

**DEVELOPING A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH TO ECOLOGICAL MISSION: A  
CASE FOR THE CHRISTIAN YOUTH MINISTRY AT MELODI YA TSHWANE**

by

**TEBOGO ZAKIA SEBEGO**

submitted in accordance with the requirements for  
the degree of

**MASTER OF THEOLOGY IN MISSIOLOGY WITH SPECIALISATION IN URBAN  
MINISTRY**

at the

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**Supervisor: PROF R.W. NEL**

**FEBRUARY 2016**

## **Acknowledgements**

This study has greatly benefitted from the support and guidance of many different people. These include:

- Professor Reggie Nel who supervised and guided me in this study. I thank him for his transformational leadership; his positive, professional and useful guidance as well as all the valuable comments;
- The Department of Christian Spirituality, Church History and Missiology at UNISA which made it possible for me to carry out this study;
- Melodi ya Tshwane URCSA Church Council for granting me permission to undertake the study among its Christian Youth Ministry members;
- Melodi Ya Tshwane Christian Youth Ministry members for their willingness to participate in the study; and
- Colleagues and friends who engage me on the diverse topics related to the study.

I have also benefited greatly from the inspiration and compassion of my lovely wife, Lerato, who shared her time so that I could continue with this study. My children Nthabiseng, Palesa and Moses assisted me to continue enjoying the research and writing process through their questions, laughter and joy even though most of our time was often taken over by my research. I also thank my family and friends for their love and support at all times.

I dedicate this work to my dear mother, Junia Matlhodi Sebego, who sadly passed away on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2015. The joy she gave us will never die and her memories will never leave us. May her soul rest in eternal peace.

### **Declaration**

I declare that DEVELOPING A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH TO ECOLOGICAL MISSION: A CASE FOR THE CHRISTIAN YOUTH MINISTRY AT MELODI YA TSHWANE is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at UNISA for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

Name : Tebogo Zakia Sebegu

Student No.: 7390793

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tebogo Zakia Sebegu', written in a cursive style.

Signed :

Date : 07 March 2016

## **Abstract**

This thesis examines the role of Melodi Ya Tshwane Christian Youth Ministry (MyT CYM) in the context of what is increasingly observable environmental crisis with a view of developing a contextual approach to ecological mission. The research does not focus primarily on the environmental crisis itself except to note that its scope incorporates not only environmental issues, but has some important implications for social justice as well. The research recognises the role that MyT CYM must play as part of their contribution towards addressing the environmental crisis. Such a role is based not on a pragmatic response to the situation, but flows from the missional nature and theology of the church. Therefore, the missional church has an obligation to address this issue, through Christian mission that takes seriously the biblical call to care and preserve the integrity of creation. Finally, this research aims to assist MyT CYM to understand the theological basis for contextual action towards developing an appropriate ecological mission.

## **Key terms**

Theology, ecological theology, mission, ecological mission, environmental crisis, missional ecclesiology, youth ministry, church, Melodi ya Tshwane.

# Table of Contents

Page

<b>CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1 Introduction and Background.....	1
1.1 Defining the basis for ecological mission or mission as the quest for ecological justice .....	3
1.2 Defining the Youth.....	4
1.3 Melodi ya Tshwane Christian Youth Ministry .....	4
2 Understanding Melodi ya Tshwane Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa.....	6
2.1 Demographics .....	6
2.2 Ministries .....	7
2.2.1 Congregational Ministries.....	7
2.2.2 Ecumenical Relations.....	8
2.2.3 Service and Witness .....	9
2.2.4 Finance and Administration.....	9
2.2.5 Proclamation and worship.....	10
2.2.6 Support Ministry for Communications and Publications.....	10
3 Theoretical Framework .....	10
4 Research Problem .....	12
5 Preliminary Literature Review.....	13
6 Aim and objectives of the research.....	17
7 Scope of Research .....	18
8 Research Methodology.....	18
8.1 Data collection instrument.....	19
8.2 Administration of questionnaire.....	19
9 Data Analysis .....	20
10 Ethical Considerations.....	20
11 Research Outline of Chapters.....	21
12 Conclusion.....	22
<b>CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW</b> .....	<b>24</b>
1 Introduction .....	24
1.1 The Roots of Ecological Theology .....	24
2 Missiological Implications .....	26
2.1 Ecomissiology Is World-wide .....	26
2.2 Interdependence and Relationships .....	26
2.3 Ecomissiology requires Contextualisation .....	27
3 Different Interpretative views on Ecological Theology.....	27
3.1 The Western Worldview .....	27
3.2 African Worldview .....	31
4 Ecological Mission or Mission as Ecological Justice .....	38
4.1 Ecological Justice.....	39

4.2	Seeking Ecojustice should be an Integral Part of Mission .....	41
5	Missional Ecclesiology .....	42
5.1	The Mission of the Triune God .....	45
5.2	Role of Christian Youth Ministry .....	46
6	Conclusion .....	49
<b>CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY .....</b>		<b>52</b>
1	Introduction .....	52
2	Missiological Research .....	52
3	Quantitative Research Methodology.....	53
3.1	Use of Quantitative Methodology in Missiological Research .....	54
3.2	Research Setting.....	54
3.3	Research Population and Sample .....	54
3.3.1	Population .....	54
3.3.2	Sample .....	54
3.3.3	Sample size.....	55
3.4	Data Collection .....	56
3.5	Developing a Database Structure .....	56
3.6	Entering the Data into the Computer .....	56
4	Data Analysis .....	57
5	Conclusion .....	57
<b>CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS .....</b>		<b>58</b>
1	Introduction .....	58
2	Demographic Information .....	58
2.1	Participants by gender .....	58
2.2	Participants by age group .....	59
2.3	Participants with physical disability .....	59
2.4	Citizenship.....	60
2.5	Nationality.....	60
2.6	Participants by educational level.....	61
2.7	Participants by employment status .....	62
3	Respondents' Level of Environmental Awareness .....	62
3.1	What is the most concerning environmental issue here at your church? .....	63
3.2	In comparison with other social issues, how important is environmental matters to you? ...	64
3.3	How confident are you that items placed in recycling bins at church are actually being recycled? .....	64
3.4	What would be the best way to encourage church members to recycle more? .....	65
4	Respondents' Level of Environmental Responsiveness.....	66
4.1	What do you do to conserve water/energy at home? .....	66
4.2	The importance of MyT CYM participation in environmental matters .....	67

4.3	Does the church provide adequate ethical guidance about issues of environment?.....	68
5	Respondents' Views and Understanding of the Concept of Mission .....	69
6	Respondents' Views on Mission Approach and how it fits into Ecological Context .....	71
7	Current Ecological Mission Programmes at MyT CYM .....	73
7.1	Does your Ministry have an ecological mission programme?.....	73
7.2	Anyone available to provide ecological mission advice or resources .....	73
7.3	Future MyT CYM collaboration with other Community Environmental Groups .....	74
8	Respondents' Views on Practical Approach to Ecological Mission .....	75
8.1	What might prevent ecological mission in your ministry or other youth ministries.....	75
8.2	Additional support or resources required for effective ecological mission programme .....	76
8.3	What must change for MyT CYM to become involved in ecological mission? .....	76
8.4	Issues to be included in a ministry's ecological mission agenda .....	77
8.5	How can Church Leaders / Church Councils become better equipped for provide leadership in ecological mission.....	78
9	Key Findings .....	79
10	Conclusion and Recommendations .....	81
<b>CHAPTER 5 TOWARDS DEVELOPING CONTEXTUAL ECOLOGICAL MISSION .....</b>		<b>83</b>
1	Introduction .....	83
1.1	Understanding context in ecological mission .....	83
1.2	Understanding ecological context of engagement.....	85
2	Promoting Environmental Awareness to enhance involvement of MyT CYM .....	86
3	Strengthening participation of MyT CYM in Ecological Mission .....	88
3.1	Providing Environmental Education .....	90
3.2	Promoting Ecological Mission Support System .....	91
4	Model for Ecological Mission .....	92
4.1	Clarity of <i>being</i> in ecological mission .....	93
4.2	Clarity of <i>doing</i> in ecological mission .....	94
4.3	Clarity of <i>saying</i> in ecological mission .....	94
5	Conclusion .....	95
<b>CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY .....</b>		<b>96</b>
1	Introduction .....	96
2	Integrating ecological mission.....	96
3	How the Research was outlined .....	97
4	Summary and Conclusion.....	98
5	Recommendations .....	100
6	Further Research Prospects.....	101
<b>LIST OF REFERENCES.....</b>		<b>103</b>

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Participants by gender .....	59
Figure 2: Participants by age group .....	59
Figure 3: Participants with physical disability .....	60
Figure 4: Citizenship .....	60
Figure 5: Nationality .....	61
Figure 6: Participants by educational level .....	61
Figure 7: Participants by employment status .....	62
Figure 8: The most concerning environmental issue at church .....	63
Figure 9: Importance of environmental matters .....	64
Figure 10: Items placed in recycle bins actually being recycled .....	65
Figure 11: Single best way to encourage church members to recycle .....	66
Figure 12: What do you do to conserve water / energy at home? .....	67
Figure 13: Importance of your ministry participating in environmental matters .....	67
Figure 14: Adequate ethical guidance provided by your church regarding environmental issues .....	68
Figure 15: Does your ministry have ecological mission programme? .....	73
Figure 16: Anyone available to provide ecological mission advice or resources.....	74
Figure 17: Future MyT CYM collaboration with other Community Environmental Groups.....	74
Figure 18: What might prevent ecological mission in your ministry or other youth ministries .....	76
Figure 19: Additional support and resources for an effective ecological mission programme .....	76
Figure 20: What must change for MyT CYM to become involved in ecological mission? .....	77
Figure 21: Issues to be included in a ministry's ecological mission agenda .....	78
Figure 22: Church leaders / Church Councils becoming better equipped to provide leadership in ecological mission. ....	79

## List of Tables

Table 1: Calculating the sample size .....	56
Table 2: Respondents' views and understanding of the concept of mission .....	69
Table 3: Respondents' views on mission approach and how it fits into ecological context .....	71

## List of Appendices

Appendix A : Ethical Clearance Certificate
Appendix B : Questionnaire
Appendix C: Approval letter from Melodi ya Tshwane Church Council
Appendix D: Informed Consent Form

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1 Introduction and Background

Care or concern for God's whole creation is an integral part of Christian Mission. This dimension of mission should not only to be understood in terms of good stewardship of our planet, but also in terms of practicing justice. This emphasis has also become evident based on the recent focus on environmental issues which became a much discussed topic in the global arena, both in the media and politics. Al Gore's much celebrated 2006 film, *An Inconvenient Truth*, played an important role in raising public awareness about global warming. Furthermore, in 2007 the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), representing the work on over three thousand scientists and other climate experts worldwide, released a series of reports, including, *Climate Change 2007*, confirming that there is ninety percent certainty that human activity, at least, since industrial revolution has been the major cause of global warming. In the IPCC's *Summary for Policymakers Report by the Working Group II* (2014: 20), environmental problems have a much bigger impact in particular, on the world's poor, including climate change hazards which affect poor people's lives directly through impacts on livelihoods, reduction in crop yields, or destruction of homes and indirectly through increased food prices and food insecurity. Diringir (2009:18) in Copenhagen-Cop 15 Summary, adds that though the 2009 Copenhagen Climate Conference raised climate change policy to the highest political level with the signing of the Copenhagen Accord, covering a long-term goal of limiting the maximum global average temperatures increase to no more than 2 degrees Celsius pre-industrial levels, no agreement was reached on how to do this on practical terms. It became apparent that politicians had challenges in finding sustainable action going forward into the future and do this locally.

This is a matter that the *church*<sup>1</sup> too has not found easy to deal with practically, and even though a start has been made, much more still needs to be done. The religious voice joined other movements especially on the effects of the growing ecological crisis on creation and on humanity in general, and how the church should position itself to deal with the looming crisis. The Christian voice includes:

- the World Council of Churches (WCC)(2013) and its constituent members, such as the South African Council of Churches advocating for ecological justice;

---

<sup>1</sup> I will use the term "church" to refer to 1) Universal church, 2) The Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa in general and 3) Melodi ya Tshwane URCSA in particular. I will indicate when I refer to the latter.

- The Joint Appeal ( for the environment) in Religion and Science, a statement by Religious Leaders at the Summit on the Environment in 1991 held at the University of Cape Town; and
- Alliance of Religions and Conservation in conjunction with the World Wildlife Fund and the World Bank organising the Sacred Gifts of the Planet Conference in 2000.

The well-known Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu (1990:7) states: “It is so sacrilegious to be so wantonly wasteful of God’s creation, using up irreplaceable fossils fuels as if the supply were endless”. To this end, churches need to develop appropriate approaches to ecological mission.

The role of youth in churches can be particularly significant in potentially leading this search for appropriate approaches against the increasing environmental crisis. Young people are often the key actors in powerful social movements that transform the course of human history (Costanza-Chock 2012). In South Africa, for example, young people were instrumental during 1976 uprising in Soweto in driving the struggle against apartheid and I would argue that young people can yet again become key agents of change in advocating for awareness raising, education and appreciation of environmental-friendly positions as well as issues of environment destruction. This could also include their role in the mission for ecological justice. The agency of young people, is also upheld by Sasha Costanza-Chock (2012:15) when she concluded that young people should be recognised and respected as potentially powerful social movement actors, and be allocated resources to support, intensify and extend their impact. Van Meter (2013:73) adds that young people should be trusted to participate in conversations that embrace all of life, not just life as defined by the *official soul*. To this end, as emphasised by Van Meter (2009:64), an ecologically conscious youth ministry will take our current ecological challenges seriously and critically engage beliefs, practices and structures that support interpersonal stewardship and gratitude in our lived contexts. It is therefore argued that the church’s mission through the youth is to take up this God-given responsibility and a mission to take care of God’s earth.

This research endeavours therefore to examine specifically the role of the Melodi Ya Tshwane Christian Youth Ministry (MyT CYM) located in the City of Tshwane (hereafter called, “Tshwane”), in the context of what is an progressively noticeable environmental crisis with a view of developing a contextual approach to ecological mission. The research will not attempt to focus and elaborate primarily on the environmental crisis itself except to note that its scope involves not only ecological issues, but also has some important implications for social justice. At the heart of this ecological mission, will be the significant obligation of MyT CYM, as full

partners in the community of faith and challenged to full participation in the life and mission of Jesus Christ and His Church.

### **1.1 Defining the basis for ecological mission or mission as the quest for ecological justice**

In defining the basis for ecological mission or mission as the quest for ecological justice (terms that I will use interchangeably), it will be important that we carefully and clearly consider “What God is calling us to do”. Bosch (1991:9) cautioned that mission is ultimately “undefinable” and we should never take it up upon ourselves to “delineate missions too sharply and too self-confidently”. Therefore, in defining and contextualising ecological mission in this research project, I argue that an appropriate mission strategy should flow out of the choice of missional nature of the church. This missional theology of the church or missional ecclesiology, has to do with the nature, role or witness of the people of God, as a collective in the world, including implications for caring and peace, also suggesting priorities for Christians engaged in God’s world-changing work. According to Saayman (2010:12), the notions of missionary and missional originated from *missio Dei*, i.e. God’s own self sending in Christ by the Spirit to redeem and transform creation. Therefore in missional ecclesiology, as expressed by Saayman, the starting point is that the church will not just be a building or an institution but a community of witness called into being and empowered by God and sent into the world to affirm and participate in Christ’s work.

Ecological mission is set in the context of the environmental crisis and the need to care for creation and it begins with an approach that includes ecological factors, or the dimension and scope of God’s creation as an integral part of Christian mission. Furthermore, this mission, as argued in this research project, should be a process of sending out, yet rooted in its own worship and being entrenched in the actions of God for the purpose of reforming societies by bringing the Good News and hope to the world. This perspective is reinforced by Newbigin (1989:119), who explains, “The Church is not only so much the agent of the mission as the locus of the mission”. Newbigin’s understanding is based among others on John 20:21-22, where Jesus said, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I sent you”, and then He breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit”, (Newbigin 1963:34). The process of sending out can therefore be demonstrated through projects of care for God’s creation, evangelism, healing, liberation and recognising cultural context while appreciating the role that the MyT CYM can play in driving this process.

To care for creation therefore begins with an *ecological theology or ecotheology*<sup>2</sup> as the unavoidable basis for the approach to this particular missional praxis and theology. Langmead (2002:508) expresses this basis, stating that “Eco-theology implicitly contains an Eco-missiology just as all theologies give direction to understand the mission that flows from them”. What is therefore important to note, as maintained by this research project, is that ecology is unavoidably a part of theology and mission so that there is an intricate connection between ecological theology, ecological mission and ecological praxis.

Conradie (2006:3) also explains that it is through ecological theology that an attempt is made to retrieve the ecological wisdom in Christianity as a response to environmental threats and injustices. For Conradie it is at the same time an attempt to “reinvestigate, rediscover, and renew the Christian tradition in the light of the challenges posed by environmental crisis”, (2005:3). In all the processes advanced by Conradie, this research will place focus on the agency of youth as driving force behind the development of an ecological mission.

## **1.2 Defining the Youth**

The National Youth Policy of South Africa (NYP) 2009 – 2014, refers to youth as those falling within age group of 14 – 35 (2009:12). This is derived from the National Youth Commission Act 1996 and National Youth Policy 2000. According to Statistics South Africa, in the National and Provincial Labour Market: Youth<sup>3</sup> in line with national definition are regarded as persons aged from 15 – 34. These young people are participating in churches and in MyT URCSA congregation, which is the focus of this study. I will therefore now move to the specific case of the MyT Youth Ministry.

## **1.3 Melodi ya Tshwane Christian Youth Ministry**

The research population for the study comprise members of MyT CYM branch located in the City of Tshwane. This research project will propose an inclusive age category of the youth by incorporating both the National Youth Policy and Statistics SA as well as by targeting members of the CYM at MyT who are aged between 18 and 35 years old and willing to participate. As highlighted by Pilot and Hungler (1999:278) eligibility criteria specify the characteristics that people in the population must possess in order to be included in the study. In this study the focus is on the membership of the MyT CYM branch. It is therefore important that appropriate background on the Christian Youth Ministry is provided.

---

<sup>2</sup> I will use these two terms interchangeably in this research

<sup>3</sup> Stats SA. 2014. National and Provincial Labour Markets: Youth. Available at <http://beta2.statssa.gov.za/publications/P02114.2/P02114.22014.pdf>. (Accessed on 28 August 2014).

According to Section 3.2.6 of the Constitution of Christian Youth Ministry (CYM) found in URCSA Church Order, Version 2012 (2012:199-229), the aim of the CYM as service organisation of the Christian Education (CE) in the URCSA is “to develop the church youth to become spiritual adult members of the body of Christ, who are competent in the doctrine, active in the mission, service and sacrifice”. In order to achieve the above aim, each member of the ministry will endeavour (among other duties), to “preserve and conserve the environment, which is God’s creation” (2012:200). It is from this main aim that CYM branches will create suitable programmes at congregation level aimed at preserving and conserving the environment.

The CYM Constitution (2012:202) further indicates that membership is subjected to the following principles:

- The age limit for youth in URCSA is from sixteen (16) years to thirty five (35) years; and
- Membership is open and not in addition to membership of the congregations.

The MyT CYM, as indicated earlier, has, as one of their goals, the intention to also preserve and conserve the environment, which is God’s creation. This is derived directly from its Primary Regulations. In terms of membership, MyT CYM does not provide any other age category for their youth membership, but refers, in line with the broad aim of the ministry to their members as *church youth*<sup>4</sup> who will become spiritual adult members of the body of Christ and who are competent in doctrine, active in mission, service and sacrifice.

It is noted that from the Constitution of CYM, as well as the aims and objectives of MyT CYM, the issue of active participation in mission and care for God's creation is prominent. This mission is evidently not focussed on one particular service by the youth, it is inclusive and holistic. This research project therefore recognises this emphasis and the energy that the youth have in undertaking mission and that the mission will have to be shaped and focused in order to give better direction to the youth. Furthermore, the research project also identifies that the youth are fully members of the church and complete members of the body of Christ. They are not there to while away time until they are ready to participate in the mission of the church; they are also participants in the liberating mission of Christ, through their various inherent gifts and talents. Finally, this research project recognises, as a point of departure, the youth as being very useful and energetic members of the Body of Christ.

The next section presents the profile of the population at MyT congregation within URCSA, as one expression of this inclusive Body of Christ.

---

<sup>4</sup> CYM / MYT Church. 2014. Available at <http://www.mytchurch.com/ministries/cym/>. Accessed on 07<sup>th</sup> August 2014

## **2 Understanding Melodi ya Tshwane Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa**

In the heart of the central business district (CBD) of old white Pretoria (currently part of the Tshwane metropolis), close to the statue of President Paul Kruger on Church Square, is a church building located on the corner of Bosman and Madiba streets in the city centre of Pretoria bearing a plaque that indicates that it has been declared a national monument. According to Saayman (2010: 135 – 145) this was the church building of arguably the most prominent and important congregation of the white Dutch Reformed Church in Pretoria, heartland of Afrikaner hegemony for such a long time. Saayman further adds that some very important events in Afrikaner history in the apartheid years took place within its walls, such as the burial service of Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd, the giant intellectual and political leader credited with having been one of the architects of apartheid. It was a physical and symbolic space for a particular public and civil religion. Saayman (2010: 138) considers that if one visits this old and historical place on a Sunday morning, though, it bears little resemblance to the former symbol of Dutch Reformed piety or Afrikaner hegemony. Finally, the ashes of one of MyT founding members, a South African Missiologist, Prof Nico Smith as well as those of his wife, Prof Helen Smith have been buried on the church premises.

MyT is a congregation of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA), whose activities are centred in and on this space. The members attending the church's morning service (in this historic building), live in different parts of Tshwane, but many live in the inner city. Its members come not only from a variety of cultural backgrounds, but also from different walks of life: some are domestic workers, while others are students, workers or professionals. The congregation represents all races, classes and genders of South African society. The congregation has, as its registered members, people from the Southern African Development Community (SADEC) region. MYT church has a full time minister, Dr TJ Nthakhe and two part time ministers, Prof JNJ Kritzinger and Rev PM Maruping. The congregation follows Integrated Ministry Model (IMM) where representatives from the ministries and committees together with the administrator and the three Ministers constitute the Church Council.

### **2.1 Demographics**

The demographic data below is based on the 2012 skills audit undertaken by the MyT Worship Committee. This audit also captured some demographic indicators of the population at MyT. These numbers may be slightly lower than the current numbers based on the membership register, which shows an increase during the past two years. The church holds a welcoming

service for new members every quarter of the year. The church record shows that from 2012 to date, almost 80 new members have been welcomed. According to the 2012 skills audit, there were approximately 500 members in 2012. The audit further shows that approximately 76 percent of members of the church were females and 24 percent males. Black Africans accounted for 95 percent of all members, followed by 2 percent representing Indian / Asian population, 2 percent comprising coloured population and 1 percent representing the white population. Major ethnic groups comprised Pedi (North Sotho – 55<sup>\*\*5</sup> percent), Sotho (15<sup>\*\*</sup> percent), Venda (10<sup>\*\*</sup> percent), Zulu (5<sup>\*\*</sup> percent), Xhosa, (5<sup>\*\*</sup> percent), Tswana (5<sup>\*\*</sup> percent), Swati (1<sup>\*\*</sup> percent), Tsonga (1<sup>\*\*</sup> percent). The main language used for liturgy and preaching is English with preaching is interpreted to other South African languages mainly Sesotho, Setswana, Sepedi, isiZulu, isiXhosa and Tshivenda. The main language spoken at MyT is Sepedi followed by Sesotho, Tshivenda, isiZulu and Setswana. The audit further showed that 1 percent of MyT members are Non-South Africans originating mainly from SADEC region. The youth (14 – 35 years old) accounted for 55 percent and elderly (65 years and older) comprised 4 percent of all members.

## **2.2 Ministries<sup>6</sup>**

The following ministries form the core of MyT and the broader Uniting Reformed Church in general.

### **2.2.1 Congregational Ministries**

*Christian Men's Ministry (CMM)* has a vision of worship, building the faith and the spirituality of men so that they can be faithful witnesses for Christ in the church and in society, opposing that which is in conflict with the Christian faith both within and outside the Church of Christ.

*Christian Women's Ministry (CWM)*: Its mission is to also to worship, build the faith and the spirituality of women so that they can be faithful witnesses for Christ in the church and in society, opposing that which is in conflict with the Christian faith both within and outside the Church of Christ.

*Christian Women's League (CWL)* has a vision to empower women members of the URCSA to be actively involved in building God's kingdom through public witness and community service

---

<sup>5</sup> \*\* denotes estimates based on interviews held with Worship Committee member. Interview conducted on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2014.

<sup>6</sup> Information on ministries has been obtained from the official website of the church: <http://www.mytchurch.com/ministries/>. Accessed on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2014.

*Sunday School*<sup>7</sup> consists mainly of children of members of our congregation who come from all around Pretoria. The ministry also caters for children whose parents are not MyT members. The mission of the ministry is to teach children Bible stories in order to:

- facilitate good Bible knowledge;
- give them a foundation for their faith;
- help them to apply the specific lesson to their lives;
- develop solid Christian values; and
- gain skills for living

The General Synod of the URCSA, through the General Synodical Commission (GSC) is currently holding negotiations with MyT Church Council for MyT Sunday School to avail their teaching and learning material to be reviewed and used by all URCSA congregations.

*Catechism* consists of young people who are preparing to confess their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This group of people meets every second Sunday morning to learn more about the Bible and prepare for growth in the knowledge of God.

*Choir*: Through their melodic voices the choir aims to praise and worship God, touch and entice souls to God, entertain and unite music lovers.

*Christian Youth Ministry (CYM)* aims to develop the church youth to become spiritual adult members of the body of Christ, who are competent in the doctrine, active in the mission, service and sacrifice. CYM is the subject of this research.

*Youth Ministry* has a vision of praising God and thanking Him for the different talents that He has given them by doing different activities namely, Bible studies, and discussion of topics that affect the youth, singing, drama (acting), dancing and many more. Youth ministry is the subject of this research.

*Academic committee* has a primary role to coordinate all academic programmes and services that can be channeled into empowering all members of the church especially young people.

### **2.2.2 Ecumenical Relations<sup>8</sup>**

The three Ministers, in support and cooperation with the Church Council, play a leading role in nurturing our relationship with other churches internationally, nationally and locally. This encompasses meeting with leaders of other churches, experiencing first-hand the life and

---

<sup>7</sup> Information on Sunday School was obtained from MyT Sunday School official website: [http://www.mytsundayschool.com/#/?page\\_id=1485](http://www.mytsundayschool.com/#/?page_id=1485). Accessed on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2014.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*

ministry of other churches and advancing ecumenical dialogue, theological reflection and co-operation in mission.

### **2.2.3 Service and Witness<sup>9</sup>**

*Care Ministry:* The ministry has been established in order to provide pastoral care and support to members in their daily struggles and difficulties. Special attention is given to visiting the ill, lonely, bereaved, imprisoned and traumatised members, and to give support and encouragement in the name of Christ. The ministry is constituted of 11 prayer ward groups headed by ward leaders. The ward leaders have two representatives in the Church Council. Furthermore, ward leaders have their own forum led by the executive committee where matters pertaining to the wards are discussed. According to the ward survey undertaken in August 2014, only 36.6 percent of MyT members belonged to wards.

*Health Care Committee* consists of Medical professionals, Social workers and Counselors in different fields. The committee's main responsibility entails:

- Creating awareness and educate members about health issues that pose a challenge to them;
- Embarking on campaigns to promote healthy living; and
- Organising observance of local and international health days such as the world aids day, cancer week/month etc.

*Outreach committee* coordinates all outreach programme of the church and ensures that each outreach initiative receives maximum support from MyT members.

### **2.2.4 Finance and Administration<sup>10</sup>**

The Finance and Administration committee is made up of accountants and people with financial know-how in the congregation as well as auditors. Its main focus is on:

- Administering the finances of the congregation;
- Budgeting for ministries and the whole congregation;
- Co-ordinate all fundraising initiatives;
- Drawing up a financial policy and ensuring that it is adhered to;
- Rendering regular financial up-dates to congregation; and
- Ensuring that financial books are audited timeously every financial book-year end and reporting the audit findings to the Church Council and congregation.

---

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*

### 2.2.5 Proclamation and worship<sup>11</sup>

*Worship committee* is responsible for the following key activities:

- taking care of the preaching of the gospel by planning the preaching programme;
- Training and equipping liturgists and interpreters where there is a need;
- Plan for important days and events like: communion services; baptism; Good Fridays and Reformation Days etc.
- Take care that Sunday services and prayer meetings run smoothly

### 2.2.6 Support Ministry for Communications and Publications<sup>12</sup>

*Communications committee* is a support ministry that works in close relationship with other ministries to ensure that MyT communicates well within itself and to enhance its ability to clearly communicate its services to the world.

## 3 Theoretical Framework

Ecological mission is intended to build on the foundation of ecological theology to express the belief that Christians are called to safeguard the integrity of creation, and to exercise their mission in such a way that the life of the earth is sustained and renewed. This is emphasised by Bosch (1991:9) where he states that, mission gives expression to the dynamic relationship between God and the world. Ecological mission operates alongside other valid forms of Christian mission but makes no claim to be the whole of mission; however in a theological theory of what the Church is called to be and to do, it has its part to play.

To this end, this research project is based within the framework of a theology which offers a Trinitarian view of creation that is entrenched in Trinitarian ecclesiology. This is a theological notion of God the Creator and Father sending the Son, the Redeemer and Liberator, and the Father and the Son sending the Spirit, the Sustainer of creation, and is also seen as having another movement, i.e. the Father, Son and Spirit, sending the Church, (Newbigin 1963:34). Newbigin uses John 20:21-22 to illustrate this sending mission. Buciora (n.d.) adds that God relates to nature, creation acquires uniqueness of nature and in the context of Trinitarian ecclesiology, places creation into ecclesiological *koinonia*<sup>13</sup> with humankind and God. In the same way, Pope (2004: 4-5) holds that *koinonai* is essentially a bond for a united purpose.

---

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>13</sup> A Greek word for "fellowship" describing the beautiful relationship of faith which connects true Christians to God and to all other true believers in "'Fellowship in the Gospel': A Study of the Greek Word *Koinonia*" *Biblical Insights* 4.7 (July 2004): 4-5. Available at <http://ancientroadpublications.com/Studies/BiblicalStudies/FellowshipintheGospel.html>. Accessed on 20 September 2014.

