

HEALING MEMORIES: A Practical Theological Study of Victims of Violence with Special Reference to the Lutheran Churches in the Mberengwa District in Zimbabwe.

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Dedication:

This study is dedicated to the Central Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church,
Mberengwa District, Zimbabwe.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to unveil what the Lutheran Church has done and could do to heal the wounded society of Mberengwa during the political violence of 2000-2009. The researcher interviewed six (6) selected informants who were all members of the Lutheran church. They shared their political violence experiences.

The methods used to collect data were the questionnaire and unstructured interviews. The study began with the general introduction, followed by various themes as indicated by various literatures on healing of memories, Pastoral Care and Counseling and the church's mandate in crisis situations. After the data analysis the findings confirmed that the church failed the community during its time of need.

The study recommended that the church should come-up with a pastoral care model to the wounded community of Mberengwa. This model encompasses the Healing of memories and reconciliation as its basis.

Key-words:

Church: in this study the church is the combination of church organizations that represent different churches in Zimbabwe. To be more specific those who came together and came-up with the Zimbabwe We Want document as a blue print for the National Vision.

Mutual Community: is a group of people living together and have a lot in common, such as culture, traditions, joys and sorrows.

Peacemaker: in this context peace-maker means a mediator, a person who creates a conducive environment for the parties to settle their differences.

Reconciliation: means restoration of relationship and forgiveness. Reconciliation can be described as the process of healing wounds, hurt, pains and settling differences.

Wounds: according to this study, wounds are scars and trauma that were inflicted during Gukurahundi atrocities and political elections related violence. Both left wounds and caused untold pain.

Pain: any situation that robbed people's joy and caused sorrows and tears.

Hurt: An occurrence that caused bitterness and sadness.

Healing of memories: is a grassroots care and counselling movement among people in which the calling up of suppressed and hurtful memories is used in order to deal with them.

Gukurahundi: this was a war which aimed to achieve a one party state. The war was exclusively an arm of the Shona soldiers trained by North Korea for special combat duties. The attack targeting those who supported PF ZAPU and ZIPRA forces who were resultantly labelled as bandits/dissidents.

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Abbreviations/Acronyms

AU- African Union

AFP- Agence FrancePresse

CA-Christian Alliances

CCJP-Catholic Commission for Justice for Peace

CCSDC-Compendium Civil Society Dossier to Cabinet

CCS-Church and Civil Society

CIO- Central Intelligence Organisation

EFZ- Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe

Fr.-father

GDP- Gross Domestic Product

GPA- Global Political Agreement

MDC-T-Movement for Democratic ChangeTvangirai

NANGO-National Association of Non-Governmental Organisation

NIV- New International Version

ONRHI-Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration

RGM- Robert Gabriel Mugabe

SADC-Southern Africa Development Committee

TRC- Truth and Reconciliation Commission

TZWW- The Zimbabwe We Want

UN- United Nations

UNICEF- United Nations International Children Educational Fund

USAID- United States Agency for International Development

ZANU PF-Zimbabwe African Nationalist Union Patriotic Front

PF ZAPU- Patriotic Front Zimbabwe African People's Union

IRB- Institutional Review Board

ZCBC- Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference

ZCC- Zimbabwe Council of Churches

ZNPC-Zimbabwe National Pastors Conference

ZUM- Zimbabwe Unity Movement

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1.0 CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the greatest challenges of today's church in general and theological praxis in particular is how to be relevant and authentic in a society characterised by conflict, corruption, selfishness, fear, despair and political polarisation. In such situations, as in post-war Zimbabwe, people tend to question the power of God and the relevance of the church. In Zimbabwe, Africa and the world at large, the Church, as part of its mandate is there to formulate a theological practical model that deals with issues of political violence. This theological intervention of the Church has to address issues of painful memories and communal life that continues to be negatively affected by political violence. "The fact that a large segment of the population is involved either as victims, perpetrators, or as survivors and bystanders makes it imperative for the Church to deal with political violence as a theological issue".¹ The Church has a duty to come up with an effective practical theology model in times of crisis. This was the challenge faced by the Lutheran Church when it came to dealing with the politically wounded community of Mberengwa. Together with the Church, community leadership also shares this responsibility.

