DR MANAS BUTHELEZI’S CONTRIBUTION TO EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN SOUTHERN AFRICA’S STRUGGLE AGAINST APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA
(1970s-1990s)

by

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submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

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CHURCH HISTORY

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: PROF MPJSB MADISE

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DECLARATION

I, James Kenokeno Mashabela, declare that this dissertation is my own work. It is submitted in part fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Theology degree in the subject Church History at the University of South Africa (UNISA), Pretoria, Gauteng Province in South Africa.

I declare that the dissertation is my own work and all references used are carefully specified.

Signed:
by James Kenokeno Mashabela
Student number: 33151830
Dated: June 2014

Higher Degrees Committee

Department of Christian Spirituality, Church History and Missiology
University of South Africa
PO Box 392
UNISA 0003
08-05-2014

ETHICAL CLEARANCE FOR MASTER OF THEOLOGY RESEARCH PROJECT OF JK Mashabela ON DR MANAS BUTHELEZI’S CONTRIBUTION TO EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN SOUTHERN AFRICA’S STRUGGLE AGAINST APARtheid IN SOUTH AFRICA (1970-1990).

The Higher Degrees Committee of the Department of Christian Spirituality, Church History and Missiology hereby declares that it scrutinised the design and methodology of the Master of Theology (MTh) research proposal of JK Mashabela (Student number: 33151830).
in 2012 and approved the ethical aspects of his research before he embarked on the project. We were satisfied that he had built adequate protective measures into his research design to protect the participants in his research from harm and abuse. We were convinced that his research upheld the highest standards of integrity and deep respect for each research participant.

Yours sincerely,

Dr ZJ Banda
Chair, Departmental Higher Degrees Committee
SUMMARY

This academic study provides a historical background to the unsung hero Dr. Manas Buthelezi. He is amongst many such heroes who contributed enormously to the liberation of South Africa. Buthelezi fought against apartheid by promoting human liberation and rights; just like other circle unrecognized of heroes who were interested in combating the agonies caused by the apartheid system. This academic study presents the work of Buthelezi in the South African political, socio-economic, cultural and ecumenical effort at combating the apartheid policies. The history of Buthelezi's contribution can be deliberated in relation to the South African political and socio-economic dimensions. Church history is an alternative engagement to the social struggles hence a church leader like Buthelezi had to participate in the public arena. Not really; the focus is more on issues within the current ELCSA.

Broader historical evidence is considered on the theoretical writings in the field of church history. The analytical aim of the study develops how the struggles internal to the church and the understanding of struggle for liberation in South Africa. The study highlights the history of Lutheranism in South Africa as the background of creating an understanding of this research. The findings of the study are that although the Lutherans were fighting against apartheid system in South Africa they were divided on racial identify between the white and the black. This was also operational in the church in South Africa as well. The church in South Africa was theologically challenged around issues of struggle and liberation. The white community was part of the apartheid government aimed as its interests to benefit from the dominant values of racial connections. The dominant apartheid government oppressed the black community through racial discrimination. Study shows how Buthelezi and other theologians critiqued both the church and the state to resistant apartheid that was operational in the church and the society.

Black Theology as a historical phenomenon is part of the heritage of the Black Consciousness Movement of the 1970s. It was a religious counterpart of this
movement. Theologians such as Buthelezi had to develop Black Theology given the
t situation that prevailed in South Africa. My approach will be historical and analytical.
This study highlights aspects of Black Theology as a method used from its historical
heritage and its roots and relevance in South Africa to engage external struggle for
justice. This study examines historical heritage developments within the Black
Theology, its inception and aim in the 1970s. The analytical aim discerns the questions
arising in a particular context of Black Theology and develops theological formulations
in response to this context. There is something special about Black Theology as it
reminds the church about its responsibility and accountability for the liberation of human
beings. Black Theology will never be out dated as long as human beings experience
oppression. It seeks to give something new to every generation and every social
context.

Apartheid context tried to destroy it and it failed because it was gospel-centred.
Apartheid theology was a dominant theology which was produced by the white church.
This dominate theology was manufactured by the white missionaries through their
synods working together with the apartheid government. This was self-white
understanding, which was a limited autonomy in its daily operations in South Africa.
Black Theology was able to survive to strengthen and develop a sustainable human
fellowship and to reaffirm its commitment for human liberation. Black people identified
their own situation and experiences that lead them to discover key Black theological
issues. Whether Black Theology is relevant today will be determined by the contextual
relevance of black people. The critical issues for black people are that they live in
poverty and economic oppression.

The topic of my critical study is: Dr. Manas Buthelezi’s Contribution to Evangelical
Lutheran Church in Southern Africa’s Struggle Against Apartheid in South Africa (1970s-
1990s).

The study investigates his contribution in this respect. It will be necessary to look at
what happened historically in apartheid and Black Theology.
The intention of this study is to investigate how Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi in South Africa was involved and committed in the struggle against apartheid. I would like to analyse and reflect on his contribution and writing during apartheid, as this has not yet been researched. Buthelezi served the Lutheran Church and the South African Council of Churches (SACC) as its president, from where he viewed apartheid ideology and practice as contradictory to the Word of God and human wholeness of life.

One cannot research Buthelezi without considering his Church where I will explore the ordained ministry and the ‘lay’ ministry. Questions on teaching, training and service offered by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (ELCSA) raise serious matters about its present and future.

In the conclusion, I provide an analysis of the problems outlined and make recommendations which can be considered to be alternatives to challenges that face our South African context and that of the church. My recommendations are opened to everyone, to engage each other to furnish alternative solutions to the problems that face the church and the South African context.

**Title of thesis:**

**DR MANAS BUTHELEZI’S CONTRIBUTION TO EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN SOUTHERN AFRICA’S STRUGGLE AGAINST APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA (1970s-1990s)**

**Key terms:**

Black Theology; Black consciousness, political; oppressed; poor; black and white people; liberated; leadership; education, apartheid theology
TABLE OF CONTENTS

This table of contents is intended as an approach to the contents of this academic study. It is written to give a guide to readers regarding how this academic study is structured. It covers such areas as Buthelezi as an academic, activist and ecumenical leader.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest gratitude first to the Ultimate source of life, Modimo ka Jesu Kreste, for constant support, protection and strength.

Second, I wish to express many thanks to my mother Monica Paniki Mashabela and my late father John Stemere Mashabela (topa nama Mashabela ke di retlwa) who raised me in many ways to arrive where I am today. To my in-laws’ parents, mma Andrina Baloyi and tate David Baloyi, thank you for your support to my work. To my three brothers Tony, Philemon, George and my late brother Simon, my sister Thakane and late sister Eva, seven grandchildren of my parents and one great grandchild who have always been there for me. To my in-law sesi Sibongile Ndlovu, sesi Fikile, buti Nhlanhla and sesi Thuli Mchunu and her husband Stula. To my wife Londeka Mashabela and our recent first born son, Tumišo Stemere John Mashabela, thank you for allowing me to do my work even though I was not at home with you always.

Third, I would dearly like to thank Bishop Emeritus Dr. Manas Buthelezi for willingly giving me the opportunity to study his work.

Four, my humble thank-you to Prof. Mokhele Madise for his critical scholarly advice offered to me during my academic work.

Five, I express my best regards to Prof. David Levey for his contribution to the language editing of my academic work.

Six, to all the interviewees, thanks for your insights, energy, space, and time.

Seven, to Emily Dahle from the USA and Elias Molwantoa from Soweto, thank you for assisting me in inserting the numbers of the pages in both Roman and Arabic numerals.
Eight, with humbleness to Rev. B. Zulu, former Dean of Soweto Circuit and mma Moruti and mmaDean Zulu (my spiritual parents); Prof. S. Maimela; Rev. L. Morena; Rev. B. Khumalo; Rev. M. Mathye and mma moruti Mathye; the late Mr. K. Bogopa and his wife B. Bogopa and their daughter Johanna; sesi M. Lerotholi and sesi Audrey Manthata; mma T. Ramokgopa and tate P. Ramokgopa; mma L. Mathibeng and tate J. Mathibeng; mma C. Mailula; my close friends Z. Mokholoane; Rev. A. Matamela; Rev. M. Nkwanyana; L. Seitlhamo and T. Mntambo; Rev. Prof. M. Masoga, the former Dean of Pretoria Circuit; tate M. Rankapole; mma P. Ledoaba; tate Monama and Rev. D. Lesejane, the former Dean of the Western Circuit, for tirelessly encouraging me to work on this dissertation.

Nine, to Tembisa East Parish, thank you for your support in my theological discourse.
PREFACE

As a young man born in Tembisa, near Johannesburg in Gauteng Province and growing up in the Lutheran Church, I feel that I need to know what the Bishop of the Central Diocese at the time did during the apartheid era in South Africa. I have chosen this particular topic because Dr. Manas Buthelezi was involved in and committed to the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. In 2004, during my first year of studying theology, as students we were given an assignment by the late Rev. A. Lieta, senior lecturer at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal on writing a biography about one of the South African church leaders who had contributed to the struggle against apartheid. The first interview I conducted in the same year was with Rev. Bongani Zulu, the former Dean of Soweto Circuit. I had to leave Pietermaritzburg to come specifically to Tembisa to do that interview over two days which was most interesting, and then I returned to Pietermaritzburg to investigate more written resources. Rev. A. Lieta indicated to me before he passed on that my paper had been submitted to the Dictionary of African Christian Biography (DACB) for publication. I was writing about Dr. Manas Buthelezi, my article was published by this Dictionary with the help of Prof. Dr. Denis Philippe, Professor of the History of Christianity and DACB liaison coordinator. This is how I became more interested in researching further about Buthelezi. I was motivated by his contribution as an activist to the struggle against apartheid in South Africa and therefore looked at how he responded to the challenge of apartheid during the 1970s-1990s.

In 2007, I met Buthelezi and his wife Mrs. Grace Buthelezi at their home in Mahlabathini KwaCeza where I spent four days with him in interviews and in searching through more of his library as he had agreed that I could research his work. I also had the opportunity of interviewing him in Soweto, at Dobsonville later the same year where he had been invited as the key note speaker of the Synod of the Central Diocese. I found Buthelezi to be still a sound theologian, church leader and activist. In those interviews I came to know him better; and he became more open about his contribution to the South African country and his church.
The reason I selected this topic is because I was never involved as a young person in the struggle against apartheid. Hence I felt that there was a need for me to understand where this new democratic South Africa came from. In 1973, Buthelezi was requested by Dr. Beyers Naudé to be the Director of the Christian Institute of Southern Africa (CI) in the Natal region. Naudé was the National Director of the CI, having founded it in 1963, after the Sharpeville massacre as a response to apartheid. During the 1970s Buthelezi and the institute were radical in their opposition to apartheid and its government’s repressive ideology. At that time Buthelezi was also challenging black people to take charge of their own situation, even if they had to directly confront the whites. This forms part of the heritage of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) of the 1970s.
**ABBREVIATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AALC</td>
<td>All-Africa Lutheran Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>ABRECSA</td>
<td>Alliance Black Reformed Christians</td>
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<td>AIC</td>
<td>African Independent Churches</td>
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<td>ALM</td>
<td>American Lutheran Mission</td>
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<td>ANC</td>
<td>African National Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>BMS</td>
<td>Berlin Mission Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCM</td>
<td>Black Consciousness Movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>BPA</td>
<td>Black Parents’ Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>BPC</td>
<td>Black People’s Convention</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCZ</td>
<td>Christian Council of Zambia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>Christian Institute of Southern Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSM</td>
<td>Church of Sweden Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COSAS</td>
<td>Congress of South African Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSM</td>
<td>Church of Sweden Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLM</td>
<td>Co-operating Lutheran Missions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DGM</td>
<td>Department of Global Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DACB</td>
<td>Dictionary of African Christian Biography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Dutch Reformed Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELCSA</td>
<td>Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELCSA-CC</td>
<td>Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa-Church Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELCSA-NT</td>
<td>Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa-Natal Transvaal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELCSA-SER</td>
<td>Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa-South Eastern Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELCZA</td>
<td>Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zambia</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELOKCSWA</td>
<td>Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church- South West Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELM</td>
<td>Evangelical Lutheran Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELCSWA</td>
<td>Evangelical Lutheran Church in South West Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEDSAW</td>
<td>Federation of South African Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FELCSA</td>
<td>Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Southern Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPC</td>
<td>Finance and Planning Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMS</td>
<td>Finnish Mission Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>HFCM</td>
<td>Hanoverian Free Church Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>LTC</td>
<td>Lutheran Theological College</td>
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<tr>
<td>LTI</td>
<td>Lutheran Theological Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>LTS</td>
<td>Lutheran Theological Seminary</td>
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<tr>
<td>LUTHOS</td>
<td>Lutheran House of Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>LWF</td>
<td>Lutheran World Federation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NECC</td>
<td>National Education Crisis Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGK</td>
<td>Nederduitsch Gereformeerde Kerk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIC</td>
<td>Natal Indian Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>NUSAS</td>
<td>National Union of South African Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>NMS</td>
<td>Norwegian Mission Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAC</td>
<td>Pan African Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>RMS</td>
<td>Rhenish Mission Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>SACBC</td>
<td>Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>SACC</td>
<td>South African Council of Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SASO</td>
<td>South African Students’ Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCEM</td>
<td>Transforming-centred Christian Education Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCM</td>
<td>University Christian Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UELCSA</td>
<td>United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNISA</td>
<td>University of South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>United State of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WARC</td>
<td>World Alliance of Reformed Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCC</td>
<td>World Council of Churches</td>
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INTRODUCTION

This introduction presents a setting for the study which I have outlined in the mentioned research topic. It discloses the research aims and objectives, and the essence of the study. It addresses the research methodology, approaches used during the research and the review of literature.

1. Aims and Objectives

To establish how Buthelezi and other liberation theologians contributed towards the liberation of South Africa as opposed to the apartheid system. Why did they discover the method of Black Theology? The purpose is to study the context in which South Africa was liberated and what Buthelezi and other theologians such as Allan Boesak, and Sekone Maimela did as they attended to the impact of the political, socio-economic, cultural and social struggle on life among the black people under the regime of that time. Also to consider the active participation in church life that Buthelezi and other theologians developed to interpret the Bible according to the people’s needs for their liberation.

This research will help Lutherans, other Christians, other religious people and non-religious readers to understand what Buthelezi contributed towards the liberation of South Africa. Surely it is not evident from the current history celebration of June 16 that Buthelezi preached and conducted the funeral of Hector Peterson with other key leaders. One aim in this study is to assist Lutherans and other South Africans to understand their identity and why they need to know about the heritage and history of the liberation of the new South Africa. This will aid Lutherans directly to confront their daily challenges by learning from those who were present before the current Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (ELCSA) leaders. It is my hope that this thesis will serve the purpose of a bridge from the contemporary apartheid system and current South African context to the actual principled liberation which gives substance to a realistic purpose of what Christ has called us to do for his service. This should not only speak to Christians but also to those who align themselves with the concept of stewardship even if not gospel-centred or Christ-centred.
2. Research Method

This research affords the opportunity to consider the challenges that existed in the apartheid crisis. It will use a qualitative research method, which includes consulting books, journals, newspapers, oral interviews and archival sources. I have ensured that issues of apartheid such as evil and oppression that were not supported by liberation movement have been treated with openness. All the evidence is critically interrogated. To achieve my purpose in this research there is clear separation of the actual evidence and my interpretation of evidence. Few individual interviews were conducted amongst people interviewed were Dr. Manas Buthelezi, Revs. M. Makhoela and B. Zulu, which were attached as the appendix. This was a more probe in the investigation of this research in order to find out more about the explained topic. Other interviews cannot be disclosed to a fact that people did not want their names to be mentioned. Thus those interviews were destroyed. Interviews were made on one-on-one were a questionnaire was sent before the actual interview for an individuals to prepare themselves. Interviews are key information that provides additional information in this research topic.

In this thesis, references are made according to the factual and historical events that took place in South Africa. There are a lot of historical events on how Buthelezi got involved in the socio-political situation and little material on the ELCSA response to the South African situation. Lutherans in South Africa has not written a lot about its church contribution against apartheid in South Africa. However through this study, the analysis of tracing the history of Buthelezi becomes clear. The study reveals that there is a limited focus on the ELCSA church and particularly of the period of the 1970s-1990s. Thus the ELCSA church history is inadequate to find in South Africa. Perhaps writers of church history must deal with the general history events in searching for the ELCSA history by exploring to other Lutheran churches histories outside South Africa.

2.1. Written sources

Primary and secondary literature was consulted.
2.1.1. Primary sources
In this study, the primary sources are found in archival material from the ELCSA Central Diocesan Centre archives in Soweto, Johannesburg and the ELCSA Church-wide office archives at Evangelical Lutheran Centre in Bonaero Park a suburb of Kempton Park. In these two areas I consulted materials such as letters, reports and minutes which are relevant to this research. Further archival material is in the Lutheran Theological Institute (LTI) library in Pietermaritzburg where I have consulted material, which contains documents related to the appointment and resignation letter of Buthelezi as a lecturer at the Lutheran college in Umphumulo that contains the dialogue correspondence between Buthelezi and the Lutheran college.

Oral history and oral tradition are critical areas for the history of Christianity in Africa. I conduct interviews, which form part of the methodology to be used in this research. Some of the persons I interviewed include Dr. M. Buthelezi, Rev. B. Zulu, and Rev. P. Makhoela, this list is not exhaustive, other role players such as Lutheran Church deans and ministers, activists and laity were also interviewed. This includes non-Lutherans as well.

2.1.2. Secondary sources
This research presents a critical engagement with the secondary sources and dialogue with various authors on the written evidence. During the research more written sources concerning Buthelezi were consulted.

In writing this history, I have carefully selected sources of information based on their validity in providing consistent data. The purpose was to conduct interviews with several interviewees to discover information that had not been captured in secondary sources.

3. Demarcation and scope of research
This history of the study about the contribution of Manas Buthelezi in the struggle against apartheid is divided in into two periods. The first period (1971-1974) gives the
early stages of Buthelezi beginning his ministry as the minster and also being appointed in the Christian Institution of Southern Africa as a regional director in response to apartheid, participated in organisations such as LWF and when he was harassed by the government. The second period (1975) when Buthelezi is transferred by his church to work as the ELCSA General Secretary and later on being elected to serve as the Bishop of the Central Diocese which was based in Soweto where he also meet the political Soweto students’ uprising of 1976s with the formation of BPA which he led. Thus this part serves to explain the scope of the history which has been used for this study.

4. Theoretical Substantiation
A theoretical substantiation of the study aims to write both a story and analysis of Buthelezi’s contribution to ELCSA in the struggle against apartheid. Through this analysis a brief overview of the ELCSA history is needed to provide an answer to this important research.

It is of critical importance to look at the background and scope of the struggle of ELCSA in response to the relationship between the church and the state. Although this study shows how Buthelezi contributed in a struggle against apartheid, it is a common good also to highlight an analysis of ELCSA’s contribution during the socio-political, economic and social forces during the apartheid. The historical and heritage of the Evangelical Lutheran work could be understood in a threefold firstly the origins of mission societies. The ELCSA emerged from the Evangelical Lutheran Church confession mission societies, combining the Norwegian Mission Society (NMS) which functioned around Natal in 1844; another mission society in Natal in 1876 was the Church of Sweden Mission (CSM) and Finnish Mission Society (FMS) in 1868; the Hermannsburg Mission Society (HMS), given the new name Evangelical Lutheran Mission (ELM) in 1854, which then occupied the Western Transvaal in 1857, it had a split in 1870 with the birth of Hanoverian Free Church Mission (HFCM) established in 1890; the American
Lutheran Mission (ALM), also given a new name, Department of Global Mission (DGM) became operational in 1927 with the help of the Norwegian Mission Society and Berlin Mission Society (BMS) which established the first congregation amongst the black communities at Bethany in 1832, then relocated to operate in the North Eastern Transvaal in 1860 (Florin 1965: 67). The BMS and ELM operated in more than one region as South Africa contained four regions given the socio-political boundaries since the Union of South Africa was founded in 1910.

Secondly, in 1912 the Lutheran history in South Africa marked the powerful establishment of the joined body named Co-operating Lutheran Missions (CLM) firstly founded by the Berlin, Norwegian and Church of Sweden Mission then in 1928 joined by the American Lutheran Mission, Hermannsburg Mission Society in 1938 and lastly joined by Hanoverian Free Church Mission in 1952 (Florin 1965: 67). This establishment of Lutheran missions brought together all resources to support the educational training such as pastors, evangelists, teachers and nurses, Lutheran High School and a Lutheran Publishing house which was based in Durban. In 1959, CLM was against the South African government on its racial discrimination as the result of government policy which destroyed the dignity of human resources. Lutherans statement was taken at Unity of the Southern Eastern Region Church that “Since all men have been created by God and equal before him in matters of salvation, we consider it a duty always to respect the dignity of man and we consider it a sin to discriminate against anybody on the basis of race and colour” (AALC 1961: 109). The apartheid government through its law on “Church Clause” (1957) took the resources of the Lutheran Church such as land of Church sites, mission farms and the removal of Lutheran schools to Bantu Education in 1959 (Florin 1965: 48). Although the CLM strived to become one body there were divisions within itself. There were those who supported Lutherans statement against racial discrimination and those who supported a government of the day on a separate development policy. CLM experienced the method of divide and rule which brought confusion whether the CLM could be a witness on its evangelistic mission only or that includes its political responsibility.
In 1963, in Durban at a Lutheran missionaries’ meeting the doctrine of the “Two kingdoms” had to be revived to ensure that the Lutheran Church became relevant to the South African situation (Florin 1965: 49). The Lutheran witness declared that Lutheran teaching was that God was responsible to the Church and to the State. Thus the Lutheran Church was called to be involved and committed in the socio-political environment to preach the justice of the Gospel in order to respond to the situation of the people of South Africa. The Lutheran Church on the other side promoted separate development in its white congregations which did not allow African Lutherans to worship with them. CLM did not only challenge the apartheid government, it also called for the white Lutherans to repent from their racial discrimination behaviour. The Lutheran doctrine of the “Two kingdoms” which was that the government was responsible to God and the Church was responsible to God and to critique itself and remind the government about its proper duties to protect and care for the South African citizens.

During the 1960s, Lutherans were still to be blamed because of the South African dilemma in the Christian socio-political conviction of an existential isolation in society. It also caused Lutherans who were isolated from one another. This resulted in Lutherans who enjoyed their racially segregated status and ethnically divided churches which caused more damage on separation in the country. This historic separation was supported by not only the local Africans and Europeans who supported their white counterparts who pushed separate development. September 1960, was the year of redefining the role of Lutheran witness which was organised by the All-Africa Lutheran Conference (AALC) to unify and be more decisive of what the Lutheran doctrine of “Two kingdoms” meant on the South African situation (Florin 1965: 85). This was a drive for what was called Southern Africa Christian Citizenship Academy which called Lutheran Christians and other Christian communities in South Africa to participate to ensure that the Christian could defend and support human dignity, that all South Africans could have access to equal benefits of the society such as health care, education, work opportunities and society protection. What could be offered as well of Christian
citizenship was participation to equality before the law that all people could be given same privileges and protection before the law. This participation was well known in that the Church could provide shared citizenship to the South African situation. It was not going to be possible for the Lutheran Church in South African to engage in this project of Christian citizenship without a collective move of all Lutherans and other Christian communities.

Thirdly, in 1953 the Council of Churches on Lutheran Foundation (CCLF) was founded as a non-legislative body to drive Southern Africa-wide Lutheran agenda and interests with the CLM and other regions had call in Durban in 1957 to prepare an assembly which finally happened in 1958, as the Constituent Assembly. This was to consolidate Lutheran missions to become regional churches. In 1957 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in South West Africa (ELCSWA) was the first region to be established by the so called “pioneer mission period (1829-1889),” which began its ministry as the Rhenish Mission Society (RMS) that work in Cape Province as well (Florin 1965: 67). The ELCSA-Tswana Region was established in 1959, now the Western Diocese; Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church-South West Africa (ELOKCSWA) in 1960 and ELCSA-South Eastern Region in 1960 became the South Eastern Diocese; ELCSA-Transvaal Region in 1961 became the Northern Diocese while ELCSA-Cape Orange Region in 1963 became the Cape Orange Diocese which were predominantly black. These regional churches became operational as ecclesiastical independence which was primarily established in South Africa. The periodical merger to form regional churches was mainly supported by the black people while the white people did not because of racial discrimination and tribal customs (Florin 1965: 71).

“Two vital conferences formalized the process of the formation of regional churches. A ‘Preparatory Assembly’ in November 1957 in Durban was called by the CLM. It laid the ground work for a ‘Constituent Assembly for the formation of the Regional Church and FELCSA’ in October 1958” (Winkler 1989: 14). FELCSA formation was to intensify the Lutheran churches in response to unit all race while the CCLF was formed based on the
Lutheran doctrine and confessional writings. FELCSA used the Lutheran doctrine as a critique to both the church and state (the Two kingdoms). It used its doctrine to fight against apartheid. The CCLF only proclaimed that everyone was saved by the grace of God; it did not critique the state to declare that racial discrimination was a heresy. However, CCLF further critiqued itself that it did not arrive at what actually the Lutheran doctrine of Two kingdoms was all about. In 1965, CCLF moved to convert itself to a legitimate body named a Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Southern Africa (FELCSA) aimed to a closer Lutheran unity to combat apartheid system and to desire for a greatest one Evangelical Lutheran Church (Florin 1965: 102). What was significant with FELCSA was that it was formed in 1966 at the last meeting of the CCLF attended by all Lutherans of South Africa and Namibia (Winkler 1989: 20). FELCSA was developed to ensure that all resources available to the Lutheran family be brought together to support FELCSA mission. The founded LWF in 1947 at Sweden become closer in working with FELCSA by being given a LWF-Regional Office in South Africa (Huebner 1978: 10). The LWF was the trustee on behalf of all Evangelical Lutheran churches. The LWF represented the overseas partners while FELCSA represented the South African churches.

When black regional churches where established, the white regional churches were also structured themselves. “In 1961, the ‘Evangelisch Lutherische Kirche in Südafrika’ (Transvaal) and ELKSA (Kapkirche) were formed, and two years later the Hermannsburg Kirche” (Winkler 1989: 18). These formed white regional churches came together to form the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (UELCSA) that was born in 1964 that included the German Lutheran Church in Namibia (DELKSWA), the German speaking congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa-Church Cape (ELCSA-CC) and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa-Natal Transvaal (ELCSA-NT). UELCSA did not become part of the FELCSA due to the fact that it supported apartheid to protect its white benefits from Europeans. It did not want to meet with other races in South Africa.
In April 1974 at Tlhabane, the first draft Constitution of the new church was discussed by a Joint Church Council Meeting. In this meeting the date of the Constituent Assembly was set for December 1975. At this Assembly at Tlhabane, the ELCSA constitution was “signed on the 18th December 1975 consisting of four dioceses namely: the Cape-Orange, the Northern, the South Eastern and the Western Dioceses. On the same year at the assembly an acid bomb was thrown into the hall which strengthened the resolve to unite” (ELCSA Handbook 1975: iii). The four merged regional churches were as follows: ELCSA-Tswana Region, South Eastern, Transvaal Region and Cape Orange Region which gave birth to the ELCSA on December 18th, 1975. Dr. Manas Buthelezi started his ministry as a pastor in the ELCSA-South Eastern Region and in 1976 was elected the first Bishop of the Central Diocese. As ELCSA General Secretary, he was involved in the formulation of the liturgy. In January 1976, delegates from ELCSA-South Eastern Region, ELCSA-Transvaal Region, and ELCSA-Tswana Region constituted themselves as the Merger Committee. Bishop P.G. Pakendorf was elected the chairman and Mr. S. Baloyi secretary. As Rev. P. M. Makhoela reported, “The Federation secretary was invited to attend meetings of the Committee with request to report about the proceedings to other FELCSA member churches. It was proposed that there should be four dioceses: one in the South Eastern Region with mainly Zulu as language; one in the West with Tswana as language; in the North with mainly Northern Sotho language and Venda as language and one in the industrial area of the Reef and Pretoria with many languages” (Interview with Makhoela 2007). In November 1973, the Cape-Orange Church joined these other churches. This decision was taken at its Synod in 1972. These dioceses consisted of circuits, while circuits contained parishes. In 1976, the fifth diocese known as Rand Diocese, later called Central Diocese, was formed. The first bishop was Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi. Each and every diocese was led by a bishop while a Presiding Bishop was the head of ELCSA-church wide. Other two dioceses named the Eastern Diocese and the Botswana Diocese were born later.

The ELCSA church was also called to train its clergy to sustain the church as the body of Christ. Buthelezi was one of the students trained in the Lutheran seminaries in his case at Oscarsberg in Rocks Drieft. ELCSA trained and educated its clergy at the
Lutheran Theological Seminary (LTS) which originated there and was founded in 1912 with nine students and its principal, the missionary J. A. Hellden from the Church of Sweden Mission (CSM). Another institution was at Bethel under the administration of the Hermannsburg mission for Tswana-speaking evangelists in the Western Transvaal. When the regional churches were formed Bethel was moved to Marang near Rustenburg in 1958 with the help of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). The pastors in Marang were trained until 1992 when the decision was made that all theological students must be trained in one institution. The seminary was referred to continue at the Umphumulo campus in Kwa-Zulu Natal until the financial situation of the church made it possible to extend the buildings at Marang. Some ELCSA theological students completed their postgraduate degrees at the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of Natal, now the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. Others undertook their post graduate training at different institutions such as the University of South Africa (UNISA) and the University of Pretoria. In 2002, the Umphumulo campus was closed; from 2003 ELCSA students were studying at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal Pietermaritzburg campus, residing at the Lutheran Theological Institute (LTI), which was previously called the Lutheran House of Studies (Luthos) where lectures were also taking place.

ELCSA remained a Lutheran family, emphasizing the common priesthood of all believers. Martin Luther, an influential reformer of the church, declared, “For whoever comes out of the water of baptism can boast that she or he is already a consecrated priest, bishop, and pope. Because we are all priests of equal standing, no one must push himself forward and take it upon himself, without our consent and election, to do that for which we all have equal authority” (Luther 1966: 129). As the Bible puts it, “You are a chosen people. You are royal priest, a holy nation, God’s very own possession” (I Peter 2: 9, NLT). This was well known as the common Priesthood of all Believers; from it, the ministry of the ‘laity’ and that of the ordained were regarded as complementary. These two ministries were equal and inseparable as they existed for mutual supportive in achieving the purposes of the Spirit. The ELCSA still held to Luther’s view of ecclesia visibile and ecclesia invisibile. Luther’s view of the ecclesia visibile was the “outward institution with its offices, regulations, organizational arrangements, buildings and so on”
This external formation was the assembly of baptised saints where the gospel was taught in its purity and the only two sacraments, of Holy Communion and Holy Baptism, were administered in obedience to the gospel. Luther also viewed the *ecclesia invisibile* as “composed of all those who have been reached by the Word of God and have responded in faith, wherever they may be” (Nürnberger 2005: 132). Hugo Söderström added that the church was the congregation of those “who are now alive and those who have entered the eternal kingdom” (Söderström 1977: 171). The whole community empowered and charged the ordained to facilitate the church’s duties on behalf of others guided by the gospel. All members of the church could be expressed as its priesthood. The Spirit had endowed every member or disciple with diverse gifts and necessary purpose to equally serve each other, their neighbours and in the interests of all (I Corinthians 3: 9-14; 12: 14-27, Ephesians 2: 19-22; 4: 11-16 and Philippians 2: 1-4). The common priesthood of all baptised believers concerned spiritual and social justice service, carried out equally to preach good news to the poor, share the sacraments, release the captives, minister recovery of the sight to the blind and liberation to the repressed (Luke 4: 18). According to this analysis, this was the purpose of ELCSA, led by the Spirit.

In 1975, FELCSA has challenged the South African situation to be transformed. “We affirm that the political system in force in South Africa, with of its discrimination against some sectors of the population, its acceptance of the break-up of many families, its concentration of power in the hands of one race only, and the limitations it imposes on freedom, cannot be reconciled with the gospel of the grace of God in Jesus Christ” (Winkler 1989: 33). This FELCSA appeal was a very prophetic Lutheran theology as part of advocating for its Lutheran Two kingdoms to ensure that justice in South African took place to protect the South African citizens. FELCSA was becoming a more Lutheran witness as it took the political responsibility of the churches. On the other hand when German speaking churches refused to join FELCSA as the vehicle for united Lutheran churches ELCSA left the federation in 1984. ELCSA became the member of the SACC and very influential in a collective decisions that were against the apartheid
ELCSA being a member it influenced the Lutheran Churches in Germany, Scandinavia and the LWF to fund the SACC through the initiated efforts of three SACC presidential Lutherans of Rev. August W. Habelgaarn from Moravian, Bishop Pakendorf and Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi.

