayer which results in loving our neighbour and making disciples.

Discipline three is about enabling team learning, which is defined as 'the process of enabling a team to produce results far beyond its combined capabilities as individuals' (Herrington et al., 2000: 128). The endeavour is to bring together a group of people – with various and complementary skills and who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and approach – with the objective of generative learning, which is defined as 'learning that increases/expands the organization's capacity to achieve the desired results' (Herrington et al., 2000: 128, 107). A high degree of alignment is created with the purpose of focusing the team's collective energy in a single direction (Herrington et al., 2000: 130).

According to Herrington et al., (2000: 142) 'the three skills of team building, performance challenges, and dialogue' will contribute to the effective formation and functioning of the team in order to accomplish God's vision for the congregation as determined by the vision community. The vision community is the first (pilot) team to be set up in the context of the All Saints United Church. Members will be prayerfully identified and selected in terms of their commitment to teams and developing the required skills. Team building will be organised with the objective of learning to know one another as colleagues with different gifts in the context of team values such as openness, consensus, mutual respect, creativity and diversity. The alignment of the

different gifts will result in the team functioning more effectively. Communication skills need to be introduced and developed to guarantee clear and effective dialogue. The important performance challenges, to ensure accountability for the team and congregation, will be established in answer to the question: 'What needs to be accomplished and in what time frame?' (Herrington et al., 2000: 138). All Saints United Church will set out progressively to become an interceding congregation at the pace of learning and comprehension of the individual and subsequently the congregation, in the context of teaching and performance. Supervision by the pastor initially, and subsequently by the vision community with regard to other teams, is an essential final aspect of team learning. It will be conducted in terms of commitment to the team, opportunities provided for skills development and monitoring the team's progress (Herrington et al., 2000: 142).

Discipline four deals with practising systems thinking. Herrington et al., (2000: 144) state that

Systems thinking considers interactions between different parts and causes that may not be obvious. It helps integrating the other three learning disciplines – creative tension, mental models, and team learning. The comprehensive and interactive thinking of a systems perspective improves leaders' ability to perceive current reality, discern vision, and improve mental models.

Layers of a congregational system, according to Herrington et al., (2000: 146), consist of Mental Models (perceptions and assumptions) at the centre, with Structure (patterns of relationships) as the next layer. Trends (a current direction) follow and Events (routine and special activities) form the outer layer. It is an open system and all are related. Though Events and Trends enjoy the most time and attention of the leadership and congregation, the highest leverage for significant transformation is generally found at the mental model and structural levels (Herrington et al., 2000: 147). The importance of understanding the congregational layer system with regard to change and transformation is underscored by Herrington et al., (2000: 151):

Intervention may involve directly addressing the area that seems to be weak, the presenting problem. This type of surface approach will not alter the powerful underlying forces that often undermine progress. Deeper and longer-term impact is achieved by changing other areas that are contributing to the presenting problem. Finding and correcting the most significant of these underlying factors is a high-leverage intervention. This comprehensive approach to understanding congregations is basic to a systems thinking approach.

Integrating creative tension, mental models, and team learning (Intervention) improves leaders' ability to perceive current reality, discern vision, and improve mental models.

All Saints United Church is a complex, interrelated and dynamic system, as a unique, interracial, bilingual and elderly congregation. It consists of three prominent denominations: Anglican,

Methodist and Presbyterian. Unavoidable amalgamation occurred 19 years ago, due to the international trend of depopulation of the countryside. For two years, from 2008 until 2009, the congregation was without a pastor after an irreparable break between the congregation and the previous pastor. It influenced the members' commitment, attendance and involvement negatively with regard to the congregation. The present pastor has been with the congregation since November 2009. It initially was a situation of 'the one hand washing the other.' His ordination only took place three years later in January 2013. Various historical negative causes with negative effects were and are not addressed.

Team learning for the pastor and congregation is essential. Together they will have to identify and address unresolved issues in the past with regard to individuals and the congregation. Counselling sessions with unrelated counsellors will be arranged for individuals struggling to come to terms with the past. The unity, in terms of being related and interdependent as believers, will be emphasised and pursued. Every member is gifted to the benefit of the body. Forgiveness and reconciliation is crucial to ensure individual and congregational spiritual and relational vitality as the basis of transformation.

The process of correcting erroneous mental models will be viable with individual and congregational relationships being a priority. Team learning and personal accountability is significant. Spiritual and relational healthy individual members now are part of a spiritual and healthy All Saints United congregation. But this unity also has an outward perspective. All Saints United Church is a spiritually healthy congregation to the benefit of its own members and to those outside. Continuity and change take place as the congregation continues to exist and to grow internally and in addition, changes with a focus on those outside. With the mental model modified, patterns of relationship restored and the direction of the congregation aligned to live in harmony with God and one another, the event of loving and reaching out to our neighbours through interceding prayer will be progressively pursued.