1.2. AREA OF RESEARCH

Although most communities in Zimbabwe were affected by post war violence, the study is limited to the Mberengwa community because of its peculiar needs. The presupposition is that it is a Lutheran church's strong-hold. If the Church fails to address challenges and unify residents of Mberengwa, it stands to lose its credibility. Coincidentally, the researcher was born and bred in this community. She is therefore familiar with its challenges as well as its culture, community systems, values and norms. The researcher is also a pastor in the Lutheran Church.

This chapter will discuss the research problem focusing on the political unrest and its implications regarding the seriousness of broken relationships within the Zimbabwean society including the Mberengwa community. The writer will go on to discuss relationship between theory and praxis based on the five principles of Christian healing, namely; healing of memories, reconciliation, transformation, empowerment and peace. Lastly, the research

¹Jimmy G. Dube, A socio-Political Agenda, for the Twenty-First Century, Empowering the Included, The Edwin Mellen Press, Lewiston. 2006, p.111

methodology will be outlined in terms of research structure and execution in compliance with research requirements.

1.3. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

1.3.1. WOUNDS DUE TO POLITICAL UNREST AND THE RESULTANT DISHARMONY

This study is premised on the socio-political and religious context of the post- independence Zimbabwean crisis. In Zimbabwe, political unrest especially at election times has resulted in painful wounds, hurt and animosity amongst people.¹ Divisions date back to the colonial era where names given to the provinces by colonialists damaged relationships among the Zimbabwean people. For example, such names as Matabeleland province were given as way of trying to group people along tribal lines. Originally the area was called *Isizwesika Mthwakazi* and this extended beyond the boundaries of the province now called Matabeleland. Act of political violence were influenced by these colonial divisions.

Zimbabweans have suffered traumatic experiences that emanated from various socio-economic challenges and political violence. The writer of this study is a Zimbabwean citizen and has first-hand experience of atrocities that took place , in the early 1980s where people of Matabeleland and part of Midlands provinces are traumatised by ethnic cleansing activities known as *gukurahundi*.² These atrocities left deep wounds and severe pain among the people.³

Gukurahundi atrocities violated human rights in various ways including imposition of curfews resulting in restricted movement, lack of access to sources of food and essential services like medical care. There were mass murders and burials in shallow graves, mass beatings, rape, unlawful tortures, injury, destruction and deprivation of property, abductions. Some people who were abducted have never been seen or accounted for to date.⁴

Other brutalities included dragging people from behind a car, chopping off people's heads and burying victims alive. This took place in full view of family members and friends. At times these people were forced to sing or applaud the actions of the Korean trained soldiers that were hired to kill all those whom Robert Mugabe thought would upset his reign. About 20 000

²Gukurahundi refers to rains usual that come in September they clean all the chaffs from previous harvest before the onset of the new in preparations for good rains for farming. The term refers to wiping off all people Mugabe thought will disturb his ruling in Zimbabwe especially the Matabeleland and part of Midlands's people.

³Dube, Op. Cit. p.96

⁴ Zimbabwe Human rights Association. Choosing the Path to peace and Development: Coming to terms with the Violations of the 1982-1987 Conflict in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces, Harare. Zimbabwe: Harare, 1999. P.1

Zimbabweans were killed. However nothing has been done to heal the wounds and the hurt caused by the Gukurahundi.⁵

In addition to the Gukurahundi, there were several other notable epochs of violence in the political history of Zimbabwe such as Operation Murambatsvina, Chimurenga 3, Farm invasions (or land repossession), National Youth Service and the post-election violence of 2008 popularly known as Gukurahundi part 2. These episodes inflicted internal traumatic wounds in individuals and groups of people. There are some social wounds that call for reconciliation at tribal, regional and intra-political party level. There are economic wounds as well.⁶

The above contexts have caused painful wounds that cannot heal on their own. A further challenge is that the mention of elections makes the survivors of these atrocities relive their traumatic experiences since; unfortunately, it is almost automatic in Zimbabwe that elections are synonymous with pre and post-election violence. This caused disharmony and animosity between the Shona and the Ndebele at a political level, the formation of regionally based political parties, unequal development between Mashonaland and the rest of the country, people going to the diaspora thereby destroying families, loss of employment, devaluation of the Zimbabwean dollar and the development of a culture of fear.