In 1975, the Bishops of the ELCSA Transvaal Regional Church, Tswana Region and of the South Eastern Region collectively decided to initiate a merger of one ELCSA Church that invited the Cape Orange Region and other members of the Federation. “ELCSA, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa, was meant to be the one church for all Lutherans, able to develop a unified, prophetic witness. As it has turned out, it has become the ‘black church’ (though it is not exclusively black)” (Winkler 1989: 39). This was to critically deal with the roots of the South African politics to be transformed in liberating the people. ELCSA wanted to intensify its rejection of the policy of apartheid in South Africa. Only these regional churches managed to form ELCSA while some German speaking churches remained UELCSA although each regional church retained its independence. The political position about UELCSA was that it continued to support apartheid and this became a serious disunity in order for the Lutheran church and the Christian community to dismantle the apartheid system. UELCSA’s operational separated congregations were meant to support the apartheid policy. UELCSA was a member of the LWF which was asked by the LWF in 1977 to declare apartheid a sin in order for Lutherans to have the same stand in response against apartheid. UELCSA was suspended at the meeting of LWF in 1984 at the Budapest as a result of still supporting apartheid. LWF Executive Committee pastoral delegation David W. Preus, Karsten Nissen and Margaretha Ringström, director of Swedish Church Aid met with Lutheran Churches in South Africa on March 3-10, 1989 (Lema and Noko 1991: 34). In the discussions with church members from ELCSA, ELCSA-CC, ELCSA-NT and the pastoral delegation intense decisions were taken that UELCSA must repent against supporting the apartheid and it had to commit itself to form a union with the ELCSA to accomplish the goal of total eradication of apartheid. The LWF suspension of the UELCSA was lifted as an effort to unite the Evangelical
Lutheran churches in Southern Africa. ELCSA-CC began to engage with ELCSA and ELCSA-NT in unity talks which allowed both black and white pastors to participate in pastoral retreats, the date of united Lutheran Church would be founded and the political changes in the country.

In 1986, delegations of the ELCSA Northern Diocese led by Bishop S. E. Serote requested a meeting with the ANC in Lusaka, in the Republic of Zambia at the invitation of the Christian Council of Zambia (CCZ). The discussions took place against the South Africa conflict done by the apartheid system to a resolved united creation, nonracial discrimination and democratic South Africa. The ELCSA Northern Diocese highlighted its achieved peace and justice solidarity to actively eradicate the ills of South Africa.

The Norwegian Mission Society (NMS) was one of the missions which struggled against apartheid system. “There is a long history about The Norwegian Missionary Society which started its work in 1844 in the Zulu kingdom, and was active in South Africa to 1997. Norwegian missionaries were active in establishing ELCSA in 1975. The Lutheran churches’ attitudes towards apartheid are tangled and difficult. Traditionally, Lutherans have been reluctant in involving the Church in politics, holding this should be left in the hands of the secular authorities” (Agøy 2004, 1). In 1973, the Church of Norway decided to partner with the Christian Institute of Southern Africa which supported it to combat apartheid system. In 1978, the Church of Norway had more importantly partnered and financially supported the SACC, Black Consciousness Movement (BMC), and the Black Parents Associations (BPA) in Soweto, led by Manas Buthelezi to run their program against apartheid. During the period of the 1980 ELCSA church-wide issued declarations regarding the dismantling of the apartheid system and its government. Amongst controversial decisions made by ELCSA was that its members could not serve in the government structures and at the same time in the church. This position was taken to convey to the government the clear picture that apartheid was strongly disapproved of. Pastors and church members within the church became more
involved and committed in fighting against the grounds and consequences of conflict and violence in the country. ELCSA church-wide was dominated by the oppressed society of black Lutherans, although amongst them there were a few whites such as Rev. Dr. Wolfram Kistner who also served the SACC and Rev. Frank Müller who decided to work among the black communities. All ELCSA church-wide stands against apartheid took place at its General Assemblies.

5. Review of literature

Buthelezi said, "Black Theology is nothing but a methodological formula whose genius consists in paying tribute to the fact that theological honesty cannot but recognize the peculiarity of the black man’s (sic) situation" (Buthelezi, 1973a: 34). Itumeleng J. Mosala and Buti Tlhagale agree with him arguing, “Black Theology was adopted as an approach to theological reflection by the blacks in South Africa” (Mosala and Tlhagale, 1986: xi). Stanely Ntwasa and Basil Moore are in solidarity with these authors, contending that “Black Theology is as irrelevant as any other theology if it is not about human liberation, and thus about black liberation” (Ntwasa and Moore, 1973: 26). Black Theology was not supposed to be concerned only about the liberation of black people but also with the liberation of white people. The authors’ view on Black Theology stemmed from the historical struggle by black people against colonialism and capitalism. They did not elaborate how Black Theology would benefit white people. I therefore intend to show how Black Theology would have helped the white elites to be liberated by making available their resources towards the empowerment of black people. The other aspect, which I considered was whether Black Theology was focusing on the liberation of all black people, or that of particular kinds of black people.

In his book published in 1977 titled Farewell to Innocence, Boesak states that “Black Theology is the theological reflection of black Christians on the situation in which they live and on their struggle for liberation. Blacks ask: What does it mean to believe in

1 Documents which I used when there were written the issue of gender equality was not taken serious that is why you could see that I use the word (sic) and even the gender of God. They could have been gender sensitive. I am not in favour what the authors had written on their documents.
Jesus Christ when one is black and living in a world controlled by white racists?” (Boesak, 1977: 1-2). Mokgethi Motlhabi added, “Black Theology wanted to serve as a challenge to the conscience of the church for the benefit of genuine Christian love and its implication in the struggle for justice. Black Theology, therefore, rejects most of white theology’s interpretation of the gospel and saw it as a mostly self-serving” (Motlhabi, 1986: 47). Although Motlhabi and Boesak seem to agree that Black Theology rejects White Theology, which reveals that both theologies responded to each other on the basis of race, one may ask: where is the common ground of finding a theology that embraces each other? It is quite clear that both theologies were advocating for the issue of protecting each race instead of bringing about unity for the benefit of both black and white equally. Buthelezi seems to agree with Motlhabi and Boesak in defining the image of the black people as, “To be a person means to have power to be truly a person, it means power for liberation to be a person” (Buthelezi, 1978b: 68). Buthelezi created the image that every person remained a true person on the foundation of being a person, not on the basis of race. These other theologians defined black and white theologies within the context of race and not of the person. I have investigated the gap, which was left in bringing both theologies into a unified theology for the liberation of both blacks and whites.

The book by Deane titled Black South Africans: Who’s Who 57 Profile of Natal’s Leading Blacks and that by Ferm titled Profiles in Liberation: 36 Portraits of Third World Theologians describe the work and biography of Buthelezi. The authors did not go into details about the work and impact left by Buthelezi in his appointment to the Christian Institute, Black Parents Association, ELCSA and the Evangelical Lutheran Church generally, the Lutheran World Federation, World Council of Churches and South African Council of Churches. I have filled in those details that were omitted by these authors.

6. Chapter Highlights
The study consists of five chapters that highlight the contribution and commitment of Dr. Manas Buthelezi to the South African context. The first four chapters discuss how
Buthelezi used theology in approach to the Bible and how people were exposed to dehumanization and oppression in the South African context.

Chapter one furnishes a background to who Buthelezi is. It looks at his life and how he ended up in the field of theological discourse, using this for the liberation of South Africa. Chapter two helps one to understand the scholarly work of Buthelezi in response to the context where he found himself in South Africa. It intends to bring to light the scholarly debates which were conducted in response to the thorny issues which South Africa faced amongst its white and black people. Chapter three highlights the key events that Buthelezi participated in, as an activist against the social agonies of South Africa. Amongst these were that of the banning of political leaders and organisations, the Soweto uprising and organisations that emerged to fill the vacuum of the banned organisations. Chapter four brings readers closer to what Buthelezi did as a church leader. It helps us to review how Buthelezi led and administered the affairs of the church and consider the successes and challenges of the church he served.

The concluding chapter five, helps one to understand the different dimensions in terms of which we can learn from an academic, activist and leader such as Buthelezi. It provides insights, offering a number of practical recommendations on how we can find ways towards South African solutions to the true democracy that is currently vulnerable.
CHAPTER 1

Biography of Manas Buthelezi

1. Introduction
Manas Buthelezi has been proactively an active citizen against the apartheid system, a researcher and academic, a public activist and servant, and is now a retired bishop who is frequently invited by various institutions to lead seminars and present papers. This chapter will cover the following: the life of Manas Buthelezi, his contribution in the history of Christianity, his involvement in political affairs, and with the Lutherans, and Buthelezi’s service in the South African Council of Churches (SACC).

1.1. The Life of Manas Buthelezi
Manas Buthelezi was born in South Africa in the province of Kwa-Zulu Natal, at Mahlabathini KwaCeza on February 8, 1935. His father, Abosalom Buthelezi, was a Swedish Mission evangelist. Manas Buthelezi was a descendent of Mkhandumba kaMnyamana, kaNgqengelele, ka Mvulana Buthelezi. He grew up and was schooled at Mahlabathini. Manas Buthelezi proceeded to higher education at the Mariannhill Roman Catholic Institution, where he matriculated (Interview with Rev. Bongani Zulu 2004). After this he undertook his teachers’ training at St. Francis Training College, completing it in 1957. At the same time, he had attained about five credits from the University of South Africa (UNISA), which was a requirement for the Teachers’ Certificate at that time. For a year Buthelezi taught at Ceza Secondary School, after which he was involved in church work as a youth organiser and a Sunday school teacher. As a teacher, Buthelezi taught Physiology, English and Agricultural Sciences as subjects.

Buthelezi later resigned from teaching, as he felt the conviction to join the ministry of the ordained.

“In 1958, he did his theological training both at Eshiyane (Oscarsberg) and Umphumulo Theological College, which was then a teachers training college. He concluded his studies with a Diploma in Theology and a BA in Theology, which he had been
studying simultaneously through University of South Africa (UNISA) from 1957 to 1960. Buthelezi was a bright and gifted student and wrote exceptionally good English. His contemporaries at the seminary were S. P. Zulu (of the Zulu royal house of Nkabana ka Sthayi Zulu of eGazini collateral royal house), A. J. Fortuin now retired Bishops, Rev. Shabangu and others" (Interview with Rev. Bongani Zulu 2004).

In his theological training he studied Systematic Theology and Systematic Philosophy through UNISA by correspondence, without having a face to face teacher. His first appointment was Applesbosch Parish for a period of two months. After that the Evangelical Lutheran Church transferred him to Lamontville Parish in Durban where he was ordained as a Lutheran pastor in November 1961. “On January 6, 1963, he married Grace Mhlungu who was a teacher. They were blessed with two sons and two daughters” (Buthelezi 1978a: 34).

Thereafter, “Buthelezi was awarded a scholarship to study in the United States in 1963 and he left South Africa in the same year to further his theological studies at the Yale University, in the School of Divinity, New Haven and his doctorate with Drew University. He returned to South Africa in 1968; obtained his doctoral degree at the age of 32” (Interview with Rev. Bongani Zulu 2004). Upon his return, he worked as a minister in the Ekuthuleni Evangelical Lutheran Church from 1968 to 1969. From 1969 to 1970, Buthelezi was a lecturer at Umphumulo Theological Seminary. A letter dated August 14, 1968 which was written by Rector A. I. Berglund to recommend Buthelezi stated, ‘The Faculty recommends that the College and Governing Boards call Dr. Manas Buthelezi as of January 1969’ (Umphumulo Theological College’s Letter August 14, 1968). Among other subjects, which he taught was Biblical Hermeneutics. Buthelezi was one of the theologians who introduced Black Theology in South Africa. “He could rightly be called the father and founder of South African Black Theology in the 1970s. He later left Umphumulo Theological Seminary for the parish ministry” (Interview with Rev. Bongani Zulu 2004). His letter dated February 23rd, 1970 to Bishop H. Fosseus of the Evangelical

Buthelezi left South Africa in 1972 for Germany as a visiting professor where he delivered a series of lectures in Black Theology at the University of Heidelberg. His supportive colleagues were Professors Heinz Toedt and Ulrich Duchrow.

“In 1969-71, Buthelezi served the South African Lutheran Church Committee on Church Structure as chairperson” (Buthelezi 1978a: 34). He worked in the Justice and Reconciliation committee of the South African Council of Churches (SACC) in 1972. Buthelezi was also a gifted teacher who taught theology in Germany, the United States and as a visiting lecturer in quite a few European countries, including “Switzerland (1963), Japan (1970), Kenya (1975), and Rhodesia (1976)” (Buthelezi 1978a: 34).

On March 5th, 2000 at the St. Ansgar’s Central West Jabavu at the Central Diocesan Centre, the Central Diocese celebrated a farewell service in honour of Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi and his family (Buthelezi 2000: 1). This was the ELCSA Church tradition that celebrated the retirement of its bishops, Deans and Pastors. This was a concrete appreciation of demonstrating God’s love to the workers of the Church by the congregants as they brought gifts of thanking them. Buthelezi was thanked for his contribution to the Central Diocese, ELCSA Church as a whole and his ecumenical commitment to the Church of God. This included his political participation during his service to the Church. During his farewell, his sermon was on Salvation: The Divine Solution that Lies Beyond the Expectations of Our Cries (Buthelezi 2000: 1). At his delivered sermon, Buthelezi regarded the spiritual resources as the way for the practical salvation, which overcame political oppression which banned political organisations and had harsh laws. The sermon represented the mature position of Buthelezi in that people
around 1990s when they said “Now we have it. Now there should be no general election anymore because we have found the perfect government there has brought final political salvation” Buthelezi critiqued that statement when he said “We continually search for the right government. Democratic elections can therefore be defined as periodic searches for national salvation which lies beyond human, honest efforts” (Buthelezi 2000: 3). This revealed that the South Africans would discover more political, socio-economic and sociological liberated solutions that formed part of South African liberation. This periodic search for national salvation could be found in the cross of Jesus Christ who was crucified so that a person could not claim based on her or his works. This called for a government that abided a secretive way identical with the cross of Jesus Christ. When Church remained critical of the periodic searches for national salvation meant that it legitimated itself through the gracious command of God in good governance through the Gospel. The government that South Africans needed was to upgrade the common good for political, economic and sociological context.

It was in this context that Buthelezi did not only retire, as he continued to seek the periodic search of national salvation in the Church as well. In 2008, Buthelezi was appointed for the period of January-December 2008 by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zambia (ELCZA) to research on its past, present and future under the theme leading the ELCZA towards a realistic and sustainable direction (Buthelezi 2008: 1). This search was to diagnose the challenges and successes of ELCZA to provide an accurate status of it. The purpose of this project was an analysed search evidence for consistence towards a sustainable ELCZA. This was to furnish more development of ELCZA which was a small Church. The discovered search amongst this project was that a theological education remained a serious challenge to a lot of pastors who were trained from Bible schools. This questioned the life of the Church for its presence and future that further academic theological education was needed to train those pastors for the sake of a sound theology. This was to ensure that once its pastors were trained well indeed they would be able to defend their Church against anti-Christian practices. In September 15\textsuperscript{th}, 2008 at the Church Council meeting
on Mass Media, Lusaka, Zambia; Buthelezi presented a report with the following proposal to the council:

“The present ELCZA as a Mission Church: This implies searching for a Lutheran missionary group or society which would be willing to walk and work in partnership with ELCZA, at all levels including the sharing of human and financial resources according to guidelines that can be agreed upon mutually. That ELCZA be transformed into a diocese or structural part of a neighbouring church which shall be willing to absorb into itself the existing inadequacies of ELCZA. That ELCZA considers negotiating a merger with one or more existing Lutheran Churches in Zambia” (Buthelezi 2008: 7).

This was an imperative action to be taken by ELCZA not to die as the small Church but to advance in the direction of its future in working relations with other Lutheran Churches in Zambia. It was an opportunity for it to grow and transform by networking with other Lutheran churches around. The ELCZA network would be a transformation in dialog with each other as part of the Lutheran churches to reflect and decide together for a better change and own reflections to seek ways to the liberated and common future.

1.2. Buthelezi in the history of Christianity

Upon his return to South Africa, Buthelezi continued to serve as a parish pastor. Together with Frederick Beyers Naudé of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) he published the progressive Ecumenical Bulletin which was called Pro-Veritate (for the truth) focusing on Black Theology. This bulletin was critical of the government policies at the time and exposed many un-Christian doings of the white minority regime.

“He was a Natal regional director of the CI in Pietermaritzburg from 1972-1975. In a way Buthelezi and others were prophets and advocates of thousands of voiceless South Africans. Their
interrogative critical exposure of the inhuman practices brought them to a collision with the regime in South Africa. Buthelezi and other young and ‘hot-blooded’ theologians were singing the slogan of: ‘Missionary go home and leave the black man; he is matured to do his own things.’ At that time there was a strong focus on the independent three selves: self-sufficient, self-governing and self-propagating” (Interview with Rev. Bongani Zulu 2004).

In 1972, a symposium was organised by the South African Council of Churches (SACC), in which a series of papers were delivered out of which a book was produced titled *Black Theology in South Africa*. Buthelezi was one of the cardinal contributors to that book, together with Barney Pityana, Mpumulwana and others. In 1974-75, Buthelezi was General Secretary of the Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Southern Africa (FELCSA), later being elected the first General Secretary of ELCSA in 1976 after its formation in 1975. On September 24-25, 1976, the first Synodical meeting of a new diocese was held at Eersterus in Pretoria, where Buthelezi was elected as the Bishop of that diocese. The Synod decided to call the new diocese the Central Diocese. Buthelezi was its first bishop and was consecrated by the then Presiding Bishop Paulus Ben Mhlungu of ELCSA in the Anglican St. Mary’s Cathedral in Johannesburg on December 12th, 1976.

“His election as first bishop of ELCSA-Central Diocese in 1977 at the age of 42 was a milestone in the history of the Lutheran Church. His service stretched over 20 years as a bishop. It was in this capacity as a bishop and a black theologian that many black political organisations, labour unions and other organisations found not only refuge in the Diocesan Centre but also used it as a platform to run workshops. They formulated and articulated their political programmes, visions and ideologies. This continued until 1994. It was in 1994 that Buthelezi and other theologians felt that they have done their job in filling the vacuum as spiritual leaders in
Buthelezi engaged against the apartheid era with an attitude to South African liberation when he was the first ELCSA General Secretary and bishop of the Central Diocese. Together with his Diocesan Council created time and space for political organisations, labour unions and other organisations to use the Diocesan centre which was based in Soweto to reflect on liberation struggle. This was to mobilize the Church resources to assist these unions and organisations, which fought against the apartheid. The Central Diocese did this to provide its Evangelical Lutheran doctrine of what was called “Two Kingdoms.” It was against the government of the day with its apartheid system and supposed organisations that fought against the oppression and injustices of the people of South Africa. This was a place to strengthen and a provided growth of the birth of Black Consciousness and Black Theology ideologies which were very critical of the apartheid era. This remained an imperative time for the Church to engage the government’s downfall through prayers and its critical voice during the 1976 throughout 1989 and beyond through a united Church lead by SACC. It was in this context that Buthelezi was accused and misunderstood of promoting violence in the country, not only him but also other theologians among them “P. W. Botha has repeatedly stated that Desmond Tutu, Allen Boesak, Frank Chikane and other Christians who resist the tyranny of the state are not representative of their churches and there is indeed a yawning gap between them and what the churches have hitherto been” (ECUNEWS 1988: 19). Yet Buthelezi, Tutu, Boesak, Chikane and other Christians never promoted violence within the country. They were only acting in opposition to the apartheid system. They engaged the government to show that God was on the side of the poor and the oppressed. For them the Gospel was the truth used to reject apartheid theology. The Gospel remained a legitimate authority to protect and liberate the poor and the oppressed, while apartheid theology remained illegitimate. This presented an
awakening social conscience for the poor and the oppressed, to be advocates and liberators of themselves. Buthelezi, with other liberation theologians had consistently argued that apartheid theology was not the mind of Jesus Christ and did not conform to scriptural teachings.

Amongst other memorable events was the 1956 women's campaign in protest against the pass laws, for instance their march to the Union Buildings in Pretoria (Nolan 1988b: 148). This was influenced by the formation of the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) in 1954 and its adoption of the Women’s Charter on April 17, 1954. These women in South Africa, as well suffered under the apartheid system. The campaigns were the struggle for them to be recognised as women of dignity and self-awareness to acquire training and education in order for them to participate in church and community. The SACC on the other side had to assist women within the church to establish themselves. “The Women’s Ministries established at the beginning of February 1987, struggle throughout the year (1987) to establish itself nationally” (Xingwana 1988: 126). The establishment of this ministry was to organise women and to train them on matters of leadership, church and community participation through education. This was an opportunity for women to have an ecumenical dialogue, which rooted out discrimination of gender, race and social inequalities. The women’s agenda was to share equality with men in order to reach a climate of mutual respect and understanding on matters of education, politics, economic and social factors. Equally so men would be challenged as well to partner with women with concrete action for women’s emancipation. This was an opportunity of a change of attitudes to allow women to be generously free to create an adequate liberated environment to the grassroots of South Africa. In 1987 the WCC initiated and supported women “to launch an Ecumenical Decade from 1988-1998. The theme is Church in Solidarity with Women” (Xingwana 1988: 126). This initiative revealed the trueness that women alone cannot be liberated unless they were supported by all forms of institutions around them. This global move created a unity in solidarity with women to share and fellowship with them in the life of women’s empowerment and liberation. The historical movement about the church was that a common understanding through the Word of God that provided a practical solidarity with
women. This church solidarity with women was discovered by the grace of God in Jesus Christ where the church was bearing the suffering and pain of women as an instrument of justice to the world.

A vacuum as regards political leaders originated after the Sharpeville massacre on March 21, 1960, which marked a move against apartheid repression throughout South Africa. An organised Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) gathered a crowd of black people at the Sharpeville police station around Vereeniging as they persisted on demanding their rights with a protest and anti-passbook campaign.

“Police opened fire on 3 000 to 10 000 people, who were participating in a peaceful protest led by the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC). The protest was targeted at the abolition of pass laws, and was specifically aimed at opposing white domination and emancipating blacks in South Africa. Since the apartheid government tolerated no opposition to their policies” (Hofmeyr and Pillay 1994: 273).

This derived from the focus of the liberation campaign. Forty women and eight children within a peaceful protest died or were wounded. “The South African Police shot to death 69 Africans and wounded 187. It marked a turning point in the struggle by the Black South Africans against the apartheid system. The massacre also increased tensions between the English speaking churches and the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC)” (Mutambirwa 1991: 7). When the government at the time murdered people it would invariably use tactic of blaming the blacks, who were regarded as having initiated the violence which took place at the massacre. It protected the police instead of the rights of those who needed liberation. The passbooks were a method to reinforce the racial apartheid system. The campaign made its mark by defeating the pass laws, the international voice criticised the violent actions of the police. This Sharpeville development was the moment for black identity to claim its space and full dignity and rights that could be entwined with the words of Allan Boesak:
Black consciousness may be described as the awareness of black people that their humanity is constituted by their blackness. It means that black people are no longer ashamed that they are black, that they have a black history and a black culture distinct from the history and culture of white people. It means that blacks are determined to be judged no longer by, and to adhere no longer to white values. It is an attitude, a way of life. Viewed thus, Black Consciousness is an integral part of Black Power. But Black Power is also a clear critique of and a force for fundamental change in systems and patterns in society which oppress or which give rise to oppression of black people (Boesak 1977: 1).

In April 1960, the PAC and African National Congress (ANC) were banned, together with the taking into custody of political leaders such as PAC leader Robert Sobukwe, Nelson Mandela and their counterparts. In addition, “many whites who felt threatened and insecure about their safety in the country went abroad, taking with them substantial amounts of money” (Hofmeyr and Pillay 1994: 273). Liberation movement such as the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) in the 1970s emerged from the 1960s events, as did its counterpart Black Theology. The BCM was anti the apartheid system and all repressive policies of the government, as were the South African Students Organisation (SASO) and other South African movements. The voice of the church and individual church members also advocated resisting apartheid. The Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town Joost de Blank had to task the World Council of Churches (WCC) to expel the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) because it supported apartheid after the Sharpeville event. “The WCC called its member churches in South Africa to a consultation at Cottesloe in December 1960. The consultation was memorable in many ways. Its aftermath was that it worsened the relationship between the English speaking churches and the DRC, which was forced by the government to leave the WCC” (Mutambirwa 1991: 7).
This caused WCC to be viewed as an enemy of the DRC and the government. It was in this context that the WCC had to stand firm on the notion of humanitarian liberation where “in 1970, WCC made humanitarian grants to Southern African liberation movements including the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC)” (Mutambirwa 1991: 7). When this funding was provided, the English speaking churches together with the DRC accused the WCC of supporting terrorism. The WCC was not doing so but took a stand against apartheid. Frank Chikane, General Secretary of SACC, criticised the DRC and English speaking churches when he expressed these words, “That is the same set of people who are now engaged in these protest actions. For them it is politics when we take a stand against the apartheid system and it is not politics when they support the system” (ECUNews 1988: 19). The voice of the SACC was clear; apartheid was a sinful system that was not accepted because it paralysed the majority of people in South Africa. This included a strong common critique by African scholars of the missionaries, “When the white man came to our country he had the Bible and we (Blacks) had the land. The white man said to us ‘let us pray.’ After the prayer, the white man had the land and we had the Bible” (West 2002: 23). However they also congratulated the missionaries on the well done job of managing the building and administration of schools and hospitals. These African scholars were also the products of these mission schools which included the liberation movements’ leaders.

1.3. His involvement in socio-political affairs

“Buthelezi’s transfer from Natal to Transvaal meant that he was placed at a centre of the political whirlwind i.e. centre of political events. This young gifted and able theologian did his best to advocate and harness the Black Consciousness Movement. He made tremendous contribution towards South African Students Organization and the Black Consciousness Movement by giving speeches. Steve Biko was his contemporary, and his approach was from a political-philosophical perspective. Buthelezi on the other hand interpreted it in the theological language, which was known as
the Black Theology of Liberation. Directly or indirectly the June 16 up-rasings were a product of this philosophy. Buthelezi never had peace; he was constantly harassed by the security police” (Interview with Rev. Bongani Zulu 2004).

This was an era of activists such as Buthelezi who was tested and learnt how to respond to the challenges of the June 16. It was an essential era of students who were fighting against an imposed Afrikaans language to the educational system. What the government had introduced forcefully was a crime to the South African students in particular, as well as the South African community. Students acted to the government to stop the crime imposed to them, which was Afrikaans language. The effects of the Soweto uprising on June 16 have been described as follows “1976 was the beginning of one of the most remarkable features of the struggle against the apartheid system: the rebellion of school children and their use of the school boycott. This required a considerable amount of organisation. The first national organisation of school students was COSAS” (Nolan 1988b: 147). The government blamed Buthelezi for stimulating the students to revolt against it. The actual revolt was intended to be a peaceful march, a protest against the educational crisis (Bantu Education) particularly Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in the schools. The Afrikaans imposed by the regime was regarded as negative manipulation by the students of the 1970s. They needed to create a new and redefined South African education system that drew on the principles of authentic liberation. Before the chaos of June 16, students voiced their concern to the contemporary regime. Their last resolution was to lead to a protest which also lasted for a period of 10 years that ended in 1986. This protest was periodically actioned by means of stone throwing, school boycotts and burning buildings. The aftermath of this prompted students to end their boycotts, returning to school at the beginning of 1987, forming a new students’ organisation. Teachers and parents also participated to ensure a progressive process towards quality education. The protest was intended to promote the human dignity and rights of black students for the need of English as a medium of education, to do away with corporal punishment and to obtain an equal educational system with whites. Students creatively responded to the contemporary gloomy news
of a speech made in 1954 by Hendrik Verwoerd, at that time prime minister of South Africa:

It is the policy of my department that [black] education should have its roots entirely in the Native [black] areas and in the Native environment and Native community. There Bantu education must be able to give itself complete expression and there it will have to perform its real service. The Bantu must be guided to serve his own community in all respects. There is no place for him in the European [white] community above the level of certain forms of labour. Within his own community, however, all doors are open. For that reason it is of no avail for him to receive training which has as its aim absorption in the European community while he cannot and will not be absorbed there. Up till now he has been subjected to a school system which drew him away from his own community and partially misled him by showing him the green pastures of the European but still did not allow him to graze there (Welsh 2009: 64-65).

Verwoerd’s philosophical mission denied, and hindered the black people from promoting, their socio-economic, political and social development, they became an underclass. This was designed to exploit the blacks in their own country, and effectively to reap benefits of their land ownership. The black students needed an education system that would liberate themselves and their citizens by gaining expertise and creatively using resources such as agriculture and minerals in South Africa. As the boycotts continued, they led to the July 1985 banning of COSAS while the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) continued to prepare for the reformation of the education system.

On June 21st, 1976 Buthelezi and others established the Black Parents’ Association (BPA) with the objective of establishing the whereabouts of the students who went missing during the upheavals of 1976. Buthelezi as the chairperson of BPA and his
counterparts such as Winnie Mandela, Nthato Harrison Motlana and others worked for the BPA in response to the Soweto uprising in order to dismantle apartheid and to assist the students who were victims of apartheid. In August 1976 it passed resolutions such as the immediate release of all detained students and an end to the Bantu Education system, Buthelezi attended a BPA meeting where he encouraged students to go back to school. BPA and Christian Institute of Southern Africa (CI) were among organisations allied to the BCM, also understood to be an agent for the dismantling of Apartheid. On October 19, 1977 the BPA was one of the organisations banned by the government. After the banning of BPA and some of its members, Buthelezi said:

I was later asked by the community to pursue the matter of meeting the government because there was a deadlock in education. After a number of attempts I was able to arrange a meeting with the deputy Minister of Police in the name of a differently constituted delegation. We discussed the matter of detained student leaders and the matter of the general behavior of the Police. We also met the Deputy Minister of Bantu Education Mr. De Beer with whom we discussed education matters including what sparked off the 1976 Students uprising. This initial opening of communication lines between the government and the Soweto community led to the creation of the Soweto education crisis committee (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007).

This body subsequently continued discussions with the Education Department in its own name without Buthelezi’s further direct involvement. Mr. Isaac Mogase was one of the leading figures in this Committee. A further development of the initial opening of communication lines with the government was the evolution of self-help efforts and self-management structures in the form of the creation of the Committee of Ten under the leadership of Buthelezi’s colleague, Dr. Nthato Motlana. The Committee of Ten further gave rise to the national phenomenon of what was called civic associations. According to Buthelezi, Black Theology was not to end in words but would be seen in action, meeting the needs of those who struggled for liberation, “Nobody can deny that in our
country we have many of these ‘least important,’ Among them there may be our imprisoned neighbours, banned relatives and politically detained acquaintances” (Buthelezi 1976: 6). For Buthelezi it was vital to challenge the apartheid government, everyone who was not banned and detained needed to be part of the movement that proclaimed the release of those who were. This was an engagement of the ministry of presence because the gospel was proactive in reality, to create a true new liberated society.

The involvement and commitment of Buthelezi in socio-political affairs was an invitation for solidarity in the struggle against apartheid. “Within this context, the stakes in the ideology struggle were raised. In 1977 the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), through the influence of Dr. Manas Buthelezi, one of the leading South African promoters of Black Theology, proclaimed a *status confessionis*. In 1980, delegates to a SACC consultation on racism spoke of the need to establish a black Confessing Church, and out of this the Alliance of Black Reformed Christians (ABRECSA) emerged, drawing together the two stands on Black Theology and the Confessing Church” (de Gruchy 2006: 398). The stand of the confession was to declare ‘apartheid sin and its theological justification a heresy’. This was likewise intended to dismantle the structures of apartheid. Buthelezi refused to accept the South African system that imposed inequality on the structures of society. For him the gospel of liberation of the oppressed and the marginalised black South Africans created an actual theological liberation which opposed the sinful apartheid structures. Human rights and dignity comprised an effective confession to ensure that everyone in the country had the right to equal access to privileges such as equal treatment, status and dignity. In this regard Buthelezi critically motivated the blacks to be their own liberators: He needs to see his own blackness as a gift from God instead of the biological scourge which the white man’s institutions have made it. Then the white man will be liberated from the urge to reject the black man because his rejection will be irrelevant and inconsequential (Buthelezi 1973d: 56).
He also challenged the whites to be liberated from their actions too. They were to make their resources and wealth equally available to the black community. This would be a gospel that was ready to bury the theology of separate development or apartheid, which would have been saved and resurrected by the theology of equality.

