

The struggle for unity: Towards a pastoral model for the post-unification era in the Full Gospel Church of God

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Abstract

History is absolutely crucial for a comprehension of identity and culture of a denomination or church. In the history and culture of a people lies the genetic code of their identity and mission. Honest historical observation is required to evaluate the current state of affairs. Denominational diversity should be seen as a blessing in disguise where lack of unity when we claim to be unified is deplorable. The meaning of the future and the unity of the human story which encompasses the whole “journey” is a discovery which offers wonderful possibilities.

A truly unified atmosphere is truly needed through structural expression from top to bottom, where members will enjoy a similar unified expression. No matter how strong our identification is with the core stories of our own group, we must always hold on to the possibility of change, resulting in being freed from damaging interpretations. As a Pentecostal denomination, we need to understand that the Pentecostal power is a unifying factor. In the post-unification era we need not repeat the mistakes of the past but we need to work together in order to triumph in issues of freedom, equality, social and political engagement.

The focus of the study was on the Struggle for Unity: Towards a Pastoral Model for the post-unification era in the Full Gospel Church of God. The aim of the study is to explore and evaluate critical success factors for unification by means of the literature, empirical, exegetical and hermeneutical methodologies, and proposes a pastoral model in this regard. This study holds that critical factors for unity can be identified and integrated into a pastoral model for the FGC to achieve full reconciliation and healing in South Africa.

Opsomming

Geskiedenis is absoluut noodsaaklik vir 'n begrip van die identiteit en kultuur van 'n denominasie of gemeente. In die geskiedenis en kultuur van 'n volk lê die genetiese kode van hul identiteit en missie. Eerlike historiese waarneming is noodsaaklik om die huidige stand van sake te evalueer. Kerklike diversiteit moet gesien word as 'n bedekte seen, waar gebrek aan eenheid waneer ons daarop aanspraak, betreurenswaardig is. Die betekenis van die toekoms, en die eenheid van die menslike storie van die hele "reis" omvat, is 'n ontdekking wat wonderlike moontlikhede aanbied vir die beter begrip van die menslike lewe.

'n Werklik verenigde atmosfeer is nodig deur middel van deeglike strukturele uitdrukking van bo tot onder af, waar lede 'n soortgelyke verenigde uitdrukking sal kan geniet. Dit maak nie saak hoe sterk ons identifikasie met die kern stories van ons eie groep is nie, ons moet altyd vashou aan die moontlikheid van verandering, en dit wat lei tot wat ons van skadelike interpretasies kan bevry.

As 'n pinkster denominasie, moet ons verstaan dat die pinkster krag 'n verenigende faktor is. In die post-eenwording era, het ons nie nodig om die foute van die verlede te herhaal, maar ons moet saamwerk om by kwessies van vryheid, gelykheid, sosiale en politieke betrokkenheid te triomfeer. Die fokus van hierdie studie was op die 'Struggle vir Eenheid: Op pad na 'n Pastorale model vir die Post-eenwording era in die Volle Evangelie kerk van God'. Die doel van die studie was om kritiese sukses faktore te verken en te evalueer, en vir eenwording met behulp van die literatuur, Epiriese, Eksegetiese en hermeneutiese metodes en 'n pastorale model hierdie verband voort te stel. Hierdie studie beweer dat kritiese faktore vir eenheid in 'n pastorale model geïdentifiseer en geïntegreer kan word, om die volle versoening en heling van die (VEK) in Suid-Afrika te kan bereik.

Key Words

Struggle, unity, pastoral model, post-unification era, Full Gospel Church of God

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 A BRIEF SOCIO-HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

According to Hofmeyr (1994:191), what was to become the FGC of God in SA, in its early years, evolved around two Pentecostal preachers, A.H. Cooper and George Bowie. Cooper visited the Cape as a sailor in 1901, and decided to stay. In the year 1909 George Bowie came to South Africa as a missionary sent from Bethel Pentecostal Assembly (Newark, New Jersey, USA). It was in the month of April 1910 that the Pentecostal Mission was started, and this was to become The Full Gospel Church of God in Southern Africa (Du Plessis 1979:15).

On March 28th 1951 the Full Gospel Church amalgamated with the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee, USA), and lengthened its name to the Full Gospel Church of God in Southern Africa. In America the church continued as the Church of God (FGC Constitution 1997:11-14).

At this time, the Full Gospel Church (FGC) consisted of black, Indian, coloured and European (white) communities (Du Plessis 1979:5). The non-white ministries viz., blacks, Indians and coloureds, were regarded as products of missionary work.

According to Anderson (1992:8) the Full Gospel Church followed the pattern of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa by having separate white, black, Indian and 'coloured' churches. The 'non-white' churches were dominated organisationally and financially by the 'white' church. The first open agitation for a United Church began in 1975, initiated by the black constituencies in the FGC. Negotiations commenced under what was called a 'spiritual presbytery', consisting of representatives of all four sections of the church (Anderson 1992:82).

After many years of negotiations towards putting in place a comprehensive management structure, the Full Gospel Church finally unified. The structural unification formally took place at the inaugural Conference on Thursday the 9th of October 1997 on the basis of statements of reconciliation made by the two general overseers of the two separate associations, Pastors Arthur Naidoo, and Gerald A. Honey (Celebration Programme, 11-12 October 1997). This unification presented new and exciting challenges.

1.2 PROBLEM MOTIVATING THE STUDY

Having provided some historical background, the problem motivating the study is introduced here. That is, in order to provide a truly unified atmosphere henceforth, the FGC will have to look at its membership composition, as well as its structural set up. The Church currently has a large following amongst black South Africans. Unfortunately, there are still some structural divisions it experiences, according to race, colour and language in some regions (Chetty 2002: 120-123; FGC General Conference Minutes 2009:113-134).

After 14 years of unification, there has never been a black moderator (according to minutes of the General Conference in 1997, 2001, 2005 and 2009), which might well be interpreted as portraying a lack of trust in black leadership. From the researcher's observation, this is a problem as argued in this study, and may indeed pose an ongoing struggle, which could continue to challenge reconciliation and lead to our members as well as ministers choosing to join other denominations. With a view to the above-mentioned challenge, the following question can be formulated:

To what extent can critical factors for unity be identified and integrated into a pastoral model for the Full Gospel Church to achieve full reconciliation and healing in the South African context?

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To develop a strategy for addressing and solving the main problem the following underlying questions are identified:

- 1.3.1 What is the current composition of the FGC and what does its present structural/political situation look like? (For the answer on this question please refer to pages 16-20: 2.2;2.3;2.4; & 2.4.1)
- 1.3.2 What is the impact/influence of the FGC constitution with regard to unity (Including structural unity) on the membership composition?
- 1.3.3 What does the Bible teach with regard to church and structural unity?
- 1.3.4 What pastoral model can thus be constructed to influence reconciliation and healing in the unity of the FGC of God?

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this study is to identify and eventually integrate certain critical factors into a pastoral model for the FGC in South Africa, so as to achieve full reconciliation and healing in the South African context. To consider these issues here, the study has the following objectives:

- 1.4.1 To provide a descriptive analyses of the composition of the FGC as well as what the present structural/political situation looks like.
- 1.4.2 To analyse, by means of the constitution (accessible at the FGC Headquarters) of the FGC, why there is a struggle for unity within the membership composition.
- 1.4.3 To determine what ought to be going on in the FGC by investigating what the Bible teaches with regard to church and structural unity.
- 1.4.4 To develop a pastoral model that would influence reconciliation and healing in the unity in the FGC of God.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

There is very little documentation on the practical theological problem addressed by this study. The literature available is comparatively small and limited mainly to Du Plessis (1979), who wrote the history of the Full Gospel Church in South Africa from 1910-1983, Anderson (1992), whose main focus was on African Pentecostals in South Africa, and Chetty (2002), who asserted that very limited effort has been made towards dealing with this issue. So, before our story is lost forever, it is important that it should be recorded. No empirical study has been undertaken to construct a pastoral model capable of identifying and integrating critical success factors for unification in the FGC in the context of South Africa. According to the researcher, this research area deserves attention, since a high percentage of blacks are currently abandoning membership of the FGC (General Conference Minutes: 2001, 2005 2009).

The study will contribute to the theoretical enhancement of the current level of knowledge as well as provide new insights about unity in diversity.

1.6. CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

This study holds that critical factors for unity can be identified and integrated into a pastoral model for the FGC to achieve full reconciliation and healing in South Africa.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.7.1 Struggle

The Oxford dictionary (1983:669) defines struggle as making a vigorous effort or striving under duress. Struggle in the context of this study is used with reference to the ongoing tension with regards to power sharing and unity since the 1980 split on the question of unity in the FGC.

1.7.2 Unity

Unity is neither accidental nor a product of human need, but rather a covenantal reality, and God-ordained order of human life, lived under God's

sovereign Lordship in the context of gender, ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity (Logan 2007:42).

1.7.3 Pastoral Model

The term 'pastoral' is a Christian term that expresses a fundamental concept deeply embedded in every biblical portrayal of Christian ministry (Adams 1980:5); it is a perspective in light of which all the activities and ministry of the church can be brought into perspective. Whereas "model" is something one can construct to organise and systematise a lot of data on a particular subject, and more importantly, to determine the relations between different aspects or areas of data, and to present them in a simple format (Mouton & Marais 1996:143).

1.7.4 Post-unification era

In the FGC context, post-unification refers to an occurrence characterised by negotiations to put in place a comprehensive management structure that leads to unification after having had four racially separate constituencies from 1975 to 1997.

1.7.5 Full Gospel Church of God

The FGC is a Pentecostal denomination, founded in 1910. According to Nieuwoudt (1999:15), apart from the shared etymological root of the respective terms 'Pentecost' and 'Pentecostalism', the former refers to a day within a Jewish year, whilst the latter refers to a Christian religious movement which finds its doctrinal origin in Acts 2:1-13, and its modern historical origin in either the Azusa street revival of 1906-1915, or the

experiences which took place at the Topeka Bible College, Kansas 1901 (Anderson, 1992:24).

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is undertaken from a practical theological point of enquiry, and embraces Osmer's core tasks of practical theological interpretation. Practical theology concentrates on understanding what is happening in and around us (Hendriks 2004:211). According to Osmer (2008:4) there are four questions that are able to guide our interpretation and response, namely:

- **What is going on?** This is *the descriptive-empirical task* and is about gathering information that helps us discern patterns and dynamics in particular episodes, situations and contexts.
- **Why is it going on?** The task of this question is *interpretive*, drawing on theories of the arts and sciences to better understand and explain why these patterns and dynamics occur.
- **What ought to be going on?** This question has to do with *the normative task*. Using biblical material, ethical reflection, as well as theological concepts to interpret particular episodes, situations, or contexts, and constructing ethical norms to guide our responses, and learning from "good practice".
- **How might we respond?** The task of this question is *pragmatic* and determines strategies of action that will influence situations in ways that are desirable, entering into a reflective conversation with the feedback emerging when they are enacted.

As Osmer (2008:5) has asserted, gathering information helps us discern patterns and dynamics, where the following research method will be undertaken in the context of his core tasks of practical theological interpretation structure on the basis of the purpose underscored in the aim and objectives:

1.8.1 Empirical Survey

1.8.1.1: This study will conduct empirical investigation. This means qualitative interviews will be launched amongst four (4) groups of five (5) members in selected groups of current and former pastors. The main methods of data collection in qualitative research are observation, and interviews (Dreyer 1999:216). Qualitative researchers aim to acquire an in-depth understanding of human behaviour, along with the reasons that govern human behaviour (Dhaerah 2008:13)

Mason (2002:1) stresses that

“qualitative methodologies are particularly good at celebrating richness, depth, nuance, context, multi-dimensionality and complexity. One of the major strengths of qualitative research is that it gives us insight into contextual issues. Qualitative methodologies are well suited to the exploration of multicultural concerns.”

1.8.2 The literature survey

1.8.2.1: A literature study, whereby both primary and secondary sources as well as published information on all aspects concerning the research topic will be utilised (including the study of the FGC constitution). This is because this study will be analytical and historical in approach. Further to this, before dealing with the development of organisational theory, it is necessary to understand the suppositions of structural functionalism, and the way in which they impact on denominational management.

According to Ammerman (1998:210-213) written or recorded data may be extremely valuable for all aspects of congregational life. For example, various types of church literature (from educational to theological), minutes of board meetings, worship audio and video tapes, written transcripts of sermons, all informative literature, recording of events and all reports from synods and other bodies, provide valuable insight.

1.8.3 Exegetical Study

1.8.3.1: Part of this research is conducted through exegetical study. Lawrence (2010:40) sees exegesis as the disciplined attempt to read out of a text the author's original intent, rather than what may be personal preference, experience or opinion. What this means is that words, when placed in sentences and paragraphs, convey meaning. The basic method of exegesis to be used in determining an author's original intent will be the grammatical-historical model.

Deppe (2011: xiv) described it this way: "exegesis must concern itself not only with the content but also with the form of the text, both what is said (content) and how it is said (genre, form)." Discerning the meaning of the text in this way immediately plunges us into an exploration and study of the grammar, syntax, and literary and historical context of the words being studied. This study follows what Lawrence coined as the grammatical-historical method (2010:41).

The book of Acts, particularly Chapters 11, 13 and 15, among others, deal with issues of unity and diversity implicitly.

1.8.4 Hermeneutical Study

1.8.4.1: The study is developed and constructed by means of a hermeneutical interaction. A hermeneutical approach aims to both explain and interpret the nature and character of God's involvement with humanity (Louw 2000:83). The term hermeneutical in this research proposal is used in a practical, theological sense. Practical theology no longer prescribes technical regulations for ecclesiastical practice, but designs praxis theories and strategies for action as part of social and personal transformation (Louw 2000:91).

According to Heitink (1999:179) the hermeneutical perspective links the "who does what" primarily with the "why" and the "about what". He also continues to say that "before one understands an action, one must grasp what motivates people and why they do what they do in this particular way. This allows one to move from understanding to explanation.

The hermeneutical paradigm bridges theory and practice, which connects the church with the broader society in which it is embedded. This method provides an adequate framework for examining the situation framed by this study. Osmer (2008:23) declares that new understanding emerges when scholars are open to hermeneutical experiences in which they become aware of.

1.9 PROPOSED DIVISION OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 serves as a general introduction of the study, whereby clarity is given to the scope of the research through the following elements: the problem motivating the study, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the study methodology and the outline of the study.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the FGC's historical background. An in-depth analysis will be undertaken on the years of division, functions and activities of different boards, theological training and education in context, as well as outlining the characteristics of the year 1997 as a watershed year.

Chapter 3 presents the empirical findings of the study, evaluating the research conclusions.

Chapter 4 contains an interpretive study, whereby the results of the data analysis are interpreted.

Chapter 5 evaluates the post-unification era and its impact on organisational and managerial theory of praxis.

Chapter 6 deals with a paradigm for the future.

Chapter 7 develops a pastoral model for doing ministry in the context of diversity, as well as making strategic recommendations, whereby suggestions for future research arising from the findings will be made.

1.10. TABLE 1

(Schematic Presentation of the Methodological Correlation)

Research Question	Aim and Objectives	Research Method
What is the composition of the FGC and what is its present structural/political situation?	To provide a descriptive analyses of the composition of the FGC and its present structural/political circumstances.	This study is undertaken from a practical theological point of enquiry, and embraces Osmer's core tasks of practical theological interpretation and will be determined by means of an empirical investigation.
What is the impact/influence of the constitution with regard to unity (including structural unity) on the membership composition?	To analyse by means of the constitution of the FGC why there is struggle for unity within the membership.	Determined by means of a literature study and the study of the constitution. This is because this study will be analytical and historical in its approach.
What does the Bible teach with regard to church unity and structural unity?	To determine necessary protocols in the FGC, by investigating what the Bible teaches with regard to church and structural unity.	Investigated by means of an exegetical study, where applicable parts of scripture are identified and exegeses of them made.
What critical factors can be identified and integrated into a pastoral model for the FGC in South Africa to achieve reconciliation and healing in unity.	To identify and integrate critical factors into a pastoral model that can influence reconciliation and healing in the unity of the FGC of God.	In order to develop the pastoral model for unity, the hermeneutical interaction analysis is conducted. The hermeneutical paradigm bridges theory and practice, which connects church with society. This method provides an adequate framework for examining the present situation of the church.

CHAPTER 2

A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE FGC

2.1 Introduction

The task of this chapter is to answer Osmer's (2008:4) practical theological question: "What is going on?" This is a descriptive-empirical task, which "...has to do with the quality of attentiveness congregational leaders give to people and events in their everyday lives" (Osmer 2008:33). In answering this question, information will be gathered to help us discern patterns and dynamics in the FGC episodes and situations.

In view of the fact that the FGC is a Pentecostal denomination in the South African context, it is important that we bear in mind the historical relevancy of South African history. Hendriks (2004:27) affirms that in doing theology in Africa, we must be realistic about our situation. Theological honesty about the contextual realities that face South Africa would help us as a denomination to become a truly unified organism.

South African Christianity and the concomitant ecclesiastical developments and counter-developments were directly influenced by the changing socio-political circumstances (Hofmeyr & Pillay 1994: vii). The question "what is going on?" has, according to Osmer, (2008:33), to do with the quality of attendance congregational leaders give to people and events in their everyday lives.

2.1.1 The Contextual Relevance of South African History

The historical role of the church in South Africa with regard to the development of colonial racism and apartheid is well documented (Venter 2004:111). Apartheid was ideologically underpinned by a Christian nationalist ideology, which, through a narrow and distorted reading of the Bible, attempted to justify racial separation in terms of the 'calling' and 'mission' of Afrikaner self-determination and self-preservation in an African context (Hofmeyr & Pillay 1994:246).

Kretzschmar (1998:154) defines ideology as a “world-view or mind-set, which serves the vital political, economic, social and psychological interest of my own group often at the expense of the other group.” A central figure in the development of apartheid was H.F. Verwoerd. Characteristic of apartheid ideology, many Afrikaners accorded him the stature of both a religious and a political leader. Apartheid was an attempt to both protect and maintain what they considered to be Afrikaner culture and identity (Hofmeyr & Pillay 1994: 248).

According to Naude (2010:70), apartheid was a pervasive system that permeated every aspect of the individual and society. At the height of apartheid, the numerous laws regulated where people could live, whom they could marry, which schools they could attend, what type of work they were allowed to do, and ultimately – and perhaps most fundamentally – what they ought to think. The Mosaic Law (Exodus 34:10-17; Deuteronomy 7:3-4) clearly stated that Jews were never to marry among the heathen nations. Hence, if blacks in the context of South Africa could not marry whites, they should probably have been categorised among the heathens. If the Christian principle should be applied here with regard to the apartheid policy, a different story/interpretation would be found.

Naude (2010:70) further maintains that this situation was justified on biblical and theological grounds to the extent that some apartheid measures were actually put in place by the National Party government at the request of white reformed churches, for example, the Immorality Act, which forbade sexual relations between people of different races. Perryman (1995:31) confirms that many Christians used the alleged curse of Ham as the legal grounds to outlaw marriages between Blacks and Whites (Genesis 9:18-29) while others used it to deny Blacks the position of priesthood within their denomination, and still others used this logic to justify indenturing Blacks as slaves. The mainline or historical churches, including Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, Congregationalists and Presbyterians, were members of the South African Council of Churches which rejected and opposed apartheid (Venter 2004:111). Venter (ibid) further explains that:

The Pentecostal denominations were fundamentalist who believed personal salvation and private prayer would save the country. In

practice these Pentecostal churches were either largely silent or apolitical with regard to the apartheid situation, or they isolated and segregated themselves. In reality, whether they acknowledged it or not, they are part and parcel of the system of white benefit and black oppression.

Anderson (1992:7) asserts that there are at least three distinct types of African Pentecostal churches in South Africa described as follows:

1. *Pentecostal mission churches*, so called because of their origins in predominantly white 'mission' churches, and also sometimes known as 'classical Pentecostal churches'.

In South Africa, the churches that are part of this category are: Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM), the Full Gospel Church of God (FGC) and the (South African) Assemblies of God (AOG) (Anderson 1992:8).

2. *Independent Pentecostal churches*, which have exclusively black leadership and are independent of white control. They too emphasise the power and the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit, and are mostly small, independent churches, although some are rapidly growing, and some have already become sizable churches; and
3. *Indigenous Pentecostal-type churches*, also known as 'Spirit-type' churches or 'Zionist-type' churches. These are independent African churches with historical and theological roots in the Classical Pentecostal movement, although they have moved further away from this movement in several respects over the years, and may not be regarded as 'Pentecostal' without further qualification.

This study concerns itself with the role of the Pentecostal mission churches of which the FGC forms part. According to Anderson (1993:76), the sad reality is that in South Africa, that which should have been a testimony to the unity, reconciliation and dignity of all believers in Christ, actually became a virtual opponent of these truths. The church followed the practices of apartheid society, with very little credibility as the community of the kingdom (Venter 2004:113).

Instead of uttering a prophetic cry for justice to the ugly system of government that was to divide and rule South Africa for almost half a century, Pentecostalism can be seen to have acquiesced to the society of its day, becoming a bastion of apartheid mores (Anderson 1993:76).

2.1.2 Conclusion

Based on the above-mentioned background, it is unfortunate to notice that the Bible was used for suppression, degradation and exploitation of human beings. This was indeed a heresy, theologically rationalised, as is nowhere more evident than in what Skosana (2013:10) called the re-engineering of the society as a whole. That is why Anderson (1993:76) is not hesitant to say that black Pentecostals silently withdrew to the independent church movements, or else, to their new-found Pentecostal spirituality that offered no solutions to what were seen as political questions.

In the following paragraph, attention will be given to the significant role played by George Bowie as one of the founding leaders of the FGC. I will further explore and examine the elements contributing to the historical make-up of the FGC. The following will be taken into consideration: the black history, the coloured history, the Indian history, the united assemblies, as well as the unification.

2.1.3 The Significant Role of George Bowie

According to Burger and Nel (2008:76), George Bowie was born around 1860 in Scotland and emigrated to the USA in 1900. Du Plessis (1979:5) states that George Bowie came to South Africa as a missionary, sent from Bethel Pentecostal Assembly (Newark, New Jersey, USA) in the year 1909. Du Plessis (ibid.) further states that it was in the month of April 1910 that the Pentecostal mission was started, and that this Pentecostal Mission was to become the Full Gospel Church of God in Southern Africa.

The FGC centennial celebration (1910-2010) programme of June 2010 highlighted that the founders of the church were extremely interested in foreign missions, and missions work thus commenced in the Belgian Congo (DRC), Basutoland (Lesotho), Swaziland and Mozambique. These were also

known as Pentecostal missions at that stage. The FGC then established missionary work also in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), Nyasaland (Malawi) and South West Africa (Namibia). The FGC became known as the Full Gospel church of God, with the amalgamation with Church of God (USA) in on March 29, 1959.

Therefore, before dealing with the development of organisational theory, it is necessary to understand the suppositions of structural functionalism, and how they impact on denominational management.

With a view to Osmer's question above, this chapter seeks to address the following question: what is the current composition of the FGC, and what does its present structural/political situation look like. This will be done in an attempt to deal with, or address, the above-mentioned problem statement.

2.2 The Black History

Unfortunately, there are no records of the documented history of the black department of the FGC. Chetty (2002:103) concluded that the black community has always been viewed as missionary objects and that much of the black history is only oral and very vague.

I agree with Chetty, because through personal observation, as the very first black African student in a historically whites-only theological college of the FGC in 1995, I came across no records of the history of the church in that regard. It is pertinently argued in my own view that "in the history and culture of a people lies the genetic code of their identity and mission" (Grizzle 1995:3). The work among the black community of the FGC in fact started around 1914, at which time it was initiated as a ministry from white missionaries to black people (Du Plessis 84:81). Despite the fact that blacks of the FGC have not found acknowledgement in the archive, and have also been seen as missionary objects, the current irony is that approximately 80% of the FGC's members are Black (Anderson 1992:82).

Moreover, despite this overwhelming majority, African leadership has not been given space to emerge, which has inevitably resulted in an increasing

distance between black and white Pentecostals in the same denomination (Anderson 2012:3).

This may be interpreted as the result of fear amongst the minority white membership, of the majority black membership. However, it makes it necessary to wonder what the purpose for the mission among blacks had been, and also how scripture was to be interpreted and implemented in this regard. Indeed, it can be said that there was a lack of inclusiveness from the very beginning.

It is not insubstantial that in the official history of the FGC there is no mention of the contribution of leaders such as Johannes Thusaga, who planted about 12 churches from Groblersdal, Middelburg, Hammanskraal up to Tzaneen around 1936 (Du Plessis 1984:87), Rev. J. Malambo who penetrated Botswana in 1954, Evangelist S. Biya who penetrated Swaziland in 1955, as well as Rev. E. Mkhwanazi, who was the first black principal of the Jacobus Saayman Bantu Bible College, opened in August 1952 (Roberts 2000:1-5). The above-mentioned information proves that black leaders did indeed play a leading role in the initial establishment and development of the FGC. Why they are not given proper credit and recognition and are written out of the official published history of the church, is still a question to be answered.

2.3 The Coloured History

As in the case with the black history of the church, there is also not much documented history on the contribution of coloured pioneers in the FGC (Chetty 2002:106). Du Plessis (1984:112) states that the FGC did not work among the coloured population before 1929, but makes mention of Pastor Fred Abrahams, who pastored a flourishing church at Salt River in the Cape in 1932.

2.4 The Indian History

The work in the Indian community was founded in Pietermaritzburg on July 26, 1925 in Longmarket Street (Oosthuizen 1975:72). Though the founder of this work was white, there is ample contribution made by Indian

pioneers. Oosthuizen continues to make mention of the following pastors: F.Victor, born March 11, 1906; A.A. Kenneth, born July 7, 1916; A. Naidoo, born June 27, 1932; R.C. Abel, born on February 21, 1926; V.R. Enoch, born on June 18, 1913; P. L. Simeon, born September 20, 1923; S.T. Paul, born on January 26, 1923; C.R. Geoffrey, born June 21, 1916; G. S. Ellappa, born September 3, 1930; M. K. Ivan, born on July 7, 1930 and Y. Allen, born June 5, 1940; M.N. Naidoo, born April 23, 1939; F. Chengan, born October 22, 1934 and E. J. Moodley, born January 23, 1947.

Chetty (2002:37) reports that just like the work of the black and coloured departments of the FGC, there is no mention of the above-mentioned contributors and pioneers in the official written history of the FGC.

2.4.1 Conclusion

As far as history is concerned, Koffarnus (2007:119) correctly notes that many people talk about history in negative terms. For example, he quotes the following people to support his statement: “history is more or less bunk” asserted Henry Ford (1863-1947), “history is little else than a picture of human crimes and misfortunes” (Voltaire 1694-1778). However, without history and the historians who record it, we would be ignorant of the roots of our culture (Koffarnus 2007:119). Thus, history leaves us in a double bind, which requires that we navigate responsibly towards meaningful preservation of the past.

This study argues strongly that history is important, and that to some extent, the FGC is forward focused to the detriment of history. I firmly believe that to become a fully biblically-unified denomination, the FGC will be required to discover its historical foundations, as well as to endeavour to think afresh and be as inclusive as possible in our history. As indicated by Keddie (2000:9) “history is far more than a bare record of the ‘facts’. Inevitably it is an interpretive process, in which the significance of events is assessed and evaluated.” This is supported by Crabtree (1993:1) when he writes that “our ignorance of the past is not the result of a lack of information, but of indifference, and our disbelief that history does not matter.” Contrary to this, I therefore take a stand, upon which I elaborate further throughout this study, that in the post-unification era of the FGC, a more comprehensive history is of great consequence.

2.5 Administration (Presentation by Pastor L.L Rowlands, FGC conference, Durban:13-23 October 1998).

The administration of the FGC provided a measure of local church autonomy, whilst providing some district, regional and Executive Council oversight. That means the local church may govern their own affairs in consideration of the entire programme of the organisation, with only a very few limitations protecting the organisation against property loss. The funding of the FGC is based on 10% of the non-earmarked income of the local churches (head office), and 10% of the personal income of the pastors and workers (region). This means that the local church enjoys 90% of its own income on its own programme. There were boards that exercised the greater influence on the activities of the FGC, detailed below.

2.5.1 The Sunday School Board

This board has had as its main function the provision of Sunday school materials to local churches and the coordinating of the Sunday school programs.

2.5.2 The Youth Board

This board had very close contact with local church youth organisations.

2.5.3 The Evangelistic Board

The evangelistic board has had its main task structured around evangelism through full-time and part time evangelists, the planting of new churches, as well as their financial support.

2.5.4 The Board of Christian Education

This board served as an umbrella board, having jurisdiction over the activities of all the theological colleges of the church. The main concern of this board was the education of full-time ministers through full-time and part-time study. The academic improvement as well as accreditation of the colleges has been one of the activities of this board. The Board of

Christian Education oversees the Christian Education programme of the entire church.

2.6 Conclusion

The unification long since completed, the provision of the children's ministry material to the local churches is vital. Local churches struggle to survive without specified curriculum in teaching and training within the Sunday school context. Senter (2010:245) has noted that "many congregations have Sunday schools but they are more like poorly constructed lectures or sermons than opportunities to capture the spiritual interest of young people entering adolescence". With regard to education, there is no emphasis, however, on the education of the laity, or on the educational programmes and ministries of the local church. The accreditation of the college as well as the study programmes continues to be a great challenge, even up to today.

According to the 2006-2009 report on the board of Christian Education, the college had two accredited programmes, viz. the Certificate in Theology, and the Diploma in in Theology. The report further reveal that an application had been made for the Bachelor Degree in Theology, and that SAQA had approved the application, but that the Council on Higher Education (CHE) had declined the application. In return, the administration maintains complete personal assembly records, provides the necessary approvals for applications to ministry, for purchase and sale of property, loans and bonds, and a host of other functions in terms of the constitution. Then, there is appointment of marriage officers and chaplains to the uniformed services in conjunction of the state. Conference and board meetings of the Executive Council and Moderator (a term for the top structure in the hierarchy of leadership in the FGC comprising of the moderator/general overseer, the three deputy moderators and the secretary general) are all controlled by the administration and its officials.

2.7 Amalgamation with the Church of God

In the spring of 1949, the newly appointed general overseer of Church of God, H.L. Chesser, and the executive mission's secretary, J.H. Walker,

attended the second Pentecostal World Conference in Paris. J. Du Plessis of South Africa as the secretary of the conference and a close friend of the Church of God introduced Chesser and Walker to J.H. Saayman of the FGCSA.

Saayman immediately appreciated the Church, its organisation, fellowship, zeal and vision. He wrote to the Full Gospel Church for permission to join the Church of God. Permission was granted, and arrangements were made for Chesser and Walker to visit the South African Church. The Executive Council of the Full Gospel Church adopted a resolution that discouraged the merger, but did not entirely close the doors to negotiations (Conn 1977:281-282).