Whenever elections are held, violence erupts as a result of people being forced to vote for particular political parties. Consequences of violence were that Zimbabwe became “a nation bankrupted by mismanagement, corruption and violence”.⁷

Political violence would not stop and the government came up with a project called Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration (ONHRI) which aimed at addressing all issues pertaining to political violence in Zimbabwe. The ONHRI failed because it was not mandate to address the problem of wounded memories. Its role was “to oversee the healing process and to promote dialogue among parties, and to diffuse tension and threats that may lead to incidents of violence through engaging all parties”.⁸ Instead, “it affirms that its role is only

⁵ Dube, Op.Cit p.96

⁶ <http://www.solidaritypeacetrust.org/reports/>

⁷ Martin Meredith Mugabe; Power and Plunder in Zimbabwe, Oxford. Public Affairs, 2002, p.104

⁸ Church and Civil Society forum; working together for Sustainable Peace, Proposal document to commission of Healing process 2014.21

limited to advisory as opposed to an implementation role alluded to in its earlier concept paper. This shows confusion in determining the mandate of the ONHRI from the onset”.⁹

1.3.2 RESULTANT DISHAMONY

The Gukurahundi atrocities of the 1980s and the general election violence of 2002 and 2005 all inflicted untold damage on people’s lives. These remained as festering wounds among most Zimbabweans: and yet again violence resurfaced in the 2008 general elections. “Violence, aimed at opposition members, civil society actors and the population in general continued to escalate. Diplomatic sources told Agence France Presse (AFP) that Mugabe's so-called war veterans and other loyal supporters of his ruling ZANU-PF party had been on the march, targeting certain opposition areas with intimidation, beatings and killing.”¹⁰“The question is; when all this was happening, where was the Church”?

In 2002 as a reaction to the political violence in Zimbabwe, about 1000 clergy from different denominations in the country came together and formed a network called the Zimbabwe National Pastors’ Conference (ZNPC). “It was formed for the purpose of providing a common platform for men and women called to pastoral ministry...so that they could engage in more effective and relevant pastoral ministry in light of the national crisis and, in particular the organised violence that was affecting individuals, families and communities”.¹¹The Christian Alliance (CA) was also formed after the ZNPC. Its main goal was to answer questions which were asked by people in the diaspora in relation to reports they heard from the media about the rampant human rights abuses that were going on in the country”.¹² And the question asked was “What is the church in Zimbabwe doing about all this”?¹³

The intensification of violence in Zimbabwe led to the formation of several other church organisations with the aim of addressing the country’s crisis. “Zimbabweans had lived in fear. First and foremost they were in fear of their own government and secondly fear of each other thereby increasing the degree of polarisation.”¹⁴ In response to the situation in Zimbabwe, the church organisations such as the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ) and Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC), “produced a National Vision document as a result of consultations taking place

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Zimbabwe council of Churches Pastoral Letter 2008

¹¹ David Kaulemu, Political Participation in Zimbabwe; Regional Co-ordinator for Eastern and Southern Africa AFCAS, the African forum for Catholic Social Teaching; Pacprint, Harare, 2010, p.108

¹² Ibid

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴David Kaulemd, Op. Cit.p.110)

throughout the country”.¹⁵ The document was published in 2006 and was titled, “The Zimbabwe We Want.” In this document these church organisations strongly condemned violence. The document was aimed at bringing “an end to the daily suffering and pain of our people. The Church has come together to speak with one voice, one faith, one hope and one vision in order to bring about the Zimbabwe we want”.¹⁶ There was an assumption that the crisis that the “country was facing particularly conflict and polarisation was caused by a lack of a shared national vision”.¹⁷

Furthermore, in 2004 the government declared “the clean-up operations which were ill-conceived by the government and targeted the poor with forced evictions and the destruction of property”.¹⁸