6.6.2 A Proposed Interceding Model

Revealed and confirmed by the empirical and subsequent studies, inspired and managed by the literature of Andrew Murray with regard to prayer, as well as guided by interceding principles of the Bible according to the book of Ephesians, the following interceding model is proposed for the All Saints United Church Somerset East:

Personal preparation of the change leader and vision community called together to discern God's will and administer it within the context of the congregation:

Relational and spiritual vitality is the basis and driving force for leadership and the change process. They will be enabled to discern and facilitate God's will for the change process. Leadership needs to be the change they want to see.

Organisation of teaching and establishing the liturgy and programmes of the congregation to promote prayer:

A prayer beneficial and friendly ambience will facilitate the act of prayer in generating opportunity to put knowledge received about prayer into practice, individually and corporately. Every ministry of the congregation is to be prayer-oriented and motivated.

Equipping by means of referring to biblical and contemporary prayer models and providing appropriate prayer methods to assist leadership and laity:

Equipping also involves ensuring through preaching, teaching and discipleship a spiritual relational vital congregation desiring to be right with God. Good relations with God and one another are expressed through prayer to God, for one another and for other people and events.

'Practice makes perfect:'

The final step of the proposed interceding model is to put into practice what has been received. "As we pray, we learn to pray." The change leader with the vision community through their involvement in prayer will facilitate the process of learning to pray for the rest of the congregation and will act as contextual prayer models to be accompanied. Opportunities to participate in prayer by individuals during church services and in the various church programmes and ministries need to be organised and encouraged.

6.6.3 Interactive reflections as a summary

The present study was conducted in the All Saints United Church Somerset East to determine the present state of understanding and involvement with regards to prayer and intercessory prayer in particular. The empirical study proofed a good and general comprehension of what prayer signifies and involves. On the contrary, the lamentable lack of prayer involvement in general proofed to be rampant, as well as the lack of knowledge and consequent minimal participation with regards to intercessory prayer in particular. Prayer is not considered as crucial in the ministry of the All Saints United Church Somerset East.

The problem was addressed with a literature study of Andrew Murray and an exegetical study of the book of Ephesians. An intercessory prayer model was created with the objective to ensure and enable the leaders and members to be spiritually and relationally healthy, which find expression through prayer to God and prayer for others. The leaders and members will be

taught in terms of intercessory prayer as a crucial ministry of the congregation, as well as be guided and instructed as how to participate in prayer. Campbell (2006:17) suggested that children should be given more and more responsibilities to prepare them for adulthood and that there should be age-appropriate expectations as children mature. The leaders and members of the All Saints United Church Somerset East in like manner will be given, with appropriate expectations, more and more opportunities to participate in prayer during services as well as with other church ministries as they advance in this teaching and practicing intercessory prayer process.

6.6.4 Possible themes for future research

1. The internet as a contemporary and appropriate vehicle to establish cultural, cross cultural, national and international intercessory groups. Subsequently intercessory information and guidance could also be provided by means of the internet. Intercession and other forms of prayer, such as praying with a flash that is done over the internet could be further investigated. Maybe the internet and cyber space holds much potential for this theme and therefore warrants possible further study.
2. In the SA context AICs and (neo) Pentecostal churches are very powerful and rapidly growing in number with huge intercession programs. This could be a potential area for further research with regard to this study.

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Note: Straight-forward way of writing in the late 19th century culture.

ATTACHMENT 1 A ONE DAY EXAMPLE OF THE 31-DAY GUIDE TO PRAYER

WHAT TO PRAY FOR:

For the power of the Holy Spirit

I bow my knees unto the Father...

that he would grant you...

to be strengthened with might by the Spirit.

Ephesians 3:14, 16

Wait for the promise of the Father.

Acts 1:4

The fuller manifestation of the grace and energy of the blessed Spirit of God, in the removal of all that is contrary to God's revealed will, so that we grieve not the Holy Spirit, but that He may work in mightier power in the church for the exaltation of Christ and the blessing of souls.

God has one promise to and through His exalted Son; our Lord has one gift to His church; the church has one need; all prayer unites in the one petition – the power of the Holy Spirit. Make it your one prayer.

Special petitions:

.....
.....
.....

HOW TO PRAY:

As a Child Asks a Father

If a son shall ask bread of any of you that
is a father, will he give him a stone?...

How much more shall your heavenly Father
give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

Luke 11:11, 13

Ask as simply and trustfully as a child asks bread. You can do this because “God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba Father.” This Spirit is in you to give you childlike confidence. In the faith of His praying in you, ask for the power of that Holy spirit everywhere. Mention places or circles where you specially ask it to be seen.

Special Petitions

.....
.....
.....

ATTACHMENT 2 RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE:

Question 1: What is your understanding of prayer?

Question 2: How often do you pray?

Question 3: Why do you pray?

Question 4: What do you pray for?

Question 5: What is your understanding of intercession?