1.4. Lutherans and Buthelezi’s service in the SACC

On the question of Black Theology Buthelezi challenged the church also to play a critical role in the liberation of black people,

“As a black Christian, I feel obliged to thank white Christians for having realized that God did not send them to white people only, but also to me, black as I am. In saying this, I hope that white people will also be generous enough to reciprocate this sentiment of mine as I feel moved at this hour that God has also sent me as a black person to tell them the Good News that God died in Christ to liberate the white man from his urge to oppress the black man. This means to say that the Gospel preached by the white man needs to be complemented by the Gospel through the black man” (Buthelezi 1973c: 6).

The white people were active in the church but not proactive in line with the gospel. Their theology remained hypocritical to secure their wealth in order to oppress the black people. According to Buthelezi whites were called to mobilise principled policies that would liberate themselves in order for the oppressed also to be liberated in the socio-economic and political arena. “Buthelezi made major contributions to the South African Council of Churches (SACC), World Council of Churches (WCC), Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC). He was a close friend of Dr. Phillip Porter (from Jamaica) who was a general secretary of WCC. Together with Dr. Wolfram Kistner, a Lutheran and a former director of Justice and Reconciliation in the SACC and his contributions in this ecumenical body are invaluable and extensive” (Interview with Rev. Bongani Zulu 2004).
“When John C. Rees took over, blacks made up 85 percent of the membership and 90 percent of the observer churches in the SACC. Yet whites tended to retain positions of authority in the churches and in the council. Rees was determined to change this imbalance. Radical new policies were instituted: equal salaries were paid to black and white council staff, toilets were desegregated, and even white administrators were given a black secretary and every black administrator, a white secretary. Blacks moved into senior positions: in the first National Conference that Rees attended as general secretary, delegates elected their first black president, the Rev. August Habelgaarn. SACC membership began in the late 1960s to represent an even larger section of the black churches when a number of new churches that had originated as missions handed over their work to local Christians. These churches then began joining the SACC” (Hope and Young 1981: 88).

While the German Lutherans were under the authority of conservative missionaries they did not play a crucial role in South African church life. However, Black Lutherans were among the first to join the SACC. During the leadership of August Habelgaarn, the situation altered, when missionary churches became autonomous and were now headed by indigenous leadership. Eight of them joined the SACC. “They brought into the organization a powerful new voice, embodied in such figures as the Rev. August Habelgaarn and Dr. Manas Buthelezi, leading exponent of Black theology who served several times on the SACC executive. More individual independent churches joined during the years that followed” (Hope and Young 1981: 88). In June 1983 Buthelezi was, for the first time, elected as the president of the SACC. His co-workers at that time in the SACC were “Archbishop Desmond Tutu (Anglican-Johannesburg) as general secretary, and more recently, Dr. Beyers Naudé (former moderator of the DRC Transvaal Synod), a successor of Tutu as acting general secretary” (Bachmann and Bachmann 1989: 105). In 1986 at the National Conference of the SACC, Buthelezi
delivered an opening address as the president of the SACC, his paper was titled, *The Radical Marks of the Church* (Jacob 1986: 26).

Relations between the churches in the SACC constituency and the government however remained tense, despite the meetings between the leaders of the two sides. The feeling that the State was acting against ‘churchmen’ simply because they propounded views conflicting with those of the government was strengthened when Dr. Manas Buthelezi, at that time a Natal regional director of the Christian Institute, was banned on December 7, 1973. A few months later, apparently out of the blue, a vicious smear about him was published in a rightward-leaning news magazine, *To the Point*. Dr. Buthelezi then did not do what other banned persons had done: he sued *To the Point* for libel. The magazine stated that it would defend the case, and produce evidence to support its claim that Dr. Buthelezi had backed violence and bloodshed in South Africa. When it came to determining the amount of damages the editor, Dr. John Porter, risked a heavy fine and even jail by refusing to comply with a court order to produce the notes on which the article, which he had written had been based. He was saved only by Dr. Buthelezi who refused to press charges. Nonetheless Porter suffered deep public humiliation, doubly galling in the light of his position as an ordained minister of the Baptist Union, a status he still retained” (Thomas 1979: 19).

Consequently, “Buthelezi was awarded 13 000 RANDS [approximately $ 15, 000] in damages” (Hope and Young 1981: 144). I shall develop this point further in another chapter. For his contribution he received the following awards: Honorary membership, German Mission Society 1973; Honorary president, National Union of South Africa Students 1974; Doctor of Divinity, honorary degree, Susquehanna University, Pennsylvania, USA 1974; Doctor of Divinity, honorary degree, Wartburg Theological Seminary, Iowa, USA 1975 and Doctor of Theology, honorary degree, Lund University,
Sweden 1976. Buthelezi was and will remain an academic, prophetic and activist in the arena of South African and global economic and social justice. He was the architect of his own black theological development, one who offered a key to South Africa’s controversial past and its transition to the vulnerable post-apartheid democracy.

1.5. Conclusion
From the above it may be observed that Buthelezi was not only a pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church but also an anti-apartheid activist who was deeply dissatisfied by the theology of separation. He believed that it was possible for black people to challenge whites, and that solidarity is to have respect for life and the human dignity of the black community. Buthelezi was of the view that the black liberation struggle means a true community within the context of reconciliation without conflict on the basis of race. He worked with others to envision the liberation of the South African community. Today’s South African celebration of June 16 is recognised while the Sharpeville massacre is almost silenced, if not exploited. June 16 is regarded as the first turning point against apartheid, as if Sharpeville had never paved a path to end apartheid, as is little recognised by South Africans. It should be a centre of attention for current South Africa too. The next chapter focuses on Buthelezi as the scholar.
CHAPTER 2
Dr. Manas Buthelezi as a Scholar

2. Introduction
This chapter discusses Buthelezi who was, and remains, a scholar. He has written many articles, which raise matters of concern for the Christian faith. Some of these addressed the issue of humanity or what he calls ‘true humanity’. They offered a critical analysis of how people would be liberated and empowered in the South African context. For Buthelezi it was crucial that black people must benefit from the freedom of their own thought and speech. In this chapter, the focus falls on a critical analysis and reflection on some of his writings. Firstly, we will look at the South African historical context which called for Black Theological scholarship and how Buthelezi understood Black Theology, African Theology and Indigenous Theology. We shall compare his thinking with that of other scholars such as Simon Sekone Maimela, Albert Nolan, Allan A. Boesak, Itumeleng J. Mosala and others. Secondly, we shall look at issues he raised when addressing the issue of Black Theology.

2.1. South African historical context that called for Black Theology scholarship
There was no doubt that Black Theology responded to the crises of the Sharpeville massacre in 1960 and the Soweto uprising in 1976. Albert Nolan assessed it as follows:

“Black Theology did not arise out of these churches. Black Theology is an explicit, articulated and scholarly reflection upon the Christian experience significant of black suffering and oppression in South Africa. It developed out of the student circles, in particular out of the 1971 black theological project of UCM (University Christian Movement). It was an instant and it proved to be the fundamental turning point in the history of explicit theology in South Africa” (Nolan 1988: 3-4).
Nolan underlined that African Independent Churches (AIC) emerged nearly a hundred years previously to achieve a total independence of the missionary churches. These AIC were necessary for blacks to receive their ‘baptismal’ religious freedom, as a new opportunity to interpret and live the voice of the gospel within the Africa context. They wanted to study the Bible in line with an African culture and a black experience. Nolan suggested that one needed to understand that these churches were “trying to understand the gospel in terms of the black experience of suffering, insecurity and oppression” (Nolan 1988: 3). He challenged other theologians because Black Theology did not emerge from the missionary Churches. Hence he argued that it was an inception by academic circles in the context of student life. One could say the churches had developed African Theology which considered religious freedom while Black Theology advocated political, socio-economic and social freedom. We will later on elaborate on Black Theology and African Theology.

Black Consciousness and Black Theology emerged in South Africa after Manas Buthelezi completed his PhD studies in 1968 in the United States of America (USA), returning to South Africa where Stanley Ntwasa and Basil Moore of the University Christian Movement (UCM) had launched the Black Theology project. In 1988 Nolan relevantly and clearly said, “Black Theology has been a theological reflection upon the meaning of Black Consciousness” (Nolan 1988: 4). This theology of blackness was a product of Black Consciousness and became a valuable analysis of power studying what God meant in the South African situation. It was an alternative theology to challenge the status quo. Then, living in a supposedly Christian State, Nolan crucially pointed out, “It seems to me that what matters is not what name we give to our theology, but that it remains a genuine theological reflection upon what God is doing in our country” (Nolan 1988: 4). Buthelezi was invited not only by Ntwasa and Moore but also various organisations to reflect and undertake analysis of the concept of Black Theology at a time where black people were daily oppressed in the name of their blackness. This was dealt with in the first chapter.
The point of departure in the discussion below will be from the history of apartheid in South Africa. This will be followed by a consideration of how its theology was designed in the church and then a commentary on Black Theology as a response to apartheid.

Apartheid was a system of the South African government that promoted segregation of people on the basis of race. Segregationist laws such as the Group Areas Act (1950) and the Native Resettlement Act (1954) permitted the apartheid governance to remove people from their original homes and move them to unfamiliar other areas, uncertain of what would be their future. The 1948-1994 government elected by whites only introduced apartheid to divide South Africans. As Charles Villa-Vicencio wrote:

“Apartheid has been born in the womb of the white Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk (NGK). Details of the policy were worked out by that Church and it has provided moral and theological justification for apartheid. Shortly after the election of the National Party to power in 1948, Die Kerkbode, the official newspaper of the NGK, noted with pride: As a Church we have always worked purposefully for the separation of the races. In this regard apartheid can rightfully be called a church policy” (Villa-Vicencio 1983: 59).

The NGK helped this regime to distort what Jesus Christ had declared that humanity must be shaped, understood and practised as oneness. This doctrine contributed to the political crisis where black people became the victims of apartheid. At a summer conference held at the University of Cape Town in January 1977, F. A. Van Jaarsveld pointed out: “A process of economic integration of whites and no-whites, this ideology offered the Afrikaners a mission, that of dissolving, dividing and separating the main constituents of the population each into separate areas or groups in which each can develop according to its own character… The whites would have to be re-educated to do their own manual work” (Van Jaarsveld 1977: 23). This was to create victims of oppression so that black people would never enjoy their rights and dignity, or socio-political and economic freedom. The system was in support of inequality between blacks and whites.
In the words of David G. Thomas,

“Apartheid proclaims the disunity of mankind. On the purely political plane its proponents argue that it is a necessity because men of different cultures, colour and creeds are incapable of living with each other in harmony” (Thomas 1979: 14). In November 1982 at the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) conference in Cape Town, Allan Boesak made clear, “Apartheid means that in 1970 whites, only 17.8% of the population, received 71.9% of the national income, while blacks received 19.3%. It means that whites claim 87% of the land whilst 13% is ‘allotted’ to black people. Apartheid means that the most important thing about a person is not that he is a person created in the image of God with inalienable rights, but his racial identity. It means that racial identity determines, with an overwhelming intensity, everything in a person’s life” (Boesak 1983: 5).

Apartheid had denied blacks the chance to participate in any South African political and economic decision making, or in the public service. Buthelezi supported Boesak writing: “Apartheid is the antithesis of what the gospel is about. Whereas the gospel creates a possibility and occasion for even enemies to be reconciled, apartheid has, in fact, torn apart potential friends” (Buthelezi 1984a: 417). Apartheid created fear of one’s neighbour and ensured the whites’ survival. Buthelezi and Boesak also agreed that apartheid did not create unity within humanity but separation. Both felt that apartheid contradicted the gospel of Christ and what it meant to be created in the image of God. Apartheid simply meant separation and discrimination within the world of humanity. As indicated, it was implemented by white people to subject black people to the experience of exploitation, oppression and suffering.

Where did separation or apartheid originate from? The Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk (NHK) had an interesting debate on Holy Communion. Chris Loff wrote in 1983 that
“During the recent meeting of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in Ottawa, a group of eleven South Africans decided not to participate in the celebration of Holy Communion” (Loff 1983: 10). According to the alliance, Holy Communion was understood as a community meal within the context of a faith confession. Boesak confirmed,

“Apartheid began its life in the Church around the Table of the Lord when white Christians of the Dutch Reformed Church refused to take Communion with those Christians who were not white. This sinful attitude was not only tolerated in the Church of the nineteenth century, but in 1857 became the law for the life of the Church, even while the Church knew (and confessed) that this decision was contrary to the Gospel” (Boesak 1983: xi).

Holy Communion was an expression and commitment to the unity that Christians have with one another. It broke down the negative boundaries of colour, self-centredness, discrimination and separation. When it was celebrated separately according to colour and class it became sinful and distorted the meaning of Holy Communion. The church lost its sense of what it meant to be a Christian Church.

The issue of apartheid was thus closely connected with Holy Communion. Loff discovered that the minutes of the NGK in the Cape Synod on February 3, 1829 declared that during Holy Communion all baptized people of different colours were all allowed to celebrate it collectively. This was an affirmation of the decision, which was taken by the Presbytery and Synod of 1828. Loff records, “Ordinance 50 became law in July 1828. According to it all free people were considered equal before the law. Should the Church have differentiated on grounds of colour at Holy Communion, it could therefore have been in contradiction to this Ordinance” (Loff 1983: 17). At a later stage, in 1857, the white people began promoting the ideology of racial segregation that Holy Communion should be celebrated separately in racial groups. Loff affirmed, “It was also accepted that there was such a strong colour prejudice among the whites that they refused to tolerate the black people in their midst, especially when it came to ‘Christian
privileges’ or to Holy Communion” (Loff 1983: 19-20). The final decision was made in the 1881 Synod that Holy Communion should be celebrated separately. The church did not overcome the sin of race. In this case it had lost the grounding of what it was to be a Christian church. It worshipped the idol of race and advocated the ideology of separateness. The white church presented the God of one race and not the God of all races. Part of this was what Loff mentioned when stating that black people were asked to be the least and to leave the church.

The church was thus divided into black and white because of racism. The apartheid policy divided people into four racial groups and four Dutch Reformed Church denominations, namely black, white, coloured and Indian. The church lost sight of the mission of God because it promoted disunity. Colleen Ryan clarified this point: “In 1948, the National Party came to power on the platform of apartheid. At the same time as the political programme of apartheid had been developed by nationalist ideologues in the 1940s, the NGK had also elaborated its theology of apartheid. In 1942, members of the NGK formed a Federal Mission Council and assigned a special commission to refine the policy of segregated churches for the various groups” (Ryan 1990: 34).

Black Theology in South Africa came into existence as a response to these injustices. As Itumeleng Mosala recorded, “Black Theology in South Africa first emerged in the context of black consciousness movement during the late 1960s and early 1970s” (Mosala 1989: 1). According to Mosala and Tlhagale,

“Black Theology was adopted as an approach to theological reflection by the blacks in South Africa. Originating in America in the late 1960s, this kind of theology was imported to South Africa in the early 1970s by the Black Theology Project of the University Christian Movement. Manas Buthelezi, a former Lutheran bishop of Johannesburg, was to become the leading exponent of Black Theology” (Mosala and Tlhagale 1986: xi).
Black Theology was the historical struggle by black people against colonialism and capitalism. Its aim was that people should be liberated from all forms of oppression. In the book *Biblical Hermeneutics and Black Theology in South Africa*, Mosala noted that Black Theology had to respond to the question of oppression which was perpetuated by the church to support the apartheid system. Hence, the oppressed Christians had to develop a version of Black Theology of liberation as a tool to overcome apartheid.

### 2.2. Definitions

How did Buthelezi define Black Theology? What were other definitions being used in relation to it? He commented, “The phrase *Black Theology* comes out as an attempt to characterize by means of a word or phrase the reflection upon the reality of God and his Word which grows out of that experience of life in which the category of blackness has some existential decisiveness” (Buthelezi 1973a: 29). He added, “Black Theology as far as I use the phrase stand for theological contribution in a situation such as ours in which there is a destructive obsession with the principle of colour of one’s skin” (Buthelezi 1974a: 2). Black Theology reflected the realities of the black person by interpreting God’s Word as a liberating gospel. This gospel dealt with the wholeness of life and thought of the black person in South Africa. Black Theology was a theological method which dealt with the challenges of black people in their context. Frank Chikane argued that Black Theology in effect was “non violent actions to force the apartheid regime to abandon this system and participate in a negotiated settlement for the just, non-racial democratic South Africa where there will be peace and prosperity for all” (Chikane 1988: 19). This called for people of all races to submit themselves to their needs and desires for a democratic country. When peace and justice became the centre of their lives they would learn to rely on the concept of human liberation. Buthelezi emphasized that “Black Theology is nothing but a methodological formula whose genius consists in paying tribute to the fact that theological honesty cannot but recognize the peculiarity of the black man’s situation” (Buthelezi 1973a: 34). Black Theology had to be a relevant one that helped the black person to deal with her or his daily situation and experience of life. Sabelo Ntwasa and Basil Moore adopted a particular approach, contending: “Black Theology is as irrelevant as any other theology if it is not about
human liberation, and thus about black liberation” (Ntwasa and Moore 1973: 26). Black Theology was a joint theological declaration for all races and for human liberation. It investigated its new meaning in God’s symbols as inclusive of all of those who were oppressed and those who were not oppressed. If it did so, it affirmed the meaning of all human authenticity and freedom. Black Theology could not be liberation theology if it was only concerned with black liberation.

Ntwasa, Moore, Buthelezi and Boesak also argued that Black Theology promoted the liberation of black people and challenged the whites to move away from oppressive systems. Black Theology would primarily reveal God to humanity as a whole, not only to black people. Black Theology was interpreted in God who was concerned with true humanness and thus freedom and wholeness. Boesak’s book was entitled Farewell to Innocence, in it he observed, “Black Theology is the theological reflection of black Christians on the situation in which they live and on their struggle for liberation. Blacks ask: What does it mean to believe in Jesus Christ when one is black and living in a world controlled by white racists?” (Boesak 1977: 1-2). Black Theology took seriously the black experience, the black situation, and held that Black Theology promotes Jesus as the total liberator of black people from all forms of oppression. At the same time it was also supposed to challenge whites to make available their resources.

Mokgethi Motlhabi supported Buthelezi and Boesak; he noted, “Black Theology wanted to serve as a challenge to the conscience of the church for the benefit of genuine Christian love and its implication in the struggle for justice. Black Theology, therefore, rejects most of ‘white theology’s’ interpretation of the gospel and saw it as mostly self-serving” (Motlhabi 1986: 47). The biblical God was on the side of the black people as their liberator and reinforced the power of the few whites who supported Black Theology. Black people needed to be liberated from the religious enslavement of heretical churches which proclaimed apartheid using the scriptures.

These theologians agreed that Black Theology was a response to the situation of black people and called the whites to join the inclusive movement. They concurred that Black
Theology should address the needs of black people from a theological perspective. Black Theology clearly emerged as the gospel that totally rejected the ‘white theology’ and any church that promoted apartheid. It aimed to liberate and empower black people to act and think for themselves and to remove the forces of repression, suffering and dehumanization. These scholars interpreted Black Theology in different ways but their aim was the same. It intended to allow the black person to be regarded as one who has regained her or his self-confidence and respect. It could be understood as a black person doing theology for herself or himself.

2.2.1. Dynamic Black Theology and African Theology or Indigenous Theology

Buthelezi viewed Black Theology as an African or Indigenous Theology. He indicated that while doing Black Theology in South Africa one had to distinguish between two approaches, the “ethnographical” and “anthropological.” He discussed these in the following three articles: An African Theology or A Black Theology, African Theology and Black Theology: A Search for a Theological Method and Toward Indigenous Theology in South Africa. He defined the ethnographical approach by quoting A.L. Kroeber who stated that

“by usage rather than definition, ethnography deals with the cultures of the non-literate people. Unlike history, which deals with written documents, ethnography does not find its documents; it makes them, by direct experience of living or by interview, question, and record. It aims to grasp and portray socio-cultural conditions: merely summarized at first, and often moralized” (Mothhabi 1986: 59-60).

Mothhabi adopted the same stand as Buthelezi towards the ethnographical approach. He pointed out, “Without the traces of our socialization into the African past in some way, it is wishful thinking to imagine that we can reflect the traces of that past in our life and actions, even instinctively” (Mothhabi 1986: 48). This approach seemed to simplify issues into questions of ethnicity rather than humanity. The conference of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT) on January 6, 1991 was
a refresher debate on the concepts of ethnography and anthropology where Simon Sekone Maimela in his keynote address similarly lamented:

In a very important sense, the theme for our conference tries to bring together the two African approaches to theology, by linking African cultural and religious expressions to African struggles for total liberation from all forms of human oppression … reinforces the hope that African theologians should be able to find one another and work together because total liberation is a first priority for all Africans, regardless of whether they live in so-called independent Africa or Apartheid South Africa. There is therefore no excuse for us to continue living in our splendid theological isolation from one another: thus allowing our detractors to mislead us into believing that socio-political and economic liberation is more important than cultural liberation (Maimela 1994: 4).

Maimela seemed to maintain a theology of a dynamic relationship between these two theologies. They were both challenged by Western theology that influenced and pressured the African Theology and Black Theology. Indeed, confusion during that time challenged African theologians to develop theologies that would influence African Theology and Black Theology not to be insecure. African theologians came up with theologies that were proactive, to furnish a guide that socio-political and economic liberation were equally important to cultural liberation. In the words of Mogomme Masoga and Mokadi Mathye: “Throughout our theological study we have always had the nagging theological concern of how African Theology and Black Theology should be integrated. Both theological trends are based on the African situation but differ in terms of their methodological postulates” (Masoga and Mathye 2010: 69). This showed that the two theological camps experienced difficulties, because they were sometimes viewed as isolated or collective. If these theologies were isolated they could not serve the total liberation of South Africans when ethnography and anthropology were engaged simultaneously.
The African Theology was based on the account of African religion and culture or enculturation. Buthelezi indicated that there were disturbing features in the ethnographical approach: firstly, the tendency towards cultural objectivism. In this regard, Buthelezi said, “Too much emphasis is placed upon the African worldview as if it were an isolated and independent entity apart from the present anthropological reality of the African man.” Secondly, the “tendency to overlook present day realities,” and the related “tendency to romanticize the ethnographically reconstructed historical past at the expense of the anthropological dynamics of the present situation” (Buthelezi 1973a: 32). The issue here was that the past must serve to liberate and inspire the person in her or his present daily responsibilities. It could not credit the past without looking at the realities of the present moment. Living in the past would be constructed and interpreted within the context of the spiritual and physical realities of daily life in the present.

Buthelezi viewed the anthropological approach as follows: “the starting point for theological reflection is the existential situation in which the Gospel finds the man. The Word of God reaches man which in his real situation, which may not always be an ideal one” (Buthelezi 1973a: 32). He related this approach by analyzing the theological meaning of blackness as, “Blackness is a life category that embraces the totality of my daily existence. It determines the circumstances of my growth as a child and the life possibilities open to me” (Buthelezi 1973a: 33). The black person interpreted God’s Word in her or his own context as a black person, not only as the future promise of a heavenly situation. Buthelezi argued, “Blackness is an anthropological reality that embraces the totality of my daily existence: It daily determines where I live, with whom I can associate and share my daily experience” (Buthelezi 1978b: 74). He was of the opinion that he could “understand his ministry only within the context of the black flock.”

He labelled Black Theology as an anthropological approach to liberation. As he explained, “Seeing that the black man experiences life from the position of being rejected because of his blackness, the methodology seeks to interpret the Gospel as a liberating event from the chains of rejection” (Buthelezi 1973b: 24). The anthropological approach referred to the human being created by God to exercise dominion over the
entire creation. A person who had been liberated by Christ from all forces of dehumanization experienced her or his potential in full. Black Theology existed when African people did indigenous theology themselves. In the words of Simon Maimela, “It is against the background of this all powerful state, which promises to give white citizens everything including salvation and heaven on earth while the dominated blacks are denied security and civil rights, law and justice, that we have to ask whether the church has any role to play, any power to project and truth to proclaim” (Maimela 1984: 109). It was the right of black people also to benefit from these. The church was challenged to fight apartheid in the name of being one in Christ with the aim of achieving political, religious and economic liberation in South Africa. Buthelezi emphasized, “To be a person means to have power to be truly a person, it means power for liberation to be a person” (Buthelezi 1978b: 68). African Theology and Black Theology were primarily accounts of how to resonate with current socio-political reality: in the words of A. E. Nsibande, “Theology must be in touch with the problems of its day if it to live and have an impact on contemporaries and posterity” (Nsibande 1992: 26). It challenged African theologians to converse with and contextualise themselves in the realities of blacks.

Black Theology empowered and liberated an African to do things for herself or himself as she or he found the meaning of the liberated life. It served as a theological method, which became optimistic towards the possibility of an African achieving the fullness of life. Buthelezi commented, “Indigenous theology without freedom of thought is a contradiction in terms” (Buthelezi 1978b: 68). African theologians had to produce their own theology, which was done within the context of liberation. The central message was that Black Theology could allow the Africans to have full participation in the wholeness of life. African theologians seemed to have grappled with African Theology and Black Theology as to which one had come first. It seemed that white theology became dominant in the African context. Consequently, a dialogue between African Theology and Black theology employed a touch to respond to white theology.
2.2.2. The scheduled arrival of Black Theology and African Theology

Masoga and Mathye were critical of both Buthelezi and Maimela who paid more attention to the anthropological approach but less to the ethnographical approach, because “Buthelezi opted head on for the ‘anthropological’ approach given its existential focus and structure, dealing with the current issues and realities that confront humanity” (Masoga and Mathye 2010: 67). From this stand point, Masoga and Mathye contended in Maimela’s 1987 publication entitled Proclaim Freedom to my People that

“There is no doubt that his previous publications took a slant towards the ‘anthropological’ side of African Theology – thereby referring to Black Theology. Maimela meticulously defined the Black Theological discourse as the theology that actions, relevant positions, articulates, and interprets the discourse of Christ in a specific situation, with specific time and purpose for liberation and change” (Masoga and Mathye 2010: 69).

One would expect that a response to such a purpose would not have avoided the real hard issues of the ethnographical approach too. Four years later Maimela revisited the dialogue of African Theology and Black Theology in a 1991 presentation entitled Religion and Culture: Blessings or Curses? Masoga and Mathye, expressing regret, were again critical: “Unfortunately, as Maimela concluded his address, he noted difficulties in integrating these two camps. This is a serious challenge!” (Masoga and Mathye 2010: 70). These camps could simultaneously have been at the centre of the total liberation of black people. It would have been a disaster if either of them had preceded the other. There was no synergy in these theologies, and because there were debates on which theology was considered to have been first there was no longer a collective theology.

Black Theology was also critical of socio-economic and political circumstances because the poor were being exploited. In 1972, when Buthelezi gave a lecture on Black Theology at the University of Heidelberg he declared, “The poor are kept in a position where they cannot receive the (material) gifts of God” (Buthelezi 1969: 35). In his view,
the materials which were denied the poor belonged to God and not to those who exploited the poor. God did not wish the poor and the oppressed to be exploited or denied God’s material gifts. Other creative thinkers like E. Aaseng explain this in the words of African theologians:

“When we recognise that all of life is unity, lived under God’s rule and according to his truths, our actions become more consistent with our beliefs and we carry God’s will more fully, to the benefit of ourselves and others. By following God’s will in our daily life we give glory to God and make Christianity more attractive to others” (Aaseng 1992: 22).

Black Theology as a theological method seriously took the present situation of black people which was the context of apartheid. For Buthelezi, Black people would be thankful when Black Theology helped them to understand that Jesus Christ bears their suffering to remove the agony of poverty and of the marginalised. According to him a person could “be enabled through the interpretation and application of the gospel to realize that blackness, like whiteness, is a good natural face cream from God and not some cosmological curse. Black Theology challenges established Christianity to engage in a dialogue with the black people who feel that somehow theology has not taken them into consideration” (Buthelezi 1973a: 35).

Hence, Buthelezi raised questions such as “Why did God create us? Why did God create me black?” (Buthelezi 1973a: 35). These questions also raised the notion of anthropology. They primarily proved that to be black was to be fully human, created in God’s image and not that of white people. Blackness was the seal of commitment to what God had indeed ordained. The point of departure was that to be black meant to be empowered and liberated people of God. The focus was on human rights and human dignity in order to reach the stage of freedom within the life context of the black people. Black Theology united the black community even if there was a reality of different ethnic groups in South Africa, learning how best to enter an alliance of mutual help and synergy.
In September 1972 at the Lutheran Theological College (LTC), at Umphumulo, Natal a consultation of theologians from Southern Africa met for ten days to reflect on a “Relevant Theology for Africa” (Becken 1973: 1). This was organised by the Missiological Institute at LTC which was established in 1965. In this event, Buthelezi stated that African Theology was a theology that must be “an attempt to relate the Christian faith to the life realities of Africa. These realities are historical in character, that is, they encompass the past traditional heritage, the present day problems and needs and the future goals and expectations” (Buthelezi 1973b: 19). When people were doing African Theology they actually suggested a particular way of doing theology in Africa, which was also to highlight the need for retrieving the African past.

In comparing and contrasting the various statements of Buthelezi and Motlhabi about African Theology and methodology it is clear that Buthelezi discussed African Theology and the ethnographical approach as the same thing. Both emphasised the reality and experiences of the past, which carry tradition and culture. Motlhabi also explained this ethnographical method as “a reconstruction of the African past” (Motlhabi 1986: 47). The ethnographical approach focused on the African worldview, which was considered to be the reality of the past. According to Buthelezi, “African Theology methodology has in itself merit in drawing attention to positive elements in what is traditionally African” (Motlhabi 1986: 21).

### 2.3. Theology and true humanity

In 1971 at Wilgespruit Fellowship Centre near Johannesburg, symposiums were held on Black Theology. Essays were presented by South African thinkers. The title of the book which contains these is *Essays of Black Theology: The South African Voice*. Basil Moore commented, “These essays were first published by the University Christian

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2 Other symposiums or conferences were held at the following places: The Edendale Ecumenical Centre near Pietermaritzburg, Natal, the Federal Theological Seminary at Alice, Cape Province, St Peter’s Seminary, Hammanskraal, near Pretoria, and other centres in Zululand, and the Transkei, as well as an address given at the South African Student Organisation (SASO) conference in Durban (Moore 1973: vii).
Movement in South Africa early in 1972” (Moore 1973: vii). The South African black theologians’ essays were a critique of apartheid government in South Africa. Buthelezi addressed his fellow colleagues at the Black Theology Seminar which was held at Edendale Ecumenical Centre, Pietermaritzburg from August 26th-29th, 1971. His article was titled *Theological Meaning of True Humanity* and was contained in the same book. In it he criticized the apartheid government on the bases of human rights and human dignity. Buthelezi’s view of true humanity was primarily found in these concepts. He asserted the person “has an inalienable right to be herself and himself in the way she or he wants” (Buthelezi 1973a: 93). To be a true person was to have justice and peace in all spheres of life. He wrote, “Many a times man’s selfhood is made prisoner in its own human house” (Buthelezi 1973c: 93). His argument was that the person could not be a prisoner of another person and could not be an object of negative manipulation by force. The person lost her or his human dignity in such a case. She or he was treated as an object instead of a subject. The person only became herself or himself when she or he had access to social, economic and political rights in life.