The nature of the connection differs depending upon the nature of the purpose. For example, in Luke 5:10<sup>14</sup> (NKJV), Luke describes James and John as “*partners*” with Simon in the fishing business. Here their bond was that of a common employment, and their shared purpose was literally to catch fish. The ecclesiological *koinonia* in this research would refer to the bond between the Christian church and humanity, as well as with Creator God. This interdependence is also emphasised by Tutu (2004:28) where he maintains that the world is also discovering that “we are made for interdependence not just with human beings; but we are finding out that we depend on what used to be called inanimate nature”.

Humanity is also called to discover the mystery of nature and the deformed relationship of humanity and nature brings us to the problem of ecology. Accountability and ecological mission are essential for the recovery of nature to its original place. Ecological mission must have its roots in ecological theology as well as in the biblical mandate for mission rather than in pragmatism. A theology of ecological mission will ultimately need to be worked into and expressed through MyT CYM.

Additionally, through this framework, a notion will be advanced that ecological mission as a greater component of ecological theology cannot be regarded as an optional extra anymore, but must find its rightful place in the mainstream of Christian mission. The theology of ecological mission, or an ecological missiology, is related very much to the primary doctrines of theology and therefore follows the approach that is theological rather than pragmatic. The church, through its youth, is better placed to engage with and join other Christian groups, faiths and the wider community in addressing these critical global environmental issues. This is one very important aspect of this research that will be investigated, and which talks to the specific research problem.

Finally, the framework identifies the view of *fullness of life* which considers care for creation as an important element of restoring the integrity of God’s creation. The fullness of life also holds an affirmation of the Good News; God’s saving action in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit pronouncing hope, development of the future and equality and the church following up to fulfil its mandate, that of bringing humanity and creation into the communion with God’s very life.

---

<sup>14</sup> Luke 5:10. “And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men”.

## 4 Research Problem

The research problem which I plan to deal with emerged from my involvement in MyT URCSA congregation, and its urban community where the church is located. The study will cover a number of related issues which, in their interrelatedness, become the subject of this research. Firstly, the term “crisis” reflects an environmental situation which, as I have already suggested, is increasingly recognised as a major and significant problem that is real, significant and global in character. The crisis, as maintained by the IPCC, does not represent a single discrete problem, but rather a massive mosaic of intertwined set of problems, adversely affecting life (2014: 7-8). These problems have been well documented by the IPCC on their Summary for Policy Makers (2014:7-8) and include alteration of ecosystems, disruption of food production and water supply, damage to infrastructure and settlements due to flooding. Significantly, as noted by Andreregg (2010: 12107-12109), 97% of climate scientists agree that climate-warming trends over the past century are very likely due to human activities and most of the leading scientific organisations worldwide have issued public statements endorsing this position.

In this research project, I will argue that whether climate scientists agree or disagree on the causes of environmental crisis, the care for creation does not depend on the crisis, however caused, but, as people of faith, we firstly don't realise that this cares should reflect our respect, worship and honour to the Creator.

Secondly, part of the problem has been that Christian theology and mission has tended to be *anthropocentric*<sup>15</sup> in nature and along with society at large, have failed to appreciate the importance of our natural world. Having made this point, my basic argument is that the Church has an important role to play in influencing the worldview of our relationship with nature and proactively engage in the discourse and practice that seek to address the environmental crisis. Such a role should not only be based on a pragmatic response to the situation, but should arise from the missional nature and theology of the church and should ultimately lead to development of appropriate ecological mission. This research project will therefore work from the starting point that the role of youth in this matter is as important as being equal participants in the liberating mission of Jesus Christ and the care for creation.

Finally, on a basic level is it my contention that a lack of awareness and appreciation of the environment by the youth is also an enormous problem. To this end, this research will explore how the MyT CYM, through a specific contextual approach, would bring their special gifts and

---

<sup>15</sup> A human-centered view of our relationship with nature, emphasising the value of securing the resources we need for continued development. Available at <http://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/39158/903.pdf?sequence=1>. Accessed on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2014

talents to contribute together to the church's response to the environmental crisis. This Christian missional calling by the church, where the youth play such an important role will be based on the principle that youth are fully part of the church and equal members of the body of Christ.

## **5 Preliminary Literature Review**

Research projects and publications on ecological mission, ecological theological and urban ministries are numerous and only few have been selected to provide an overview. Detailed literature review is presented in Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

In advancing the approach to ecological mission, the research project acknowledges the importance of first understanding what mission and missiology entail and what urban ministry involves. As a starting point, would be the definition by David Bosch in his book: "Transforming Missions: Paradigm shifts in the Theology of Missions", For Bosch (1991:519):

"Mission is, quite simply, the participation of Christians in the liberating mission of Jesus, wagering on a future that verifiable experience seems to believe. It is the good news of God's love, incarnated in the witness of a community, for the sake of the world".

Greenway and Timothy (1989:19-24) share sentiments by Bosch, but goes further to provide a foundation for developing values for urban missions. They address a wide range of issues including evangelism and compassion; ethnic diversity; models of outreach; stages of church development; urban missions; poverty; raising a family in the city as well as the question of church buildings.

Kenneth Myers introduces a different view on mission by presenting a thorough and beneficial understanding on the issue of cultural challenges in mission. Myers (1989: 120) emphasises that the distinction between popular culture and traditional culture can easily be applied to non-mission and mission minded Christians in matters of reflection, immediacy, individualism, secularism and consumerism. He holds the view that our thoughts, communication and living have all been affected by popular culture of being present everywhere and at the same time. John Piper on the other hand, in: *Let the Nations Be Glad! The Supremacy of God in Missions*: argues that worship is the fuel and goal of mission because in missions "we simply aim to bring the nations into the white-hot enjoyment of God's glory", (2000:16). He adds that the goal of mission is the happiness of the peoples in the greatness of God. According to him, where passion of God is weak, the zeal for mission will be weak. Therefore the process of mission must be evident through projects of caring, healing, teaching, development or

liberation; recognising cultural context and appreciating the role that lay ministry can play in driving this process.

Missiology, on the other hand, is regarded as a science that focuses on systematic, logical and structured assessment of the theory and practice of Christian missions, combining such disciplines as anthropology, cross-cultural communication theory, ecumenism, history, intercultural studies, methodology, religious encounter and theology. Tippett (1987: 11) support this notion and emphasises that missiology must be a communication system like telephone which activates a whole network of forces; some reaching out beyond itself, others linking up relationships within, systems within systems, variable structures, linkages, synapses, material and immaterial aspects which may be sensed or felt and measured or documented

Van Rheenen (1996:137) concurs with Tippett on the fundamental aspects of missiology in that he distinguishes three interdependent disciplines that make up missiology, viz. theology, the social science and strategy. In his book, *Missions: Biblical Foundations and Contemporary Strategies*, Van Rheenen provides strategies, methods and motives for effective missionary work and lays theological and strategic foundations for the missionary of today and tomorrow. However, I have my questions regarding Van Rheenen's view because I believe that missions are not merely just chalkboard theories and that missiology is dynamic and not static. One must look beyond true life examples to aspects such as cross cultural issues, missionary cycles as well as church maturity, to name but just a few.

JJ (Dons) Kritzing (1987:7) acknowledges that Missiology as the study of the church-in-mission (*missio ecclesiae*)<sup>16</sup> comes very close to ecclesiology, and sums up that the church by its nature is a missionary church, a witnessing community of God. In this research project, I propose that, in addition to the systematic and logical nature of missiology, there is a compelling theological argument for Christian action in caring for the environment as God's creation, and this presents a clear rationale for ecological mission and a compelling missional demand to engage the insights from the disciplines in ecology.

In as far as urban ministry is concerned Mashau and Greenway (2007:3) provide very important principle of urban ministry where they advanced the notion that if the vision of urban missions starts with God, any vision for urban mission by the church should be tested by the word of God. Therefore a scriptural theology of urban mission is a reflection of the nature and attributes of God – the biblical text being its point of departure. In seeking to understand God's way, a great theme of God's love, mercy, justice, sovereignty and power is considered. In the context of the city, the themes would incorporate sociology, anthropology, economics and

---

<sup>16</sup> *Missio ecclesiae* accessed from <http://wv4g.org/biblical-theology-part-4-missio-dei-missio-ecclesiae/> viewed 19<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

theology. However, as indicated earlier, for the biblical theology of urban mission to be proper, it must be accomplished in God. It must make true the authority of Scripture, the sovereignty of God, salvation by grace through Christ and the necessity of evangelism.

On ecological theology, Ernst Conradie upholds that it (ecological theology) is an attempt to reinvestigate, rediscover and renew the Christian tradition in the light of the challenges posed by the growing environmental crisis (Conradie 2006:3). On the other hand, Steve de Gruchy on "*Agency, Sin and Grace: Protestant perspectives on mission and the earth crisis*", scrutinises the relationship between Protestants mission thinking and the ecological crisis facing the earth. He employs the concept of agency, sin and grace to propose an alternative approach to mission that is responsive to the depth of the crisis, (2006:362-379).

In chapter two, more focus will be on different Western and African worldviews of ecological theology and their interrelation. The African perspective contribution to ecological theology discussion is seen as an attempt that seeks to provide possible way for an African theological response to the debate on the ecological crisis. African scholars such as Lubunga argue that Christian doctrine can provide theologians with resources to enable a theological response to the ecological debate. Lubunga (2014: 302-319) appeals to South African Old Testament scholars to develop an appropriate ecotheology that can address current ecological challenges. Lubunga suggests that if theology has been used, in one way or the other, to encourage humankind to dominate and abuse nature, then it can be redeemed by playing a significantly priestly role of teaching people how to care for and restore nature.

Sakupapa (2012: 422-430) also adds that one way in which African theology can play a role and contribute towards the growth of ecological ethos in African Christianity lies in the appropriation of the conceptual framework of the African notion of vital force in the expression of Christian Spirituality and interactions between humans and God within the context of African theology. Sakupapa further maintains that life-centeredness and relationality, as expressed by the notion of vital force, have ecological significance. Perhaps one of the most inspiring piece of writing is by Kaoma in his book: "*God's family, God's earth: Christian ecological ethics of Ubuntu*". Kaoma (2013:34-169) explores how the increasing ecological crisis has religious, political and economic roots that facilitate and promote social and environmental destruction. Kaoma presents the notion that religious traditions, including their ethical expressions, can effectively address this crisis or ameliorate its effects. He explores the role of Ubuntu in addressing this problem.

This notion of Kaoma is shared by a well-known author, Daneel (1991:19) who focusses on a case study in Zimbabwe. In his assessment, he sees Shona traditional not just as background

to the contextualisation of the Christian message but also as an ecological power with very precise consequences for the growth of a theology of the environment. To this end, Daneel sees Shona tradition playing a key role towards caring for creation. He maintains:

“My contention is that this is precisely where traditional religion can make its greatest contribution. If we are to develop a realistic, praxis oriented Christian ethic aimed at the liberation of nature/creation, we have to probe the wisdom of Africa....” (1991:19)

Through his research, Daneel brings to light the role of indigenous Shona religion in relation to the Christian churches and considers that earthly origins and belief system of the Shona people can be an encouraging force for the mobilisation of unsophisticated earth-keeping processes. Daneel advances an African theology of the environment which requires that Christianity must be modified to become compatible with Shona culture and religion for Christianity to be acceptable to the traditional Shona people. Eventually, he succeeded in soliciting the co-operation of Shona traditional Chiefs and African initiated churches to fight environmental degradation in Zimbabwe by planting trees, (2001).

For the fact that Africa is considered one of the most vulnerable continents to the effects of this environmental crisis, I will argue that we must all of us, academics, politicians, religious leaders, and all nations, particularly Africans work together to address and overcome this continuing disaster. But, I also consider that this growing crisis is also a faith issue. The Accra Confession<sup>17</sup> (2004), adopted by the delegation of the World Alliance for Reformed Churches (WARC) in 2004 in Accra, Ghana, brings forward a theological view that the current economic and environmental injustices require a response as a matter of faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ. The economy and how God’s creation is treated are the areas in which injustice is believed to be most prevalent. This has arguably affected Africa very profoundly and through Accra Confession, the view is held that the global economy and how the world treats the environment continue to bring injustice to Africa.

The Accra confession was the culmination of a long journey of the WARC and other ecumenical movements to address these issues locally and globally from the perspective of Christian faith. WARC moved beyond addressing issues of economic justice merely as ethical issues to rather viewing them as confessional issues of faith. Though it was difficult for WARC to reach consensus on these issues, WARC took the lead in the ecumenical movement by engaging a broad spectrum of people, professionals and non-professionals, from the North and the South, rich and poor in order to ensure that such a confession is a true reflection of

---

<sup>17</sup> World Alliance of Reformed Churches. 2004. The Accra Confession – Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth, 24<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), Accra, Ghana, October 2004. Available at <http://www.WARC.Org>. Accessed on 18 March 2015.

the experiences of people at grass-roots level and that it speaks from the heart. To this end, the Accra Confession challenges Christians to take a faith stance on economic injustice. A more detailed discussion on Accra confession is provided in Chapter 2 of this research.

The Earth is the Lord's and therefore a sacrament of ecologically unified beings held together in Jesus Christ, who, as Kaoma contends, "is the Creator, the Life and the Ecological Ancestor of all life" (2013:145). Just as we fought against colonialism, racism and apartheid we must also stand together to fight this life-threatening problem.

In the western worldview three main interconnected and diverse groups of Christian ecological activism have been band together into the following categories: Christian stewardship, eco-justice and Creation spirituality (Kearns 2003:477). Christian stewardship was more appealing to the Christians with more evangelical and Bible-centred theology, (Kearns 2003:477 - 478). They understood the key dominion passage in accordance to dominion given to David, King of Israel, as an example. For the Eco-justice supporters, focus is on social-justice view of Christianity in which God's kingdom of just relations between humans and creation which should be worked for by righting social wrongs, (Kearns 2003:477). Many of the eco-justice advocates include the World Council of Churches (WCC) and its constituent members, such as the South African Council of Churches. For Creation spirituality advocates, focus is on the wonder of the universe and cosmological story of its evolution which revealed that humans were a small part of the universe story, (Kearns 2003:479).

Though there are many works of scholars and scientists, there are still divergent viewpoints based on dissimilar ideologies as well as national positions. As a result, dialogue on ecological theology many yet fully embrace its potential in an effort of changing the world on how it deals with environment in general. The challenge is perhaps best articulated by Conradie who proposed that what is needed is a fundamental change of heart and a call to care for creation. The next section outlines the main aim and objectives of the research.

## **6 Aim and objectives of the research**

The aim of this research is to examine the role of MyT CYM in the context of what is an increasingly noticeable environmental crisis, and which a great deal has been said in recent years with the view of developing a contextual approach to ecological mission. To this end, assessing the level of environmental awareness and concern of the MyT CYM will be considered, with special emphasis on factors that shape their identity and sense of mission that can be used to enhance ecological mission. The study will not attempt to focus and elaborate on the crisis itself, except to note that its scope encompasses not only ecological issues, but also has some important implications for social justice.

The research project will have a specific objective in developing this approach by supporting MyT CYM to become aware of environmental issues and to discover ways in which the ministry can contribute, alongside other groups and begin to proactively conscientise, raise awareness and deal with the environmental challenges, in particular, waste management, facing the area within which the church is located.

The type of mission that this research will advance, viz. ecological mission, is based on the need to care for creation and begins with an approach that includes God's creation as an integral part of Christian mission. Finally, this mission of God's work involves the sending of the Son and the Holy Spirit including *missio Dei* which reveals exactly who God is. This mission should then be a process of sending out rooted in worship and entrenched in the actions of God for the purpose of reforming societies and bringing Good News and hope to the world.

## **7 Scope of Research**

The scope of this research has been delineated in order to sharpen its focus on the identified interlocutor, namely, MyT CYM, a ministry within the congregation in the URCSA, located in the city centre of Pretoria. This urban congregation provides an excellent opportunity to assess the notion of a missional church in a particular urban setting in the context of ecological mission and scripture. This will be premised on the important principles advanced by Mashau and Greenway (2007:3) where they contend that if the vision of urban missions starts with God and that any vision for urban mission by the church should be tested by the word of God. Tutu (2004:28) adds that the Bible tells us of our relationship to the rest of creation and the sacredness of God's creation, all of it in its glory and physicality.

It is aimed that through this research, as the researcher interacts with the MyT CYM, even though it might be limited to one congregation, that these energetic and enthusiastic young people will recognise the environmental crisis facing the church and world, acknowledge their role in the creative, communicating and community inherent presence of the Spirit of creation and the biotic community within it. The conclusion and model for an ecologically sensitive missional youth ministry, designed as a result of this research, can possibly be applicable to other urban congregations and their youth ministries throughout the world. In order to achieve the scope, this research acknowledges that application of appropriate research methodology will be important in order to collect suitable and required data.

## **8 Research Methodology**

Missiological study by its nature is integrative in its methodological approach and to this end, this study will utilise quantitative research methodology to collect required data. Leedy

(1993:143), points out that the main assumption of quantitative research methodology is that there will be factors that cause results and that carefully planned tests can either prove or disprove the hypothetical cause of certain results in a high degree of statistical probability. For this research methodology, a questionnaire will be used to collect primary data on a sample that would be drawn from members of MyT CYM. Data received through questionnaires, will be entered into a central capturing framework and analysed. The simple random sampling methodology will be used where MyT CYM members would be randomly selected to complete the questionnaire.

### **8.1 Data collection instrument**

A questionnaire will be used as a research instrument to collect required data. Pilot and Hungler (1999: 466) define the questionnaire as a method of gathering information from respondents about attitudes, knowledge and feelings. For this research, the questionnaire will be designed to collect information about the level of awareness and concern of MYT CYM about environmental issues.

The questionnaire will be made up of close and open-ended questions. Section one captures limited demographic information of the respondents, whilst sections two and three examine the respondents' level of environmental awareness and concern. Sections four and five examine the respondents' understanding of the concept of mission. Section six assesses the current ecological mission programmes at MyT CYM. Finally, section seven probes the respondents' views on practical approach to ecological mission.

### **8.2 Administration of questionnaire**

The questionnaire has been designed to generate primary data, and includes a variety of multiple questions, ranked along five Likert-Scales. The statements on the Likert Scale are rated on a 1-to-5 scale for their relative importance, where a 1 means the statement is relatively unimportant compared to all the rest, a 3 means that it is moderately important, and a 5 means that it is extremely important. The questionnaire will also be structured to cover, in detail, the objectives of the study in order to help test the research propositions

The questionnaires will be distributed to thirty members of MyT CYM. This represents a sample drawn from fifty member of MyT CYM. This sample was determined by considering the *margin of error (or confidence intervals)*, i.e. the positive and negative deviation a researcher allows on the survey results for the sample as well as the *confidence level*, i.e. the percentage of the population that actually lies within the boundaries of the margin of error.

Once data has been collected from the thirty participants and appropriately captured, it will be subjected to analysis in order to arrive at informed conclusion about the research.

## **9 Data Analysis**

Once data has been collected, it will be analysed with the aim of discovering valuable information, suggesting conclusions and supporting decision making. Data verification will be undertaken to check for accuracy and any discrepancies that may occurred during data migration process. This will be important to determine whether data was accurately translated when transferred from one source to the other. In order to avoid biasness in reporting, an independent academic reviewer will be used to review the report and provide independent opinion before it is submitted for approval.

The Mann-Whitney U test technique will be employed together with computer-aided software called Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to analyse the primary data.

Richardson (1998:594) identifies data analysis techniques as “*methods for analyzing data irrespective of either the methodical cluster within which the technique is applied or the methods used to collect the data*”. With this in mind, data will follow a process of transcription, coding, analysis and presentation of results. However, the research methodology proposed will require that ethical consideration is taken into account and participants are assured of the professionalism and integrity of the research.

## **10 Ethical Considerations**

The researcher has a moral obligation to firmly consider the rights of participants who are expected to take part in this research. The researcher will therefore consider it very important to establish trust between participants and himself and to respect them as independent being, thus enabling them to make sound decisions. To this end, the research will reflect on the following key ethical consideration:

- The researcher will be truthful and respectful in the way that he portrays MyT CYM, its beliefs and practices;
- The researcher will not make any disparaging or judgmental remarks about them;
- The researcher will not make any sweeping statements that produces generalisation and prejudices about MyT CYM or URCSA in general;
- The researcher will not use terms that some people may experience as hurtful and offensive; and

- The researcher hereby commits that he has avoided plagiarism by acknowledging all sources used.

Respondents will sign an “Informed Consent Form” thereby giving consent that the researcher may use their information for this research. Finally, the researcher will have to assure the respondents that the information they provide will be treated very confidentially and will be used solely for the purpose of the study.

Completion of questionnaires has a similar process of consent, although there is a different dynamic when the process is facilitated. The consent will be formalised through a written agreement identifying the boundaries and extent of the permission to interview people. The researcher also applied for ethical clearance from the Departmental Ethics Review Committee. A copy of the approved ethical clearance certificate has been attached as Appendix A of the document.

This research will generally be carried out based on four guidelines. *Firstly*, informed consent will be gained from the participants who must willingly agree to partake based on full and open information. *Secondly*, a basic moral principle is that dishonesty and misrepresentation cannot be trustworthy means to extract information from participants. *Thirdly*, privacy and confidentiality will have to be respected, however, privacy protection can be meaningless if “there is no consensus or unanimity on what is public and private”, (Punch, 1994: 94 as cited in Christians, 2005). *Finally*, there must be clear assurance that data is accurate without fabrications, dishonest or deceitful materials and omissions.

## **11 Research Outline of Chapters**

Chapter one presents the introduction and background of the research project as a whole and will cover the problem posed, purpose, hypothesis and defines some of the significant terms used in the research. The chapter concludes with the delimitation of the scope.

Chapter two deals with literature review, covering definition of concepts such as ecological mission and ecological theology, ecological justice as well as missional ecclesiology. Ecological mission is a concept relating to earth mission or earth keeping and an approach to Christian mission that takes seriously the biblical call to care for creation. The chapter will review the literature by assessing what the works reveal about the church’s understanding of its mission theology. Most importantly the chapter will highlight significant trends, approaches and debates by scholars and authors to provide context of ecological mission and ecological theology.

Chapter three will focus on the methodology and the main features of the missiological paradigm that will be employed. The chapter will further reflect on the quantitative basis, the empirical investigation of ecological mission through statistical and measured techniques. Collected data will be appropriately entered in order to minimise any discrepancies. Once data has been properly entered, it will then be analysed. Issues of ethical consideration will be dealt with during data collection process.

Chapter four will focus on the analysis of collected data in order to arrive at informed conclusion. For this research, computer-aided software known as Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) together with the Mann-Whitney U test technique will be used to analyse collected primary data.

Chapter five will propose a model for contextual approach to ecological missions, for the MyT CYM which could possibly be replicated at other congregations, particularly those located in urban settings and inner cities. Similarly, it is anticipated that MyT CYM level of environmental awareness will be greatly enhanced thus enabling the youth to be actively involved in initiatives that sought to care for creation through appropriate environmental management programmes.

Chapter six will conclude the research, providing summary and recommendations for consideration on the contextual approach to ecological mission for the MyT CYM.

## **12 Conclusion**

Through this research, my essential argument is that the church has an important role to play in addressing the environmental crisis that the world is facing. Such a role should be based not only on a rational response to the situation, but that it should rise out of the nature and mission of the church. This call, I contend, is rooted in the missional nature of the church. To this end, the theology and the practice of ecological mission opens up one of the most important aspects of overall mission of the church and that the growing environmental problems sharpens the focus of this mission, which remains distinctly theological. What is important to understand is that ecology is unavoidably a part of both theology and mission and that there is a connection between ecological theology, ecological mission and ecological praxis. Therefore, I will argue that the entire life and praxis of the church should include an ecological dimension and vision.

Finally, as we aspire to make the earth more humane and user friendly, Emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu spells out a number of concerns that the church needs to take up as mission priorities. Tutu (1990:7) advocates that it is a religious task to be concerned about ecology,

about the purity of the air and water, about damage to rain forests and the ozone layer, about the greenhouse effect and about threaten species, both fauna and flora.

# CHAPTER 2

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1 Introduction

This chapter will expand on the following aspects of the research, namely, context of ecological theology, ecological mission or mission as ecological justice, missional ecclesiology as well as the role of the Christian Youth Ministry in ecological mission. Definition of concepts such as ecological theology, ecological mission, missional ecclesiology, ecomissiology as well as missional discussion related to ecological mission will be presented. The chapter will review the literature by assessing what is reveal about the church's understanding of its mission theology. Most importantly the chapter will highlight significant trends, approaches and debates to provide context of ecological mission and ecological theology.

#### 1.1 The Roots of Ecological Theology

The Nicene Creed opens with the following words: "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible". This is the basic statement of Christian faith developed in the fourth century at the first and second ecumenical councils (Kelly 2006: 297). These opening words establish a fundamental relationship between God and creation, namely, that God is the maker or creator of both the earthly truths of the mountains and minerals, seas and streams, creatures as well as the heavenly realities that remain mostly beyond our understanding. Based on this basic relationship, we cannot regard or relate to creation, earthly or heavenly, without being aware of and affirming its relationship to God. To ignore this relationship, while relating to either God or Creation, would be a great mistake. Affirming and critically exploring this relationship between God and creation is believed to be at the core of a developed Christian ecological theology, "ecotheology", or theology of creation.

The concept or ecotheology is therefore used for theologies influenced by ecological nodes of thinking. It's believed to be an approach that was born within the context of the world's ecological crisis. Habel (2000:26) maintains that the devaluation of the earth has given rise to "green" consciousness which strive to "invite us as members of the Earth community, to return to the Bible and in dialogue with the text, ascertain whether a similar kinship with Earth is reflected there". This concept is thought to have gained attention in current society, from nuclear disarmament marches to "Save the Whale" campaigns, to the ecological ruins which influence society in general, making ecology an increasing concern in our world.

Sittler (2000: 173) considers that ecotheology is broader than either theology of nature, a creation-oriented theology or a response to the ecological crisis. Sittler continues that it is more than a theology of ecology but it is an ecological approach to theology. Similar to liberation theology, it is a way of doing theology (*method*) as well as a type of theology (*content*), and rightly emerges from an environmental commitment (*location*). Sittler (2000:174) concludes that ecotheology tends to be closely related to ecopraxis, ecofeminism and ecojustice because of their emphasis on interconnectedness.

If we consider Sittler's view on ecotheology, it can be concluded that ecotheology is ecological in the sense of trying to reflect on the whole in its relationships at every level. This concept provides awareness of our interrelatedness with all things and with God. For McFague (1987: X), ecological theology is an understanding of God which involves a growing appreciation of the systematic, comprehensive, radical interdependence of life at all levels and in every possible way. It involves both a worldview and a "God-view". It has a sensibility which colours our whole approach and its governing symbol is relationship.

Furthermore, the connection between theology and contemporary ecological crisis is agreed to have become a deep issue of debate in 1967, following Lynn White's publication: "*The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis*" (1967). White maintained that Christianity was responsible for spreading an anti-ecological understanding of the relationship between humanity and the environment. He claimed that:

Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen... it not only established a dualism of man and nature but also insisted that it is God's will that man exploit nature for his proper ends. (1967: 335).

White completed his article with a challenge to theologians to present an alternative Christian view which was ecological: "Since the roots of our trouble are so largely religious, the remedy must also be essentially religious..." (1967: 338).

Rogers (1973:112) subsequently undertook a survey of the published studies on ecological crisis and theological response to the crisis and he concluded that the studies reflected the need for "an appropriate theological model" which sufficiently measures the biblical data regarding the relationship of God, human being and nature. The short outline of Rogers' 1973 article indicates that an ecological theology was possible. Three elements stood out,

necessitating address: a thorough understanding of the *immanence of God*<sup>18</sup> in creation, the nature of humans in relation to the remainder of creation and the role of the church in ecology.

## **2 Missiological Implications**

Ecotheology is also understood to indirectly contain an ecomissiology, just as all theologies give way for considerations of mission that flow from them (Langmead 2002:508). Ecomissiology is seen as an approach to mission which sees the mission of God in terms of reconciliation at all levels in a reality characterised by relationship and interdependence throughout (Langmead 2002: 505). Langmead further adds that as ecotheology is holistic in approach, so also is ecomissiology. The fundamental theme of ecotheology is one of relationship at the heart of life, and the corresponding missiological theme is that of reconciliation at all levels.

Langmead (2002:508) maintains that in the current writings on ecology and theology there seems to be an emphasis on the practical action on what Christians should do and this is without doubt a part of a missiological response. However, Langmead is of the opinion that not enough has been written about ecomissiology, (Langmead 2002:508). In some ways, therefore, Langmead proposes the aspects of ecomissiology below as opening attempt to focus thoughts forward for missiological conversation.

### **2.1 Ecomissiology Is World-wide**

Langmead (2002:509) suggests that what ecology teaches missiology is that life in all of its dimensions has to be taken into account. Mission that is directed to only one aspect of existence will always be an incomplete form of mission. Ecology is about an entire system in interrelationship, and then systems-of-systems. Abundant life shares a similar scope. This means that missiology needs to be both comprehensive (taking all dimensions of the gospel into account) and holistic (integrating them and not just adding one to another). Loader (1991: 48) puts it concisely: “If the gospel is about life and mission is about the gospel, then it has to be encompassing or, to use the term now reappearing in ecological circles, holistic”.

### **2.2 Interdependence and Relationships**

Ecology not only sees the world through the governing symbol of relationship; but it also aspires to pursue understanding through relating its perspectives to those of other disciplines.

---

<sup>18</sup> God's immanence refers to His presence within His creation. A belief in God's immanence holds that God is present in all of creation, while remaining distinct from it. In other words, God is everywhere and there is no place where God is not. His sovereign control extends everywhere simultaneously.

Just as the literature of ecotheology is presumed to cross boundaries with many other disciplines, ecomissiology also is acknowledged to operate in interdisciplinary ways, listening to unlikely sources for understanding and building bridges to those of all persuasions (Langmead 1991:509).