1.4 CHRISTIANISING REPRESSION

The positive visions of various church organisations and leaders above were compromised by the “involvement of the government whose leader President Robert Mugabe was invited to be the keynote speaker at the official launch of the programme. The original draft document was critical of ZANU (PF) in the areas of Constitution-making, violence, and Gukurahundi’s unresolved conflict...”¹⁹ However, the critical sections were altered to reflect ZANU (PF)’s thinking, making the launched document weaker and compromised. The alterations left many people wondering. The objectives of the document were fundamentally compromised questioning the Church’s commitment to solving the Zimbabwe crisis. The body of the church began to be disbanded before the final document was completed.²⁰ Again, other church organizations such as ZNPC and CA’s activities were halted. One reason for this was that “not all pastors shared the prophetic approach, Bishop Norbert Kunonga, was an example. He was later ex-communicated from the Anglican Communion in May 2008”.²¹ Another Church leader Rev Obadiah Musindo was a prominent supporter of the status quo and Bishop Manhanga who coordinated the production of the National Vision and was the president of the EFZ was later appointed by President R G Mugabe to head the Land Commission programme. All these events weakened the vision that had been envisaged for

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ The Zimbabwe We Want; Towards a National Vision for Zimbabwe by Churches in Zimbabwe, Benaby Printing and Publishing (Pvt) Ltd. 15 September 2006.p. 6

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ David Kaulemu, Op. Cit.p.107

¹⁹ Ibid, p.110

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Churches in Manicaland, The Truth Will Make You Free; A Compendium of Christian Social Teaching, September 2006.p. 7

the Zimbabweans. This Christianisation of repression resulted in some church leaders and members being involved in serious political partisanship acts. Christians were dominated by politicians, in such a way that the youths who were used to traumatise communities were the very people who had been known to sing praise and worship hymns in churches. The confusion that prevailed was evident of the Christianisation of repression by politicians.

1.5 A THEOLOGICAL CONCEPT OF THE CHURCH

From a pastoral perspective, the Church is expected to be the mother and model when it comes to “protecting the interests of the poor and the marginalised”.²² The question is why did it abandon its all efforts and decide to be quiet when its people or members were crying: out for help? Why in the first place did the Church allow the national vision to be highjacked by the government to duct its one party state agenda? Why did the church just give-up and abandon everything? All these questions will be discussed in Chapter Four and Five.

When humanity stands at the threshold of self-destruction, “Christians throughout the world must stand together and do what they can to prevent the human race from this horror. Sometimes the church fails to work for peace because of problems in its own house”.²³ Bonhoeffer challenges the Church if it has truly received its mandate from God, to proclaim peace and reconciliation in the most concrete forms possible, acting from its deepest insight into the matter and unequivocally issue a call to obedience. Bonhoeffer encouraged decisiveness regarding the Church’s reaction to ethical problems. “The Church cannot exist in an ivory tower but must stand with both feet on the ground”.²⁴ The Church has to stand its ground in defending people in the midst of human torture and killing. Further to, Bonhoeffer raises an imperative issue saying, the Church must exist in the words of John “in the world”, though it does not draw its existence “from the world”. It must live between the poles of being in the world and “not in this world”.²⁵ For it to live in this world always means with responsibility for this world rather than in a state of inner absence. It must confront the conflict of this world and speak the language of this world, but must also be mindful of the fact that its roots and the guarantee of its existence is not “of this world”.²⁶

²²Ibid.

²³M Frederic J Gaiser, Word and World; theology for Christian Ministry: Africa, Spring 2001, Volume xxi ,p. 279)

²⁴Dietrich Bonhoeffer, An introduction to his thought. Sabine Dramm, Hendrickson; 2007, p. 151

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ Ibid

1.6. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The broader research problem will focus on how the church in Zimbabwe as a care-giver and reconciler can fully participate in healing the wounds and pain being experienced by the community

The church's mandate in Zimbabwe is questionable. Whenever politicians in the political world abuse their mandate, the Church remains silent. In 2002, the then Government of ZANU-PF took people's property in the name of land reform but the church said nothing. Again in 2008, the ZANU - PF party in fear of losing elections to MDC ordered the military, war-veterans and militia to torture people who were not in support of ZANU PF. During that time many people were killed, and others were left crippled. Women and girls were raped. The Church however, through people like Pius Ncube, Bishop Manhanga, ZCC, CCJP and ZCBC raised their concerns but failed to impact the violence that was widespread.²⁷