In the words of Adam Small, “We do not make colour of the skin the basics. We have suffered enough from white racism not to want to be racist in our blackness. We are not out to hate whites, but to treat them as people” (Small 1973: 12). Black people did not reject white people, but the white separatist theology. Black theology was not invented for black self-orientation and black self-satisfaction; it was a theology intended to give both whites and blacks to one another in order to share equal rights and dignity in the context of common self-interest and interdependence. It was a theology that appeared to encourage sacrifice for each other’s desires and needs without creating pain in each other. Black people had the right to live and the right to reject apartheid because they needed to survive as humans. They would live without apology because they could not apologize for being who they are. They lived under God’s grace and not under the grace of whites. Hence Maimela commented, “For only God has the power to save and to guarantee ultimate security, and in Jesus Christ God has made a pledge that he is for and is prepared to save us and defend those who believe in him” (Maimela 1984: 113). The person became an authentic person when she or he created life for herself or
himself in daily life. Buthelezi described this act of human theology thus: “After all, who am I? What is the destiny of my being and mode of existence?” (Buthelezi 1973c: 93). Blacks understood and realised themselves as members of authentic humanity in the context of their blackness. They could not run away from who they were and what made them who they were. Small argued that the black people exist to “live their blackness”. Black theology did not attack whites, but apartheid theology. Hence Black theology was up to date, contending separation theology to be an out dated institution.

2.3.1. The person created in God’s image

Buthelezi explained the concept of true humanity from a theological perspective. He was optimistic that the person was God’s creature and under God’s grace. He stated the person “is not the image of God, but he was created in God’s image” (Buthelezi 1973c: 94). His emphasis was that the person had a unique and dynamic relationship with God, the source of life and Creator. This was an unending relationship because God created the person and the person remained the created human being of God. The person and the Creator were understood in the context of participation. They participated together and were inseparable because they had a relationship. When a person was independent she or he would always live a separate theology, but when she or he was dependent on God, she or he would always live in an embraced synergy with others. Buthelezi commented, “It is the fact of having been created in the likeness of God that accounts for man’s humanity” (Buthelezi 1973c: 97). Motlhabi had similarly decisively spoken of the importance of creation theology to the government, warning them: “To relate God as both man’s creator and his liberator to all these people in their entire situation, only religious but also social, political and economic. God’s Word and sustenance permeates the whole of man’s life and being by virtue of his very creation in God’s image” (Motlhabi 1973: 77). Being black simply reflected only the image of God, just as did being white. The person would not remain in a subordinate position to any other person, only to God. African Theology affirmed Africaness to promote justice and a proactive relationship between blacks and whites. Aaseng demonstrated the link between the sacred and secular to affirm and allow an African to live fully without being humiliated. This was verified by his words:
The world needs the testimony of African Christians that God is God of all areas of our life. Our daily life is where our faith is tested. It is in our everyday activities, as we interact with others, that we give our most effective witness to the love of Christ. When we recognise that all of life is a unity, live under God’s rule and according to his truths, our actions become more consistent with our beliefs and we carry our God’s will more fully, to the benefit of ourselves and others. By following God’s will in our daily life we give glory to God and make Christianity more attractive to others (Aaseng 1992: 21-23).

This was a source of a transformed assurance that to be created in God’s image meant God had a relationship with the person, who in turn had a relationship with other people. The emphasis was that all people, who were related to each other, would relate to God. Buthelezi asserted that although the person is “a sinner he is redeemable, because he is man: he is man because he was created in the image of God” (Buthelezi 1973c: 98). The person became a victim to sin when she or he treated the other person as a slave.

2.3.2. The person as a redeemed creature

As Peter Walshe noted, “The 1970s were characterized by political turmoil. Clearly the harsh reality of apartheid offered no respite for the vast majority of blacks. Their women, children, infirm and elderly were being ‘endorsed out’ as families were broken up and ‘surplus’ individuals dumped amid the destitution of the Bantustans” (Walshe 1983: 87). The government undermined God’s proactive strategic plan where it maintained racial segregation. It broke down the love of neighbour to neighbour. In the words of Boesak:

In 1973, hundreds of children were sent away from their parents in Johannesburg back to some homeland, where it was claimed they ought to be back to grandparents or to aunts or to whatever relatives they had but away from their parents. A reporter of one of the English-speaking newspapers asked the Bantu Administration Board, ‘Why are you doing this? These are children you are
sending away from their parents.’ The white officer in charge of this operation said: Well, you know, you must try to understand that these black women are not the same as our women. They really do not feel bad when we send their children away, because, you see, they do not see, things the way as we do. They are really very happy when we relieve them the burden of having to care for their children so that they can work uninterruptedly for the white madams they work for (Boesak 1979: 170).

What then was the role of the black person in the light of the above discussion? The person had been made by God in the image of God. The person had the right to be here; to exist; and was not inferior in God’s eyes. The person was challenged to reject all forms of oppression, exploitation and racism whether in the family, society and church: to preach the gospel in such a way that it addressed the relevant needs of the blacks and converted the theology of the whites. To borrow Buthelezi’s words, it was “indeed true that the person is a redemptive creature” because she or he was created in God’s image. When the person was baptized she or he automatically entered into a belonging community of forgiven sinners, being renewed. In the process of growth and renewal she or he was nurtured by the Word and Sacraments, being transformed into a new person here on earth and not in heaven. This could be expressed in the words of J. N. Njoroge: “human beings are made in the image of God and deserve equal rights, protection and care” (Njoroge 2002: 45).

To be a redeemed person meant not to experience poverty, slavery and other dehumanising factors. Buthelezi not only became critical of the state alone but also challenged the church to express God’s love in response to poverty, “a state of displacement from this meeting-place with God, the place where he comes to distribute gifts to his children” (Buthelezi 1973d: 154-155). It was of important that black people discerned the concept of authentic humanity in the context of the liberation from all the injustices of life. They had discovered their own theology for their voices to be heard. Buthelezi expressed this in these words: redemption positioned a person “on the road
towards the realisation of his true humanity in Christ” (Buthelezi 1973c: 98). In the theological perspective, the aspect of true humanity could be Christ-centred. To be Christ-centred meant to be like Christ and redeemed by him. Buthelezi in his paper entitled *Daring to live for Christ* which he presented at the Conference of the South African Council of Churches in 1974 affirmed the concept of true humanity thus: “To live for Christ means in the first place to be like Christ” (Buthelezi 1975b: 7). In other words, true humanity meant respect and compassion for all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender and social status. Boesak resoundingly declared:

   This responsibility involves being human in community with one another in God’s Word. It means to seek together for true humanity; to attempt together to make something of God’s objectives visibly operative in the world; to let something of God’s own heart become visible in fraternal relationships; and, in corporate relationship to history, to humanize the world and keep it humanized. This is what it means to be a brother (Boesak 1984: 149-150).

This identified a commitment to give justice and liberation to the oppressed and poor, for them to live in solidarity with changing the mindset of the whites.

### 2.3.3. The African person in the wholeness of life

Alan Paton observed,

“South Africa in 1978 is a highly fragmented society. The Afrikaner churches identify themselves very closely with the maintenances of Afrikaner identity in an extremely hostile world. The black churches identify themselves more and more with cause of black liberation and the hard fact must be faced that the cause of black liberation and the cause of Afrikaner survival are often incompatible” (Paton 1986: viii).

The Afrikaner survived owing to the sin created under the apartheid system which affected and paralysed the South African community as previously described. The
The wholeness of life for the African included the attainment of vital participation and power. The Gospel of Jesus Christ embraced the conviction that both the blacks and whites were challenged to be one interdependent family whose members needed each other. The two camps needed to be liberated and experience equality to fulfill God’s essential purpose. Buthelezi commented, “It has often rightly been said that the African has a sense of the wholeness of life. The traditional African religion was characterized by the motif of the wholeness of life. In fact, it is more correct to say that religion and life belong together” (Buthelezi 1987: 85). One could not separate religion and life because to participate in life one was already taking part in a religious activity. The person was called to dynamic participation in an African context, and all aspects of life were intertwined since they all affected each other and formed a single whole. To be more specific, Buthelezi explained that there was fellowship between the living and the dead, the supernatural and natural world. He considered that the wholeness of life existed because God was the Creator of all things that were in the world. For him, the wholeness of life “serves to preserve the integrity of man” (Buthelezi 1987: 85). The person was the dignified and venerable being that should have access to all the natural gifts of this present world.

As Bonganjalo Goba described this,

“What we discover in the concept (Black Theology) as it manifests itself in Israel and Africa is the unique idea of solidarity, a social consciousness that rejects and transcends individualism. Apart from caring, the concern is one discovers a unique sense of a dynamic community. A caring concern that seeks to embrace all love that suffers and is selfless for others” (Goba 1973: 69).

Yet South Africa had been distorted by the influence of colonialism and capitalism which were self-centred. The discussion of the wholeness of life was an encounter with life in which spirituality, economic and political or church and state was an ongoing dialogue that led to the true liberation of all people for an abundant life. The gospel declared that no one could claim to separate spirituality and the economy. Goba commented, “We
have been fooled into believing the saying: *Man is for himself and God for us all*. I would rather say everyman and all men and God for us all. Today, as black people in the country, we are divided and ruled, with no solidarity, no social consciousness, no common trust, no sense of common being" (Goba 1973: 69-70). The Creator has a relationship with what she and he have created in this world. It was essential to discern that the person always depended on God and in no way could she or he live by herself or himself. The person in context was intended to receive life from outside herself or himself. Buthelezi emphasized with respect to the person that “To be man is to have power to be truly man” (Buthelezi 1978: 87). To be truly a person meant to be dynamic and think for oneself and others, to embrace liberation for all. When one was disempowered then she or he was denied the wholeness of life. The person was most profoundly a true person in the context of social economic justice and of being liberated. Thus the African was entitled to the wholeness of life just as the Western individual was.

2.4. Suffering

Apartheid was a form of suffering but black people believed that this could be overcome. Hence when one turns to Sibusiso M. Bengu, “It is just as plain that the white government in South Africa deals with blacks as subhuman. Blacks are economically exploited and systematically denied their human rights” (Bengu 1988: 142). Black Theology asserted that freedom of socio-economic and political life came from Jesus who bore black people’s sufferings with them. Buthelezi seriously addressed suffering as something that needed one to undergo for others. “When somebody suffers and you stand by his side to the extent that you also share his suffering, your physical presence can become redemptive. There is nothing worse than an agony of suffering in solitude” (Buthelezi 1976: 5-6). When Buthelezi said this he was addressing the church in an ecumenical setting, challenging it to be in the midst of the people who are suffering from oppression. Being every critical of the church he asked, “Is it not true that many church buildings are no longer houses for worshipping God, the Father of Jesus Christ, but have become heathen shrines of a race and colour god” (Buthelezi 1973d: 4). To suffer with and for others meant to be in solidarity with the suffering, which produced redemption. Suffering with others meant opening the doors of liberation. In 1974 at a
National Conference of the SACC, Buthelezi declared: “There is a danger in indiscriminate drawing of parallels between forms of suffering and the redemptive suffering of Christ. It is a dangerous type of soul care which, as it were, attempts to domesticate the sufferer to suffering” (Buthelezi 1975b: 8). Buthelezi was challenging the church because for him, it seemed to be reluctant to be in solidarity with the suffering. This seemed to imply that to undergo suffering was a good thing which shared in the experience of Christ. However, oppressive suffering was an evil situation. One aspect of it was the denial of dignity, worsened when the “lack of adequate education facilities breeds a culture of ignorance which envelops the victims in its oppressive power” (Buthelezi 1975b: 9). This prevented the person from acknowledging her or his potential.

The concept of suffering in this context was that of black people’s experience. Buthelezi pointed out that black people experienced discrimination and were being rejected for what they were. In the 1970s and 1980s, the apartheid system in South Africa led to the exploitation and repression of black people. As Buthelezi made clear, this led to the exploitation of blacks with regard to “black labour and unfair distribution of wealth, power and life opportunities” (Buthelezi 1975b: 9). When black Christians experienced a continuous suffering Buthelezi called it oppressive suffering. Since suffering existed among black people, Buthelezi stated, “What has happened in this country is that the white man in his stewardship has violated the integrity of God’s love and justice” (Buthelezi 1974b: 195). The black people were not created in whiteness but in the image of God. To be black Christians meant to possess power and think for oneself so that one became liberated from any form of suffering. This returns us to what Buthelezi had said earlier: that authentic humanity means black humanity too.

2.5. Redemption and suffering
Buthelezi’s view was that the black person could be redeemed from suffering. He explained, “It is suffering which is not an end in itself but which is endured in the course of a struggle to realize the well-being of other fellow man ” (Buthelezi 1975b: 9). He added, “Our salvation is more than a redemption from the claws of condemnation; it is in
addition, an incorporation into the household of God with all the rights, privileges and courtesies” (Buthelezi 1993: 87). This solution was what Christ did for humanity. Redemptive suffering allowed the person to create her or his own security and interest so that she or he could secure others. Buthelezi indicated that we could not speak about Jesus Christ’s redemption for humanity if “apartheid or separate development and Christian fellowship are mutually exclusive life pursuits. This is another way of saying that you can establish Christian presence only when the other is physically present where you are” (Buthelezi 1976: 6). Communion was a redemptive experience to eliminate apartheid. Fellowship was the way for the black people to experience redemption in daily life. It could be profoundly and rightly experienced in the midst of physical and spiritual equal presence. This is expressed in the words of Scott:

The idea of the imago dei (we are made in the image of God) is used to sustain the concept of equality in the workplace. Jesus is understood either as a worker, or as being on the side of the poor, the oppressed and the exploited. The image of the eye of the needle also emerges as significant for a critique of the rich, while workers’ rights may be located in the Genesis tradition of the so-called Yahwist redactors. Moses is also mentioned as an archetypal liberator, under God, of workers (ICT Church and Labour Research Group 1991: 273).

Redemptive suffering prophetically called for a sustainable equality in all social, cultural, spiritual, political and economic sectors, to mobilise the rich to learn from Jesus’ ministry. This could be discerned in the words of justice and peace, liberation and emancipation, power and empowerment, development and transformation to free the poor, the exploited and the oppressed as they called for socio-economic liberation. At the 1975 WCC Fifth Assembly in Nairobi with the theme entitled “Jesus Christ frees and unites”, Buthelezi was critical of the status quo: “There is no generic difference between preaching to man the saving Gospel of Christ and serving man in response to those other necessities of life which promote his wellbeing within the given life structures and contribute towards his realisation of the wholeness of life” (Buthelezi 1973d: 153-155).
The words of Robert McAfee Brown endorsed those of Buthelezi: “The eyes he [Jesus] gives us are those of the hungry, the exploited, the tortured – the non-person whom the world ignores and discards. We do not live by bread alone, but Jesus never pretended we can live without it. So he frees us also for struggle with and on behalf of those others, the poor and the dispossessed” (WCC Report 1976: 13). The gospel for the rich was to make available their resources to the poor to liberate themselves out of the midst of poverty and powerless. Buthelezi explained redemption thus: “according to the Bible to be physically present with the poor and the oppressed is to be sacramentally present with Christ” (Buthelezi 1976: 6). This theological statement could be called contextual theology, it applied the Bible to a specific context and was practical. Hence, Black Theology was a historical event because it was rooted in the context and the experience of the black people in response to apartheid (separate development). Black Theology could positively direct their life-situations, both socio-political and economic, to determine the role of human liberation, nothing other than producing true development.

2.6. Conclusion

The insights in this chapter have revealed Buthelezi interpreting Black Theology as rejecting the apartheid system. He viewed the latter as the common enemy of the oppressed. Buthelezi argued that Black Theology was a social analysis which existed to conscientise the poor and the oppressed to be agents for liberating themselves. For him, God was on the side of the poor and the oppressed. Buthelezi’s theological argument was that all people are born equal in dignity and rights, which should not be only theologised but be practical also. This was the real South African way of life; oppression of people was alien to South Africa. Buthelezi discovered that Black Theology revealed the cross as a symbol of a theology of human dignity and rights. It would be a theology that proclaimed inclusiveness to be appropriate in facilitating the unity of the blacks and whites. This principle marked the centre of discovering the people in terms of their social, economic, political and theological positions of liberation and empowerment. Black Theology had nothing to say except to respond to the real human conditions of the joys and sufferings of a black South African’s daily life. It had to be a theology that pursued a proactive construction of humanity through the Gospel
of Christ which needed to correct corrupt institutions with their selfish will to power. It would be regarded as an opportunity for a continuous dialogue, given the current South African context. This point leads to the next chapter, which discusses Manas Buthelezi as an activist.
CHAPTER 3
Buthelezi as an activist

3. Introduction
This chapter will focus on Dr. Manas Buthelezi’s invitation to preach at the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and provide an overview of him as an activist. He was also invited to write papers, which he delivered at the symposiums of various organisations. In his speeches and sermons Buthelezi declared that the Christian whites who supported apartheid in South Africa distorted the Christian gospel. Buthelezi encouraged black people to be responsible for themselves, in order to create their own liberation context. Buthelezi believed in the ministry of *diakonia*, hence he was willing to work with the black community, and his white counterparts who were opposed to apartheid theology, as his neighbours. This chapter contains an outline of Buthelezi’s role in black leadership, of banned leaders and organisations, the *status confessionis*, Buthelezi as an activist, and organisations such as LWF, CI, and SACC.

3.1. Buthelezi in black leadership
In the 1970s and 1980s Buthelezi was invited by various students and organizations to explain his vision of what it meant to be black in the Christian church. Buthelezi as a theologian and the leader of the Christian Institute of Southern Africa (CI) in the Natal Region was expected and challenged by organisations such as the South African Students’ Organisation (SASO), the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) and others to develop and think profoundly in response to the South African crisis. He was required to develop a common theology which was in line with the young black intellectuals who reflected on the black political dispensation as a way of seeking liberation within the black people. Buthelezi developed a working relationship with organisations such as the BCM and the UCM and other organisations with the aim of demonstrating Black Theology as a vehicle of liberation theology. Manas Buthelezi had personal contact with church leaders such as Barney Pityana, and Allen Boesak who were prophetic figures, with Steve Biko the leader of the BCM, Saths Cooper the Vice-President of the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) in 1971 who influenced the Indian community to embrace the...
ideology of Black Consciousness and later resigned to be a secretary of the Black People’s Convention (BPC) in 1972, and Simon Sekone Maimela who was a close co-worker in the Evangelical Lutheran Church with Buthelezi. The Black Theology Seminar of August 26-29, 1971 was organised by Stanley Ntwasa who invited Buthelezi to assist him to invite speakers, amongst others was Stive Biko. The seminar was intended to address and reflect on the situation of South Africa and took place at Edendale Lay Ecumenical Centre in Pietermaritzburg.

In June 1973, Buthelezi joined the CI at the request of Beyers Naudé to be director of the Natal region, Pietermaritzburg (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007). As indicated, the CI was founded in 1963, its founders being the anti-apartheid academics John De Gruchy and Stephanus Geyser, CI national director Frederick Beyers Naudé and others. The ELCSA-SER released him to serve there. The CI was an ecumenical institute, which became the first Christian anti-apartheid organisation that emerged within the lines of the Afrikaner circles after Naudé left his institutional church, the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC). The response by the CI was to condemn the racial discrimination and capitalist exploitation, it was a project to promote equality in humanity and justice for the poor, the exploited and the oppressed. Of course, the root of injustice was race intertwined with poverty and affluence. CI undertook a power analysis which revealed that churches were part of the oppressive structures.

Buthelezi remarked,

“Beyers Naudé introduced me into the politics of South Africa and this was a baptism of fire to the political platform. I was invited all over South Africa, especially in Natal, addressing political communities, teachers, church, university and simple school audiences. My speeches were open and critical of apartheid and its institutions, albeit couched in practical, religious and theological idiom. Black theology made this possible. If you cannot make a
frontal attack with bazookas, make it in any other way” (Buthelezi 2011: 1).

Buthelezi was one of the theologians who stood firm and knew that it was only God who had power to save, empower and guarantee the ultimate and alternative security of black people as a way of transforming the South African context. It was a vehicle to ensure that the task of Black Theology was to liberate people from within the world of apartheid where its government slavishly worshipped the presence of apartheid. Buthelezi argued that Black Theology had always been misunderstood in the context of promoting violence instead of as being a theology that desired people to be liberated from social, political and economic ‘oppression’. Allan Boesak observed:

Black Theology is not new. Although the term stems from 1966, the content is as old as the attempts of white Christian to bring the gospel to blacks. There has always been a distinct black understating of Christianity and the message of the Bible. It is therefore wrong to suggest that black theology is the product of the theology of revolution; some claim that this ‘theology of revolution,’ conceived in 1966 by the ‘white’ World Council of Churches, in turn was translated into a black theology in the United States and then exported to South Africa by a white man (Boesak: 77).

It is critical to emphasise again that Black Theology was a theology of liberation to deconstruct the apartheid system, a new approach which was to enable black people to live a truly human life within unlimited openness towards others. Black Theology became a situational response within the context of the liberation of the black people. Among the theologians who viewed it as situational was Allan Boesak who understood “Maimela who believes that black theology meant to free-spiritually and politically-and that black theology must keep this thought alive in the hearts of those who are engaged in the struggle for liberation” (Boesak 1978: 84). Boldly so, Maimela, Mosala, Buthelezi and others risked their lives to challenge white theology and defend not only black people but also Black Theology.
Working for the CI, Buthelezi recalled, “At one time we organized what we called a ‘fellowship bus’ which was to carry a provocative, made up group of black and white passengers from Pietermaritzburg to Dundee. It so happened that the Mayor of Dundee at the time was a member of the Christian Institute” (Buthelezi 2011: 2). The security police at that time ensured that this kind of meeting was not successful due to their effective political network. However, a successful event took place when Buthelezi was invited to address the students of Stellenbosch University at the time when John Vorster was its Chancellor. Although the meeting this time was not banned by the security police but by the University authorities, it was successfully held outside the University campus.

Both Naudé and Buthelezi were CI board members, it also consisted of “Jane Phakati Community Organizer for the Transvaal and Orange Free State. Additional black clerical staffs were recruited for the Cape Town and Johannesburg officers. At the September 1974 annual general meeting of the Institute, eight of the twelve new members appointed to the Board Management, were black” (Walshe 1983: 158). The other members of the Board in the CI were “Colin Gardner (chairman of the CI board), Margaret Nash (board member)” (Ryan 1990: 151). The CI board was very powerful. The CI leaders declared the apartheid system evil and sinful before God. When the black voice was silenced, forced to remain uncritical of its context by the government, the CI was able to furnish different viewpoints, being critical of the apartheid voice as discussed earlier.

3.2. The banning of leaders and organisations
In chapter one, the matter of the banning of organisations was briefly discussed. It is now important to explore this more deeply. Maimela commented:

> The South African State believes that it has been called upon to help God achieve divine goals of separating and preserving different racial groups. Surprisingly, however, it just turns out that the same calling, namely to preserve and perpetuate the different
race God has ordained, also benefits the Whites; it coincides with their wish not to commit national suicide through any form of racial integration. Indeed, the divine calling and natural instincts for White self-preservation have become so identical and inseparable that, as a matter of faith, the White Afrikaner government has chosen to perish on the way of obedience rather than let the white melt into the non-whites, thereby forfeiting their white identity and their sacred calling (Maimela 1984: 107).

Black people had to take their own stand to declare themselves that they deserved their own rights, dignity and respect. This was a critical step of consciousness: to reject the white theology that denied the black people their colour. Adam Small asserted: “That we do not make colour of the skin the basic criterion for our blackness must be evidence that this blackness is not racist. We have suffered enough from white racism not to want to be the racist in our blackness” (Small 1973: 12). One should point out that this message was geared towards both white and black people to live in peace, not in pieces. Since race was ordained by God, this actually meant that human rights and human dignity existed to protect and empower all human races. Buthelezi challenged the theology of the white church:

“It is the love of God in Jesus Christ that transforms strange neighbors into loving brothers. It is very often said that points of racial contact are points of friction. What is unique about the Gospel is that it changes points of contact into points of fellowship. It follows that there can never be Christian fellowship without human contact. Any deliberate elimination on points of human contact is a calculated sabotage of the essence of Christian fellowship” (Buthelezi 1973c: 4).

Among other theologians were Small, Biko, Moore, Boesak and Pityana who challenged the apartheid system to change its approach by critically conscientising the white Christians to understand that various races, people and groups would forever remain
reconciled only through liberation theology, not a racist theology. Albert Nolan addressed the existential agonies of apartheid thoroughly:

“Similarly when we speak of apartheid we are not referring only to those laws and policies that discriminate against people of colour; we are referring to the whole system with its security laws, press curbs and states of emergency and with its consumerism, money-making, labour laws and class conflicts. We call the whole system apartheid because its dominant characteristic is racial or ethnic discrimination” (Nolan 1988: 68-96).

This is aligned with the black people’s desire to create an environment of hope where people could live together without being masters and slaves. The drive was to create the best system to live in essential peace and justice in the existential South African context. Mokgethi Motlhabi put this simply: “Black Theology, therefore, seeks to relate God as both man’s creator and his liberator to all these people in their entire situation, not only religious but also social, political and economic” (Motlhabi 1973: 77). The South African government and its apartheid system, however, dictated an interpretation of the Word of God whereby it banned BCM, UCM, CI and other liberation movements as well as the PAC and ANC. As Manas Buthelezi noted, “It took almost a decade before the Apartheid regime realized that these movements were new political dynamite that had to be banned and legally prohibited, as happened later in 1977. Hitherto the Apartheid regime seemingly thought that it was good and harmless for these black people to be fascinated with their blackness since hopefully they will forget about white people and white things. After all that was what Separate Development was about” (Buthelezi 2011: 1).

Among some whites who responded in order to abolish the apartheid system were those who founded the CI, which without fear addressed the existential agonies of the day. Buthelezi recorded,

“The Christian Institute of Southern Africa (CI) was a predominantly whites initiated group that wanted to allow black leaders to exercise
black consciousness. In 1972, people like Bennie Khoapa, Steve Biko who was the founder-president of South African Students’ Organisation (SASO), and other members of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) were the first to be banned. In the same year the Anglican lay preacher David de Beer who was administrative secretary of the Christian Institute in Johannesburg was the first person to be banned in the CI” (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007).

Dwight Hopkins stated that “Buthelezi led the fight to build black caucuses in predominantly white churches. His writings reflected a specific problem: how to uphold black dignity while pursuing some type of Christian relationship with white fellow church members in the midst of Black Consciousness Movement” (Hopkins 1989: 98). The CI was an organisation which was opposed to apartheid but at the same time tried to create harmony amongst races. According to Buthelezi who pointed out it wanted to create Christian fellowship between whites and blacks.

In 1973 the government issued banning orders affecting SASO and amongst others. This was shortly followed by the banning of Manas Buthelezi for a period of five years. He was the second person in the CI to be banned. In July 1973, the Minister of Justice “issued a banning order against Dr. Manas Buthelezi” (Buthelezi 1974b: 195). The reason was related to his paper entitled “Change in the Church, which he delivered at the University of Cape Town” (Walshe 1983: 169). He was banned a few weeks later when he was in Pietermaritzburg. He remarked, “holy and love are words which almost define the nature of God. We say God is holy and God is love” (Walshe 1983: 168).

Buthelezi recalls, “After I received and signed a letter from a police who said to me: I hope you were expecting this. I said to the police let us pray. After prayer I quoted Mathew 28: 19-20 and said God will reveal himself . I was not allowed to attend public events such as political, students’ gatherings and other meetings, as I was banned for a period of five years. After this I went to attend a conference of the Lutheran World
Federation (LWF) in America luckily my passport was not taken away by the police” (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007). Buthelezi was the first clergyperson to be banned in the Lutheran Church, he was denied human rights as he was accused of promoting the aims of Communism. The banning order prohibited him from attending public events such as those mentioned. In the Lutheran Church later many other pastors were banned and subjected to all forms of torture and suffering. Though banned, Buthelezi bravely accepted an invitation to preach at Michael House, a white boys’ high school based outside Pietermaritzburg. He violated one of the terms of his banning order but nothing happened to him. By the grace of God the Security Police did not confiscate his passport as per the terms of the banning order.

The Geneva staff arranged for him to travel to certain countries in Europe and Washington DC in the United States where he delivered lectures on Black Theology. In Washington, a State Department officer approached and informed him that the US government had decided to offer him political asylum, if he decided not to return to South Africa (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007). Buthelezi did not hesitate to reply that he was returning to South Africa in spite of his political situation as he had been born in the community of the black oppressed. Buthelezi turned down opportunities offered to him to teach theology, holding a professorship in England and the USA. This offer would have included his belongings where one institution in the USA offered to transport them there and grant his children scholarships. If Buthelezi had accepted this offer, probably his black counterparts would have viewed him as a sellout. This demonstrated that Buthelezi displayed an unconditional total commitment to the liberation of the black oppressed. Consequently, Buthelezi, like other theologians, helped to bring about liberation of South Africa.

Buthelezi recalls that in the magazine To the Point, the editor claimed that he knew why the government had banned him, claiming that at one point he addressed a group at Umphumulo with the aim of promoting violence. He added that the editor also claimed that “I said that I have friends around the corner who can supply me with all kinds of weapons for blowing up the Union Buildings and killing John Vorster who was a Prime Minister.”
Minister at that time” (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007). The CI suggested that Buthelezi should take legal action in response to this editorial. “Buthelezi sued To the Point and won the case and was unbanned” (Walshe 1983: 162). He was awarded R 13,500 damages by the Supreme Court. He said “When I was awarded the money I bought my house with it” (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007). Buthelezi stated explicitly: “Violence is inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel of Christ. All Christian churches in South Africa would without hesitation say ‘Amen’ to this statement…..The church should be a peace maker and not a party in the business of violence” (Buthelezi 1979b: 54-55). Hence he believed that violence could be ended by negotiation between the state and the liberation movement. The Church could become a mediator viewing the situation through the lens of a peace maker.

What was the purpose of the Christian Gospel for him? He was opposed to violence because his theology was influenced by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Albert Nolan stated explicitly, “There can be no doubt that violence in any circumstances is a problem, not only for us Christians but for anyone who has any feeling of moral responsibility. The reason for this is quite simple: violence causes suffering” (Nolan 1988: 166). Nolan and Buthelezi were opponents of the way the regime invented much violence, suffering and bloodshed when it justified violence in the name of peace by killing students who protested by burning down buildings. Violence could not be justified when innocent students were killed and detained on the basis of fighting for their human rights and dignity, informed by the principles of liberation. The regime rejected its responsibility and accountability in protecting the interests of students’ rights and dignity together with those of all South Africans. If the regime had implemented what Buthelezi and Nolan had suggested in terms of negotiation around a table violence could have been avoided. Buthelezi and Nolan were explicit that negotiations called for the regime to lead with responsible leadership, which would have effectively produced a ministry of peace and justice in the South Africa of the time and its government. However, this violence affected the students and activists such as Nolan, Biko, Boesak, Maimela, Chikane, Tsele, Naudé and Buthelezi. Chikane’s house and his family were threatened by petrol
bombs, his neighbours organised armed youths to protect him and his family (Villa-Vicencio 1987: 303).

In December 6, 1973 the Minster of Justice, Jimmy Kruger, lifted the banning order of Buthelezi. The letter asserted “I James Thomas Kruger, Minister of Justice, hereby, in terms of section 9 (4) of the Suppression of Communism Act, 1950 (Act 44 of 1950), withdraw the notice issue in terms of section 9 (1) of the said Act on 17 November 1973, and delivered to you on 6 December 1973” (letter dated November 1973). The latter recalled, “The police who gave me the letter said to me ‘Do you understand?’ I answered ‘I do not understand.’ This happened within five months when I received the letter of the lifting of my banning order. This was a prophetic statement because on the day I was banned I said to the police God will reveal himself” (Interviewed Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007). Buthelezi was visited by CI members when he was banned. His banning arbitrarily took away something of his human dignity and. When he was banned he was studying for an LLB with the University of South Africa (UNISA) and registered for three courses namely criminal law, Latin and private law. After his unbanning he dropped these. He further noted that when he came back from the USA Black Theology had emerged in South Africa. He remarked,

“Groups like SASO, University Christian Movement and students will say, ‘What does Jesus Christ say about being black?’ ‘What does it mean to Jesus to say he is the saviour to black people?’ I developed the papers on Black Theology after these groups asked me to speak about Black Theology. By that time I have never studied anything on Black Theology” (Interviewed with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007).