Ecomissiology plays an important role in encouraging cooperation and association and is believed to take the view that although we attempt to bring a distinct and unique holistic Christian perspective, we can never understand enough to do it alone. We need to do our research and be well informed before declaring that a decision is bad for the earth or its people, but as well, we need to engage in respectful and humble dialogue at all times, realising that all our estimates of environmental impact are provisional.

### **2.3 Ecomissiology requires Contextualisation**

An ecological perspective in mission examines how the gospel takes a diverse shape not only in different cultures but also in different ecosystems, observed in the broadest terms. Important aspects such as language, culture and religious background are often considered today in the process of inculturation the gospel. If we intend to position our mission more deeply in creation in all of its regional variety, it may be proper to have to take into account other factors such as the land, flora, fauna, climate, natural features and physical history. For example, what for one section of society may seem to be an empty desert may be for indigenous communities jam-packed with life, meaning and stories of origin. These are all factors of missiological significance, and ecomissiology urges us to pay attention to ecology as well as to the cultural environment.

## **3 Different Interpretative views on Ecological Theology**

This section examines some of the historical and more contemporary contexts that have shaped what is now rich and deep ecological dialogue. Focus will be on Western and African worldviews of ecological theology and its interrelations.

### **3.1 The Western Worldview**

The attention of many scholars from a western perspective including Lynn White was focused on certain biblical concepts such as to have dominion, to subdue, and the perfect relationship of humanity to nature, and on the corresponding explanatory issues that resurfaced time and again in theological and philosophical thought. This can be seen from the roots of very diverse understandings of the human-nature relationship in the Genesis creation stories. It is in

Genesis 1:28<sup>19</sup> that the essential verbs "subdue" and "have dominion" are found, and these have encouraged a great deal of scholarship over their correct interpretation and application.

The term "dominion" over all the earth sets the tone for the religious roots for many, that of destructive and anti-ecological. Such an account suggests, in White's view, that "Man and nature are two things, and man is master" (White 1967:37). White further maintains that such mastery is, moreover, not caring, but cruel, leading White to the inevitable conclusion that Christianity was the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen, not only established a dualism of man and nature, but also insisted that it is God's will that man exploit nature for his proper ends (White 1967:37).

In response to White's assertions, scholars such as Hessel (1992 :468) urged that dominion was more accurately interpreted as stewardship, or the caring and keeping of the earth, because it is the Lord's. Other scholars for instance Brueggemann (1977:210) placed less emphasis on the instructions in Genesis 2 to keep and take care of the Garden of Eden. Brueggemann saw the combined texts in *covenantal*<sup>20</sup> terms, implying that human being are to keep the land maturely and responsibly in return for God's blessing thus enabling them to be fruitful and multiply. Brueggemann (1977:210) further pointed out that this stewardship theme ran throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, and was evident in the numerous commandments regarding agricultural and dietary laws in the care both for the land and for animals.

Perhaps the most important was the global religious, Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) effort which made sure that its voice was clearly heard at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and the succeeding 1997 Kyoto Conference on global climate change in Japan (Granberg-Michaelson 1992:468). These conferences were dominated by corporate interests and could not agree on implementation of resolutions taken. Though some countries such as US and multinational corporations are believed to have sought to undermine the 1997 Kyoto treaty on global climate change, by the 2002 Johannesburg South Africa UN Summit on Sustainable Development, many nations had signed including China. This means that the standards of the treaty for reducing carbon dioxide emissions might have some impact.

Another large global cooperative effort, the conference at Rio, resulted in the Earth Charter, a document which thousands contributed to in hearings and meetings around the globe. This document was hailed and presented at the UN Summit on Sustainable Development held in

---

<sup>19</sup> Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." *New King James Version (NKJV)*

<sup>20</sup> The conditional promises made to humanity by God, as revealed in Scripture.

Johannesburg, South Africa. The Earth Charter, as well as the religious and NGO present at the UN conferences, was an attempt to make sure that the voices of those most affected by economic development and environmental degradation, i.e. the indigenous, the poor, and developing countries were heard. It was clear that a new, global, ecological, and morally just vision was needed to guide Earth's citizens. The religious voice also joined other movements especially on the effects of the growing ecological crisis on creation and on humanity in general, and how the church should position herself to deal with the impending crisis. The religious voice included the following:

- The Joint Appeal ( for the environment) in Religion and Science, a statement by Religious Leaders at the Summit on the Environment in 1991 held at the University of Cape Town;
- Alliance of Religions and Conservation in conjunction with the World Wildlife Fund and the World Bank organising the Sacred Gifts of the Planet Conference in 2000;
- Declarations by the Dalai Lama, Pope John Paul II and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I in the Religion, Science and Environmental Symposia from 1994 – 2002; and
- The United Nations Environment Programme, Interfaith Partnership for the Environment organising the World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders in 2000.

The Christian call focussed on the following key aspects:

- Clarifies the seriousness of the ecological crisis;
- States the importance of the Christian church to respond to the crisis;
- The call is motivated in terms of the Bible, Christian faith and Christian tradition;
- Through all the literature, an attempt is made to make real a visible environmental praxis; and
- Every contribution to this field is important to raise an environmental awareness continually and in different and altering local contexts.

Kearns (2003:477) maintains that the many diverse ecological voices were not just from theologians, but were developing from a variety of activist as well as church-related organisations, for it was in this range that the vast and rich variety of eco-theology was translated into action and problem-solving. In other words, it was at the level of the activism that the greater purpose of ecotheology could bear fruit in terms of changing the way people and institutional actors behaved.

Furthermore, Kearns (2003:477) suggests that the main interconnected and diverse groups of Christian ecological activism band together into the following categories: Christian

stewardship, eco-justice and Creation spirituality. According to Kearns (2003:477 - 478) Christian stewardship was more appealing to the Christians with more evangelic and Bible-centred theology. They interpreted the key dominion passage in accordance to dominion given to David, King of Israel, as an example. To this end, Kearns adds that Kings were responsible to God for their “keeping” of the kingdom and were such held accountable. Therefore for many Christian stewards, to be good Christian was to care responsibly for the earth. Christians did this by seeking to thoroughly ground “saving the creation” in biblical texts. Kearns (2003: 478) further pointed out that Christian stewardship was an important voice countering a widespread view of conservative Christianity that was anti-science with “creationist’ implications.

Ecological justice advocates are understood to stand for more mainstream and liberal Protestant and Catholic social-justice views of Christianity in which God’s kingdom of just relations between humans and creation which should be worked for by righting social wrongs (Kearns 2003:477). The source of authority here is the example of Jesus and the social Gospel tradition. The eco-justice group acknowledges that environmental problems are also justice issues with adverse effects to those already excluded such as people colour, the poor, women and children. Many of the eco-justice advocates include the World Council of Churches (WCC) and its constituent members, such as the South African Council of Churches. The WCC and members have all worked to reveal environmental injustices in the dumping of hazardous and toxic wastes and the enormous health results especially for women in developing countries, or shortened lives of children caused by air pollution. The WCC argues that the one principle of Christianity is the just treatment of one’s neighbour and should be applied to polluter pays principle. Those found guilty of pollution and wastes must be made to pay for their actions. One more concern by the WCC has been those who may suffer and perhaps also suffering from global climate warming, raising waters, failing crops due to erratic and often violent whether and so forth.

Creation spirituality focussed on the wonder of the universe and cosmological story of its evolution which revealed that humans were a small part of the universe story, (Kearns 2003: 479). The group with this view is believed to have mostly emanated from liberal Protestants and Catholic groups. The revelation of the universe, according to this group, surpassed the knowledge of most religious traditions and found themselves creating a collection of spiritual sources that identified the need and incorporated viewpoints that human beings were part of the larger economic web of beings that needed to be recognised. This group regarded the Bible as their source of authority and inspiration.

Finally, I will submit that ecotheology has therefore slowly evolved into a multi-voiced and multi-faced complication in which a variety of theologians, geographic and demographic

voices are trying to be heard and considered. For this reason, I will argue that the dominant discourse is not only by the white Euro-Americans but has spread to other voices of the world. However, this success has also brought along a number of challenges as the message takes a number of multitude of forms. Many disagree with each other and disintegrate into divergent ideological, academic or national positions. As a result, ecological theology discourse has therefore struggled to transcend the many limitations and embrace the many possibilities of its indecisive views on humanity, God and nature. The section below will focus on yet another view on ecological theology, the African worldview.

### **3.2 African Worldview**

African studies addressing ecology identify the African worldview, particularly their cosmology, and offer the most influential factor on the way they relate to the earth and other forms of life, (Sindima 1990:137). Sindima further suggests that the environmental studies also highlight how African ways of relating to nature have changed as a result of Western influence, which has changed the cosmology that informs their view of life and community. African scholars such as Daneel and Sindima for example, focus broadly on the following:

- African perspective contribution to ecological theology discussion as an attempt to offer possible route for an African theological response to the debate on the ecological crisis; and
- Daneel advance an African theology of the environment which requires that Christianity be modified to become compatible with Shona culture and religion for Christianity to be acceptable to the traditional Shona people.

Sindima further holds that the Western cultural views have compromised Africans' hermeneutical process including the process by which Africans assumed their own heritage, corrupting their thought system and destroying their value system, (Sindima 1990:138). This influence, as Sindima maintains, has resulted in Africans ceasing to understand the world through their own cultural system or through the symbolic understanding given by their cosmology. Sindima (1990:137) provides an expression that would perhaps best describe African Christian interpretative efforts in context of the current ecological crisis: "Doing theology with African creation wisdom."

Daneel (2000: 248-263) echoes Sindima's sentiments when he points out that to formulate an expression that would best describe African Christian informative efforts in context of the current ecological crisis one might choose this notion of "Doing theology with African creation wisdom." This expression embraces three basic aspects and beliefs through which Africans have articulated their environmental concerns. Daneel highlights the following aspects:

identification of Christ's body with creation, a religious view of the universe and a community of creation and life.

Daneel further suggests that in the attempt to halt deforestation, desertification, and soil degradation, some African churches have embraced a reforestation/tree-planting Eucharist as a way of celebrating the death and resurrection of Christ. In the celebrations a close association between Christ's body and creation is made in an attempt to embrace the completeness of what it means to live under the lordship of Christ, who after resurrection said: 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me' (Mt. 28:18). Daneel (1994:250) proposes that this declaration is understood as mandating Christian churches, as the body of Christ, to build a unity and harmony amongst themselves "but also to build new relationships with the entire creation in attempt to avoid destruction and preserve life for all creatures". This understanding has generated a tree-planting Holy Communion in an attempt to integrate creation into the body of Christ. Furthermore, as proposed by Daneel (1994:252), the central argument among proponents of a tree-planting Holy Communion is that the body of Christ is more than the church. The concept also includes relationships with all creation: "For by him all things were created... in him all things hold together ... and through him to reconcile to himself all things," (Colossians 1:16-20).

Recognition is given to the relationship of the unity in the body of Christ (the church) and also Christ's presence in all creation is remembered through Holy Communion by including tree planting. Furthermore, Daneel (2000: 262) proposes that "replacing the trees in sacramental recognition of the lordship of Christ; the ultimate guardian, who reigns over yet suffers within the stricken earth; brings life and celebration to creation".

The sacrament begins with public confession and ecological sins are named such as cutting trees without replanting and restoring them, overgrazing and soil erosion resulting from riverbank farming (Daneel 1996: 572-573). These sins, as claimed by Daneel are associated with wizardry, the most serious of all sins. Creation-destroying wizards are well known to the church's prophets, who act as guardians of the land. They are people who cut trees extensively and without thinking in pursuit for quick profit, refuse to abide by the principle that firewood can only be cut by those who planted the trees for it, and resist traditional and government laws prohibiting tree-cutting in sacred belts and cultivation of riverbanks. A healing ceremony with laying-on of hands, sprinkling of holy water and prayers is performed for those afflicted by ecological sins is required. These ecological sins highlight the urgency for a proper ecological mission or mission as ecological justice.

Daneel (1991:19) focussed on a case study in Zimbabwe. In his assessment, he sees Shona tradition not just as background to the contextualisation of the Christian message but also as an ecological power with very precise consequences for the growth of a theology of the environment. To this end, Daneel sees Shona tradition playing a key role towards caring for creation. He maintains:

“My contention is that this is precisely where traditional religion can make its greatest contribution. If we are to develop a realistic, praxis oriented Christian ethic aimed at the liberation of nature/creation, we have to probe the wisdom of Africa....” (1991:19)

Through his research, Daneel brought to light the role of indigenous Shona religion in relation to the Christian churches and considers that earthly origins and belief system of the Shona people can be an encouraging force for the mobilisation of unsophisticated earth-keeping processes. Daneel advances an African theology of the environment which requires that Christianity must be modified to become compatible with Shona culture and religion for Christianity to be acceptable to the traditional Shona people. Eventually, he succeeded in soliciting the co-operation of Shona traditional Chiefs and African Initiated Churches (AICs) to fight environmental degradation in Zimbabwe by planting trees.

As a way of Africanising the sacrament one regards Christ, through his death and resurrection, as the real guardian of the land. Christ identifies with the abused and barren soil against human injustice; in contrast to or fulfilment of the African ancestors traditionally understood to be the guardians of the land.

In his book, *Africa Earthkeepers: Wholistic Interfaith Mission* (2001), Marthinus Daneel used interfaith reforestation as an extension of the war liberation to regain natural lands. Daneel (2001:137 -141) portrayed influences between social liberation and ecological restoration and was able to show the missional significance of connections between social and ecological relations. Daneel's account of Zimbabwean nationalist land reclamation is argued to offer compelling suggestions for connecting liberation and motherland within particular relations of grace and creation. Daneel shows how religious support for the Zimbabwean liberation movement developed from “a religious inspired sense of place”, (Daniel 2001:29). His militant tree planting movement developed as the “ history of the liberation movement is reinterpreted in the context of the green revolution in such a manner that cultural, religious and nationalist-patriotic motivational forces converge in a powerful imperative to participate in environmental reform” (Daneel 2001:29).

The association made by Daneel raises very important and continuing questions about how Christian communities participate in God's mission to restore creation. A bigger question

becomes how missional war for liberation can restore people to their place by repossessing land claimed by ethnic identity through ecological restoration. For Daneel, a local way of understanding creation, originates from a conception of grace tied to the land identity of local people.

Lubunga (2014: 302-304) also makes an appeal to South African Old Testament scholars to develop an appropriate ecotheology that can address current ecological challenges. Lubunga suggests that if theology has been used, in one way or the other, to encourage humankind to dominate and abuse nature, then it can be redeemed by playing a significantly priestly role of teaching people how to care for and restore nature.

Sakupapa (2012:422) also adds that one way in which African theology can play a role and contribute towards the growth of ecological ethos in African Christianity lies in the appropriation of the conceptual framework of the African notion of vital force in the expression of Christian Spirituality and interactions between humans and God within the context of African theology. Sakupapa further maintains that life-centeredness and relationality, as expressed by the notion of vital force, have ecological significance. Perhaps one of the most inspiring pieces of writing is by Kaoma in his book: *“God’s family, God’s earth: Christian ecological ethics of Ubuntu”*. Kaoma (2013:169) explores how the increasing ecological crisis has religious, political and economic roots that facilitate and promote social and environmental destruction. Kaoma presents the notion that religious traditions, including their ethical expressions, can effectively address this crisis or ameliorate its effects (Kaoma 2013:114) He explores the role of *Ubuntu* in addressing this problem. This, as argued by Kaoma, is based on the notion that we are one Earth family, Gods family and we must protect the rights and dignity of Creation without overlooking those of the poor. In addition, our attitudes towards the natural world and the way we relate to the Earth will determine the future of life on this planet.

Coming from a different perspective, Ernst Conradie adds to the discourse that ecological theology is an attempt to reinvestigate, rediscover and renew the Christian tradition in the light of the challenges posed by the growing ecological crisis, (Conradie 2006:3). As indicated in Chapter one, Steve de Gruchy on *“Agency, Sin and Grace: Protestant perspectives on mission and the earth crisis”*, scrutinises the relationship between Protestants mission thinking and the ecological crisis facing the earth. He employs the concept of agency, sin and grace to propose an alternative approach to mission that is responsive to the depth of the crisis, (Conradie 2006:372-379).

Africa is considered one of the most vulnerable continents to the effects of this ecological crisis, and I will therefore propose that all of us; academics, politicians, religious leaders, and

all nations, particularly Africans must work together to address this continuing disaster. But, I will also argue that this growing crisis is also a faith issue. This is because the Earth is the Lord's and therefore a sacrament of ecologically unified beings held together in Jesus Christ, who, as Kaoma contends, "is the Creator, the Life and the Ecological Ancestor of all life" (Kaoma 2013:145). Just as we fought against colonialism, racism and apartheid, I will argue that we must stand together to fight this life-threatening problem.

The Accra Confession, as shown in Chapter 1, was a call upon Reformed Christians around the world to engage injustices in the world as a fundamental part of their churches' witness and mission (Article 8) The Accra Confession challenges current economic doctrines with the traditional Reformed criticism of idols (i.e., Mammon, consumerism, the financial and speculative markets) that deny God's life-giving authority and defy God's agreement by excluding the poor, the vulnerable, and the whole of Creation from the fullness of life. This notion is confirmed by Articles 17-19 of the Accra Confession:

*17. We believe in God, Creator and Sustainer of all life, who calls us as partners in the creation and redemption of the world. We live under the promise that Jesus Christ came so that all might have life in fullness (Jn10.10). Guided and upheld by the Holy Spirit we open ourselves to the reality of our world.*

*18. We believe that God is sovereign over all creation. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" (Ps 24.1).*

*19. Therefore, we reject the current world economic order imposed by global neoliberal capitalism and any other economic system, including absolute planned economies, which defy God's covenant by excluding the poor, the vulnerable and the whole of creation from the fullness of life. We reject any claim of economic, political and military empire which subverts God's sovereignty over life and acts contrary to God's just rule.*

The Accra Confession mentions that the issues of economic and environmental justice are not only social, political and moral issues but are integral to faith in Jesus Christ and affect the honour of the church (Article 7). This necessitates that Christians and the church in general to take a stand against current economic and environmental injustices. To this end, the unity of the church becomes paramount in dealing with both economic and environmental injustices. Finally, the church must stand in solidarity with persons who suffering, the poor, destitute, wronged and the downtrodden (Articles 4-5).

The world disorder is analysed by "looking through the eyes of powerless and suffering people", (Article 28). The confession calls upon churches and society in general to hear the cries of the people who are suffering and creation which is wounded, over-consumed and underrated by the current global economy.

In this context it is discerned that God calls us as a Communion to seek right relations among peoples and all of creation; build sustainable, inclusive, just and life-enhancing communities; resist systems of oppression; create and strengthen alternatives and strive to witness through our accompaniment and actions the dignifying fullness of life as exemplified in Christ, (Article 18) It further points us toward a critical aspect of our work as Christians in the world. It provides the theological foundation, principles and vision of the social, economic and ecological justice God calls us to live out. In addition, the Confession provides an alternative to the neoliberal economics that have arguably been damaging to our relationship with others and with creation. Together with Reformed leaders in other parts of the world, the reflection on economic and ecological injustice led to the development 2004 Accra Confession.

In South Africa the work of the South African Faith Communities' Environment Institute (SAFCEI)<sup>21</sup> offers possibly the best example of continued prophetic analysis based on participation in public hearings on government policy. SAFCEI's objective is to promote and support the care and nurturing all of God's Creation. It's an institute of people of many faiths, united in diversity through common commitment to earthkeeping. The Institute supports the faith communities in fulfilling their environmental and socio-economic responsibility.

Another such prophetic engagement, addressed at local church leaders rather than the government, business or industry is the voice of the South African Council of Churches (SACC). In their document entitled "*Climate Change – A challenge to churches in South Africa*" (2009), SACC recognises that prophetic critique and assessment would not be sufficient. The task of a prophet is not merely to condemn evil and injustices but also to inspire people with an attractive vision for the future, supporting them to see what the next appropriate step is or should be, (SACC 2009:5). This suggests the need for moral leadership, moral courage, moral vision and moral imagination.

The SACC just like Accra Confession regards climate change as an issue of justice, and a moral and spiritual crisis. SACC does not believe that the reduction of targets was reasonable at two degrees, but should be 1.5 degrees (SACC 2009:6). It believes that South Africa must promote renewable and sustainable energy, called for environmental impact assessments to be conducted by non-government experts, and for public participation in consultation. SACC further noted that some of the claims needed to be substantiated by research, included the issues of polluter pay principles as well as possible alternatives for carbon trading.

---

<sup>21</sup> South African Faith Communities' Environment Institute. Available at <http://safcei.org/>. Accessed on 14 April 2015

In the *Climate Change – A challenge to churches in South Africa* document SACC highlights the underlying problem being that of moral leadership, moral courage and moral imagination. SACC (2009:40) proposes that there is something more attractive and more inspiring than the consumerist heaven portrayed so vividly by the media and publicly demonstrated in the lifestyles of the affluent, also in relatively poor countries. This raises the question whether Christians can uphold an alternative moral vision in a world threatened by climate change. The SACC document observes:

“We live in a time that lacks a compelling moral vision, even though most businesses and institutions continually talk about their vision and mission. It is deeply worrying that we as Christians, too, so often seem unable to portray through our witness and action the alternative that is required. This is strange because the Jewish-Christian tradition has such a cherished heritage in this regard” (2009:41)

The church in Africa, with its understanding of the interplay between the material world and the spiritual world (between the visible and the invisible), with its vibrant forms of spirituality, may offer vicarious prayers also for Christian churches in other parts of the world, (SACC 2009:62-64).

The SACC believe that during the apartheid years the prophetic voice was raised in support of the struggle for freedom. Now the struggle is also to liberate all of creation: to nurture and foster life and to resist the many forces that threaten it. In responding to the cry of those who are poor the church must not be deaf to the cry of the earth. With the high rate of HIV and AIDS in the country now more than ever there is need to promote a healthy environment, and to enable the production of nutritious food to ensure food security for all. The mission of SACC is to promote healing and reconciliation which includes cleaning the polluted rivers, purifying the polluted air, and challenging the spirit of greed that seeks to dominate and threatens to destroy all that God has made. There is therefore a need to ensure that the gifts of God are distributed justly and that there is recognition for land as one of the gifts that has been entrusted to our care and responsible use.

Additionally, the SACC is of the view that in responding to the impending ecological crisis, Christians must consider their belief in God as creator and Jesus as redeemer of all life awaken the church to our environmental responsibility (SACC 2009:63). In rediscovering that care for the earth is central to the church's gospel message, people are moved to a deep respect for the integrity of creation and all forms of life and a firm obligation to safeguard the full human development of all people according to their inherent human dignity. SACC believe that as human beings it is significant that we view ourselves as integral to the community of

life and that our very survival depends on maintaining a healthy environment and protecting the biodiversity that maintains our ecosystem (SACC 2009:64).

In conclusion, the African perspective contribution to ecological theology discussion can therefore be seen as an attempt that seeks to provide possible route for an African theological response to the debate on the ecological crisis. The researcher considers well African scholars who argue that Christian doctrine can provide theologians with resources to enable a theological response to the ecological debate. Of importance in the discourse is the view that issues of environmental and economic justice are not only social, political and moral issues but are integral to faith in Jesus Christ and affect the honour of the church.

#### **4 Ecological Mission or Mission as Ecological Justice**

*Ecological mission or mission as ecological justice*<sup>22</sup> embrace the role of the Christian Church in the world which is referred to in its wholeness, including worship and spiritual disciplines, pastoral care and a compassionate response to human need. This is in addition to social justice and ecological issues as suggested by Jesus' use of the term "kingdom of God". In short, as Bosch states,

"mission gives expression to the dynamic relationship between God and the world" (1991:9).

But as in the case of theology and as argued so far in this chapter, eco-mission is understood to build on the foundation of eco-theology to express the principle that Christians are called to protect the integrity of creation, and to exercise their mission in such a way that the life of the Earth is sustained and improved. As such eco-mission operates alongside other valid forms of Christian mission; it makes no claim to be the whole of mission, but in an ecclesiastical ethos, I will maintain that it has its part to play.

Furthermore, care for creation begins with an ecological theology as the unavoidable basis for the approach to this particular missional praxis and theology. Langmead (2002:508) expresses this connection, stating that "Eco-theology implicitly contains an Eco-missiology just as all theologies give direction to understand the mission that flows from them". What is therefore important to note, as advanced by this research, is that ecology is unavoidably a part of theology and mission so that there is a complete connection between ecological theology and ecological mission.

---

<sup>22</sup> I will use these two terms interchangeably in this research.

Mission as ecological justice should flow out of the missional nature and theology of the church. This missional theology of the church emphasises the role or witness of the people of God, as a collective in the world, including implications for caring and peace, also suggesting priorities for Christians engaged in God's world-changing work.

The ecological mission is therefore set in the context of the ecological crisis and the need to care for creation and it begins with an approach that includes ecological factors, or the dimension and scope of God's creation as an integral part of Christian mission. Furthermore, this mission, as understood in this research, should be a process of sending out, but also being rooted in their own worship and being entrenched in the actions of God for the purpose of reforming societies by bringing the Good News and hope to the world. This is reinforced by Newbigin where he explains:

“The Church is not only so much the agent of the mission as the locus of the mission”, (Newbigin 1989:119). Newbigin's understanding is based on John 20:21-22, where Jesus said, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I sent you” (NKJV), and then He breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit”, (Newbigin 1963:34).

The process of sending out can therefore be demonstrated through projects of care for God's creation, evangelism, healing, liberation and recognising cultural context while appreciating the role that the Christian Youth Ministry can play in driving this process.

Ecological mission is therefore intended to build on the foundation of ecological theology to express the belief that Christians are called to safeguard the integrity of creation, and to exercise their mission in such a way that the life of the earth is sustained and renewed.. Ecological mission operates alongside other valid forms of Christian mission but makes no claim to be the whole of mission; however in an ecclesiastical ethos that has often overlooked this field, it has its part to play.

#### **4.1 Ecological Justice**

The phrase ecological justice or “eco-justice” links the concepts of ecology and social justice. It emphasises the strong relationship that exists between the ecological question and the issues of justice, peace and the defence of the rights of individuals and peoples. Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) (2011:6)<sup>23</sup> in “*Confronting Environmental Crisis and Social Justice*” calls for the fair treatment of all races, cultures, income classes and educational levels with respect to the development and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. JPIC advocates adds that fair treatment suggests that no population should be

---

<sup>23</sup> Available at [http://www.ofm.org/01docum/jpic/EnvironmentalJustice\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.ofm.org/01docum/jpic/EnvironmentalJustice_ENG.pdf). Accessed on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2015

forced to shoulder an uneven share of exposure to the negative effects of pollution or other environmental dangers due to lack of political or economic strength. In addition, JPIC activists hold that consequently the worldwide attack on the environment has become, in reality, an assault on the poor and a form of environmental racism.

Ecological justice has to do with a straight and liberal social justice understanding of Christianity in which God's Kingdom of just relations between humans and with the realm of creation is to be worked for on earth by righting social wrongs. Here the source of authority is the example of Jesus and the Social Gospel tradition. Environmental problems are seen here also as justice issues with strong adverse effects on those already excluded; blacks, the poor, women and children. To this end, many ecojustice advocates, such as the World Council of Churches (WCC) and its constituent members including the South African Council of Churches (SACC), have worked to expose environmental injustices in the dumping of hazardous and toxic wastes and the enormous health consequences, especially for women, or the reduced lives of children caused by air pollution as well as global climate, rising waters, failing crops due to erratic and often violent weather. As indicated in earlier sections, SACC put forward the argument that the Christian principle of the just treatment of one's neighbour is applicable to the question of who pays the hidden costs for wastes and pollution.

Ecojustice, as advocated by this research requires stewards of God's earth. To this end stewards would see the rest of nature as a gift from God and humans as tillers and caretakers of the earth. This would involve recycling, reducing, reusing, preservation, saving, healing, and caring as some of its most common expressions.

Therefore, ecojustice, as faith practice, recognises that there can be no social justice without ecological justice. We are interconnected, so ecojustice tackles both. Ecojustice considers that the non-human nature has rights also and suffers due to human sin (Rom 8:22<sup>24</sup>). Both kingdoms are in need of liberation. Human beings are special partners with God in the preparing and keeping of the land, but also are creatures like any other living thing on this earth. Finally, Ecojustice envisions a Kingdom of God where there will be no more bloodshed and we all will live in peace (Isa 11:6-9).

International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity (CIDSE)<sup>25</sup>, an international network of 16 Catholic development agencies, records how climate change is primarily a matter of global justice and equity and not just an environmental issue, (CIDSE 2014:4). They further show that the impact of human induced climate change unduly affects the poor and vulnerable

---

<sup>24</sup> Rom 8:22. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pain together until now.

<sup>25</sup> International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity (CIDSE). Available at <http://www.cidse.org>. Accessed on 02<sup>nd</sup> February 2015.

people who live in developing countries. These developing countries tend to suffer the greatest effects of a global problem they did not create. These effects include major natural disasters, lack of food security, inadequate access to clean, safe water and increasing health risks. CIDSE (2014: 9-11) calls for rapid and effective measures to deal with climate change, noting the special responsibility of developed nations, due to their previously unchecked consumption of natural resources. Developed nations must begin to pay for the solutions and to ensure that developing countries can pursue development paths which do not provoke further climate change, (CIDSE 2014:13).

Based on the viewpoint of ecojustice advocates, I will argue that creation is gifted with all kinds of resources that are entrusted to the stewardship of the human family and because resources are not unlimited, we have to preserve them for the future generations. It should also that competition for scarce resources creates conflicts, whilst the conservation of nature and natural resources contributes to justice and maintains peace. As maintained by JPIC (2011:6), there are three interlocking elements in the journey of the human family and these are: justice, peace and in of creation. I will therefore further argue that there can be no genuine justice and peace in our world unless human beings begin to act as true stewards of creation, thus preserving the survival and integrity of the earth.

Finally, recognising that the ecological crisis is a manifestation of a deeper moral crisis, the church must stress the need for conversion that will lead to a clear position of environmental responsibility among the faithful. To this end, I will consider that the church has a lot to contribute to the conversation today regarding ecological justice and sustainability.

## **4.2 Seeking Ecojustice should be an Integral Part of Mission**

It should be recognised that the vision of ecotheology points directly to the inclusion of ecojustice in the mission of the church. Cauthen (1973:156) writes:

“to speak of ecojustice means that in the quest of that good society which is most productive of justice and joy, we must take into account not only the psychological, social, and historical dimensions of human existence but also give attention to the biological, natural, and cosmological setting of life”.