The two groups were identical in many ways, but there was a severe divergence in a few instances of organisation, for instance, The Church of God is stern in its centralised form of government, whereas the Full Gospel Church “Strongly favoured decentralization” (Minutes of the Executive Council of the FGC, January 6, 1951). The obstacles did not prove insurmountable, however, and the amalgamation was effected on March 28, 1951. The Full Gospel Church lengthened its name to Full Gospel Church of God (Conn 1977:282).

2.7.1 The Church of God

It is imperative to include the brief history of the Church of God in this study since it merged with the FGC in South Africa. According to Holstein (2006:1) the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee) can be traced back to 1886. There was a meeting of Christians at Barney Creek Meeting House on the Tennessee and North Carolina border. These Christians were originally known as the Christian Union and were led by Richard G. Spurling. Elder Spurling was an ordained Baptist minister, who rejected some of the views (of the Baptist church?) that were, according to his views, not based accurately upon the New Testament. Richard Spurling and the seven other members from Holy Springs and Pleasant Hill Missionary Baptist Churches in Monroe County, Tennessee and Cherokee County, North Carolina, organised the Christian Union in August 1886.

This newly-formed group agreed to eliminate all man-made creeds and concentrate on the teachings of the New Testament. The church eventually became known as the Church of God (Cleveland Tennessee) for identity reasons (Synan 2001:119). The reason for this is because of many churches with similar variation of the name Church of God, the Church of God (Cleveland Tennessee) added headquarters designations to distinguish them and avoid confusion with the Pentecostals who also boast of a denomination known as the Pentecostal Church of God (Synan 2001:114)

2.7.2 The Origins of Pentecostalism

A common problem that plagues most attempts to define and characterise Pentecostalism is that the emphasis is often placed on the distinctiveness of Pentecostal faith and experience rather than on the broad agreement between Pentecostals and evangelicals (Tienou & Walls 2007:165). One of the issues emerging in the study of Pentecostalism is how to understand the term 'Pentecostal' itself (Anderson 2001:423). According to the Concise Evangelical Dictionary of Theology (1999:376) Pentecost was the culmination of the feast of weeks (Exodus 34:22, Deut.16:10) and included in the offering two loaves of unleavened bread, representing the first products of the harvest (Lev.23:17-20; Deut.16:9-10).

Although the Feast of Pentecost is still celebrated in the Jewish calendar, the term Pentecost at times also refers to the Christian movement of Pentecostalism (Nieuwoudt 1999:14). After the exile it became one of the great pilgrimage feasts of Judaism. In the Christian church, Pentecost is the anniversary of the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2). Pentecostalism is an evangelical charismatic reformation movement that usually traces its roots to an outbreak of the tongue-speaking in Topeka, Kansas in 1901 under the leadership of Charles Fox Parham, a former Methodist preacher (Elwel 1991:376).

According to Engelbrecht *et al.* (2000:42) Parham's theology later exercised influence on the Pentecostal movement. Six years later, in 1906, the movement was launched to the world at the Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles. A former student of Parham's, W.J. Seymour, was the instrument

God used to spread this truth (Hamon 2003:196). Synan (2001: 4) refers to the Azusa experience as follows:

The Azusa Street meetings were notable for interracial harmony and seem to have been a merger of White [sic] American holiness religion with worship styles derived from the African-American Christian tradition, which had developed since the days of chattel slavery in the South. The expressive worship and praise at Azusa Street, which included shouting and dancing, had been common among Appalachian Whites [sic] as well as southern Blacks [sic]. The admixture of tongues and other charisms with Southern Black [sic] and White [sic] music and worship styles created a new and indigenous form of Pentecostalism [sic]. This new expression of Christian life would prove extremely attractive to disinherited and deprived people in both America and other nations.

Macchia (1996:116) correctly argues that:

the day of Pentecost reveals an event of enormous ecumenical implication. Men and women gave prophetic witness in many tongues that people from many different geographical locations could understand and affirm. Such an astounding praise of God's mighty deeds cuts across geographical and cultural lines, without eliminating them. There was a unity in diversity.

The gospel breaks down the barriers of race, language, and colour and Pentecost gives us a glimpse of what that looks like (Thomas 2011:34). Thomas (ibid.) further maintains that it ought to be appreciated that Pentecost signals to us the sinfulness of racial and ethnic superiority.

I firmly agree with Nieuwoudt's argument (1999:17) when he says that Pentecostalism is not only concerned with the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, but is a movement centred around a prominent experience of rebirth in Christ by the responding believer. The observers who have tried to emphasise the "American" nature of Pentecostalism in Africa and elsewhere often miss this important fact (Anderson 2001:424). Therefore, Nieuwoudt (1999:17) concludes that it is therefore a misrepresentation to suggest that

Pentecostalism and its adherents are solely concerned with the Holy Spirit. Tienou & Wall (2007:165) argue, in contrast, that:

Pentecostals fully affirm the authority of the Bible. They affirm the centrality of Christ's work on the cross for salvation and the historic reality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. They affirm the importance of repentance, conversion, and living a holy life, and they eagerly anticipate the glorious return of Jesus Christ at the end of the age.

According to Tienou & Walls (ibid.), it should therefore be made clear from the outset that the overwhelming majority of Pentecostal groups practice their faith solidly within the ideological boundaries of historic Christian orthodoxy.

2.8 Theological Education and Training

The Full Gospel Church has a proud history with regards to the education and training of its ministers. For more than 70 years the church has trained and equipped them. The following are some of the colleges that belonged to the FGC.

2.8.1 Bethesda Bible College (Durban)

According to the information pamphlet presented at the FGC spiritual conference held in Durban in 1999, the Bethesda Bible College was a theological college of the FGC in South Africa. The FGC Executive Council, Board of Christian Education and the College Board of Control controlled this college. The college was the brainchild of one of the chosen men of vision, the late Dr John Francis Rowlands. He was born in Bristol, Great Britain, in 1909, settled in South Africa with his parents, brother and sister. As early as 1933, Dr Rowlands had started classes in Bible studies on a part-time basis.

Full-time workers, as well as other interested members, enrolled as students. Examinations were conducted and certificates were presented to successful students. Over the years, the need for a fully-fledged Bible College became evident. In pursuance of this, Dr Rowlands made visits to

the U.S.A. at the invitation of Cecil R. Guiles, who was the general director of the Church of God Youth and Christian Education at that time. The Youth World Evangelization Appeal (YWEA), a new programme of this department, raised \$214,333.92 towards the building project.

Bethesda Bible College was completed and officially opened on October 11, 1975. Full-time classes were given by Pastor Schimper with teaching sessions commencing on February 10, 1976. The purpose of Bethesda Bible College was to prepare men and women for a fruitful ministry.

The courses were structured so as to give the student a sound theological and practical basis from ministry. There were three programs of study leading to a certificate in Theology or a diploma in Divinity. Matriculated students, and those who received 50% in their courses, qualified to receive the Diploma in Divinity at the end of the three years. Others received the Certificate in Theology. The Bethesda Bible College was fully accredited with Unisa, University of Durban Westville and Lee University in the U.S. Students with a Diploma in Divinity and a matriculation exemption, gained admission into the Honours Bachelor of Theology degree at Unisa and the UDW.

2.8.2 Chaldo Bible Institute (Cape Town): (FGC Herald 1989:10-11)

Chaldo Bible Institute owes its existence to a decision of the Executive Council of the FGC in 1955, whereby Pastor C.J. van Kerken was appointed and commissioned to found a Bible College in Cape Town supposedly to train pastors in the former coloured race group. This coincided with and brought fruition on a dream of the late Pastor Ben Dodds who had bequeathed property to the Church.

It was his clear and written desire, amongst others, that a bible college be established and that it be named in memory of his late wife Charity Althea Dodds.

On the 11th of May, 1959, full-time classes commenced to train men and women for the pastoral ministry. Chaldo offered a three-year Diploma in Divinity to students who fulfilled the academic requirements of its comprehensive curriculum.

This diploma met the denominational needs for acceptance into the ministry of the FGC. The University of Western Cape accepted students to earn the B. Th. after completing a bridging course. Alternatively, students were accepted in the BA (Hons) programme with religious subjects (FGC Herald 1989:10-11).

2.8.3 Berea Theological College. (Irene-Pretoria)

Berea Theological College of the FGC was officially inaugurated at Strang Street, Kroonstad in September, 1951. Very soon the house in Strang street became too small and the college had to move to Plot Ruhe, where the still growing Seminary burst it's seams, to the extent that a brand new college had to be built at the Head Office in Irene, ten minutes south of Pretoria. Since 1965, Berea theological College enjoyed recognition with Lee College, Cleveland, Tennessee (USA) and the University of South Africa. Students with a Licentiate in theology (L. Th) diploma were able to enter directly for the degree of (Hons. B.Th.) at the University of South Africa. The minimum entrance requirement for the study at Berea was standard 10 (Now Grade 12), or equivalent. Lectures were given in both English and Afrikaans (FGC Herald 1989:8-9).

2.8.4 The Full Gospel Bible Institute

The need for a Bible College for Black students arose in the FGC in 1952. In August of the same year, Dr Jacobus Saayman, the moderator of the FGC, officially opened the Bible College on his farm near Koster. Seven years later, the church decided to move the college to a "better" area, and in 1963, the "Full Gospel Bible Institute" became the new college situated at Taung in the Northern Cape.

Because of urbanisation, millions of people moved to cities and the Gauteng area needed a Bible College. In April 1980, the FGC Bible Institute was moved to Jabavu (White City) at Soweto, and was dedicated to God (Information Pamphlet 1999). Venter (2004:66) interviewed one of the Black students who attended the above-mentioned college around 1987-1988. The student said the following:

The college was poorly equipped: there was no electricity, one communal bathroom, toilets with no doors, and the library could hardly be called a library. In winter we divided into pairs to take turns lighting the fire every morning to heat up the water drum for our morning ablutions. We slept in a shed like cattle, knowing that our White [sic] sister college in Pretoria had all the facilities necessary for a good training institution. As young Black [sic] students, we were content with the humble surroundings and inferior facilities, as we considered it a privilege to learn.

Nkomo (1990:2-3) attributed the poor education of blacks to the following:

The accession of the National Party to power in 1948 brought about a qualitative change in every aspect of life. In the education domain, segregated and inferior schooling was legislated for Africans in 1953, Coloureds in 1963 and Indians in 1965, providing an ideological cornerstone for social segregation, economic exploitation and political oppression of these groups, calibrated according to their location on the racially hierarchical social system. Education historically served as an instrument to ensure white domination over all Blacks. Blacks attended poorly constructed and overcrowded school facilities resulting in poor instruction and performance.

Looking at the above it is obvious to recognise the eurocentrism that has always guided the FGC. It has consistently made little room for anyone but the dominant racial group in the church.

2.9 Years of Division

Roberts (1991:3) recorded that “the extension of the church in South Africa carried on unabated, despite South Africa’s political problems from 1948 onwards, as the separation of races became a government priority and was enforced bylaw. This caused the church to grow into separated departments which was placed under white superintendents who were answerable to the Executive Council of the Church at her head office, which by April 1960 had become permanently located at Irene, near Pretoria in the then Transvaal Province. Even the official history of the church became

departmentalised. According to Chetty (2002:35) the 1948 Separation of Race Act became another dilemma in the history of the FGC. The separation of the races in this church became a contentious issue. Many black, Indian, coloured and a few white churches were outraged when the church opted to follow the status quo of the then-racist government. Anderson (1982:82) further mentions that the first agitation for a united church began in 1975, initiated by the black constituencies in the FGC. Negotiations commenced under what was called a 'spiritual presbytery', consisting of representatives of all four sections of the church. For many years, the white community had oversight of the whole Church and all departments were subject to the Executive Council in Irene.

Since 1986, all communities had their own moderators and executive councils, as well as theological colleges. In 1986 an umbrella legislative body of ordained ministers called the ordained ministers' council (OMC) was formed, purporting to be non-racial. However, these arrangements were seen as papering over of the cracks, which continued between groups that existed as separate bodies.

Anderson has noted:

It was also felt that Blacks [sic] (especially Africans) were not adequately represented on the OMC because of the academic and theological qualifications that were conditions of membership. Blacks felt heartache at their virtual exclusion, as they did not have adequate training facilities and were victims of an inferior education system that denied them many of the opportunities accorded to Whites [sic]. Nevertheless, this was a serious attempt at bringing unity to the church. The OMC then elected a General Moderature (GM) led by an elected President, Dr. Alex Thomson, consisting of representatives from all four sections, still under the organizational domination of the Whites [sic].

Funds, which were given to the church from USA, were still under the control of the white church. The GM was given considerable authority over the 'entrenched clauses' and the 'principles' of the constitution, the 'by-laws', which related to the running of the church on a more local level, were left in the hands of the different sections (1992:83).

There were still four separate General Conferences, Moderatures and Executive Councils. Negotiations continued at the level of the OMC and the GM (General Moderature), resulting in a statement of intent being drawn up in the same year (1996), where it was declared that the ultimate aim of the FGC was to have a single General Conference with one executive council acceptable to all four sections of the church. The pressure by the black churches against white control increased until in February 1990. Then the OMC set a date in May 1990 to form one united integrated church.

The majority of white churches said that they were not ready for such a move and asked for an indefinite period of time to 'prepare' their members for it. In the meantime, during 1989, both the coloured churches (then known as the Wynberg Community) and the Indian section, commonly called the Bethesda Church, had resolved to withdraw from the FGC altogether if unity was not achieved by October 1989. They were disturbed that a notice calling them to a united conference reached them too late to be a constitutionally valid discussion document. Dr. Lamer Vest, an emissary from the Church of God (Cleveland) in the USA, then entered the negotiations requesting to be allowed to promote reconciliation and healing in this divided church and persuaded these two sections not to force a church split. As a result of this appeal, the churches agreed to go back to the OMC.

In February 1990 the three black sections agreed with each other on the date of 18-19 May 1990 to form one integrated and united church. In May 1990, two separate associations were formed, namely: The United Assemblies and the Irene Association, each with its own ecclesiastical autonomous government (Anderson 1992:83-84).

The three black church organisations consisted of about 750 churches, with an estimated membership of about 250 000, with a sprinkling of eight white churches and about 60 white ministers (mostly formerly associated with the mission's department of the church) united to form the United Assemblies Association of the FGC. Elected to the leadership of this predominantly black church was a former (white) moderator of the FGC, Pastor van Kerken, who became its first General Overseer. Another white member, Dr Alex Thomson, was elected the First Assistant General Overseer; Pastors

Arthur Naidoo (from the Indian section) and L.E.S. Masekwameng (of the African section) were Second and Third Assistant General Overseers, respectively and Pastor Henry van der Vent (from the 'coloured' section) was Secretary General (Anderson 1992:84). Dr. Alex Thomson, the First Assistant General overseer of the FGC-United Assemblies, said the following on why he chose to serve in the United Assemblies of the FGC (Thomson 1991:7):

We are aware that the formation of a non-racial association within the Full Gospel Church of God was preceded by years of negotiations and discussions at council, board, presbytery and conference meetings. The ultimate decision that such an association should be formed was taken by a meeting of all the ordained ministers of the Church gathered at Irene. We are proud of the fact that the Full Gospel Church of God had the initiative and courage to move in this direction. A four-year period has been agreed upon during which time negotiations will continue to be aimed at unity. These arrangements have created the opportunity and the framework within the Church, wherein those who hold such convictions regarding unity without reservations within the church, may serve the Lord at all levels of church structure by virtue of qualification, irrespective of race or tribe. Those who have come to this conviction have, naturally the responsibility to act accordingly. The formation of this association within the church has provided the means to do this. Because the Word of God teaches that obedience is better than sacrifice, having taken this step we believe that we can humbly anticipate the blessing of the Lord upon the United Assemblies and the leading of the Holy Spirit in their endeavours to teach, preach and minister in the name of the Lord. The Full Gospel Church of God in Southern Africa during the course of its eighty years in the ministry, has passed through the valleys, stood on the mountain tops, but always faithfully proclaimed the truth of the Gospel of Christ and now of this we are confident, that the Lord, the Head of the Church, will guide and help us to be what He wants us to be, as an instrument to bless the future new South Africa.

Pastor van Kerken emphasised that there was to be absolutely no discrimination throughout the church down to its grassroots. This was not

to be a forced integration, but any other ordained minister would be eligible for any office in the FGC. Most of the white churches (over two hundred churches consisting of some 60 000 members) formed a separate association, known as the Irene Association. Some 65 black congregations, four coloured, and three Indian congregations, were included in this association. Effectively, these two associations formed separate church bodies, but together, they legally constituted the FGC. The two Executive Councils met annually as a National Convention to 'negotiate', and the black churches compromised by giving the white FGC an absolute maximum of four years from February 1990 to resolve the differences. The National Convention took the place of the disbanded General Moderature and Ordained Ministers Council.

2.10 The Year 1997 as a Watershed

The FGC became one of the most racially stratified churches in our country, by embracing policies, which disadvantaged so many and caused grief and pain to greater majority of South Africans, blacks in particular. The political repercussion of the rapidly changing South Africa in the 1990's was felt throughout Pentecostal churches, manifesting in agitation for united structures and equality of leadership opportunities. This resulted in increasing pressure for change on white Pentecostal leaders and the gradual emergence of black Pentecostals in church leadership and in the political arena (Anderson 2012:10). This rapidly changing political situation forced many white members in the FGC to rethink their position. After years of negotiation, the FGC finally united. Chetty (2002:114) sees this unity as having been sparked by selfish reasons, rather than by reasons of authentic forgiveness and Godly unity. He asserts that the white church feared that they might lose the connection with the Church of God (Cleveland-Tennessee), because of its conservative stance on the question of unity.

It is important to note that the Church of God (Cleveland-USA), which amalgamated with the FGC in South Africa, dealt with the matter of equal rights since 1966. The stage had been set in 1964, with the adoption of a strong Resolution of Human Rights, which recognised the dignity and worth of every individual. The resolution asserted "that no American should,

because of his race or religion, be deprived of his right to worship, vote, rest, eat, sleep, be educated, live and work on the same basis as other citizens.” Along with its rhetoric, the resolution flexed spiritual muscle by declaring that “no Christian can manifest a passive attitude when the rights of others are jeopardized [sic].”

The wall that appeared, innocently in 1926, was broken down in 1966. All members of the Church of God (USA) could attend, or become members of, any local congregation they wished, attend any conference or convention, or enrol in any college, without regard to race or colour (Conn 1977:353). So, for the FGC to lose their connection with the Church of God (USA) would also mean that they will lose the monthly financial subsidy which they had been enjoying for over 50 years. Hence there was impending need to unite (Chetty 200:115).

With regard to the above paragraph it is important to see within our own context how seriously the FGC dealt with the issue of apartheid, both effectively and drastically. This takes us to what happened in 1997. After negotiations were aborted, the Church of God (USA) sent a fact-finding committee in June of 1995. Thereafter, negotiations resumed. 1996 saw the birth of the 20 principles on which the then “proposed” merger of the bodies would be based. According to the minutes of the Inaugural General Council meeting on the 9th and 10th of October 1997, the secretaries of the former associations read the declaration of unification of the church in terms of the Transitional Clauses of the Constitution as approved by their respective associations.

2.10.1 Declaration of Unity

The declaration of unification reads as follows:

Article 1-Unification

1.1 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF “THE FULL GOSPEL CHURCH OF GOD IN SOUTHERN AFRICA”

1.1.1 Having functioned as a single denomination in two distinct associations as the Irene Assemblies and the United Assemblies;

- 1.1.2 Having had through the history of the Church a shared historical background, shared confessions based on the Holy Bible and the shared objective of proclaiming the Word of God;
- 1.1.3 Having accepted this constitution at the meeting of the General Conference of the Irene Assemblies and the United assemblies on 7 October 1997, representing all the members of local churches thereof;
- 1.1.4 Having gathered as a unified assembly in Pretoria on 10 October 1997 with the sole desire to function as The Full Gospel Church of God;
- 1.1.5 Hereby declare that this constitution, having been adopted at the last-mentioned meeting, forms the basis of the functioning of the Church in Southern Africa;
- 1.1.6 Shall organize [sic] and arrange its affairs and activities in accordance with this Constitution, subject to the transitional provisions set out in this chapter.

The structural unification formally took place on Thursday the 9th of October, 1997. During unification, the two general overseers of the two separate associations made their Statements of Reconciliation after the Table of the Lord. Pastor Arthur Naidoo, General Overseer, and FGC united assemblies, said the following in his statement of reconciliation (the original statements are attached in the annexures):

As members of the body of Christ, we do acknowledge the hand of God upon us in our painful journey together all these many years. When we survey the uplifting story of the Pentecostal [sic] movement in South Africa, we are justly proud of the glorious achievements of our founding fathers and pioneers, who dedicated themselves single-mindedly to carrying out the Great Commission of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. However, much [as] we may praise this aspect of our collective History [sic], we must also sadly confess the dark stain that it shadows over our past [sic]. The stain, to which we refer, is the smug way in which the

church forged a system that fitted perfectly within the evil doctrine of racial separation or segregation known as “apartheid” [sic]. The evil in the earth-bound system of apartheid was that it put vast numbers of us across the colour line at a disadvantage through no fault of our own, but to a circumstance of birth. It was thus an attack on our personal dignity, self-image and ultimately an attack on God’s sovereignty. Institutionalised racial separation, without our consent as separated ones, hurt us, and this brought resentment, and in the end all of us were psychologically damaged. Today we come together humbly and confess this flaw in our collective past. We as the United Assemblies of the Full Gospel Church of God, cast away our former resentments, confess and forsake them and extend the warm hand of Christian Fellowship and unity to everyone who names the name of Christ in all our churches. We forgive our brethren of the Irene assemblies, and pledge our loyalty and allegiance to the Full Gospel Church of God in Southern Africa. We make our commitment today to work to fulfil the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ the Head of the Church. We declare our unity under His Lordship. May God be glorified in our unity. May our unity endure forever, and may no cloud ever arise again to darken our future history.

Pastor Gerald A. Honey, Moderator: Irene Assemblies said the following in his Reconciliation Statement (9th October 1997):

In pursuance of the “unity” of the Church in accord with what deem to be consistent with our Christian conviction we submit the following in all good faith and conscience. We as the Irene Assemblies of the Full Gospel Church of God in South Africa do deplore those policies which have disadvantaged so many and caused grief and pain to the greater majority of South Africans. We recognize and lament the grave injustices done in our land and though as a Church we have been and are an “A” political institution, we cannot avoid acceptance of our share in the human dilemma, so tragic, in our national history. Be it by commission or by neglect, in the light of the awesome plight of so great a multitude of “the people” [sic] of South Africa we deem it incumbent upon us to record our deep regret at the unnecessary and tragic circumstances that have attended the lives of so many. We bow in deep repentant humility before Almighty God and request forgiveness of all those who have been pained

and still suffer the consequences of the past injustices in Our Land. Further, whereas we as a Full Gospel Church of God in Southern Africa have, understandably, experienced the national political tension within our own ranks which have made fellowship strained and negative and resulted in lack of dynamic growth in the Church, We ask God to forgive us for allowing our vision and focus to be clouded and compromised. We also asked our brethren of the United Assemblies to forgive us for being party to the internal conflict, which has divided us these past seven (7) years and believed our “Unity in Christ by the Spirit”. We further as the “Irene Assemblies” of the FGC hereby pledge our allegiance to work together in a diversified unity as prayed by our Lord in Jn.17 and outlined in 1 Cor.12 to proclaim the whole Gospel for the whole man, to all men “with signs following” and to pursue the path of reconciliation in terms of 2 Corinthians 5:14 to 6:2. In the conviction that the grace of God, which had appeared to all men, shall be made manifest in this our beloved land in our generation and in our day and it shall be said of us, it was said of another land in another day.

After the above statements by the overseers of the former church associations the following section will now deal with issues pertaining elections (Minutes of the Inaugural general council meeting of the FGC 1997:2-5).

2.10.2 Elections

The house then, by secret ballot, elected the leadership of the Church. Finally, the following leaders were elected to the hierarchical structure of the Church:

- i) Pastor G.A. Honey was voted Moderator/General Overseer, with 410 votes.
- ii) Pastor T. Bowers was voted First Deputy Moderator, with 233 votes.
- iii) Pastor A.S. van Deventer received 267 votes as the Second Deputy Moderator.

- iv) The Conference then voted on the nominations submitted by the former two General Conferences being Pastor L.L. Rowlands (White) and Pastor H. van der Vent (Coloured). The results of this election determined the position of secretary General, whereby the alternative nomination served as Deputy. Pastor L.L. Rowlands received 274 votes, which automatically made him the official Secretary General. Pastor van der Vent became his deputy after having received 222 votes.

2.11 Conclusion

This chapter portrayed and discussed the history, including the drastic changes, which took place within the FGC. Looking at the above list of voted leaders at the dawn of unification, it does not portray a sign of hope in the new era. This is not an inclusive leadership at all. It is somehow a picture of the historical church in the apartheid era, where everyone in positions of power is white, and everyone underneath them, is black (For clarity refer to the above paragraph). The direction that the church took became a disappointment from its inception, and this has made its supposed unification artificial.

As (Howard 2006:8) has put it, denominational diversity should be seen as a blessing in disguise. Therefore, the FGC has a crucial role to play in order to provide a truly unified atmosphere among its members. Lack of unity when we claim to be united, is deplorable. Structural unity must find expression at the grass-roots level, where FGC members of all cultural groups will generally have a similar, unified expression. As a Pentecostal denomination, we need to understand that the Pentecostal power is a unifying factor. In the post-unification era, we don't need to repeat the mistakes of the past, but we need to work together in order to triumph in issues of freedom, equality, social and political engagement.

Anderson (2012:15), when emphasising the power of the Holy Spirit, declared:

the bestowal of spiritual power was the means by which ordinary people could become part of egalitarian community, where social distinctions on

the basis of theological elitism became blurred, and where (in some cases) the social distinctions were further levelled by the use of universal uniforms worn by the faithful.

In the Azusa Street revival, we found the legitimacy to continue our witness as Pentecostals. It was here that God called to Himself a prophetic movement in an oppressive society, one which believed the dignity of the downtrodden (Chetty 2002:132).

The necessary question is has comprehensive equality been achieved in the FGC? The post-unification era ethically demands an inclusive Church. Ethics are crucial (Rae 2009:12). The Church needs to be always working together in harmony as God's redeemed children (Romans 12:16). I firmly believe that in spite of differences in race, colour, nationality, culture, language and temperament we are one body (1 Corinthians 12:12). We therefore need to endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit and guard against any divisions or smouldering animosities (Ephesians 4:3).

The Church needs to see division as a distortion of the Creator's grand "rainbow" design, and the perversion of His intent that there be variety among His creation. When one group in the FGC intentionally or unintentionally refuses to share power or resources, then division and disunity will abound. Jesus came to be the Saviour of all men, and calls them into the same fellowship of the Holy Spirit. All men have the same ancestry in God's creation (Acts 17:26).

This includes the same honour and solidarity of all men, not granted according to race, colour and nationality. It is the FGC's task to enlighten its members with regard to race relations. Any signs of unity in the body of Christ on earth point to the final oneness of God's kingdom to come. The exclusion of anyone from this unity contradicts the true signs of this unity. As a denomination we are called to give courageous witness for justice and equality (for clarity please refer to pages 56-58 in this regard).

CHAPTER 3

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH & FINDINGS

3.1 Introduction

This study is undertaken within a practical theological context, and therefore, the focus of this section will be on the empirical task. In the methodology of practical theology, one meets three concepts: understanding, explanation and change (Heitink 1999:164). Empirical research proves especially helpful in allowing interpretive guidelines to better understand the people who participate in this dialogue while it also helps them recognise social trends that impact people's lives and shape the context of ministry (Osmer 2008:41).

Smith (2008:204) expands this by saying that "the key characteristics of practical theology is that it seeks to apply theological reflection to solve real life problems". Fowler (1995:5) calls practical theology a "problem-posing theology".

Dingemans (1996:84) stresses that, "to begin with, 'practical' theology is not the opposite of 'theoretical' theology but it stands for a theoretical or theological approach to practice." Smith (2008:205) cited Cowan (2000), who pointed out that practical theological research has four crucial characteristics, namely:

- *Correlational*. It evaluates the relationship between 'the world as it is' and 'the world as it should be'. It seeks an accurate understanding of the present situation and preferred scenario.
- *Hermeneutical*. It requires the ability to interpret accurately both "our world and our traditions". Practical theologians use two tool sets, one to interpret the present situation and another to perform scriptural exegesis.

- *Critical*. It “requires that we explicitly evaluate the inherited understandings that guide our interpretations and actions”.
- *Transformative*. Its underlying drive is to bring the world into greater harmony with the word.

The focus of the entire study is on exploring and evaluating critical success factors for unification, as well as to propose a pastoral model in the FGC. Thus, the goal of practical theology as Smith (2008:205) puts it:

is to examine the world to understand the real-life problem, examine the word to see what God’s ideal is, and then develop an action plan to transform what is into what should be. These goals provide the working backbone of a working model for doing practical theology.

The aim of this chapter is to deal with the empirical research findings and their interpretation.

3.2 Definitions of Research

Research is a scientific enquiry into a relevant problem that provides an answer contributing to an increase in the body of generalizable knowledge about the particular profession (De Vos 1998:20). Mouton and Marais (1988:7) call research “a collaborative human activity in which social reality is studied objectively with the aim of understanding it”. Research then, is the activity one undertakes when trying to solve a problem accurately and systematically (Dreyer 1991:211). Mouton Marais (1988:7-17) distinguish five dimensions of social science research namely:

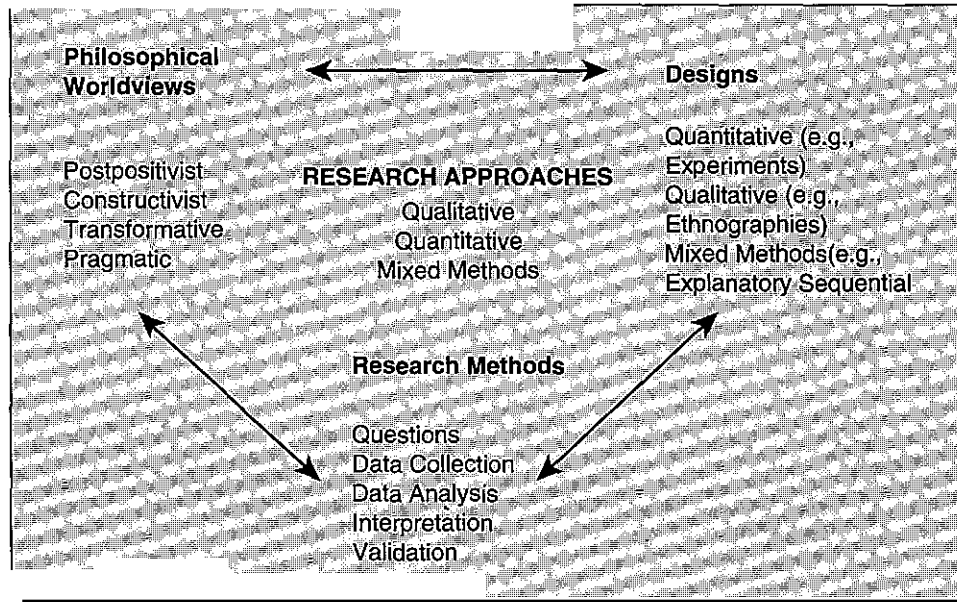
- *The sociological dimension*. Scientific research is collaborative activity: it occurs within given scientific communities which are characterised by a particular understanding of research.
- *The ontological dimension*. Social science research always studies an aspect of reality. As far as practical theology is concerned this reality consists of human communicative actions for the furtherance of the gospel.