Question 6: What prevents you from praying?

Question 7: Do you doubt whether God answers prayer or are you sure?

Question 8: Do you doubt God's existence?

ATTACHMENT 3 RESPONDENTS QUESTIONS

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Uncertain; dual purpose: ask and thank.	Certain; Confident	Stupid; 'Don't waste my time.'	Tradition; Uncertain	Certain; a living reality	Communica tion. Requests.
2	Irregular; inconsistent.	Relation; Conversation; Experience; Deviate.	Senseless	Infrequently	A way of life; specific times	A way of life; specific times
3	Don't know	Certain; Help; Thank	Speculate; objective view	Uncertain; don't know	Ask, thank, spend time, confirmation	Communicate, request, thanks
4	Certain; world a better place.	Well being; Care; personal.	Uninvolved	Uncertain; self-centred	Family, others, guidance	Thanks, requests, intercede
5	Don't know.	Don't know; deviate	Don 't know; No part of frame of reference	Don't know	Stand in, represent	On behalf of
6	Hopeless. Unbelief	Nothing; Certain; confidence; personal	Unbelief	Unbelief	No priority	Distraction, ignorance, procrastination

7	Surprise; uncertain; confused.	Certain; sure	Uncertain	Yes	Certain no	Certain no
8	Uncertain; Certain; Don't know, confused	No; Observant	Yes	General agreement; uncertain, confusion	Certain no	Certain no

ATTACHMENT 4 YES – NO GROUP:

The **'Yes-group'** personally seems to know prayer as conversation with God and reflecting a good comprehension of prayer according to their responses. Therefore, the codes selected in analysing the data emerging from the answers given to question one, for the 'Yes-group' are: conversation, communication, confidence, real, a living reality, requests and expressions of gratitude.

The **'No-group'** appears on the contrary, to have no or only partial comprehension of prayer. They either have no interest in prayer, or prayer has no priority for them. This 'No-group' is descriptively coded as don't waste my time, ignorant, beat about the bush and indifferent; whereas those with a limited understanding, who are also part of the 17%, are being described by codes like procrastination, infrequently, inconsistent, and doubt.

Contrary to the 'Yes-group' theoretically understanding what prayer involves, only 50% of them admit to praying often **'Yes-Yes group'**. According to their responses, their prayer conduct is coded as 'relation, conversation, a way of life and specific times,' with the focus on action, in them being personally involved in prayer.

On the other hand, the lack of being personally involved in terms of prayer of the other 50% of the initial 83% respondents **'Yes-No group'** who nevertheless have the correct knowledge with regard to prayer, but to whom regular prayer is uncommon, is descriptively coded as 'irregular, inconsistent, and infrequent.'

Only 33%, a third of the 'Yes-Yes group', is praying for other people apart from themselves **'Yes-Yes- Others group.'** They understand and practice intercessory prayer as part of prayer as such. 'Family' and 'others', which is central to and characteristic of intercessory prayer, were descriptive codes selected for this 'other-person-centred' action of this 33% of respondents.

The opposite prayer distinguishing traits of the other 67% of the respondents **'Yes-Yes-Self group'** were coded with codes to express their more self-centred, traditional and general understanding of prayer and actions: 'world a better place'; 'well-being'; 'care'; and 'personal.'

ATTACHMENT 5.

(Translated from Afrikaans) The trinitarian presentation of the indicative is evident in the exposition of the thought structure of chapters 1 to 3:

In the reason for praise (1:1-14):

The Father elected us (1:4-6)

In Christ He accomplished our salvation (1:7-12)

Through the Holy Spirit as Pledge we are sealed (1:13-14)

Notice how every section concludes with the refrain: "To the honour of His glory!"

Through intercession (1:15-20)

That the Father of glory shall give (1:17)

the Spirit of wisdom...(1:17)

the power that he accomplished in Christ (1:17)

Exposition of the confession (2:11-22)

Through Christ we have access through one Spirit to the Father (2:18)

fellow inhabitants of God (the Father) (2:19)

while Jesus Christ himself is the corner stone (2:20)

a home of God in the Spirit (2:22)

Final intercession (3:2-13)

In the interruption of intercession (3:2-13)

the mystery of Christ (3:4)

revealed through the Holy Spirit (3:5)

according to the gift of grace of God (3:2,7)

In the intercession itself:

I bend my knees before the Father

of our Lord Jesus Christ (3:14)

that He might will you to be strengthened through the Holy Spirit (3:16)

Final praise (3:20,21)

To Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine (= the Father),

according to the power at work in us (= the Holy Spirit, note 3:16)

to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus.

In conclusion it could be stated that the indicative in Ephesians 1:3-3:21 is presented in several thought patterns, which come together in the central motive of the Headship of Christ, and which are presented within the trinitarian framework.

ATTACHMENT 6 CONGREGATION TRANSFORMATION MODEL

Congregational Transformation Model