Mission must therefore recognise the connection between human exploitation and environmental exploitation, (Wink 1993:476). While there may be times when there is a strain between eradicating poverty and caring for the earth (as there may be between any pair of worthwhile aims), generally speaking the two go hand in glove and can be integrated into one another. Justice is for life in all of its forms and “All justice is now ecological” (Wink 1993:477).

## 5 Missional Ecclesiology

The term “missional” refers to the essential nature and vocation of the church as God’s called and sent people (Saayman 2000: 19). In addition, Saayman argues that the word missional as an adjective, which is connected to missional church has established itself in missiological discourse in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Saayman 2010:5). It was mostly used in the First World, especially in North America and Europe. But towards the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it had established itself into the Third World, especially South Africa. Saayman (2010:9) further indicates that both the terms "missionary" and "missional" have been developed from the *missio Dei* and he makes distinction between the two terms in the following three abroad areas: (Saayman 2010:10-12)

- Firstly, the unique area is the context within which the term missional originated, specifically Western, North Atlantic, emerging postmodern culture;
- Secondly, typical area is found in the aim or vision of the utilisers of this term, which, among other things, includes the question of the identity of the church and its social relevance in its existing context and
- Thirdly, the distinctive area is the relationship to and interaction with the emergent church or emerging church movement.

Saayman (2010:12) considers that if missionary and missional originated from *missio Dei*, i.e. God’s own self sending in Christ by the Spirit to redeem and transform creation, therefore in missional ecclesiology, the church will not just be a building or an institution but a community of witness called into being and empowered by God and sent into the world to affirm to and participate in Christ’s work. Hooker (2008:1) adds that the church does not have missions; instead, the mission of God creates the Church. The Church serves God’s call to mission through its work in three broadly defined categories: the proclamation of the Word of God, the administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, and the nurture of the covenant community of disciples. For Saayman (2010:12) it undertakes this mission without regard for its own agenda or survival.

Saayman (2000:19) further maintains that any church is missionary by their nature, although “mission and church are regarded as two distinct structures which Christians had to link together in some way”. The process and progress from church to mission to church should “rather be seen as recurring, and specifically as an ascending, never-ending spiral” (Saayman 2000:20). The missionary church lives in mutuality and interdependence with other missionary churches throughout the world. Bosch (1995:10) adds that the Christian mission is the first

mission from God based on “communication to all men of God's love, as Jesus Christ who showed attention even to the smallest, in the strength and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit” Therefore, Christian mission should reflect the dynamic relationship between God and the world, as initially reported in the covenant with Israel, and then finally, in the coming of life, death, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus Christ. Therefore I will maintain that we cannot establish the Christian mission without continually referring to the fundamentals of the faith: faith in God through Jesus Christ.

A missional view of the Church will therefore be more than just list of projects or priorities for congregational survival, energy and resources. It will have to be a more reflective understanding of the mission that lies at the very heart of the Church's existence. Van Gelder (1999: 37) concludes that the basic premise of missional ecclesiology is that all church priorities, programmes, organisations, institutions and structures have the same vocation, namely, to encourage the church to be what it is meant to be.

For Wright (2006:24-25) missional can then be understood as centripetal, because we want to be a blessing to people around us and the community in which we live by our way of living. In this sense we live missional reaching out to our own people and those who come to us for assistance and support. Missionary can be understood as being centrifugal and this could be done when we go out not only to our own community but also to other communities, (Wright 2006:24-25). Both centripetal and centrifugal have certain shortcomings and misinterpretations, in the same way that both missional and missionary have some shortcomings and misinterpretations. Based on expression by Wright, I will contend that context will be important in how we ultimately define missionary and missional.

Ecclesiology, on the other hand, refers to the theological theory of what the Church is called to be and to do, i.e. its nature, purpose, hopes, structure and practices. It is also regarded as the confluence of the nature, purpose, activity and organisation of the church. Ecclesiology focusses on developing the theology of the church that is informed by missional vision (Guder 1998: 9). This, as maintained by Guder, provides a new perspective on what it means to be the church today. Therefore, the focus is no longer on survival but faithfulness, no longer invested in growing out influence but in serving others and no longer inward focused but outward focused.

In developing an ecclesiology for North American culture, Guder adopted the focusing metaphor of an alternative or contrast community (Guder 1998: 9-10). Guder highlights the need for the church that embodies the communal and critical dimensions of the Christian

mission over against the individualism but rather accommodation worldwide community of Christians. In addition, Guder (1998:119) asserts:

“If Christian faith makes any difference in behaviour, then the church in conformity with Christ is called to an alternative set of behaviours, as alternative ethic, an alternative kind of relationship, in dialogue with the surrounding cultures. Its difference is itself a witness to the gospel”.

Furthermore, a significant duty of the church is to discern what are those key points at which to be different from the evil of the world and in considering the question, Guder (1998:127) suggests that some kind of dissent is required if the church is to be genuinely missionary to the dominant culture and if this is not done, then the church will be unable to critique the powers that shape its culture. Guder describes the dominant culture as follows:

“Whenever the church has a vested interest in the status quo, politically, economically, socially, it can easily be captivated by the powers, the institutions, the spirits, and the authorities of the world. And whenever the church becomes captivated by the powers, it loses the ability to identify and name evil” (1998:113).

In considering the above, it can be determined that missional ecclesiology should take seriously the organisational life of the church both in its expressions of local missional congregations and local missional structure, (Guder 1998:75). Developing such an ecclesiology, as maintained by Guder, will require a careful evaluation of the local congregations that now exists, and how they fit into a more holistic of the biblical character of missional structures generally.

A missional ecclesiology therefore calls us to see the Church in a different way, beginning not with the Church as we see it, but through the lens of the Triune God’s mission in the world. A missional vision of the Church would remind us that whatever is true of the Church is true because it is first and foremost true of God in Christ, who through the work of the Spirit calls the Church into being. God’s act of self-sending into the world defines the Church. As the Father sends the Son to the world, so the Church also is sent into the world to be the community of witness to God’s gracious action.

If we live missionally, it means that we ask the question, “What does God want us to be, do, and become to continue the ministry of Christ within our own community and global context?” rather than, “What do we want to be, do, and become to respond to our denominational programmes or unexamined beliefs and traditions?” I will therefore argue that it should not be

the Church of God that has a mission, but the God of mission who has a church. To this end, a missional church is the sent church of a sending God.

Additionally, the biblical foundation of missional ecclesiology is believed to be found in Luke chapter 9. This is based on the act of sending of the disciples to go and proclaim the reign of God which is regarded as the initiating action that began the mission work of the church. In Lord (2012: 82) Stanley Skreslet, upholds that the next event that propelled the mission of the church was the Pentecost event. The descension of the Holy Spirit empowered those gathered to take the message of Christ far beyond the territorial boundaries of Israel. Because the power of the Holy Spirit was placed in those apostles gathered at Pentecost, the mission of the church was set: proclaim the gospel, being filled with the Spirit of God. In everything the followers of Christ did and said, the reign and Kingdom of God was to be spoken. Furthermore, the following event that propelled the mission of the church was the Pentecost event. The descension of the Holy Spirit enabled those gathered to take the message of Christ far beyond the boundaries of Israel. Because the power of the Holy Spirit was placed in those apostles assembled at Pentecost, the mission of the church was set: to proclaim the gospel, being filled with the Spirit of God. In everything the followers of Christ did and said, the reign and Kingdom of God was to be spoken.

## **5.1 The Mission of the Triune God**

The mission of God's work involves the sending of the Son and the Holy Spirit and *missio Dei* reveals exactly who God is. Although the incarnation, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ conquer the centre of the redeeming story, the context of the story should be based on understanding that God is present in His mission in all three persons, (Vicedom 1965:52). This mission is based on the will, movement and action of the grace and love of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Through His Son God made Himself the very content of sending and the mission of God is today still possible and God continues His sending through the gift of the Holy Spirit, out of the onetime sending of His Son (Vicedom 1965:52).

The mission activity of God occurs within the context of the sending group, i.e. The Trinity and the receiving group, i.e. humanity, (Anderson 1988:487). This notion is also true for Vicedom who holds that because mission originates in the Triune God, who sends, it must be more than just a model. As pointed out by Bosch (1991:390), the sending of the Son and the Spirit can be, and has been, expanded to include yet another movement: Father, Son, Holy Spirit, sending the church into the world. To this end, I will put forward that because *missio Dei* arises out of the nature of God, the mission of the church must reflect greater participation in God's mission.

Van Gelder and Zscheile (2011:4) add that mission begins in the heart of the Triune God and the love that binds together the Holy Trinity, overflows to all humanity and creation. Furthermore, the missional discourse that shifted the agency of mission from the church to God's mission is an extension and amplification of God's very being. Missional theology builds on the understanding that God is Trinity and missional. Mission is participation in the life of God and it is to be caught up within the dynamic sending and being sent that God the Holy Trinity has done and continues to do, (Wright 2010:211). In the words of Moltmann (2010:26), the community of the church is like the Christian faith itself, a Trinitarian experience of God. Bosch (1991:370) emphasises that since the missionary conference in Willingen (1952), Trinitarian reflections are seen as being foundational for a proper understanding of, and action in mission. This is confirmed by Volf (1998:195) that the Trinity is the determining reality of the church, therefore "we must start with the Trinity in order to understand mission". The *missio Dei*, affirming that mission is God's sending forth, expanded during the ecumenical discussions in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to include the participation of the church in the divine mission and it reframed mission from being church-centric to becoming theocentric (Balía and Kim 2010:23).

This research considers that one cannot isolate the members of the Trinity, without rejecting the very nature of God, and as added by Newbigin, if any of the dimensions of the church's nature and purpose is taken in isolation as the evidence to the understanding of mission, the results will be misrepresentation and distortion. In addition, active agent of mission is a power that rules, directs and goes before the church: the free, sovereign, living power of the Spirit of God. Mission should therefore not be regarded as something that the church does; but rather it should be seen as something that is done by the Spirit, who is himself the witness, who changes both the world and the church and who always goes before the church in its missionary journey.

Finally, in this research I will argue that if the Spirit is sovereign over the mission, then the church can therefore only be the observant servant. To this end, the church's witness is secondary and imitative. The church is witness to the extent that it follows obediently where the Spirit leads. As a result, it can be concluded that the church's nature and purpose is inseparably linked to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

## **5.2 Role of Christian Youth Ministry**

Our ecological crisis changes the setting for how we make meaning about our place in this world and our relationships to our fellow creatures. One question shaping the future of faith communities is how we join with young people as the developers of hope for generations yet

to be born. Van Meter (2013:7) supports this notion when he affirms that we are living in the heart of fundamental transformation to the life sustaining systems of our planet and our young people are inheriting an ecological mess. To this end, young people will need to learn and nurture resources for redefining their lives in collaboration with life on this planet. Costanza-Chock (2012) adds that young people should be recognised and respected as potentially powerful social movement actors, and be allocated resources to support, intensify and extend their impact. Consequently, the role of youth in churches is particularly significant in possibly leading the fight against the increasing ecological crisis.

This research recognises that the youth are wholly members of the church and complete members of the body of Christ. They are not there to while away time until they are ready to participate in the mission of the church but they are also participants in the liberating mission of Christ, through their various inherent gifts and talents. Nel (2001: 78-79) support this view by indicating that we need to understand youth as fully part of the church and that youth ministry is not that place where teens are entertained until they are ready to participate in the mission of the church, or where we hook them into joining the church with the hope that maybe in the future they will also understand how the church operates. If we understand youth as fully part of the church, then this means that they are also participating in the liberating mission of Jesus, in incarnating the good news for the sake of the world. From the above discussion, we might also say that youth ministry is fundamentally missionary.

Nel (2009: 105) further emphasises that the youth are invited on the journey which the church is already part of, even though they are invited as full members of the body of Christ and not simply to emulate other generations, but to bring their unique gifts to contribute to the journey the church has already commenced with. Van Meter (2009:55) proposes a diverse approach for involvement in youth ministry; youth ministry growing out of an engagement with ecology. An ecological theological framework that opens youth ministry to a re-conception from an periodic, time limited programme for adolescents to the formation of disciples participating in faith with generations who have gone before and the generations who will follow (2009:55). Van Meter determines that ecological youth ministry emerges from a desire to return in community to the texts, contexts and interpretations that have challenged and sustained faith for generations (2013:4). He consequently continues that an ecologically conscious youth ministry will take our contemporary ecological challenges seriously and critically engage beliefs, practices and structures that support interactive stewardship and gratitude in our lived contexts (Van Meter 2009:64).

Van Meter further challenges communities of faith to construct youth and young adult ministry through an ecological hermeneutic. He challenges youth and young adult ministers to seek their own foundation through practising hope in resistance to despair as they engage ecological questions in partnership with young people. For him, adults must involve the youth in engaging the big question together about God, faith and about the world we live in.

In the same way, young people should be trusted to participate in conversations that embrace all of life, not just life as defined by the *official soul* (Van Meter 2013:73). Furthermore, churches must be a place where young people and adults engage in difficult conversations. These conversations are critical and very important for our learning to be in unity and harmony with our fellow creatures and to re-learn how to engage with delight in our place as partners responsible for creation's flourishing. For Van Meter (2013: 80) young people are prophets, theologians, poets, and artists ready to partner with adults to shape, portray, and embody beauty in the midst of a shared life, Therefore, if our churches could become places for young people to live this; youth could strive and be empowered to claim their nature as creators of beauty and stewards of abundance.

From the above, I will argue that liturgical and Eucharistic relationships with God who created the world we are occupying, can begin to be reconstructed. Finally, youth are called by the Holy Spirit for full partnership in the community of faith and challenged to full participation in the life and mission of Jesus Christ and His Church. To this end:

- Youth ministry should be Christ-centered and developed and supported through the proclamation and study of the Word;
- Youth are full members of the Church of today as well as the Church of the future;
- Youth ministry is fully integrated with and not separated from the mainstream of the Church's life and mission; and
- Youth ministry is established to equip and prepare youth to utilise their God-given gifts as faithful disciples.

Youth ministry recognises the youth group as one dimension of a larger ministry that involves young people, together with people of all ages, in the life of the congregation, the community and the world.

## 6 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the context of ecological theology as an approach that was born within the background of the world's impending ecological crisis. The importance of ecological theology in fostering awareness of our interrelatedness with nature and with God has also been reviewed. This understanding is intended to stimulate a growing appreciation of the entire interdependence of life at all levels and in every. Most importantly, this research considers that ecological theology can no longer be seen as an optional extra but as part of the mainstream of the Christian mission. To this end, the important role that the church has to play in addressing the ecological crisis facing the world, which is rooted in the nature and mission of the church, also received attention.

Furthermore, an assessment of some of the past and more current works that have shaped the contemporary profound ecological dialogue was also made. Two worldviews, namely, Western and African worldviews were identified and assessed. The Western worldview identified there main interconnected and diverse groups of Christian ecological activism grouped together into the following categories: Christian stewardship, eco-justice and Creation spirituality. Christian stewardship became the key voice with widespread view of conservative Christianity that was anti-science with "creationist" implications. They focused mainly on certain biblical concepts such as to have dominion, to subdue, and the perfect relationship of humanity to nature. The eco-justice advocates believed that environmental problems were also justice issues with adverse effects to those already excluded such as people colour, the poor, women and children. Some of their members worked tirelessly reveal environmental injustices in the dumping of hazardous and toxic wastes and the enormous health results associated with such acts. They proposed that those found guilty of pollution and wastes must be made to pay for their actions.

According to Kearns (2003:479) creation spirituality group regarded the Bible as their source of authority and inspiration and focussed on the miracle of the world and planetary story of its evolution which revealed that humans were a small part of the universe story. The global cooperative religious including WCC as well as NGO efforts also became more visible and contributed to the discourse on the impending environmental crisis. Their contributions were noted at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the subsequent 1997 Kyoto Conference on global climate change in Japan as well as the 2002 Johannesburg South Africa UN Summit on Sustainable Development.

The African perspective on ecological theology discussion became an attempt that sought to provide likely course for an African theological response to the debate on the ecological crisis. The general approach by African scholars pointed to the fact that an African approach which recognises the “African creation wisdom” (Daneel: 2000: 248-263) was needed to deal with the current ecological crisis. In addition, issues of environmental and economic justice were not only perceived as issues of social, political and moral nature but as fundamental to faith in Jesus Christ and affected the integrity of the church. The supportive global and African voice included the World Alliance for Reformed Churches in 2004 in Accra, which led to the development of the Accra Confession. In its analyses of the current crises, the Accra Confession traces the roots of the current economic problems to the policies of unlimited growth, profit maximisation, ecological looting and corporatisation of life. In Article 8, the Confession declares that, “the policy of unlimited growth among industrialised countries and the drive for profits of transnational corporations have plundered the earth and severely damaged the environment”.

The South African contribution included, amongst other voices and movements, the South African Faith Communities’ Environment Institute as well as the South African Council of Churches. The SACC just like Accra Confession viewed climate change as an issue of justice, as well as a moral and spiritual crisis.

The chapter also outlined missional ecclesiology. Ecclesiology was seen as the theological theory of what the Church is called to be and to do, i.e. its nature, purpose, structure and practices, purpose, activity, hopes and organisation. Therefore, the basic premise of missional ecclesiology was that all church priorities, programmes, organisations, institutions, and structures have the same vocation, namely, to encourage the church to be what it is meant to be (Van Gelder 1999:37). For Saayman (2010:12) the church could not be seen as just a building or an institution but a community of witness called into being and empowered by God and sent into the world to affirm to and participate in Christ’s work.

The term “missional” was understood to refer to the essential nature and vocation of the church as God’s called and sent people. Saayman (2010:9) added that it was important to understand the context of the terms “missionary” and “missional”. He proposes that both the terms have been developed from the *missio Dei*. To this end, missional ecclesiology began in the heart of the Triune God, determined by *missio Dei* and focussed on God’s life of communion and God’s involvement in history. Missional ecclesiology further aimed to draw humanity and creation into the communion with God’s very life.

Additionally, missional church was seen to be transformational and existed for the transformation of the community that it serves, through the power of the gospel and the Holy Spirit. The Church does not have missions; instead, the mission of God creates the Church. The Church serves God's call to mission through its work in: the proclamation of the Word of God, the administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the nurture of the covenant community of disciples. The church undertakes this mission without regard for its own agenda or survival.

Finally, this chapter recognised that an ecologically conscious youth ministry will consider current ecological challenges seriously and critically engage practices, principles and structures that support collaborating stewardship and gratitude in our different real contexts. Van Meter (2013: 73) holds that young people should be trusted to participate in dialogues that embrace all of life, not just life as defined by the official soul. This view is supported by Nel (2001, 78-79) when he asserts that we need to understand youth as fully part of the church and that youth ministry was not that place where teens were entertained until they were ready to participate in the mission of the church, or where we hook them into joining the church with the hope that maybe in the future they will also understand how the church operates. To this end, I will argue that it will be important that we shape missions with young people who seek the thriving of all living being. This research project further recognised that youth are called by the Holy Spirit for full partnership in the community of faith and challenged to full participation in the life and mission of Jesus Christ and His Church. Consequently, the Youth Ministry must then involve young people, together with people of all ages, in the life of the church, the community and the world. The next chapter outlines the methodology used to collect, collate, enter and analyse required data in order to effectively inform the findings of the research project.

# CHAPTER 3

## METHODOLOGY

### 1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I sketched the theoretical and missiological background and basis for my research, based on the concern for the deepening ecological crisis. I also made reference to ecological mission as a dimension of ecological theology which must be part of the mainstream of the Christian mission. The role of Melodi ya Tshwane Christian Youth Ministry (MyT CYM) as fundamentally part of the missional congregation to shape, portray and express the beauty of this mission in the midst of the ecological crisis the world is facing, was also emphasised. A contextual approach to ecological mission will therefore be developed, placing the Christian Youth Ministry at the center of this mission.

This chapter focuses on the research methodology utilised to collect and collate relevant data, and to this end, quantitative research methodology was used. Givan (2008:6) describes quantitative research as a systematic empirical investigation on social phenomena via statistical, mathematical or computational techniques. Through this research methodology, the relevant data was collected, analysed and used to arrive at informed conclusions to apprise the development of appropriate approach to ecological mission for MyT CYM.

### 2 Missiological Research

In order to meet high scientific demands in missiological research undertaking, Faix (2007:116) identifies an empirical analytical procedure, viz empirical-theological cycle in the context of missiological research process. Faix contends that the cycle signifies a methodological expansion of experience processes and proceeds in the sub-processes of perception, experiment, test and evaluation, (Faix 2007:116). Through the works of Van der Ven (1994a:132), and other scholars such as Flick (2000:60–62), Faix points out six phases of the empirical-theological cycle, viz research plan, field of practice, conceptualisation, data collection, data analysis and research report, (Faix 2007: 117-118). The foundation of the research process, as highlighted by Faix, describes the empirical theological praxis cycle and can be described in terms of the frameworks of discovery, justification and application.

The researcher recognises that the phases of the empirical theological cycle are very useful in missiological research in the many ways. Firstly, they assist us to collect relevant and

useful information so that we can make informed decisions, and therefore be able to correct the course of our actions. There is even greater need for continuous evaluation of our activities and programmes in the light of solid research in order to correct some of our pertinent misunderstandings.

Secondly, they are likely to result in good missiological research which can assist in the conceptualisation and design of mission which will motivate and inspire appropriate action. On-going research will further help us to see both the gap, the work ahead and make us aware of the need and possibilities for our concerted efforts in our missions. Thirdly, missiological research in the context of the empirical theological praxis cycle will help us empower the church we serve to study its own situation and to take action. As aspirant missiologists we have become increasingly aware of the fact that not only should we do research as outside observers, but also that we should be insiders helping the church and mission to do research itself. Doing research together with people we serve, such as MyT CYM, helps them build confidence and abilities, and teaches them how to do study and reflection for themselves.

Finally, we will need missiological research to do self-examination as members of the body of Christ and part of God's beautiful creation. This is because we sometimes tend to be blind to our own biases and limitations when dealing with missions. Therefore, as maintained by Rommen and Corwin (1996:133) self-reflection in missiological research acts like a mirror for it helps us see our own historical and cultural contexts and how these shape our understanding of missions.

### **3 Quantitative Research Methodology**

Quantitative research aims to explain a phenomenon by collecting numerical data that is then analysed using a statistics based method. The researcher asks participants for their reflections in a structured way so that facts and statistics can be produced to guide the research. Leedy (1993:143) describes quantitative research as aiming to "manipulate variables and control natural phenomena" and as such it is impersonal, cold and experimental. Through this research methodology, the assumption will be that there will be factors that cause results and that carefully planned tests can either prove or disprove the hypothetical cause of certain results in a high degree of statistical probability, (Leedy 1993:143).

Since missiological study by its nature is integrative in its methodological approach, quantitative methodology will be best suited to collect required data for this project. Data will

have to be quantified in order to increase reliability and the accuracy of the contextual approach to ecological mission to be advanced by the findings. In the application of the quantitative research method, the researcher will be required to be unbiased and not manipulate the results of the research in any way.

### **3.1 Use of Quantitative Methodology in Missiological Research**

Quantitative methodology proceeds with empirical logic, beginning with a proposition or a set of propositions and moving on to design a test which would provide the data against which the assumptions may be reinforced or rejected, (Leedy 1993: 243). To this effect, collected descriptive statistics were analysed to arrive at an informed conclusion. The researcher drew a representative sample of a number of MyT CYM members to gather data on the views and perspectives of members of MyT CYM.

The data and results have been presented in tables and graphs and these are results drawn from representatives of MyT CYM.

### **3.2 Research Setting**

Research setting refers to the place where data will be collected. For this research, data was collected from the members of the MyT CYM, a ministry within the congregation of Melodi ya Tshwane Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa, located on the corner of Bosman and Madiba streets in the city centre of Pretoria.

### **3.3 Research Population and Sample**

#### **3.3.1 Population**

Pilot and Hungler (1999:155) define the population as the totality of subjects that conform to a set of specifications, comprising the entire group of persons that is of interest to the researcher and to whom the research results can be generalised. A research population consists of all the subjects that form part of the study. The research population for my study comprise of registered members of MyT CYM who were willing to participate in the study.

#### **3.3.2 Sample**

Miles and Huberman (1994: 250) indicate that a sample as a portion or a subset of the research population selected to participate in the study, represents the research population. Therefore, sampling can be regarded as the process of selecting units from a population of interest so that by studying the sample we may impartially generalise our results back to the population from which they were chosen. For the purposes of this research study, the

researcher used simple random sampling techniques which involves “selecting a relatively large number of units from a population, or from specific subgroups (strata) of a population, in a random manner where the probability of inclusion for every member of the population is determinable”, (Tashakkori and Teddlie 2003a: 713). The simple random sampling was aimed at achieving acceptable representativeness i.e. the degree to which the sample accurately represents the entire population.

In terms of the MyT CYM current membership register, there are currently 50 registered members belonging to the ministry.

### 3.3.3 Sample size

The Creative Research Systems<sup>26</sup> identifies two measures that affect the correctness of the data. These are:

- Firstly, the **margin of error (or confidence intervals)**. This is the positive and negative deviation a researcher allows on the survey results for the sample. Or, in other words, the deviation between the opinions of the respondents and the opinion of the entire population.
- Secondly, the **confidence level**. This tells how often the percentage of the population that actually lies within the boundaries of the margin of error. The confidence level also tells the how sure researcher can be. It is expressed as a percentage and represents how often the true percentage of the population who would pick an answer lies within the confidence interval. The 95% confidence level means that a researcher can be 95% certain; the 99% confidence level means that the researcher can be 99% certain. Most researchers tend to use the 95% confidence level.

Table 1 below provides an indication on how the researcher has calculated a statistically representative sample for this study. The table shows that for a population of 50 members of MyT CYM, at 95% confidence and a sample error of 15%, the statistically accepted sample would be 30.

---

<sup>26</sup> Creative Survey Systems available at <http://www.surveysystem.com/>. Accessed on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

**Table 1: Calculating the sample size**

Level of Confidence	<input type="radio"/> 95% <input checked="" type="radio"/> 99%
Sample Error	+/- <input type="text" value="15"/> %
Total Population	<input type="text" value="50"/>
<b>Sample Size</b>	<input type="text" value="30"/>

Source: Creative Research Systems Survey Software<sup>27</sup>

### 3.4 Data Collection

A questionnaire was used to collect primary data on a sample drawn from members of MyT CYM. The questionnaires was distributed to 30 members of MyT CYM in accordance with the sample size calculation in Table 1 above. Data received through questionnaires was entered into a central capturing framework and analysed so that informed conclusion about the study could be drawn. It is therefore anticipated that through this research method, sufficient volume and quality data was collected to ensure that through analysis well-versed conclusions could be arrived at and that significant factors through the study can also be revealed, thus enabling the development of appropriate ecological mission.

### 3.5 Developing a Database Structure

The database structure is the manner in which the researcher intends to store the data for the study so that it can be accessed in subsequent data analysis. There are commonly two options for storing data on computer, viz. database programmes and statistical programmes. For this research, computer-aided software called Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to store and analyse collected data.

### 3.6 Entering the Data into the Computer

Data was directly typed into the computer in order to assure a high level of accuracy and the process of double entry will be used. This meant entering data once but using a computer program that allowed data to be entered the second time and the programs checks each second entry against the first one. If there are discrepancies, the program would notify the user and allows the user to determine the correct entry. This double entry procedure

<sup>27</sup> Creative Research Systems Survey Calculation sourced from: <http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm#2>. Accessed on 6th March 2015

significantly reduced entry errors. The team responsible for data entry was thoroughly trained in order to improve the accuracy of data entry processes.

## **4 Data Analysis**

Once data had been collected, it was subjected to thorough analysis with the aim of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions and supporting decision making. Data verification was undertaken to check for accuracy and inconsistencies after data migration has been completed. This was important to determine whether data was accurately transformed when transferred from one source to the other. In order to avoid biasness in reporting, an independent academic reviewer was used to review the report and provide independent opinion before it is submitted for approval.

The Mann-Whitney U test technique was employed together with SPSS to analyse the primary data. Data analysis followed three steps below once gathered. These are:

- data reduction (selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, transforming);
- data display (organised, compressed); and
- conclusion drawing/verification (noting irregularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, propositions).

Finally, it was important that ethical consideration is taken into account and participants are assured of the professionalism and integrity of the research.

## **5 Conclusion**

This chapter has set out the quantitative research methodology to be utilised to collect relevant data. Furthermore, the chapter has outlined the importance of research in missiology and provided an assessment of quantitative research methodology in missiological study. Research setting, data collection, population and sampling as well as data analysis were also outlined.

In the next chapter, the comprehensive results of the analysis of collected data will be presented.

# CHAPTER 4

## DATA ANALYSIS

### 1 Introduction

Quantitative research methodology was selected and used to collect and collate required data for this research project. A questionnaire was then developed and used as an instrument to collect relevant data. Data was collected from 30 members of MyT CYM on 12<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> May 2015 respectively. A random sampling technique was used where MyT CYM members were randomly selected to take part in the research and thus completed the questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire is included as **Appendix B** of this document. Approval to conduct surveys among MyT CYM members was granted by Melodi ya Tshwane Church Council during its sitting on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2015. A copy of the approval letter is attached as **Appendix C** of this document. Participants also completed “Informed Consent Form” wherein they granted permission that their information may be used for this research. A copy of the Informed Consent Form is attached as **Appendix D** of this document.

Data received through questionnaires was entered into a central capturing framework and analysed to compile descriptive statistics in order to arrive at informed conclusion about the study. This section therefore summarises the results of the analysis. The results of analysis for all Sections other than Sections 5 and 6 have been presented in the form of pie charts whilst sections 5 and 6 have been presented in the form of tables. This has been chosen based on the extent of information gathered and number of questions for each of the sections represented by tables.

### 2 Demographic Information

The information below provides summary of collected information on the following key limited demographic indicators: gender, age group, *physical disability*<sup>28</sup>, citizenship, nationality, educational level as well as employment status.

#### 2.1 Participants by gender

According to Figure 1 below, 74 percent of participants were females and 26 percent represented males. This picture somehow reflects the general demographics of MyT as

---

<sup>28</sup> This has been included only to assess how ecological mission programmes would be development in order to cater for MyT CYM members who have physical disability.

indicated in section 2.2 of Chapter one where the 2012 skills audit showed that 76 percent of the total members of MyT were females and 24 percent males.