- *The teleological dimension.* Social science research is a purposive human activity, aimed at the understanding of phenomena.
- *The epistemological dimension* stresses that objective research is not simply a mere understanding or comprehension, but the construction of realistic statements.
- *The methodological dimension* emphasises that social science has a distinct method that is objective (viz. critical, balanced, unbiased, systematic and verifiable).

Creswell gives the following framework to describe the interconnection between the research worldview, design and methods. This study also comes with its own philosophical assumption. The term *worldview* refers in this context to “a basic set of beliefs that guide action” (Guba.1990:17).

Others have called them *paradigms* (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba. 2011; Mertens, 2010); *epistemologies* and *ontologies* (Crotty 1998), or broadly *conceived research methodologies* (Neuman 2009). Creswell (2014:6) sees worldview as a general philosophical orientation about the world and the nature of research that a researcher brings to a study.

TABLE 2: A framework for research-The interconnection of worldviews, design, & methods.



Creswell (2014:6) describes four kinds of worldviews:

TABLE 3: The four worldviews:

Postpositivism	Constructivism
• Determination • Reductionism • Empirical observation and measurement • Theory verification	• Understanding • Multiple participant meanings • Social and historical construction • Theory generation
Transformative	Pragmatism
• Political • Power and justice oriented • Collaborative • Change-oriented	• Consequences of actions • Problem-centered • Pluralistic • Real-world practice oriented

The philosophical worldview that is followed in this study is transformative. The inquirers in the transformative worldview felt that the constructivist stance did not go far enough in advocating for an action agenda to help marginalized peoples. A transformative worldview holds that research inquiry needs to be intertwined with politics and a political change agenda to confront social oppression at whatever levels it occurs (Mertens, 2010). Thus, the research contains an action agenda for reform that may change lives of the participants, the institutions in which individuals work or live, and the researcher's life. Moreover, specific issues need to be addressed that speak to important social issues of the day, issues such as empowerment, inequality, oppression, domination, suppression and alienation.

The purpose with the study is not to further marginalize the marginalized and therefore the researcher will proceed collaboratively with the marginalized or the pastors in this context who feel marginalised by the church system. The idea is that his research will give a voice to the marginalized especially because of the silence due to the fear of victimization. This would lead to a united voice and for reform and change (see Creswell 2014)

Merten (2010) states among others that one of the key features of transformative worldview is that places central importance on the study of lives and experiences of people of diverse groups that have been traditionally been marginalised. This also looks into how the lives have been constrained by oppressors and the strategies that they use to resist, challenge and subvert these constraints.

3.2.1 Differences between Qualitative and Quantitative Research

Mouton (1988:1) commenting on the term "qualitative" shows that this type of research emphasises the quality of human action, rather than the measurable (quantitative) aspects. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994:2) qualitative research is a multi-perspective approach (utilising different qualitative techniques and data collection methods) to social interaction, aimed at describing making sense of, interpreting or

reconstructing this interaction in terms of the meanings that the subjects attach to it.

Dreyer (1991:227), quoting (Mouton 19881), says the term “qualitative” shows that this type of research emphasises the quality of human actions, rather than the measurable aspect. Unlike qualitative research, quantitative research is aimed at measurement. This can be defined as the process of assigning symbols and numbers to objects and events according to certain rules, in order to count, compare and rank them and determine the relationships between them (Seaman 1987:433). Dhaerah (2008:7) includes the consideration that the objective of quantitative research is to develop and employ mathematical models, theories and/or hypotheses pertaining to natural phenomena. Bryman (1999:37) confirms this by stating:

In quantitative research the researcher’s contact with the people being studied is fairly fleeting or even non-existent. While data collection phase often extends over many months, the contact with each individual is usually brief. In longitudinal surveys or before and after experiments, the investigator returns to his or her subjects, but the degree of contact is still fairly short-lived. Indeed, the use of some methods associated with quantitative research may not require any contact with subjects at all, except in indirect sense [such as] postal questionnaire surveys, laboratory experiments, in which the researcher simply observes while hired staff carries out many experiments.

TABLE 4: Differences between Qualitative and Quantitative Research

	Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research
Role of qualitative research	Preparatory	Means to exploration of actors interpretation
Relationship between researcher and subject	Distant	Close
Researcher’s stance in relation to subject	Outsider	Close

Relationship between theory/concepts and research	Confirmation	Emergent
Research strategy	Structured	Unstructured
Scope of findings	Nomothetic	Ideographic
Image of social reality	Static and external to actor	Processual and socially constructed by actor
Nature of data	Hard, reliable	Rich, deep

I agree with Dreyer (1991:231) that despite their differences, qualitative and quantitative research are both scientific. They both operate on different levels; it is only the purpose of research which determines one's choice of a given method. If the purpose of an investigation is to give an overview of a phenomenon, or, when one tries to explain the casual relationships between phenomena, a quantitative approach is more suitable if a researcher wants to probe the depth or essence of a phenomenon. As far as practicalities are concerned, the phases of the research process are usually the same for both qualitative and quantitative research, although the steps to be taken differ.

To clarify this, Creswell (2014:17-18) states that the distinction between qualitative research and quantitative research is often framed in terms of using words (qualitative) rather than numbers (quantitative) or using close-ended questions (quantitative hypotheses) rather than open-ended questions (qualitative interview questions). He further states that a more complete way to view the gradations of differences between them is in the basic philosophical assumptions researchers bring to the study, the types of research strategies used in the research (e.g., quantitative experiments or qualitative case studies) and the specific methods employed in conducting these strategies (e.g., collecting data quantitatively on instruments versus collecting qualitative data through observing a setting).

This study, and in particular this chapter, aims to acquire an in-depth understanding of the struggle for unity within the FGC by making use of qualitative research.

An important advantage of qualitative research is that it builds on skills that theologians generally possess, such as interpersonal skills, interviewing, and text analysis skills (Dreyer 2004:17).

3.2.3 Characteristics of Qualitative Research

Dreyer (ibid.) outlines the following five characteristics:

- Qualitative research is usually undertaken in a natural environment. The reason for this is that the importance of context is a basic principle of qualitative research. Thus, this research method takes an action to be best understood if it is studied in its normal context.
- Qualitative research is characterised by its descriptive nature. Data are verbal, or pictorial, and may include transcriptions of interviews, field notes, photographs, video recordings, personal documents, memos, and official documents. The data are normally analysed in the form in which they were gathered. The written word is normally important.
- It is paramount when using this approach to pay attention to the process, rather than merely noting the outcomes or results.
- Data is usually analysed inductively.
- The centrality of meaning: the researcher is particularly interested in the meanings people attach to events, phenomena and so on.

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3.3 Empirical Research in Theology phenomenology

Empirical research refers to the way in which we as theologians might attempt to gain insight into the context in which we practice our theologies (Dreyer 2004:3). According to Dhaerah (2008:5), empirical research describes research where data is collected by the investigator him/herself, for the purpose of a specific inquiry or study. Newman (1997:7) adds that

empirical evidence refers to observation that people experience through the senses, namely touch, sight, hearing, smell and taste.

It is in this chapter that I want to present the research responses and reports undertaken through questionnaires.

The researcher chose the qualitative approach and interviews were done for this matter. The focus was on ministers of the FGC in the Gauteng province as one of the biggest as far as membership is concerned and because it has four regions. Twenty pastors have been interviewed individually. The study specifically focused on pastors in particular to acquire an in-depth understanding of the struggle for unity. Eight questions were asked to each individual. For fairness, the interviewees differed in years in ministry, age in years, highest level of theological training, church position (pastors in the FGC play different roles – some are in management, some are full-time in congregational work, some chaplains and some teaching at seminary), gender, as well as racial group.

TABLE 5:

AGE IN YEARS	RACIAL GROUP	GENDER
6 out of 20 are between 31-40 years	15 out of 20 = African	: 15 out of 20 = males
7 out of 20 are between 41-50 years	3 out of 20 = White	5 out of 20 = female
7 out of 20 are 50 years and over.	1 out of 20 = coloured & 1 out of 20 = Indian	

Despite the different categories just mentioned it is also important to consider that there are common elements that the above population shares (elements such as distinctive, constitution, identity, feeling of loneliness in ministry, as well as ministry context. Smith (2008:242) declares that to present data in a succinct, accurate and honest manner, it is necessary to

code, organise and discuss/analyse them. This is exactly what I propose to do in analysing this data.

3.4 Empirical study data analysis

The term 'data' refers to the information obtained by means of scientific study, whereas data analysis may be regarded as the process by which the researcher tries to make sense of a mass of data (Dreyer 1993:204). Dhaerah (2008:13) points out that qualitative researchers typically rely on four methods for gathering information:

- participation in the setting;
- direct observation;
- in-depth interviews; and
- analysis of documents and materials.

The following are the questions and responses which will be categorized and analysed in the following manner:

- 1) how many responded positively;
- 2) how many responded negatively;
- 3) How many were neutral.

Question 1 of the research questionnaire asked: "describe your relationship with members of other racial groups in our denomination?" This question sought to ascertain whether members had solid relationships with members of other racial groups since unification.

- 1) How many responded positively?

Seven out of 20 interviewees (Both black and white) responded positively. This group sees building relationships as the starting point for unity.

2) How many responded negatively?

12 out of twenty responded negatively to the question. It was clear from these respondents that they don't have any solid relationship with people of other races. Some in this group related that they don't have social relationships and friendship but only communicate with one another only in a work situation.

3) How many were neutral?

Only one out of twenty was neutral and related himself to be still battling to reach out. This respondent said he doesn't know how to deal with the preconceived fear that caused him to build walls of protection.

Question 2 asked how would you reach beyond your normal social circles to meet people of other race or culture whom you ordinarily would never meet?

100% of respondents agreed that attending conferences, having outreach programmes, and being open to others would help in fostering relationships, as well as connecting members. These responses show and prove that there is a need to relate and connect beyond conferences and work.

Question 3 asked how a member saw unity and unification in the FGC?

Out of the 20 interviewees, only seven saw the church as successfully integrated, so far. Thirteen out of 20 respondents see unity as a 'mere business deal' as well as an administrative success, but do not perceive spiritual benefit to most races and cultures in the Church. The above response suggests that unity is only seen to be portrayed by the top leaders of the Church, and is not displayed in the grass roots.

The follow up question asked members what they perceived as the greatest single barrier to unity in the FGC.

The 13 respondents who responded negatively on the above question see change as being slow, and leadership and management as only being concerned with money and position, while neglecting ordinary members.

The fourth question asked members what the FGC can do in addressing division.

Two out of twenty respondents see change is a matter and willingness of the heart and continued to say that we need to allow God to change our heart, the division will be addressed. Eighteen out 20 responded that the FGC can address division by embracing the idea of equality, regardless of colour. Having more interaction in the grassroots, interaction at the congregational level, as well as pulpit change with members of different races. The church must get an independent organisation to do a spiritual survey, so as to assess the aftermath of unification.

The fifth question asked: what can you personally do to make the FGC a more accepting place for other races.

Five out of 20 responded in the following in terms of their personal contribution: they can do that by encouraging a more open approach, where all races respect each other and make more efforts to learn from each other. Fifteen out of 20 responded that the Church needs to have a positive impact upon its sphere of influence, practically reaching out to others and pursuing unity, despite the natural resistance in the early stages. Proving other races' perceptions wrong through performance, and be willing to compromise until we have reached full unity.

The 6th question asked: what leadership abilities are required in our leaders in order to foster a cross-cultural ministry.

Seventeen members responded that anyone undertaking the leadership of the church in the post-unification era will have to be honest, will have a Christ-like personality and a servant heart, and must not create position for

themselves, but be strong enough to offer others mentorship. The cross-cultural ministry context indeed demands that members become honest and open without trying to undermine one another in the process. Three out of 20 finally said the Church needs a transformational and grass roots conscious leadership to foster a cross-cultural ministry in the context of the FGC.

The 7th question asked: what do you think are the greatest prices the FGC will have to pay to become multiracial?

One out of 20 believed the Church already to be a multiracial Church, with no need to develop integration strategies. Nineteen out of 20 responded that in order to be a fully multiracial denomination, that the Church would need to be humble and always come to the level of the people, that members ought to prioritise the Church over personal gain, and become stewards of God's resources, paying the price of openness and vulnerability in ministry, as well as respecting each other's ministries and cultures.

The 8th and final question asked: what do you think would be the greatest benefits of becoming a multiracial church?

All respondents declared that when the Church is unified, that its members will really be an example to society, and the work of God will flourish. The church will be able to attract and keep powerful and influential leaders, who are kingdom-minded, and will have scriptural fulfilment, reach the nations, growing to become more influential.

3.5 Conclusion

After analysing the data, it is important to take note of the trends observed. The similarities and differences between the responses have been identified. Having divided them into different groups, it is interesting to note that it is those who are between the ages of 31-40 who provided the most radical responses. In my own view, this is a group that can be considered as the future leaders of the Church. Before moving on to the interpretive study, it is therefore crucial to conclude this section by noting

that the Church needs to pray for unity to blossom, and to give each other space to lead, such that we might become spiritually vibrant. Leaders who have been there in terms of their experience should stop swaying the church to vote in their particular way. This is likely to strain our unity, and ultimately, relationships amongst members. We need to tell our stories in a truthful manner by not just resorting to a false sense of togetherness. Alignment to the plan and will of God will lead the Church to enjoy the unique, rich culture of every race, and as a result, be able to enjoy a richer ministry and brotherhood.

CHAPTER 4

THE INTERPRETIVE STUDY

4.1 Introduction

Once the data has been analysed, the results of the analysis require interpretation (Dreyer 1993:204). This study embraces Osmer's core tasks of Practical Theological interpretation. Therefore, Osmer's (2008:4) key question: "Why is it going on?" serves to guide our interpretation and response in this chapter. The task of this question is *interpretive*. The interpretive task seeks reasons for the phenomena observed in the descriptive task. My assignment in this chapter is to identify issues observed within the embedded FGC episodes, situations and context, and interpreting the data. This will be done drawing on theories of the arts and sciences, to better understand and explain why these patterns and dynamics are occurring.

4.2 Why the Voting System should be revisited

Voting can be defined as a formal expression of one's opinion or choice on a matter under discussion, e.g. by ballot or a show of hands (Oxford Dictionary 1984:758). This means that members are given the opportunity to express their mind, and their preference in electing the leader of their choice, or in determining questions proposed.

According to Gibbs & Coffey (2001:24), churches can become so traumatised by their internal problems, that they fail to notice that society at large is in the midst of a cultural shift of seismic proportions, affecting every area of society. The FGC can indeed be commended for having responded to such a shift when the need to do so emerged. The challenge is that the political climate of South Africa, which has played a role in putting pressure on the church to rethink its stance on unity, has progressed tremendously so far. It is therefore against this background that the voting system needs to be revisited.

Having looked at the aspects that demand attention, as well as concentrate on many aspects that unite the Church, it is critical to ask why, after so many years of unification among other matters, it still hasn't had a black moderator in the top structural tier of the Church. In noting this, it would be fair to the current moderator, to note that from the time he took over and throughout the terms he served, there is indeed a tremendous improvement.

However, in order to be contextually relevant as far as our unity is concerned, this question is of greater academic interest and concern to those who vote for leadership in the FGC. With over 90% of the membership being black in composition, it seems necessary to question why the outcome is always the same. Does this indeed reflect lack of trust of black leadership from blacks themselves, or is it the will of God for things to remain as they are? Another aspect connected to the voting system is the tithing system within the FGC. The funding of the FGC is based on the 10% of the non-earmarked income of the local churches, and 10% of the personal income of the pastors and workers. The problem with this system is that it favours rich and wealthy congregations with higher income. The performance of the Church comes to be measured in financial terms.

The above problem is intensified by the fact that those who are not tithing appropriately will be restricted from voting for the leaders of their choice. Chetty (2002:64) added that they will not be allowed to stand for any position themselves. It stands to reason that the people affected by this system are those who were previously oppressed.

The Church has pastors pastoring in townships and villages, and most members in their congregation are domestic workers, some of whom work in retail shops, and most of whom are unemployed. It goes without saying that this adversely affects the income of the Church. While the congregation is battling with being unable to pay a living wage to their pastor, they also have to carry the burden of sending money to the national structures of the denomination. By way of comparison, white denominations continue to enjoy the historical financial privilege granted them by apartheid. As a result, the congregation's income is significant, and such a

congregation is able to support the denominational programme as well as give its pastor a good salary and allowances, which no doubt has an influence on their perceived success as a pastor. Of course, I would be quick to add that money has nothing to do with the skills of the pastor. Even after unification, there are still congregations that cannot provide travelling costs to their pastors, resulting in most pastors from poor congregations unable to be present at the general conference.

Banana (1958:58) defines poverty as a state of things, which has turned people into refugees in their own homes and within themselves. Poverty is a condition in which a person is deprived of, and lacks the essentials for a minimum standard of well-being and life. Low salaries make it difficult for pastors to be true to their calling, as well as to develop more meaningful connections with their colleagues. Some have the pressure of buying school uniforms for their children, and paying for their college or tertiary education. Without savings, and with the fear of retirement, the expectation is laid upon them to be faithful in supporting the church financially in order to maintain their decision making influence in the form of voting. Some are led by this to leave the ministry to enter other professions, or other forms of ministry. We need to find out why pastors are leaving the ministry, and therefore try to address this issue appropriately, by introducing a credible system to evaluate pastor's support of the church programme, in addition to tithing.

According to the constitution of the FGC, approved by the General Conference on the 9th and 10th October 1997, and amended in 1999 and 2001, there are few qualifications for entry into the ministry namely: a distinct call of God, a sound knowledge of scripture, character reference, Holy Spirit baptism, membership qualification and academic training. When one examines these qualifications there is no mention of being able to generate more money. However, we overlook what contributions are made by pastors within the framework of the required qualifications, giving wealth undue pre-eminence. In what sense can financial wealth become proof of effective ministry? The Church has begun to overlook that what qualifies one to be a leader is the call and leadership skills, and not the capacity to fundraise.

According to De Jongh van Arkel (1991:96), pastoral work involves relating to people in a very special way, caring for them by entering into their situation in a redeeming and revitalising manner. Acts 20: 28 clearly indicate that Paul regarded the office of pastor as a definite appointment of the Holy Spirit. In his own case, the apostle was quite certain of a divine call, where Christ had placed him in the ministry (1 Corinthians 9:14; 1 Corinthians 9:1-10).

The Lord does call some men in a particular way, and for a particular form of service. Biblical history lends abundant support to this truth. In the Old Testament, there are the calls of Moses (Exodus 3:10), Samuel (1 Samuel 3), Isaiah (6:9) and Jeremiah (1:5). Although the work of the pastor can be most satisfying and rewarding, it also involves extremely difficult, discouraging, and disappointing experiences that can sap the energy and frustrate the efforts of even the most dedicated servant of God. Therefore, the voting system that is based on the dehumanising process only adds to humiliation for the already downtrodden leader. The character of pastors cannot be judged by the amount of money they make. This is not good for unity. I don't think Jesus is going to judge pastors by how much money they have raised, but by how they presented the Gospel truth, and brought change into the hearts and lives of people.

4.3 Allocation of Ministerial Staff

It would be irrelevant to talk about unity without addressing the issue of the allocation of pastors. It is still difficult for pulpit exchange programmes to be facilitated, which I would argue, is of utmost importance. When one enters the ministry of the FGC, he/she is told that he is doing so by faith, however, this mandate seems to reflect racial bias, where the Church does not see white pastors committing themselves to a Church that is not financially well-off, where he would be without the benefits that white churches continue to enjoy in exclusivity.

Most of those I studied with after completing theological studies were all privileged to enter into congregations that prepared everything for them from a car, salary, medical aid, petrol allowance, as well as telephone allowance. It is of course commendable that the white section of the Church has both the financial and the human resources to support their

pastors, and it is clear that they respect their pastors and support them accordingly. Blacks are always reminded that the ministry of the FGC is by faith. From observation indeed many Blacks in the FGC started and planted churches from nothing. Faith is constituted by the ability to start from nothing, believing God to intervene. In unification, however, we cannot go on as if we are still in the old dispensation.

The Church comprises people of differing languages and cultures, but I argue that it is nonetheless necessary for debate to centre on the deployment and calls of pastors. For the sake of unity, it would be appropriate for pastors to proactively pastor wherever they feel led to go. It ought not after all, according to the faith, be a strange thing for a white minister to pastor a black church or a black minister to pastor a white church – yet this is still rare in the FGC. This is, however, the fruit of unity. The Roman Catholic Church is far ahead in this instance, and maybe we need to learn from them in this regard, because from the apartheid era to date, their ministers are deployed cross-culturally, as well as across the racial barriers. In the words of Skosana (2006:89), a divided church cannot begin to serve a broken community. (Kumalo 2006:264) confirms that:

For any church to be relevant in a changing society it needs to undergo a process of transformation in its ecclesiology and this in turn will lead to a mission that will bring social transformation. It is not enough for the church to embark on the changing of its structures and focus on ministry without looking at its nature and theological and missiological foundations.

By segregating black pastors into black communities without involving white pastors and leaders in the heart of these same communities, or without involving black pastors in white communities, racism cannot be said to have been adequately addressed (Robeck 1996:139).

4.4 Comparison with the South African Context

Oosthuizen (2013:14) states that the democratic election of a black government in 1994 and the abolishment of apartheid laws that accompanied this transition led to a new dispensation, in which the National Party, Afrikaner Broederbond and the Dutch reformed Church

yielded influence. Unfortunately, today, as Skosana (2006:40) asserts “we are seeing cracks in the formidable structure of the ANC; loyalty is giving way to the frustration caused by hunger, unemployment and poor service delivery. What the world called a miracle is actually, postponed conflict.” As much as there are constant protests day by day in South Africa, the FGC must remember that the current frustrations and disappointments in the church may ignite doubts about our claim to unity. Dr. Hess (1998:6) clearly put this in context by remarking that “people are no longer loyalists, but are switchers.” It would be irresponsible to assume loyalty to the Church to be passed from generation to generation.

Stott (1990:160) summed the broader situation in the church up admirably in these words:

The Church should be the community in the world in which human dignity and equality are invariably recognized [sic], and people’s responsibility for one another is accepted; in which rights of others are sought and never violated, while our own are often renounced; in which there is no partiality, favouritism or discrimination; in which the poor and the weak are defended, and human beings are free to be human as God made them and meant them to be.

Paul said, “let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves” (Philippians 2:3). According to De Gruchy, (cited in Khumalo 2009:253), the pastoral responsibilities of the Church include accompanying the newly-established democratic nation through a crucial process of confession, forgiveness, healing, reconciliation, transformation and reconstruction. The question to ask is why is unity important?

The answer given by Dockery (2009:99) adds value to this study. He says “unity is not important just so we can all get together, hold hands, and be nice, but it is important so that our witness to the world will be credible.” The future of the ministry of the Church in a democratic South Africa depends on how it relates to, and champions the cause of the ordinary citizens (Khumalo 2009:256). It needs to appreciate their aspirations, while restoring their hope and dignity by keeping the state and its representatives accountable to basic principles of good governance and democracy (Mugambi 1995:176).

4.5 Pastoral guidelines for blacks in the FGC

In unity we are all brothers and sisters in the Lord. So it is important that we deal with the legacy of apartheid and address the dependency syndrome of some blacks in our church. Every time a white pastor is encountered, there is the tendency to beg for stuff, even unnecessarily so. We received church buildings, missionaries and education for free. Now it is the time for us to give back. Blacks must know that they are going to be treated the way they treat themselves. Another problem lies in the fact that genuine adult relationships can only develop where both sides give and receive. Blacks need to realise that they have the potential to make it in the ministry, without depending on other people. Yes, they (blacks) have depended on donations to run their affairs in the past, but the time for that is over. Blacks will never emerge to be credible leaders if expecting handouts on a regular basis.

This has paralysed some of the black led denomination, who depend on foreign support, without establishing their own supportive base. Steef van Slot (2000:136), when dealing with this issue says:

Many mission established churches have become dependent on foreign funding, and often their leaders feel they cannot function well without the subsidies they have received. Sometimes, for over a century, they feel that without these subsidies they are unable to reproduce themselves by executing their own evangelistic and mission outreaches. Often they have others build their church building for them. It often distorts reality and leads people to feel like they have nothing or little to give back to God.

Steams (1991:116-117) distinguishes two kinds of fatalism, namely *African Fatalism*, which expects that 'we cannot because we have not. We will probably never have anything'. "*Western Fatalism*" on the other hand says: 'let's help them because they have nothing and will never have anything. We'll probably have to help them for another 100 years.' Both kinds of fatalism are corrosive, because:

- they create dependency and stunt the act of giving;

- they reinforce feelings of insecurity;
- they create a mercenary spirit;
- both self-image and community image are diminished.

To assume that any native church perpetually requires constant supervision is an unintended insult to their capacity to manage their own affairs (Hodges 1999:23). Indeed, Blacks have the capacity to manage their affairs and bring their part to add to the flavour of broader Church unity. But, if they are not careful, their dependency culture will cause them not to be trusted.

Blacks need to know that dependence raises a false sense of unity. The other issue is that blacks voted for leadership whether on the regional or national level, must be leaders indeed, because the Church requires functional leaders, who know what they are doing. When that opportunity arises, such a leader will need to sharpen his skills, and be informative, so that he may contribute to the church decisively. We need leaders who will increase their value and continually improve their performance. The post-unification era demands a black leader who has knowledge, skill, and experience, rather than leaders who just serve their personal interest. This has never worked in the government of the day, and it will never work in the Church. Any black leader rising to the top in leadership is there because he was voted in to make a difference, and nothing else.

The days of leaders who provoke the church councils to encourage enviable ministers to allow them to give communion for personal profit, ought to be over. Once a black pastor is voted as an overseer, he must serve with diligence and excellence. When he leaves the position, he must leave a great legacy for other blacks to build on. Church positions are not for personal gain (or for fulfilling personal interest), but for serving. Therefore black ethical/servant leaders are mandatory to the purposes of national unity. As Dales and Barna (2009:200) have noted, “we need to care more about God’s kingdom than our own reputations, dying to ourselves, to our own ambitions and any craving for the limelight.” blacks must know that they have a responsibility to challenge injustice anywhere they see it manifest in the framework of their sphere of influence.

4.6 Pastoral guidelines for whites in the FGC

White Pentecostals in South Africa need once more to return to a respect for black leadership if they are going to be meaningful in the new South Africa (Anderson 1993:76). Whites must stop prescribing what must be done (Skosana 2006:54), and must know that the problem of racism in the FGC cannot be solved by blacks alone. It is impractical for blacks to be united to themselves. Because “reconciliation is the act and/or process of putting things right between two alienated parties in order to restore relationship, justice and harmony” Venter 2004:93. Amos (1996:132), when dealing with the issues of race, gender, and justice, observed that:

Our efforts for reconciliation must extend beyond formulation of token groups and periodical meetings that give the appearance of harmony. It is fruitless to meet together to fellowship and pray if we are not willing to man the trenches to pursue reconciliation. Policies and practices must be put on the scale of God’s justice, and be weighed. Devotion to God mandates our Christian involvement in the total liberation of all humanity. All persons must be held accountable for their attitudes and actions. The Holy Spirit that we emphatically say gives us power over devils and demons of the world should empower us to oppose the evils that lurk within our own ranks. We must struggle to eliminate the ills that threaten our Christian witness.

If whites in the FGC will not heed to the above, then what happened to the Baptist Church will happen to the FGC also. Rae (2006:6) when speaking about reconciliation between Baptists in South Africa said the following: “our reconciliation process got nowhere through discussions that tried to justify and defend our own positions as we dealt with the issues that divide us.”

4.7 Conclusion

True unity in the FGC will only be multi-racial (composed of people of many races), nothing more, and nothing else. According to Stott (1990:224) Paul made four affirmations to the biblical vision of a multicultural society:

1. First he *proclaimed the unity of the human race, or the God of Creation*. From one man He made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth. From this portrayal of the living God as Creator, Sustainer and Father of all human kind, the apostle deduces the folly and evil of idolatry. But he could equally well have deduced from it the folly and evil of racism. For if He is the God of all human beings, this will affect our attitude to them as well as to him. Although, in terms of an intimate, personal relationship God is the Father of those He adopts into His family by His sheer grace, and our brothers and sisters are fellow members of His family. Being equally created by Him and like Him, we are equal in His sight in worth and dignity, and therefore have an equal right to respect and justice.
2. Secondly, Paul proclaimed *the diversity of ethnic cultures, or the God of History*. Paul probably alludes to the primeval command to multiply and fill the earth. For such dispersal under God's blessing inevitably resulted in the development of nature. What is "natural" is God-given and inherited; what is "cultural" is man-made and learned. Culture is an amalgam of beliefs, values, customs and institutions developed by each society and transmitted to the next generation. Paul was a product of three cultures. By descent and upbringing, a 'Hebrew of the Hebrews', he also possessed Roman citizenship, and had absorbed Greek language and concepts as well. We too can enhance our human life by learning other languages and experiencing other cultures.
3. Thirdly, Paul proclaimed *the finality of Jesus Christ, or the God of Revelation*. The richness of each particular culture should be appreciated culture, but not the idolatry, which may lie at its heart. For we cannot tolerate any rivals to Jesus Christ, believing as we do that God has spoken fully and finally through Him, and that He is the only Saviour, who died, and rose again, and will one day come to be the world's Judge.
4. Fourthly, Paul proclaimed *the glory of the Christian Church, or the God of Revelation*. God has called us into a new and wider unity.

The Church must therefore exhibit its multi-racial, multi-national and multi-cultural nature. Only a true theology, the biblical revelation of God, can deliver us from racial pride and prejudice.