One of the students who asked Buthelezi to speak about Black Theology was Steve Biko. On July 8, 1974 Buthelezi was invited as a speaker at the 51st congress of the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) at the University of Natal in Pietermaritzburg where he delivered a paper on Building A Heritage for the Future. This was motivated by concerned students and addressed the solution to the problems that
needed to be overcome to build a new structure that would shape the South Africa of tomorrow. On December 8th, 1974 Buthelezi delivered a message entitled *God-Given Human Rights* at St. Mary’s Cathedral in Johannesburg, dedicated to hundreds of banned people and others whose rights had been violated by the apartheid system. At the end of June 1975, Buthelezi was transferred by ELCSA to work in Johannesburg. Though he was new to Johannesburg, all the June 16, 1976 events happened in his presence since he was resident in Soweto. On June 16, 1976 Hastings Ndlovu was the first student at the age of 15 years to be shot and killed by the police in Orlando West in Soweto while Hector Peterson, a 12 year old, was the second student who was buried at Avalon Cemetery. In 1976 Buthelezi preached and officiated at the burial of Hector Peterson with the help of Winnie Mandela, Dr. Ntatho Motlana and others. The BPA had agreed to organise a mass funeral in memory of those who had lost their lives. However, the Johannesburg Magistrate’s office refused Buthelezi an application for a mass funeral. On July 3, 1976 the mass funeral was replaced by a symbolic funeral of Hector Peterson, also to commemorate the hundreds of others who had been killed. His funeral was covered by the press: *from the Rand Daily Mail and Rand* and *The World*. On June 21st, 1976 Buthelezi was invited by Aubrey Mokoena to a meeting at the Methodist Youth Centre at which professionals such as social workers, clergy, medical doctors and leading sports organisers were present. The purpose was to determine and respond to the events and consequences of June 16th. This led to the formation of the BPA with the aims of being in solidarity with the black protesting students. The BPA also had to assist in identifying hundreds of dead students who were shot by the security police and in identifying and supporting the individual, bereaved families. The BPA committee was elected, it was led by the following six: Mrs. Winnie Mandela, Dr. Ntatho Motlana, Rev. Dr. Manas Buthelezi, Aubrey Mokoena, Benjamin Nteso and Dr. Matlhare. Buthelezi was elected chairperson. During its formation and in the forums of the BPA, Winnie Mandela was given the political platform to conscientise the black world to unite against the oppressors’ ideologies:

> It is only when all black groups join hands and speak with one voice that we shall be a bargaining force which will decide its own destiny. This is the only way in which we shall maintain our...
oneness. We know what we want, our aspirations are dear to us. We are not asking for majority rule; it is our right, we shall have it at any cost. We are aware that the road before us is uphill, but we shall fight to the bitter end for justice . . . Let us leave this meeting with the spirit of rebirth, of purification from the humiliation of domination. If you are to free yourselves, you must break the chains of oppression yourselves. Only then can we express our dignity; only when we have liberated ourselves can we cooperate with other groups. Any acceptance of humiliation, indignity, or insult is acceptance of inferiority. We have to think of ourselves as men and women. As one quotation goes, ‘Once the mind is free, the body will soon be free’ (*South Red Sun Press*, p. 15-16).

In August 1976, Buthelezi and others discovered that students were marching to John Vorster Square to demand the release of their detained leaders. Buthelezi, Dr. Ntatho Motlana and others went to the Soweto Protea Police Headquarters to warn the police that they must not repeat the tragedy of June 16th. After the negotiations with the police, Buthelezi, Dr. Motlana and others arrived at New Canada where the police were already assembled with the aim of stopping the students from continuing with the march. Buthelezi became the peace negotiator between the police and the students, as he put it,

“I went to the Police and asked them not to aim their guns at the students in a provocative manner. From the Police I went to the students and asked them not to move from the point where they were. I went back and forth between the two groups not without a little cold shiver down my spine. All of a sudden and without warning, the police dashed forward and charged at the students with tear gas canisters. There was the burning smoke of tear gas everywhere. The students ran and dispersed towards the only direction open: towards Soweto. At least the repeat of June 16th was avoided. The students had nevertheless demonstrated that the
massacre of June 16 had failed to quench the liberation fires from within” (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007).

Buthelezi risked his life to put the government under pressure, to take to heart the needs of students. The latter protested to ensure that the black liberation struggle should be taken seriously in order for the oppressed to be liberated and also to conscientise the oppressed, as Allan Boesak said: “The critical reflection of Black Christians on their involvement in the black liberation struggle, always keeping in mind that the oppressor cannot be liberated unless the oppressed are liberated” (Boesak 1978: 76-77).

On October 19th, 1977 the BPA was among the organizations that were banned. All its property was confiscated by the government including its furniture, funds in the bank, and all documents and financial records. In the process, Buthelezi said,

“By phone I got in touch with Mr. Jimmy Kruger, Minister of Justice, Prisons and Police and told him that a delegation of BPA requested to meet him on behalf of the protesting students. He stumbled over the name of Winnie Mandela in the list of those who were to see him. He said he is not prepared to meet the whole group and can only meet me as Chairman. I told him that it would be impossible for me to meet him alone without other members. The matter ended there. This deadlock marked the end of BPA formally representing the students to the government. Moreover the Police subsequently detained three quarters of the BPA Committee members and BPA itself was later banned” (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007).

As Walshe recorded, “On the October 19th, 1977, it (government) banned the Christian Institute and eighteen black consciousness organizations. Black leaders were detained; Naudé and key members of his staff were banned” (Walshe 1983: 158. Also see Thomas 1979: 20). After this banning Steve Biko was killed in a Pretoria prison. All the
CI documents and assets were confiscated by the police and were stored behind the Diakonia House in Pietermaritzburg. “Naudé was not allowed to leave his office or to use the telephone. For four hours he watched these mechanical proceedings as unanswered questions raced through his mind. He asked himself: Does this mean the end of everything that I have stood for? Has every sacrifice I have made been in vain?” (Ryan 1990: 2-3). The police gave him three copies of documents, from the Justice Minister, to sign in order to acknowledge that his rights and movements were restricted for five years. He signed the documents and kept them with him. When the CI was banned it was no longer receiving funds abroad. Beyers Naudé was the first Afrikaner with whom Buthelezi had a close relationship in combating the apartheid system. Amongst the active Evangelical Lutheran members of the CI were invited to deliver papers were theologians like Klaus Nürnberger, Wolfram Kistner and others.

According to Walshe, “In May 1962 Beyers Naudé, Albert Geyser, Fred van Wyk of the South African Institute of Race Relations, the Rev. Ben Engelbrecht, Bruckner de Villiers and others minded souls launched a new monthly journal called Pro Veritate” (1983: 29). In this respect Buthelezi commented, “The Pro Veritate was also banned. Pro Veritate is the Latin word meaning for the truth. It is a Christian magazine which publishes speeches, articles and other important things of the Christian community. It was used by the Christian Institute of Southern Africa as a social gospel to counter apartheid” (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007). This magazine was mainly published in English or Afrikaans. When Buthelezi was in the CI Rolf Meyer was the editor of Pro Veritate. The other written source which was banned, a book, “Black Theology: The South African Voice was published in 1972 by the Black Theology Project of UCM” (Moore 1972: p. vii). On the same day it was published the book was banned by “the South African government” (Mosala and Tlhagale 1986: vii). The government regarded it as a very serious threat to the security of the state. The papers in it were delivered by South African black and white scholars and critical thinkers such as Manas Buthelezi, Mokgethi Motlhabi, Steve Biko and others. As Buthelezi recalled, “The same papers were delivered in the symposium which was held at the Edendale Ecumenical Centre near Pietermaritzburg in 1971” (Interviewed with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi's Contribution To Evangelical Lutheran Church In Southern Africa's Struggle Against Apartheid In South Africa (1970s-1990s)’ Kenokeno Mashabela
Buthelezi 2007). The book critiqued the current government of South Africa on the basis of its political and economic repression, emphasizing the liberation of the oppressed, marginalized and exploited black people. The essays “were written for black South Africans exhorting them to participate in the struggle to throw off their chains” (Moore 1972: viii). Other theologians banned were the secretary general of the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference (SACBC), Father Smangaliso Mkhatshwa, for five years.

3.3. Status confessionis

In 1967 Buthelezi was invited by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) to present papers. He regarded this as a platform for his academic expertise. When the LWF structured its committees it would verify that there were representatives from different areas of the LWF. Buthelezi was one of the representatives of Africa in many commissions. He was firstly exposed to the LWF while he was still a student at Drew University working on his dissertation. He was invited to address the commission on theology about the problem of work in Africa in 1967. In 1970, when its assembly was to meet in Brazil Buthelezi was one of those who were to be delegates from the ELCSA. This assembly could not take place due to the political situation in Brazil, so that it met at Evan in France near Geneva. After Evan, Buthelezi was appointed one of the members of the Commission of Studies. In that capacity, Buthelezi was invited in the LWF consultation to deliver various topics. This happened alongside his membership in the commission of the LWF.

In 1971, Buthelezi was a member of the “Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches” (Ferm 1988: 21, also see Deane 1978: 34). He attended the LWF Commission on Studies meeting in Geneva in May 1973. He was also invited by the LWF to participate in the Mission on Six Continents team in USA in October 1973. In March 1974, “he delivered a sermon entitled The Relevance of the Gospel Today at the symposium organized by the LWF” (Buthelezi 1974c: 271). He declared, “The Gospel invests the believer with the saving power” (Buthelezi 1974c: 273). According to him, believers were called to be Christs for others and have the interest of others at heart, as Jesus Christ had done for them. For him, the presence of
God in the world was obtained through faith, which revealed truth about God’s work in the world. His messages emerged to address the present crisis in South Africa, calling for the gospel to be systematically contextual. In January 1976, both Buthelezi and Wolfram Kistner who was a professor of theology at the University of Natal, now the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, were invited by the LWF to deliver a joint paper on the theme *Marks and Signs*. They came up with a paper entitled *The Proclamation of the Gospel and Other Marks of the Church*. In it they observed, “To preach the gospel is to create in the human situation this realistic hope of a way out” (Buthelezi and Kistner 1976: 27). For them, to preach the gospel meant that God was with people and for people in an unconditional way. They insisted the preacher must remain faithful to her or his calling and emphasized that proclaiming the gospel was regarded as a mark of the church. Their message was that South Africa would practically experience a true gospel which challenged the usual method of theology. This was the ability to collectively develop a strategy for the protection of the citizens’ rights. It was done to settle the South African political environment in order to safeguard climate that needed a desperate change for its people. This served as the dialog which turned the daily lives of people to influence a liberated South Africa. The proclamation of the gospel was a self-discovery and a driven fulfillment in the space and time of the citizenship which was a necessity. In 1977 the Six General Assembly of the LWF was hosted in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania for the first time in Africa. Buthelezi was asked by his counterparts to be elected as the president of the LWF, but refused to stand. In 1988 during the Sixth General Assembly of ELCSA in Umphumulo, Buthelezi reported, “Other engagements which relate to my use of the church’s time include membership in committees and Commissions of LWF and WCC” (General Assembly minutes 1989).

In the mid-1970s, Buthelezi was very supportive of black Christians, commenting “that they not only live out their faith in ways which liberated them psychologically, spiritually and politically from oppression, but that they work simultaneously for the conversion of liberation of whites” (Walshe 1983: 159). In the CI, Buthelezi and his colleagues felt that the whites failed to practice Christian fellowship. According to him they distorted the Christian mission. He argued the whites violated God’s love and justice. He challenged
black people to witness to new forms of Christian fellowship, his view being developed because of the tension between black and white Lutherans. He took the matter further to the LWF. “In 1977 the Lutheran World Federation, through the influence of Dr. Manas Buthelezi, one of the leading South African promoters of Black Theology, proclaimed a *status confessionis*” (de Gruchy 2006: 398), during the LWF Sixth Assembly in June 1977. Buthelezi declared, “The church has reached a confessional situation, reminiscent of the Reformation, when a new Church alignment was called into being by theological and ethical trends that had led to the adulteration of the essential of the faith. We need a new confession which will clearly list criterion of the oneness of the church in relation to the crucial issues of our time” (Buthelezi 1978e: 38) and stated that the church that was to save its life must be prepared to lose it. According to him, the church would stand in solidarity with the oppressed because Jesus Christ did the same.

He added that when the church was within the oppressed it became victorious at the end of struggle. According to Buthelezi, everything was possible when the church was united and God was present as the ultimate source. Buthelezi’s critique of the Lutherans not only challenged ELCSA but also the entire church of God, vividly encouraging the church to move out of its comfort zone into a public victory where it would succeed in working with the oppressed. This would be confirmed when the white church and black church had confidence that to achieve public victory was possible when political, religious, social and economic history were addressed through an authentic gospel.

In October 1983, a resolution was taken by the ELCSA Church Council on the *status confessionis*. A press release issued at Rosettenville, Johannesburg during the meeting from August 22-23, 1985 stated that

“The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa affirmed her stand against apartheid and that it is a heresy. It is oppressive against the majority in our country. We again categorically condemn the new constitution and all elections associated with it or group of people who are opposed to the elections that are being held under the new dispensation …we are deeply and sincerely
concerned about the situation at educational centres and actions taken by authorities especially the police and we call upon those responsible to apply their authority in a sensible way” (Third Synod Central Diocese Minutes 1982).

The church declared that human rights were in fact God-given. The stand was that individual rights were a result of the rights to land, to food, to work, to accommodation and to self-determination. Maimela clearly perceived the role of the church and the state: “The proclamation of God’s will by the spiritual form cultivates the virtue, good will, and the good deeds among people which are needed by the secular side. God gives the secular the power of the law to maintain order and peace and to administer justice to the citizens entrusted to its care” (Maimela 1988: 99). Both the church and state would not be dependent on their own ideas because they were certain to be obedient to God’s will. Their role was to build an excellent relationship with the citizens of God. They were required to respond with a positive desire to solve the exploitation of the oppressed, to foster transformation to respectful order and peace and ensure that the oppressors moved away from their treatment of the oppressed.

Similarly concerning the status confessionis other foundations were shaken such as those of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC). Allan Boesak insisted, “With regard to the South African situation, the WARC should accept it as a special responsibility. It should declare that ‘apartheid,’ in the words of the 1978 Synod of the black Dutch Reformed Mission Church, is ‘irreconcilable with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.’ And if this is true, and if apartheid is also a denial of the Reformed tradition, then it should declare a heresy that is to the everlasting shame of the church of Jesus Christ” (Boesak 1983: 8). According to Boesak the Reformed churches would confess that apartheid was a heresy and was opposed to the gospel of Christ. “The decision by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches to declare apartheid is probably the most significant ecclesiastical event affecting the Churches in South Africa” (de Gruchy 1983: xv). The WARC declared that “The Confession clearly stated that the secular gospel of
apartheid threatened the very core of the witness of reconciliation in Christ and the unity of his Church” (Hofmeyr and Pillay: 284).

As Buthelezi emphasized, “Separate development is not acceptable to the black community” (de Gruchy 1979: 172). According to him, the question of unity was only understood when people were under the lordship of Jesus Christ. He observed that Christians who were Lutherans were confused about the ideology of apartheid and how it had become part of the Lutheran tradition. According to Buthelezi, apartheid was opposed to Jesus Christ’s gospel because it separated people on the basis of race. At the Synod of the Evangelical Church of Baden, FRG, 3-8 May 1981 he made this clear: “Where there is racism the unity of the church disappears. It is heresy in the basic sense of the Word” (Buthelezi 1984b: 420). Apartheid separated churches, economic and political structures. This caused a major difficulty as far as humanity was concerned. The church had to dethrone the gods of apartheid and race so that it could heal and liberate society.

3.4. Buthelezi as an activist
Buthelezi reported, “I came in Johannesburg when I was elected as a general secretary of FELCSA in 1974 and in 1976 general secretary of ELCSA at the time of the process of merger” (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007). In June 16, 1976, “what started as a peaceful demonstration in Soweto degenerated under the impact of insensitive action into stone-throwing and police gunfire. After several days of rioting and shooting, 176 school children were dead and hundreds wounded” (Walshe 1983: 200-201). As indicated, the high school organizations, which were black activists, had lost their pioneering leaders such as Tsietse Mashinini and Sechaba Motsitsi who were detained by the police.

The CI and SACC were distressed by what happened in the townships. “Their immediate response was to co-operate in launching the Asingani Relief Fund to assist victims and the families: those shot, wounded or detained” (Walshe 1983: 209). The fund was raised on the basis of requests which helped to sustain families who had lost
their breadwinners, pay bail, and contribute to funerals. In 1976, organisations were established to support black students and other black leaders who were traumatized by the June 16 chaos. Buthelezi as one of the black South African activists said, “Being at the Black Parents’ Association (BPA) I became the chairperson in 1976. The BPA was formed after the June 1976 riots. I served in this organisation with people like Oshadi Phakati who was also banned in 1977 as member of the Christian Institute of Southern Africa” (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007).

The SACC was the only operational organisation still allowed to function; it was not directly attacked by the government, which did not see the prophetic SACC as a political threat like the CI and BPA. In 1970-1977 under the leadership of John Rees, the General Secretary of SACC, the overseas donors shifted their financial support to the SACC. His successor was Bishop Desmond Tutu (1978-1984) who also became one of the prophetic voices of the SACC against the apartheid system. In 1983-1991 and 1992-1994 Buthelezi succeeded Bishop Peter Storey (1980-1983) when the latter retired as president, and he worked at the SACC during the whole period up to the unbanning of the PAC, the ANC and the Communist Party, until the release of Nelson Mandela from Robben Island. Buthelezi served several terms as the SACC president, together with four General Secretaries: Bishop Desmond Tutu, Rev. Dr. Beyers Naudé (1984-1987), Rev. Frank Chikane (1993) and Dr. Brigalia Bam (1994-1997). Rev. Dr. Allan Boesak, Rev. Dr. Simon Gqubule and Mrs. Sally Motlana became his deputy presidents respectively.

In 1972, Buthelezi was a member of the “SACC Justice and Reconciliation Committee” (Deane 1978: 34). In 1988 at the Sixth General Assembly in Maphumulo, he said, “Last year I was re-elected as President of the SACC. Apart from attending to routine things of the Council. I was recently part of a delegation that went to meet the leadership of the African National Congress (ANC)” (Sixth General Assembly Minutes 1989). The colleagues of Buthelezi listed above possessed unique gifts that empowered Buthelezi as the SACC president and served the interests and visions of SACC. In 1976
in the midst of the political crisis Buthelezi was resident in Soweto: the only mainline church Bishop whose diocesan headquarters were right in the midst of the township.

At the SACC National Conference at St. Barnabas College Johannesburg during 1988, in the opening address Buthelezi pointed out, “When we focus attention to what kind of concrete actions the church should take in order to dismantle apartheid, we should see more and more clarity about the being of the church. Our ecclesiology should give the shape to our social ethics and not the other way round” (Buthelezi 1988a: 16). According to him, the church should not be confused with the apartheid politics and powers caused to create the fear of one’s neighbour. Thus the church would not be seen as an oppressive institution which prevented the people from enjoying the resources of God. When the church denied these to people it became hypocritical, which assisted the apartheid self-righteousness which was profoundly unrighteous in its harshness and evil. At the same conference, Nolan pressurized the church: “We Christians cannot just sit back and wallow in our weakness. We must not try to make a virtue of powerless and helplessness. The truth is that often enough we are simply afraid of power struggles and look for excuses to avoid being involved” (Nolan 1988a: 6). Nolan and Buthelezi were of the view that when the church abandoned the struggle against apartheid it had lost its vocation as the called church.

Buthelezi used to attend meetings of the SACC as one of the delegates of ELCSA, delivering a number of papers. The SACC policy was that papers would be delivered on the emphasis of action, not just reflection. When he became the president of the SACC the LWF supported the SACC financially. Buthelezi as the SACC president would address issues making use of Evangelical Lutheran theology. A major change that he made in the SACC was the introduction of the presidential address. Before he became the president only the general secretary would give an address. From after 1976 up till the dawn of the rebirth of South Africa, Buthelezi as both president of the SACC and bishop of ELCSA-Central Diocese carried out other political actions, including confronting relevant government Cabinet Ministers for the purpose of demanding the release of political activists who had been detained without trial. This led them to visit
the detainees in prison. Manas Buthelezi reminisced, “I remember the day when I and the local Circuit Dean presented ourselves to the Krugersdorp Prison and sought permission to see one of our detained pastors. The commanding officer said: We do not have Reverend Molefe Tsele here; we only have Prisoner Molefe Tsele” (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007). Amongst ELCSA pastors who were detained were the current Dean of Soweto Circuit, S. S. Mugivhi, Revs. T. S. Farisani, S. Malebo, and N. P. Phaswana, now the Bishop, to name just a few. After 1994 individual pastors decided to serve in government, private sectors and ecumenical bodies, which created divisions within the borders of ELCSA. We will expand on this later in the next chapter. Buthelezi retired from service in the SACC in 1994.

He supported the *Kairos Document*, which was drafted in 1985 and revised in 1986 but he did not sign it. He argued,

“I did not sign the *Kairos Document* because if you sign theological statements it means that you agree with each and every statement. As a Lutheran I had to stand with the Lutheran teachings. It was difficult to reflect and comment objectively about such a situational and passionate document as Kairos. It was basically meant to be heard not to be analysed” (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007).

Buthelezi viewed the Kairos Document as an anti-apartheid document. He critiqued the Kairos Document, as did other theologians, in order for it to be modified in its theological expression and move beyond political expression. This led to the second edition published in 1986. In 1988 Buthelezi made comments on the document: “People have appropriated the theological territory. They may not understand its contours and layout or who legitimately owns it. That is why the first edition of the Kairos Document was also signed by people who, one would correctly say, had never studied theology or read any book on theology. There has come about another generation of theologians, the generation of the people. One can debate the question of legitimacy, but no one can deny the reality of the appropriation of the theological territory by the people” (Buthelezi
The *Kairos Document* was circulated among churches, institutions and individuals because it was accepted positively as a response to apartheid. It remained a theological expression and a controversial document in the history of South Africa. Amongst other theological documents, which also contributed against the apartheid system were the *Belhar Confession* (1982) and *Evangelical Witness in South Africa* (1986). Prophetic confessions and declarations by churches such as the Roman Catholic Church (1957), ELCSA (1977) and other evangelical churches declared apartheid as a sin and heresy which proclaimed the radical gospel, as an agent of social justice transformation in the South Africa of the time. Regarding the *Kairos Document* Nolan pointed out, “The Kairos Document went a step further by starting from the present political crisis in an attempt to understand what the gospel means for us in our context of conflict and crisis” (Nolan 1988b: 25). This process was known as contextual theology or contextualisation where the gospel entered a dialogue with the South African context of the time.

### 3.5. Conclusion

Buthelezi demonstrated a *prophetic ministry*. His role was to identify challenges and needs in the South African community. His achievement was that he worked in the said community as a committed person for the sake of the liberation of South Africa. We have seen that he challenged the LWF to take a stand on the *status confessionis* and the entire church. He also became a mediator in peace keeping meetings between the students and the regime during the 1976 uprising. He challenged the apartheid governmental bodies and the church to attend to the needs of the black people, doing so by facilitating processes of harnessing the management and leadership gifts of local people towards self-help, self-sufficient and self-management for the purpose of achieving their liberation. The following chapter explores Buthelezi as the leader of ELCSA.
CHAPTER 4
Buthelezi as the church leader

4. Introduction
This chapter attempts an analysis of the way Buthelezi used his time as the leader of ELCSA. It deals with the development and existence of the diocese he served and how it was actually formed. One cannot speak about Buthelezi without discussing the background of his church. The reason we want to do so that he also contributed to it. Analysing and reflecting in this chapter, we will also highlight aspects of the ideal pastors who devote themselves to the threefold ministry of the so-called Full-Time, Secondment and Self-Supporting, of which we will propose a fourth ministry that of the laity and its challenges.

4.1. The fifth diocese
The Central Diocese was the fruit of the unity of the four Evangelical Lutheran Churches. In the merged church each of those regions was transformed into Dioceses under the ELCSA church-wide. There were four dioceses in all; in 1975 the first Presiding Bishop was Paulus Ben Mhlungu of the ELCSA-South Eastern Diocese and the first General Secretary of ELCSA church-wide was Rev. Dr. Manas Buthelezi.

The first Church Council resolved to create the fifth Diocese in an area where all these regional churches had congregations and also where there was a high level of ethnic diversity: the largely urban grouping of Johannesburg, Pretoria, the Witwatersrand and the Vaal, now Gauteng Province. The first synod of the new diocese was held at Eersterus in Pretoria on 24-25 September 1976, at the height of the Soweto uprisings. The fifth diocese had 200 000 Evangelical Lutheran members. The second Synod was held in Mamelodi West in 1980. The Synod decided to call the new diocese the Central Diocese, as discussed previously.

It was born in the midst of the 1976 students’ riots and political uprisings. The whole decade was characterized by one political crisis after another, with education as the
overriding issue. The diocese was affected in one way or another. In the Central Diocesan Synod which was held at Kagiso, Krugersdorp on 26-29 August 1982 Buthelezi in his report emphasized: “With ELCSA God has created amongst our people a sense of belonging which no human hand can take away. The Central Diocese is not only a historical fact but it is here to stay” (ELCSA church minutes no. 3, 1982). Buthelezi was profoundly confident that even if South Africa was divided because of apartheid the Central Diocese would remain united. Challenges that faced this diocese were to overcome the divisions forced by ethnic groupings as these congregations and parishes were formed according to their ethnic background. Thus Buthelezi and his administration were faced with resistance congregants, given their origin, because some of them did not want to leave their regional churches. After the formation of the Central Diocese its administration began work in January 1, 1977; some Evangelical Lutheran members resolved to leave ELCSA to form their own churches. These were members who resisted the merger, although other evangelicals supported the merger and its dynamics of ethnic grouping. The offices of the diocese were in Braamfontein, housing predominantly white citizens by apartheid design and definition. The diocesan office was forced by the government of the time to move to the largely black township known as Soweto, Central Western Jabavu. Buthelezi officiated the dedication and opening of the diocesan headquarters. On the cornerstone was engraved: “Blessed shall you be when you come in and blessed shall you be when you go out Deut. 28: 6.” The foundation stone was laid by him on 23rd July 1982. The complex consisted of three building blocks containing a ground floor and a first floor. Two building blocks were used for sleeping purposes. The first was used for administrative purposes. The diocese also consisted of a bishop’s parsonage, a chapel, a hall and a packing place.

4.2. The challenges to the unity of the Central Diocese

Amongst the challenges were to create a united administration, with its ethnically diverse congregations. This diocese was faced with pluralism of social and cultural factors for a long time. Buthelezi said “I had the task of bringing together the different traditions namely Transvaal region, South Eastern region, Cape Orange region and Tswana region. In spite of baptism into Cape Orange diocese, Western diocese; the
features and remnants of missionary traditions were still felt and visible which constantly cost division” (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007). When congregations were merged into parishes quite a number of congregations petitioned to pull out from the new diocese and to join the ELCSA Church as whole. For example in a congregation dominated by Tswana people, liturgy was celebrated in Tswana following the Hermannsburg tradition, and it would not join a congregation dominated by Zulu people who celebrated their liturgy in IsiZulu. These congregations would be joined to form a parish because of their proximity, which did not happen because of a differing cultural background. The church was also affected, even more when the government forcibly removed people from their homes to other areas because of the apartheid system. For Buthelezi who served in this diocese, it was a miracle that the structure of the Central Diocesan congregations, parishes, circuits and diocese itself did not disintegrate and was still functioning and that the congregations had, without any break, continued to support the administration in the period of Rev. J. G. Shobede (Eastern Circuit), E. N. S. Mutshekwane (Pretoria Circuit), H. N. Seloane (Soweto Circuit) and later on L. Sibiya (Western Circuit) since deans were cooperative (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007). Buthelezi together with his administration had an opportunity to develop the diocese. When there was a division in the diocese those who had left the ELCSA church were politicising the office of the bishop because other church members wanted this office to be held by one who belonged to their ethnic group. For Buthelezi, it was a mistake to do so. The office was a spiritual one according to the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Makhoela affirmed “There was a division in this Synod the Tswana’s (Tswana Region) broke away during the Synod. They wanted Bishop Nthuping to be the first Bishop of the Central Diocese. They were two services of the Tswana’s” (Interview with Rev. Makhoela 2007). Buthelezi would work tirelessly with his members of the Diocesan Council to unite the diocese. A further role played by Buthelezi was to train pastors and laity through workshops to understand the structure of the church.

In 1980s, a number of mayors in Sebokeng, Pretoria and Soweto were killed, some of whom were members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. They were buried by these
very evangelical pastors. They had been killed by police because they were working in collaboration with political leaders. In Duduza ‘necklacing’ was being used. In July 1989 members of this diocese were supposed to hold their annual procession to Jabulani Amphitheatre Stadium, but the police stopped it even before they arrived at the stadium. The government of the day saw such celebrations as threats. The diocese was therefore faced with challenges both inside the church and outside it.

4.3. Diocesan administration and leadership

Rev. Makhoela reported, “Buthelezi spent a lot of time writing speeches, sermons, teaching bible studies and presentations to both pastors and congregants” (Interview with Rev. Makhoela 2007). During 1977 the Diocesan Council members were “Bishop M. Buthelezi, P. J. Lucas, E.N. S. Mutshekwane, J. G. Shobede, H. D. Seloane, and L. Sibiya as deans, Mr. S. P. Kwakwa (President of the Diocesan Council), S. Maboa, P. Krope, D. Makgatlo, Mrs. H. O. Phahle, Rev. E. Chiloane (Executive Treasurer of the Diocesan Council) and Rev. T. Makgatho (Executive Secretary of the Synod Council)” (ELCSA Church minutes no. 3, 1982). The Rev. Makgatho joined the Diocesan Council after the retirement of Mr. T. Mafoko as Executive Secretary in 1982. Buthelezi and council members started visiting his parishes in 1981 where he spent his time with each parish from Wednesday to Sunday. One of his tasks was to evangelize and visit backsliders.

According to Buthelezi, administration was one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. He emphasised, “The Spirit governs the body. The church is governed by God’s Spirit. This is like when the human being is created as body and God gives the body the spirit. Everybody must work according to the gifts of the Holy Spirit” (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007). When Buthelezi was elected as the bishop of the central diocese he was living in Dube in Soweto and would travel to the diocesan offices in Braamfontein as mentioned. He drafted the liturgy, hymnbooks and the altar books. From 1988-1993, he served as the deputy Presiding Bishop of ELCSA church.
One notable achievement during the twenty years was the building of the Diocesan Centre through funds received from Christian brothers and sisters in Europe and America and from their own people. One example of the latter was that the Prayer Women’s League of the Central Diocese furnished the Hall with 1000 chairs consisting more than R100 000. Parishes and circuits also contributed other furnishings. Many of their landmark decisions were made at the diocese. There was no money for launching the new administration, yet the first salaries were to be paid in January 1977. The responsibility of laying the foundation for the financial administration fell on the shoulders of Rev. E. M. Chiloane. It was a miracle that the Central Diocese sent to their pastors the first salary cheques from the income they had received from the congregations.

Buthelezi said it was difficult for the diocese to construct the Diocesan Centre financially. He added, “In 1977, Rev. E. M. Chiloane set a standard and pattern of financial administration, which was so high that even now it has not yet been surpassed” (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007). Towards the end of 1988, Rev. Chiloane passed away, as Diocesan Treasurer having helped to build a system of accounting that made diocesan members all proud of this evidence of the presence of local talent and know-how, which only needed to be recruited and harnessed. Rev. Chiloane was both the Executive Treasurer of Central Diocese and the General Treasurer of ELCSA church-wide. In 1989, Mr. Hemut Schrader became his successor as the Diocesan Treasurer. Buthelezi said that Rev. Chiloane was an expert in the administrative framework of checks and balances asserting, “It is natural to pay tribute to the Rev. Chiloane who contributed a lot towards building the diocese. Rev. T. Makgatho together with Rev. Chiloane both contributed in building the diocese. When seculars were signed by myself, Rev. Makgatho and Rev. Chiloane were working together in the name of unity” (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007). Buthelezi called them to draft the diocesan reports, as they worked together as a team.

The financial support of pastors remained a top priority within the diocese. From the beginning of 1982 the Diocesan Council decided with the blessings of the Church
Council to add an allowance of R 20.00 to each pastor’s salary. The diocese was able to pay its church workers through fundraising for a salary pool and Sunday offerings. The diocese paid its church workers, rentals and administration from the money which was collected through the thanksgiving for Holy Baptism, confirmation class, Holy Communion, harvest, tithes, marriages and such like events. The people in the congregations continued to support the church financially. Whenever the diocesan council made appeals, routine or special, congregations responded in a most humbling way. Buthelezi would say, “I wished the quality of my leadership matched their steadfastness.” Whatever problems they had were encountered mainly in the way they led and motivated congregations at various levels. Buthelezi would organise workshops on stewardship and finance and taught Evangelical Lutherans about tithing and other forms of thanksgiving. On the issue of finance Buthelezi recognised that the diocese contained members whose daily occupation had something to do with money, either accountants or business women and men. He encouraged such people to assist the diocese in terms of handling money and ensuring that money was well kept and used in the most profitable way. However, it was a reality that the living conditions of church workers were a challenge where both ELCSA church-wide and the Central Diocese were unable to supply fair living. We will explore this subject later.