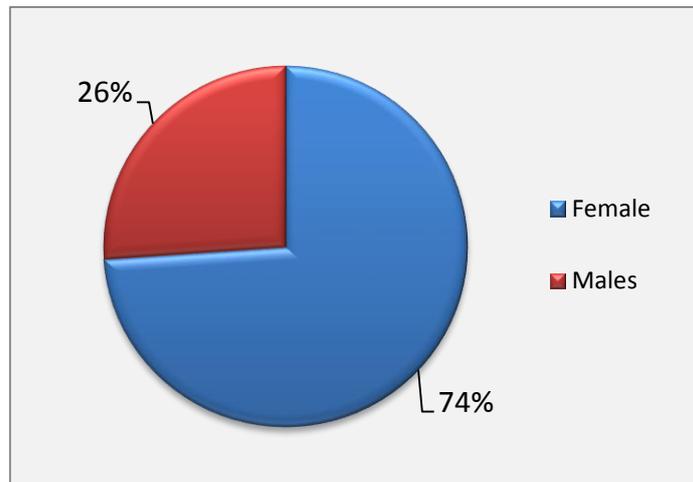


Figure 1: Participants by gender

## 2.2 Participants by age group

Figure 2 below shows that the majority of participants (78 percent) were in the age group of 18 to 23. This is followed by age group 24 to 29 which accounted for 18 percent and age group 30 to 35 which made up 4 percent of all participants.

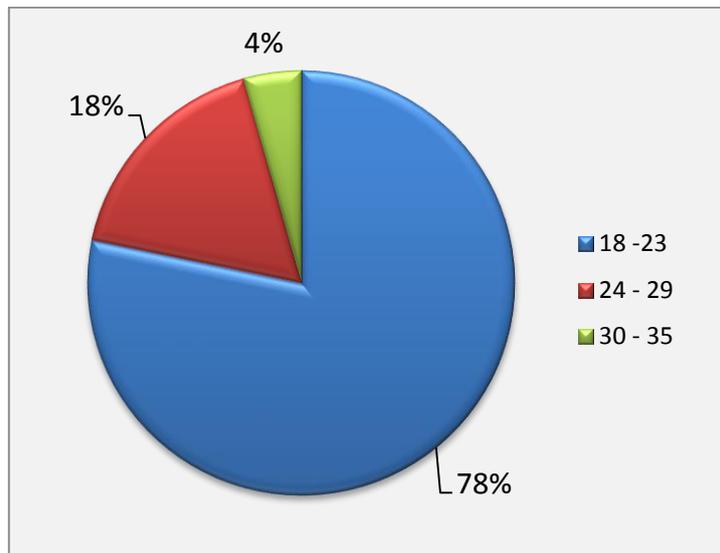


Figure 2: Participants by age group

## 2.3 Participants with physical disability

As indicated in Figure 3 below, 96 percent of participants did not have any physical disability. The question was intended to assess how ecological mission programmes would be development in order to cater for MyT CYM members who have physical disability. As shown below, only one member (translating to four percent of participants) had physical disability.

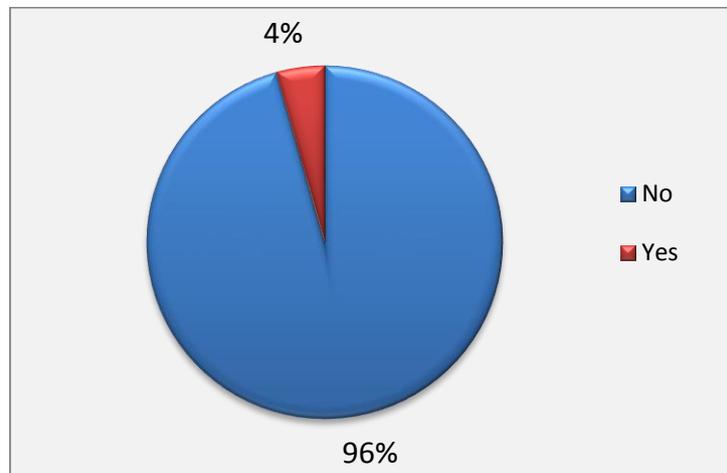


Figure 3: Participants with physical disability

## 2.4 Citizenship

The question on citizenship sought to test whether there were foreign nationals among MyT CYM members. This was based on the premise that MyT have registered members from the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region. As confirmed by Figure 4 below, all participants are South African citizens.

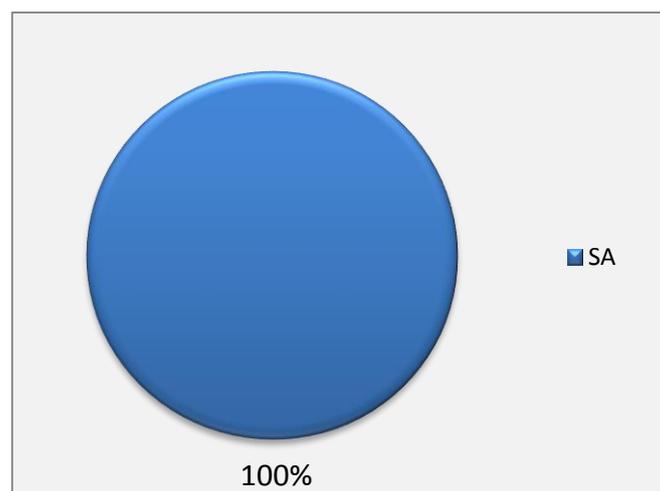


Figure 4: Citizenship

## 2.5 Nationality

In accordance with Figure 5 below, all participants are black South Africans.

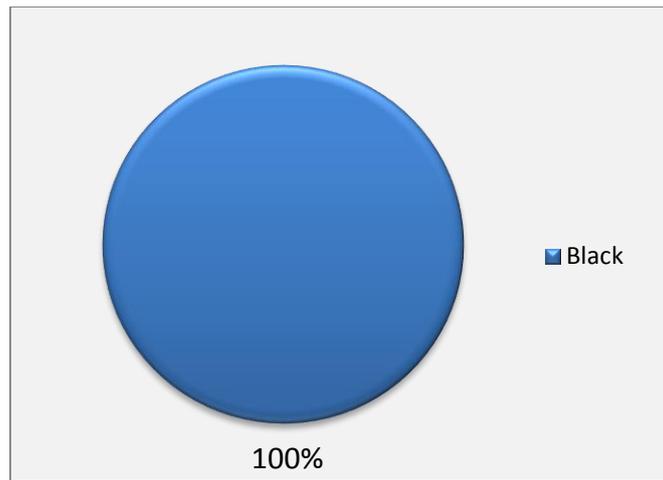


Figure 5: Nationality

## 2.6 Participants by educational level

The level of education of participants will be a very important indicator of how ecological mission programmes should be designed to be at the appropriate level of education of members. As per Figure 6 below, 9 percent of participants have acquired degrees and 35 percent some diploma whilst 26 percent have obtained grade 12. A further 22 percent of participants have acquired some certificate post grade 12. This reflects, on average, a relatively high level of education of participants. Only 8 percent of participants have education level of grade 11 and less.

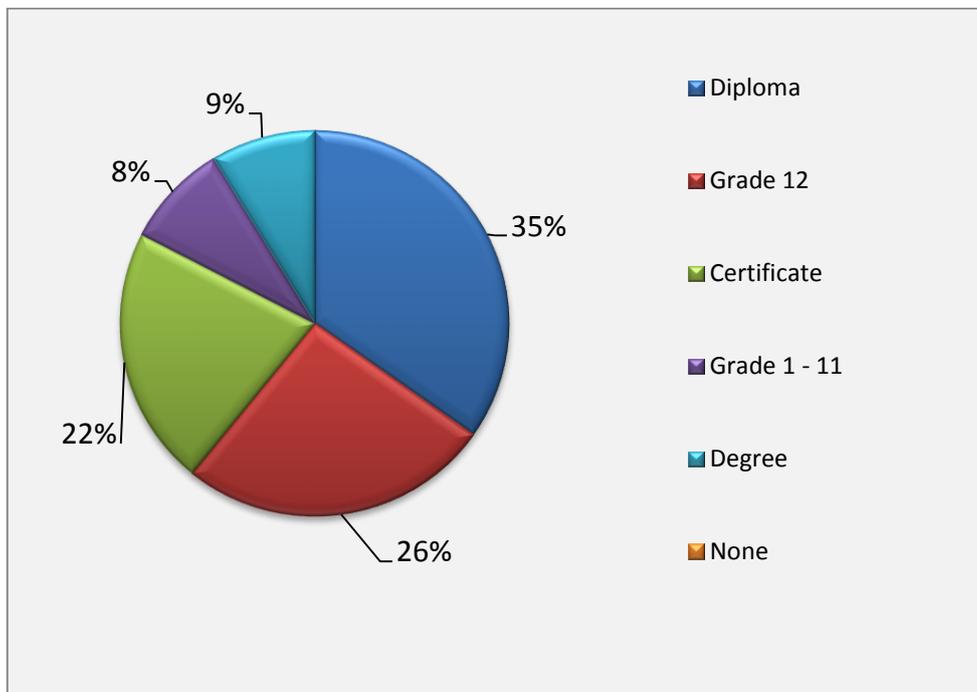


Figure 6: Participants by educational level

## 2.7 Participants by employment status

As expected, based on the age group of the majority of participants, 63 percent of them are students as shown in Figure 7 below. This is followed by 17 percent of participants who are on formal wage employment. A further 8 percent of participants are unemployed but were actively looking for employment during the last three months. What is also noted is that an additional 8 percent of participants were unemployed, while an additional 4 percent of participants were self-employed.

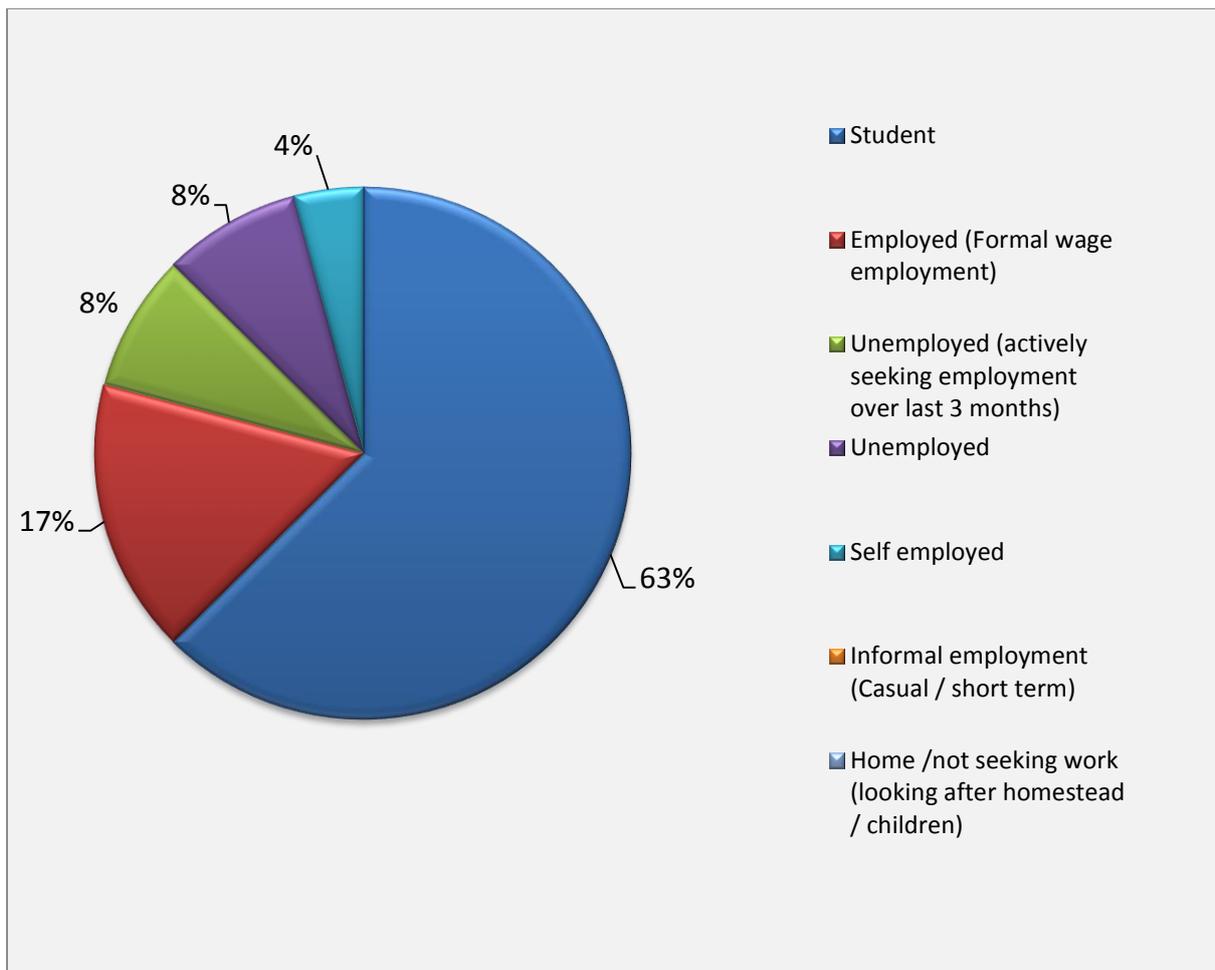


Figure 7: Participants by employment status

## 3 Respondents' Level of Environmental Awareness

This section sought to examine the level of environmental awareness and concern of participants. This included environmental issues at church that concern them, importance of environmental matters to them as well as the drive and extent of recycling at church.

### 3.1 What is the most concerning environmental issue here at your church?

In accordance with Figure 8 below, 26 percent of respondents indicated that lack of waste recycling was the most concerning environmental issue at church. This is supported by a further 12 percent which added that trash was the most concerning environmental problem at church. A further 12 percent of participants indicated that lack of waste management was the main environmental issues at church. These participants would be eager to take part in any waste management including recycling initiative at church and thereby do what is good for the environment. An additional 18 percent believed that water issues were a concerning environmental issue at church. This is followed by 15 percent of participants who are of the view that lack of environmental education was the leading factors influencing people to become involved in environmental issues at church. Noise pollution is accounted for by 10 percent of participants' whilst both energy issues and resource use are represented by 3 percent respectively. Based on the above, I would deduce that waste management represents the most concerning environmental issue at MyT.

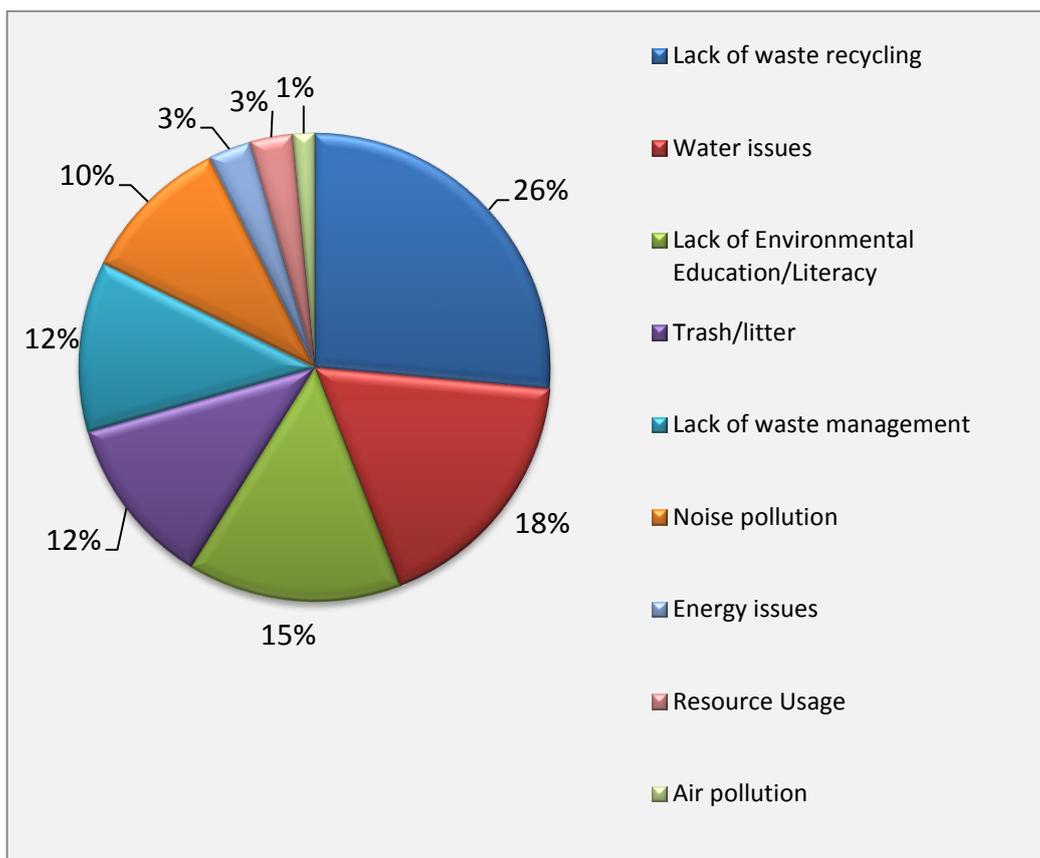


Figure 8: The most concerning environmental issue at church

### 3.2 In comparison with other social issues, how important is environmental matters to you?

An overwhelming percentage of participants (78 percent), as shown in Figure 9 indicated that, as compared to other social issues, environmental matters were very important to them. This is a very important first step of examining the level of importance for which environment issues are perceived by participants. A further 9 percent indicated that environmental issues were somewhat important whilst another 9 percent never thought about it. Only 4 percent pointed out that they did not know whether environmental issues were important. From the figure below it would be maintained that environmental issues are perceived to be very important by the majority of MyT CYM members.

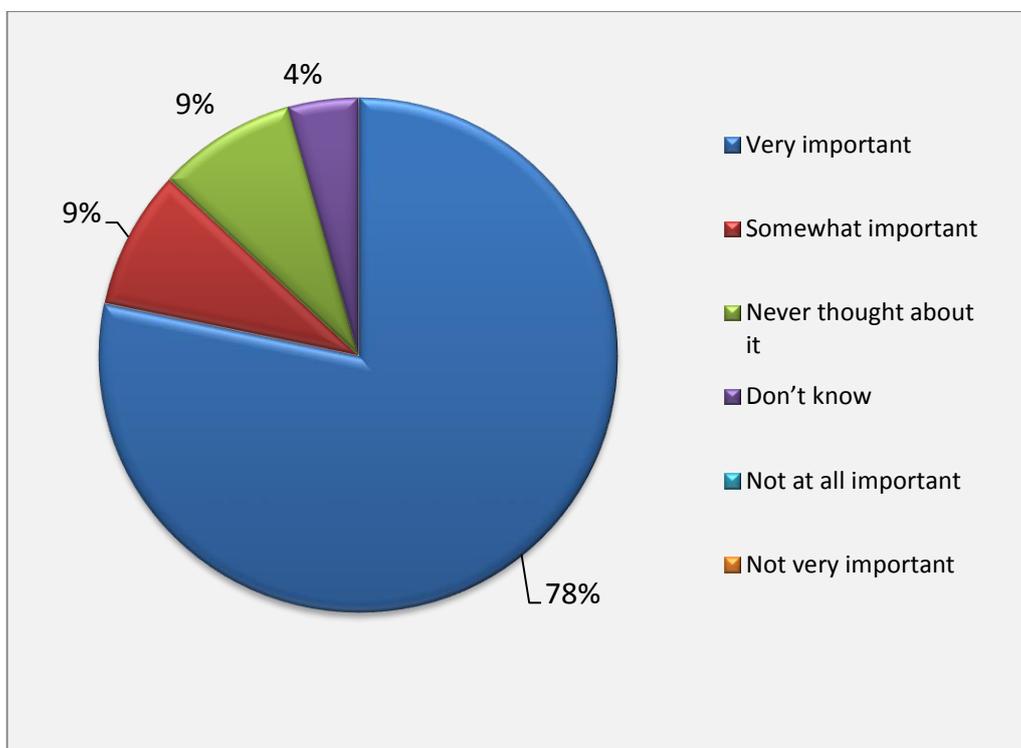


Figure 9: Importance of environmental matters

### 3.3 How confident are you that items placed in recycling bins at church are actually being recycled?

Figure 10 below indicates that 43 percent of all respondents did not know whether items placed in recycling were actually being recycling. This is followed by 13 percent of participants who were not at all confident and not very confident respectively that items placed in recycling bins at church were actually being recycled. A further 9 percent was confident that items were being recycled.

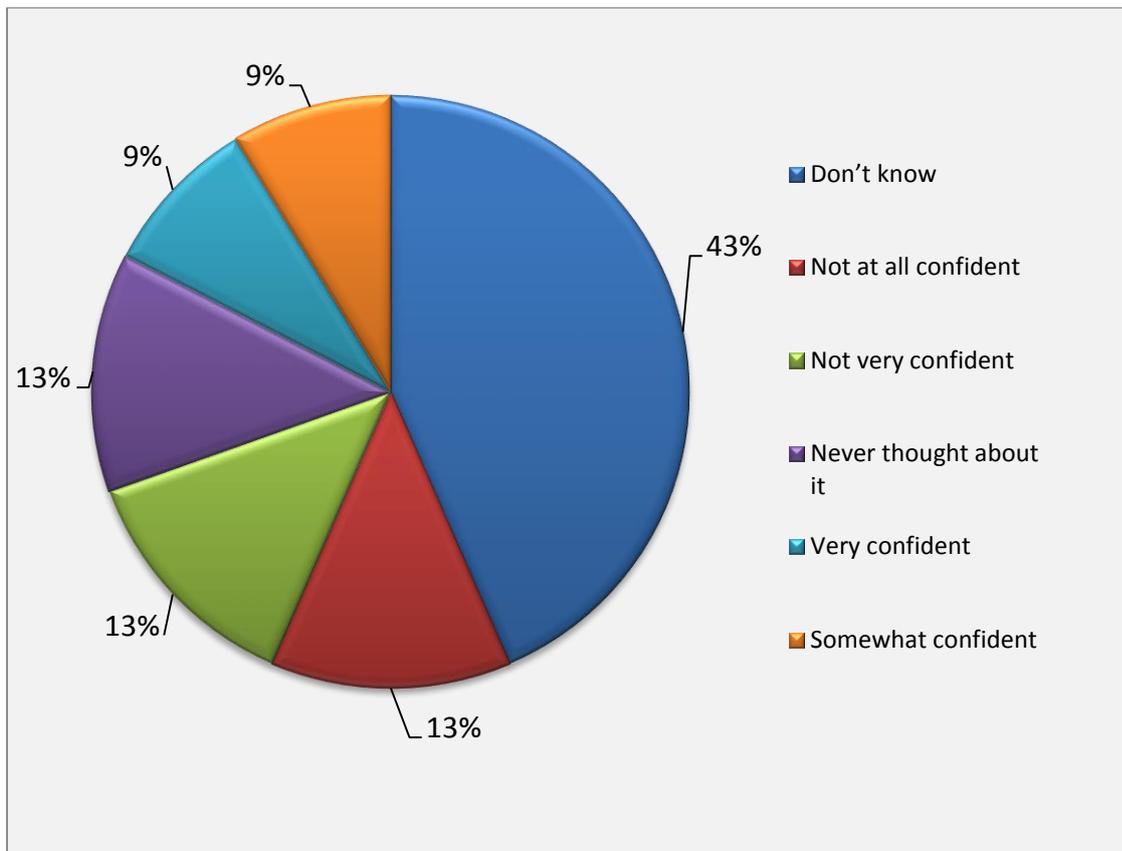


Figure 10: Items placed in recycle bins actually being recycled

### 3.4 What would be the best way to encourage church members to recycle more?

In terms of Figure 11 below, 32 percent of participants indicated that education on recycling was the single biggest way to encourage church members to recycle more. This is followed by 28 percent of participants who are of the opinion that more recycling outreach would be the best way of encouraging church members to recycle. Another 24 percent thought that more accessible bins around the church building would encourage members to recycle. The additional 8 percent believed that more clearly marked bins for different waste material would encourage members to recycle more. The analysis above shows that more education and awareness was needed for church members to recycle more.

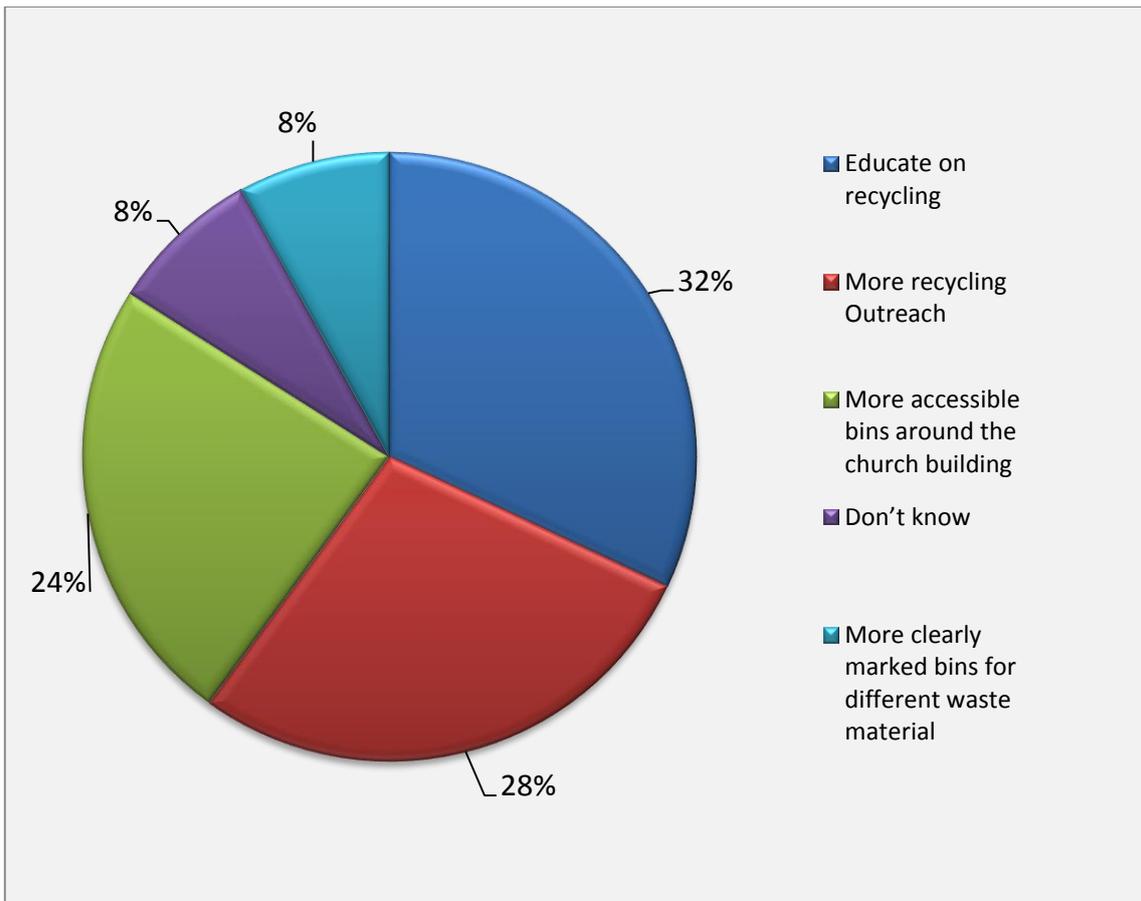


Figure 11: Single best way to encourage church members to recycle

## 4 Respondents' Level of Environmental Responsiveness

The section below examined the participants' level of environmental responsiveness. This incorporated how they behaved at home in their endeavour to conserve water and energy. It also assessed the importance of their participation in environmental matters as well as the role of the church in providing adequate ethical guidance on environmental issues.

### 4.1 What do you do to conserve water/energy at home?

According to Figure 12 below 22 percent of participants turned off the lights when not in use, 21 percent turned off electronic when not in use and a further 21 percent turned off the water while brushing their teeth or shaving. This shows that these participants were conscious of saving water or energy hence they behave in this way. However, in contrast 4 percent of participants indicated that used water sparingly. One would have expected a larger percentage that would have been conscious of the importance of saving water or using it sparingly, especially that 21 percent switched off the water while brushing teeth of shaving, whilst only 4 percent use CFLs bulbs and reusable plates. From the above it will be concluded that there is need to conscientise MyT CYM on importance of saving and using water sparingly.

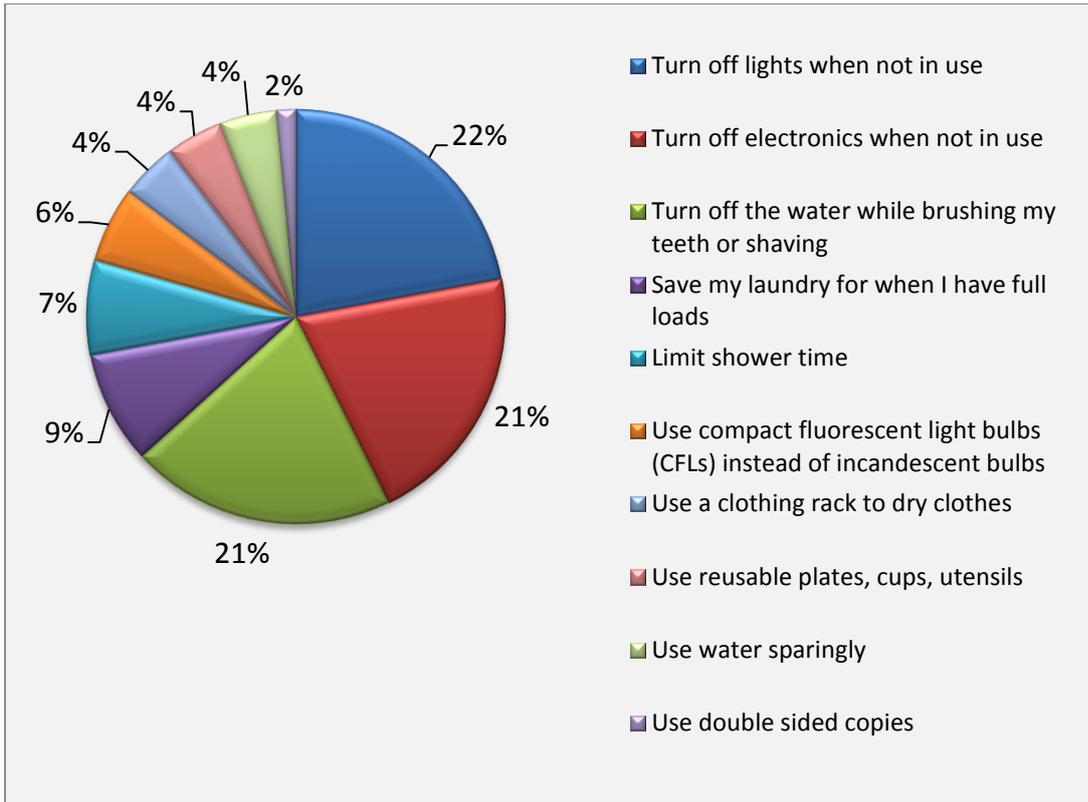


Figure 12: What do you do to conserve water / energy at home?