Smit (2003:307), citing (Cloete & Smit 1984:1-2), is right in saying that within the Dutch Reformed family, the URCSA's Confession of Belhar (1986) brings at least two important sets of convictions to the never-ending discussions in the Dutch Reformed Church family about the nature of the unity we are called to:

1. The *first* is found in the way it describes this unity itself in its first article:

We believe in one holy, universal Christian Church, the communion of saints called from the entire human family. We believe that Christ's work of reconciliation is made manifest in the Church as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another; that unity is, therefore, both a gift and an obligation for the church of Jesus Christ that through the working of God's Spirit it is a binding force, yet simultaneously a reality which must be earnestly pursued and sought: one which the people of God must continually be built up to attain; that this unity must become visible so that the world may believe that separation, enmity and hatred between people and groups is sin which Christ has already conquered, and accordingly that anything which threatens this unity may have no place in the Church and must be resisted; that this unity of the people of God must be manifested and be active in a variety of ways; in that we love one another; that we experience; practice and pursue community with one another; that we are obliged to give ourselves willingly and joyfully to be of benefit and blessing to one another; that we share one faith, have one calling, are of one soul and one mind; have one god and Father, are filled with one Spirit, are baptized with one baptism, eat of one bread and drink of one cup, confess one Name, and are obedient to one Lord, work for one cause, and share one hope; together are built up to the stature of Christ, to the new humanity; together know and bear one another's burdens, thereby fulfilling the law of Christ that we need one another and build one another, admonishing and

comforting one another; that we suffer with one another for the sake of righteousness; pray together; together serve God in this world; and together fight against all which may threaten or hinder this unity; that this unity can be established in freedom and not under constraint; that the variety of spiritual gifts, opportunities, backgrounds, convictions, as well as the various languages and cultures, are by virtue of the reconciliation in Christ, opportunities for mutual services and enrichment within the one visible people of God; that true faith in Jesus Christ is the only condition for membership of this Church. [sic]

2. The *Second* set of convictions is found in the overall structure of the *Confession*, in the way this living unity, real reconciliation and caring justice belong integrally together. There can be no visible unity without real reconciliation and caring justice.

Lastly, it ought to have been noted that whoever takes the challenge of being the General Overseer of the FGC in the future must always bear in mind that:

In a society where the conflict has not yet abated, inclusion is hampered by the lack of trust. Any desired resolution, therefore, will require instruments that will help to draw and keep the community together in the process of building cohesion. Leadership is a crucial element in this record. Community healing relies on three competencies, which reconciliatory leaders should practice: managing conflict, managing change and managing diversity (Community Healing Training Course: 04-08 October 2010).

Johnston (1980:14) says “a proper understanding of nationhood calls attention to the human need for roots, a security and an identity mediated by the community on the basis of which each individual knows that he ‘belongs’.” Because He is the God of Creation, it is necessary to proactively affirm the unity of the human race. Stott (1990:225-226) further extends the above idea, which I think should be emphasised by saying that:

“God is the God of History, therefore we must affirm the diversity of ethnic cultures. Whatever policies for racial integration may be developed, of the unity of humankind we demand equal rights and equal respect. Because of the diversity of ethnic groups, we renounce cultural

imperialism and seek to preserve all those riches of inter-racial culture, which are compatible with Christ's lordship. We must seek to rid ourselves of any lingering racism and strive to make a model of harmony between races, in which the multi-racial dream comes true."

Paul (1 Corinthians 1:13) clearly emphasizes that "Christ is not divided". This should indeed warn us as Christians, that anything that breaks up the unity of Christ has something wrong with it regardless of what it is.

CHAPTER 5

THE MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE: TOWARDS A THEORY OF PRAXIS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is guided by Osmer's (2008:4) question: what ought to be going on? Therefore, biblical material, ethical reflection as well as theological concepts will be utilised to interpret particular episodes, situations, or contexts in constructing ethical norms to guide our responses, and learning from best practice, deriving norms from good practice, by exploring models of such practice in the present and past or by engaging reflexively in transforming practice in the present (Osmer 2008:161). I therefore elect to utilise the normative theological perspective in this chapter as a tool to help determine what the FGC ought to do within the management of change framework as a denomination.

Conner (1982:10) defines denomination as: (1) the act of naming; (2) a name or appellation; (3) a religious sect; and (4) a denominational system. According to Conner, denominations are usually formed around the following:

- a certain type of government. i.e., apostolic, episcopal, Presbyterian, congregational, etc.
- a doctrinal emphasis or some truth of scripture. i.e. holiness, grace, Pentecostalism, charismatic, etc.
- a personality which God used to emphasise a truth or experience, or used by God in some awakening or revival power. Dever has noted that "whole apostolic networks have grown up around the ministries of particular individuals" (2012:117).
- An experience. i.e. Baptist, water baptism, baptism in the Holy Spirit; holiness, second blessing, covenant, etc.

Conner (ibid.) sees denominationalism as contrary to the Scripture, and as the evidence of our carnality and division. Another author who supports the above view is Cole (2009:36), who maintains that “Christ did not come to establish an institution. His kingdom and his Church are meant to be relational and spontaneous movements, and not organizations [sic].” To Viola (2008:125), “denominations are man-made divisions. They are religious organizations that meet around a common denominator other than the Lord Jesus Christ. As such, denominations undermine biblical principle and fragment the Body of Christ.” While I agree with Conner on the denominational formulation process, I disagree with these three authors on how they perceive a denomination as institutionalising its members, as well as being contrary to the Scripture. There have been those who left denominational structures to start their own churches in seeking freedom, only to reproduce the same system they were running from, and more so, became worse.

Ashbrook (1995:131) asserts that:

the Early Church began without the benefit or need of organization [sic]. As men sought to carry out the purpose of God in the church, [...] they soon realized [sic] their limitations and the need of coming together for fellowship, counsel, and the strength that the unity of believers could bring.

Ministry cannot be affectively carried out, except through some structural system, but that system must not overwhelm the ministry (Mock 1989:11). This study is undertaken from a practical, theological approach, and that will be the focus of this chapter. Hawkes (1989:29) sees practical theology as the critical study of contemporary activities and experiences of Christians and of the church in relation to God’s will and purposes for them. To Hawkes (ibid.) concepts, ideas, beliefs, convictions, attitudes and worldviews affect experience and behaviour. Heitink (1999:125) confirms this by seeing action as always taking place within a social context, requiring definition within the context or framework of a theory of social action, viewed as an inter-subjective event.

Heitink (1999:8-9) divides praxis into two parts as follows:

(1) Praxis 1: is the mediation of Christian faith which occurs through human ministry and is the unique object of practical theology. It is linked to actions which were intended to change a given situation. (2) Praxis 2: is the praxis of modern (human) society, a domain of action where people make specific choices and pursue specific goals.

A further argument about praxis is made by Ackermann (1993:27), who said that theory and praxis are linked in acts of faith, which are reflected on critically.

Janson (1974:310) stresses that “anyone engaged in practical theology has to deal with the gulf between theory and practice (praxis) or between science and practice and between church and society.” The dialectical relation between theory and praxis provides insight into the situation of ecclesiastical and social action (Heitink 1999:154).

According to Heitink (1999:126) practical theology refers to the act of pursuing a goal, to work toward an intentional and active realisation of certain plans by utilising specific means in a given situation. Maddox (1991:166) sees practical theology as an “application” discipline. According to him, “praxis” has been retrieved to capture the dialectical relationship between action and reflection. Tracy (1983:76-77) has indicated a specific proposal for the development of practical theology, which I think is relevant for this study:

1. There would be, first a collaborative exercise of the development of models of human transformation. Those models would be provided by psychology, social science, historical studies, cultural anthropology, philosophy, ecological theories, and religious studies and theologies.
2. A second step would develop, again on collaborative basis, an analysis of the public claims to human transformation provided by different concrete ideals for the future.

Maddox (1991:650-672) asserts that “a truly practical theology should be inherently transformative, for example it should not only seek to understand, but also to correct Christian life.” This is exactly what this

chapter is concerned with, dealing with the phenomenological analysis of unity in the FGC, before developing an alternative theological model of practice for the well-being of the church. As Farley (2000:118) noted, every contemporary experience of ordinary people has a theological meaning and significance. “Leadership and organisation need to be understood as always being contextual, and therefore, always being provisional in character. This means that leadership and organisation will need to change over time to respond to changing context” (Van Gelder 2007:122). Knipe and Van der Walt (2001:46) refer to the elements of change as a movement away from the known to the unknown. They argue that the question that arises among people who are affected by change is, above all others, ‘what will happen to me?’

It was Lovett (1996:123) who once said “It is unrealistic to prepare for a new future without honestly and realistically assessing our past. Doing that calls for bringing out hidden things to the surface.”

The evaluative question in the post-unification era must be “Would God be pleased with the way I treat those of other races?” We therefore need to exemplify Christ’s standard of love for all people (2 Corinthians 5:20; John 15:12).

5.1.1 Conclusion

In the context of this study, I wholeheartedly agree with Lovett (1996:123) above, and I argue that the post-unification era in the FGC demands change of structures, objectives as well as strategies. I believe that organisational structures and constitutions are not untouchable/unchangeable realities. The most obvious place to see unity is in our organisational structures. “If our denominational structures are in place primarily as instruments of control, then the division problem is insurmountable” (Gibbs & Coffey 2001:71). These structures must ultimately stand under the judgment of the Bible.

In (Acts 5:27-29) the Apostles were obeying what their Lord and Master had told them to do. Wiersbe (1987:90) declared the following:

The apostles did not change their convictions (Acts 4:19-32). They obeyed God and trusted Him to take care of consequences. They could not serve two masters; they had already declared whose side they were on. Had they been diplomats instead of ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5:20), they could have pleased everybody and escaped a beating. But they stood firmly for the Lord, and He honoured their courage and faith.

Believers are commanded to obey civil authority, except when it comes in conflict with the commandment of God. With view to the above text the following questions comes to the surface: why was apartheid allowed in the church of God? Why did so-called Christians allow themselves to be influenced by apartheid? And why could they not take a stand? These questions remain, where the future of FGC depends upon what the church is doing about this problem right now.

It is in the context of the above-mentioned background that the following questions will be answered in this chapter: what is the impact/influence of the FGC constitution with regard to unity, and secondly, what does the Bible teach with regard to church and structural unity? These questions will be investigated within the exegetical/hermeneutical framework. According to Browning (1991:55) questions are formed by the problems of life that impede our action. Browning (ibid.) further adds in this regard that there are at least four basic questions that drive us to strategic practical theological thinking, namely:

- *First, how do we understand this concrete situation in which we must act?* This goes beyond the question of the general features of the situation but entails questions about this concrete situation in all its particularity. This consists of the special histories, commitments, and needs of the agents in the situation. It consists of the interplay of institutional systems, and how they converge on the situation.
- *Second, what should be our praxis in this concrete situation?* The symbolic and actional norms that have come forth from historical and systematic theology, shaped from the beginning by practical concern, are now brought into even more intimate relation with the particularities of the situation being addressed.

- *Third, how do we critically defend the norms of our praxis in this concrete situation?* The critical defence of the norms of action is what distinguishes the revised correlational approach to practical theology from all simple confessional, narrative, or cultural-linguistic approaches.
- *Fourth, what means, strategies, and rhetorics should we use in this concrete situation?* This question poses the issue of where people are and how ministry in its various forms takes the first and begins the process of transformation.

5.2 Church Organisational Structure

The organisational structure refers to the relatively stable group of tasks, relationships and processes within an organisation (Smit & de Cronje 1992:176). According to Viola (2008: 32), the New Testament uses many images to depict the church. Significantly, all of these images are living entities: a body, a bride, a family, one new man, a living temple made up of living stones, a vineyard, a field, an army, a city, etc. Viola (ibid.) concludes from this that each image teaches us that the church is a living thing, rather than a mere abstraction in the form of an organisation.

Viola's view is corroborated by Tidwell (1985:104) thus: "a church is a very special and unique creation. It is a fellowship. It is an organism, a unit of life, though not primarily an organization it does have needs for organization."

Ashbrook's study (1995:136) clearly indicates that

... if the organization is to succeed in fulfilling its aims, special individual or group points of view and interest have to be subordinated to or harmonized with those of the whole body as such. Individuals have to find satisfaction and fulfilment in making the organized aim their own aim. They have to feel a genuine stake in the outcome, as affecting them. Such unity, such harmonizing, is not impossible, but neither are they spontaneous. They have to be striven for.

Constant growth requires a continuous adjustment of structure (framework) of church (Cooke & Goodell 2006:62). Organisation should be a blessing, not a burden, and a means of getting work done, not hindering it (Sugden & Wiersbe 2005:46). It is worth noting that the main ecclesiological disputes throughout history of Christianity have occurred over matters of the church's organisation (Dever 2012:113). Dever (2012:113) adds that in particular there are three areas that have drawn much of the disagreement namely: membership, government, and discipline.

5.2.1 Definition of Organisation

Tidwell (1985:108) defines organisation as "the arrangement of persons to 'get the job done'." He further includes the common elements in organisation as being: some pattern of structure and some design (an arrangement). Hamill, in *the Pastor and Administration* (1995:435), defines an organisation as a "deliberate association of persons who desire to accomplish something together or to realise certain common objectives." The following are the reasons for organising, given by Smit and De Cronje (1992: 179):

- organising leads to an organisational structure that indicates clearly who is responsible for what task;
- accountability is the next important aspect of organising, where lines of authority are indicated;
- clear channels of communication are pinpointed;
- the principle of synergy helps promote the effectiveness and quality of the work performed;
- organizing helps managers to deploy resources meaningfully;
- the organizational structure is responsible for creating a mechanism for co-ordinating the entire organisation.

5.2.2 Church Government

The word “government” carries the idea of ruling, controlling or exercising authority over the affairs and actions of an organisation or institution (Mock 1989:256). Conner (1982:79) defines “government” as:

- the exercise of authority over an organisation, institution, state, district, etc.; direction, control, rule, management;
- a system of ruling, controlling, etc., an established system of political administration by which a state, district, etc., is governed;
- government involves (a) territory, (b) people and (c) leadership.

Churches must have procedures for determining who is a member, and who is not, and who is the final earthly judicatory under God to provide leadership, settle controversies, and so forth (Dever 2012:116).

5.2.3 Forms of Church Government

Mock (1989:256-257) outlines the following basic forms of church governance:

- *Episcopal or Hierarchical Form:*

Episcopal, from a Greek word meaning “overseer,” with bishops having authority over ecclesiastical districts, synods or conferences. This is a “top down” form of authority and the earliest of church polity (Schwarz 2004:204).

This involves a three-fold ministry of bishops (overseers), presbyters (or priests), and deacons. The elders (or priests) are subordinate to the bishops, who alone have the right to ordain elders (priests) and deacons. The bishops in effect govern the Church (Mock 1989:256).

- *Presbyterian or Federal Form: Presbyterian*, From the Greek word “elder” is a representative form of polity, with power vested in the presbyteries made up of clergypersons and governing elders of churches within a district or region (Schwarz 2004:204).

This representative form of government involves the congregation at the level of selecting elders and deacons who make up the session, which then governs the church. Once the elders and deacons are selected, the congregation has little to say about running the church (Mock 1989:83).

- *Congregational Form:* Emphasis in the congregational form is upon democratic structure, where the ultimate governing authority for the local church is vested in the members themselves. While ministers are selected as leaders, their authority rests solely in the relationship to the congregation, and their authority in the final analysis is no more than that of any other church member.

In connection with the above, the governing system of the FGC seems to be closely linked to the Presbyterian one, whereby the highest legislative body is the General Conference. The General Conference is made up of all qualified certificated ministers workers of the church and delegates. It would be of interest to do a comparative historical study whereby the impact of apartheid on our church government is closely analysed. However, the ultimate purpose of this is that "Church government is organized for service, not dominion (Clowney 1995:206)". The well-being of the church lies very largely in the hands of its leadership (ibid. 76).

5.2.4 Conclusion

Indeed, while the church is clearly a living spiritual organism, made up of the body of believers, (Ephesians 2:19-22), it is also a structural organisation. For the work of the ministry must be accomplished within some structural framework (Acts 6:1-7; Titus 1:5; Hebrews 13:7, 17). While it might be useful for the Bible to have specified one acceptable form of church structure and administration, that is simply not the case. Swartly (2005:23) argues that traditions embedded in our churches, our culture, and modern business practices must not obscure the vision for the church set forth in Scripture. Therefore, regardless of the form of church government used, the following conclusion could be made that:

- the church must have spiritually qualified leaders properly exercising God given authority;

- the church must have programs that practically minister to the spiritual, Physical, emotional and social needs of its members;
- the church must recognise Christ as head and ultimate authority;
- any organisational practice which fails to recognise the mind of Christ through the indwelling Spirit, no matter how closely patterned after the New Testament structure; does not qualify as a biblical church government (Saucy 1972:98-119);
- the church should realize that it is not only structural organization but also a spiritual organism;
- and has to rely on the Holy Spirit to empower the ministry and make it fruitful.

In view of the above conclusive remarks, it is relevant that at this stage, attention be paid specifically to the FGC structure:

5.3 The FGC Structure

The ministries of the FGC local churches are, to a greater extent, influenced by the denominational leadership which sets the policy of the church and exercises a great deal of influence over its local pastors.

5.3.1 Administration and Management

5.3.2 Administration

Administration is the name given to a comprehensive and essential function in any society, which carries on through the instrumentality of numerous organisations. It is the function within an organisation which is responsible for establishing its objects, purposes, aims or ends, for implementing the necessary organising and operating steps, and for assuring adequate performance toward the desired end (Hamill 1995:435).

5.3.3 What is management?

According to Smit and De Cronje (1992:6), management is defined as “a process of series of activities that gives the necessary direction to an enterprise’s resources so that its objectives can be achieved as productively as possible in the environment in which it functions.” Rush (1983:10) puts it most succinctly as getting work done through others.

The above-mentioned definitions show the popular approach of a secular management philosophy. This type of philosophy is often humanistic and materialist because authority is seen as a means of manipulating, using and controlling people. Such a concept of management is particularly appealing to man’s sinful nature, because it gives managers and leaders the “right” to control and exploit those under them (Rush 2002:2). I believe that management is the process of accomplishing God’s purposes and plans through proper use of human, material and spiritual resources. Therefore, in the post-unification era, we need to see the value of members and pastors in particular. People are more important than products and systems. The New Testament stresses the importance of relationships (Acts 2:43-47).

Organisational systems that seem to be based on machine models in which people are components, don’t have a Christian basis. After the structural unification of the FGC, a great turning point marked the life of the church. As Malphurs (1993:9) puts it, “when change is happening, we can pretend it is not happening, we can build walls to keep changes away, or we can open all doors and be changed by change.” Dr. Larry G. Hess, from Church of God in America, preaching in the FGC conference in Durban, South Africa which was held on the 19-23 October, 1999 noted the following:

Churches today operate in an increasingly complex changing world. We find ourselves ministering in turbulent times, times which test our endurance and spiritual maturity. If we are to respond effectively to this turbulence and address our most critical issues, we must develop skills and commit to the values necessary for faithfulness. Outdated paradigms, antiquated programs, inept leadership and a church which overall may be incapable of responding to the present crisis, is part of the problem.

Every institution – no matter how large or small – eventually reaches a point where it must adapt to changing circumstances (Knipe & Van der Walt, 2001:27).

5.3.4 The FGC Constitution

The main purpose for a constitution is to provide a basis for fellowship and to promote unity in the work of God (Pate 1984:88). According to Tidwell (1985:118), a constitution reflects the basic truths and the settled rules of action related to the function, the direction, and the control of the church. Tidwell continues to tell us that in a written constitution are placed those items most treasured and enduring, such as the following:

- A preamble, which sets forth the purpose of the constitution.
- The name, in the official form, to be used for church business and legal purposes.
- A statement of the church's purposes or objectives.
- A statement of basic beliefs of a doctrinal nature.
- A church covenant reflecting the commitment of members to one another in light of their commitment to God.
- A church statement of polity and relationships.

Having a written standard of doctrine and conduct can help prevent errors in doctrine that may arise at a later time, as well as strengthening the church in having a unified purpose (Pate: 1984:88). According to Chetty (2002:103), since the first constitution and the by-laws passed by the General Council of the FGC in 1922 up until that approved on the 4th of April 1979, one is able to clearly see the entrenchment of apartheid laws. In all the preamble of all the constitutions up to 1979 the following lines appear:

it is incumbent on us as a church to be subject to the higher powers, which have been ordained of God (Romans 13:1) and to the existing governmental policies of the Republic of South Africa, and to the laws relating thereof. We deem it incumbent upon us to comply with governmental policies, which are in force.

The 1979 constitution continues to emphasise the following:

- Preamble paragraph 4: “it is incumbent on us to comply with governmental policies which are in force.”
- Article 7, 60 & Article 8, 74: “whilst the highest authority of the church is the General Conference...”

Examining the previous constitutions, it is evident to see that white pastors were the highest legislative body in the church, hence it was called the General Council. The blacks, Indians and Coloureds had white representatives on this council, could not be present to represent themselves. Since the General Conference only met once a year, its authority was delegated to the Executive Council. According to Article 7, Section 1 the Executive Council consisted of the following:

- I. The Moderator
- II. The Deputy Moderator
- III. The Secretary General
- IV. The Representative of the coloured Community
- V. The Representative of the Indian Community
- VI. The Representative of the black Community

Though the FGC is a unified organisation and that some of the injustices of the past has been dealt with in the church's constitution it seems as if the current constitution has some gaps which needs attention. By way of example, in Article 6, Section 3. of the Constitution, there is a mention of

what is called the “Zoning of the Local Churches”, this means that “any local church coming into existence and falling within the area of a particular region shall come under the jurisdiction of that particular Regional Council unless granted special permission by the Executive Council to be placed in another region.”

This is very problematic, because it is not going to promote unity, but will work to the advantage of those leaders and ministers who are not willing to accept change but want to hop from one region to the next for linguistic purposes escaping integration.

Another thing is that the constitutional division of the FGC through regions and districts will be based strictly along the boundaries of language, whereby English and Afrikaans regions persist. Then, if any pastor can go to the region of his language preference, as stated by the above article, then unity is pointless.

As Chetty (2002:123) pointed out, that type of a move will indeed take us back to the same old apartheid structure, whereby white Afrikaners were in their preferred districts and regions and other groupings in their own corner, just as it happened in the years of division. So, instead of the publicly celebrated unity, we are going to see what Chetty calls the “reinvention of Apartheid [sic] along linguistic lines.” This was confirmed by one regional overseer, who I once contacted with the intention of planting a church in the squatter camp that was in his jurisdiction. He clearly told me that he wouldn’t be able to assist, being the overseer of the Afrikaans region.

5.3.5 Conclusion

Initially in this study I discussed the brief history of the FGC and how we finally became united. I now want to conclude with a few remarks, particularly on unity. Unity refers, as discussed, to the combining or joining of separate things or entities to form one. It also means harmony of opinion, interest, or feeling. Unity within the FGC context speaks of the unity of people of different races namely blacks, whites, Indians and coloureds, coming together to be one church after a long time of

separation. Yes there will be times of conflict revolving around leaders, personalities, types of music, polity, styles of worship, doctrines, traditions, or other quotidian concerns. However, every member of the FGC, especially the leaders, must help in building unity. Pastor M. Maanzwane of the Apostolic faith mission preaching at the AFM conference themed: “Decade of Unity Conference” in 2006, mentioned the following people as unable to help in building unity:

1. the one who is fighting for his own survival;
2. the one who competes with others;
3. the one who wants to protect his culture, this is the one who does not want his culture to be deculturised and contaminated;
4. the one who was defeated by votes because he is against unity;
and
5. the one who is running away from unity.

Every four years in the FGC, we vote on leadership. Fernando (1998:429) indicates that the problem with voting is that some people are always dissatisfied with the decision, and thus there is no unity achievable, as believers work on a project. Therefore, the members of our church and the leadership must understand that our unity should take priority no matter who the overseer may be.

My proposal is that the time for a black moderator in the FGC is long overdue. The question might be asked: after how long will the FGC be able to redress the past imbalances in its leadership? As Habib & Bentley (2008:18) describe:

Redress is an explicit political mandate identified in the South African Constitution. Section 9(2) of the constitution explicitly states that “to promote the achievement of equality legislative and other measures designed to protect or advanced persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination may be taken.”

Unlike most institutions, the church cannot confine its attention to certain groups of people (Gibbs & Coffey 2001). In the apartheid era in South Africa, whites were in the minority, yet they were the ones who held the reins of power. That must not be the case in the FGC, especially in the post-unification era. Our unity must be strong to the point where leadership reflects this likewise. When the black leader finally takes the leadership as General Overseer of the church, my plea is that all those who have been leading us all along must stay and be led. No one is really ready to lead if he/she is not ready to be a follower. Unity must not be determined by the identity of the overseer, be it legitimately or illegitimately ascribed. Being multiracial must be our priority, because that is the fruit of unity.

This unity is not the unity of the spirit, but the unity of people. I believe that when the Church is in unity, then we will pray better in the spirit. Those who are in the hierarchy of the church leadership must finish their race of leadership very well. This they will do by leaving the wealth of unity to the FGC for generations to come. It is necessary to thank God for unity, to stop romanticising the past and criticising the present. Talking about how good the past was will not determine the future. It is necessary not to romanticise the past to the extent that the past will be allowed to destroy our future. The past must also not be forgotten to the extent that we come to repeat the past in the future.

The question that needs to be asked is as to why in the same town, there a rich church that is excelling, and a poor church struggling, both belonging to the same denomination, where the pastors don't even talk to one another? It stands to reason that pastors need to talk to one another by building friendships between black and white, Indians and coloureds, and find innovative ways to express our unity. This is also possible by identifying some of the challenges in our local as well as the regional structures. It is necessary to fight the legacy of apartheid by all means in our structures, as well as to address the lack of trust of black leadership accordingly. I believe the other races in the FGC, by virtue of their education, training and experience, are capable of leading this great denomination, and should not be portrayed as stupid or childish, needing to be baby-sitted. This type of mind-set maintains a justified superiority of

one race over another, and affirms that things have to stand as they were before unification.

After unification, the concept of race must not be used to distinguish amongst various groups, or to classify groups in terms of superiority and inferiority, as well as to stereotype and stigmatise them. My personal observation of this makes me feel as if I am underdeveloped, as if I am somehow a child when compared with colleagues of other races. This indeed is the manifestation of the mind-set defined by (Kretzchmar 1988:154) as the political, economic, social and psychological ideology, which serves the interests of a particular group. It is necessary to deal with any distortion of the Creator's grand "rainbow" design and perversion of His intent in the FGC, as well as to realise that there is abundant variety among His creation. According to this logic, ethnocentric pride compromises leadership, and causes unity to become impractical. To encourage unity, it is necessary to:

1. be conscious of the common brotherhood we share in Christ through the Eucharist;
2. help people understand the true nature of Christian identity, which does not depend on human distinctions. When people realise that they are accepted as significant and useful to the Kingdom, not because of any merit of their own but only because of the mercy of God, they also realise that they cannot look down on anyone (Fernando 1998);
3. be grateful for the Word of God as recorded in the Bible and handed down through the church to succeeding generations, and we should share it with each other;
4. avoid words, judgments and actions which divide and separate, and should instead encourage sincere dialogue conducted in a spirit of forbearance, openness and charity;
5. avail ourselves of opportunities to work together for the common cause of promoting the kingdom of God;
6. gather together for prayer and the study of scriptures;

7. turn back the pages of history and look afresh at those areas where differences have developed and see if they can now be resolved or at least dispassionately discussed;
8. seek to renew ourselves, acknowledging our failings and asking pardon for them, since every renewal of the church increases its credibility and builds up the whole body;
9. set aside special days of prayer for Christian unity; such prayers in common are an effective means of petitioning for the grace of unity and an expression of the ties which bind Christians together (Puglisi 2005).

As a denomination it is necessary therefore to deal with the past honestly and with love; to listen to each other's stories and deal with the issues of inclusivity, being sensitive to one another; to deal with the issues that divide and separate us; to deal with the psychological, emotional, and economic problems of the past. If we fail to do that, then we will fail in dealing with issues that threaten our Christian witness, such as poverty, unemployment and HIV/AIDS.

Finally, in the words of Dr. Robert White (1991:8), any governmental structure must compliment and accommodate the Bible principles of the divine mandate, rather than a national or regional structure that practices exclusively. A structure that provides full membership, rights and authorities to all members, and at the same time provides wise administration and fiscal responsibility, is more easily attainable, than depleting those energies and resources in trying to build kingdoms within the church.

5.4 Ministry Training

It was on the first of January 2005 when the three existing colleges of the church merged to become one integrated, non-racial Full Gospel Church of God College in Southern Africa.

My concern is that since the merger of these institutions, there has been a crisis within the church in terms of training for the ministry. This new FGC

College is not producing the number of ministers sufficiently to address the needs of our denomination. (FGC General Conference Report: 1999-2001) One would expect that this merger would bring about a major change, and attract a large number of students. The fees are also abnormally high, as if after the students graduate, they will work and earn more money. Most of the students who cannot afford the college fees are from the previously oppressed black community. Is there any future for them in this denomination? When one takes a careful look at the present leaders of the Church, a few key questions come to mind:

- how old are they?
- how long will they be on leadership positions?
- who is capable of replacing them?

These questions require analytical answers if our church is to have sufficient, capable and aggressive leadership in the future. In answering the question as to what the FGC is doing to create new leaders, the Church is required to act decisively, because, tomorrow this church will require a new generation of leaders. Many of our ministers are coming to retirement age and if we are to continue growing and planting churches, we need an increased number of young ministers.

Another factor affecting the decrease in the number of pastors in the FGC is what Anderson (1990:48) sees as: “a decline in the number of students attending denominational colleges which also adds to denominational decline. Many who once would have had their denominational ties reinforced by their collegiate experience are now attending state and secular colleges and universities or nondenominational schools.” Many of the students on the denominational college campus are not from the denomination; they chose the school for geographical or educational opportunities, rather than for its denominational stance (Gibbs & Coffey 2001:93-118).

This makes it impossible for the students to be loyal to the denomination. Also, the rise of non-denominational Bible colleges and seminaries has

flooded churches with pastors who did not grow up within the denomination they now pastor (Anderson 1998:48). Often these pastors are less than enthusiastic about promoting denominational loyalty because they have little of it themselves.

The FGC refuses ordination to candidates who did not go through its training institution, or they require that they do certain modules from its curriculum so that they acquaint themselves with the denomination adequately (FGC Constitution, Article 9; Section 4;9.4.2:103).

. This effort has failed tremendously because it makes candidates lose interest and opt for joining other denominations with flexible entry requirements.

5.4.1 Ministry Entry in the FGC

According to the constitution of the FGC, approved by the General Conference from the 9th to the 10th of October, 1997 and amended in 1999 and 2001, there are few qualifications for entry into the ministry, namely:

5.4.1.1 A distinct call of God

This must be witnessed by the applicant, whilst the corroborative testimony of others lends assurance.