4.4. The purpose of the diocese
The Central Diocese was used by political parties and other organisations for the purpose of meetings. Buthelezi said “We were also honoured in providing a venue for the first National Executive of African National Congress (ANC) inside the country after its unbanning” (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007). As Makhoela remarked, “During the 1980s all prominent leaders such as Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa who was a Lutheran at Chiawelo Congregation in Soweto and others used the diocese as a refuge during the leadership of Bishop Manas Buthelezi” (Interview with Rev. Makhoela 2007). The Central Diocese was not just a place of worship but also one where the community was given a platform to run its day to day business. The diocesan centre, during the Soweto uprisings and beyond, became a meeting place where politicians held their meetings. One should ask: If the evangelical churches gave politicians and
political parties the platform to hold their meetings during the political struggle, what is the contribution of the current government and political parties to the evangelical churches today?

Buthelezi held regular meetings with pastors as a group in annual conventions and with individual pastors, either at his initiative or at the request of a pastor. At the pastors’ conventions the regular Bible studies, inspirational and educational lectures very often were led by guest speakers. The diocesan centre was also used for services of fellowship and worship on Sundays. In fellowship, Buthelezi commented that if Christians in their diocese had fellowship with one another they merely lived out the relationship they had in Christ. Revivals were also held. As Buthelezi said, “In the revivals as preachers we preached sermons which caused a dramatic change in people’s lives. Through our sermons people were healed not only spiritually, but also physically” (Interview with Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi 2007). According to Buthelezi, revival was the work of God which was demonstrated through reading and listening to God’s Word.

There were also crusades which were held outside the diocese. This became more visible towards the end of his retirement, which was 1997. Buthelezi pointed out that in the diocese they would organise meetings for the preparation of crusades. Buthelezi and his colleagues would invite people (non-Lutherans) who would be part of the leading process in organising the crusades. A large tent was used for this purpose. The first was held at Protea in Soweto. Their purpose was to bring back the lost sheep, for instance gangsters, hobos, prostitutes, employed and unemployed people as well as back sliders. The crusades created hope for the homeless, depressed, prisoners and those who did not know Christ as their personal saviour. They were held from 19:00 at night. Buthelezi organised preachers from different denominations to come and be part of the crusades. Numerous Lutherans supported this movement and many viewed him as a prophet and a dynamic leader.
4.5. Church workers in the diocese

The diocese viewed pastors as church workers; this included those who worked in the diocese but were not pastors. Buthelezi was equipping his fellow pastors through workshops and pastors’ retreats. In March 1989 at the pastors’ retreat, he delivered a paper titled *the Ordained Ministry*. He noted, “Ordination is a seal to a calling while commissioning is for licensing to carry out certain functions. Ordination like marriage is a seal to an office of servant relationship with God” (Buthelezi 1989: 6). He emphasized that the ordained ministry was the ministry of God’s Word. For him, it was the Word that contributed the nature and function of the ministry. The ordained ministry was entrusted to the church as a whole and the Word shaped the ministry. It was essential that Buthelezi reinforced his view that the interests of pastors, bishops and deans could not be served by setting the bad example of disrespecting the church and its leaders. He emphasized the office of the ordained ministry, in that there was a need to encourage members of congregations not to lose respect for the office of pastors. Buthelezi’s view was that the weakness of the leadership in the diocese was that a pastor led the people using her or his own power. For him, a pastor cannot lead others without being led by God. He observed that as the diocese they did not emphasise the Holy Spirit and that to be a new community of believers all leaders needed to re-discover the discipline of prayer coupled with fasting and the reading of God’s Word. The understanding was that the basic purpose of fasting was to spend quality time with God.

Certain Lutheran disciples were also spiritually hungry and experienced starvation while other disciples underwent both spiritual and material (social) starvation. Some pastors and ‘lay people’ operated in a position of neutrality, given the challenges that ELCSA church-wide faced. When one was baptised and had accepted the gospel one could not be neutral. Hence the gospel was not meant for believers to be neutral and they should never become neutral. In this reflection questions such as these should be raised: What was the future of ELCSA? Within the ordained, who was going to remain in full-time ministry in the church while the church did not provide a healthy environment? Among self-supporting ministry, who would be allowed to be given the half rights of the ordained to participate in the church? Was it viable for all pastors to join the self-
supporting ministry; where would the church be in this notion? What resources were there in the church for equipping disciples for spiritual and material growth? Was the church also conscious that it lost resourceful disciples as they joined other denominations? What resources were there in the church for a healthy work environment for the ordained and church workers? Was the church still marketing the relevant product? Was the church still pursuing the agenda of Ecclesia semper reformanda? Amongst these questions a vital one was raised by Molefe Tsele: “The questions should not be who qualifies for election to positions of the Church. It should rather be: who can be most effective in a particular office for the service of the Church’s mission to the world?” (Tsele 2012: 9). From the church’s inception it existed to equip and enable the disciples and ensure a healthy environment for the other disciples (the ordained) through the common priesthood of all believers; today one can diagnose that there was instead a division in this common priesthood.

4.5.1. Called only by the Spirit of God, on behalf of the disciples

There was common agreement that those in the full-time ministry, secondment ministry and self-supporting ministry were disciples who were equally trained and ordained by the ELCSA church (ELCSA Constitution Part III, Chapter 3). Maimela pointed out that: “To be sure, the ordained person has privileges such as public preaching, conducting services, to exposing and forgiving sins, administering sacraments and exercising jurisdiction over the members of the congregation thereby guarding against wrong teachings and practices. But this in no way implies that a Christian minister has any power over the Christian community outside that which has been given him by the word, the power in the service of the gospel” (Maimela 1982: 128-129). As Klaus Nürnberger commented, the ordained “have to be trained to become competent in their jobs. Training is an obvious prerequisite of exercising a profession that demands expertise” (Nürnberger 2005: 165). This office was meant to recall that God called an ordained pastor to remain theologically sound and grounded in protecting the church of the Spirit. The ordained were practical pastors who always ensured that the church and its leadership and management were not paralysed or in disorder. Paul Althaus wrote that the ordained person “administers his office in the place of all and as the representative
of the entire community” (1966: 325). The ordained gained expertise and were expected to build, enable, empower and equip the disciples in order to assist them to spread the gospel. This would take place daily where the ordained were gifted differently to teach the Word of God, the history and heritage of the evangelical church, to guide disciples in order to understand the constitution and other guidelines of the church, and motivated them towards the area of evangelism and witnessing. The ordained were expected to create something out of nothing. This remained a challenge that ELCSA had to contend with. The ordained would be a living message among the disciples, the people of God.

4.5.2. The ordained ministry was a practical method

This ministry was instituted by the Spirit for the ordained to exercise the authority of Christ in the way Christ expressed his ministry. The ordained were set apart to serve the disciples as a gift for the edification of the one body. They were appointed by the new community to exercise their gifts on behalf of the others. Maimela defined the role of the ordained thus: “Preaching the word, to which other service such as administration of sacraments, baptism, confirmation, officiating at funerals and weddings are subordinate, is the highest function of Christian ministry” (Maimela 1982: 121). The church would remain chaotic if it did not preach and lead the disciples. This could cause them to go astray and experience spiritual starvation. The ordained remained in the church for this very purpose of being critical, to protect the disciples against false teaching (I Timothy 4: 1-5). Buthelezi asserted, “The ordained ministry is to teach and train the laity in the things and purposes of God and ‘laity’, is to do the works of service” (Buthelezi 2010: 1). The disciples were equipped to develop the skill of teaching others to be disciples of Christ Jesus. In the ELCSA, the disciples were viewed as of the same status, exercising various gifts the Spirit granted them to serve their neighbour out of love. The gifts endowed on the disciples would be used for the building up of the church and service to the world. Tsele critically pointed out, regarding part-time and full-time ministry: “What forms of ministry ‘best serves the mission of the Church in the world today’. Not which form is superior, or which is the correct form. The question should start with the purpose of ministry, ‘to serve the mission of the Church in the world’. It is for this SERVICE that God calls some to the ministry. It is not for privilege and power”
(Tsele 2012: 5). Full-time ministry was however defined as superior and part-time inferior, according to the ELCSA Church Council, which did not make the church effective.

The gifts of the ordained ministry were exploited and misused by some of the ordained. It was some of those who were trained in this ministry leaving the method of being a long learning life student. The main emphasis in the area of theological education was questioned in relation to the ordained who were no longer taking their calling serious. A further expression of a lack of proper teaching and training could be traced in the words of Maimela:

“We are aware that our pastors are among the best educated in the country to serve the congregations. But because they carry one routine ministry of visiting congregations to administer sacraments and to preach, there is hardly any time left for real training. Most of our pastors have their libraries fill with dust, they do not read” (Maimela 1980: 8).

This was a survey that Maimela carried out in the 1980s. Indeed in that present century there was still a routine ministry of visiting congregations, while the ministry of teaching and training continued to decline. Even during that time some of the disciples came to church only on the day of Holy Communion without having received the full package of Lutheran teaching and training. As Buthelezi asserted, “Unfortunately the children of God are not taught about their priesthood and royalty at this rate. Even on Sunday there is not enough time for programmed and meaningful teaching” (Buthelezi 2010: 10). It was only a few of the ordained who organised workshops and bible studies and only a few congregants attended those sessions. Most of the disciples spent more time in the social sphere and less in the spiritual sphere. These were disciples who hindered the ministry of the church because they lacked the training and teaching of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. The ordained ministry remained irrelevant. The pastors, deans and
bishops were overloaded with work so that they ended up failing as regarded their spiritual and administrative responsibility and accountability. The ministry of teaching and training suffered because there were no manuals or even books while the ordained did not put in place educators who were thoroughly trained by pastors in order for these educators to train the disciples in the congregations.

4.5.3. Were Maimela and Buthelezi ‘baptised’ by the Evangelical Lutheran heritage and history of theology?

As Maimela and Buthelezi addressed the practical ministries of both full-time and part-time ministries, were they theologically sound when they started to use *sola scriptura*? This was one of the Evangelical Lutheran church principles and a sound doctrine. Maimela observed,

“The Christian ministry (diakonia) according to the New Testament refers to an activity that is performed in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ and our fellows. The goal of such an activity is the building up, edification and nourishing of and care for the Christian community (Mt. 9: 35; 10: 42; 20: 26; Jn. 21: 15-17; 1 Cor. 12: 4-6; 2 Cor. 5: 18f; Eph. 4: 11ff; 1 Thess. 3: 1-3)” (Maimela 1982: 121).

If Christian Ministry was the goal of building up the Christian community surely education and training was an agent of self-giving love of God through Jesus Christ to people. Christian education and training was a theological basis to edify and care for the Christian community. The Christian community received an advanced freedom because it was in solidarity with the poor and the oppressed. The basics of education and training to the Christian community were the primary motivation within the context of liberation. Thus the mission of Christian education and training was defined within the history of God through Jesus Christ as an advanced educator. If the Christian community did not received education it would protest in support of the service of Lord Jesus Christ.
Buthelezi pointed out: “The Holy Spirit became a gift to the whole church. The individual members of the church were, however, called by the same Holy Spirit and given gifts by him in relation to the particular ministry to which they were individually called” (Buthelezi 2010: 6). The Holy Spirit had given spiritual gifts to individual members of the church in order for them to participate in the public arena (the world). Thus church existed to educate and train them in order to influence the public arena through the biblical and evangelical tools. The church was mandated by Jesus Christ to prepare these gifted members to create the kingdom of God over against kingdom of the public arena. The church was sent to liberate the public arena from oppressive systems, criminals and work in partnership with the poor to liberate themselves. The church was sent to educate and train its members according to the syllabus of Jesus Christ. It was tasked to critically examine church members’ forms of life to be influenced by evangelistic efforts and genuinely proclamation of Jesus Christ without being heretical. The church was understood as essentially social to demonstrate a liberating love to the public arena without a violation of Jesus Christ’s mission to the public arena. Its mission was to be in justice solidarity with others and inseparable with Jesus Christ who called them not be silent on issues of injustice to the poor and the oppressed. The presence of the Holy Spirit emancipated firstly the church before it could transform the public arena to an emancipated life.

The church could not reveal itself as a destructive and abusive household but as a Christian ministry to achieve a common goal towards transformation and liberation of the oppressive social orders of the public arena. Christian ministry (diakonia) aimed at service for furtherance of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. This was contained within the collective activity of preaching the gospel connected with the administration of the holy sacraments (Baptism and Communion), confirmation, and transforming-centred Christian education and officiating at weddings; funerals; blessings of cars and homes and such like activities. Maimela and Buthelezi indicated that during Jesus Christ’s time, after his resurrection and ascension, various ministries were introduced as situations enforced the need for diakonia, amongst them were the ministry of disciples, the ministry of the office of the seven and others. Each ministry had its specific role
centred on the Christian understanding of fellowship between God and people and between people and others with God. The forms of ministries introduced at various times were vehicles of fellowship and community development.

As Maimela and Buthelezi deliberated on the forms of ministries, they did not elaborate on how they survived financially. This raised the question of what the weakness and strengths of these ministries were. One could not deny that there were challenges within ministries. In the New Testament were successful as come believers were contributing towards their financial strengths and others even sold their land and distributed money to the needy (Acts 4: 32-37). It was clear that one ministry emerged after the other because of the challenges, which existed in the early ministry of the church. Ministries were established to edify and work toward unity in diversity among the people of God in obedience to the gospel. It was clear that all ministries were established within the general ministry of the priesthood of all believers. ELCSA was however, faced with an introduced part-time ministry to complement the full-time ministry and secondment ministry. This became a thorny issue in approximately the 1980s and 1990s where full-time pastors would work elsewhere yet still work for the church without payment.

4.5.4. The two Evangelical Lutheran various ministries were in dialogue
From the Evangelical Lutheran perspective all baptised believers were equal priests and stewards of the gospel who had equal responsibility and accountability to further the gospel to the world, since they were gifted variously. The context of this was the ministry of the ‘laity’ and the ordained ministry, linked by the priesthood of all believers. Martin Luther emphasised that “All Christians are truly of the spiritual estate, and there is no difference among them except that of office” (Luther 1966: 127). This was interpreted from the perspective of the noble spiritual gifts of the Spirit where every disciple in the church was entrusted with a gift. Maimela noted, though, that “The Lutheran Confessions are aware that in all practice all Christians cannot publicly minister and teach” (Maimela 1982: 128). He argued a baptised believer was called to preach and was commissioned by the Christian community. She or he was a pastor.
who worked on behalf of the entire membership of the church. She or he had to be
ordained by means of the ordination rite. Ordination was not a divine institution but a
public confirmation of the person’s already having been appointed by the Christian
community. Albeit the pastor worked on behalf of the congregation, she or he was
responsible to give guidance to the disciples to do their work. The disciples became
assistants of the pastor in keeping the church intact and in line with the Holy Spirit’s
mission through an effective strategy. The pastor as a facilitator taught and trained the
disciples to ensure that mistakes were prevented. She or he worked in collaboration
with all the structures of the church, constructively and critically. God called persons
through a vision or a strong conviction. A person declared to the church that she or he
was called by God to work in the church. The disciples of God tested her or him in
different ways to verify whether she or he was indeed called.

4.5.5. Was a threefold self-supporting, secondment and full-time ministry still
a relevant possibility?
The ELCSA constitution defined these ministries as follows: the pastors were trained
and ordained by the church where full-time ministry included those who were assigned
to a parish and received a stipend from the church. Secondment ministry encompassed
those seconded to other church related organisations for ministerial purposes. They
would receive their stipend from those organisations. The tent-marking ministry (self-
supporting ministry or part-time) referred to those who assisted in an identified
congregation but did not receive a stipend from the church (ELCSA Constitution Part III,
Chapter 3). There was a view that part-time ministry or self-supporting ministry was (or
would be) for people who were trained for ministry on their own and volunteered to
serve the church while maintaining their current employment. As regulated, such people
would serve only in the parishes (areas) where they were members and even then the
church had no obligation to grant this ‘privilege’. The later ‘exodus and purging’ of
clergy from full-time into self-supporting ministry derailed this system; hence the
principles were not applied consistently across ELCSA. The consequent expression of
regret (in private by the architects of this framework) was that the wrong people went
into the ministry. Molefe Tsele rightly puts this as follows:
ELCSA cannot deal with those who offer their service freely and voluntarily, without asking any remuneration from the church. It is as if you cannot be a properly ordained minister, if you are not on the salary roster of the church. But ordained ministry is more than drawing a salary, as we will argue. I know of Lutheran churches in some parts of Africa, where the Diocese has absolutely no revenue, and ordained pastors are encouraged to raise chicken and other agricultural produce, sell them, and make a living, whilst joyfully offering their service to the Church as ordained ministers. Many are encouraged to run private schools as NGO’s, in order to earn a decent living. We will be arguing that the Lutheran teaching of ministry, is more theologically nuanced than that, and that the matter of monthly salary, though important for the livelihood and dignity of Church workers, is really theologically irrelevant (Tsele 2012: 12).

Thus the ELCSA church-wide leadership could not prevent those pastors who were in self-supporting ministry from serving the church in all positions or prohibit those who started a business for a living as long as it did not jeopardize their ministry. At best this had always been a tolerated ministry while the secondment ministry had always been for ordained ministers who were released by the church into other spaces or institutions. Because of the power plays in ELCSA the purpose thereof had been shifting over the years.

Maimela declared, “Unfortunately in our over-centralization and over-management people have come to believe that it is to pastors, deans and bishops that the responsibility of winning the world for Christ has been given. Too often church officials take people off the hook by shouldering all burdens that rightly belong to congregations” (Maimela 1980: 3). Indeed ELCSA had not offered a practical method of leadership and management that included all the disciples towards the advancement of the mission of God (Missio Dei) to the world. It only sang the chorus of the common priesthood of all
believers, which was not visibly practical. As mentioned, pastors, deans and bishops were continuously over burdened with the work of being administrators, secretaries, treasurers, teachers and trainers, counsellors, preachers, evangelisers and offerers of service (diakonia). The crisis facing the ordained ministry was that pastors, deans and bishops did not receive refresher courses which equipped them for the role of developing themselves in order to develop the disciples and congregations. This led to their failure in equipping and enabling the disciples to assist them to carry the mission of God to the world. For the so-called full-time, secondment and self-supporting workers, the church did not furnish adequate support material or a healthy environment. In 1990 in the ELCSA Seventh General Assembly N. P. Phaswana was advocating for change towards social justice in the church:

“That those who call for a living wage within ELCSA argue that bishops are the only employees who earn salaries worth the salt. They also have funds which they administer which are not, in most cases, audited. Now with paradise on fire, how can we silence them without being accomplices to the cleaning of ELCSA financial books? Those who formed their fellowships were silenced … Truly ELCSA must introspect herself” (Phaswana 1990: 5).

In the Middle Ages the Roman Catholic Church accorded the pope nearly all power and authority, with the ‘laity’ exercising almost none at all. This was also the case in ELCSA where bishops and councils took decisions which undermined the church and extended financial exploitation to support this hierarchical structure. ELCSA leadership faced a majority of the disciples who were burdened with the knowledge that the church did not have money as its members were already suffering from poverty. It was time for the true disciples to challenge the ELCSA leadership in that it abused authority and power, as strongly opposed to sola scriptura and Evangelical Lutheran theology or confessions.

It seemed that the church had retrogressed to the view of the Roman Catholic Church that only the pope could interpret the sola scriptura to be valid and only he was allowed to summon a council (Luther 1966: 126). This method prevented the church from
experiencing its continuous process of reformation. Both the ordained and the ‘laity’ were accorded certain functions, responsibility and accountability within the church, the purpose being order and quality administration by qualified leaders. Bishop Manas Buthelezi who struggled for South African liberation in 1970s on the side of the poor and the oppressed, similarly to Bishop N. P. Phaswana who was his successor in 2000 who also held the same belief in liberation. When two bishops occupied the leadership of the church they forgot about social justice within it. Why were bishops who had fought for the poor allowed the church, which paid a smaller living stipend to the full-time pastors?

Definitely pastors would not be able effectively to deliver service on behalf of the disciples because they were denied human rights and dignity as workers of the church of the Spirit of God. The full-time pastors were denied resources such as a living salary, medical aid, a healthy working environment and so on. They were prevented from giving the facts to claim their rights about their inadequate stipend and other benefits. ELCSA even failed to furnish its full-time workers with these needs, even if in 1990 at the Seventh General Assembly (GA) it had accepted and introduced a complementary self-supporting ministry in order to meet the financial needs but also to strengthen the work force. Maimela went a step further:

“It is simply a practical fact that the ideal of having one pastor for every congregation, no matter how desirable, is for us not an option at this point in history. For we know too well that we neither have the financial resources nor the man-power to make this ideal of one full-time pastor for every congregation a practical reality” (Maimela 1982: 121).

The method introduced to have one pastor to every congregation was a system that would ensure congregants’ needs were met on daily basis. Even though there were full-time pastors who occupied those congregations the challenge was that the ELCSA church could not afford to provide them a living salary and other significant needs. ELCSA church was a struggling church (ecclesia militans) as it could not afford to take care of its workers due to its financial resources. It was an empowered notion of God to
view ELCSA church to be with full-time pastors but a disturbing view for full-time pastors not paid well. The criticisms of ELCSA church about the established life of full-time pastors were oppressive as far as evangelistic liberation was concern. ELCSA church could be liberated to think that full-time ministry would be highly necessary and theologically legitimate to achieve the mission and mandate of God through Jesus Christ. This could be achieved only when part-time pastors' significant needs were met and managed every well. If ELCSA church were to provide security to the part-time pastors it would have developed mutual confidence and to build a trust with its workers. ELCSA church would indeed furnish a united act with part-time pastors for the common good of this church of God. This would remain history as harmonious to the ELCSA church as a transformed community. The more empathically ELCSA church recognised its full-time pastors by meeting their significant needs it proposed an impressive demonstration of quality security and sustainability.

Hence the self-supporting ministry "was accepted in principle by the GA; (and that an) appropriate committee (was) to work out the details" (GA minutes 1990: 318). The self-supporting ministry, which was designed and accepted by the ELCSA-GA, as a method to alleviate the burden of ELCSA church limited financial resources. This ministry was designed for pastors who volunteered to work for part-time at ELCSA church. This was an opportunity for ELCSA church to embrace the part-time pastors while ELCSA church was still working on an ideal of independence and self-sufficient on its financial resources. ELCSA church failed to meet the significant needs of its full-time pastors as a result they began to apply to notify ELCSA church that they were no longer full-time workers at ELCSA. This occurred “Following a submission of a Petition by a group of Pastors organised under Lumasa during the General Assembly Session, the matter was referred to a committee for deliberation and recommendation” (Tsele and Buffel 2003: 2). This committee was tasked to significantly develop recommendations that would provide the fruit of peace and justice towards a common good relationship between ELCSA church and the part-time pastors. It was to conduct the day to day of ELCSA church righteousness relationship with the part-time pastors in action to provide a practical reality to serve every congregation with dignity. This committee had to be
critical of itself, to ELCSA church and part-time pastors in order to achieve a fruitful working relations within and without in danger of being destroyed for the task which it was given. This project was an endeavor to create a gift according to God’s design and purpose for ELCSA church to embrace this part-time ministry, as the significance of development for the kingdom of God.

The self-supporting workers who were classified as working part-time in the church were also denied their full rights working in the church. In 1993 the ELCSA leadership was emphatic that “A pastor who entered into the self-supporting ministry shall not hold the office of the bishop, dean, parish-pastor and/ or any position in the executive councils of the church. A pastor in the self-supporting ministry shall not be entitled to free housing” (Church Council 72. 1993: 14). This would indeed cause the slow death of the church, particularly when there were pastors who were able to take the church forward as far as leadership development was concerned. There was inconsistency in the operation of ELCSA where in one parish the self-supporting pastor was a pastor-in-charge of the parish but in another parish a self-supporting pastor working alone in a particular parish was not a pastor-in-charge. On the other hand the self-supporting pastors and full-time pastors lamented that the ‘laity’ occupied church positions while employed elsewhere, which was not a major issue in itself, yet this did not apply to the pastors who were employed elsewhere. In as much as ‘lay’ people who were employed elsewhere could serve the church, the self-supporting pastors ought to be given their full rights within the church too. The ELCSA leadership made it difficult for this self-supporting ministry to be effective in complementing full-time ministry. The full-time workers were in solidarity with the self-supporting workers who held that the church could not use the latter to attend to its problems when there was an emergency.

The ELCSA leadership brought division within the church because it viewed full-time ministry as superior, and self-supporting ministry as inferior. When the latter ministry was introduced it was to assist the ordained ministry to be productive and inseparable from full-time ministry. These two ministries offered equal service to the spirituality of the cross, economically and socially empowering the disciples to carry out the strategic
mission of Spirit of God. The so called bishops spent much time outside the country where they even failed to see to the essential services to run their dioceses. They were challenged, but defended themselves, arguing that this was one of their constitutional tasks. Self-supporting pastors did excellent work in their parishes which they serviced, compared to the bishops who denied the self-supporting pastors their full rights. Some bishops did not permit their deputy to take care of the dioceses when they were away. Diocesan Council meetings could not take place when the bishops were not there. This was to bring the growth of the church into disgrace.

The full-time pastors also had a touch of excellence in doing their work, as they provided essential services to the church. Both full-time and self-supporting workers were equal pastors who were accorded equal responsibility and accountability to carry out duties in any parish, according to the guidance of *sola scriptura* and the Evangelical Lutheran principles, as opposed to the way in ELCSA leadership was treating these various ministries. This leadership would not repent of dividing the church and being instrumental towards the ministry of hope in order to allow it to be a truly liberated and transformed church. The fourth type ordained ministry, which grouped together the three ministries could not be introduced and embraced where secondment, full time and part-time already could not be regarded as equal ministries.

**4.5.6. A betrayed ‘laity’ leadership**

“In case *missional leadership* is conferred by God and missional values may be inferred. When the leadership is faithful and competent the church benefit; when the opposite happens, the church suffers. Such an experience can be great or absolutely terrifying” (Mathye and Masoga 2010: 1). *Missional leadership* of ELCSA church could only be intrinsically consisted of good church governance that is opposed to traumatic church leadership. Where there was an ordered structure of values the missional leadership had a collective purpose for ELCSA church to advance to its mission of God. In this light would mean that the ecclesiastical structure listened to the voice of God in giving important leadership to the missionary calling of God’s people. When the absolutely terrifying leadership happened it was because people did not listen to the voice of God.”
The ‘lay’ church leadership was faced with a crisis when people were elected to occupy key positions who had no knowledge of the church constitution and other church policies, as a result of them not being trained to carry out the ministry of the church. The context of the church was very clear that the same leaders had destroyed the *Missio Dei* and continued to do so because they took advantage of their key positions. As they were in leadership for a particular period, the church left for the next term again. When workshops were organised, leaders of the ‘laity’ did not see the need to attend them. This genuinely destroyed the image of the true church. This was not what Jesus Christ had called the church to be. Good decisions were sabotaged by ‘laity’ in key positions, held at their personal level to suit them, as opposed to being Christ-centred. The ‘laity’ continued to drink a poison which led them to elect people with long service who were well known because their parents and grandparents had been in the congregation or parish or church for a long time or had been born in families where the pastors were produced. These were people who were elected but were not qualified morally, professionally and spiritually. Such people were elected on the basis of popularity, which destroyed the future of the church of the Spirit.

4.6. Conclusion

This chapter has established that everyone in the church should remember that the Holy Spirit has called every member of the church to be entrusted with a particular responsibility and accountability for an office or ministry. The ‘lay’ and ordained ministries belong to the common priesthood of all believers equally. Bishops, deans, pastors and councils should not think that they are higher and holier than the ‘laity,’ or the contrary. Indeed the church needs a continuous reform guided by the gospel, as Luther insisted. In the self-supporting, secondment and full-time ministry, all ordained pastors should be given equal status and policies regarding work, as a technique to develop a visionary leadership and management, demonstrating collective excellence in her or his performance. She or he is expected to know her or his profession very well in order to remain ahead of the disciples of the Spirit. This is done within the context of their spiritual, economic and material needs. She or he is expected to do great things
through preaching, teaching and counselling. All this happens through faith in Christ alone. This kind of a pastor carries out God's ministry in tandem with a touch of excellence. She or he does not advocate gossip with congregants.
CHAPTER 5
Conclusion: Challenges and Recommendations

5. Introduction
There were challenges which faced South Africa in the era of apartheid which called for its response by Black Theology. Among these were social, cultural, political and socio-economic injustices. Education was another challenge which could be traced back to 1976 and is still a major issue in the current South Africa. This impelled radical people such as Manas Buthelezi who came to lead the struggle against apartheid and to provide possible solutions to end injustice in this era. This chapter will review the major problems identified in this research and diagnosis the current South African exploitation of the poor and oppressed by the previous political white elites and emerging black elites. A further challenge faces ELCSA where there is a decline of quality leadership and management, accountability, transparency, training and teaching. Recommendations are highlighted to give solutions to these challenges, such as revisiting Black Theology as a response to current social ills of this country, and also revisiting teaching techniques used to equip the disciples for the mission of the church to the world and provide questions to probe our thoughts.

5.1. Conversation with Black Theology
Buthelezi has developed the method of Black Theology as an expression of how the church should be committed in being critical towards the state on matters of socio-economic and politics of the South African situation. He has argued that Black Theology is there to empower the oppressed and to encourage the black people to embrace who they are even when the white government was oppressing them. He productively used it as a weapon against apartheid in South African to manage the transition to democracy. He worked constructively with institutions such as the SACC and others to show that apartheid will not have a permanent stay in the South African country that belongs to God. When one engages in conversation with the application of Black Theology’s relevance in the current South Africa we need to align ourselves with the power analysis of Charles Villa-Vicencio in 1990s:

‘Dr. Manas Buthelezi’s Contribution To Evangelical Lutheran Church In Southern Africa’s Struggle Against Apartheid In South Africa (1970s-1990s)’ Kenokeno Mashabela
“The collapse of apartheid was otherwise. The apartheid state was not defeated on the battlefield” (Villa-Vicencio 1998: 185). Villa-Vicencio raised this in context with the observation of a human rights lawyer: “In post World War II European people paid with their lives for the past deeds. In South Africa state torturers could walk with a pension” (Villa-Vicencio 1998: 185).

In this post-apartheid period although labeled as a democracy, questions of political, religious, cultural and economic injustice are still thorny issues. Those whites who gained political and economic power in the previous apartheid system are still indeed living with the wealth stolen from the poor who are experiencing political and economic exploitation to date. The current government has also added to the exploitation of the poor, the marginalised and the exploited by stealing the resources of the downtrodden. A slogan regularly heard amongst South Africans states that, “the rich become richer and the poor become poorer.” This is a huge challenge to be addressed by all sectors and structures of South Africa.

This calls all South Africans to return to the drawing board of what Allan Boesak critically described in the 1970s as “The critical reflection of Black Christians on their involvement in the black liberation struggle, always keeping in mind that the oppressor cannot be liberated unless the oppressed are liberated” (Boesak 1978: 76-77). This is not only an invitation to Black Christians but also to White Christians, other communities of faith, those who do not belong to such communities, business sectors, organisations of social justice and all political parties themselves to revert to the authentic ministry of the liberation struggle against injustices of economic, social, cultural, religious and political power which is a perpetual by those who occupy the power structures of the present day South Africa.