#### 4.2 The importance of MyT CYM participation in environmental matters

Figure 13 below shows that the majority of participants (91 percent) believed that it was very important for MyT CYM to participate in environmental matters. A further 5 percent agreed that it was somewhat important for MyT CYM to be involved in environmental matters. Only 4 percent of participants pointed out that they did not know whether it was important for MyT CYM to get involved and participate in environmental matters.

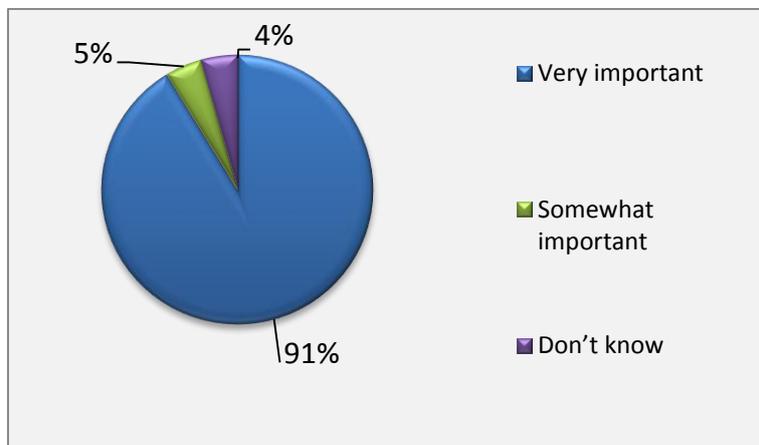


Figure 13: Importance of your ministry participating in environmental matters

### 4.3 Does the church provide adequate ethical guidance about issues of environment?

According to Figure 14 below, there is general agreement that the church does not provide adequate ethical guidance on issues of environment. This is shown by 26 percent of participants who indicated that the ethical guidance provided by the church was not very adequate. A further 13 percent indicated that the ethical guidance provided by the church on environmental issues was not at all adequate. In addition, another 26 percent of participants maintained that the church provided somewhat adequate ethical guidance on issues of environment. The last 18 percent did not know whether the church was providing adequate ethical guidance on issues of environment. The analysis above indicates that there is need for the church to look for ways to provide more adequate ethical guidance on issues of environment.

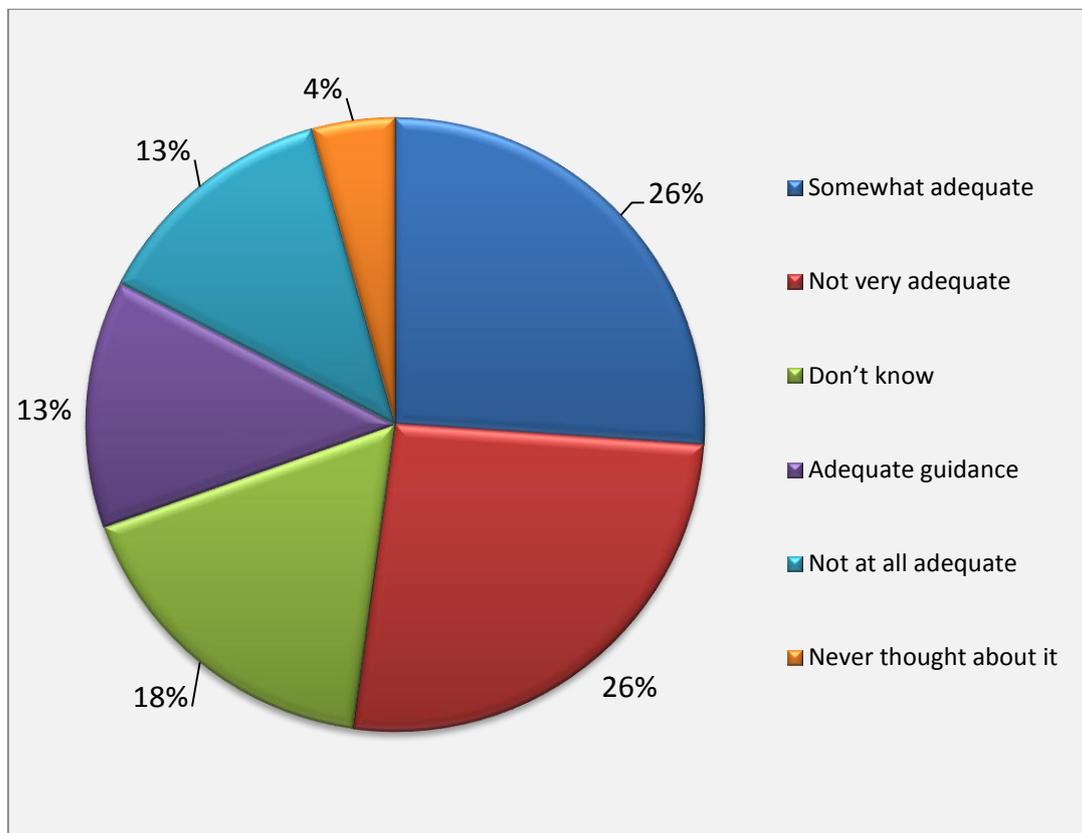


Figure 14: Adequate ethical guidance provided by your church regarding environmental issues

## 5 Respondents' Views and Understanding of the Concept of Mission

Table 2: Respondents' views and understanding of the concept of mission

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Undecided (Neither agree nor disagree)</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Participants</b>
4.1. Mission is a useful opportunity for Christian outreach.	19	10	1	-	-	30
4.2. The concept of mission can be traced back to <i>John 20:21-22</i> <sup>29</sup>	21	7	2			30
4.3. The concept of mission can be traced back to and Matthew 28:19 <sup>30</sup> .	21	8	1			30
4.4. The church's biggest mission is to engage in activities of charity.	11	19				30
4.4. The main goal of mission is to transform societies.	20	10				30
4.5. The church's mission should be about empowering the people.	19	10	1			30
4.6. Missions bring Good News and hope to the world.	19	7	1	3		30
4.7. The church in mission works with individuals and faith-based organisations to attend to the question of poverty.	4	20	4	2		30
4.8. Through missions the church strives for justice and liberation among societies.	20	7	3			30
4.9. The MyT CYM, through their various natural gifts and talents, must play an important part in the mission of the church.	28	1	1			30
4.10. Youth are called by the Holy Spirit to participate in the life and mission of Jesus Christ and His Church.	23	7				30
4.11. The Holy Spirit guides the church on how missions should be achieved.	23	7				30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>		

<sup>29</sup> So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on *them*, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit, (*John 20:21-22*).

<sup>30</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (*Matthew 28:19*).

According to Table 2 above, 63 percent of all participants strongly agreed that mission was a useful opportunity for Christian outreach. In addition, 33 percent also agreed that mission was a valuable occasion for Christian outreach. Only 3 percent of participants were undecided on whether mission was really important for Christian outreach. A further 70 percent of participants strongly agreed that the concept of mission can be traced back to either John 20:21-22 or Matthew 28:19. An additional 65 percent of participants strongly agreed that the main goal of mission is to transform societies.

To be noted is the fact that 10 percent of participants disagreed that the missions bring Good News and hope to the world. Similarly, 7 percent of participants disagreed that the church in mission works with individuals and faith-based organisations to attend to the question of poverty. On the contrary, 67 percent agreed that the church in missions must join other organisations to address poverty.

This issue of justice was also perceived strongly by participants as 67 percent strongly agreed that through missions the church strives for justice and liberation among societies. An overwhelming majority of participants, 93 percent, strongly agreed that MyT CYM, through their various natural gifts and talents, must play an important part in the mission of the church. A further 77 percent also strongly agreed that youth are called by the Holy Spirit to participate in the life and mission of Jesus Christ and His Church. Finally, a further 77 percent also strongly agreed that the Holy Spirit guides the church on how missions should be achieved.

The analysis above shows that most participants understand mission and believe that missions are very important for Christian life. They also maintain that missions can be linked directly to the Bible in John 20:21-22 or Matthew 28:19. Participants also hold the view that missions change societies for the better and seek to address issues of poverty, integrity, justice and liberation. Finally, almost all participants are in agreement that MyT CYM must play an important part in the mission of the church.

## 6 Respondents' Views on Mission Approach and how it fits into Ecological Context

Table 3: Respondents' views on mission approach and how it fits into ecological context

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Undecided (Neither agree nor disagree)</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Participants</i>
5.1. Ecological mission embraces the role of the Christian Church in the world.	8	17	5			30
5.2. Ecological mission is set in the context of the environmental crisis and the need to care for creation.	20	10				30
5.3. Through ecological mission Christians are called to protect the integrity of creation.	21	9				30
5.4. Care for creation should be part of the Church's mission.	23	7				30
5.5. An environmental crisis is becoming increasingly evident in South Africa.	11	19				30
5.6. Environmental problems are also justice issues.	6	22	1	1		30
5.7. The mission of the church should also include ecological justice.	8	21	1			30
5.8. Ecological mission focusses on the scope of God's creation as an integral part of Christian mission.	9	19	2			30
5.9. The impact of climate change affects the poor and vulnerable people who live in developing countries.	10	18	2			30
5.10. Effects of climate change include major natural disasters, lack of food security, inadequate access to clean, safe water and increasing health risks.	23	7				30
5.11. The World Council of Churches (WCC) as well as South African Council of Churches (SACC) are working hard to expose environmental injustices in the dumping of hazardous and toxic wastes.	2	8	19	1		30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>2</b>		

Table 3 above shows that 63 percent of participants agree that environmental crisis is becoming increasingly evident in South Africa. Furthermore, 67 percent of participants strongly agree that the current environmental crisis and the need to care for creation is the main driver behind ecological mission. This is also supported by 70 percent of participants who strongly agree that through ecological mission Christians are called to protect the integrity of creation.

Although 73 percent of participants agree that environmental problems are also justice issues, 4 percent disagrees with this notion. Nonetheless 70 percent of participants added that mission of the church should also include ecological justice. Another 60 percent agreed that the impact of climate change affects the poor and vulnerable people who live in developing countries. In addition, 77 percent agreed that the effects of climate change include major natural disasters, lack of food security, inadequate access to clean, safe water and increasing health risks.

A further 63 percent of participants were not sure whether World Council of Churches (WCC) as well as South African Council of Churches (SACC) were hard at work to uncover environmental wrongs in the dumping of hazardous and toxic wastes.

In conclusion, the analysis above shows that most participants were aware that ecological mission is an approach that was born within the context of the world's environmental crisis. They also agree that the church can no longer stand aside and watch but that caring for creation should be part of the Church's mission. Participants also agree that the effects of climate change were dire for humanity in general. I will argue that for climate change to be addressed, moral leadership, appropriate enforceable resolutions and ethical visionaries would be needed. Finally, not much is understood on both WCC and SACC as participants were unsure of the role that the two organisations were playing in addressing issues of environment. More will need to be done to educate MyT CYM of the important role that the two organisations in particular and other similar advocates in general, were playing as ecological justice advocates.

## 7 Current Ecological Mission Programmes at MyT CYM

This section reviews the existing ecological mission programmes at MyT CYM and whether any financial or human resources support is available for the programmes. The section also assesses MyT CYM's endeavours and willingness for future collaborations with Community Environmental Groups.

### 7.1 Does your Ministry have an ecological mission programme?

Figure 15 below shows that 87 percent of participants indicated that the ministry did not have an ecological mission programme. In contrast, 9 percent maintained that the ministry has an ecological mission programme and 4 percent did not know whether such a programme existed in the ministry. This inconsistency indicates the lack of understanding by some participants of ecological mission programme.

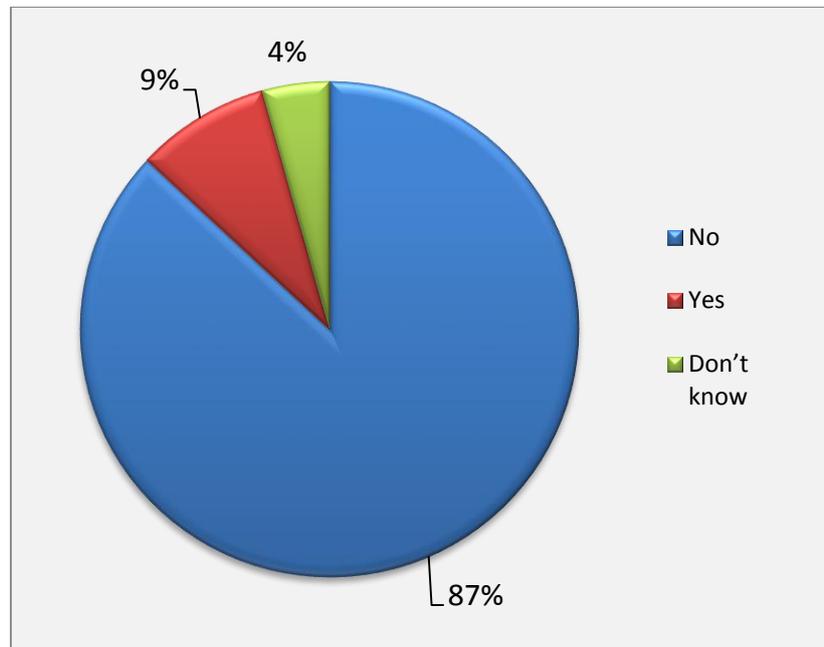


Figure 15: Does your ministry have ecological mission programme?

### 7.2 Anyone available to provide ecological mission advice or resources

In accordance with Figure 16 below, 65 percent of participants were of the view that there was someone MyT who could provide ecological mission advice and resources. On the other hand, 26 percent of participants held that there was no one available at MyT who could provide needed advice and resources for an ecological mission programmes. The final 9 percent did not whether anyone at MyT could provide advice and resource for ecological mission.

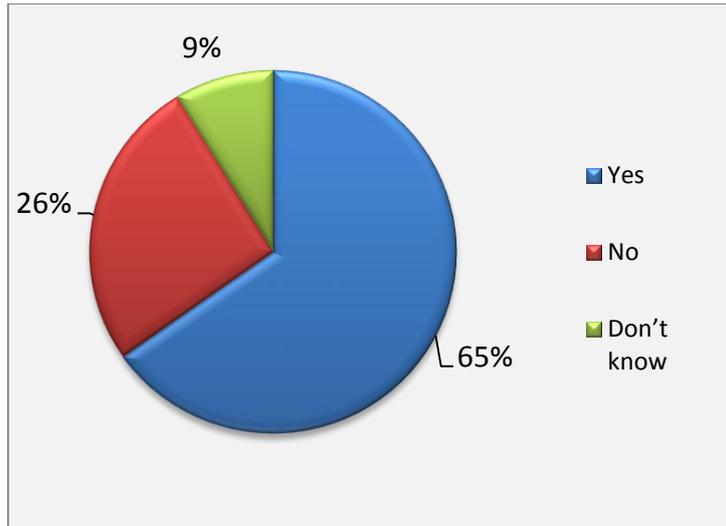


Figure 16: Anyone available to provide ecological mission advice or resources

### 7.3 Future MyT CYM collaboration with other Community Environmental Groups

As per Figure 17 below, an overwhelming majority (91 percent) of all participants believed that MyT CYM should forge future collaborations with other Community Environmental Groups. It is hoped that this will assist and encourage them on their future ecological mission programmes. On the contrary, only 9 percent held that MyT CYM should not have any future collaboration with Community Environmental Groups.

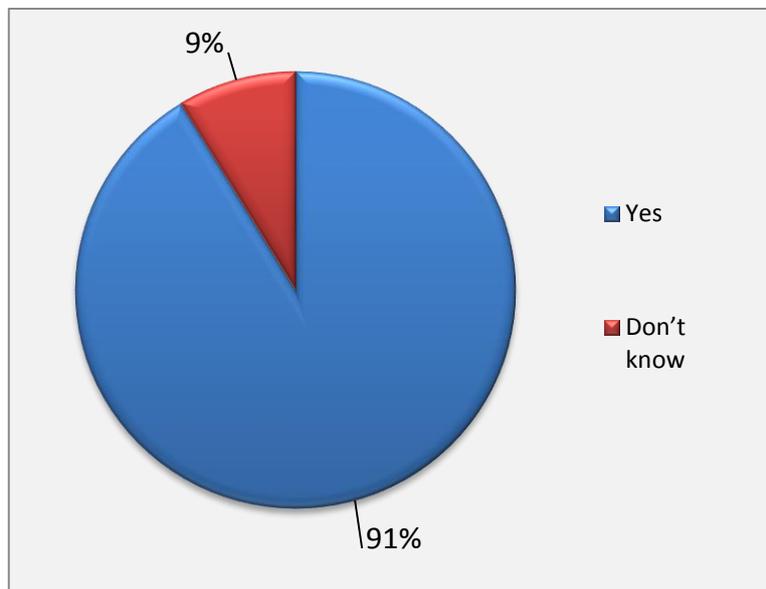


Figure 17: Future MyT CYM collaboration with other Community Environmental Groups

## 8 Respondents' Views on Practical Approach to Ecological Mission

This section was intended to assess the respondents' views on practical ecological missions and associated resources for a successful mission. The section also evaluated respondents' view on the kind of change that must happen in their ministry for them to become involved in ecological mission as well as the role that church leaders and Church Council can provide in supporting MyT CYM endeavour for an ecological mission.

### 8.1 What might prevent ecological mission in your ministry or other youth ministries

In terms of

Figure 18 below, 21 percent of participants believe that they would not know where to start with an ecological mission whilst 14 percent indicated that lack of faith in such a mission would prevent its ultimate success. Lack of leadership was cited by 13 percent of participants though 10 percent brought up the issue of lack of education as a matter that could prevent an ecological mission at MyT CYM. A further 6 percent believed that it might be because it was not part of the church's agenda and this is slightly supported by 5 percent of participants which indicated that other priorities may prevent ecological mission at MyT CYM.

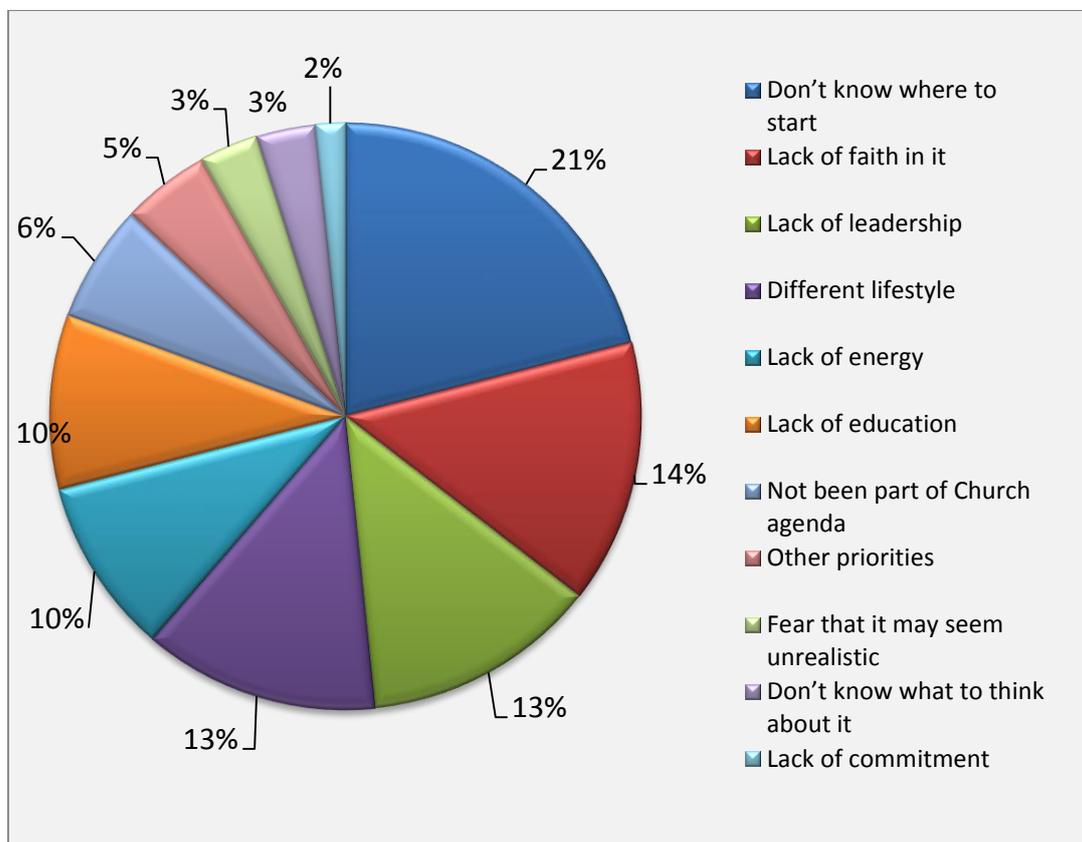


Figure 18: What might prevent ecological mission in your ministry or other youth ministries

### 8.2 Additional support or resources required for effective ecological mission programme

As indicated in Figure 19 below, financial support has been cited by 32 percent of participants as the main resource required for effective ecological mission. Additionally, the issue of education and awareness campaign has been mentioned by 29 percent of participants as the additional support required for active ecological mission. Appropriate guidelines and policies were also highlighted by 14 percent of participants. This is followed by conferences as well as worship and study resources which accounted for 10 percent of participants.

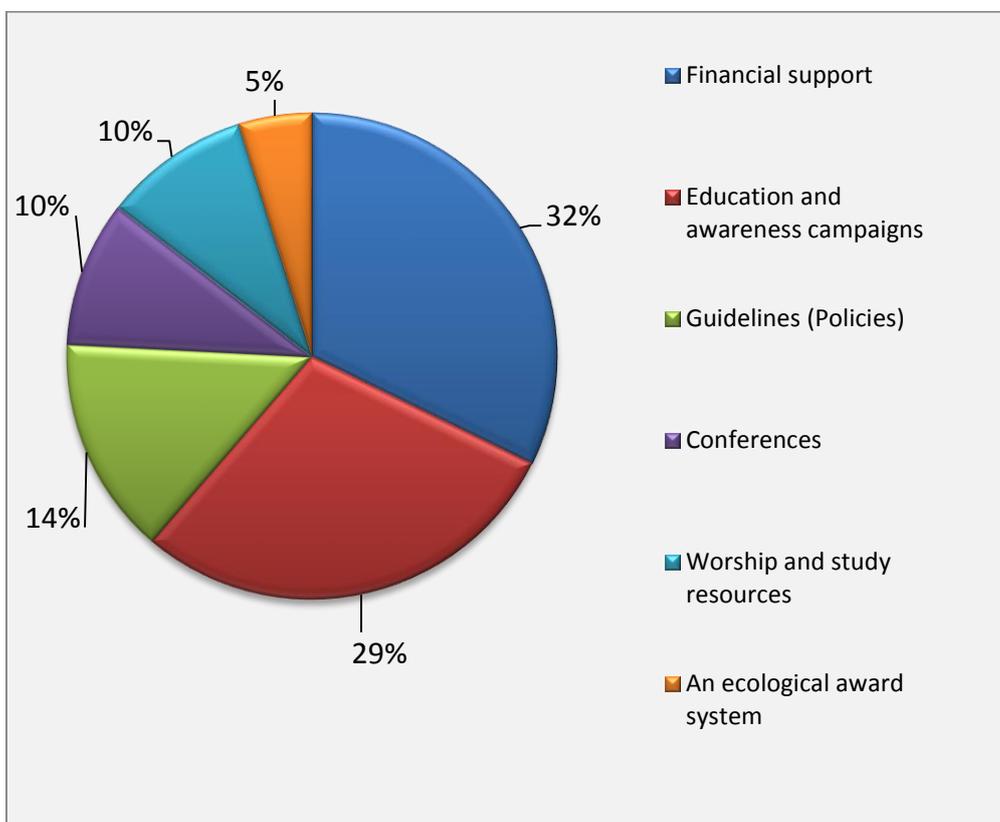


Figure 19: Additional support and resources for an effective ecological mission programme

### 8.3 What must change for MyT CYM to become involved in ecological mission?

Figure 20 shows that 30 percent of participants were of the opinion that more information and planning was needed in order for MyT CYM to become involved in ecological mission. A further 20 percent indicated that ecological education for youth ministry leaders was needed to change the current situation so that MyT CYM can become involved in ecological mission. One important aspect which is a different attitude towards the environment was mentioned by

19 percent of participants as one thing that must change for MyT CYM to become involved in ecological mission. Finally, 17 percent pointed to financial resources and 14 percent to ecological mission champions as all that must change for MyT CYM to take part in ecological mission

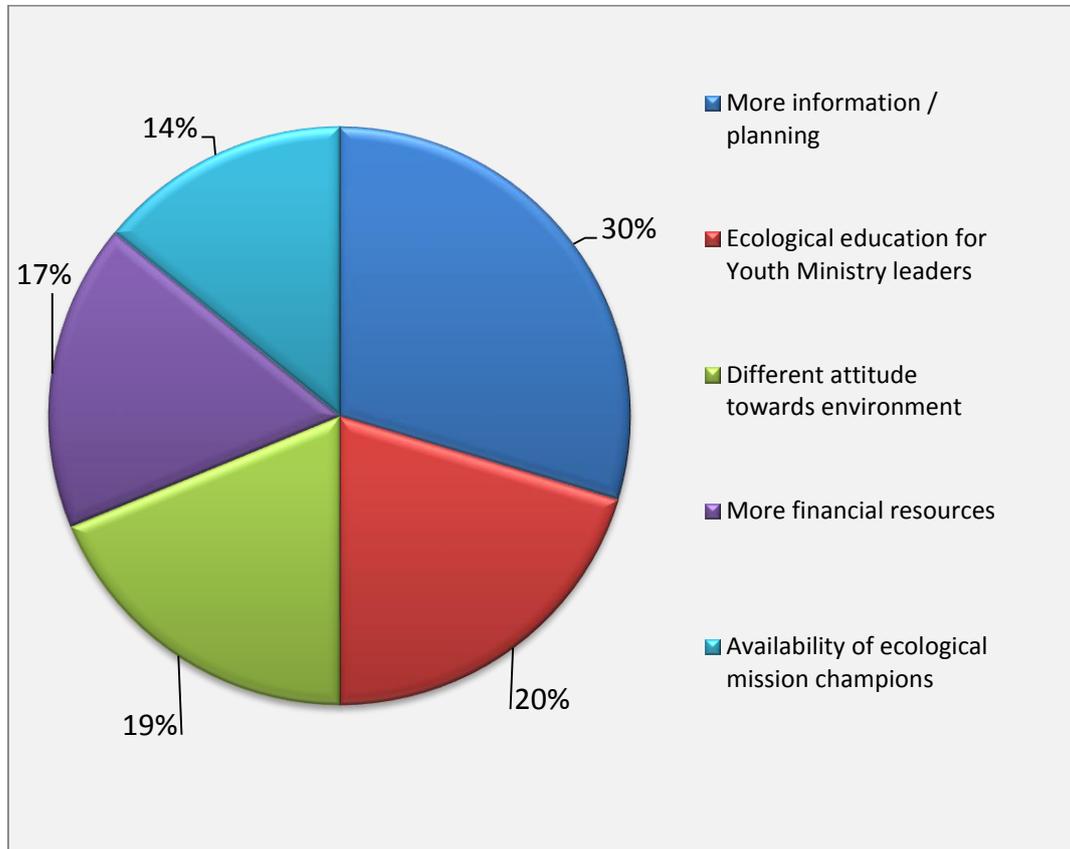


Figure 20: What must change for MyT CYM to become involved in ecological mission?

#### 8.4 Issues to be included in a ministry's ecological mission agenda

Figure 21 below highlights issues that must be included in a ministry's ecological mission agenda and 21 percent of participants held that learning about environmental justice issues was one main issue that would have to be included in the mission agenda. Care for church surroundings accounted for 27 percent of all participants while environmental education programmes was pointed out by 19 percent of participants. Nine percent of participants added field trips to sites that will help build environmental interest and concern among members of the ministry. The issues of learning as well as environmental education have been highlighted very intensely by participants as being important for an ecological mission agenda. Worship incorporating environmental themes as well as coalitions with Community Environmental Groups were pointed out by 8 percent of participants respectively.