5.4.1.2 Sound Knowledge of Scripture

A sound knowledge of the scriptures is required, especially with regard to the teachings and doctrines of the Church, including a preparedness to undergo necessary training and instruction in the teaching of the church.

5.4.1.3 Character Reference

A good report from the brethren with whom they have been associated in spiritual fellowship and “from them which are without”, (Acts 16:2; 1 Timothy 3:7).

5.4.1.4 Holy Spirit Baptism

Ministers must have received baptism in the Holy Spirit, with the evidence of speaking in tongues (Acts 2:4; 20:46; 19:6).

5.4.1.5 Membership qualifications

Any applicant who is not currently active in the ministry of another recognised Christian organisation must be a member of the Church for a period of not less than one (1) year to the date of his application, unless such applicant can satisfy the Executive Council that he has successfully completed theological training for admittance to the ministry of another church, equal to the minimum requirements of the Full Gospel Church of God.

5.4.1.6 Academic Training

Applicants must have an academic qualification not lower than Matric (Standard 10 or Grade 12) and three years theological training of any college of the church, or its equivalent approved by the Executive Council. Such theological training shall be by full-time or correspondence training.

5.4.1.7 Full Time Ministry

The ministry of the FGC shall be full-time ministry (with the exception of 'Tentmaker' or 'Free-Lance' Evangelist)

5.4.2 The Quality of Education

It is important to evaluate the quality of education in the FGC today. The quality of education varies from institution to institution. Education has been, is and probably will remain a subject of controversy within the FGC, because theological education forms the basis of the training of ministers within the FGC. Therefore, it is important to realise that it is the training that determines the multiplication of ministers in the Church. Relevant theology is always contextual. This is to say, theology, from any

perspective, must be related to its circumstances. As a denomination we must take full advantage of the past, its accomplishment, learning and insights. To neglect this truth is to fail to listen and be receptive to God. I believe that some pastors are not efficient today because of the inferior training they received. If a pastor is ministering in a context where members are educated and are busy upgrading themselves, from time to time he /she will be left behind with his inferior education.

This will cause giving, which is the source of the church income from local to national level, to be reduced. No longer will the well-educated, mobile and sophisticated church members believe or do everything the pastor suggests. This will happen because educated people will go to churches where they feel that their needs are met. Giving is a barometer of the people's acceptance of the ministry of the church, so when people stop giving, they are indirectly punishing the pastor for not doing what they expect of him.

This will be the ultimate fate of the church that stubbornly refuses to acknowledge, accept and cope with the demands of unification as well as of a changing South Africa. It stands to reason that church members prefer pastors who want to be more informed and contextually relevant.

The day of uninformed and almost illiterate black preacher is rapidly drawing to a close. The leadership role of pastors within the FGC (blacks in particular) has come under tremendous scrutiny and condemnation. The black pastor of today in the FGC is being challenged as never before. Therefore, the FGC needs theological education that is suitable for the present time, because education stands at the centre of genuine reconstruction.

This theological training has to be made less expensive, considering the fact that some other population groups within the FGC, who were previously deprived are just not in a position to pay for it. This is not the reinvention of the past, but there are still those who need some sort of empowerment in this regard. The structure of the programmes should also meet current needs and systematically adapt and adjust as times and circumstances demand. Theological education in the post-unification era should do the following:

1. help ministerial candidates to think critically;
2. challenge students to be in a position to evaluate and review material that has to be learned instead of just memorising it;
3. the curriculum should be relevant. It must maintain balance between the individual and the society, with provision being made for both individual and community needs (students should know the strength and weaknesses of their past);
4. Instruction should be more functional than being more formal and theoretical. (Theological education in the FGC must address issues affecting the survival of the denomination, especially the current need for multiracial leadership).

The place of personal development in a leader's life cannot be overemphasised, as the growth of the church depend to a large extend on it. The scripture (2 Timothy 3:16-17) places a strong emphasis on the necessity of a leader's personal development. The FGC therefore should accord the development of leaders the priority it deserves. Personal development is essential to pastors in full-time ministry because:

- pastors need to maintain personal fellowship with God;
- to keep the spiritual freshness of life and ministry;
- to be able to face the challenges of the modern society
- To remain committed, consistent and steadfast in the face of strange doctrines (Colossians 2:8; 1Timothy 4:1-3);
- to forestall the activities of hirelings, false prophets, backsliders and to deliver the ignorant; and

- to conform to the image of Christ, is the highest reason for personal development (Phil 3:8-11; 2 Peter 1:3-4). Christ-centred development, definitely meets divine specifications.

If the FGC is to survive, the church must provide quality leadership. The ordained ministry demands knowledge of the Christian faith, an understanding of it in relation to human life and an ability to present it effectively in the contemporary world. Therefore, theological education in the FGC must seek not only to move the heart and touch the mind of the students, but must also inspire them to mission and to action in the world. Hodges (1999:55) noted that “there is a measure of failure in our training programme if the men we train are unwilling to return to the churches and areas with which they are familiar, and which present a great spiritual challenge.” He continues to say that students are not to be trained away from the task, but instead they need to be trained for the task.” Hodges further identifies the following gaps in most training programmes thus:

1. the gap between the intellectual development and the spiritual development of the student. Too often we have trained the mind and have not been able to lead the student into the full life in the Holy Spirit;
2. the gap between knowledge and the practical ministry. We place a student in school and nurture him in a somewhat artificial climate. He/she is often too far removed for too long a period of time from the rugged life and problems which he/she is to meet in the ministry;
3. the gap between the clergy and the laity; Our training program should aim to put the entire church on the march for God.
4. the gap in our concept of the role that training plays in the development of the church; students should not be trained only to fill vacancies.

In connection with the above, the FGC ought to follow practical suggestions in order to embrace the New Testament approach in training, namely that we must provide for the spiritual development of our prospective workers, as well as their intellectual development. Jesus selected twelve men to be with Him in a special capacity (Matthew 10:1). First and foremost, the

twelve were to be trained as disciples ('apprentices'), then after some extended period of equipping, the disciples were to become apostles (a term which means 'one set forth by the Lord').

The same principle can be applied in our training programmes. Eager beginners are desirable, but in the end of the training, we need the consistently faithful worker, who will get the job done. Our training programmes should be such that it will meet the needs of the church. The student should be trained to the task and not away from it. Myron Rush (1983:28) asserts that Jesus' major goal was to give his life to and for the people.

The New Testament approach of training is more along the line of so-called on-the-job training (Hodges 1999: 60). Lastly, the FGC ought to provide training of the entire church, rather than the exclusive training of the selected few, who will be devoting themselves to full time ministry. Jesus not only sent out the twelve (Mark 3:14-15) but "other seventy also" (Luke 10:1). What place does the FGC have for the "other seventy also" in the present training programme?

According to Hodges (1999:61), we are missing a tremendous opportunity for the Kingdom by failing to develop a lay ministry. Ordinarily, the training programmes are set up in such a way that only the younger people can attend. Those who have family responsibilities find no way to meet these responsibilities and get the necessary training. The church has an obligation to provide training for everyone that God is calling. Teaching should be tailored to fit the need of each class. The place of the laity in the FGC, in particular, in the ministry of the local church, is therefore a vitally important issue that must be addressed by both local pastors and general church officials. The future of the church depends on this.

5.4.3 Continuing Education

The paradigms of ministry are changing from time to time. It would be good for our college to constantly organise seminars for the purpose of refreshing and empowering ministers who are in full time ministry of the church. The seminars will be a source of empowerment to ministers, as well

as offer relevant resources for effective ministry. The goal of our college should be to produce pastors or leaders who understand the Christian life better, think biblically about issues of living, as well as improving their ministry skills. Basically, the college should strive to help ministers to stay current, through continuing education. The core of an effective leadership training programme ought to include the following.

- Gospel Centred Spirituality

1 John 1:5-10 is a letter that calls us to self-examination and holiness. We also find rich pictures of who we are in Christ (1 John 2: 12-14; 3: 1-2; 4:16; 5:11). Gospel-centred spirituality avoids behaviourism, while addressing the heart that leads to behaviours and God-honouring actions and obedience.

We want pastors who will help others grasp the dynamic of the gospel-centred living. That calls for ongoing faith and repentance. The shepherding ministry of the church calls for it.

- Exegesis of Scripture

Pastors in training need practice with exegesis of biblical passages. Exegesis avoids using proof texts and isolated passages to make a point. The leader must be equipped to teach the passage while taking the context into account. Pastors not only need a solid theological foundation; they must also know how to handle the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:15).

- The Work of the Holy Spirit and Prayer

The power to change is the power of the Gospel and the sanctifying work of the Spirit. The process of helping others discover where change is needed depends on the Holy Spirit. Student pastors needs to be taught how to listen.

- Spiritual Gifts

Peter C. Wagner (1979:164-165) asserts that once it is recognised that the pastor is the key person for the church growth, the training of that pastor becomes a crucial consideration. By accepting the position of a Christian church, a person has committed himself/herself to a life of a demanding work. Not only must a pastor discover, develop and use his own spiritual gifts but, even in the best of situations, he must be prepared to exercise his Christian roles to a degree much higher than the average Christian.

I agree with Dr. Wagner, cited above, that most ministers are trained in Bible School or seminary, and that the purpose of the professional training that is offered in Bible Schools and seminaries is to prepare Christian ministers. One of the basic problems is that, generally speaking, the people who enter those institutions have not yet discovered their spiritual gifts, and had them confirmed in any significant way by the Body of Christ. Since they have never been in the ministry, there is no way for them to know for sure whether they have a mix of gifts appropriate for pastoral work. Seminary application forms do not screen out candidates who are unsure that they have the kind of ministry-related gifts that seminaries are set up to help develop.

The all-too-prevalent assumption is that by virtue of taking a three or four year course in Bible School, people can be trained to be pastors no matter what gift-mix God has given them (Wagner 1979:166). The most important element in leadership training is to identify and develop the leader's gifts (Coffey & Gibbs, 2001:107).

5.4.4 Conclusion

The earliest Pentecostals tended to have little formal education and were therefore unfamiliar with sophisticated theological argumentation (Tienou & Walls 2007:173). Alvarez (2000:281) further asserts that traditionally, Pentecostals have been looked on as theologically uneducated. Be that as it may, the role of theological training, where professional Christian workers, theologians, missionaries and researchers are trained, cannot be avoided in the FGC as a Pentecostal denomination. Mahoney (1993:4) says, theological seminaries too frequently become "cemeteries" where

hundreds of potential church leaders' spiritual life is buried. I can't entirely agree, nevertheless, I want to apply his words to the extent that they pertain to the context of the high cost of theological education in the FGC.

I have observed many young people with pastoral and leadership potential being expelled from the college, and were unable to pursue ministry, lacking the finances to fund their studies. So the college, in the words of Dr. Mahoney, became the cemetery that buried their potential. The cost of training in the FGC is very high. The high cost of theological education also means that many smaller congregations can no longer afford to pay the salary required by a seminary-trained, younger pastor with heavy financial commitment to repaying loans, as well as in many cases, supporting a family (Coffey & Gibbs, 2001: 96). Most pastors do not make a great deal of money, despite the years of education required to qualify for the job (Cole 2009:35).

Therefore, theological education in the FGC needs to be made affordable to the extent that blacks called to the ministry can also access it. One other element to consider, is that the FGC College is going to have to foster balance of strong intellectual preparation alongside the development of one's inner resources. Henri Nouwen (1989:48) suggests that "teaching means the creation of the space in which the validity of the questions does not depend on the availability of answers, but on their capacity to open us to new perspectives and horizons." Finally, the FGC will have to take a practical approach to its education, structuring programmes, which meet current needs, systematically adapting and adjusting emphases as times and circumstances demand. This is of relevance to Aleshire's (2008:62-63) argument, who sees:

... teaching as an act of scholarship, and at its best, it is as attentive to students as it is to subjects. Teaching that guides students toward theological understanding involves curricular and course design, but it transcends them as well. It is the work of persons who know an area of theological inquiry intimately well, care about it deeply, understand and value the work for which students are preparing, and engage their students with honesty and integrity. These characteristics have pedagogical power, especially in theological schools, where teaching

touches on struggles about ultimate meaning and encounters with intense human commitments.

Pentecostal education must offer a balance between the cognitive, competence, and the affective domains of education for Christian service (Alvarez 2000:284). Jonathan Lewis (1998:1-3) offered three identified domains that must head the educational enterprise, by trying to match the desired outcome of theological education with its methods and contexts. According to Lewis (ibid.) the following will help us understand the commitments of Pentecostal education to theory and praxis in a balanced application and relevance:

- cognitive outcomes: as produced through formal methods in a school context.
- skill outcomes: as produced through non-formal methods in the workplace context.
- affective outcomes: as produced through informal methods in a community context.

Osmer's (2008:4) question as to what ought to be going on will be dealt with in the following section, with specific reference to interpreting the biblical material. Osmer (ibid: 139) arrived at the heart of the matter when he wrote: "theological interpretation focuses on the interpretation of present episodes, situations, and context with theological concepts."

As already mentioned, the book of Acts will be used in this regard for the exegetical study, particularly Chapters 11, 13 & 15, as these deal with issues of unity and diversity implicitly.

5.5 The Exegetical Study: An Exposition of Selected Biblical Text

A tremendous definition of exegesis is found in Deist & Burden (1980:1) as follows: "Exegesis, as an academic discipline, is concerned with the process by which one understands a text and by which one is able to tell

what one has understood.” Mock (1989:22) refers to exegesis as “the process of carefully studying and analysing the text to determine its original meaning (another way of describing basic Bible study methods).” According to Horton (2006:71) exegesis involves the following process:

1. examining the text itself, its origin and wording,
2. scrutiny of translation,
3. discovery of historical content-authorship, setting and dating,
4. analysis of literary context,
5. determining the genre or literary type,
6. outlining and diagramming structure,
7. classification of grammar and syntax,
8. systematically studying a given truth in the setting of all revealed truth, and
9. applying the text.

5.5.1 Pentecostal Hermeneutics

At the heart of classical Pentecostalism is the conviction that the whole Bible is the inspired word of God. This conviction affirms that the Bible is a reliable revelation of God, and that it states the exact truths the Holy Spirit intends to convey. The starting point and very foundation for Pentecostal faith and praxis has been the biblical text (Arrington: 1994:101). Cargal (1994:180) has offered an assessment of hermeneutics as practiced by classical Pentecostals as follows:

Through the Holy Spirit the Word of God becomes alive and speaks to our present situation with new possibilities for personal and social transformation.

According to Arrington (1994:104), the interpreter does not lay aside personal beliefs about God, nor the influence of God on his or her life when interpreting Scripture. However, to guard against personal experience displacing Scripture as the norm or against excess in interpretation, active participation is vital in the Pentecostal community of faith where the members are bound together by bonds of love, interdependence, and accountability. The Jerusalem Council exemplifies community and provides a biblical model for interpretation that includes scripture, experience,

tradition and reason (Acts 15). Smith (2008:169) suggests that Biblical exegesis is an in-depth, inductive examination of the scripture, in which the exegete systematically applies established hermeneutic tools (exegetical methods) to discovering the meaning and implications of a biblical text (or group of texts). As already mentioned, the exegetical study using the grammatical historical method will be undertaken, whereby passages dealing with the element of unity will be selected. Passages from the Book of Acts will be selected to formulate the main focus of this exegetical study.

Thomas (2011: xi) asserts that our doctrine must derive from the biblical text, and our understanding of any particular passage of Scripture must arise from the doctrine taught in Scripture as a whole. Studying Acts brings us into close proximity, not only with the early church, but with the way in which the early church was shaped by the gospel. The church in our time can so easily lose sight of its mission: to be a witness to the resurrected Christ, beginning in Judea and continuing, in concentric circles, “to the end of the earth.” Acts reminds us that the story of the church remains incomplete (Thomas 2011: xv).

Some of the major themes outlined by Fernando (1998:29-31) significant for this study are as follows:

1. the priority of evangelism;
2. the power of the Holy Spirit;
3. community life: (Acts presents a vibrant community that was passionate about mission, with the members caring for each other, pursuing holiness, and dealing with matters that affected unity);
4. teaching;
5. breaking the human barrier in Christ: (in keeping with the geographical order presented in the Great Commission (1:8), Luke shows how the gospel spread from Jerusalem to Judea

and Samaria and to the ends of the earth. In this process, Gentiles are saved, he describes the way the church handled that witness as other social differences among Christians, leaving us with the strong impression that human barriers were broken in the early church and giving us reasons why that is so);

6. the place of suffering;

7. the sovereignty of God;

8. the Jewish reaction to the Gospel;

9. the legal status of Christianity;

The book of Acts is largely history. In our postmodern world, the church will do well to heed the importance of history, of establishing solid empirical roots to faith and doctrine. Luke was a careful historian, eager to establish solid foundation for the New Testament church's origins (Thomas 2011:7). Acts considers that the work of the Spirit cannot be separated from the structures of the church, even though the Spirit may not be tied by, or restricted to them (Suggit 1992:38).

5.5.2 Acts as a Radical Challenge to Today's Church

The blue print and pattern recorded in the Book of Acts portrays the Church as a supernatural people, operating according to supernatural principles (Hamon 2003:76). According to Fernando (1998:40) contemporary Christians who read Acts with an open mind, will find themselves challenged with pointed applications by what happened in the early church. The following are some of the challenges mentioned:

- to a society where individuals reigns and where the church also seems to have adopted a style of community life that "guards the privacy of the individual," the early church presents a radical community where members held all things in common;

- to a society where selfishness is sometimes admired and each one is left to fend for himself or herself, Acts presents a group of Christians who were so committed to Christ and the cause of the gospel that they were willing to sacrifice their desires for the good of others;

to a society where pluralism defines truth as something subjective and personal, Acts presents a church that based life on certain objective facts about God and Christ-facts that were not only personally true, but also universally valid, and therefore had to be presented to the entire world;

- to a society that denies absolute truth, and therefore shuns apologetics and persuasion in evangelism in favour of dialogue, Acts presents a church that persuaded people until they were convinced of the truth of the gospel. Instead of aiming at mutual enrichment as the main aim of interreligious encounter, as many do today, the early church proclaimed Christ as supreme Lord with conversion in view;
- In an age where specialisation has hit evangelism so much that we rarely find churches that emphasise healing also emphasising apologetics, Acts presents a church where the same individuals performed healings and preached highly reasoned, apologetic messages;
- in an age when many churches spend so much time, money and energy on self-preservation and improvement, Acts presents churches that released their most capable people for reaching the lost;
- in an age where many churches look to excellence in techniques to bring success, Acts presents a church that depended on the Holy Spirit and gave top priority to prayer and moral purity;
- in an age when many avenues are available to avoid suffering, Acts presents a church that took on suffering for the cause of Christ and considered it a basic ingredient of discipleship.

Dr Jonathan David (1997:81) states that even though the book of Acts cannot be used to draw doctrinal truth, the spiritual implications and interpretations could be used as models to help us get into the minds and thought patterns of the apostles. We can become acquainted with the ways and working of the Holy Spirit through the apostles, where the book of Acts reveals the aspect of the ministry and the life and the power of the Holy Spirit through the restored ministries of the Church. Acts considers that the work of the Spirit cannot be separated from the institutional structures of the church, even though the spirit may not be tied by, or restricted to, them (Suggit 1992:38).

5.5.3 Authorship

Although the author does not name himself, evidence outside the Scriptures and inferences from the book itself lead to the conclusion that the author was Luke (Hindson & Mitchell, 2010:323). Acts claim to be “Part Two” of a series, and its author was identified as Luke within a century of its writing (Horton 2006:313). According to Hindson and Mitchell (ibid), the book itself presents some clues as to who the author was:

- *Luke was the companion of Paul* (Colossians 4:14; Philemon. 24; 2 Timothy 4:11). In the description of events in acts, certain passages use the pronoun “we”. At these points, the author includes himself as one of Paul’s companions in his travels (16:10-17; 20:5-21; 27:1-28:16). The author was therefore probably present with Paul during events described in the “we” sections.
- *Luke, the physician*. Although it cannot be proven that the author of acts was a physician simply from his vocabulary, the words he used and the traits and education reflected in his writing fit well his role as a physician.

Since Luke is identified as a medical doctor in Colossians 4:14, scholars in the nineteenth century sought to show that the “medical language” in Luke-Acts is sufficient to prove that the author is indeed a physician (Burge & Hill, 2012:1166). The preface of Acts (1:1) also refers to an

Earlier narrative (Adeyemo 2006:1297).

5.5.3.1 Date

According to Burge & Hill (2012: 1167) the date of writing is yet another area of scholarly debate. F.F Bruce (2008:1239), said the following concerning the date of the book of Acts:

“Luke intended his work to be read in times when it seemed possible that Christianity might attain official recognition, i.e. before A.D.64.”

Two dates are possible for the writing of this book: (1) circa AD 63, soon after the last event recorded in the book, and (2) circa AD 70 or even later, however the earlier date is much to be preferred (Hindson & Mitchell 2010:324).

5.5.3.2 Audience

Williams (2004: 6) in view of the audience said that:

“the recipient of the book, Theophilus, is the same person addressed in the first volume, the gospel of Luke. Theophilus was probably a high Roman official, since Luke in his gospel addresses him with the title ‘most excellent’, or as we should say, ‘your excellency’.”

5.5.3.3 Theme and Theological Message

“Acts was written to provide information about what Luke considered to be the most significant events in the early days of the church. His interpretation of what was significant was influenced by his theology, and thus in reading Acts we need to focus on both historical and theological questions” (Adeyemo 2006:1297). Hindson and Mitchell (2010:324-325) asserts that “the major theme of Acts is best summarized in (1:8) presented in the words of Jesus “ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” They further give the following

outline which they believe Luke may have written Acts having them in mind:

1. *Historical.*

The significance of Acts as a historical account of Christian origins cannot be overestimated. It tells of the founding of the church, the spread of the gospel, the beginnings of congregations, and evangelistic efforts in the apostolic pattern. One of the unique aspects of Christianity is its firm historical foundation. The life and teachings of Jesus Christ are established in the four Gospel narratives, and the book of Acts provides a coordinated account of the beginnings of the church and its geographical spread over the three decades of its existence.

2. *Apologetic.*

One finds embedded in Acts a record of Christian defences made to both Jews (4:8-12) and Gentiles (25:8-11), with the underlying purpose of conversion. It shows how the early church coped with pagan and Jewish thought, the Roman government, and Hellenistic society.

3. *Legal.*

Luke probably wrote Acts while Paul awaited trial in Rome. It has been suggested that he wrote with the purpose of helping in Paul's defense before the emperor. If Paul's case came to court, what better court brief could he have had than Luke's account of the life of Jesus, history of the beginning of the church (including the activity of Paul), and early collection of Paul's letters? Advocates of this view point out that Roma officials always vindicated Paul in Acts.

4. *Prescriptive.*

Luke had no way of knowing how long the church would continue on this earth, but he may have wanted to provide guidance to

congregations facing common problems. Indeed, as long as the church pursues its course, the book of Acts will be one of its major guides. In Acts, basic principles are applied to specific situations in the context of problems and persecutions. These same principles will continue to be applicable until Christ returns.

5. *Theological.*

Since Acts is the second volume of the work that Luke began in his gospel, these two books are best viewed together. A major theme in the gospel of Luke is that the grace of God is available to Gentiles as well as to Jews. Acts highlights the spread of the gospel to the Gentile world in a manner consistent with the theological theme so prominent in Luke's earlier work: the universality of the gospel. This explains Luke's emphasis on Paul's missionary work, as well as why so much attention is given to the conversion of Cornelius and why the Jerusalem church receives comparatively little attention after the early chapters of the book.

6. *Exhortation and encouragement*

Churches in the second half of the first century faced increased persecution in various places. Isolated groups of Christians might easily become discouraged. Despair often results from persecution as the vision wanes and as success continually eludes those seeking to evangelize. The success of the church in carrying the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome and in planting local churches across the Roman Empire demonstrated that Christianity was not a mere work of man; God was in it (5:35-39). Churches could read Luke's account and be strengthened to endure the trials they faced while being emboldened to tell the good news of Jesus Christ to their communities.

5.5.4 New Testament Churches

5.5.4.1 The Church at Jerusalem (Acts 8:1; 11:22):

And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.

The beginning of the church at Jerusalem was supernatural and unique. In Acts 1, the Lord Jesus gives the final teachings concerning the Kingdom, after three and a half years of ministry with the Twelve Apostles. Acts 2 marks the birthday of the Jerusalem Church, by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. About 3000 souls added to the church, added to the 120 initial company. The Lord added daily to the Jerusalem church.

Acts 2:43-47

And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things in common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and the breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

- Original Meaning

According to Fernando (1998:119) the verbal expression “they were devoting themselves to” covers four activities: The first is “the apostles’ teaching”. The second is the word *koinonia*, which Luke uses for “fellowship”; which refers specifically to sharing, but it is used to denote intimacy and fellowship in general. It is used for “the fellowship of the Holy Spirit” (2 Corinthians 13:14) and also for our participation in the bread at the Lord’s Supper (1 Corinthians 10:16). “The breaking of bread” in Acts refers to the Lord’s Supper. The final feature in verse 42 literally reads, “and to the prayers”. The phrase could refer to prayer during the set times of the Jerusalem temple (3:1; 2:46; 22:17). But there were also times when they prayed on their own (1:24; 4:24; 12:12).

- Bridging context

This passage gives us a picture of the early Christian community life. The first thing that we see is the completeness of their community life. There was a care of new believers (v.42), the various elements of worship (vv.42, 47) evangelistic outreach (vv.43, 47), caring for the material needs of each other (v.45) oneness in spirit (v.44), and joyful informal fellowship in homes (v.46).

David (1997:89) noted the following about the Jerusalem church:

1. It is (was?) an Ethnic, Single Culture Church

This is the church for the Jews, only at the exclusion of other cultures and nationalities. To exalt one culture against the other is to cause offence. Arrogance and ethnic disharmony will result at the grassroots levels of the church. The ability of the church to cross cultures within its own boundaries and borders is essential to its growth and its ongoing success. The church must develop a mentality that has a multi-cultural, global worldview, in order to demonstrate its relevance to the society it aims to reach.

The only culture the FGC need to emphasise in the Church is that of the Bible standard of the New Testament forms. We ought to pursue Scriptural values and standards as a priority. The Jerusalem church got deeper and deeper into its cultural and religious upbringing until the gospel became secondary to its cultural and religious emphasis and belief. The circumcision, the Law of Moses, the Sabbath, the observance of days and abstinence of food soon became a major issue in the Jerusalem church.

2. It is a Personality Platform-Centred Church

This type of church exists on the strength of the ministry of an individual whose platform style keeps the church together. The charismatic personality or the dominant ministry gift and its anointing, rallies the people together and keeps the church active. The people are basically followers, with little influence on the future destiny of the church. The Jerusalem church had Peter as its main leader initially, until James, the brother of Jesus, took over. The chief elder, James gave the final decision at the Jerusalem council of apostles and elders (Acts 15:13-21).

3. It has a Central form of Government

In the central form of government, all new initiatives and different views are rejected. The potential of the members' ministry, gifts and their spirit of creativity is neglected by those who exercise a central form of government.

4. It operates on Crisis Management

Acts 6:1-6 reads:

And in those days, when the numbers of the disciples were multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, it is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

Jewish Society had a system to help needy widows. Probably the isolation that resulted when these people became Christians made these sources less accessible to them. Grecian widows were particularly needy, as they were not native Judeans, and did not have relatives nearby to care for them.

Acts outlines different methods of decision-making in the church and in this passage we find one such method. What is important here is that the leadership led in this crisis and the congregation had important input to give. We also see wisdom in the way the church handled the multicultural nature of her first constituency. While we can take comfort in the fact that the early church also had problems of disunity, we are challenged by the

way these problems were immediately dealt with. The church used much sensitivity in the way they solved the problem.

The inability to progressively develop the leadership structure and its leaders was one of the major weaknesses of the Jerusalem church. This inability created scores of other problems in the church. The apostles began to bear the burden of the people, rather than the burden of the Lord (David 1997:94). The Jerusalem had so many problems it required two lengthy Pauline letters to confront its myriad dysfunctions (Iorg 2011:5).

5.5.4.2 The Church in Samaria

According to (Adeyemo 2006: 1313) "Samaria had originally been the capital of the northern kingdom, established by Omri in about 880 BC (1 Kings 16:24), but the whole region was known as 'Samaria'. Samaritan religion was a mixture of Judaism and paganism, and thus the Jews viewed the Samaritans as outcasts." With reference to Acts 1:8; 8:1-25; 9:31; 15:3, Philip the evangelist, from the church at Jerusalem preached Christ in the city of Samaria. Signs and wonders, exorcism, salvation, water baptism took place under his ministry. This was the harvest time spoken of in John 4:35-38. The city was stirred. Then Peter and John, the apostles from Jerusalem ministered the Holy Spirit to the Samaritans. In Acts (8:14) the people were obedient to the gospel proclaimed by Philip (Hindson & Mitchell 2010: 351).

5.5.4.3 The Corinthian Church

According to Elsworth (2013:12) the church, founded by the apostle on his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1-18) was located in one of the great cities of that day.

The church in Corinth in the first century was the church beset with factions and divisions. Paul called for them to be "one in Christ Jesus." The church at Corinth comprised of racial and social mixture representative of the predominantly Roman Culture. As the church developed, however, many members' differences came to cause friction. Paul's letters to the Corinthians show his heart's desire for the Church to be united. The

apostle Paul had a vested interest in the Church at Corinth (1 Corinth 1:1-17).

Paul was instrumental in founding the church; and as their spiritual father, he felt the need to write to the church. Paul noted that they have factions based on divided loyalties to various leaders. He appealed to them to pursue unity and to focus on their faith in Christ, the basis for harmony in any church that seeks to honour Him. People who believe in Christ become part of a spiritual family with one another. It is the family of faith, the body of Christ, His church. Families, even church families, sometimes have problems. Paul's desire for the Corinthians was for them to be 'perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment' (1:10). Paul is quite obviously connecting unity with maturity, and the implication is that the Corinthians were not making much progress towards the goal of maturity in Christ (Ellsworth 2013:27).

Conflict and division have often been a problem for God's people. Factions in the church in Corinth caused Paul great concern, for they were causing envy, contention and division. In verse 10 of 1 Corinthians 1, Paul gave an impassioned call for unity and cooperation. He based his appeal on two relationships. The first was his own relationship to the Corinthians as their brother in Christ. The second was the relationship to Christ that Paul shared with the Corinthians. The Corinthian church was divided into at least four factions, each having its own emphasis and antagonistic toward others. The first group may have emphasised the teachings of Paul, the founder of the Corinthian church. His ministry was directed toward Gentiles, and many members had been converted through his preaching. Paul was a trained scholar, but not considered a man of polished speech.