To make matters worse, most of those who were abused were Christians. The Church should be God's dwelling place in the world and it is supposed to identify with the marginalised and the poor.²⁸ Though in Zimbabwe there were some church organisations such as the ZCC, EFZ and ZCBC, these organisations seemed to be divided along political party lines. As a result they did not speak with one voice. The different church voices were in some cases in disagreement thereby confusing society as to which voice authentically spoke on behalf of God. To date most people are waiting for a time when the Church will be relevant to the socio-economic and political situation in Zimbabwe.

1.7. KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The major research question of this study is: In the context of a community wounded by political violence, can the church find space in the midst of political confrontation, not as a partisan player but rather as a peacemaker and reconciler for the healing of memories? The question is specifically at the Mberengwa community which is one of the epi-centres of traumatic political violence resulting in socio-economic and personal wounds dating back to 1982.

In addition to the above key research question, the following sub-questions are also critical in this research;

²⁷ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *An introduction to his thought*, Hendrickson Publisher, Massachusetts; 2007, p. 149

²⁸ Frederic J Gaiser, *Word and World; theology for Christian Ministry: Volume xxi*, Africa, Spring; 2001, p.279

²⁸ Ibid

What is the Church in Zimbabwe doing in light of continuing political violence and polarisation with special focus on the Mberengwa community?

What is the pastoral role of Christianity in the light of human experiences of pain, hurt and suffering?

1.8. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The Independent Catholic newsletter argues that “Zimbabwe is quietly bleeding to death while politicians debate and deliberate. Zimbabweans continue to experience intimidation and violence following previous elections”.²⁹ Therefore, this study intends to develop theories of healing memories, wounds and pain of the people of Mberengwa and hopefully restore their confidence as a mutual community. Again the study seeks to determine if the church is fully and genuinely committed to stopping political violence in Zimbabwe. A potential pastoral care model will be developed in a preliminary manner.

To answer the research question, the following objectives are highlighted:

1. To summarise as completely as possible, the nature and known extent of hurt of wounded people in the Mberengwa community.
2. To relate the real life encounters of people and church leadership regarding this violent context.
3. To explore what the church in Zimbabwe has done in the past and is doing at present regarding political violence and polarization of people in general and particularly within the Mberengwa community.
4. To develop a contextual pastoral care model for healing memories which can be implemented to deal with the wounds and empower the victims of political violence.

1.9. PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

Practical theology means the Church should attempt to communicate with both the faithful within the church and the wider community outside it. Practical theology also involves reflection on the Church’s ministry in the world within this larger framework.³⁰ If the church

²⁹Independent Catholic News 2009.

³⁰Don Browning, *Practical Theology and Political Theology*; G, DON. “Methods and Foundations for Pastoral Studies in the University.” *Pastoral Studies in the University Setting: Perspectives, Methods, and Praxis*. Ed. Visscher, A. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1990.

takes the work of practical theology upon itself, it would take on public concerns like the plight of the Mberengwa community.

This study aims to call to attention the problem hindering life in its fullness (John 10:10) for humanity. The purpose is to awaken the pastoral role of the church in response to the problems being faced by humanity. Although the study may raise some theological weaknesses of the Church, it would not do so for purely negative criticism, but to construct a practical theological approach that could assist the church to be relevant to its work and purpose in society. The Church “should take-up the premise of wide social relevance”³¹ by applying practical theology as “a critical theory of religiously influenced praxis in society”.³² If practical theology is really undertaken by the Church as its core mandate according to the word of God, the Church would strongly condemn such violence as that which traumatised Zimbabweans especially in the Mberengwa communal area since 1982.