Black Theology today is relevant, as we know that in post-apartheid the architects of Black Theology have betrayed the real democracy of South Africa by abandoning the prophetic ministry or public theology, claiming that now they can leave politicians to deal
with the South African political transition as they are qualified politicians. Is this really accurate? This was a major error committed by the likes of Dr. Manas Buthelezi, Desmond Tutu and others because their reasoning was to say they could now focus on the work of the church itself and that church leaders would not be involved in and committed to public issues or public theology; they would leave politics to politicians. Buthelezi and Tutu committed themselves to ecclesial issues full-time while other clergypersons such as Rev. Frank Chikane, Rev. Dr. Molefe Tsele and others decided to be swallowed by the new government, since they accepted leadership positions in the departments and commissions of the South African government. The same new democratic government thought it was relieved that it could not be critiqued by the prophetic ministry where the role players were the church leaders. The transition in the church led to a vacuum in politics where God has called upon the former to be once again critical as it guides, reprimands and embraces the government. There is no doubt that South Africa is currently in the chaos where justice, peace and security are not taken seriously. Church leaders in this current space and time must declare and challenge the current government and private institutions. These two institutions are representatives of what God demands them to deliver to the South African community. They must assure the community that massive social, political, moral and socio-economic dislocation of South Africa needs a merger change to better lives of South Africans.

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must lead its congregations to engage the public arena through the church theology of the two kingdoms.

The commitment of the SACC should focus on the revival of the prophetic ministry. South Africans are still disadvantaged by the current government in areas of poverty, unemployment, health care system, education, housing or infrastructure and so on. It is the task of the church to ensure that the misuse of funds as a result of ‘tenderpreneurship’ (benefiting through one’s connections from funds awarded by government to run projects for job creation) be stopped and the money used for the betterment of South Africa. As its duty the church must revisit Black Theology and begin to interrogate the current political status just as it did in the past. The churches are no longer interested in working together. Instead a new trend has emerged as individual churches compete against each other and focus on strengthening themselves financially at the expense of the poor. They do not even come together in addressing the social agonies of the poor and the oppressed. Sermons preached in churches today do not address the ills of society. Instead, ministers have begun to preach utopia to the poor. The church must leave its comfortable zone to secure itself by critically engaging itself in the public arena to be crucified. The church must bring hope to the South African public arena to boldly engage in the ministry for justice, peace and reconciliation as it proclaims justice of God to the current government. The church does this to remain the current government that democratic participation in the political and economic process gives the right to shape the community. When the community participates in the democratic processes by engaging the government means the basic human rights are fulfilled in a way of just social and political structures. The church has a mandate to engage the public arena as its ministry to proclaim social justice of the saving grace of God to address an abuse of human rights.
5.2. Diagnoses before prescription for the current South Africa

5.2.1. Wholeness of life defines the socio-political and economic freedom
Buthelezi argued that the *wholeness of life* defines the ‘impilo’, the concept of ‘botho’ or to belong. He declared that the people’s liberation should be driven by people accessing human basic resources for life. This means that the church should encourage the government to ensure that people are not exploited socially, politically, spiritually and economically in the South African landscape. The gospel for this current South Africa is that the majority of people, who are mainly black, are not free from the wounds of oppression and marginalisation. Some few whites are also experiencing poverty. In Nelson Mandela’s words, “The truth is we are not yet free; we have merely achieved the freedom to be free, the right not to be oppressed. We have not taken the final step of our journey, but the first step on a longer and more difficult road” (Mandela 1994: 17).

What is happening today is that those who are in economic and political power, whether private or public, are still oppressing the poor. What black theologians such as Buthelezi, Maimela, Chikane, Boesak, Naudé and others did in condemning oppression within humanity has not come to an end. The recent development in 2000s has been that South Africa has not gained economic freedom: the poor, the marginalised and the exploited still experience poverty as a perpetual form of apartheid. The basics of the apartheid system still operate although the previously white regime has been buried; unjust ideologies still exist in what is termed the new democratic government.

I argue therefore that the project of Black theology continues in the current South Africa. There is no doubt that inequality in black labour with unfair distribution of wealth, abuse of power and socio-political and economic opportunities are perpetuated to exploit the generosity of the oppressed and the poor.

5.2.2. The betrayal of the vernacular languages in the “middle class” schools
During the Soweto uprisings in 1976, Buthelezi strongly negotiated with the apartheid government and the students to obtain the best education that was to confirm and secure the future of the South African situation. Buthelezi currently encourages the
youth to focus on education just as he did in the past when students became rebellious against the previous system of education, and boycotted classes. Today Buthelezi maintains that education is a key investment for South Africa’s spiritual, cultural, political and socio-economic justice and development. Church and state are both responsible to ensure that education remains a priority in the development of South Africa.

The ‘middle class’ schools or what is termed ‘dikolo tša makgowa’ (meaning schools which used to be attended by white learners) paralyse and dethrone South African vernacular languages, betraying these as a result of the said schools not offering black learners the opportunity to learn them. A lot of young people who were born after the 1980s and attend or attended the middle class schools cannot read or write properly. It is unacceptable that black people are unable to express themselves in their own languages. Another contributing factor is that parents do not speak vernacular languages with their children. They use the English that the June 16, 1976 classes advocated, refusing to be taught in Afrikaans. However, the questions remain: did the 1976 class want English to be the only language used in South Africa today as opposed to the vernacular languages? In the future will English be permanently spoken in South Africa and the global world?

A large number of learners in the middle class schools are the children of the people who fought the old system of education under apartheid. Among those learners are the children of teachers who teach in the township schools while their children are in the middle class schools. These teachers believe that township schools are not of a good standard, given the education system and infrastructure. This includes the educated and non-educated who can afford to send their children to the private schools or middle class schools. This remains a crisis in that those who fought against an unjust education system create or even perpetuate the same system instead of reforming it into a just one. Children must be given classes in their vernacular languages which should be taught by people who are equipped to do so. The vernacular must be legalised in all private schools to ensure that all children are able to speak their vernacular languages. In their respective homes parents must always encourage their children to speak, read
and write these languages in order to preserve the African languages that God has given them.

5.3. The wisdom of Black Theology for the current South Africa

Black Theology still prescribes that those who are wealthy and in power cannot live by exploiting the generosity of others. These employees continue to work hard, increasing the wealth of their employers while being exploited. The poor, oppressed and marginalised cannot face the agonies and discomfort of this current South African context. The church is challenged by the gospel of Jesus Christ to furnish quality leadership and management of God’s resources to meet the basic needs of the ordinary South Africans. The church has been mandated to ensure that South African citizens enjoy real freedom as regards spiritual, cultural, political and socio-economic factors. It needs to remind the government that it is a sin to exploit ordinary citizens who live in the situations described.

All political movements must first think of the people and not their own interests in governing South Africa. The main goal for political parties should be how they improve the quality of life of South Africans. These parties need to understand the importance of engaging ordinary people or citizens in the spirit of ‘The people shall govern’. The ruling political party must not focus on defending itself but work with other parties to find a solution to the problems of South Africa.

5.4. The agony within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (ELCSA)-church wide

ELCSA is continuously losing the mission of the Spirit in what we termed in chapter four the question of the priesthood of all believers. The present crisis within ELCSA stems from a damaged understanding of the common priesthood of all baptised believers, where the ordained ministry and the ministry of the ‘laity’ remain divided. There was a lack of service delivery within and by both the ordained ministry and that of the ‘laity’. ELCSA experienced chaos within the sphere of leadership councils where everyone did as she or he liked. Some of the ordained ministers no longer equip, empower and
enable disciples of Jesus Christ in the form of teaching and training. The current situation is similar to that of the 16th century, which was challenged by Martin Luther:

There are many bishops and preachers in the ministry, who do not serve God faithfully ... they lie down or otherwise play with their office. There are lazy and worthless preachers who do not tell princes and lords their sins. In some cases they do not even notice their sins. They lie down and snore in their office and do nothing that pertains to it ... Others play hypocrite and flatter the wicked gods and strengthen them in their self-will. Others still fear for their skins and are afraid that they must lose life and goods ... all these are not faithful to Christ ... it is far more seditious if a preacher does not rebuke the sins of the rulers; for they make people angry and sullen, strengthens the wickedness of the tyrants, become partakers in it and bear responsibility for it (Luther 1956: 48-50).

It seems that many ordained ministers continue to look for employment in the secular world, as they suffer from hunger, starvation, a lack of security and comfort for their families because of being underpaid by ELCSA. Of cause there are those ministers who are called to work in the secular world. The leadership of ELCSA continues to deny the ordained ministers who work in the Church a decent living wage and good working conditions. Tsele has vividly argued that

"We see this when for example choosing monastic life or mendacity (vow of poverty or a life of begging) or celibacy is regarded as a higher vocation. We know that this is one of the biggest heresies that Luther had to battle with, and ultimately defeat. What we now teach as Lutheran doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, was in reality Luther's answer to the false teaching of a hierarchy of the ministry of God's work" (Tsele 2012: 2-3).

The ordained are also denied their human rights and dignity of being called workers. Thus the continued struggle against the vow of poverty is that the ordained ministers
need security for themselves and their families. This ELCSA church-wide leadership remained unfaithful not only to the church but to Jesus Christ who founded and owns the church. The same leadership denies the self-supporting ordained ministers their full human rights and dignity to contribute their gifts and benefits, bestowed by the Spirit, such as being elected to hold church. They are regarded as having left the church, which is not the truth. The leadership has created a divide and rule method which regarded only those who are in full-time ministry as the ones who are working for the church, over against those in the part-time ministry.

The ordained ministry was opposed to the notion of the ELCSA leadership, in solidarity with Tsele’s words,

“Once ordained to the ministry of the Church, you cannot be part-time ordained. There is no such thing. Yes, you may earn your salary elsewhere, but in the church, you are on the roster of the ordained. Wherever you are, at whatever age you may be, even in your retirement, when you no longer earn a salary, you remain an ordained minister of the church” (Tsele 2012: 2).

All ordained ministers were equally ordained thus they deserve to appear in the clergy roster to serve the church. The ordained ministers seconded by the church to other institutions were classified as being full-time in the church because the church had established a relationship with those institutions. The question should be: what is the difference between self-supporting ministry and secondment ministry in executing the work of the church? Both of them are the same, even if the church has established a working relationship with other institutions or not. There are pastors who were regarded as ‘moonlighting’ because they were afraid of declaring their own businesses or employment. The current system of church leadership has created injustice with respect to the ordained ministry. Tsele has recently challenged the Church Council of ELCSA, asserting, “The ECLSA approach is a reactionary way of making decisions and developing policies, which results in absurdities, incoherent positions in many instances” (Tsele 2013: 4). Thus the Church Council has remained irrelevant instead of
being proactive in search for the building of the church as opposed to dictatorship. What undermined the ministry of the church of God was when the Church Council or leadership indicated that where there was a part-time pastor in the parish the Dean of the Circuit was in charge of the parish. Where there were part-time pastors in working relationship with a full-time pastor in the parish the full-time pastor would be inducted by the Dean while the full-time pastor would induct the part-time pastors.

In one circuit of which the researcher is aware, part-time pastors are numerous: each or more than one works in parishes and there are a few full-time pastors in their own parishes also. According to the leadership, where there are part-time pastors one Dean will be in charge of more than one parish in a Circuit, as a parish pastor and the part-time pastors are assistants. This is impossible and will never be. As regards day to day activities, would the Dean carry out pastoral work for those parishes? For instance on a particular Sunday when the parish council meetings are usually held the Dean would be an ex-officio member of the council. This would hinder the progress of the church. Recently in 2013, the Church Council adopted an unjust policy, which laid down that when the part-time pastor needed to return to full-time ministry at the age of 40 will not be accepted while the office of the bishop should be extended to the retirement age of 75 years. The leadership seemed to be dictating not only to the people of God but also to God herself and himself. There is no justice in this regard, and if this policy were to be approved by the GA there would be no future for this church.

The ELCSA is also divided on the part of the ministry of the ordained with respect to the matter of power as opposed to the essentials of service, as discussed earlier. ELCSA lives in contradiction, in declaring the secondment ministry full-time but denying self-supporting ministry the same status. Tsele observes,

“Evidence from how our parishes are run provides ample proof of this falsification and misdirected sense of piety. It is simply not true that pastors in full time ministry have opted for poverty. Numerous cases of complaints about the poverty stipend and calls for better working conditions have been documented. Equally false is the
error of viewing those in self-supporting ministry as if they have a lesser calling or have left the church or are somehow more money focused?” (Tsele 2013: 8).

The reality indicates that ELCSA leadership is the factor that paralyzes both self-supporting ministry and the full-time ministry and undermines the priesthood of all believers. The challenge for ELCSA is: if all its pastors become self-supporting and secondment, how will the essential services of the priesthood of all believers delivered?

5.4.1. Collapsed teaching and training
Maimela asserts “Naturally the multiplication of local pastors often leads to problems because some would be found unworthy leaders” (Maimela 1982: 125). ELCSA church-wide is faced with challenges where some of the ordained ministers are not equipping the disciples within this church. They wait for Sunday or for the disciples to ask for pastoral care and counseling. The service delivery within the church is disrupted, which leads to members joining other denominations although in some of these they continue to receive wrong teaching and training. In this church, we find some ordained ministers who make presentations without undertaking proper research or preparation as far as the Evangelical Lutheran doctrine and theological soundness are concerned. Only a few of the ordained ministers do provide quality presentations and sermons. Presentations or even sermons become misleading the ordained confuse the disciples on matters of the Evangelical Lutheran understanding of the Holy Communion where one finds the body and blood of Jesus Christ viewed as a symbol and not as the presence of Christ. This shows a lack of allocating themselves time to study, research and be critical of the Evangelical Lutheran documents or confessions. Some ordained ministers do not want to be questioned about the purpose the money is going to serve and become agitated by this. Training and teaching within the church is losing its value as the ordained ministers no longer seem interested in what the Spirit had called them to do.

Tsele proposes an overdue transformation to ELCSA: “We come from a wealthy tradition, led by the freedom of the Spirit, and we are called to celebrate the various
forms of ministry. We need to be faithful to our heritage hence we insist on diligent and serious preparation for candidates for the ordained ministry” (Tsele 2013: 11). Thus the proposed method is not a new effective drive for various ministries, which have been there in the early church. In fact, without fear and favour, Tsele calls ELCSA to return to *sola scriptura* as its primary source; secondly to the literature of the Evangelical Lutheran church heritage and history. Both Maimela and Buthelezi had written on the question of the ordained ministry, of course, tracing the early church ministry: the search was not for whether ministry should be secondment or part-time or full-time but for what has been termed as “celebrating the various forms of ministry”. This calls ELCSA church-wide to justly decide that these various forms would strengthen the network of the priesthood of all believers.

Recently the Church Council resolved that secondment could only be to church related institutions, so clergy could not be seconded to ‘government’, including chaplaincy services. There have been debates that secondment must be accorded only when the church has been involved in the process. Clergy on secondment ministry remain on the clergy roster and the church retains the prerogative to recall them when needed. Some disciples are not aware of this ever happening, though. What did occur was that the leadership had deceitfully changed the status accorded to clergy in this ministry. It has been argued earlier that the secondment ministry is full-time in the church while self-support ministry part-time. ELCSA church-wide should be aware that by now it has pushed God away as the owner of this church. The ELCSA church-wide should do away with dividing the ordained ministry and rediscover the presence of God again.

After 34 years of pastors being called employees, in 2010, ELCSA exploited them by declaring that “pastors do not qualify in a definition to be an employee” (Church Council 119, 2010: 27). This means ELCSA is in solidarity with a policy of exploitation carried out to date whereas in the 1970s it was in solidarity with the poor. ELCSA primarily denies pastors the right and dignity of being full workers of God in the church of God. Buffel reminds the bishops and others who follow their ideal type of a pastor that:
“One then wonders when the church hides behind legislation to deny pastors their human rights. How can the church be trusted with human rights of other people when it does not care about the human rights of its own servants? To say that pastors are not their employees it is like disowning them” (Buffel 2010: 4).

If the bishops and the Church Council even the General Assembly are advocating for social justice, for the people of both church and society, but denying the pastors labour benefits, human rights and the dignity of being called workers they are contradicting what they advocated for. ELCSA church-wide in changing the rights and dignity of pastors as workers to servants is taking away the rights of its workers and denying them social justice, as opposed to being in line with the Constitution of South Africa. Yet bishops and other high officials who work with bishops possess established social and financial security.

5.4.2. Rethinking ahead with the ministry of the ordained
ELCSA ought to equally integrate self-supporting ministry, secondment ministry and full-time ministry with a policy of equal work; of course finance should be allocated accordingly. Hence Tsele says, “Our conclusion here is that we miss the point if we assume that congregations or the Church received effective and faithful service from a pastor, based on whether he/she is full-time or self-supporting” (Tsele 2012: 11). For this to happen, the church must use the self-supporting workers in all spheres of the church’s needs including those of being a bishop, dean, pastor-in-charge of the parish and being elected in all the necessary positions of the church. This calls ELCSA to be liberated to stop calling the self-supporting ministry an assistant or emergency ministry. Maimela considers, “The relation of part-time ministers to the full-time pastors can be solved in several ways. Only full-time pastors could be appointed parish pastors so that they might oversee the work of the others and become equipping teachers for those who have not had seminary training. Full-time ministers then would become professional theologians of the church, whereas part-time ministers would serve only as
associate ministers, or licensed for a specific time and the renewal of such licenses would depend on the needs of the church” (Maimela 1982: 132).

When only full-time pastors are appointed as parish pastors there is a huge risk in this. It still divides the gift of full-time, secondment and self-supporting pastors in terms of essential services. In theory the three ministries should be practical. But in practice they are not. Much as the disciples try to pretend otherwise, there are clear lines between salaried and non-salaried pastors in the church. This is being exploited by the leadership where those who are in self-supporting ministry are said to ‘have left the church’. This is opposed by the visibility of the self-supporting workers and full-time workers who are still working in the church. Self-supporting pastors must also be appointed parish pastors so that the freedom given to all ministries is equal. All ordained ministers must be appointed parish pastors. Tsele furnishes details on this:

Ordination is one thing, and all ordained pastors, self-supporting or full time, or seconded, are judged by the same requirement, namely, that they will teach the teachings of the Church faithfully; they will preach the Gospel in its purity; and that they will conduct themselves in a manner worthy and fitting of the office they occupy. Interestingly, one of the serious violations of pastoral conduct is neglecting the ministry of sacraments, violating the confessional confidentiality between pastor and congregant. It is when a pastor is found lacking on these matters that his or her ordination comes under question. There is no reference to part-time or self-supporting questions becoming factors to put ordination under scrutiny. It is all a function of how an ordained pastor functions, whether he or she is faithful or negligent with matters that are at the core of the office of ordained ministry, namely preaching, teaching, pastoral care, and faithful conduct (Tsele 2013: 10).

Today, the full-time workers are largely attracted by decent living salaries offered by the secular world. This is the results of not being paid a decent living salary. Once the
workers are materially fed the disciples will be spiritually fed and vice versa. ELCSA Church-wide leadership must invest in full-time workers by furnishing them with a reasonable living salary, bonuses during the year, medical aid and other beneficiaries; as a result it should be able to sustain full-time ministry. If the leadership of ELCSA Church-wide continues to furnish an unhealthy environment for full-time pastors, surely full-time ministry will become out dated, as pastors join self-supporting ministry. When it does the same to self-supporting pastors, surely the mission of God suffers. The Church must urgently respond to the needs of the full-time pastors and declare that self-supporting pastors are eligible to hold all offices of the Church. The analysis is that the secondment or full-time or self-supporting pastors are equally educated and trained to deliver services to the Church of God and to the world.

5.4.3. The pain of thanksgiving joyously
The disciples and congregants must express the joyous salvation of Christ Jesus: that giving generously to God means they give what belongs to God so that the church of the Spirit is sustainable and liberated. The tension between the diocesan treasury and the disciples who occupy the offices of congregational and parish councils is that the diocesan and church-wide treasury does not spend finances very well, visible and beneficial for the entire church. Simultaneously the diocesan and church-wide treasury claims that the reason it cannot pay pastors adequate salaries and maintain other expenses is that congregations and parishes retain the money, while parish finance and planning committee (FPC) wrongly uses money. Congregations and parishes are also accused of not recording all the income in the books at those levels. There is lack of proper research and engagement on this issue between the church-wide office, diocesan, circuit and the congregation or parish office. This is caused by not every office being open and honest about its financial systems as far as accountability and transparency are concerned.

The document entitled, “Here We Stand: The Founding Statement of the Lutheran Confessing Movement” of October 2003, clearly suggests that there is a failure to act in unity. This stems from a lack of visionary leadership, corruption, and individual
ownership of the house of God among disciples. A successful church will ensure that all pastors are paid equally with reasonable salaries in a full-time ministry and give the part-time ministers the full rights to work for the church, although it does not provide self-supporting ministers with salaries. This matter can be debated: can one work for an institution where money is involved without receiving something? The classes of payment such as 'top notch' and 'non top notch' are not useful as far as Matthew 20 is concerned. Where is the unity in this? This does not even promote the concept of unity in diversity. In fact such classism must be buried because this system is also distorting and paralyzing full-time ministry.

The common priesthood of all believers ought not to forget that the offerings made are public funds which belong to the Spirit of God. ELCSA church-wide can only become relevant when all its books in its structures are audited by professional auditors. An intensive research and engagement ought to take place to verify that public funds are used appropriately to sustain the strategic mission of the Spirit, as opposed to misappropriating public funds. At the same time those who are in the office of finance should ensure that transparency, communication and accountability as regards financial resources are used with justice to rebuild, renew and maintain the buildings of the church and respond to the challenges of the needy and other social ills, but also to pay the church workers with a living decent salary. This is to avoid and condemn what the traditional people within the church are saying: whatever pastors are paid is acceptable because they are called to suffer for the work of God. God is the God of justice and liberation for all God’s people. Thus church workers or pastors are not called to suffer starvation and to make their families suffer. God does not need the pastors to live in starvation because God is in solidarity with the needy. It is painful for full-time pastors to support their families with an inadequate salary at the moment.

Full-time, secondment and self-supporting ministry with pastors according to the sizes of the congregations means effective reform only by collectively seeking to understand one another in obedience to the gospel. This means to stand shoulder to shoulder (in solidarity) with the disciples and the ELCSA church-wide. It is the continuation of the
transformative church as the Spirit regenerates it daily where both the diocesan office and parish office and all ELCSA structures must devise a liberated and sustainable financial strategic method of management for congregation, parish, circuit, diocesan and church-wide administration income and expenses. This should be informed by research carried out by the established FPC to investigate the status of the congregations and parishes; without forgetting that a lot of other parishes at this moment are accorded ‘mission status’. This study has not been carried out in many spheres of the church; hence parishes cannot meet their so called ‘budgeted obligations’. It is suggested that a research study on church structures should be undertaken with the question ‘is the current ELCSA structure relevant today or not’? Tsele attests “We thus arrive at the conclusion we sought to reach, namely that in Lutheran theology, there is no such thing as part-time or full time ministry. The Church has only two ministries, lay and ordained. And there is no hierarchy within the ordained ministry. The ordained ministry is the only ministry in our Church” (Tsele 2012: 12).

5.4.4. Collective ministry

Without the ordained pastor present, a baptised person can be charged with the ordained office within a Christian community where she or he can administer Holy Baptism and Holy Communion in a case of emergency. This reminds the disciples that it is necessary to work together for the church as this is done in reference to respecting the role of the ordained in the church. During these challenging times in Africa, disciples in ELCSA church-wide, to be successful, need to put their differences aside and integrate their skills and resources to accomplish the mission of Christ who has called them to respond to the challenges of the church and society with positive tactics. One should also listen to the words of Maimela: “Too often we believe, as church officials that we are the church and, counting on our resources, we all too soon conclude that the church is poor, referring to church offices’ treasury and leaving out the richness that God’s people have” (Maimela 1980: 2). The ordained ministry partners with the ‘lay’ ministry as necessary to take on the responsibility and accountability of the church as the right for everyone. The sola scriptura and the Evangelical Lutheran theology teaches that the disciples and congregants should use their energy, various spiritual
gifts, thinking and money for the edification of the entire ELCSA. Partnership in the ministry of the Spirit requires the ordained ministers and the congregants to plan, implement, appraise and manage finances and other resources for the survival of the congregations. Each disciple should be placed according to her or his right gift and ministry. Whoever does not perform her or his duties for a long period should be expelled after proper procedures have been followed. This helps the church to enhance the common priesthood of all baptised believers.

People must be elected according to their identified gifts, according to the set standard of performance. Elections must start with training, which should continue thereafter. The church should furnish a strategic training programme that will sustain and liberate the life of the church. This is a motivation to make every disciple aware that she or he belongs to the church and has an essential role in it. Every disciple should acknowledge that the church’s survival is a vehicle for the faith and love of Christ in their hearts. The training programme should be designed within the framework of the biblical, theological and historical milieu which guides the Evangelical Lutheran principles. All elected leaders who do not perform should be recalled before more damage can occur. The disciples should not wait until their term ends. Every disciple has a responsibility and accountability to be loyal to Christ and be Christ like.

There is a need to develop an effective teaching ministry, which we have entitled transforming-centred Christian Education Ministry. This ministry will be a backbone to revive the church. This domain has been neglected; this is the reason the church is failing to train and teach its disciples as a technique of equipping, empowering and enabling them for the mission of God. The church has to identify pastors who will spend more time in developing quality study materials which will be used to train and teach the disciples to carry out the Spirit’s strategic mission practically.

A majority of some disciples do not create time to attend organised workshops and other forms of training because they spend every weekend and evening on commitments such as attending funerals, weddings, social parties, unveiling of
tombstones and so on. They do not have time for matters of spirituality where teachers or pastors have researched and are ready to present prophetic messages which will encourage the disciples to make the church an effective ministry. Those who do not agree with the Evangelical Lutheran theology often create chaos in the church; when they are caught with evidence of bad behaviour they join other denominations, claiming that they are born again or move within the church. The ELCSA church-wide will always contain Judases. For the disciples to be effective within ELCSA church-wide, they must be committed to the matters of spirituality and things of the Spirit who is persistently at work (John 5: 17-30 and Romans 1: 16). Every disciple, congregant and pastor must take her or his rightful place as endowed by the Spirit within the common priesthood of all believers. Everyone should be happy with her or his spiritual gift as a way for equipping others.

The transforming-centred Christian Education Ministry (TCEM) is one of the Evangelical Lutheran church’s offices which are needed urgently to research on issues that confront our church today. The present day decisions at the General Assemblies, Church Council and Diocesan Synods and Diocesan Councils are taken without proper research study, methodically guided by the Holy Spirit. This places ELCSA church-wide in the mess of human effort as opposed to the mercy of the Spirit. Maimela’s analysis holds instead that “Our deans and bishops who are omnipresent because of their administrative and spiritual responsibility also have no time to study methodically and purposefully” (Maimela 1980: 7). This concerns not only pastors, deans and bishops but also other leaders of the Church who occupy many positions where they end up with no essential service delivery. This should seriously be reviewed. The teaching ministry furnishes the methods in terms of which all church offices such as social justice or care and service, finance, health or wellness, human resource, communication and others must function in Church and society. This ministry becomes more effective with an eye to evaluating positions and doctrines that allow the ELCSA leadership to take well researched and informed decisions. I argued that the transforming-centred Christian Education Ministry is the back bone office, which will produce the fruits of the Spirit to ensure that ELCSA congregations are alive and productive as they are fed with the
living Word of God through teaching and training and respond to the challenges of the poor and the marginalised as the Spirit called the Church, to do so generously and well.

The Church also expects the ordained to further their studies and live a life of study even if they are not registered with a particular academic institution. This is to help the Church to develop in terms of the transformative and redemptive purpose of the Spirit as far as the ministry of teaching is concerned. We have argued that it is necessary for the threefold ministry, self-supporting, secondment and full-time, to be given equal rights and dignity in working for the Church to strengthen the future of the ELCSA Church-wide. This could be called the fourth ministry within the church that promotes the ordained forms of ministry to work as one ministry although there are many functions. Teaching, training and equipping the disciples and ever studying pastors create a sustainable living Church. This is the goal always to be aimed at by transforming-centred Christian Education Ministry (TCEM).

5.5. Conclusion

This study focused on Manas Buthelezi and his contribution in the struggle against apartheid. It attempted to afford an insight into some important events in the historical development of Black Theology in response to apartheid. The period studied covers the 20 years from the 1970s to the 1990s. Buthelezi as a scholar and activist as well as thinkers like Chikane, Boesak, Naudé, Nolan, Mosala, Tlhagale, Motthabi and others have verified that Black Theology became the true gospel for the liberation of black people in this period. Buthelezi, a prolific writer, delivered and wrote a number of papers which are based on the Christian faith. These were a critique of the injustice perpetrated during the apartheid era. We saw that Buthelezi’s theology called for a political stand which was based on the liberation of the black people and on freeing white people to make their resources available to society. His theology was of the Cross, which helped black people to achieve their liberation. It was to help black people to enable themselves as regards the interpretation and application of the gospel.
From 1970s to 1994, he viewed the church as the institution best equipped to make a healing intervention and to stop conflicts. Buthelezi held the view that when the church was committed to fighting apartheid God was with the church and the oppressed. Thus the church was demonstrating the image of wholeness in relation to political formations and transformation in South Africa. We have shown how activists like Buthelezi, Boesak, Naudé, Mosala, Kistner and others took a stand against apartheid in South Africa in 1970s to 1990s, declaring it a heresy. Today liberation is celebrated but more transition needs to take place. Leaders such as Manas Buthelezi have not been fully recognized for their efforts in fighting apartheid.

Buthelezi managed to use his knowledge to stand critically against the apartheid system in order to create a new one. He used Black Theology as the transition from apartheid into creating a collective liberated South Africa. His passion was to ensure that the church stood in solidarity with the gospel in order to overcome the oppressive state. During apartheid Buthelezi stood courageously in solidarity with the oppressed, as Christ did with the sinners. He became victorious at the end of the struggle, suffering with the suffering. For him, suffering symbolized death which should no longer be taken as the destiny of the oppressed. Buthelezi understood suffering as a route to liberation. For him, Black Theology was an instrument which was related to the faith of the black community to overcome apartheid. He was committed to his calling as a church leader, a scholar and an activist, in the sense that he wanted to plant the tree of liberation for South Africa. He can be viewed as the leader, transformer and liberator who knew where he was leading people and how to help them to reach liberation. As a society we can learn from him to overcome the challenges that we are facing today in South Africa.

Perhaps one should therefore ask the question in the post-apartheid era: what has the current South African government done to reward Buthelezi for his contribution to this country, as well as those unsung heroes too? Is it offering Buthelezi resources and opportunities to write and publish his own work? One wonders how this world has affected the life of Buthelezi’s children and his wife. Buthelezi took unpopular decisions in order to be in solidarity with the black oppressed.
Church leaders such as Buthelezi took their prophetic and public witness seriously during the time of apartheid. It is a huge challenge for church leaders today in this new democratic South Africa to do the same. The question is: do we have leaders such as Buthelezi? It seems that church leaders have lost some of their prophetic and public witness. Black Theology was helpful to leaders such as Buthelezi and surely has to be of relevance in this so-called new democratic South Africa.
Can you give me a brief biography of Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi?

Manas Buthelezi was born at Mahlabathini KwaCeza in February 1935. A son of evangelist Abosalom Buthelezi in the Swedish Mission. He is a descendent of Mkhandumba kaMnyamana, kaNgqengelele, ka Mvulana Buthelezi. He grew up at Mahlabathini and went to school there. He proceeded to higher education at Mariann Hill Roman Catholic Institution, where he matriculated and completed his Teaching Training Diploma. He taught for a few years at the age of twenty and left teaching for ministry. In 1958, he did his theological training both at Eshiyane (Oscarsberg) and Umphumulo Theological College, which used to be a teachers training college before. He concluded his studies with a diploma in Theology and a BA in theology, which he had been studying simultaneously through Unisa. Buthelezi was a bright and gifted student in writing exceptionally
good English. His contemporaries at the seminary were now retired bishops, Bishop S. P. Zulu (of the house of Nkabana ka Sthayi Zulu of eGazini collateral royal house), Bishop A. J. Fortuin, Rev. Shabangu and others. Upon completion at Umphumulo Theological College, Buthelezi left for the USA in 1963 for further studies for masters in theology at Yale University and his doctorate at Drew University. He came back in 1968; he was one of the youngest PHD holders in Black SA at the age of 32. From 1970-72, he taught at Umphumulo Theological Seminary. He taught among other things Biblical Hermeneutics. On 6 January 1963, he married Grace Mhlungu who was a teacher. They were blessed with two sons and two daughters.

JKM What are other things he did in his life?