The second group was Apollos, an eloquent and gifted preacher. He was a Jewish Christian from Alexandria, Egypt (Acts 18:24). Some suggests that this group emphasised wisdom (special knowledge), and through their pride they created conflict in the church. Still another group looked to Cephas (Peter). Those members who exalted him probably were impressed by his emphasis on the Jew. The mention of Peter does not mean necessarily that he had visited Corinth, but his influence was such that many viewed him as the true leader of the Corinthian movement. He was older than Paul, and

had been a key leader of the original 12 disciples. Yet another group claimed spiritual superiority as the true followers of Christ (1 Corinthians 1:12).

The Christ group may have claimed a special relationship to Christ, or emphasized some unique aspect of His teaching. Discord can occur in churches when members view the church in terms of their own personal preferences, rather than God's redemptive purposes. Differences may arise over leaders, worship, procedures and organisations. Regardless of carrying opinions, Christians are to operate out of the same frame of mind and ultimate purpose that of serving Christ and leading others to Him. Sometimes, church members contribute to disharmony, by favouring one leader against the other. God is not pleased when we contribute to divisiveness. He desires that we maintain a positive attitude of unselfish concern for others as we seek to serve Christ together. May God only forbid that we have any part in disrupting a church fellowship (Ellsworth 2013:30-31).

Paul rebuked Corinthians (1 Corinthians 1:10-17) believers for focusing their attention on favourite leaders, and sought to help them focus instead on the gospel that brought all of them into fellowship with one another.

The few churches mentioned above are just a sampling of the New Testament churches. These churches were a diverse collection of dysfunctional believers, trying to work out the messy first decades of community life in Christ. Most of what is written about those churches reveals their problems, struggles, and inadequacies based on doctrinal rifts, tensions in worship, and interpersonal conflicts. In the words of (Iorg 2011:7), by and large the early churches experienced a plethora of troubling, disheartening, passion-killing problems that must have made potential leaders (or members) shudder.

5.5.4.4 The Church at Antioch

Acts 11:19-21 reads:

Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phoenicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word of God to none but unto the Jews only.

And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spoke unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

The Africa Bible Commentary (2006:1321) summarises the above-mentioned verses as follows:

the scattered evangelists had, at first, preached the word only to the Jewish people, and had thus been discriminatory in their witness (11:19). Even though they had fled to the Gentile areas of Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, they were not willing to preach the word to the Gentiles there. This selective witness was ended by some evangelists, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who went to Antioch and began to preach the Lord Jesus to the Greeks (11:20). As had been the case with Peter, The Lord's hand was with them; that is, the Lord approved of their mission and a large number of Greeks believed and turned to the Lord. The Lord left no room for doubt about the call to spread the gospel among the Gentiles.

Wagner (2008:223) specifically defines the three places mentioned above as follows:

- *Phoenicia* was a province beginning just north of Galilee, having three principal cities in the Mediterranean: Ptolemais, Tyre and Sidon.
- *Cyprus* was a large island a little more than 100 miles from the mainland. Some believers might have gone there from Sidon by sea. Two major cities were located in Cyprus: Salamis in the east and Paphos in the west. The church, or churches, on Cyprus fairly rapidly became missionary-sending churches because we read in Acts 11:20 that missionaries went from Cyprus to Antioch.
- *Antioch* was the capital of Syria. In the Roman Empire, only Rome and Alexandria were larger cities, so Antioch was a highly important and strategic centre.

Conner (1982:53) observes that the church in Antioch was not founded by apostles, but by an unnamed group, then established under apostolic ministry. Gentile churches needed teaching as they did not always have the Scriptures, as did the Jews. Jewish believers needed interpretation and spiritual application of Scripture truths they already knew. To the Gentiles, all was new material and lifestyle. Thus, from Antioch we have three great missionary journeys of Paul in establishing Gentile Churches. From Jerusalem to Antioch, Peter to Paul, Jews to Gentiles is the order of in Acts. Acts 1-2 is Peter's ministry, while Acts 13-28 is Paul's ministry.

Both are responsible for the founding of local churches, Peter from Jerusalem, Paul from Antioch. Antioch was also a multicultural stew pot. Greeks, Syrians, Phoenicians, Jews, Arabs, Persians and Italians were all part of the city's population mix. As a port city, a capital city, and a transport hub, Antioch attracted all kinds of people creating a cosmopolitan mosaic of nationalities, languages, and cultures (Iorg 2011:15). If indeed the church is not a building, but instead it is a people, then God left His church to reflect who He is and His attitude toward things. The early Church in its inception limited its message to one ethnic group, namely the Jews. The church at Jerusalem had a limited focus by limiting the purpose of God to their purpose and pride. According to (Bruce 2008 :1264) the expansion of the church at Antioch was not organised, because those who preached the message preached it to whoever they may have met (Cyprus, Cyrene, and Jews etc.).

David (1999:101) argued that the group of believers who had left Jerusalem because of persecution, initiated a fresh move in church planting. Both David (1999:101) and Iorg (2011:7) agree that it is not Jerusalem, but Antioch, that is the model or pattern of the New Testament church, by virtue of having modelled a healthy, balance and effective church life. Dr David further outlines the following about the Antioch concept of building churches, which I think could be helpful to the FGC in the post-unification era:

1. It was both a Multiracial and Multicultural church

It is a church that accommodates both Jews and Gentiles without compromising the message of Christ. They laid proper standards for all

nations, tribes and kindred to come into the church at Antioch. Human traditions, culture and customs can become limitations to the move of God unless the paradigms of our thoughts are elevated above human realm to the revelatory realm. The Antioch church was a church that had solved its racial problems, and that is why they 'had room for' Greeks and Africans, as well as Jews.

2. It Has a Plurality of Leadership

The team at Antioch was unique. They had professionals, dignitaries and strong ministry gifts in their leadership team (Acts 4:36-37; Acts 22:3; Acts 13:1) Barnabas was an ex-Levitical priest, whereas Saul was trained and highly educated in the ways of Judaism. Manaen was brought up in the courts of Herod the tetrarch. These men laboured together as a team, and they could not only share space, but they also shared power and authority.

3. It has Operational Autonomy

Each church that was planted through the apostolic endeavour of the Antioch church, which grew into an operational base. They developed their own dimensions and distinctiveness, even though it was through Antioch's initiations that they were formed.

4. It Developed Local Ministries

Acts 11:25-26 reads:

Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul. He found Saul and brought him to Antioch, where they met with the church for a whole year and taught many of its people. There in Antioch the Lord's followers were first called Christians.

During this time, some Prophets from Jerusalem came to Antioch. One of them was Agabus. Then with the help of the Spirit, he told them that there would be a terrible famine everywhere in the world. And it happened when Claudius was emperor. The church grew in its resources of ministering

because it was Paul's base of operation. Paul and Barnabas pastored and systematically taught the church the truths of God (Acts 11:28-28).

5. It has Leadership Structure that Grows

The church at Antioch was ready to release anybody or do anything in order to fulfil God's purpose (Acts 11:29-30). Antioch, after having learned from Jerusalem's mistake in leadership structure, built a strong operational base and released each key ministry in the local church for larger and greater work, rather than confining them to local church pastoring and shepherding alone.

6. It Developed a Vision for World Evangelism

The persecution of the Christians and also of the apostles at Jerusalem produced in the apostles at Antioch a burden to seek out God's advice about world missions from Antioch. Paul, who realised that the difficulties faced by the Jerusalem church would only set greater limitations for the Gentile work, desired to explore and experiment in Gentile regions (Acts 11:25; Gal.2:7-10; Acts 14:26-28).

5.5.5 Conclusion

Having examined the scriptures, I will now draw conclusions to the chapter, returning to the context of the present day FGC. What we currently see in the FGC is the agreement to work together according to the unification specifics even though we may not be one in heart and mind. By so doing, we are settling for functional unity, which serves as mere 'window dressing', rather than unity in the true sense. When leaders are united, it helps the members to be united too. We need to experience the covenantal reality and the God-ordained order of human life under God's sovereign Lordship in the context of gender, ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity. Unification does not mean a merger, whereby the United Assemblies of the FGC drowned, or was swallowed up by the Irene Association.

The FGC needs a carefully defined theology of ethnicity when it comes to leadership. Mono-ethnic leadership limits growth. I believe that the dynamics of a racially mixed leadership will impact and extend the ministry

of the church to greater heights. But there is a problem when everyone in the top is white, and everyone in the bottom is black.

Fernando (1998:185) mentions five key biblical requirements that are needed to maintain unity, which I think are very relevant to the FGC context:

- Individuals must crucify themselves.

This is clearly taught in Paul's great passage on unity (Phil.2:1-11), where Christ's humiliation is presented as the model for our lifestyle as we are to maintain unity within the body. When we are hurt in a situation of conflict, we need to "be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ forgave you" (Eph.4:32). One of the biggest hindrances to maintaining unity is hurt individuals who, in their effort to solve a problem, give vent to their hurts. At such times we need to be willing to compromise on nonessentials for the greater good.

- Leaders should make maintaining this unity one of their primary responsibilities.

One of the most dangerous hindrances to unity in the FGC can come from the General Overseer when he takes sides when cliques form and rivalries appear. Whoever the General Overseer may be he must resist the tendency to lower the standards of unity, even if that can earn him the reputation of being a traitor to his own people.

- Believers, especially team members, should meet often to share openly.

In this busy world we must find time as the leaders of the FGC for what we consider important. What I have found to be a crisis is that we have developed good systems of financial accountability by which our financial activities are monitored, but we have forgotten the need for spiritual accountability. As a denomination we need to set a tone that

will allow pastors and leaders to share openly. Meeting once a year in what is called a “spiritual conference” is not enough.

➤ Christian fellowship is essentially a spiritual unity in Christ.

Encouragement from being united with Christ (Phil.2:1) enables us to be “like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose” (Eph.2:2; 4:3). Borrowing from Fernando (1998:188) again, there are several activities that can confirm our unity namely: (a) Worship and prayer. Acts consciously presents the connection between unity and prayer (Acts 1:4; 4:23). (b) Common commitment to the truths of God’s word. The result of ministry of the word by the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers in the church is that “we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the son of God and become mature” (Eph.4:13).

➤ Striving for agreement over a course of action.

Acts 15 gives us a good illustration of this. When some men from Judea came to Antioch and brought theological confusion about the place of circumcision in the Christian life, Paul and Barnabas immediately undertook the long trip to Jerusalem. The church there summoned the Jerusalem council and different groups were able to present their viewpoints. Under the statesmanlike leadership of James, the council was able to come up with a solution to which everyone was able to agree (Acts 15:25-28).

Hamon (2003:67) adds that the church is not a man-made institution. It does not exist nor operate on natural laws, but functions in the supernatural or religious forms. The church operates on spiritual laws and functions in the supernatural. Its power is not that of political prestige, secular positions, wealth, or fame, but in the power and demonstration of the supernatural ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The ultimate New Testament criterion of any church order is that it usurps the Crown Rights of the redeemer within His church. No person or group can purport to stand for Christ over against the body, which is under the

immediate headship of Christ, nor does any organisational practice which fails to recognise the mind of Christ through the indwelling Spirit, no matter how closely patterned after the New Testament structure, qualify as biblical church government. The second indispensable feature of any biblical church order is the recognition of the unity of the church. No church organisation must hinder the realisation of the fellowship of all believers in Christ (Saucy 1972:119).

The unity in the body of Christ is a unity in diversity. There is one body, with many members, and the members have different functions (1 Corinthians 12). This unity and diversity applies not only to differences in gifts, but also to differences in cultures as well. Each individual and each culture make a contribution to the body of Christ. Some theologians, one of whom is John Fuder (1997:1), in his view of Jesus' ministry, argues that Jesus's words explained His works, and that His works dramatise His words. He continues by saying that words without works lacks credibility, and works without words lacks clarity. This is what the FGC needs in the post-unification era, to make the word visible (John 1:14) and the image audible (Col.1:15).

According to Van Niekerk (1982:35) the ministry of Jesus, in principle is human, relevant and maturing. It is human in that it stresses that the world and relationships between men are realities of the utmost importance for man. It is human in that it creates new relationships with others, and it persistently accepts men and renews them, thereby refusing to regard men as things, while insisting their total being is important in the kingdom.

Therefore, unity must never be distorted into an assumption that all must agree about the political and economic issues linked with a given social concern. Adeyemo (2006: 1297) confirms that one of the major themes of Acts is inclusiveness. Luke provides strong evidence that the community of believers transcends all racial, regional and social barriers. The church should not be divided on the lines of race, region or class. Believers are called to reach out to everyone.

CHAPTER 6

A PARADIGM FOR THE FUTURE

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 of this study gave a general introduction of the study, whereby clarity was given to the scope of the research through the following elements: the problem motivating the study, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the study methodology and the outline of the study. Chapter 2 provided an overview of the FGC's historical background. An in-depth analysis was undertaken on the years of division, functions and activities of different boards, theological training, and education in context, as well as outlining the characteristics of the year 1997 as a watershed for the Church.

Chapter 3 presented the empirical findings of the study as well as evaluated the research conclusions. Chapter 4 provided an interpretive study, whereby data was interpreted, a literature review was done, and the views of several pertinent authors were compared.

Chapter 5 evaluated the post-unification era and its impact on organisational and managerial theory of praxis. In Chapter 6, we now come to the pragmatic task of practical theological interpretation, which answers Osmer (2008:4)'s question: how might we respond? The task of this question is to determine strategies of action that will influence situations in ways that are desirable, entering into a reflective conversation with the "talk back" emerging when they are enacted.

In the framework of the FGC unification, a conclusion could be made that, what was once a predominantly divided denomination, has now become a large multi-racial/ethnic/cultural organisation. In support of the central theoretical argument, which holds that critical factors for unity can be identified and integrated into a pastoral model for the FGC to achieve full reconciliation and healing, it is in this changing context that this chapter aims to develop a pastoral model for doing ministry in the context of

diversity, as well as make strategic recommendations whereby suggestions for future research arising from the findings will be made.

6.2 Reflecting honestly on history

Any person who has read Genesis, Exodus and the Gospel's accounts about Jesus Christ's life and work, will understand that history is absolutely crucial for a comprehension of the identity and culture of a denomination or congregation (Hendriks 2004:125). Dockery (2009:25) has observed that "addressing the future of any movement is an inherently dangerous affair. But it is even more dangerous not to envision the future." Mansfield (2000:259) pithily wrote, "history is more than dates and dead people."

Greer (2003:261) asked the question, why did God include so many history lessons (accounts of reflections about the past) as well as basic history (accounts of what happened) in His inerrant word? His answer to the above question is indeed worthy of record, because it gives us some validity to the honest reflection of history, particularly in the FGC. Greer (ibid.) has asserted:

Biblical history helped reinforce the special history of God's people, but more importantly, it reminded them of His faithfulness. He had worked with a mighty arm in the past. That would reassure them that, despite occasional chastening, He would keep His covenants and fulfill His promises for the present and future. Believers today are blessed by reading this history too. Of course, God did not retire from involvement in the unfolding of history after biblical times. He did not cease acting in human history after closing the canon.

The honest historical observation will help us to evaluate the current state of affairs, as well as go forward in our attempt to achieve unity. We need the perspective that only a good knowledge of our history can give us. Therefore, we will understand the present and prepare for the future of this denomination. I agree with Greer (2003:256) that "God created time and space. A supreme, transcendent, self-sufficient, self-existent, personal God stepped out of eternity to inaugurate history."

Schaff (1995:273) asks the following question relevant to the assertion above:

How shall we labour with any effect to build up the Church, if we have no thorough knowledge of her history, or fail to apprehend it from the proper point of observation? History is, and must ever continue to be, next to God's word, the richest fountain of wisdom, and the surest guide to all successful practical activity.

The crucifixion of Christ (John 19:16-27) is the bedrock of Christian unity, and it is absurd to contemplate establishing a unity on any other basis.

6.3 Conclusion

Without doubt, there is indeed a united front portrayed by the top leadership structure of the church. It is representative of the different races, but in Chapter 3, exposed for being representative in superficial sense, and at times, contradicting representivity, and undermining its members according to race. In my observation this current practice of unity is incapable of eradicating prevailing inequalities at the grassroots level, where unity is needed the most in the FGC. With a view to the above, it is important that before any workable pastoral model is proposed, we deal with the relevant use of models.

6.4 The use of Models

Research in the field of practical theology begins with a real life problem and hopes to end with a workable solution that will change the situation (Smith 2008:204).

Snyder (1991:21) wrote that a model "is a somewhat formalized [sic] way of using metaphorical language to describe or to explore some reality not fully understood. By constructing and exploring models one finds hints of what may be true about the hidden reality the models represent. In this sense models reveal mystery." Mohapi (2008:1) citing Conn (1985:95), describes models as "our spectacles through which we scale down reality so that we can understand it". The following are five ways identified by Conn

(1985:98), as quoted by Mohapi above, in which models affect our biblical vision:

- models explain: they explain how and why things became what they are and how and why they continue to change.
- models evaluate: they judge other customs as inferior, or at least inappropriate, and reaffirm the inherent rightness of their own patterns and modes of expression.
- models provide psychological reinforcement of the group: the model provides security and support for the behaviour of the group in a world that appears to be out of control.
- models integrate: They systematise and order their perceptions into an overall design, and they filter out those glimpses of reality that do not confirm to the beliefs concerning the way reality should be.
- models are adaptable: If our vision of ministry is threatened by conflict or cultural dissonance the models seek to accommodate the dissonance, rather than reorganise itself to face the new conflict.

Louw (2000:2) has explained that the challenge for pastoral theology as to develop a model of human and contextual transformation, to interpret God for our contemporary situation, as well as formulate a theological theory, which expresses Christian faith in terms of our human quest for meaning and identity. In an attempt to developing a model of contextual transformation in the FGC, the following paragraphs will try to engage on the steps toward renewal in this regard.

6.5 Steps Towards Renewal

Our exploration of the state of the FGC in the post-unification era demands that we take several steps towards renewal. We cannot build a 'new' future on the old foundation. Robertson (2007:10) points to something that I believe to be crucial in the context of transition is that "all human activity

involving more than one person requires some kind of organisation". Organisations are the result of structural relationships (Engstrom & Ceder 2006:142). The FGC will fail or succeed on the strength of these relationships. I believe that God wants to use the FGC in South Africa as a new wineskin (Luke 5:37-38).

I therefore want to make the wineskin analogy applicable to the FGC context in order for us to understand the steps toward renewal. According to (Mahoney 1997:21), the Greek word translated as "new" in Luke 5: 37-38 does not mean something that has never been used before. It means renewed or recycled wineskins, after such have become rigid, inflexible, stiff and hard without use. Then it is immersed in water and soaked for several days until it becomes malleable, pliable and resilient again. Thereafter, olive oil is rubbed into it then the wineskin is renewed. Mahoney (ibid.) continued to say the following in an elaboration on this etymology:

The wineskin is made of the sheepskin. When it is originally prepared to contain wine, it is very flexible, pliable, and elastic. The new wine represents the joy and blessing flowing from the new revival God is pouring out. The wineskin is that which contains this harvest of the new wine. The wineskin typifies the forms and traditions that have come out of a past harvest season of revival. As the new wine begins fermenting, the wineskin stretches, just like a balloon. It swells; it forms in all kinds of unusual shapes. Almost every church group and denomination today is the result of a past revival, with certain forms, liturgies, rituals and traditions. These represent the old wineskin. It is all the above that must be renewed.

The apostle Paul correctly interprets the era inaugurated by Jesus when he refers to the church as a "new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15; Ephesians 4:24). The appearance of Jesus Christ on the scene has changed everything fundamentally. Nothing can ever be the same again, for the Kingdom of God has arrived. The early Christian church believed that the breaking in of the new era in Christ has been sealed by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and manifested in the church. The church is 'a house where God lives through His spirit' (Ephesians 2:22).

Organisational structures must be fluid as the church wrestles with putting in place a new way of doing things (McIntosh 2009:147). It is unrealistic to expect the FGC to prepare for a new future without honestly and realistically assessing the past. There is a vast difference between learning from the past and living in it (Evans 2011:204). As Dockery (2009:20) has asserted, “we need a new spirit of mutual respect and humility to serve together with those with whom we have differences of conviction and opinion.” Otherwise, reality will put us in a position where we lose both the wine, and the skin, if we are forcing the new life of the spirit into the old wineskin without going through the process of renewal. I want to suggest the following issues as areas of concern to be given priority if we are to have full unification take place.

6.5.1 Racism

Demarest & Matthews (2010: 316) define race as a way that people categorise each other based primarily on the physical attributes, such as skin colour and facial features. Racism is the intentional or unconscious use of power and domination by one race to withhold equal privileges and discriminate against individuals and communities of another race. The FGC as we know it today is at a crossroad where, after years of separation, we are undergoing the process of healing as well as finding our new identity. In my observation, we still struggle to understand one another. For us to fully enjoy the benefits of unification, we need to deal with the issue of race and race relations honestly. I agree with Venter (2004: 124) that although post-apartheid South Africa has seen racial categories overtly replaced by class categories and consciousness, we still need to face the challenge of racism. Venter (2004: 124) mentions four categories of racists and believes that we all – whites, blacks, Indians and coloureds, fall into one of these four categories:

- *Confirmed racists*: are those who are still prejudiced and are open about it. They resent or even hate people of other races. Some believe more than ever that blacks and whites should be apart. For some whites, blacks are still inferior. They say, “Things were better under apartheid.” For some blacks, whites are still imperialistic settlers – they should “go back to Europe”. Confirmed racists are more upfront and “honest” in their racism, often verbally dumping

their offensive opinion and actions on those close at hand. The attitudes of this group are hardening.

- *Suppressed racists*: are those who are still prejudiced, but have suppressed it in the name of political correctness, keeping the peace, fear of reprisal or self-deception, and psychological denial. Many South Africans would protest, “I am not racist, and never have been. Or if I was, I certainly am not now.” It just takes a certain event, issue or person to bring out the prejudice, the racist comments and attitudes. Sometimes it is blatant; at other times they are blind spots. We can only suppress things for so long, then they pop out – what is in the heart comes out sooner or later (Matthew 12:33-37; 15:18-20). This phenomenon can be called “modern racism” that pays lip service to principles of equality, while opposing its implementation with all kinds of rationalization [sic] and maintains negative stereotypes via selective perception, choosing what one wants to see in various groups.
- *Recovering racists*: are those who have acknowledged and faced their racial conditioning – racism is inbred if you were raised in SA – and are taking responsibility for it by consciously working on their thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and actions. They have dealt with their guilt and are free. But freedom is relative; like people recovering from addiction, they are “in recovery” from racism. They are working at inner and outer transformation of their lives (and society).
- *Preracists or Innocents*: are those who are in the pre-judge stage – our children. They are the racially innocent people, unless their parents or others have already infected them with their prejudice. The post-apartheid generation now growing up has a wonderful opportunity to be free from racism in a way other South Africans could never be. When and how they will lose their innocence will depend on our guidance and modeling, or lack thereof.

With view to the above, as a way of application to the FGC context in the post-unification era, I want to prescribe love, justice, repentance and reconciliation as the four core biblical themes, which must form our Christian response to racism. Demarest and Matthews (2010:316) detailed the following highlights when giving practical examples about the above-mentioned themes:

1. When Jesus spoke about the nature of love, He told the story of the Good Samaritan, a story with racial overtones. The hero of the story is a Samaritan who crosses ethnic lines to love a Jew who had been robbed and beaten up (Luke 10:25-37). We should engage in this same type of boundary-crossing, a move that invariably challenges racism. The type of love we are to embody is a love that initiates across line of animosity and resentment, a type of love that includes loving those who doesn't love us (Matthew 5:46). Regardless of where we find ourselves we each have a responsibility of making the first move to love others. We can't wait for others to come to us before we exhibit the love of Christ.
2. God's justice also demands that we confront the oppressive and destructive spirit of racism in both its personal and structural forms (Matthew 25:31-46; Ephesians 6:12). When the divide between rich and poor in any economic systems falls along racial lines, we must see that as unjust and challenge it. Educational and medical systems that better serve people of one race over people of another race must be judged as inadequate. If a court system treats people differently based on their race, that system stands under God's judgment as unjust. The biblical witness shows God's passion for justice. Because racism defies God's justice, Christians must work to see it overcome.
3. When we fail to live out God's love and justice, the necessary action is repentance. We are to turn away from our sinful ways (Ezekiel 18:30; Matthew 3:2). We are to repent so that our sins may be forgiven (Acts 2:38). The sin of racism requires repentance. This turning from sin is the prologue to God's work of reconciliation.

4. Because racism results in a bitter divide between people, Christians are to seek reconciliation between people on both sides of this divide. The wall erected between Jews and Gentiles prior to Christ was torn down by the work of Christ, and the one newly created body is reconciled to God (Ephesians 2:11-22). This serves as a paradigm for addressing divisions between all ethnic and racial divisions. As Christians, we're reconciled to God through Christ, and as a result, we're called to the ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-19). In order to confront issues of racism we must continue this reconciling work.

I want to evidently conclude this section on racism by emphasising the words of Evans (2011: 212), which I find to be true:

Superficial racial relationships patterned on paternalism will dissolve before any lasting connection can be made. Only through repentance and forgiveness done through first and foremost on a personal level will we be free to forge relationships that allow us to embrace dignity and diversity. We must be mindful that it takes time together in order to learn how to build trust, relate across cultural differences, and learn from each other. Unless our personal motivation is pure during the initial ups and downs of that time, we will become easily offended or wearied and fail to last in the ongoing effort that is required to learn how to embrace true oneness.

All of scripture involves relationships, both with God and with fellow human beings. Through relationships we develop, grow and learn and from them we obtain self-esteem, identity and significance. This should be the fruit of unity in the FGC.

6.5.2 Reconciliation

Elwell (1991:420) defines reconciliation as change of attitude or relationship. I think this is a shallow and problematic definition because it does not unpack the relationship or describe those attitudes those reconciling must change from. Wessels (2007:44) argues that reconciliation does not mean:

- a grey sameness;
- that there never will be a difference of opinion;
- a false acceptance of other standpoints, and
- an insincere, patronising attitude.

Wessels sees reconciliation as an undertaking to:

- accept one another's good faith;
- resolve differences through discussion;
- develop understanding for the other side of the argument;
- put communalities first and to build upon those;
- never launch little petty- minded fight, and
- not get stuck in the past, but forge forward, together.

Venter (2004:93) correctly indicates that reconciliation is the act and/or process of putting things right between two alienated parties in order to restore relationship, justice and harmony. Venter further adds that this is done by removing the "enmity" or causes of division, and by restoring a "togetherness" of forgiveness, trust and mutual respect. According to Venter (2004:138), reconciliation is both an event and a process, having the following aspects:

- to turn or change (repentance);
- to remove enmity, wrath and sin (confession);
- to pay the price in the justice of the cross (trusting Jesus in the cost of reconciliation);

- to give forgiveness and receive it if necessary (actual reconciling);
- to establish peace (shalom) restoring fellowship and making restitution if necessary (living out reconciliation by restoring justice)

Looking at the above concise definition by Venter, I believe that as a step to renewal in the post-unification era, we definitely need to strive to achieve such reconciliation in the FGC. Stringer (1992:164) reiterates Venter's definition by stating that:

Reconciliation in the New Testament means a change from being enemies to being friends. The reason for a quarrel has been removed. The people involved see how they have misunderstood each other and the person in the wrong apologized [sic] and repaired whatever damage had been done.

According Demarest and Matthews (2010:318-319) reconciliation is the healing in relationship of those who previously harboured hostility toward one another. To Demarest and Matthews, reconciliation involves the following three aspects:

- reconciliation occurs in an existing relationship marked by animosity, hostility, disregard, or enmity between two parties. One or both parties hold something against the other, and as a result, a breach of relationship exists between them.
- intervention to address the cause of the enmity is introduced, providing the means to remove the hostility and breach of relationship.
- the removal of enmity isn't just a form of amnesty, truce, or lack of conflict; reconciliation is a positive renewal of relationship marked by peace and acceptance. Both parties now experience true delight and fellowship with one another.

If we can understand and embrace reconciliation as discussed above, then we will be able to demonstrate reconciliation to the point where we will live out the gospel, such that others can clearly see the power of the cross as a Pentecostal denomination in South Africa. However, if we deny reconciliation in the true sense, we will only keep talking about unity, while remaining separate in our comfort zones. It was Evans (2009: 242) who said of race relations that God is not asking blacks to be whites or whites to be blacks. He is asking both to be biblical. This ties beautifully with the words of Van der Ven (2002:151) that indeed “reconciliation cannot be contrived, imposed, or guaranteed. It can, rather, only be given or received.” Reconciliation is best demonstrated rather than announced (Lovett: 1996:125).

In clarifying the above argument, Evans (2011: 213) has noted:

Reconciliation cannot be achieved by one group imposing its ideas, preferences, context, and programs [sic] on another. Nor can it be achieved by simply inviting the other group to participate in a program [sic], an idea, or a ministry after the agenda and procedures has been established. This limits the contribution and intermingling of unique qualities needed in order to produce a stronger, more complete whole. Both groups must be brought to the table on the front end of the discussion and planning so that there is full participation, recognition, appreciation, and use of the strengths of both groups. Both groups will also have to give up something, to yield in some areas, in order to fully implement the strengths of the other group. True reconciliation occurs through a merging of strengths toward the pursuit of a shared purpose under Christ.

The psalmist speaks warmly of believers living together in unity (Psalm 133:1-3). The key to healing relationships is forgiveness (Ephesians 4:31, 32); Colossians 3:12-15), and forgiveness needs to be based on a truthful view of the offenses neither exaggerating nor minimizing them.

6.5.3 Unity

Tenney (1980:248) made some notable points on the concept of unity. He says the concept can be understood by analysing what unity is, alongside what it is not. From the above quotation the following are outlined:

- Unity is not *unanimity*. Unanimity means “absolute concord of opinion within a group of people.” Nowhere in the Bible does the Lord say that everyone must think alike or even agree on every topic. There is plenty of room for different perspectives. These differences complement each other. Like the mosaic or stained glass window, they help to complete the picture with various hues.
- Unity is not *uniformity*, that is, “oneness or sameness of organization or ritual.” Again, scripture does not mandate things like the order of worship or the exact way we worship. Rather, it conveys the atmosphere, which should permeate our services and leaves room for diversity of individual operations.
- Unity is not *union*, which “implies political affiliation without necessarily including individual agreement.” Belonging to something without personal commitment is not what unity is about either.

Scheidler (1980:28) speaks of the church as “a complex organism that has a tremendous unity in the midst of diversity. Unity does not mean uniformity. Uniformity implies a loss of identity and individuality.” The fact that we are a unified church in the FGC means we can still maintain our individuality, personality, unique expression and yet come into a corporate identification where we forfeit our rights to act independently of the rest of the members. Scheider (ibid.) gives several New Testament pictures, which portray the relationship and the unity of the Church:

- the church is one body with many members;
- the church is one temple with many stones;
- the church is one flock with many sheep;
- the church is one nation with many citizens;

- the church is one vine with many branches;
- the church is one family with many brothers and sisters;
- the church is one army with many soldiers.