Wolfarardt contextualised the church’s approach to community problems when defining practical theology as “a critical and constructive reflection within a living community about human experience and interaction, involving a correlation of the Christian story and other perspectives, leading to an interpretation of meaning and value, and resulting in everyday guidelines and skills for the formation of persons and communities”.³³ The definition is inclusive as practical theology should address community problems without fear. The definition could be articulated as a vision of ecclesial mission pastoral practice which is both consciously and practically in touch with and relevant to the political, economic and social crises of our context, while creatively attempting to respond to this context from a theological and ethical centre.³⁴

1.9.1 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEORY AND PRAXIS

These two poles, theory and praxis complement each other and one cannot contradict the other. “Mediation between theory and praxis is to be achieved by the ideal pastor whose ‘pastoral wisdom’ is rooted not only in theoretical acknowledgement but also in practical experience”.³⁵ The care that the Church gives to the suffering community is part of theory interacting with actions as praxis. Bastian argues that, “theory and praxis, plus a scientific

³¹M Frederic J Gaiser, Op. Cit.p.279

³² Ibid

³³Prof. J.A Wolfarardt Department of Practical Theology; Practical Theology, Only study guide for PTA200-W, University of South Africa, Pretoria. 1992, p.23

³⁴ ibid

³⁵ Ibid.

account of their interrelationship, be the chief motif and basis for further theories in practical theology”.³⁶

Practical theology is considered as a true science subject because it has its own goal in the field of research, methodology and terminology, and is taught at Universities.³⁷ Because of this it can be valued for community purposes. In view of the two poles the “vital resource of practical theology is the empirical dimension or praxis of the life of the church”.³⁸ Practical theology thus supplies a critical vantage point for church practice. Therefore “praxis shows how it is a touchstone of theory”.³⁹ That means that praxis is the result of theory or theory and praxis rely on each other, supplementing each other by way of principle or by way of experience.⁴⁰

There are specific issues that can be studied in the light of praxis such as “questions about informal societies, pastoral care in communities and prisons and individual pastoral care”.⁴¹ Browning argues that, “practical theology must be more than methodological. It must do theology and it should do it in such a way as to illuminate Christian practice in relation to life’s concrete problems and issues”.⁴² It means that practical theology should play a leading role for the church praxis as an independent entity when it comes to addressing challenges in the community especially of political violence, corruption, poor service delivery, and poor management of resources.

Again practical theology should be hermeneutical in the more ethical or moral sense “of understanding and self-interpretation toward the goal of orienting individuals and communities toward action. To be practical it must describe and interpret both contemporary situations and classic Christian resources”⁴³.

1.9.2. CORRELATION

Stone points out that, “To correlate then is simply to bring two discrete entities together into mutual relation with each other”.⁴⁴ He further argues that, “yet the term correlation remains a

³⁶A.G. Van Wyk, From “Applied Theology” To “Practical Theology” In Andrews University Seminary Studies, spring 1995, p.85).

³⁷ Rev JJ Gerber Op. Cit.p. 21

³⁸ Ibid, p.22

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴¹ Ibid

⁴² Don Browning, Op.Cit. p.15

⁴³ Ibid

⁴⁴ Howard W. Stone, Theological Context of Pastoral Caregiving: Word in Deed (New York / London:

handy label for a complex process of comparison and contested that takes place in all theological reflection”.⁴⁵

To achieve the task before them, practical theologians should use the revised correctional method. This variation of methods would guide “the interdisciplinary commitments of the pastoral care and pastoral psychology movements, the pastoral counselling movement and the hospital chaplaincy movement”.⁴⁶ Therefore some of the contemporary pastoral ministries mentioned above are praxis of the Christian action and cultural praxis in contemporary situations.

Correlation affirms theory and praxis in practical theology and is another related understanding of practical theology. Therefore, correlation is to bring two discrete entities into mutual relation with each other. Correlating theology of ministry involves allowing the insights of theological thoughts to impinge upon, interact with, and influence the actual day-to-day tasks of ministry and vice versa.⁴⁷

Besides this, “both the care exercised by the church, and the care of the society at large need to be guided by a critical theory of human fulfilment”.⁴⁸ A theological ethic stated in terms of a theory of character and virtue is “fundamental for the care ministry of the church in its own pastoral care, in its pastoral counselling, in its pastoral psychotherapy and in its wider effort to influence the care patterns of society as a whole”.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, the church in its good ministry lacks sufficient complex theory to do both good description of contemporary moral praxis and good critical work about the goals or direction toward which we should move.⁵⁰

By applying practical theology as a theory, the Church will be able to concern itself with the whole life of its members. This type of a church will be more relevant to the Zimbabwean situation. These theories and actual practice guide people’s goals. To challenge the church in Zimbabwe, practical theologians have to come up with a truly relevant theology of praxis, one that stays close to the concrete context. This shows how practical theology can be a “profound challenge”.⁵¹

The Haworth Pastoral Press, 1996) 64. Stone wrote his book from Theological Context of Pastoral Caregiving: Word in Deed with a purpose of correlation of pastoral care and theology—the meeting of the two. Cf. Stone 1996 xi.