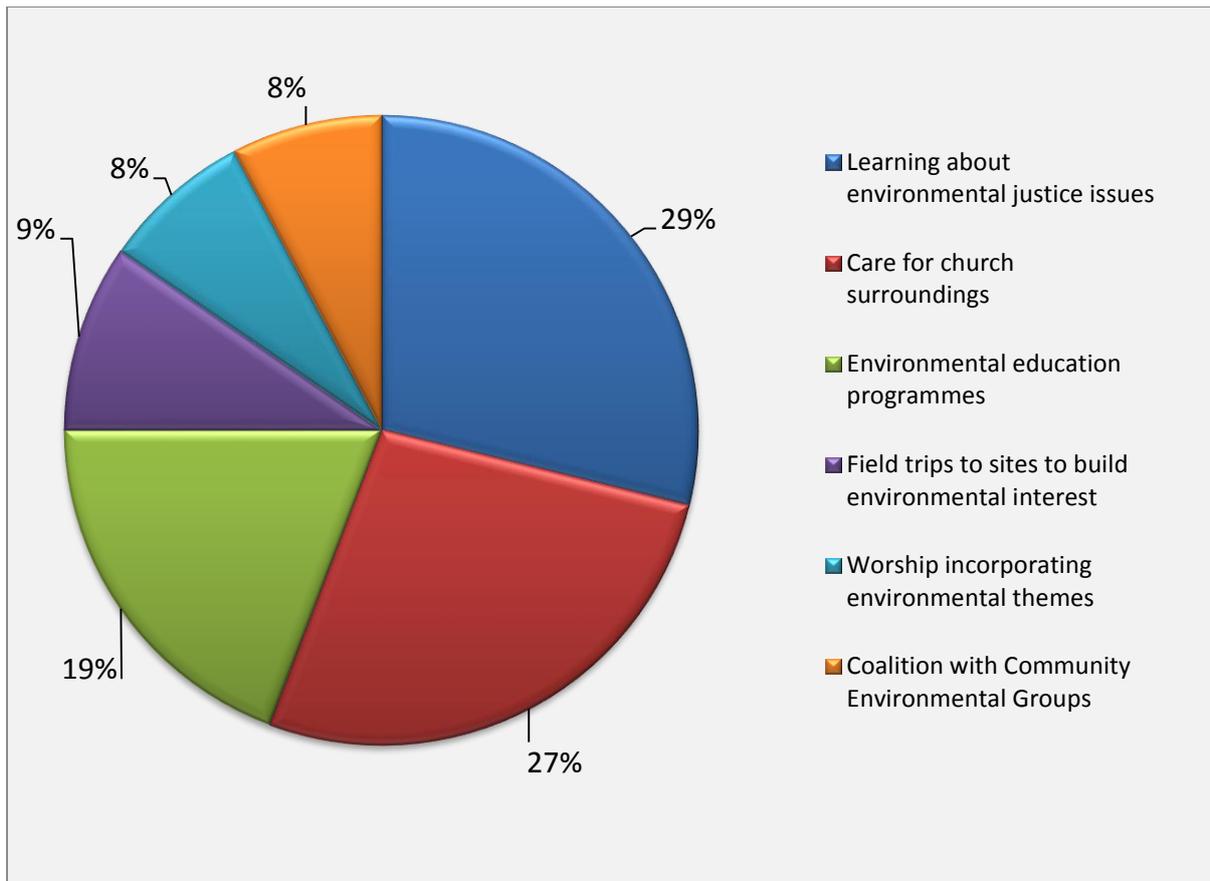


Figure 21: Issues to be included in a ministry's ecological mission agenda

### 8.5 How can Church Leaders / Church Councils become better equipped for provide leadership in ecological mission

Church leaders and Church Councils play an important role in the success of all missions in the church and Figure 22 below shows that 25 percent of participants were of the view that church leaders must hold special services such as Earth Day, Water Conservation Week, etc. to better equip themselves with knowledge and thus provide effective leadership in ecological mission agenda. An additional 17 percent indicated that church leaders needed to develop spiritual and theological themes to support messages about specific environmental issues. This is supported by 15 percent which pointed out that leaders were required develop creative, Ministry-based solutions for environmental issues. Reaching out to other churches or Ministries to encourage them to join in environmental efforts has been highlighted by 13 percent of all participants. Finally, 8 percent thought that ecological theological education training should be provided to church leaders to equip them with necessary skills to effectively lead ecological mission.

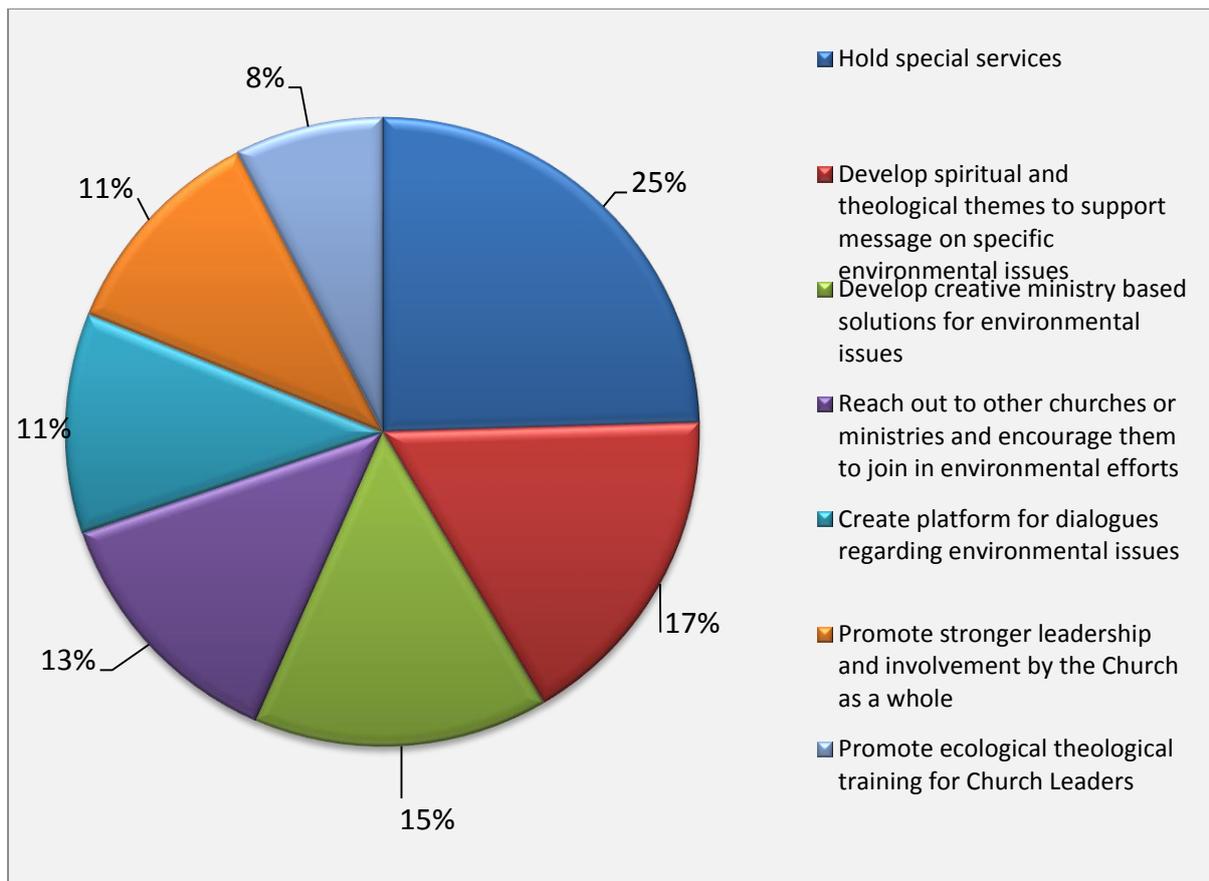


Figure 22: Church leaders / Church Councils becoming better equipped to provide leadership in ecological mission.

## 9 Key Findings

The findings of the analysis will be used to develop a contextual approach to ecological mission that MyT CYM could consider and apply. In general, the analysis revealed the following key factors:

Thirty MyT CYM members took part in the research and all were black South Africans with 74 percent representing females and 26 percent males. Majority of the participants (78 percent) were in the age group of 18 to 23. Participants had, on average, reasonably high level of education with 9 percent having acquired degrees, 35 percent diplomas and 26 percent having obtained grade 12. A greater percentage (63 percent) of participants was students with 17 percent on formal wage employment, 4 percent self-employed and 8 percent being unemployed.

The analysis further revealed that waste management represented the most concerning environmental issue at MyT. This was supported by 26 percent of respondents who indicated that lack of waste recycling was the most concerning environmental issue at church as well as 12 percent pointing out that lack of waste management was the main environmental issues

at church. Another 12 percent added that trash or litter were the most concerning environmental problem at church. Environmental issues were perceived to be very important by the majority of MyT CYM members and this was reinforced by 78 percent of participants who indicated that, as compared to other social issues, environmental matters were very important to them.

Additionally, the analysis showed that more education and awareness was needed for church members to recycle waste and this was highlighted by 43 percent of all respondents who did not know whether items placed in recycling were actually being recycling. Furthermore, 32 percent of participants indicated that education on recycling was the single biggest way to encourage church members to recycle more.

Some participants were not conscious of the importance of saving water or energy at home and to this end, some work was needed to conscientise MyT CYM on importance of saving and using water sparingly. On participation in environmental matters, an overwhelming 91 percent of all participants held the view that it was very important for MyT CYM to take part in environmental matters. The analysis indicated that there was need for the church to look for ways to provide more adequate ethical guidance on issues of environment. This would go a long way in encouraging ministries including MyT CYM to be fully committed to protecting the integrity of creation.

Mission was seen as a useful opportunity for Christian outreach and almost all participants were in agreement that MyT CYM, through their various natural gifts and talents, must play an important part in the mission of the church. A further 67 percent approved that the church in missions must join other organisations to address issues of poverty, justice and liberation.

Most of the participants agreed that the effects of climate change include, among others, major natural disasters, lack of food security, inadequate access to clean, safe water and increasing health risks. One aspect that was of concern was that 63 percent of participants were not aware of World Council of Churches (WCC) or the South African Council of Churches (SACC) and were also not sure whether WCC as well as SACC were working hard to uncover environmental wrongs in the dumping of hazardous and toxic wastes. I would argue that more need to be done to educate MyT CYM of the important role that the two organisations were playing in the sphere of ecological justice.

In terms of the current ecological mission programme, 87 percent of participants indicated that MyT CYM did not have an ecological mission programme. A further 91 percent of all participants believed that MyT CYM should partner with other Community Environmental Groups. Finally, all participants believed that the issue of lack of education and awareness of

environmental issues could prevent successful development of ecological mission programmes at MyT CYM. They held that without relevant environmental education, they would not know where to start with an ecological mission and would lack the necessary faith in such a mission and ultimately fail in their endeavour.

## **10 Conclusion and Recommendations**

Based on the analysis, the following issues will have to be taken into consideration in developing ecological mission programmes relevant for MyT CYM:

- More appropriate and simplified information on planning and implementation of the ecological mission programme must be made available to MyT CYM members;
- Education and awareness programmes and campaign should be undertaken to conscientise the entire congregation on environmental issues, primarily, related to waste management initiative. These programmes should represent a lifelong process for all members of the congregation. Therefore, Church leaders should draw up programmes to address environmental themes from a variety of perspectives, and throughout the year;
- Financial support should be made available for the programmes to succeed and this could be achieved through special fund raising initiatives by ministries and the entire congregation, aimed specifically at enhancing environmental programmes;
- Internal and external mentor and advisors should be identified and requested to support MyT CYM on ecological mission programmes;
- 
- Church leaders should be equipped to provide appropriate leadership on ecological mission in general;
- MyT CYM should be linked to Community Environmental Groups or other Christian Youth Groups from other churches to partner and learn;
- Church leaders must create an enabling environment for MyT CYM members to raise environmental issues in pastoral conversations;
- There should be an overall promotion of the notion of environmental stewards at church; and
- Inclusion of eco-justice and creation care in worship as an essential aspect in building congregational awareness and commitment to caring for the environment should be considered.

In conclusion, I will recommend that ecological mission cannot be left in the hands of MyT CYM alone but stronger leadership from and involvement by MyT as a whole will be required.

The church, through its leaders and other ministries should reach out to other churches in the neighbourhood or denomination to encourage them to join in the MyT environmental efforts. Since the ecological mission would be in its developing stage, MyT must cooperate with the churches that already are providing leadership in this cause. The next chapter focuses on the development of contextual ecological mission and recommends a model that MyT CYM could adopt and utilise for their ecological mission.

# **CHAPTER 5**

## **TOWARDS DEVELOPING CONTEXTUAL ECOLOGICAL MISSION**

### **1 Introduction**

The results of the survey analysis undertaken with Melodi Ya Tshwane Christian Youth Ministry (MyT CYM) were consistent with the spirit of Section 3.2.6 of the Constitution of CYM which notes that one of their goals as a ministry is to “preserve and conserve the environment, which is God's creation”. MyT CYM members also recognised that the environmental crisis was becoming increasingly evident in South Africa. To this end, they expressed their willingness to get involved in ecological mission programmes. Furthermore, MyT CYM members acknowledged that though their ministry did not currently have ecological mission programmes, they were prepared to establish such ecological mission programmes and collaborate with CEGs for enhanced results. They all maintained that whatever ecological mission programme is developed, it would have to be useful and contextual, taking into consideration urban nature of the Melodi ya Tshwane URCSA (MyT). Based on the findings of the analysis, this chapter will then propose a model for contextual approach to ecological mission for MyT CYM on the basis of their commitment to preserving and conserving the environment, within and around the church precinct.

#### **1.1 Understanding context in ecological mission**

The research recognises that God’s mission always takes place in particular socio-economic, political, religious and cultural contexts. Therefore, engaging in missions will require prayerful sensitivities of the signs of the times and a faithful reading of the contexts. For truly effective, all-inclusive and contextual mission, the church is faced with the task of engaging in clear-sightedness context and analysis of the local environment while keeping in mind the impact of regional context on local settings.

Developing contextual ecological mission programme will require ownership of the programme, developed upon sustainable and environment friendly values. This may be regarded as a statement of fundamental principle upon which programme goal will be based. Furthermore, it will be important that MyT CYM establishes clear and specific ecological mission goals based on appropriate periodic intervals. The ecological mission goals will have to be SMART, i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound. MyT CYM will

have to lead in identifying clear ecological mission goals and encourage other ministries, youth groups and the congregation at large to become involved. A wide range of environmental outcomes will be achieved through greater effort of awareness raising initiatives to be undertaken by MyT CYM.

Ecological mission programme development based on context will take into consideration the fact that MyT CYM is overwhelmingly urban in orientation and that may bring both challenges and opportunities. As supported by Bevan (2005:3) “there is no such thing as theology; there is only contextual theology”. Therefore, the first opportunity will be a rapid increase in environmental awareness and concern among MyT CYM members and the congregation at large. Context will require a locally identified agenda within an overall Church framework and will provide the best possibility of relevance and effectiveness.

The survey analysis highlighted the importance of environmental education for MyT CYM members and to this end, they have to acquire appropriate environmental theology education. This means that appropriate programmes would have to be designed and developed to educate MyT CYM members on environmental issues. Institutions of Higher Learning could be requested to assist in this regard. Furthermore, education programmes this will need to be conceived and applied at the level of the entire church. Additionally, there will be greater need for the church to build central policy statements in definite ways to ensure that ecological theology and ecological mission issues remain an important part of the church’s agenda. This would be achieved through involvement of other ministries in the church. Finally, the survey further showed that environmental awareness initiatives will need to extend to the worship life and spirituality of the church.

In considering Daneel’s advances highlighted in Chapter one, I will maintain that responsible and appropriate contextual mission practices depends on the theological interpretation of social ecology. This emphasises the fact that all our present ecological problems arise from deep-seated social problems. Conversely, present ecological problems cannot be clearly understood, much less resolved, without decisively dealing with problems within society. To make this point more real: economic, ethnic, cultural, and gender conflicts, among many others, lie at the core of the most serious ecological dislocations we face today, apart, from those that are produced by natural disasters.

In his writing Kritzingler (1991:16) maintains that good development must include recognition of the ecological context and impact of development. To this end, Kritzingler holds:

“We need both an ecologically sensitive theory and practice of development, and a humane and holistic involvement with the environment,”

Therefore as maintained by Jenkins (2008:117), missiology should be able to discover ways to indicate how it matters for mission that the practice of following God’s love across important human boundaries happens on earth, across particular terrains, within a community of life and a set of ecological relations that bind us to one another.

## **1.2 Understanding ecological context of engagement**

The first step in church’s ecological mission engagement is that of confession and repentance. The church’s viewpoint and its emphasis have been on human dominion or domination over creation which somehow paved the way for the exploitation and destruction of nature. The term “dominion” over all the earth sets the tone for the religious roots for many, that of a destructive and anti-ecological. Such an account suggests, in White’s view, that “Man and nature are two things, and man is master” (White 1967:37). White further continues that such mastery is, moreover, not caring, but cruel, leading White to the conclusion that Christianity was the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen, not only established a dualism of man and nature, but also insisted that it is God’s will that man exploit nature for his proper ends.

It is therefore important to look at the whole of creation in the light of the gospel and search for ways to restore this planet to health. The world is in its own an active participant in God’s mission. Apostle Paul in Romans (8: 20 – 21) says “*creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God*”. Therefore, the church should participate in the process of rehabilitating the earth and preventing further ecological destruction caused by toxic waste pollution as an example.

Melodi ya Tshwane should, jointly with civil societies and voluntary groups be concerned about the integrity of the earth, raise its prophetic voice in naming and condemning the destructive actions against the mother earth. Furthermore, MyT CYM projects dealing with ecological rehabilitation should be encouraged and supported financially by all partners. To this end, environmental engagement will become an urgent mission call for all, and might lead to appropriate action towards conserving the integrity of creation.

## **2 Promoting Environmental Awareness to enhance involvement of MyT CYM**

The role of MyT CYM in environmental awareness initiative will be a platform for MyT CYM members to study nature and be active in environmental protection initiative. This involvement will further be an important step for MyT CYM to partner with other youth formations and community organisations working for environmental protection.

The survey undertaken with MyT CYM members indicated that 91 percent of ministry members were eager to learn about ways in which they can improve their environment through an opportunity of learning and collaborating with other formations. They have the enthusiasm required to create and implement projects and want the support of the church and community in general. Cultivating a sense of environmental ownership and responsibility in youth will ensure that MyT's sustainability efforts will continue into the future.

Chapter 25 of the United Nations Sustainable Development (UNSD) Agenda 21<sup>31</sup> highlights the essential role of the youth in the protection of our environment. As the primary government agency tasked to coordinate youth programmes and formulate policies relative to their development, UNSD (1992) indicates that they are committed to strengthen the role of the youth in sustainable development, environmental quality and social justice.

The concept that all are stewards of the environment is putting responsibility to all in the church to ensure that development and environment is managed with ecological soundness. Therefore, MyT CYM can be advocates and practitioners of sustainable development. They can be advocates of issues and concerns that affect the sector and the whole environment. This means acting on and bringing attention problems that threaten ecological balance. Through the survey MyT CYM members have highlighted what they believed were the biggest environmental problems at MyT.

Furthermore, MyT CYM members can be effective communicators of information and technologies, mobilisers of resources, networkers to strengthen church linkages, trainers and effective prime movers in environmental information and education campaigns. There is even greater need to provide MyT CYM with bigger responsibility to determine and create their own future. If we provide our youth with access to information and skills training in environmental awareness and protection, we will be securing the future generation.

---

<sup>31</sup> United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda 21 (Chapter 25). 1992. Available at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/Agenda21.pdf>. Accessed on 21 May 2015.

Increasing environmental awareness entails a proactive environmental education approach. To the 8 percent of survey participants who have education level of grade 11 and less, this will be an opportunity to empower them and address the complexity of the problem. Through informal educational and skills training the church will be able to tap the greatest resource that she has, the youth. This awareness raising initiative will also aim to re-orient the values of MyT CYM towards environmental sensitivity. In addition, the church could identify local conferences and relevant courses and register CYM members there to acquire necessary skills.

Awareness raising shapes an order of value and at the same time has an influence on the sense of responsibility for inappropriate choice of values and indifference towards wrongdoing. MyT CYM awareness of the environmental issues will mean the ability to emotionally understand the surrounding world, including the laws of the natural environment, understand how the environment works as a system and a sense of responsibility for the common heritage of the earth, with the aim of preserving them for future generations.

According to Chapter 4 of the United Nations Environment Programme<sup>32</sup>, in order to understand actions aimed at increasing environmental awareness and the role that youth, including the role of MyT CYM must play regarding littering, waste recycling and waste management in general, they would need the support in the following areas:

- People shaping their attitude and awareness:
  - Parents;
  - Other ministries in the church;
  - Community leaders in the church; and
  - Church council.
- Place where awareness of the environment is formed and shaped:
  - Family homes;
  - Schools and institutions of higher learning;
  - Community environmental organisations;
  - Church;
  - Sports and culture; and
  - Workplaces.
- Aspects that shape and increase environmental awareness:
  - School and other educational manuals;

---

<sup>32</sup> United Nations Environment Programme: Chapter 4-Available at <http://www.unep.or.jp/ietc/publications/techpublications/techpub-11/4-2.asp>. Accessed on 26 May 2015.

- Field trips;
- Messages transmitted through sermons;
- Work and partnership with other organisations;
- Church activities aimed at raising environmental awareness;
- Cleaning campaigns = *#LitteringMustFall*;
- Plant a tree campaign;
- Own experience and observations; and
- Internet.

In addition, the knowledge of factors affecting environmental awareness will be essential for the selection of the appropriate environmental programme and activities oriented at resolving littering and lack waste management initiatives at MyT.

Basic and specialist knowledge of waste management awareness by MyT CYM will be important so that they are able to appropriately manage issues of waste categorisation, sorting and recycling. MyT CYM members will have to be aware and conscious about the needs and demands posed by different sectors of the church so that they can make a better judgment before and during their participation in the ecological mission.

It will therefore be important that MyT widens access to relevant information and develop skills of MyT CYM members. Education and other formal and non-formal trainings will help develop the necessary skills and provide the foundation for strong decision making. The church will have to increase the capacity of MyT CYM to transform their vision to realities and their future secured. This will be done towards advancing the role of MyT CYM and actively involving them in the protection of the environment and the promotion of economic and social development.

### **3 Strengthening participation of MyT CYM in Ecological Mission**

Realising an improved and efficient MyT CYM youth participation in ecological mission is vital for fostering a culture of responsible, proactive and caring citizenship for the whole church. However, there are still difficulties to be overcome in order for MyT CYM to fully participate in ecological mission programmes including lack of environmental education and awareness. In order to overcome these difficulties, I will argue that:

- MyT CYM members should be empowered as responsible actors in shaping and protecting our environment;

- The church should recognise the role of the MyT CYM in ecological mission and empower them to claim their nature as creators of beauty and stewards of abundance;
- MyT CYM members should be provided with necessary environmental awareness and protection skills;
- The role of MyT CYM in the church is particularly significant in possibly leading the action in dealing with issues of waste management at MyT; and
- MyT CYM to be recognised as legitimate representatives of young people in the church and therefore represented in decision- making at all church levels on matters of waste management and environmental protection.

Joseph (2004:123) notes that participatory approach to environmental protection is one of the sustainable developments in environmental perspective. Therefore, the participation of MyT CYM in environmental protection can be pursued at levels and locations ranging from grass-root activism and participation in conversation projects to church councils as well as CEGs. Participation of MyT CYM through CEGs and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) will be targeted at concerns about lack of environmental awareness at MyT. The participation will be based on the mission of welcoming, encouraging and celebrating the involvement of MyT CYM in the planning and implementation of environmental awareness and sustainability undertaking. The mission will foster for opportunities to learn more about MyT CYM's local environment and participate in local events by NGOs supporting environmental improvements. Finally, the mission will motivate behaviour change at the appropriate level, and will have to be integrated with the church's environmental priorities.

Strengthening participation MyT CYM in environmental protection is also partly a matter of increased opportunities in the church and partly a matter of MyT CYM themselves devising new form of action and finally partly a question of more effective environmental education and more focus on environmental issues. Therefore reinforcement of participation of MyT CYM in ecological restoration work will sustain their learning of social, communication and community building skills that will support them to become confident, respectful members of the church and society in general.

In accordance with the results of the survey, the participation of MyT CYM in ecological mission is currently lacking as they do not have such as mission. Therefore, creating such an opportunity to initiate an ecological mission programme through partnership with NGOs and private sector will be an important achievement for MyT CYM and the church in general. For private sector, the partnership will be important in recognising the contribution and importance of the private sector in securing and achieving environmental sustainability while engaging in business practices.

MyT CYM partnership with business and local CEGs will promote coordinated work practices that seek to protect and enhance the local environment. The partnership will guide and foster environmental commitments to achieve responsible and effective ecological mission. Partnership of MyT CYM with other stakeholders should therefore be able to recognise superior environment performance based on effective and beneficial ecological project at church.

### **3.1 Providing Environmental Education**

Environmental education is one way of preparing young people with the necessary intellectual skills to recognise and deal with issues of environmental protection. In addition, environmental education has an important role to play in the promotion of environmental awareness. Environmental education will have to be made available to both males and females within MyT CYM and in the broader church. In keeping with other aspects of the Christian mission, a constantly changing social context will require a measure of in-service training or continuous education for MyT CYM members and other congregation members in order for them to become true change agents on environmental matters.

The knowledge base of the MyT CYM will be one important aspect of its capacity to address and cope with environmental issues. Jänicke and Weidner (1997:19) write in this context of “the conditions under which environmental knowledge is produced, distributed, interpreted, and applied”. Environmental education is therefore regarded as the first step in enhancing this knowledge base.

Looking at the existing state of environmental awareness and education, as per the survey, one might conclude that the picture is at first glance quite positive, at least in environmental education enthusiasm and eagerness to learn which is very high. Furthermore, the success of environmental education for MyT CYM will lie in the efforts of translating environmental value commitments into action of any kind, be it in terms of lifestyle adjustments or social activism. Therefore, the right kind of environmental education will go a long way in realising the much needed difference at MyT. In addition, the search for more and better knowledge must not substitute appropriate action but enhance it.

Sagoff (1988: 45) indicates that environmental education should be aimed at producing ecological citizens, not just green consumers. As a result, environmental socio-political education should also address the obstacles to effective socio-political action and how they might be overcome. It should further be emphasised that environmental education, in its broadest and perhaps most important sense, is not formal schooling. Rather, it is a process of

social learning in which MyT CYM and others will engage in generating and conveying knowledge as well as receiving it. Therefore, social learning will involve a multitude of activities. CEGs and NGOs can play an important role in providing the much needed learning to MyT CYM members and this could be an integrated education with their activism. Networks of activists can work together to explore and develop ideas such as exploring how the whole idea of environmental justice arose, from the bottom up, and providing a variety of local experiences showing the unfair distribution of environmental hazards. Learning by doing will also be very important, whether through participation in waste management projects or involvement in environmental awareness campaigns. In these sorts of processes, MyT CYM members will play a role as active participant in education rather than passive recipients.

### **3.2 Promoting Ecological Mission Support System**

The personal care of people involved in ecological mission is extremely important, against the context that they are sensitively often operating near the edge of accepted Christian mission, and in many circles their cause is not yet widely accepted. When disappointment is added to feelings of isolation, an energy weakening hopelessness may result. In the context of MyT CYM the entire congregation must support and care for them. There should be adequate personal and pastoral care and support of MyT CYM in their ecological mission programme.

During the undertaking of the survey, only 5 percent of respondents maintained that awards should be used as additional support to encourage effective ecological mission programme. Therefore, MyT CYM members should not be engaged in ecological mission for the sake of awards. The award structure should only provide a resource for learning and development in ecological mission, a tool of encouragement to continue on a journey.

MyT CYM will need to actively participate in all relevant levels of decision –making process in the church with regards to environmental issues. In addition to their intellectual contribution, they will also be able to rally support and be able to bring exclusive perspective that needs to be taken into consideration. Most of the environmentally relevant information young people receive comes not from formal education but from the media. In principle, formal environmental education and the media could join in the larger process of social education, though the fact that the media are generally driven by other concerns can get in the way of such a combination. Even then the media can be a powerful tool for education.

## 4 Model for Ecological Mission

A model for ecological mission to be adopted by MyT CYM, which considers *mission as the fullness of life*, will enhance participation of MyT CYM in ecological missions and be based on the notion of God's mission which begins with the act of creation. To this end, an approach that is reflective of the interaction between context, theology and practice has been selected. This is based on the notion that creation's life and God's life are entangled, therefore ecological mission can be seen as the overflow of the unlimited love of the Triune God. The mission of God's Spirit involves us all in a true act of grace. We move beyond selfish human-centered approach and to hold on to forms of mission which express our reconciled relationship with all created life. As we listen to the cries of the poor we also hear the cry of the earth due to all environmental degradation the earth is enduring.

The biblical theme of fullness refers to the presence of God, who after the erection of the tabernacle filled the building: he filled it with His glory (Exodus 40:34). Just as once the tabernacle was filled with the presence of God, so the human heart may be filled with God's Spirit. In Ephesians 3:19 the author bring forward the notion that a heart filled with the fullness of God, is a heart filled with love. This longing of fullness is also expressed in the Gospel of John where he combines it with the concept of life. Eternal life has been realised in Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Such a life is guided by the Spirit of God which bears the fruit of love, peace, joy, caring, kindness and gentleness.

For Daneel, *at al* (2005:5) such fullness of life infuses the hearts, minds and actions of Christians. To this end, I will argue that this charge of truth will challenge us all and MyT CYM in particular, to reflect upon the presence and role of churches in societies and to propel us to care for the integrity of creation. The fullness of life, that is the Kingdom of God, already present but not complete in its existence, constitutes christian expectation and hope, (Daneel 2005:5).

At the heart of the relationship between man and environment is the relationship between human beings. As individuals, we live not only in vertical relationship to God and horizontal relationships to one another, but also in a multifaceted web of relationships that extend throughout our lives, our cultures, and the material world. Human beings and the environment form a whole and unbroken pattern of existence, created by God.

As human beings, created "in the image and likeness of God" (Genesis 1:26), we are called to recognise this interdependence between our environment and ourselves. In the bread and the wine of the Eucharist, as priests standing before the altar of the world, we offer the creation

back to the creator in relationship to Him and to each other, (Kelly 2001:92). In our life, we realise by anticipation the final state of the cosmos in the Kingdom of Heaven. We also celebrate the beauty of creation and make holy the life of the world, returning it to God with thanks. Finally, as added by Hart (2006:90), we share the world in joy as a living mystical communion with the Divine. Thus it is that we offer the fullness of creation at the Eucharist and receive it back as a blessing, as the living presence of God.

We also realise the fullness of life by standing against all kinds of human rights violations and resources exploitation. It is important to note that justice is not only a mere abstract concept, but the rightness of things. It should rather be practiced in concrete situations where justice is denied such as economic exploitation of people, racism, sexism, etc. It's a struggle together with those who are aspiring for justice in its totality, including ecological justice. Ecological justice has to do with liberal social justice understanding of Christianity in which God's Kingdom of just relations between humans and with the realm of creation is to be worked for on earth by righting social wrongs.