According to (Skaggs 1999: 175), unity involves something different than total agreement, sameness of practice or ritual or political affiliation. The key to Jesus's concept of unity can be found in the very nature of the Trinity itself as "the oneness of the inner heart and essential purpose through the possession of a common interest or common life"; while maintaining the uniqueness of each individual's gifts and functions.

The problem is that creating the conditions and climate for the emergence of a coherent, racially diverse national identity and common culture requires the courage to confront the excesses and collective sins of the past and the will to institute correctives for the future (Felder 1998:29).

6.5.4 Conclusion

As members and leaders of the FGC, we need to understand and define ourselves as people. Reconciliation, race relations and unity are not going to come cheap. There is a price to pay. We will have to talk and deliberate more in order to move forward, so that we may leave a wealth of unity to the coming generations. As Wessels has said (2007:78) "it is not wrong to be different but to judge and condemn another person on the basis of their differences, actually represent an indictment of oneself. It is indicative of lack of self- knowledge." For renewal to be implemented in the FGC, "there has to be mutual respect and understanding among people for one another's culture and values (ibid.)." Indeed, in the words of Malphurs (1993:88) the church that fails to change fails to impact the culture of change. I believe there is great hope for the FGC in the future of South African Pentecostalism, if we could take the initiative of talking and listening to each other's stories carefully, thoughtfully, without interruption, without hidden agendas and without preconceptions. Therefore, the challenge of anyone who will become the Moderator/General Overseer of the FGC from now henceforth is the one with "the ability to bring divergent

groups together and unite them in a common mission with benefits for all” (Carson 2012:1630).

The following were outlined by Nieman *et al.* (2005:99) as ideas that will help teachers to teach effectively in a multicultural teaching environment. I want to recommend these ideas for anyone who will undertake being a leader in the hierarchical structure of the FGC, because I found them to be relevant in any context of diversity:

- get information on other population group;
- be sure that all cultural groups are respected;
- acknowledge differences;
- create a climate of openness;
- communicate equally with all ethnic groups;
- promote ethnic integration;
- make sure that diversity is reflected;
- take everybody into consideration.

Equally significant with the above is the fact that all members of the body are a unity (1 Corinthians 12), even though it is composed by diverse members. The physical body is not composed of one members, but many (1 Corinthians 12:14), and these members must be different (1 Corinthians 12:17-20). The members vary in function (v.17), in strength (v.22), and honour (v.23). There is similar variation among the members of the body Christ, and yet all are necessary to the body.

6.6 Theological Training

First and foremost, I really commend our church for its emphasis on training and development. Though in some church circles, Pentecostals are undermined as far as in-depth scholarship is concerned, our church

believes in formal education. I believe the days of saying “if you want to hide something from a Pentecostal preacher, put it in a book” are long gone in the FGC. Synan (2011: IX) pointed out that “there has been a growing realization [sic] that solid theology and excellent scholarship are not antithetical to Spirit empowered experience. The Church is in urgent need of shepherds and teachers, who are prepared to study (Begg & Prime 2004:102).

Arguably however, when one takes a careful look at the present leaders of the Church, age is indeed against them. Therefore the FGC needs to act decisively in helping them with the exit plan. Their contribution is appreciated and they have to be given honour due them so that they finish strong, because the future will require a new generation of multiracial/cultural leaders. If the Church is to continue growing and to leave a legacy of unity as a Pentecostal denomination in South Africa, it needs an increased number of young, energetic ministers who will run with the vision. The FGC definitely needs the highly educated majority of its ministers address the challenges at hand.

FGC members are busy upgrading themselves academically from time to time, and this poses a challenge for the ministers and their training. So if the pastors’ training is not kept current and relevant, the educated members may leave us and go to churches where they feel that their needs are more adequately met. When they leave the FGC will lose their financial support, as I have already mentioned, giving is always a barometer of the people’s acceptance of the ministry of the church.

According to Pato (1994:8) the living experience of the church and society will thus set the questions and the agenda for the demands in our training programmes. Therefore, the FGC needs theological education that is suitable for the present time. As a denomination, while we are celebrating and being proud of our past and its accomplishments, we must never forget to develop a relevant theology which is related to our current circumstances. Relevant theology is always contextual. To neglect these truths is to fail to embrace all that comes with unity. I want to further recommend that the board of Christian education and those who are involved in making educational policies, develop innovative means to control costs and improve productivity.

6.6.1 The Overarching Curricular Goal

Booyse and Du Plessis (2008:1) define curriculum as the teaching and learning activities and experiences provided by schools. The definition includes:

- aims and objectives of the education systems well as the specific goals of the school;
- selection of content to be taught, how it is arranged into subjects, programmes and syllabi, and what skills and process are included;
- ways of teaching and learning;
- forms of assessment and evaluation used.

According to Dreeckmeier (1997:8) the term “curriculum” is a broad one, and its meaning has changed greatly over the years, especially in the course of the twentieth century. An analysis of the variety of definitions and descriptions of the concept “curriculum” reveals that it is generally viewed as a plan or programme of one kind or another for teaching and learning. At least the following components of the curriculum can be discerned: aims/objectives, learning content, teaching and learning strategies, and evaluation (ibid.). The overarching goal of the theological curriculum is a “theological understanding,” which is an aptitude for theological reflection and wisdom pertaining to responsible life and faith (Aleshire 2008:30).” Teaching then is either the depositing of information into the empty vessel, or the providing of appropriate stimuli to activate and enhance internal learning processes (Dreeckmeier 1997:71). Farley (1983:153) has argued that theological education needs to recover learning that contributes to a theological habitus. According to Aleshire (2008:30), he meant a sapiential and personal knowledge, the kind of knowing that disposes one toward God. The overarching goal of theological education, therefore, is a wisdom related to the ways of God (ibid.).

6.6.2 Theological Research

There has to be a move for the FGC college earmark potential leaders from the onset. In so doing, we will be able to produce those who will be the custodians of our Pentecostal distinctive and heritage, as well as those who will be able to undertake research and publish their work to help enhance our work in the South African context. We definitely need pastors to pastor our local churches throughout South Africa, but I believe that not everyone who goes for theological training belongs in the pulpit or in the pastorate. There are those who have the gifting and capacity to give instruction and impart knowledge as well as those who are able to do research and find out more about something very specific. I believe conclusively so that our college is essential to the health of the FGC.

The following are what (Alshire 2008:74-77) said as far as research is concerned:

- research that matters addresses particular intellectual agendas or needs in ecclesial communities;
- theological research that matters serves the broader purpose of religion;
- research that matter sometimes deals with issues that are very deep in the scholarly infrastructure;
- research that matters speaks to important human conditions; and
- research that matters can also address wrongheaded tendencies in religious practice.

Our college must foster a balance of strong intellectual preparation and the development of our student's inner resources.

6.6.3 Correspondence Courses

Correspondence courses are yet another way to prepare for ministry (Murphy 2007: 9). It is therefore crucial that the correspondence component of the FGC college is made cheap, relevant and current.

Materials must reach students on time and there must be proper constructive feedback. Bijeesh (2012:1) outlines the following advantages of studying through distance learning:

- *It's flexible*: you earn and study at the same time; flexibility is the biggest advantage of distance learning courses. This stands true especially if you are a working professional. Not everyone has the luxury of taking their own time to finish their studies. For those who had to take a break from studies to start working, such courses are a boon and provide the opportunity to pursue higher education.
- *Saves time and energy*: you might be based out of a remote village or town, which does not have enough options for higher studies, distance learning courses eliminate these obstacles.
- *Study at your own pace*: not everyone has the same pace of learning. Some students pick up things fast, others need time to grasp a concept. One of the biggest advantages of distance learning is that you can study at a pace that is comfortable for you.
- *Saves money*: These courses are reasonable compared to their on-campus counter-parts. You also can cut down on the costs incurred while commuting etc.
- *Convenient*: you can submit your assignment with the click of a button or simply drop it off at a post-office. It is as simple as that.

Not everything about distance learning is advantageous, but looking at the above, there is much to recommend it in the FGC context. The FGC should therefore accord the development of pastors and leaders the priority it deserves whether full time or part-time/ distance. Cole (2009:217-219) has rightly emphasised to this effect by saying "learning should be a lifelong adventure, a quest and that leadership development is a lifelong process."

Assuming that today's world needs a new kind of leader, the FGC must develop different ways of identifying, selecting and training prospective candidates (Gibbs 2005:175).

6.6.4 Continuing Education

A continuing education is a necessity for the minister (Zimmerman: 85). It would be beneficial for the college to organise and facilitate seminars and workshops from time to time for the purpose of refreshing and empowering ministers. These seminars ought to address relevant and current ministerial topics to offer empowerment and make ministers effective. The rapid changes characteristic of the information age requires lifelong learning in order to stay current in ministry (Gibbs 2005:177).

6.6.5 Conclusion

Alshire (2008:122) truthfully said that "no school wants to be known for mediocre academic work." The goal of our college should be to produce pastors or leaders who understand the Christian life better, think biblically about issues of living, as well as improving their ministry skills. When students graduate they must be people who have developed a questioning approach to life understanding that there are no immediate, simple, straightforward answers to life's questions.

6.7 A Paradigm for the Future

Burger (2011:1) declares that structures and constitutions are not unchangeable and untouchable realities. To him, any growing and dynamic organisation needs to constantly review things such as structures, objectives and strategies to make sure that they serve the best interest of the that organisation's purposes.

The above paragraph is also true in the context of the FGC. Any constitutional amendment made should serve to further make the FGC an inclusive organisation with the vision not only for the present but for the future. One of the challenges the Church faces is the selling of properties of the church. I believe any organisation has an impact and a voice on the

basis of the assets it owns. So if the FGC keeps on selling, it will one day resort to renting and paying lots of money, ultimately appearing as if a fly-by-night church. In over hundred years of existence there has to be much to show to the next generation. Our constitution must be in a way that it discourages this type of trend. If different races are moving into traditionally white-only suburbs, it does not mean the end of the Church, or the time to even sell church buildings. It is time to open doors and hearts to embrace a multiracial context of ministry. Church buildings can't be sold as if there are no people in the community.

One issue is that the church has a spiritual conference, which is held every year for the leaders of the church. This is great platform and vehicle for ministers to interact and fellowship. Great speakers are invited and no registration fee is required. I think it is a great vehicle to foster unity among pastors, where the challenging would be to ensure full attendance. Some pastors are only seen at the General/business conference once in four years, where the Church votes. If the Church's unity only serves the purpose of business where our only interest is to come and push the leader of our choice through a vote, then we have not reached our unification objective.

In order to be relevant in the presence and face the future, blacks must stop talking to blacks about whites and whites must stop talking to whites about blacks. If there is time to build bridges and make friendships is now. The Church needs to stop the negativity and support the Church programme by all means necessary, especially financially. Then, it is necessary to deal honestly with the issue of power sharing, which is a major obstacle in the promotion of unity in the FGC. Zimmerman (1995: 152) gives us a good, conclusive statement, which bears witness to the above in the following paragraph:

There is nothing that will nullify preaching as quickly as division among God's ministers. Paul said he wanted them to stand shoulder to shoulder (Philippians 1:27), not as antagonists, but as fellow soldiers fighting the good fight of faith. How sad it is to see neighbouring pastors acting as though they were enemies instead of brothers. Division, whether caused by differences in politics, ethics, or doctrine can only disrupt the unity of the spirit and degrade the ministry of the

word of God. There is strength in unity. How much more can be accomplished when pastors strive together to achieve common goals instead of striving with each other. The personal peace of mind that comes when one is at peace with his brethren vanishes immediately at the entrance of strife.

While united in our shared values, the Church must make room for diversity in culture, language, style, liturgy and ministry models (Burger 2011:3). It is against this background that a new paradigm/model in the post-unification era is needed to help the FGC to provide the human, financial, and material resources that will assist the church in accomplishing the vision of unity.

6.8 Conclusion

As the Book of Acts so clearly demonstrates, no obstacle can withstand the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). The FGC therefore need not to be ashamed of Pentecostal distinctiveness.

Pentecostal pneumatology made a living truth of the Reformation doctrine of the priesthood of believers, and in so doing deeply influenced ecclesiology and congregational praxis (Watt 2006:380). It is at this point that I want to adopt the words of Burger 2011:3) as he affirms the following:

while there are situations and places where the completeness of our unity can be questioned, we have a reason to thank the Lord that He helped us to achieve unity to a large degree. Yet it is important that we continue to work with sensitivity and honesty to improve our unity.

In order for the FGC to become effective and relevant in South Africa, there must be realistic developments in place. The standing of the church and its stature must be assessed. This must be done so that the long-term plan can be implemented. The Church is not to have an unrealistic limited perception of ourselves, it must choose the primary direction for its future. Before this is done, however, the church must determine where it is now, as far as members, constituencies and resources. That means the

economic structure, dealing with assets, ought to be critically examined, and transformed to serve the entire unified church.

The Church doesn't only need to determine where it is, but also to determine how far it wants to go. This is, in simplicity, determining the potential for the future growth of the Church. In helping to accomplish the above, the following critical inviting questions must be answered:

- where is the Church headed?
- what kind of future is it building?
- what are its strengths, gifts and competencies?
- what is God calling us to accomplish?

With view to the above, the following are recommendations for achieving full unification within the post-unification framework:

- a process is required whereby unification will be evaluated from time to time to see how far the Church has gone, and to see if there are still issues to be dealt with. This could be done through designed programmes, to be distributed at congregational level;
- questions will have to be continuously asked in promotion of openness and fellowship;
- encouragement for members and leaders to befriend members of other races within the FGC will have to be made;
- strong and established assemblies/congregations will have to adopt at least one struggling assembly of a different race whereby joint activities to foster reconciliation can be planned from time to time. Such activities can include but not limited to the following: administrative training, Sunday school/youth leaders training and conferences, sharing any relevant information for the betterment of

the ministry as well as having joint retreats for men, women and elders;

- additionally, there ought also to be constant and occasional pulpit exchange programmes planned among different racial members of the clergy. If members see leaders taking the lead in setting an example in this, they will automatically follow and build relationships on their own, and if these are able to spread in the church countrywide, then unity will move from being declared in documents, to being translated into the praxis life of the church;
- Finally, pastors who want to transfer to and from any region or province must be encouraged to do so irrespective of colour or race.

Then, we can finally endeavour to become mission-oriented and model this even to other denomination still faced with division within the democratic South Africa. According to Burger and Nel (2008:476) mission is no longer a “white-reaching-out-to-black” or “west-to-the-rest” endeavour; it is believers reaching out to the lost. Boraine (2000:80) has asked this question: “can we be reconciled?” and according to him, a lot of white people do not trust black people, whilst black people are deeply suspicious of white people. Consequently, we are faced with a lot of guilt and resentment. According to Levine (cited in Ackermann 1998:90), “love accompanied by concerted action directs one to a healing praxis. The beginning of the path of healing is the end of life unlived.”

The future of the FGC depends on forgiveness so that it may ultimately become a church that proclaims the Gospel, and become the community that practices reconciliation, where members hold each other accountable to one another in love and finally the bible will become normative. Deymaz (2010:47) has remarked that personal relationships are important to the health and well-being of any church. I definitely agree with him, because such relationships are of exponentially greater importance, especially in a multiracial church like the FGC. The Church needs “to recognize that each person has power and the ability to make decisions - must expect each one to contribute to the whole” (Robertson 2007:11). Although all members will

never agree on every point, they can begin to set aside differences, and seek out values that Christ would have them rally around (Demarest & Matthews 2010:73). The Church is finally required to embrace the following characteristics of relational unity (Deymaz 2010:170):

- Oneness implies union. Union: the act of forming one interdependent unit from two or more independent units, such as when a man and a woman unite in marriage (Matthew 19: 4-6; Ephesians 5:25-33).
- Oneness implies identity. Identity: when two or more independent units share a similar purpose or cause, indent is forged, such as in the case of an eye or a foot in supporting the human body (Romans 12:4).
- Oneness implies harmony. Harmony: the intentional focus of independent parts playing complementary roles, such as when two or more musical notes are played simultaneously to form a chord (Romans 5:15).
- Oneness implies integrity. Integrity: when a structure of one kind or another is sound and unimpaired, it is said to have integrity, such as in a set of support trusses under a bridge; integrity in a church allows the greater whole to carry the burdens or multiply the blessings of all those involved (I Corinthians 12:24-26).

You can manufacture uniformity by manipulating people and exerting pressure, that will not be true unity. True unity can come only from the Holy Spirit. Believers are one in Christ. As believers we are told to endeavour to "...keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3).

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION: A PROPOSED PASTORAL MODEL

This study observed the struggle for unity as well as a high percentage of ministers and members abandoning the membership of the FGC. The qualitative approach and interviews were done for this matter. Twenty pastors have been interviewed individually to acquire an in-depth understanding of the struggle for unity. Eight questions were asked to each individual. Based on their responses the following findings were established for the FGC to achieve full reconciliation and healing:

- The FGC need to deal with the past honestly and with love.
- The FGC need to turn back the pages of history and look afresh at these areas where differences have developed and see if they can be resolved or at least dispassionately discussed.
- We need to listen to each other stories and deal with the issues of inclusivity being sensitive to one another,
- Avoid words, judgments and actions which divide and separate us and should instead encourage sincere dialogue conducted in a spirit of forbearance, openness and clarity.

My intention and purpose in this study has been the building up of the Church, rather than merely discrediting it. Research in the field of practical theology begins with a real-life problem and hopes to end with a workable solution that will change the situation (Smith 2008:204). Thus, the goal of this study was to explore and evaluate critical success factors for the FGC post-unification era, as well as to propose a workable pastoral model in this regard.

One of the four questions of Osmer (2008:4) is pragmatic and determines strategies of action that will influence situations in ways that are desirable and entering into a reflective conversation. It answers the question: *how might we respond?*

After gathering information which helped me to discern patterns and dynamics of the FGC as a church as one of its members, it is against this background that I now have come to the conclusion of the study and wish to make a pastoral model proposal as I initially indicated. Louw (2000:301) outlines five possible pastoral models:

- *the thematic model*: This model identifies and formulates a few themes, and then assumes that there is a correlation between certain theological and psychological themes. The theological themes can be reduced to certain metaphors which could provide a better understanding of pastoral actions;
- *the holistic growth model*: in this model, the nature of faith correlates with the person's capacity and inner potential to cope with crisis, as well as with the quality of his/her spirituality;
- *the life story (narrative) model*: this model identifies those factors which reveal the person's own religious story (the story model);
- *the rational-analytical model*: this model attempts to make an analysis of a person's belief system and basic presuppositions, and then tries to change a person's conceptions and reasoning; and
- *the developmental stage model*: this model is based on the presupposed correlation between human development and faith.

Muller (1999:18) maintains that:

pastoral intervention is always concerned with change. The gospel is concerned with church. No matter how strong our identification is with the core stories of our own group, we must always hold on to the possibility of change and resulting in being freed from damaging interpretations.

Having looked at the above-mentioned pastoral models, I want to specifically adopt and propose the *life story (narrative) model*. The reason for this proposal is, as Louw has asserted, "each person thus lives within a

distinctive context which is linked to a specific series of events which influences his/her life” (2000:309). The use of stories is also the only way enabling us to link actions together. Whenever experiences are organised into story form, they develop additional meaning (Muller 1999:2).

According to the Unisa tutorial letter (102/2003:249) for pastoral care, to become a healing and transforming community that decreases anxiety, the church needs to model ways of initiating conflict and being angry that do not carry connotations of harm, abuse or violence. A community of hope is directed toward the future and therefore by necessity has to be open to change in its own structures and directions (102/2003:251). According to Louw (2000:71), the bible provides a three-fold perspective on transformation namely:

- *metanoia*: which brings about a radical change;
- influence*: the agogic moment in pastoral care when the inner framework of person is changed; and
- *sanctification*: the eventual effect which the pastoral event has on a person's behaviour and future life-style.

The meaning of the future and the unity of the human story which encompasses the whole “journey” is a discovery which offers wonderful possibilities for better understanding human living (Muller 1999:3). Traumatic experiences in the past; group interest in a cultural context; interactionary patterns within family associations; faith and philosophical presuppositions; all play an important role in religious formation (Louw 2000:309). Finally, the FGC definitely needs to deal with the past honestly and with love as well as listening to each other's stories. Dealing with issues that divide members rather than assuming unity will indeed make us a fully unified denomination in South Africa. Without undermining the journey we have travelled so far, the question that arises is: what happens should conflict arise?

Of course we do need to anticipate conflict, prepare ourselves and our members for handling it when it comes. Iorg (2011:128) suggested the following summary, looking at how the Antioch church handled conflict:

- anticipate conflict;
- address conflict situations when they arise;
- bring resolution to every conflict;
- accept mixed results from conflict resolution; and
- move on when resolution has been achieved.

According to Hughes (1990:120-121), the people who bring unity are first of all humble and gentle. Paul extols humility and couples it with the tandem characteristics of “gentleness” (or “meekness”). This meekness is not a form of weakness. It is, rather, strength under control (Ephesians 4:2).

Pride and self-promoting arrogance sow disunity, but a humble, gentle man or woman is like a caressing breeze (Hughes 1990:120-121). Indeed our unity must be our priority. The Church has come too far to go back and have really achieved more than some of the denominations that are still struggling with unity in South Africa. It needs to continue being open, as well as sharing our stories to the point where unity will flow to the following concrete aspects as outlined by Driscoll and Breshears (2010:310-311) below:

- *theological unity*: the leaders and members of the church must agree on what they will and will not fight over;
- *relational unity*: does not necessarily mean that everyone likes one another, but it does mean that people love one another and demonstrate it by being cordial, friendly, and kind in their inter personal-interaction;

- *philosophical unity*: characterises ministry methods and styles. These are house rules or ministry philosophy about how the church does things, and they are in many ways the cause of a particular and primary cultural style in a church;
- *missional unity*: concerns the objective of the church. Ultimately the goal of everyone in the church must be to biblically glorify God in all they say and do, with the hope of seeing the nation meet God and also live to glorify Him; and
- *organisational unity*: based on how things are done in the church, such as job descriptions, performance reviews, and financial policies, so that the church can be a unified good steward of the resources God has entrusted to its oversight.

I want to conclude in the words of Deymaz (2010:171), that true unity will be more than just a slogan or a mission statement; it will visibly reflect aspects of union, identity, harmony, and integrity.

Unity does not require us in the FGC to see eye to eye on everything. In our engagements we need to agree on matters of fundamental importance while having the liberty on differing viewpoints. Being different does not prevent us to work together.

FURTHER RESEARCH

Despite the exponential growth of women serving in the ministry of the FGC, our history pays little attention to individual as well as collective leadership contributions of gifted women. Women continue to face gender challenges in our Church. Though deconstruction of structural organisation is not what I call for here, I believe further research will be necessary for the FGC to start engagements and debates on the slow hierarchical/upward promotion of women who are called within the denomination. From a different perspective, attention should be drawn to the important role women play within the FGC structures.

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ANNEXURES

- A. Research Questionnaire
- B. Participation Consent
- C. Osmer's Hermeneutical Spiral
- D. FGC Moderators & Secretary Generals until 1990
- E. Berea Theological College student Body
- F. Berea Theological College
- G. Bethesda Theological College
- H. Chaldo Bible Institute
- I. Bophelo Theological College
- J. Reconciliation Statement by: Pastor G.A Honey
- K. Reconciliation Statement by: Pastor A. Naidoo
- L. The Joint Executive Council of 1997
- M. The new Full Gospel Church College
- N. The Newly Elected Modarateur of 2009
- O. FGC Leadership in 2010 (Celebrating 100 Years: From 1910-2010)

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear colleagues,

I'm a PhD student registered at the North-West University. As part of the requirements I am conducting a research study entitled: **The Struggle for Unity: Towards a Pastoral Model for the Post-Unification era in the Full Gospel Church of God**. The aim of the study is to explore and evaluate critical success factors for unification as well as propose a pastoral model in this regard. I am therefore dependent on your co-operation to gather empirical information by sharing your experiences. All the information will be treated confidential and your identity will not be disclosed.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

Age in Years: 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 50 & Over ☐ Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Racial Group:

- ☐ African
☐ Coloured
☐ Indian
☐ White

Highest Theological Training

- ☐ Certificate ☐ Diploma
☐ Degree ☐ Honours
☐ Masters ☐ Doctorate

Church membership Status

For how long have you been the FGC member? 5-20yrs ☐ 20 & Over ☐

What is your position in the church?

- ☐ Pastor
☐ Regional Overseer
☐ Executive Council Member

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Describe your relationship with members of other racial groups in our denomination. _____

2. How would you reach beyond your normal social circles to meet people of other race or culture whom you ordinarily would never meet?

3. How do you see unity and unification in the FGC? _____

What do you think is the greatest single barrier to unity in the FGC?

4. What can the FGC do in addressing division? _____

5. What can you personally do to make the FGC a more accepting place for other races? _____

6. What leadership abilities do we need in our leaders to foster a cross-cultural ministry? _____

7. What do you think are the greatest prices the FGC will have to pay to become multiracial? _____

8. What do you think would be the greatest benefits of becoming a multiracial church? _____

Participation Consent Form

I hereby consent to participate in this study. The purpose of the study was explained to me. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may refuse to answer any particular question or withdraw from the study if I so wish without any negative consequences. I expect my responses to be kept confidential.

Name of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

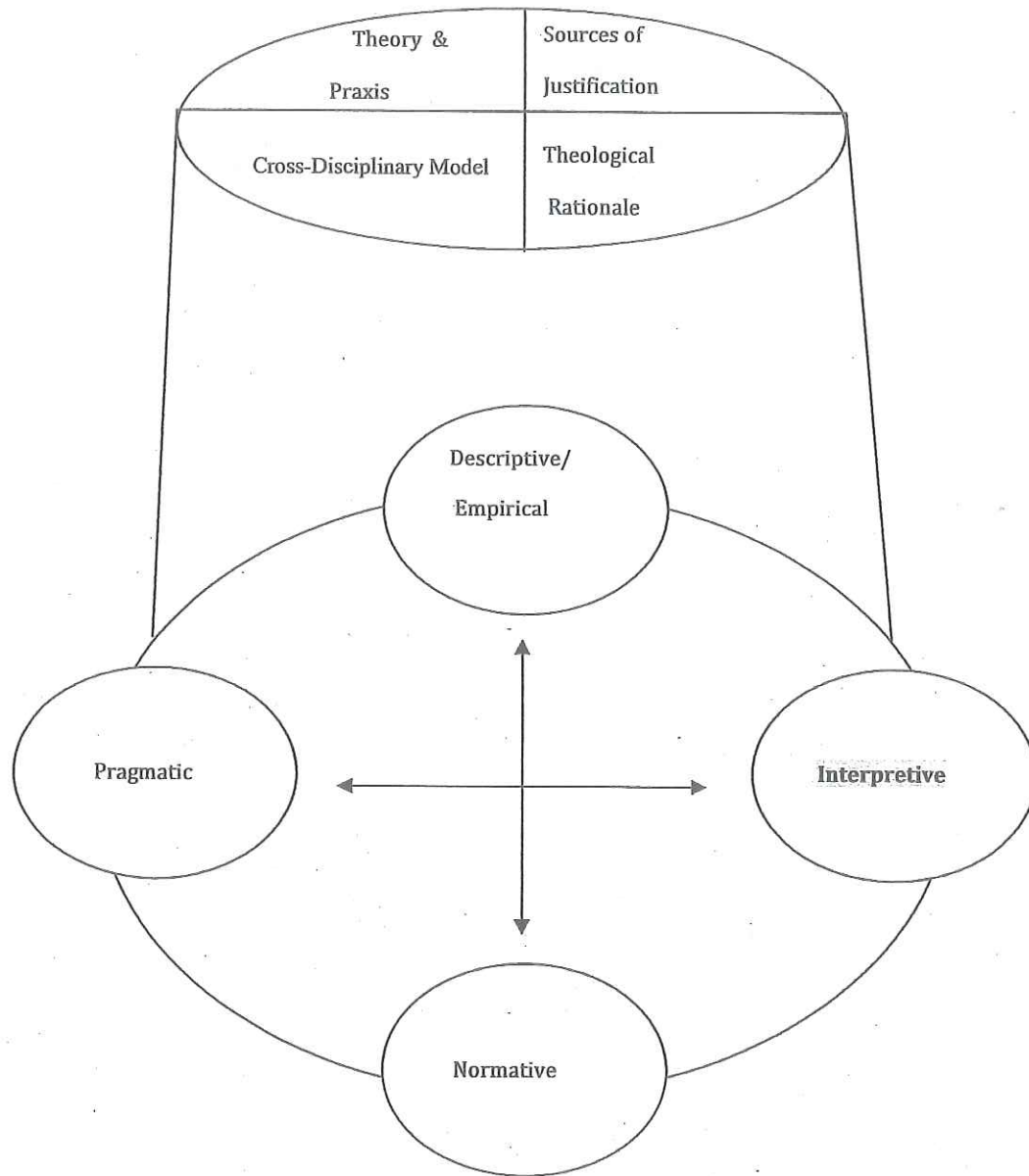
As researcher I am bound by the aforementioned and agree to the conditions mentioned thereby and I also undertake to adhere to the conditions.

Name of Researcher _____

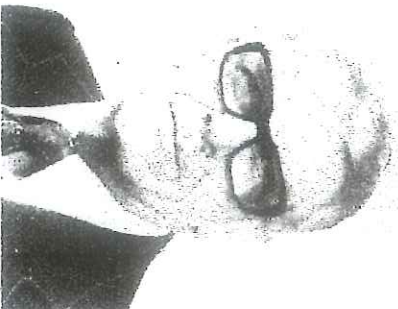
Date: _____

Signature: _____

Osmer's (2010: 7) Hermeneutical Spiral



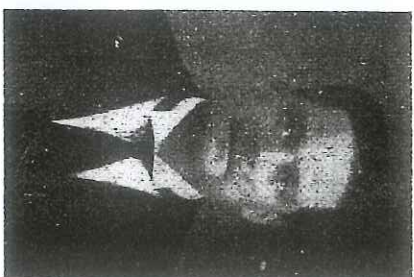
Moderators & Secretary Generals (until 1990)



A. Thompson 1985-1986
(President) 1987-1989



H. Van der Vent
Wynberg SC. 1988-1990
SC-UA 1990-1997



P.B. Viljoen
1935 & 1937



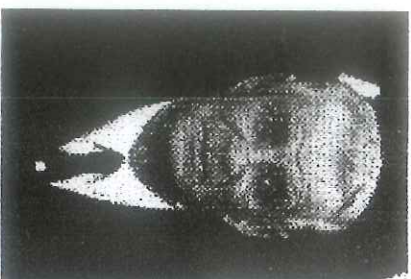
I.C.L. Du Plessis
1989-1990



L.E.S. Masckameng
Soweto 1985-1990



Q. Babu
Wynberg 1988-1990



J.F.M. Beelge
1922, 1925, 1927, 1929,
1931, 1933-1934, 1936,
1938-1939, 1940-1950



W.S. Green
1959, 1961, 1963,
1965, 1969.