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ Browning, Op.Cit.p.15

⁴⁷ Stone H, Op. Cit. p.64

⁴⁸ Browning, Op. Cit. , p. 19

⁴⁹ Ibid, p.20

⁵⁰ Ibid

⁵¹ Ibid

Paul Ballard says, practical theology like theology itself therefore, is not simply the handmaid of the church. It is also part of that theological critique that is constantly addressing questions of truth and meaning as well as those of appropriateness and validity challenging the church to become alive creatively in the actual world.⁵² Practical theology is a correlation approach that involves other practical disciplines. These are psychology, social sciences and social work and therefore it cannot avoid working in the public domain. If we look at Jesus, he became a religious misfit, caught in the middle of a multi-sided religious and political struggle. Jesus' era is characterised by imposition of unjust laws, the exclusion of outcasts, and outbursts of physical violence. Against all odds Jesus showed unwavering commitment to his mission. Similarly, despite all threats to it, the church should do what it was called for in the world.⁵³

Practical theology has to address real-life experiences of the community. Browning rightly says, "For a practical theology to be genuinely practical, it must have some description of the present situation, some critical theory about the ideal situation, and some understanding of the processes, spiritual forces, and technologies required to get from where we are to the future ideal, no matter how fragmentarily and incompletely that ideal can be realised"⁵⁴. This concept about practical theology by Browning could apply to the Zimbabwean situation where the church has been caught in between being voiceless about its own people and speaking out only when told to do so.

The difference between practical theology and theology of praxis is that, practical theology emanates from the community's experiences, whereas, theology of praxis develops from the need to address problems that are faced by the community. To achieve this the church has tools such as the gospel that transforms people's situations and heals their wounds. Practical theology needs to analyse the context of the problem, respond to the situation and heal the wounds. The healing process begins "with ancient hurts and enhances the relationship among people".⁵⁵

Practical theology should help the church respond effectively to society's challenges. In particular, practical theology is expected to help the Church use the scientific potential of this era to place the actions of the church on a level at which the greatness and relevance of the

⁵² Ibid,11

⁵³ Prof. J.A. wolfarardt, Op. Cit. p.34

⁵⁴ Browning, Op. Cit. p. 20

⁵⁵ Churches in Manicaland, Op. Cit. p. 157

gospel will be able to stand the test of time.⁵⁶ The practical theology approach opens new avenues for the church in dealing with the present situation in a scientifically acceptable manner“.⁵⁷It means that a practical theology approach helps the church of today to be relevant to the community and society like the Mberengwa community. In this area, people are bleeding internally due to unhealed wounds of election violence and massacres of friends and relatives.

1.10. HEALING MEMORIES, RECONCILIATION, TRANSFORMATION EMPOWERMENT AND PEACE AS THEORIES FOR CHRISTIAN HEALING

The study bases its recommendations on the principles of healing memories, reconciliation, empowerment, transformation and peace-making. The researcher uses these principles as indicators and hopefully solutions to the problem of political violence. The conceptualisation of these principles is seen as a major component in the healing of memories.