#### **4.1 Clarity of *being* in ecological mission**

As MyT CYM members engage in ecological mission the main question would be what kind of stewards would they aspire to be. The apparent answer might be that they would be stewards of God restoring the integrity of creation. The service to the environment and to people comes as a consequence of service to God. The reason for being and doing must be clearly understood. In the survey as part of this research undertaken with MyT CYM, participants held the view that missions were not just aimed at activities of charity, but sought to change societies for the better and seek to address issues of poverty, integrity, justice and liberation. Therefore, if MyT CYM members are to meet environmental and human needs in Jesus's way, they ought to do it for the same reason that Jesus did, which is in obedience to God.

To lose sight of this essential divine element will be to distort the actions allowing the humanistic tendency to become donor or recipient driven and to lose sight of the prophetic dimension of the mission. As highlighted in Chapter 2, the task of the prophet therefore is not merely to condemn evil and injustices but also to inspire people with an attractive vision for the future, supporting them to see what the next appropriate step is or should be, (SACC 2009:5). Van Meter (2013: 80) adds that young people are prophets, theologians, poets, and artists ready to partner with adults to shape, portray, and embody beauty in the midst of a shared life. Finally, in a post-modern society where secularisation tends to undermine and

weaken the divine, the way the prophet understands his nature is fundamental for his continuation.

## **4.2 Clarity of *doing* in ecological mission**

As MyT CYM members seek to serve in Christ's name they have to do it with the same manner that Jesus did. Jesus served to reveal God's salvation plan to people as he brought about reconciliation to God (2 Corinthians 5:18). As sin entered the world relationships were severely affected and broken: relationship to God, relationship to self and relationship to others (people and nature - creation). Through reconciliation restoration of these relationships is possible. In reconciliation, the relationship between people and nature as well as relationship to self, are often referred as re-socialisation, (Eliassen 2014:4).

Though restoration of relationships to self and to others (people and nature) is necessary, meaningful and credible, it is however not enough. To serve as Jesus did means to go beyond and enable the restoration of relationships of people to God. For Jesus, mission was to bring about reconciliation. For MyT CYM it must mean to promote community development through the church as the transformation process through which the capacity of the church is maximised and the church is therefore encouraged to take ownership of her own destiny, including capacity to relate to God, capacity to relate to self, capacity to relate to others and capacity to relate to nature. Through this vision, MyT CYM will have clarity of doing what God is requesting from them, to care for God's creation through supporting the missional church in its core work.

## **4.3 Clarity of *saying* in ecological mission**

For MyT CYM members to serve like Jesus did, they need to communicate like he did. Jesus was a great communicator who taught the crowds through simple every day stories and parables. Using everyday situations known to all he explained deep eternal truths that would forever change people's lives. He attached what he intended to say and teach to common situations that all could understand and follow.

However Jesus not only proclaimed the message through interesting and appealing words that everyone could understand, and apply to their lives, but he became the message himself. Living out exactly what he wished people to learn. In developing ecological mission programmes, MyT CYM members will have to lead by example and live the mission they wanted to convey to the church. In addition, it will be vital that MyT CYM members are able to communicate and personify the ecological message so that it is clearly understood. To this

end, MyT CYM message should be one transforming message of Jesus Christ which brings freedom, hope and life.

## **5 Conclusion**

In this chapter I have sought to show what it will take MyT CYM to develop successful ecological mission at MyT. In addition, this chapter has also considered a range of factors that might either encourage or inhibit effective ecological mission. To this end, context was highlighted as one of the main factors to be considered when developing ecological mission. Furthermore, matters regarding underlying attitudes, ways in which ecological mission begins, the importance of partnerships with CEGs and a number of general themes by which ecological mission programmes might be established. Other important dimensions that have not been fully explored related to empowerment of MyT CYM members through appropriate environmental education training as well as the need for adequate support systems, including some structural issues, and the potential for productive broader dialogue with other ministries and the church in general.

Finally, this chapter recognised that the model for ecological mission should be based on the principle of a “mission as the fullness of life”. This fullness of life is a feeling expressed by being fully alive and living with life. This feeling causes us to embrace life in order to experience more of life. It pulls us to create a life worth living and a feeling overwhelming abundance and desire to share the beautiful creation by God. This fullness denotes the presence of God who fills the human heart and propels the actions of love, caring for the environment, kindness and peace.

In the final chapter I will summarise the conclusions and contribution of this thesis, and provide an indication of possible future research prospects on ecological mission.

# **CHAPTER 6**

## **CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY**

### **1 Introduction**

This chapter will serve as a conclusion, highlighting major findings of the research as well as its recommendations and further research prospects.

What I sought to ensure through this thesis is to argue from theological perspective for the inclusion of ecological mission as one significant dimension of the mission of the Church. To this end, I am in contention that ecological mission is not just an optional extra or an afterthought aspect, but part of the mainstream mission of the church. There is furthermore recognition that God's mission always takes place in particular socio-economic, political, religious and cultural contexts. Therefore, engaging in ecological missions will require context and analysis of the local environment while keeping in mind the impact of regional context on local settings.

The research therefore examined the role of Melodi Ya Tshwane Christian Youth Ministry (MyT CYM), in the context of the growing environmental crisis with a view of developing a contextual approach to ecological mission. The research did not attempt to focus on the crisis itself but considered that its scope involved not only ecological issues, but also had some important implications for social justice. Quantitative research methodology was utilised to collect and collate required data from a sample of MyT CYM members who were willing to take part in the research. Each chapter was built upon the previous one as a symbol of such a connection as fundamental to the Christian faith itself.

### **2 Integrating ecological mission**

I have argued that ecological mission is based on ecological theology approach and should be placed squarely within the mainstream of the Christian mission. The main question is how can the approach to ecological mission be implemented and integrated into the church's missional practice. To this end, I propose five steps programme to address the basic issue.

Firstly, it will be important to understand the current situation and to determine the problem areas relating to ecological mission. In the case of MyT CYM, waste management at church is a problem therefore ecological mission programmes will be around waste sorting and classification, waste collection and recycling initiatives. To this end, changing and enhancing the church surroundings at Melodi ya Tshwane (MyT) will be a step in the theological

imperative for creation care. Secondly, MyT CYM will have to take ownership of creation care statements which will be derived from the church's theme for 2015: "*Growing in stewardship: serving God's household*" and one of its four pillars is "*growing in care for the earth*". To this effect, I contend that effective environmental action can only be based on the conviction that ecological mission programmes are structured within the framework of what the church has already developed. In this way, the environmental action will be visible at every level of the church.

Thirdly, I will further argue that ecological mission and ecological theology should be essential elements of the basic ministry training. This means focus on leaders and ministry executives as well as identified ecological champions to be included in conferences and suitable courses in conjunction with Institution of Higher Learning or Seminaries. Room should also be created for more advance courses for those who would have completed the basic ones. Fourthly, there is also need to attend to structural issues in terms of where ecological mission must fit into the overall programme of the church. To this end, a balance between various competing needs of the church will have to be reached. Fifthly, the issues of ecological mission cannot be left at congregation level alone but needs to be escalated to Presbytery and Synodical levels so that the church in general can decisively deal with environmental issues through appropriate approach to ecological mission and ecological theology.

### **3 How the Research was outlined**

The research is made up of six chapters of which chapter one served as general introduction and supported the need and reason for the research. The researcher argued that if the church was to deal decisively with the increasing environmental crisis, there was greater need for ecological mission to be included as part of the central mission of the church. The chapter also conclude with the delimitation of the scope, where MyT CYM was identified as the research interlocutor.

Chapter two reviewed the literature by assessing what the works revealed about the church's understanding of its mission theology. Most importantly the chapter focussed on significant trends, approaches and debates by scholars and authors to provide context to ecological mission and ecological theology. To this end, two worldviews, namely, Western and African worldviews were assessed. This chapter also reviewed the role of youth, particularly, MyT CYM in ecological mission. The theological framework advanced for this research was based on the framework of a theology which offers a Trinitarian view of creation that is entrenched in Trinitarian ecclesiology. This is a theological notion of God the Creator and Father sending the Son, the Redeemer and Liberator, and the Father and the Son sending the Spirit, the

Sustainer of creation, which is also seen as having another movement, i.e. the Father, Son and Spirit, sending the Church.

Chapter three focused on the research methodology for relevant data collection. To this end, quantitative research methodology was used. Random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 30 MyT CYM members out of a total of 50 registered MyT CYM members to take part in the survey. A questionnaire was used as an instrument to collect required data.

Chapter four provided the results of the analysis of collected data in order to arrive at informed conclusion. The results showed that education and awareness programmes and campaign should be undertaken to conscientise the entire congregation on environmental issues, and in particular, waste management matters. MyT CYM should partner with Community Environmental Groups or other Christian Youth Groups from other churches in order to learn and perform optimally. Finally, the analysis revealed that ecological mission could not be left in the hands of the MyT CYM alone but stronger leadership from and involvement by MyT as a whole would be required. The church, through its leaders and other ministries should reach out to other churches in the neighbourhood or denomination to encourage them to join in the MyT environmental efforts.

Chapter five proposed a model for contextual approach to ecological missions, and the model was based on the principles of “Mission as a fullness of Life” which considered Trinitarian view of creation. The fullness of life embraces a declaration of the good news; God’s redeeming action in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit pronouncing hope, advancement of the future and equality and the church following up to fulfil its mandate. The fullness of life notion further considered care for creation as an important element of restoring the integrity of God’s creation. This model would possibly be replicated at other congregations, particularly those located in urban settings and inner cities.

Chapter six concludes the research and reviews broader integration of ecological mission in the church. The chapter also highlights major findings of the research as well as its recommendations and further research prospects.

## **4 Summary and Conclusion**

Through this research, my essential argument is that the church has an important role to play in addressing the environmental crisis that the world is facing. Such a role should be based on the missional theology of the church. This call, I contend, is rooted in the existence, nature and mission of the church. I argued that the theology and the practice of ecological mission opens up one of the most important aspects of overall mission of the church and that the

growing environmental problems sharpen the focus of this mission, which is distinctly theological.

The research further considered that what is important to understand is that ecology is unavoidably a part of both theology and mission and that there is a connection between ecological theology, ecological mission and ecological praxis. To this end, the research has advanced the notion that the entire life and praxis of the church should include an ecological dimension and vision.

In focusing on the role of the church in ecological mission, the concept of missional ecclesiology was discussed. Ecclesiology is seen as the theological theory of what the Church is called to be and to do, i.e. its nature, purpose, structure and practices, purpose, activity, hopes and organisation. For this reason, the basic foundation of missional ecclesiology was that all church priorities, programmes, organisations, institutions, and structures have the same vocation, namely, to encourage the church to be what it is meant to be. For Saayman (2010:12) the church could not be seen as just a building or an institution but a community of witness called into being and empowered by God and sent into the world to affirm to and participate in Christ's work.

Furthermore, missional church was seen to be transformational and existed for the transformation of the community that it serves, through the power of the gospel and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the church undertakes this mission without regard for its own agenda or survival. The Church serves God's call to mission through its work in the:

- proclamation of the Word of God;
- administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; and
- nurturing of the covenant community of disciples.

The research also recognised that an ecologically conscious youth ministry will consider current ecological challenges seriously and engage practices that support collaborating stewardship at MyT. In addition, the researcher holds that there is need to understand youth as fully part of the church ready to participate in the mission of the church. Therefore, I will argue that it is important that we shape missions with young people, noting that they are called by the Holy Spirit for full participation in the community of faith and challenged to full contribution in the life and mission of Jesus Christ and His Church.

Finally, as the research evaluates what is required for a truly ecological mission, taking note that by divine calling the Church is in the midst of the ever increasing environmental crisis, the

challenge is perhaps best articulated by Conradie who proposed that what is needed is a fundamental change of heart and a call to care for creation (2005: 285-6).

## 5 Recommendations

Based on the conclusion reached by this research, the researcher would like to make the following recommendations:

- For an appropriate ecological mission, a good starting point would be to identify “ecological champions” within MyT CYM or the congregation at large who would drive the ecological mission programme. These champions would then have to be well resourced. In addition, a small group led by these champions would also have to be established in order to encourage the congregation as a whole to become involved in ecological mission programmes.
- The use of educational workshops and other teaching opportunities, including sermons, will help to ensure that any practical activity is able to encourage a response that is theologically based as well as to help people understand the extent of the environmental crisis.
- The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of class, colour gender, and income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, policies and regulations.
- Attendance at environmental conferences and taking part in environmental courses would enhance the levels of skills and knowledge of MyT CYM members.
- I will also argue that it is essential that the wider church create an environmental resource pack that could be shared with other churches and groups. This would provide emerging local groups with a means of determining where they are currently situated environmentally, and also a package of basic resources with a series of issues they can work through.
- I would further assert that it is highly desirable that in establishing ecological mission MyT CYM should be working through an adoption of an ecological mission statement that sets out the primary vision and aims of the mission. This will serve to clarify what the MyT CYM hopes to achieve, and therefore to be the immediate foundation on which specific goals might be based. The advantage with MyT CYM is that the church’s theme for 2015 is *“Growing in stewardship: serving God’s household”* and one of its four pillars is *“growing in care for the earth”*. The commitment statement of the church is: *“Creator God, Empower us to serve you, to care for others and for the whole of creation.”* From these statements, MyT CYM should be able to derive their aims and vision linked to the already existing

commitments. This will also make it easy for the broader congregation to join in and provide support.

- MyT CYM would need to establish its own priorities and goals, but the master plan may include a series of project or programme options, which may be a list from which selections would be made. This may also inspire them for fresh thinking based on local circumstances or perceptions of the global situation.
- Partnership with other Community Environmental Groups and other active CYMs will assist MyT CYM to learn and be able to focus on that which their ecological mission programmes seek to achieve.
- The success of any ecological mission programme will be based on support by the church council as well as MyT congregation in general.

## **6 Further Research Prospects**

There is need to explore further the question of ecological mission and ecological theology. I will argue that the implications of ecological theology for Christian mission can easily be extended to a number of additional areas of research.

Ecological mission may be viewed as an extension of pastoral care. To this end, pastoral care should be aimed to generate love, justice and harmony both within and between people, but also with the natural order. The challenge here is that the ministry of care does not always directly promote ecological partnership. I want to argue that there is value in providing an inclusive pastoral care that also takes cognisance of the biophysical environment. Therefore, a ministry of care must extend to the earth itself, and pastoral care should be able to assist people and families to examine their way of life in terms of its ecological consequences, as well as its possibilities for promoting ecological justice. Based on the fact that pastoral care is truly perceived as basic to a Church's mission, perhaps extending care beyond people to include the earth could be one solution that may broaden the care for environment to include both individuals and families. Further research would be needed in this area.

Finally, Daneel (1991:19) advanced an African theology of the environment which required that Christianity be modified to become compatible with Shona culture and religion for Christianity to be acceptable to the traditional Shona people. Daneel saw Shona tradition not just as background to the contextualisation of the Christian message but also as an ecological power with very precise consequences for the growth of a theology of the environment. This brings the issue of existing resources and assets that a community or church possesses that could be used to enhance progressive ecological theology and mission in general. Further

research would bring to light the positive aspects of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) assessment in ecological theology and mission.

## LIST OF REFERENCES

Anderegg, W.R. 2010. *Expert Credibility in Climate Change*, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences Vol. 107 No.27, 12107–12109 (June 2010); DOI:10.1073/pnas.1003187107.

Anderson, R. S. Mission . . . in the way of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in *International Review of Missions* LXXVII- 308 (1988).

Balia, D. and Kim, K. (eds.), 2010, *Witnessing to Christ Today*, Regnum Books International, Oxford. (Regnum Edinburgh 2010 Series, volume II).

Bosch, D.J. 1991. *Transforming mission: Paradigm shifts in theology of missions*. Orbis: Maryknoll, New York.

Brueggemann, W. 1977. *The Land. Place as Gift. Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith*. Philadelphia. PA: Fortress Press.

Buciora, J. n.d. *Theology of Nature: Trinitarian Paradigms for Ecology*. Available at <http://www.uocc.ca/pdf/theology/Theology%20of%20Nature.pdf>. Accessed on 06<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

Cauthen, K. 1973. *A Future-Oriented Strategy of Ministry and Mission*. *Foundations* 16.

Christians, C. G. 2005. *Ethics and politics in qualitative research*. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 131-164). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. 2001. *Research methods in education* (5th ed.). New York: Routledge-Falmer.

Conradie, E. 2006. *Study Guides in Religion and Theology II. Christianity and Ecological Theology Resources for Further Research*. SUN Press: Stellenbosch.

Conradie, E. M., ed. 2005. *Towards an Agenda for Ecological Theology: An Intercontinental Dialogue*. London: Equinox Publishing.

Costanza-Chock, S. 2012. *Youth and Social Movements: Key Lessons for Allies*. [Online]. Born This Way Foundation & the Berkman Centre for Internet at Harvard University. P 1-6. Available at

[http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/sites/cyber.la.harvard.edu/files/KBWYouthandSocialMovements2012\\_0.pdf](http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/sites/cyber.la.harvard.edu/files/KBWYouthandSocialMovements2012_0.pdf). Accessed on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2014.

Creative Research Systems Survey Software. 2015. *Calculation frame for sample size*. Available at: <http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm#2>. Accessed on 6th March 2015.

Daneel, M. L. 1991. The Liberation of Creation: African Traditional Religious and Independent Church Perspectives, in *Missionalia* (August 1991) 19:2,100.

Daneel, M. L. 1994. African Independent Churches face the Challenge of Environmental Ethics in D. Hallman (ed.), *Ecotheology: Voices from South and North*. WCC Publications, Geneva and Orbis: Maryknoll.

Daneel, M. L. 1996. African Independent Churches face the Challenge of Environmental Ethics in Roger S. Gottlieb (ed.), *This Sacred Earth: Religion Nature, Environment*. New York and London, Routledge.

Daneel, M. L. 2000. Earthkeeping churches at the African grass roots in D. Hessel and R. Radford Reuther (eds.), *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the well-being of earth and human*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Daneel, M. 2001. *African Earthkeepers: Wholistic Interfaith Mission*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis.

Daneel, L. et al. 2005. *Fullness of Life for All: Challenges for Mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Rodopi: BP Amsterdam – New York NY.

De Gruchy, S. 2006. "Agency, Sin and Grace: Protestant perspectives on mission and the earth crisis" in *Missionalia*. Vol 34 No 2/3 August/ November. Unisa Press.

Diringer, E. 2009. *Copenhagen –Cop 15 Summary*. Available at <http://www.c2es.org/international/negotiations/cop-15/summary>. Accessed on 22 September 2014.

Eliassen, T. 2014. 2014 USA Salvation Army Conference for Social Work and Emergency Disaster Services 25 to 28 March 2014. *Salvation Army*. GLOBAL CONVERSATION SESSION 1A.

Farley, E. 1987. *Interpreting Situations. An Inquiry into the Nature of Practical Theology*. In Mudge, Lewis, Poling S. Poling and James, N. *The Promise of Practical Theology: Formation and Reflections*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia.

- Faix, T. 2007. *The Empirical-Theological Praxis (ETP) cycle as a methodological basis for missiology*. *Missionalia* 35:1 (April 2007), 113 – 129.
- Given, L.M. 2008. *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*. Los Angeles, Calif.: Sage Publications.
- Hoffman, A. J. L. and Sandelands, E. 2004. *Getting Right with Nature: Anthropocentrism, Ecocentrism and Theocentrism*. Social Sciences Research Network Electronic Paper Collection. (pp2) October 2004. University of Michigan: Ann Arbor.
- Granberg-Michaelson. W. 1992. *Redeeming the Creation: The Rio Earth Summit - Challenges for the Churches*. Geneva: WCC Publications.
- Guder, D. et al. 1998. *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Habel, N.C. 2000. Geography. The Earth Story in Genesis 1, in Habel NC & Wurst, S (Eds), *The Earth Story in Genesis, Volume 2*, 34 – 48. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Hart, J. 2000. *Caring for the Commons: Creation, Church and Community*. New Theology Review.
- Hart, J. 2006. *Sacramental Commons: Christian Ecological Ethics*. Lanham, Md: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Hessel, D. T. 1992. *After Nature's Revolt: Eco-Justice and Theology*. Minneapolis, MN. Fortress Press.
- Hooker, P. 2008. *What is missional ecclesiology?* Available at <http://www.negapby.org/missionalecc.pdf>. Accessed on 19 April 2015
- International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity (CIDSE). Available at <http://www.cidse.org>. Accessed on 02<sup>nd</sup> February 2015.
- IPCC, 2014: Summary for policymakers. In: *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability*. Part A: Global and Sectoral Aspects. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Field, C.B., V.R. Barros, D.J. Dokken, K.J. Mach, M.D Mastrandrea, T.E. Bilir, M. Chatterjee, K.L. Ebi, Y.O. Estrada, R.C. Genova, B. Girma, E.S. Kissel, A.N. Levy, S. MacCracken, P.R. Mastrandrea, and L.L. White (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA, pp. 1-32.

Jänicke, M. and Weidner, H. eds. 1997. *National Environmental Policies: A Comparative Study of Capacity-Building* Berlin: Springer.

Joseph, K.N.R. 2004. *Essentials of Environmental Studies*. Dehli: Pearson Education.

Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) (2011) in "Confronting Environmental Crisis and Social Justice" Available at [http://www.ofm.org/01docum/jpic/EnvironmentalJustice\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.ofm.org/01docum/jpic/EnvironmentalJustice_ENG.pdf). Accessed on 27 January 2015.

Kaoma, K.J. 2013. *God's family, God's earth: Christian ecological ethics of Ubuntu*. Zomba: Kachere Series.

Kearns, L. 2003. The Blackwell Companion to Modern Theology "The Context of Eco-Theology." 57(1):55-70. London: Blackwell Publishing

Kelly, J.N.D. 2006. *Early Christian Creeds*. Continuum International Publishing Group: London.

Kelly, T. 2001. *The Bread of God: Nurturing a Holy Communion Imagination*. Melbourne: HarperCollins.

Kim, K. 2009. *Joining in with the Spirit. Connecting world Church and local mission*. London: Epworth.

Kritzinger, J.J. 1991. Mission, Development and Ecology. *Missionalia* 19 (1991): 16.

Kritzinger, J.J. 1987. Introducing Missiology, in H.L. Pretorius, A.A. Odendal, P.J. Robinson & G. Van der Merwe (eds.), *Reflecting on mission in the African context*, pp. 1-10, Pro Christo Publications: Bloemfontein

Langmead, R. 2002. Ecomissiology. In *Missiology: An International Review: Vol XXX No. 4* October 2002. (pp 508). Adelaide: Australian Theological Forum.

Leedy, P.D. 1993. *Practical Research: Planning and Design*. New York: Macmillan.

Loader, J. A. 1991. Life, Wonder and Responsibility: Some Thoughts on Ecology and Christian Mission. *Missionalia* 19:44-56.

Lord, A. 2012. *Network Church: A Pentecostal Ecclesiology Shaped by Mission*. Koninklijke Brill NV: Leiden.

- Lubunga, W. 2014. Redeeming the priestly role of theology for the Land of Africa. *Old Testament Essays*, 27(1), 302-319. Available at [http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S1010-99192014000100017&lng=en&tlng=en](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1010-99192014000100017&lng=en&tlng=en). Accessed on 02<sup>nd</sup> December 2014.
- Mashau, T.D. and Greenway, R.S. 2007. *An eye that sees: Vision for Urban Missions*. Thitshi Publishing: Potchefstroom
- McFague, S. 1987 *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age*. London: SCM.
- Melodi ya Tshwane Uniting Reformed Church. 2014. *CYM / MYT Church*. 2014. Available at <http://www.mytchurch.com/ministries/cym/>. Accessed on 07<sup>th</sup> August 2014 [Online].
- Miles, M., & Huberman, A. 1994. *Qualitative data analysis*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Moltmann, J. 2010. *Sun of Righteousness, Arise! God's future for humanity and the earth*, SCM Press: London.
- Myers, K.A. 1989. *All God's Children and Blue Shoes: Christian and Popular Culture*. Crossway.
- Nel, M. 2009. Inviting and initiating youth into a life of discipleship. *Verbum et Ecclesia* 30(2), 2009: Art. #344, 11 pages. DOI: 10.4102/ve.v30i2.344.
- Nel, M. 2001. *The inclusive congregational approach to Youth Ministry*. Zondervan, Grand Rapids.
- Newbigin, L. 1963. *The Relevance of Trinitarian Doctrine for Today's Mission*. CWWE Study Pamphlet 2. Edinburgh House: London.
- Newbigin, L. 1989. *The Gospel in Pluralist Society*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Patton, M.Q. 2001. *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (3rd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Pilot, D.F. and Hungler, B.P. 1999. *Nursing research. Principles and Methods*. (6th ed). Philadelphia: Lippincott.

Piper, J. 2000. *Let the Nations Be Glad! The Supremacy of God in Missions*. 3rd Ed. Baker Publishing Group: Grand Rapids. Michigan. Available at <http://www.wtsbooks.com/let-the-nations-be-glad-john-piper-9780801036415>. Accessed on 02<sup>nd</sup> May 2014.

Pope, K. *Fellowship in the Gospel: A Study of the Greek Word Koinonia*. *Biblical Insights* 4.7 (July 2004): 4-5. Ancient Road Publications: Amarillo, TX.

Punch, K. 2005. *Introduction to Social Research*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE.

Richardson, L. 1998. *Writing: A method of inquiry*. In N. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (pp. 354-371). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Rogers, J. 1973. *Ecological Theology: The Search for an Appropriate Theological Model*. Reprinted from *Septuagesimo Anno: Theologische Opstellen Aangebsden Aan Prof. Dr. G. C. Berkower*. The Netherlands: J.H. Kok.

Rommen, E. and Corwin, G. 1996. *Missiology and the Social Sciences: Contribution, Cautions and Conclusions*. California: William Carey Library.

Saayman, W 1998. Missiology in the theological faculty: A view from South Africa. *Mission Studies* 15 (1), 29.

Saayman, W 2000. Missionary by its very nature....: A time to take stock. *Missionalia* 28 (1), 4-22.

Saayman, W 2009. Missionary ecclesiology: A perspective from history. *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 35 (2), 287-300.

Saayman, W. 2010. Missionary or missional? A study in terminology. *Missionalia* 38(1) April 2010: 5-16.

Saayman, W. 2010. The beautiful birdsong of Tshwane: preliminary reflections on the beginnings of the Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa (URCSA) congregation Melodi ya Tshwane, *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, vol. XXXVI, no. 2, pp. 135-145

Sagoff, M. 1988. *The Economy of the Earth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sakupapa, T.C. 2012. Spirit and Ecology in the Context of African Theology. [Online] *Scriptura* 111 (2012:3), pp. 422-430 Available at <http://scriptura.journals.ac.za/Sakupapa>. Accessed on 01<sup>st</sup> December 2014.

- Seaman, C. 1987. *Research Methods, Principles Practice and Theory for Nursing*. California: Apple and Lange Publishing.
- Sindima, H. 1990. Community of Life: Ecological Theology in African Perspective in Charles Birch, William Earkin, and Jay B. McDaniel (eds.), *Liberating Life: Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1990).
- Sittler, J. 2000. Evocations of grace: the writings of Joseph Sittler on ecology, theology, and ethics, eds. Steven Bouma-Prediger and Peter Bakken. Grand rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans.
- South African Council of Churches, 2009. *Climate Change – A Challenge to the Churches in South Africa*: SUN Media, Stellenbosch.
- South African Faith Communities' Environment Institute. 2014 *Annual Report*. Available at <http://safcei.org/>. Accessed on 14 April 2015
- Statistics SA. 2014. *National and Provincial Labour Markets: Youth*. Available at <http://beta2.statssa.gov.za/publications/P02114.2/P02114.22014.pdf>. Accessed on 28 August 2014.
- Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. 2003. *Foundations of mixed method research: Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches in the Social and Behavioural Sciences*. California: Sage Publications.
- Tippett, A. 1987. *Introduction to Missiology*. William Carey: Pasadena, CA.
- Tutu, D.M. 1990. Afterword: A Christian vision of the future of South Africa in Prozesky, M (eds), *Christianity amidst apartheid*, 233 – 241. New York: St Martins' Press.
- Tutu, D.M. 2004. *God has a dream. A vision of hope for our time*. London: Random House.
- United Nations Environment Programme-Chapter 4. 2015. Available at <http://www.unep.or.jp/ietc/publications/techpublications/techpub-11/4-2.asp>. Accessed on 26 May 2015.
- United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda 21 (Chapter 25). 1992. Available at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/Agenda21.pdf>. Accessed on 21 May 2015.
- Van Gelder, C. and Zscheile, D.J. 2011. *The missional church in perspective: Mapping trends and shaping the conversation*, Kindle edn. Baker Academic Grand Rapids.

Van Gelder, C. 1999. *Confident Witness – Changing World: Rediscovering the Gospel in North America*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Van Meter, L. 2009. *Living in the Delight of Creation: Youth Ministry and Practices in Ecological Theology*. *Journal of Youth and Theology* (2009) vol. 8 no. 2 pp55-66.

Van Meter, L. 2013. *Created in Delight. Youth, Church and the Mending of the World*. Oregon: WIPF & Stock.

Van Rheezen, G. 1996. *Missions: Biblical Foundations and Contemporary Strategies*. Zondervan Publishing House: Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Vicedom, G. F. 1965. *The Mission of God*, Gilbert A. Thiele, and Denis Hilgendorf, Trans, St Louis MO: Concordia.

Volf, M. 1998. *After our likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids.

White, L. 1967. The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis. *Science* 35:3767 (March 10, 1967).

Wink, W. 1993. *Ecobible: The Bible and Ecojustice*. *Theology Today* 49:465-477.

World Council of Churches. 2013. *Resource Book, World Council of Churches 10th Assembly Busan*. Geneva: WCC Publications.

World Alliance of Reformed Churches. 2004. The Accra Confession – Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth, 24<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), Accra, Ghana, October 2004. Available at <http://www.WARC.Org> Accessed on 18 March 2015.

World Council of Churches. 2013. *A New WCC Affirmation on Mission and Evangelism*. Available at [http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/20699/Mission\\_statement.pdf](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/20699/Mission_statement.pdf). Accessed on 27th May 2015.

Wright, C.J.H. 2006. *The mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's grand narrative*, Inter-Varsity, Nottingham.

Wright, C.J.H. 2010. *The Mission of God's people: A Biblical theology of mission*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids.

# Appendices



# Appendix A: Ethical Clearance Certificate

# Appendix B: Questionnaire

# Appendix C: Approval Letter – MYT Church Council

# Appendix D: Informed Consent Form