A.N. Naidoo
Belhesda 1985-1989
OO - UA 1996-1997



C.J. Van Kerken
1986 - 1989
SC.1976 & 1981-1986
OO - UA 1990-1996



H.R. Carter
1955-1958 & 1967
SC. 1951-1954 & 1959-1965



M.L. Badenhorst
1961-1985
SC. 1977-1981
(President) 1989-1990



P.J. Swanepoel
1973-1976
SC. 1957-1958



J.J. Vos
Wynberg 1985



A. Cooper
1924 & 1922 & 1930 & 1932



E. Jenkins
1928



C.M.L. Schirper
1977-1980



W. O. O'Reilly
1943-1950, SQ. 1955 - 1957



W. Theron
SQ. 1923 - 1927



T.D. Bowers
Wynberg 1985 - 1988



N.E.D. Nyawo
SQ. 1985 - 1990



G. Boule
(President) 1910-1921



J.F. Nel
SQ. 1928 - 1942



B.H. Prinsloo
1968



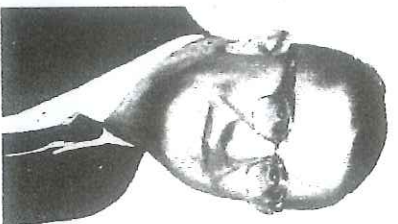
J.G. De Jager
1971



L.L. Roulands
SQ. 1986 - 1990



H.C. Jenkins
1972



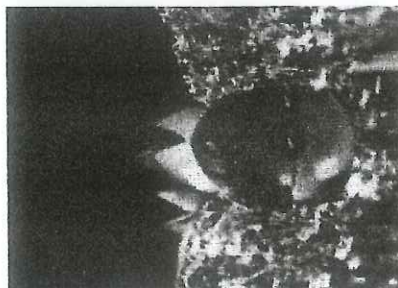
J.H. Saagman
1951-1954



J.D. Seekola
Bethesda 1989-1990



F.L.K. Howard-Browne
1960-1966, 1962, 1964, 1966



C.J. Lucas
1939



Ralph Riggs
SQ. 1920 - 1922



C.J. Beege
1923

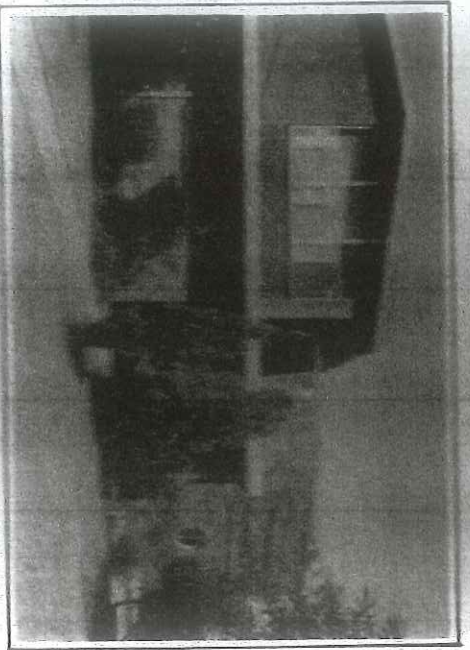
STUDENTE LIGGAAM ♦ 1995 ♦ STUDENT BODY



DIE ENDE DIE LIEDE WERK NIEKE WILDE.
 DIE BYBEL, BESTUDEER,
 IS STEEDS DIE PLEK VIR DIE GESLAG,
 HIER LEER ONS, LER ONS,
 LER ONS, WIL U ONS KOM LER.
 MAAR GOD SE KNEGT NOU HIER STAAN,
 ONS ROEPING TE WAARDEER,
 WIL ONS DIE KENNIS HOM TOEWY,
 ONS DIER HOM, DIER HOM,
 DIER HOM, DIER HOM - HYS ONS HEER,
 O.J. TEN VAN SWYDERS.
 IN HAN BORD
 IS 'N WAARDIG
 O.A. DE SEEN ONS,

Voor Vmr. Gerda Cremer, Past. P B van Niekerk, Past. W M Booysen, Past. J W Badenhorst, Past. L L Rowlands,
 Past. P G Hudson, Past. A S van Deventer, Past. H C Nieuwoudt, Andie Haneekom, Rudolf Kock
 Middell Vmr. Johan Nell, Stefan Pieterse, Zaida Claassen, Jacques Potgieter, Sonja Horn, Wouter Ventler, Sharon Gates, Morrie Lötter, Marianna Mitchell
 Agter Vmr. Elmarie Basson, Arthur Bosch, Phillip Oliver, Christiaan Broodryk, Renier Vermeulen, Conradie Scheepers, Charl Pretorius, Cyril Craill, Dirk de Clerk, Moses Hobe

BEREA THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE



PO BOX 35, IRENE 1675 TEL: (012) 667-1076

SHORTENED PROSPECTUS 1991

(Abridged by Irene)

Background

Berea was officially inaugurated at Irene on September 5, 1951. The campus has been situated at IRENE, ten minutes south of Pretoria, since 1965. **BEREA Theological College** is a full-fledged, academically accredited pastoral training college. **Two out of every three pastors of the FOC are Berea alumni!**

Although Berea is the primary training institute of the Full Gospel Church (Irene Association), students of other denominations are also considered for training. The qualifications of Berea are in general accepted by the Pentecostal and Charismatic world.

Berea is the number one choice for pastoral training. As one of the biggest residential Pentecostal colleges in the RSA, we offer you, inter alia, the following advantages:

- Forty years of experience in tertiary education
- Sound Pentecostal theological training
- A devotional atmosphere, spiritual solitude and daily chapel services
- Opportunities to preach and cultivate your talents
- Classroom interaction with lecturers and fellow-students
- Exposure to assemblies country-wide
- Academic accreditation at selected South African universities
- Hostel facilities
- A campus situated in the beauty of nature in a rural area
- A highly in demand and sought-after qualification at completion of studies

Diplomas and Certificates

Conferment	Entrance Requirement	Duration
Certificate of Pastoral orientation	Standard 8	Lay training 1 1/2 years
Certificate of Pastoral and Theological studies	Std 8 or higher	Three years
Diploma of Divinity	Std 10 or equivalent	Three years ministerial training
Licentiate of Theology	University entrance	Three years ministerial training

Courses:

- MAJOR SUBJECTS: Are taken over three years with semester examinations.
- Practical Theology I - Introduction, methodology, constituting scientific theory, Homiletics, pastoral orientation and meeting procedure.
- Practical Theology II - Pastoral communication, guidance, general pastorate, pastoral involvement, types of services, pastoral essentials, the Church and financial institutions, pastoral loyalty and counselling.
- Practical Theology III - The church and its horizontal outreach, crises and the pastorate, constituting theory, pastoral care, teaching structures, church models and matrimonial studies.
- Biblical studies I - OT and NT introduction, origin of the Bible, Bible Geography, Pentateuch, OT poetic books.
- Biblical Studies II - Four Gospels, Luke, Life of Christ, OT writings and the intertestamental period.
- Biblical Studies III - Hebrews, Pauline letters and the OT prophets.
- Systematic Theology I - Introduction and methodology survey of the subdivisions, doctrine of creation, doctrine of revelation and doctrine of God.
- Systematic Theology II - Christology, Soteriology, Anthropology, Systematic Theology III - Dogma history, Eschatology, Church doctrine and Pentecostal Theology.
- ADDITIONAL SUBJECTS (One or two year courses)
 - Greek 001 - Introduction to grammar
 - Greek 002 - Grammar, Lexicography, Textual criticism and art of translation.
 - Greek 003 - Hermeneutics and its application.
 - Pastoral Education - Pedagogics, Andragogics, Gerontogics and its practical application
 - Ethics - Fundamentals of Ethics, casuistry and pastoral ethics.
 - Church history - The early Church, the medieval Church, the Reformation and the modern period.

- Missions - The charge and the mission of the Church, Theology of missions, problems of missions, Science of Religions - a study of world religions.

* CHURCH SUBJECTS

- Sunday School work
- Youth work
- Social work
- Church Administration and Evangelism.

General

All subjects are compulsory for ministerial candidates, except Greek, which is optional for the Diploma course. The pass mark is 50% and students will maintain credits for subjects passed. Class attendance is compulsory. I.Th. students receive accreditation at the University of South Africa to the equivalent of eighteen half courses with regard to the Bachelor of Theology degree. The diploma ceremony is held annually in November. Students who have successfully completed the ministerial training course, may apply to be admitted to the full-time pastorate. Students who have proved registration to the authorities are usually allowed postponement of their national service.

The Faculty

The faculty consists of ten full-time and part-time lecturers with wide ministerial experience. All members of the faculty have recognised qualifications and post-graduate research is also being undertaken. Berea offers fifteen subjects which cover the full spectrum of theological and church subjects.

Work Opportunities

Classes are convened from 08h15 to 12h15. The urban infra-structure offers ample work opportunities to students to support themselves.

Costs and Registration

Prospective students requiring hostel accommodation are advised to apply before October. Kindly complete the attached entry form and send it without delay to:

The Registrar
Berea Theological College
PO Box 35, Irene, 1675

An interview with the Faculty council, which is a condition for admission, can be arranged. Any further enquiries are welcome. For fees and dates, see attached letter with information.

BEREA THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

Background

Berea the mother of the theological/bible colleges of the Full Gospel Church of God in Southern Africa was officially inaugurated at Kroonstad on September 1951. The campus has been situated at IRENé, ten minutes south of Pretoria, since 1965. Berea Theological College is a full-fledged, academically accredited pastoral training college. Two out of every three pastors of the FGC (prior to its amalgamation with the other racial groups) are Berea alumni.

Although Berea is primarily a training institution for the Full Gospel Church students of other denominations also considered for training. Berea is the number one choice for pastoral training. The college is bound to a non-racial and non sexist policy. As one of the biggest residential Pentecostal colleges in the RSA it offers, inter alia, the following advantages to its students:

- Forty seven years of experience in tertiary education
- Sound Pentecostal training
- A devotional atmosphere, spiritual solitude and chapel services
- Opportunities to preach and cultivate their talents
- Classroom inter-action with lecturers and fellow-students
- Exposure to assemblies country-wide
- Academic accreditation at selected South African universities
- Hostel facilities
- A campus situated in the beauty of nature in a rural area
- A highly in demand and sought-after qualification at completion of studies.

Berea Theological College enjoys recognition with Lee College, Cleveland, Tennessee (USA) and the University of South Africa. It also has a working arrangement with University of Pretoria. Students with a Licentiate Theologiae Diploma (L.Th. Dip.) may, should they wish to further their studies, enter directly for the degree Honours Bacalaureus Theologia (Hon B.Th.) at the University of South Africa. Details in respect of credits for study at Berea Theological College by Lee College can be obtained upon request from the Faculty of Berea. The minimum entrance requirement for study at Berea is Std 10 or equivalent. Lectures are given both in English and Afrikaans.

Courses:

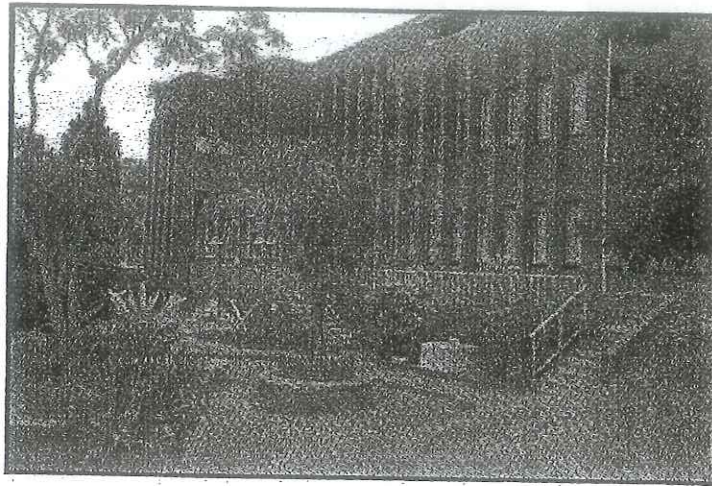
Major Subjects:

- Biblical studies
- Systematic Theology
- Practical Theology
- Missiology

Major subjects are taken over three years with semester examinations.

Additional subjects:

- Church History (2 yrs)
- Hebrew (2yrs)
- Greek (3 yrs)
- Biblical Geography & Archaeology (1 semester)



BETHESDA BIBLE COLLEGE

INTRODUCTION

The Bethesda Bible College is a theological training institution of the Full Gospel Church of God in Southern Africa. (International Headquarters - Church of God, Keith at 25h, Cleveland, Tennessee, U.S.A.). It is controlled by the Full Gospel Church of God Executive Council, board of Christian Education, and the College Board of Control.

The College is the brainchild of one of God's chosen men of vision - the late Dr. John Francis Rowlands. As early as 1933, he had started classes in Bible studies on a part time basis for both full-time and part time Church workers. Over the years, however, the need for a full-fledged Bible college became evident. In pursuance of this Dr. Rowlands visited the U. S.A. at the invitation of Cecil R. Guiles, who was the general Director of the Church of God Youth and Christian Education at that time. Youth World Evangelism appeal, a new programme of this department, raised \$214,333.92 towards the building project.

Bethesda Bible College was completed and officially opened on October 11, 1975. Full-time classes were launched by pastor Schimper, with teaching sessions commencing on February 10, 1976. It is noteworthy that the College bears an interna-

tional character. Over 250 graduates are presently involved in the ministry throughout South Africa and abroad.

FUNCTION AND SERVICE TO THE CHURCH.

The purpose of the Bethesda Bible College is to prepare men and women for a fruitful ministry in God's Church in today's world. We are committed to the absolute authority of Scripture and to the Holiness and Pentecostal interpretation of the Christian Faith. As a denominational school, the Bethesda Bible College is fully committed to the spiritual, ministerial and doctrinal emphasis of the Full Gospel Church of God in South Africa. The Bethesda Bible College offers a full program of Christ centred study and activities to promote growth in grace and Christian conduct.

TRAINING PROGRAMMES AND ACCREDITATION

The courses are structured to give the student a sound theological and practical basis for his or her ministry to a needy and hurting world. The College only prepares men and

women for the ministry, but does not accept or place them in the ministry. It is purely a training institution.

The current program of study is for three years leading to a Certificate in Theology or a Diploma in Divinity. Matriculated students, and those who receive 50% in their courses qualify at the end of three years with the Diploma in Divinity. Others receive the Certificate in Theology.

The Bethesda Bible College is fully accredited with UNISA, UDW, and Lee University, USA. Students with a Diploma in Divinity and a matriculation Exemption gain admission into the Honours. B. Th. Degree with UNISA and UDW. In addition to this, the Bible College plans to offer a Bachelor of Theology Degree in 1999. The University of Zululand will confer the Bachelor of Theology Degree upon qualifying students.

OBJECTIVES

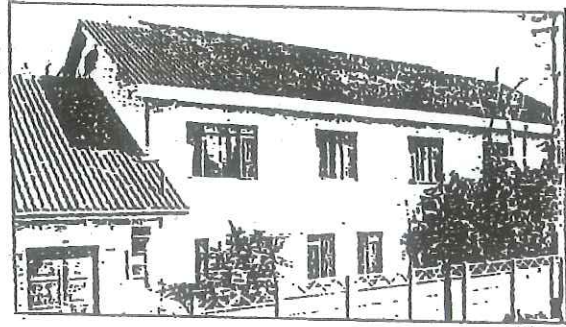
The curriculum is planned:-

1. to give students the ability to understand and interpret Scripture,

Chaldo Bible Institute

FOUNDING AND FUNCTION

CHALDO BIBLE INSTITUTE owes its existence to a decision of the Executive Council of the Full Gospel Church in 1955 whereby Pastor C.J. van Kerken was appointed and commissioned to found a Bible College in Cape Town – supposedly to train pastors in the former “coloured” race group. This coincided with and brought to fruition a “dream” of the late Pastor Ben Dodds who had bequeathed property to the church. It was his clear and written desire, amongst others, that a Bible School be established and that it be named in memory of his late wife **CH**arity **AL**thea **DO**dds.



Full time classes which commenced on 11 May 1959 and which still continue today, primarily aims to train men and women for the pastoral ministry. To this end some 250 persons have already graduated from its full time programme with many more who have benefited from the part-time and correspondence classes.

PROMOTION AND PURPOSE

The training and providing of men and women for the ministry should be viewed as a vital and life giving support system of the Full Gospel Church of God in South Africa. It is our contention that *the times demand a “trained” ministry.*

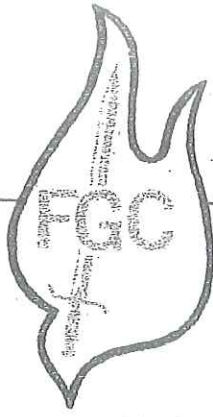
The National church – (top leadership) should set the pace by showing a visible moral support of, and express its faith in the relevance of its training institutes. The need to consider and respond to the call of the Lord to “full-time” service should be a constant reminder to the church. Every Bible School student is a prospective future pastor.

CHALDO offers a three-year Diploma in Divinity to students who fulfil the academic requirements of its comprehensive curriculum. This diploma meets the Denominational needs for acceptance into our ministry. It also satisfies the University of the Western Cape who allows student to earn the B.Th after completing a bridging course. Alternatively, student will be accepted in the BA(Hons) programme with Religious subjects.

It is my opinion that the Full Gospel Church should consider viewing its Institutes not only for the training of persons for the ministry (admittedly our prime purpose) but also as a launching pad for those who are considering other vocations.

STAFF AND SUPPORT

The integrity and value of any academic institute largely depends on the dedication, commitment and qualifications of its staff. Chaldo has made significant strides in this regard.



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Marthinus Oosthuizen Avenue
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FAX 907-3018

Bophelo Theological College

ALBERTON NORTH

OVERVIEW OF BOPHELO THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE.

THE ORIGIN

The need for a Bible College for black students arose in the Full Gospel Church in 1952. In August of the same year, Dr. Jacobus Saayman, the moderator of the F G C officially opened the Bible College on his farm near Koster. Seven years later the church decided to move the college to a "better" area and in 1963 the "Full Gospel Bible Institute" became the new College situated at Taung in the Northern Cape. Because of urbanization, millions of people moved to the cities and the Gauteng area needed a bible college. In April 1980, the Full Gospel Bible Institute was moved to Jabavu (White City) at Soweto and the Full Gospel Church of God College, Soweto was dedicated to God.

SOURCE OF LIFE BIBLE COLLEGE

The need for training bible students in the Gauteng area, especially after working hours became evident and many such bible colleges came into being in the 1980's. In 1991 the Source of Life Theological College was founded by Pastor J Pretorius inspired by the Holy Spirit to start at Alberton in the Full Gospel Church of God. The college officially opened on 10 February 1991 together with Br. T Vorster and Prof. D Vorster, a fast growing bible college was established and lecturers appointed.

COLLEGE ENTRY

To overcome obstacles to growth and evangelism, a greater emphasis must be placed on leadership development and training by :-

1. Expanding entry level screening and interviewing of ministerial applicants.
2. Maintaining an aggressive and effective ministerial internship program.
3. Using renewal programs to strengthen the commitment and focus of all clergy.
4. Expanding denominational support of our colleges.
5. Expand in our educational field to include training members of all local assemblies.

EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES

1. To impart knowledge about God as He is revealed in the Bible and in creation an opportunity for the student to learn to know God personally.
2. To aid in personal development which will lead to healthy physical, mental and spiritual growth.
3. To provide a frame work on which the meaning of life and individual roles in the church and society can be understood.
4. To encourage ethical relationships in accordance with biblical principles.
5. To lead to an appreciation of biblical faith and practice as understood by the church, acceptance of its principles and to encourage a living expression of its precepts.
6. To prepare for successful ministerial pursuits and effective Christian Service.
7. To train in personal attitudes and needs necessary for ministry, to find significance and security in nothing else by Christ, being led by the Spirit, bearing the fruit of the Holy Spirit.
8. To teach holiness and dedication to God, loyalty to the body and covenant relationships with those serving together.

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THE FULL
GOSPEL CHURCH
OF GOD
IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

RECONCILIATION STATEMENT. 9th October 1997.

In pursuence of the "Unity" of the Church and in accord with what we deem to be consistant with our Christian conviction we submit the following in all good faith and conscience:-

We, as the Irene Assemblies of the Full Gospel Church of God in South Africa do deplore those policies which have disadvantaged so many and caused grief and pain to the greater majority of South Africans.

We recognise and lament the grave injustices done in our land and though as a Church we have been and are an "A" political institution, we cannot avoid acceptance of our share in the human dilemma, so tragic, in our National history.

Be it by commission or by neglect, in the light of the awesome plight of so great a multitude of "the People" of South Africa we deem it incumbent upon us to record our deep regret at the unnecessary and tragic circumstances that have attended the lives of so many.

We bow in deep repentant humility before Almighty God and request forgiveness of all those who have been pained and still suffer the consequences of the past injustices in our land.

Further, whereas we as a Full Gospel Church of God in Southern Africa have, understandably, experienced the National political tensions within our own ranks which have made fellowship strained and negative and resulted in a lack of dynamic growth in the Church. We ask God to forgive us for allowing our vision and focus to be clouded and so compromised.

We also ask our Brethren of the United Assemblies to forgive us for being party to the internal conflict which has divided us these past 7 years and belied our "Unity in Christ by the Spirit".

We further as the "Irene Assemblies" of the Full Gospel Church of God hereby pledge our allegiance to the one Full Gospel Church of God in Southern Africa and commit ourselves anew to work together in a diversified unity as prayed for by our Lord Jesus in Jn.17. and outlined in 1 Cor.12. To proclaim the whole Gospel for the whole man, to all men "with signs following" and to pursue the path of reconciliation in terms of 2 Cor.5:14 to 6:2. in the conviction that the Grace of God which hath appeared to all men shall be made manifest in this our beloved land in our generation and in our day and that it shall be said of us as Church as it was said of another land in another day, "THIS, WAS THEIR FINEST HOUR!"

To this end we solemnly and avowedly before God and among our Beloved Brethren as "Family of God", prayerfully commit ourselves; God helping us by the power of His Blessed Holy Spirit and the Truth of His Holy Scriptures!

GERALD A. HONEY.
MODERATOR IRENE ASSEMBLIES.
FOR THE IRENE ASSEMBLIES.

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Adm. Office : Head Office Building 40, Irene, 1675



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THE FULL
GOSPEL CHURCH
OF GOD
IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

RECONCILIATION STATEMENT

9TH OCTOBER, 1997

As members of the Body of Christ we do acknowledge the hand of God upon us in our painful journey together all these many years. When we survey the uplifting story of the Pentecostal movement in South Africa, we are justly proud of the glorious achievements of our founding fathers and pioneers who dedicated themselves single-mindedly to carrying out the Great Commission of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

However much we may praise this aspect of our collective History, we must also sadly confess to the dark stain that casts its shadow over our past.

The stain to which we refer, is the smug way in which the Church forged a system that fitted perfectly within the evil doctrine of racial separation or segregation known as "apartheid". We do not think it is an exaggeration, but a fact that our Church was amongst the most racially stratified Churches in our land: four racially separate constituencies, each with its own facilities, and separated workers, right down to four different Colleges for ministerial training!

The evil in the earth-bound system of apartheid was that it put vast numbers of us across the colour line at a disadvantage through no fault of our own, but to a circumstance of birth. It was thus an attack on our personal dignity, self-image and ultimately an attack on God's sovereignty. Institutionalised racial separation, without our consent as separated ones, hurt us, and this brought resentment, and in the end all of us were psychically damaged. Today we come together humbly and confess this flaw in our collective past.

We as the United Assemblies of the Full Gospel Church of God, cast away our former resentments, confess and forsake them and EXTEND the warm hand of Christian Fellowship and Unity to everyone who names the Name of Christ in all our Churches. We forgive our brethren of the Irene Assemblies, and pledge our loyalty and allegiance to the ONE Full Gospel Church of God in Southern Africa.

We make our commitment today to work together to fulfil the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ the Head of the Church. We declare our unity under His Lordship. May God be glorified in our UNITY. May our unity endure for ever, and may no cloud ever arise again to darken our future history.

PASTOR ARTHUR NAIDOO
GENERAL OVERSEER, UNITED ASSEMBLIES.

GESAMENTLIKE UITVOERENDE RAAD JOINT EXECUTIVE COUNCIL



The Combined Executive Councils of the respective Associations which finalised the findings of the Working Committees and all the final details for presentation to the respective General Conferences and the Inaugural General Conference. This whole operation was carried out on the basis of consensus which is no small achievement. They are to be complimented for the spirit in which it was achieved.

MODERATORS



PASTOR G A HONEY
(IRENE)



PASTOR A NAIDOO
(UNITED)



PASTOR L L ROWLANDS
(IRENE)



PASTOR H VAN DER VENT
(UNITED)

MISSION STATEMENT

Excellence in Christian education & training for effective witness in a changing world.

Do you have a desire to engage in Christian work?

Perhaps as a Christian Worker...

being involved in Children's Ministry and Youth; in the leading of Worship; function in a Cell group; minister among women or men; be competent to Counsel or engage in cross-cultural Missions?

Perhaps as a Candidate Minister?

Perhaps as a Minister?

The Full Gospel Church of God College can meet your need with its "Ecumenical ethos with Pentecostal distinctive" by offering:

- a high standard of Christian education & training;
- highly qualified Spirit - filled facilitators;
- a fine library with access to the internet & specialized databases;
- computer facilities for learners;
- Ministerial training experience since 1933.

The Full Gospel Church of God College offers multi-level qualifications, compliant with SAQA's Outcome Based Education (OBE) philosophy, at three different levels to meet the needs of local churches, providing excellent resources, facilitated by qualified accredited learning personnel with requisite specialised qualifications.

MODALITIES OF LEARNING

IA] FULL TIME studies are conducted only at our Tshwane (Pretoria) location. Some of the highlights are a Practical week for each of the four terms in addition to the annual mission trip. Work-shadow experiences are also in place and have proved to be exceptionally beneficial.

IB] DISTANCE LEARNING CENTRES

Operate from Distance Learning Centres (DLC) at strategically-located churches. These centres will evolve progressively in designated areas throughout South Africa. The DLCs will provide portable, affordable and accessible Learning Programmes.

IC] CORRESPONDENCE (2006)

Will be available in English and Afrikaans.

ADMISSION CRITERIA

Admission is usually with matriculation exemption however **RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)** WILL ALSO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

Other access options:

1. Mature age (40 years and older).
2. Five (5) years or more of Pastoral experience.
3. Completion of a 2-year certificate or diploma.
4. Completion of four Foundational modules, which are included in the current learning programmes.

MODULARISATION

The learning programmes have been modularized within an OBE framework. All modules account for 8 credits each and earn 80 notional hours of learning.

Full Gospel Church of God College

Volle Evangelie Kerk van God Kollege

"A stepping-stone into sound, accurate and dynamic Pentecostal ministry



*Anointed
&
Academic*



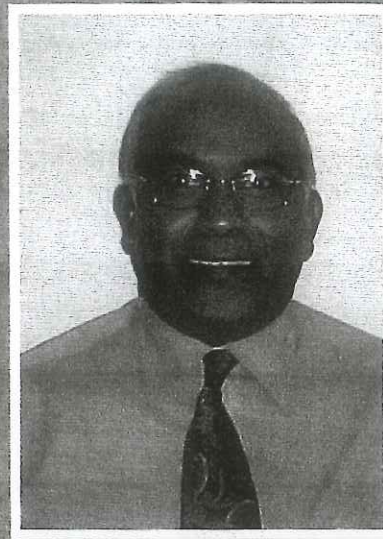
"Study to Show Yourself Approved..."

2 Tim. 2:15

THE NEWLY ELECTED MODERATEUR



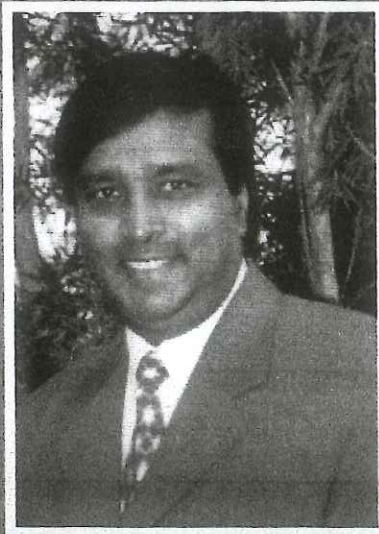
Dr Anton S van Deventer
Moderator



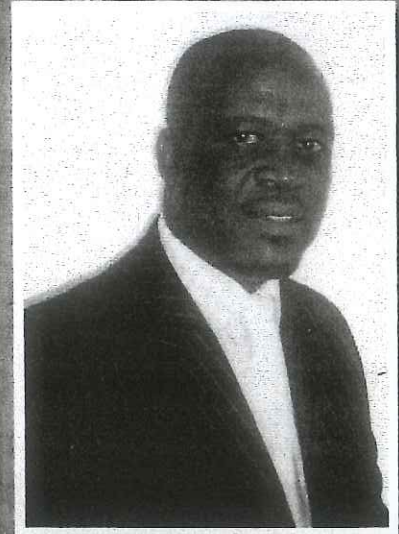
Pastor Christy J Perumal
Secretary General



Pastor Jerot Z Mvelase
First Deputy Moderator



Pastor Emmanuel J Moodley
Second Deputy Moderator

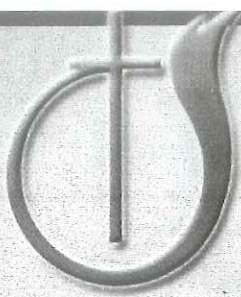


Pastor Takalani I Mufamadi
Third Deputy Moderator

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS

R Pelser
MC Barnard
MM Berrange
GC Horak
HR Mashila

PA Buckley
SC Petersen
WR Douglas
LS Sanabria



FULL GOSPEL CHURCH OF GOD

IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

100 YEARS

LEADERSHIP

MODERATEUR:

A S van Deventer
J Mvelase
EJ Moodley
T. Mufamadi
C J Perumal

Moderator
First Deputy Moderator
Second Deputy Moderator
Third Deputy Moderator
Secretary General

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL:

Dr. A S van Deventer
Pastor C J Perumal
Pastor J Z Mvelase
Pastor E J Moodley
Pastor T Mufamadi
Pastor R Pelser
Pastor M M Berrange
Pastor P A Buckley
Dr G C Horak
Pastor S C Petersen
Pastor W R Douglas
Pastor H R Mashila
Pastor L S Sanabria
Pastor M C Barnard