BZ Buthelezi is the first theologian to introduce; Black Theology of Liberation in SA. He could rightly be called the father and founder of Black Theology in the 1970s. He later on left Umphumulo Theological Seminary for the parish ministry. He served as a parish pastor at Sobantu and Lamontville respectively. Early in 1972 he left for Germany as visiting professor where he delivered a series of lectures in Black Theology in summer of 1972 at the University of Heidelberg. His supportive colleagues were Professor Heinz Toedt and Ulrich Duchrow. Upon his return in SA he continued to serve as a parish pastor. Together with Beyers Naudé of the Dutch Reformed Church were publishers of the progressive Ecumenical Bulletin pro-veritate (for the truth) about Black Theology. He was a Natal Regional director. This bulletin was critical of the then government policies and it exposed many un-Christian doings of the white minority regime. In a way Buthelezi and others were prophets and advocates of thousands of voiceless South Africans their interrogative critical exposure of the inhuman practices brought them to head on collision with the notorious regime in the then Apartheid SA. Buthelezi and other young and hot-
blooded Theologians were singing the slogan of: ‘Missionary go home and leave the black man; he is matured to do his own things. At that time there was a strong feeling of the independent three selves (self-sufficient, self-governing and self-propagating)’. In 1972, a symposium was organized by the SACC, in which a series of papers were delivered out of, which a book was produced titled ‘Black Theology in South Africa’. Dr. Manas Buthelezi was one of the cardinal contributors in that book together with Barney Pityana, Mpumulwana and others. In 1974-75, he was a General Secretary of FELCSA and then later on elected general secretary of ELCSA in 1976 after the formation of ELCSA in 1975.

His election as first bishop of ELCSA- Central Diocese in 1977 at the age of 42 was a mild stone in the history of the Lutheran Church in Gauteng. His service stretched over 20 years as a bishop. It is in this capacity as a bishop and black theologian that many black political organization and labour unions and other various organizations found not only refuge in the Diocesan Centre but also used it as a platform to run workshops in, which they formulated and articulated their political programmes, visions and ideologies. This continued until 1994. It was in 1994 that Buthelezi and other theologians felt that they have done their job in feeling the political vacuum as spiritual leaders in a political arena. A vacuum, which was created during the absence and imprisonment of political leaders. Buthelezi was sometimes misunderstood; misinterpreted and fought by both Lutherans and white apartheid police. After, 1994 Buthelezi shifted from a political liberation theology to a redemptive eschatological theology with emphasis of on the Lutheran Teaching of sola scriptura (Scripture Alone) hence (many Bible workshops at the Diocesan Centre, sola fide (Faith Alone), solus christus (Christ Alone) and sola gratia (Grace Alone) refer Rom. 3: 21-26, 1:16-17 and Eph.2: 5-9, Gal. 3: 23-29, Rom.4, I Cor.6: 11, II Cor. 5:17-21. He retired in February 2000 to his place of birth Mahlabathini- eDwadweni the Buthelezi Royal homestead. There is a lot
to be said and written about this unsung living hero, prophet and servant of God.

JKM  Reverend, thank you for allowing me to interview you about Dr. Manas Buthelezi?

BZ  You are welcome James. God bless!
When was the establishment of the Central Diocese? How was the first bishop elected?

The first Bishop of Central Diocese was Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi. In 1977, the first Synod was held at Eersterus in Mamelodi. He was elected at that Synod. There was a division in this Synod the Tswana’s (Tswana Region) broke away during the Synod. They wanted Bishop Nthuping to be the first Bishop of the Central Diocese. They were two services of the Tswana’s. There were those who would attend in the morning and those who supported merger would attend the second service.

What was his involvement in socio-political affairs?

His transfer from Natal to Gauteng area meant that he was placed at a centre of the political wheel wind i.e. centre of political events. This young gifted and able theologian did his best to advocate and harness the Black
Consciousness Movement. He made tremendous contribution towards SASO and the Black Consciousness Movement generally. Steve Biko was his contemporary at the time. His approach was from a political-philosophical perspective. Buthelezi on the other hand interpreted it in the theological language, which was well known as Black Theology of Liberation. Directly or indirectly June 16 up-raisings were a product of this philosophy. Buthelezi never had peace he was constantly harassed by the security police. Buthelezi was viewed as a community builder in the community of Soweto.

He with the help of others in 1976/77; he established the Black Parents Association with the objective of establishing the where about of the missing students during the upheavals of 1976. Buthelezi made major contributions to the SACC, WCC, LWF and all Africa Conference of Churches. He was a close friend of Doctor Phillip Porter (from Jamaica who was a general secretary of WCC). Together with Dr. Wolfram Kistner, a Lutheran in SA and a former director of Justice and reconciliation in SACC and his contributions in this Ecumenical body are invaluable and extensive.
Interview of Bishop Dr. Manas Buthelezi by James Mashabela together with the Rev. Dean of Soweto Bongani Zulu, Dobsenvile, Soweto, on 24 September 2007

JKM Morning Bishop, your contribution in fighting against apartheid made an impact to lives of the South African liberation. How did it come about?

BM From 1973-1975, I served as a Natal Regional director of Christian institute in Pietermaritzburg. Dr. Beyers Naudé approached and requested me to take up the post. It was here in the Christian Institute where I got my political baptism. In a way, I was placed in the national and international stage. Political activities were banned at that time. My task was to arrange meetings for the Christian Institute. Beyers Naudé was the national director of the Christian institute. Our office was in town in Pietermaritzburg, Boem Street in Sairal house next to Commercial Street. I worked with Dr. Wolfram and Collin Gardner who was the national chairperson of C.I. We quarterly published a paper called Pro-Veritate. The meetings of the Christian institute would meet at various venues e.g. Cape Town. The Christian institute was hated and targeted by the government because of our activities and standing for the truth. Our institute eventually closed down because of lacking funds. We could receive financial support from outside (overseas) because the government prohibited such connections. The institute was subsequently banned in 1977.

JKM The Christian Institute as an organization of anti-apartheid. How did you join the Christian Institute?

BM In June 1973, I joined the Christian Institute at the request of Beyers Naudé to be director of Natal region, Pietermaritzburg. The Christian Institute was born in 1963 and established by Beyers Naudé who was the
As leading exponent of Black Theology and filling the political vacuum, what was your role in the Soweto uprising?

Upon my return from United States, I was immediately faced with the challenge/task of interpreting the then political situation in South Africa. In the light of the Gospel, I did not learn Black Theology from anybody nor from the United States of America but I started it and developed it in the context of South Africa. From time to time various organizations especially students from SASO would come to me and ask a direct question: What are you (Buthelezi) and church in general saying to the situation of oppression we are facing in this country? Then I was faced with a challenge of response to such questions. Emanating from my critical and theological reflections, students of Black Consciousness Movement, (The World Newspaper) people like Agrie Klaste who was the junior editor of Sowetan in the Soweto uprising, Steve Biko and others who were young leaders of BBC. I was very young already holding a Doctors degree.
Therefore I was expected by many people especially from progressive movement to take a theological position with authority. It is against this background that I developed Black Theology standing at the political cross ground in this country. Tenuously, Black Theology evolved in the United States. Deliberately and consciously in the early 70s, I decided not to join only political party, for that is dangerous for a pastor/theology to do so. I was then served with the banning order by the government and it happened in the following manner. I had been away to deliver a paper in Ladysmith. When I returned to the office (Christian Institute) the members of the staff told me that the police were here looking for me and they left a letter summoning me to appear at the police station. On arrival, a banning order was read to me. My response was let us pray, I said: God will reveal Himself (Mat 28:18-20). They were taken aback by this statement and asked me what it meant and what will happen. The issue of my banning was reported by the newspaper right through the country and abroad. There were demonstrations all over the world and the government received telephone calls and telegrams demanding the lifting of the banning order against me. This phenomenon took the government by surprise because it cost a ripple a ripple reaction throughout the world. Indeed by his phenomenon or by this reaction by the people in South Africa and the people all over the world God has revealed Himself. The government never thought that its actions against me would coast a reaction of this magnitude within six months the ban was lifted up.

In midst off the political turmoils in South Africa, I was invited to the United States. I left South Africa for America by ship. On arrival I was offered a political asylum which I flatly refused the offer. Upon the completion of my mission I returned to South Africa where I was served with my unbanning. Subsequently, I received a number of invitations to go around and teach as a professor of theology and in addition to that a scholarship was offered to me for my family with fully boarding and tuition to go and study abroad.
refused the lecture offer in Pennsylvania, USA in 1974 and Birmingham in Britain. I refused scholarship for my children. I did all of these out of love for my country.

JKM I think our diocese has survived in the midst of violence. In the context of this what can you tell us about our church and our diocese?

BM In December 1976, in Easters during the convocation of the synod, I was elected as the newly formed diocese. Consequently, I was then placed at the centre of the political battle field in SA namely Soweto. It is here that not only for the church and my new chapter. Here I was faced with the challenges of writing the newly born diocese. I had the task of bringing together the different traditions namely Transvaal region, South Eastern region, Cape Orange region and Tswana region. In spite of baptism into Cape Orange diocese, western diocese; the features and remnants of missionary traditions were still felt and visible which constantly cost division. New deans had to be elected for the formation of the circuit namely Dean Shwabede from the Eastern circuits, Dean Motshekewane from Pretoria circuits, Dean Lucas Western circuits and Dean Seloane Soweto circuits. I used to take time without calling the Dean’s meeting because of the fightings. I remember very well during the meetings of the Diocese circuits where members like Kwakwa and Mabo served not only the diocesan level but also the church level. I am grateful and indebted to all members of diocesan councils from the inception of the diocese until the end of my turn as the Bishop of the Central Diocese. I wish to visit some of the members of Diocesan council who served with me. The diocesan was situated somewhere in town and later on moved to Kgotso House to the SACC of the Divillious Street. The first was how to create one administration out of ethnically diverse congregations at a time when the government policy of separate development was in full force. Quite a number of congregations petitioned to pull out of the new diocese and go
back to their origins. There were even instances of bloodshed and fights between those who were for the merger and those who were against the merger. Members of the Central Diocese congregations during these twenty years have experienced no normal social life. People have lived in continuous fear and uncertainty. Our members have died violently in their homes, taxis, buses, and trains. Some of them been forcibly removed from homes. In the period of Rev. J. G. Shobede (Eastern Circuit), E. N. S. Mutshewane (Pretoria Circuit), H. N. Seloane (Soweto Circuit) and L. Sibiya (Western Circuit) as deans were cooperative. I had an opportunity to change gees as the bishop. It is a mistake to politicize the office of the bishop. The office of the bishop must be spiritual.

BZ Who has contributed towards the construction of our diocese?

BM Moving away from Kagiso house and dividing the construction of the diocesan centre. Meadowlands was suggested as a possible single of the construction of the centre. After many deliberations it was agreed that the diocesan centre will be built in Jabavu and the Bishops house. At that time, I was staying at Dube. Donations for the building of the centre came from the following organization; the church from Rhenish Mission in Germany out of those funds the Bishop’s house was built. A son of a missionary draws a plan for the building. The centre was built in three faces; face one, kitchen, launch, office and the dormitory block. LWF also made a lot of donations for the construction of the second face additional dormitory, hall and chapel were built. We had a treasure who worked at our office as a treasure Schred who eventually to work at the church office. I notice and told the diocesan council that something was happening with the money of the church. Mr. Schred or all of a sudden he disappeared. Shortly we were called by the bank to notify that there were unusual amount which was transferred electronically. What he had done,
he transferred the diocesan finds to his own in the US amounting to the R500 000.

JKM How did the diocese survive in its spiritual life?

BM In the revivals as preachers we preached sermons which caused a dramatic change in people’s lives. Through our sermons people were healed—not only spiritually, but also physically. People from all churches would come and attend. Powerful sermons similar to those of John the Baptist were preached. Because many people’s faith was revived, these services were called revivals. The revival is the work of God. There is no revival apart from reading and listening to the Word of God.

JKM Have you ever been part of the TRC commission?

BM When the TRC was introduced in the 1990s our church did not testify in the TRC. We cannot confess as a black church. The black church cannot confess to the politicians of cause our mandate as the church is to confess our sins. The white people and white church are ones who must confess. In 1990, when Nelson Mandela came out the politicians never called the church leaders but religious leaders. He said Tutu was the one who was leading the religious leaders. The politicians wanted to shut down the church. When the government wanted leaders to be part of the parliament the ELCSA church council decided that the pastors are free to join but they cannot do pastoral responsibility. The political leaders asked me to join the parliament but I refused the offer. As the SACC president, I would address issues using Lutheran theology. The change that I made in the SACC is that I introduced the presidential address. Before I became the president only the general secretary will give an address. I ended up serving in the SACC in 1994. I used to attend meetings of the SACC as one of the delegate of ELCSA. I delivered papers in the SACC. When I
become the president of the SACC the LWF supported the SACC financially. The SACC had a policy that says papers should be delivered on the emphasis of action and not reflection.

JKM I think I should visit you for the next interview where I will be using a recoding type.

BM No, problem. We will be looking for you as will be visiting us.

JKM Thanks, Bishop for you time.
Morning ee, Dr. Manas Buthelezi, e, I want to ask you to tell me about yourself?

Em, I was born on the 10 of February 1935 and I grow up in the district of Mahlabathini at a place known as, eSikhwebezi, near Ceza Mission Station. My father was an evangelist of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and we grow as a Christian family. Therefore, there were four brothers and four sisters at the present moment we are only three remaining two brothers and one sister. I first went to Sizana Primary School, which is not far away from here and from there I went to Ceza School as far as standard 4, 5 and 6. I went to a Catholic school St. Francis Mission School Mahlabathini that was standard 5 and 6 and 7 standard I went to Hlabisa School.
JKM  Can you ee, also tell me about your ee, after finishing matric. What happened after?

BM  Well I did a junior secondary school at Eshowe, which was called Zulu Lutheran High School and went for matric at St. Frances High School Mariannhill. After which I did my teachers’ training there and completed in 1957 at the same time I had about five credits from the University of South African, which was a requirement for the Teachers’ Certificate at that time. I taught for one year at Ceza Secondary School and after which at Ceza Secondary School I was involved in church work there as the youth organizer and Sunday school teacher. These sideline events had a very great impact upon me in that I got interested in matters of the Christian faith. I would counsel students as a result of it all I decided to resign from teaching. I went to a Lutheran Theological Seminary in Rocks Drieft in 1958 at the same time I continued with UNISA studies and graduated in 1960 more or less at the same time as finishing my theological studies. There at Rocks Drieft after that I worked in a parish first at Applesbosch. The pastor I was supposed to replace there refused to move as a result I spent about two months staying in a garage of a missionary because that pastor was still occupying the parsonage. Then the Church decided to transfer me to Lamontville in Durban.

JKM  In which year?

BM  Em that was in 1962 I was at Lamontville in 1962-1963. After which I got a scholarship to go and study in United State at Drew University.

JKM  I want to know when were you ordained?

BM  Ask me again.
JKM I was asking when you ordained were?

BM I was ordained in November 1961 that is why I went to Lamontville shortly after then I got as far as the scholarship in the United State. Ya! I got it in the middle of 1963. I went to the Yale University I did a Masters degree which was called Masters of Secrete Theology at that time. I moved from Yale to Drew University where I started my PhD. which I completed in 1968 after then I returned to South Africa. I started, I went to Ekuthuleni parish I served under Reverent Madide who was a parish pastor then but towards the end of the year I was transferred to the Lutheran Theological Seminary to teach.

JKM When was it, a year?

BM I was in 1969 but ee, I was only therefore a short time. I moved to serve a parish in Pietermaritzburg and I served under Reverent Mkhize who was a parish pastor.

JKM What is the name of the parish?

BM It was Pietermaritzburg parish at that time I was resident at Sobantu and in 1972 while I served in Sobantu I was invited as a visiting professor at Heidelberg University. After which I returned then Rev. Dr. Beyers Naudé came and invited me to be the Regional Director of the Christian Institute in Natal. He was the National Director. In serving Christian Institute, I think it was that time when I became the public figure in the sense that my activities where covered by the press because of that time the political climate was very tense. You could not preach sufficiently if you did not relate what you were preaching to the political atmosphere at that time. I was also invited by many people, members of the organizations including
schools. I should also add that it was at this time that I had an opportunity of interacting with students organizations one of them was SASO.

It was just at that time Black Theology started in Unite State. They expected me simple because I came from the United State somehow I studied black theology which it was not the case because black theology started after, just after I have finished my studies and came back to South Africa. So this challenge on the part of the students was they expected me to demonstrate how Christianity gospel relates to the oppression of the black people and suffering of black people. It was like a school on my part because I was forced to do this. I have not read about black theology because there was nothing published at that time when I was a student. I had to reflect on the relevant of the black Christian gospel to the experience of the black person. What does it means that Jesus Christ is savior to somebody who feels in need for being saved or liberated? As I say it was a new school of education on my part this kind of exercise as a result of this I also participated in organizing seminars on Black Theology in co-operation with the Students Christian Movement which was headed by Basil Moore at that time and Sabelo Ntwasa who was a pastor no he was not a pastor then he became a pastor later on. I should also mention that one reason I rose into prominence is that time in my Church there was not anybody who had a doctors degree in our country. They were very few. So as a result you were called so what I find very interesting is that simple because black people, black organizations at that time had been banned there was no political organization.

JKM In which year where those political organizations banned?

BM Well they had been banned earlier in 1960s. I would say just at the time when I finished my theological studies. It was towards the end of my theological studies. Political organizations as ANC and PAC where
banned which means that there were no political voices and it was not easy for anybody to speak out. So Black Theology then became a new vehicle along the side the Black Consciousness Movement which was there at that time became a platform for political expression. I can say that in the beginning the government thought that by lay emphasis on blackness we were operating within the framework of the government policy which was advocating that each racial group should do its thing in its racial box. When we focused on our blackness that’s what we were waiting for. It took time before the government to realize that black consciousness and black theology were very dangerous. At one time when I was in the United State participating in a programme which was called Mission on Six Continents I read in the newspaper about the bannings of people like Steve Biko, Barney Pityana and others. I just felt that it’s coming to me although no black clergy man had been banned at that time with an exception of the Anglican priest who had written a book “Dabbling Ground” Cosmas Desmond was the only banned among clergy men. Therefore, I was the first one to be banned in my church when I returned from United State after the banning of Stave Biko and others.

JKM What is the name of your Church?

BM Evangelical Lutheran Church of course in Southern Africa. I think, it was a combination of my involvement in the Christian Institute and in Black Theology Movement that I drew the attention of the apartheid government to my activities as a result of that I was then banned. I still remember then I was banned. I was just being addressing a group of people outside Ladysmith. When I come back to the offices of the Christian Institute I was told by my secretary that the security police have been in my office looking for me and left the message that I should visit them at Loop Street in Pietermaritzburg which I did. When I came back they were about two of them said: I hope that you have been expecting this? Then he read the
banning order which was signed by the Minister of Justice at that time it was Pulsar. After he had finished reading it which the fact of preventing me from attending social gatherings, student gatherings and political gatherings. They asked whether I had only questions in relating to the banning order. Just spontaneously, I said no I do not have any questions but I want to ask God what his will is for me from now on. Then I asked that we should pray. I closed my eyes and prayed. I do not think that they closed their eyes. I prayed for them as well and after I had finished praying, I just said God is going to reveal himself. They said what is going to happen. Then I drew my attention to Matthew 28 where it says: know I shall be with you until the end of the world. After that I left the office they had worn me that no more preaching and then I told my family that I have been restricted.

But indeed, God did reveal himself in a way I did not image when I said that statement to the police. There were opposition actions towards my banning order not only in South Africa but all over the world and such an extent that the government left me alone normally at that time when you were under the banning order the security police will visit you every now and then but they did not do it in my case because they had cope with this unexpected explosion which had come about as a result of their banning me. The report as Asia, Europe, and United State, in the embassies, the South African embassy and all over the world, the South African government was just flooded by this wave of these reactions.

All that time my attention was drawn by the office of the Christian Institute in Johannesburg there was an editorial in the magazine which was called To the Point. In that magazine, the editor was claiming he knew why the government had banned me. Therefore, those people who were protesting against the action of the government really did not know what kind of a person I was. He claimed that at one point when I was addressing a group
at Umphumulo I said that I have friends around the corner who can supply me with all kinds of weapons for blowing up the Union Buildings and killing John Voster who was a Prime Minister at that time. The office of the Christian Institute was suggesting that a court of action should be set up in reaction to this editorial as a banned person. I could not answer it and deny that the editorial is true because no paper was allowed to publish anything uttered by the black person. There was a court action which effect, intended effect was to prohibit that issue of this magazine from being disseminated. So that was my first experience of appearing in a court of law. One of the junior Council was Bezos was the senior one that is why when I meet George Bezos for the first time.

The court granted me the interdict, interdicting *To the Point* for being disseminating. After that while I was still banned somehow I should mention that the police because of the international reaction did not take time to take away my passport to restrict my traveling. At that time I was a member of the Commission on Studies of the Lutheran World Federation. I was invited to attend that meeting my day of departure happened to coincide with the day of day of the elections there where election in South Africa.

**JKM** When was it, the year?

**BM** It was 1974 or so then I left the country quietly. My friends assumed that was my last international visit LWF together with other organizations ensured that during that time. I will visit as many places as possible a kind of an international farewell. Among the places I visited is the United State and I remember one day when I was in Washington a representative of the United States government approach me and said the government is offering me a political asylum. Then I just turned it down without even saying I am going to think about it. When I think about it now I ask myself
why I was so root to people who meant well simply saying I am going home without not accepting the political asylum. Indeed, I flew back nothing happened at the airport upon my return. About two days after my return my wife told me that the security police have been there asking about my where about and they left the message that I should visit them at their offices at Loop Street in Pietermaritzburg. Before I had to do that I consulted a lawyer because I was expecting that they were calling me in order to take my passport or to increase the severity of my banning order. I was expecting something drastic so with the advice of the Christian Institute office in Johannesburg I had to consult a lawyer. I still remember he gave me tips as to how should I respond to those questions.

JKM Was he a black person?

BM No he was but white. Then I went there expecting the worst because it was about three days after my return from overseas. Then the security police read me a letter which was signed by Jimmy Kruger who was the Minister of Justice at that time. So in my mind I was expecting something bad and because of that after had finished reading this order. He asked me whether I understood. Then I said no I should not understand what they were reading because it was lifting my banning order. In mind, I was full of something bad. No you are free now you can do what you like. Oh then, I think no I should have made a prayer of thanks giving but the Holy Spirit did not direct me to pray as he did when I was banned. I left; I wanted to tell somebody about this but did not meet anyone I knew. I went to the office the secretary was not there you can image what it means to have something which you want to tell people and there is nobody to tell it to. So that was my experience. So then that was the lifting of my banning order.
After that I received an invitation as a visiting professor at Wesley Theological Seminary in United States where I taught for one semester while I was there I received other invitations from other theological institutions including Union Seminary also inviting me to teach but there was one theological institution which inviting me to hold a permanent teaching post. They were offering that they will pay for the transport of the whole family from South Africa to United State. They will see to the issuing of scholarships to all my children while I am in the United State. Then I turned down, I did not take the offer after that then I was invited to other institutions to teach temporarily.

JKM So what where you teaching?

BM The custom was that you had to decide what to teach. They did not tell you what to teach but you just have to teach what was in your heart. At that time what was current was black theology although the topic was not that but the scope was the emphases on liberation. I don’t remember the actual topic. The custom was that the institution would invite you as the visiting professor. They did not tell you what to teach and then you had to tell them that I will teach this and that and that. Then they will publish it together with other teaching offers of other professors. Then students will think whether they want to join this lecture or not. It was like that. The custom at the end of your teaching period when you have finished because it was for one semester. Then the custom was that they would give evaluation forms to the students to rate you teaching whether you are good or bad. I still have some of the evaluation forms although I do not want to read them. I am not only talking about that was the custom in the Unitate State that at the end of the course then students were to evaluate you that would help the administration. It was to assist whether if you wanted for instance to apply for a permanent tuna. The students will be your evaluators.
JKM: So, at some stage where you ee, did you ever come to Johannesburg. How did you come to Johannesburg when you were in Pietermaritzburg? How did you move to Johannesburg?

BM: While I was in the United State then the Christian Institute was declared an affected organization. The law at that time of, the law behind that declaration prohibited an affected organization from receiving funds from overseas. This therefore meant that the Christian Institute would not be in a position to maintain its staff. Therefore then I come back then my church called me back I was made the associate General Secretary of Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa which was called FELCSA.

JKM: Maybe to clarify that when you were in the Christian Institute where not in the Lutheran Church?

BM: No, no I was the pastor of the Lutheran Church but I have been seconded to the Christian Institute but when Christian Institute had been crippled and could no longer maintain its staff because it had limited resources. The Church called me back once of the assignment was to serve as the associate General Secretary of (FELCSA) Federation Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa. I did not serve longer at that time the Lutheran Church in Southern African was in the process of uniting in one Church.

JKM: In which year?

BM: It was in 1975, when ELCSA was formed I in the Church Council deciding to appoint me as the first General Secretary of the new Church in Johannesburg. That is how I was moved to Johannesburg as the
associate General Secretary of FELCSA then just shortly after my movement to Johannesburg. I was appointed as the first General Secretary of new Church Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa because my coming up to Johannesburg happened to the same time as the 1976 uprising. So we moved around about in November 1975 then I was in Johannesburg in January 1976 then on June 16.

I remember that we heard the news that something in Soweto. Some students have been short by the police. I remember we went together with others just to find out what had happened on that day about a few days after wards. I was invited to a meeting which was held in the Central Jabavu in the Methodist Centre. The other people there being Dr. Motlana, Winnie Mandela, Benjamin Ntiso, Aubrey Mokwena the topic there was to form an organization which aim was to help the bereaved, the parents of the many students who have been shot by the police. Just to give a form of assistance. So the organization which was formed was Black Parents’ Association. Then at that meeting I was elected as the chairman of Black Parents’ Association. When I look back now I think that the rational was, the government would think twice before taking action against a clergy man and moreover I have been banned before and the government had unbanned me again. So it would be ridiculers to ban me again. Let’s have the person like that as the chairman in Black Parents’ Association. So there was an assignment and responsibility. I remember that the medical doctors were assigned to the task of identifying the cophses because parents did not know a boy or girl would just disappear. They would not know whether was dead or not and looking around. The task of this committee was consisting of two medical doctors were two doctors was too help in the identification of cophses. We also decided to offer grant towards funeral expenses of those who died. Immediately after the formation of Black Parents’ Association there was flood of donations from all over the world from Europe. So we had to open a bank account. I think
the Christian Institute was instrumental in recommending us to the funding bodies overseas because at that time South African Council of Churches was the main organizations through which foreign agencies operated.

So we received all kinds of donations and the results of that was that we decided to have an office to open an office to employ a fulltime secretary and open a banking account Black Parents’ Association. We had a certain Mrs. Modise, she was our secretary. In 1977, I still remember I have been in Natal driving towards Johannesburg and I heard over the news that a number of organizations have been banned among them of cause was Black Parents’ Association, Christian Institute, South African Student Organization (SASO), BPC have be banned which meant that they are unable to operate. When I arrived at home Oh, I did not know what to will happen. I was expecting police to come and arrest me. I have been informed that when you are detained you are not allowed to have a bath you will spend may days without washing. So I took a bath. I did not sleep the whole night expecting something will happen.

Then nothing happened then one of the days when I went to office I just packed in Braamfontein. Then I was about to clime the steps of Diakoni House into the office than I felt a tip on my shoulder. We are arresting you in terms of the internal security act. Then they directed me to get into the car. Some members of the staff saw what was happening then they drove off with me. I was setting at the back together with the black police. I said what is wrong? Where are you taking me to? He said we are collecting you. Then it daunt to me it means some of the member of the Black Parents’ Association are being arrested too. So I was driven to John Voster Square and then told to get into a lift that lift went up it opens the door in an office. Unlike a normal lift which opens in a passage. When it opened then the man who was there said: we are not arresting you go back. So then they took me back to the office. But I learnt later that they
collected all members of the Black Parents’ Association with the exception of Benjamin Ntiso. Now then I went back home in the afternoon there were journalists there. I should have mentioned that during this time some of the journalists who were very close to us who were giving publicity to our activities among them were Agrie Juste who died few years ago, there was also Bokala who is still alive. I found journalists at home instate of being happy that I came back they were saying why are you back, why you not here unto prison? So maybe they had prepared stories that I was in prison no instate of welcoming me they were expecting why I was here, why are you back. Then meant that there were only two of us myself and Benjamin Ntiso we continued with the work of Black Parents’ Association. Winnie Mandela was in prison with others.

JKM  Oh, Winnie Mandela was part of the Black Parents Association?

BM  I should have mentioned that one of the activities of the Black Parents’ Association was to organize a mass funeral of the students who died. During those days there laws which prohibited actions of that of public gathering so you had to apply to the magistrate of Johannesburg. Mass funeral were there many people were congregating and of cause as you can image not granted permission. Some of our members were pressing that we should have the mass funeral nevertheless even if it was against the law but the prevailing view point was that instate of having a mass funeral were should have a symbolical funeral as a symbol funeral. Symbolizing the funeral of others so we then consulted with the family in addition to give money we planned for the funeral. I officiated that funeral of Hector Petersen and I preached. Hector Petersen was one of those pictures had been displayed all over in the newspapers. We decided that to have his funeral as a symbolic funeral. So we negotiated with the family for this purpose in addition to granting money for the funeral expenses we decided to officiate. As a chairman of the Black Parents’ Association, I
conducted the funeral of Hector Petersen and I preached. I may still have
on the piece of paper the text of my sermon. It takes time to locate some
of my papers. I sometimes wonder what have there have been many
activities around Hector Petersen those of us who were involved burying
Hector Petersen are not invited. There is even a monument of Hector
Petersen we are never invited. It seems as if history has become
politicized in that history is not allowed to be history by that I mean that
those who are familiar with the events of history should play a role in the
symbols of that history. So we are forgotten there is still Winnie Mandela,
there still Dr. Motlana, I as the chairman, I was in the funeral of Hector
Petersen too. We are never contacted.

JKM So, Hector Petersen was buried in which place?

BM Ee, it was in Avalon.

JKM Where is situated? Is one of the townships?

BM Avalon is near Chiawelo but I do not remember precisely the cemetery but
one has to check.

JKM That was in Soweto?

BM Ya, in Soweto of cause in Soweto.

JKM Can you briefly tell me about the Lutheran World
Federation? What was your role in the Lutheran World Federation?

BM When the Lutheran World Federation structured its committees they would
make sure that there were representatives from different areas of the
Lutheran World Federation. I was one of the member representatives of
Africa in many commissions. But I shall start by saying that my first exposure to the Lutheran World Federation was while I was still a student at Drew University working on my dissertation. I was invited to address the commission on theology on the problem of work in Africa. I think I still have a copy of that presentation that was in 1967. I graduate in 1968. So I would say I started my involvement in the Lutheran World Federation in 1967. In 1970, when the assembly of the Lutheran World Federation was to meet in Brazil I was one of those who were to be delegates from our church but because of the political situation in Brazil the Lutheran World Federation decided not to meet in Brazil. We meet at a natural place at Evan which was in France near Geneva. After Evan, I was appointed one of the members of the Commission of Studies. So I served in that capacity and was in the cause of the time I was invited in LWF consultation to deliver this and that address this and that topic. This happened alongside my membership in the commission of the LWF.

I was also invited to participate in the work of the World Council of Churches. I did not play a dominate role in the work of the WCC at that time. In 1985, there was a World Council of Churches assembly in Nairobi one has to check the date. I delivered an address there but you ask me about my activities in the Lutheran World Federation. General assembly, no Nairobi was in 1975, no in 1985, it was in Budapest I give an address in one of the sections of the assembly. Then latter on the new assembly was held in Brazil again in Brazil. I was also asked to deliver one of the addresses that about my activities. Again as early that alongside the other minor activities and consultations of being invited to do this, or that. Later on and I then was appointed to be the president of the vice president of the Lutheran World Federation which meant that I was the member of the Council of the Lutheran World Federation and also the member of the executive of the Lutheran World Federation. Then that happened until the assembly in Yong Kong.
JKM The Kairos Document was a living document which was viewed an anti-apartheid document. As church leader and activist what can you say about it?

BM I did not sign the Kairos Document because if you sign theological states it means that you agree with each and every statement. As a Lutheran I had to stand with the Lutheran teachings. Critical remarks have been made in the area of its theological formations, general styles and characteristic theological language. Consequently, in the second edition an attempt has been made to modify at certain places, even cut out certain formations which belong more to political rhetoric than theological exposition. Kairos will always remain a controversial document like any of its kind.
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