1.10.1. HEALING OF MEMORIES

Healing of memories is a complex process that includes the ventilation of great pain and the potential resolution of negative memories and trauma which individuals and communities may have experienced during long periods of violence and wars. Emmanuel argued that, “As human persons, we find ourselves broken and bruised in many ways. From time to time, we find ourselves in need of physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual restoration. Healing presupposes that we have lost something we once enjoyed and that it is possible to regain what we have lost”.⁵⁸ Thus, in this study, the healing process attempts to create space for the wounded to tell their stories and be listened to. The study also concerns itself with pastoral and community care and church leadership in trying to attend to the severe trauma of individual members of the victimized community. The healing process will focus on the Mberengwa community which is a mixture of different ethnic groups. In some instances, the victims and perpetrators lived next door to each other. Hopefully, both victims and perpetrators will be able to take part in the healing of past and present wounds if invited to do so. The healing of memories is linked to the whole process of reconciliation, transformation, empowerment and peace-making.

⁵⁶Rev J.J. Gerber, Op. Cit. p.40.

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ Immanuel Y Lartey, In Living Color, An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral Care and Counseling. Second Edition, Jessica Kingsley London. 2003, p.62

1.10.2. RECONCILIATION

Reconciliation means restoration of relationships and forgiveness. This is supported by Paul's message to the Corinthians where he points out that, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself. He (God) did not count sins committed by humanity and entrusted the church with the message of reconciliation.⁵⁹ Therefore, the church has to carry out this mandate and apply it to today's societal problems. If "reconciliation and healing is the pillar to sustainable peace for all Zimbabweans",⁶⁰ the process should be genuine and frank in respect of individuals and all groups involved. Reconciliation and healing as the "Pillar to sustainable peace and justice" needs the church's intervention. Reconciliation can only materialise when selfishness and superiority complex have ceased. This implies that the same government who butchered its people in Midlands and Matabeleland in the early 1980s, in 2002, 2005 and 2008 has to evaluate its way of ruling.

Reconciliation needs a clear stance in "such a society where religion may be very important since religion argues for Christ's absolute truth."⁶¹ Reconciliation demands both a material as well as moral and spiritual input by which all these can be dealt with by the church. This reconciliation by the church should be independent of any political influence. The empirical information from this study will address the challenges of the reconciliation approach that can work in the Zimbabwean situation.

1.10.3. TRANSFORMATION AND EMPOWERMENT

Transformation is a marked change that could happen in people's lives. Transformation is a continuous process.

Scriptures speak of transformation as an on-going process of total reorientation of life rejection of that which dehumanizes and desecrates life and adherence to that which affirms the sanctity of life and gifts in everyone and promotes peace and justice in society to create change, the old way of thinking must change first to enable both parties to become partners in solving the complex issues facing the community. In collaborations based on mutual respect, diverse perspectives, and a developing vision, people work toward creative and realistic solutions.⁶²

Transformation as a tool of justification will empower people to denounce dehumanization of people and equip them to fully express their voices against injustice inflicted to them.

⁵⁹ 2 Corinthians 5:19 (NIV)

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ Civil Society Dossier to Cabinet P20.

⁶² Cheryl E Czubaczuba@canr1.cag.uconn.edu

Empowerment “means giving, authority or power or strength and confidence to a person”.⁶³ According to this project there is need to empower people to restore their strength and confidence. For the most part they feel resigned to their fate. Therefore, they need to be empowered to voice their hurt, pain and aspiration.⁶⁴

Again when things go wrong in society, spiritual, political, social and economic power is needed to enable empowerment to become operative and avoid all that leads to social disintegration.⁶⁵ Further, empowerment “is a process that fosters power in people for use in their own lives, their communities and in their society, by acting on issues they define as important”.⁶⁶ This means empowerment enables the community to evaluate its situation and come-up with solutions. The goal is on the connection between individual action and community action, encouraging personal change through training sessions, discussions and supporting community action through participants' efforts to change their communities.

1.10.4. PEACE

Peace refers to the absence of hostility. It refers to an environment that is characterized by healthy interpersonal and institutional relationships, acknowledgement of equality and fairness. Hence “Peace cannot be reduced to the mere absence of conflict: it is the presence of justice, truth and solidarity. The church preaches peace and the world expects active peace from the church as elsewhere”.⁶⁷

Along with all other processes of healing of memories, reconciliation, empowerment and transformation, peace is very important. Positive peace prevails “where peace is filled with positive content such as the restoration of relationships, the creation of social systems that serve the needs of the whole population and constructive resolution of conflict”.⁶⁸ The Mberengwa community needs a positive kind of peace to sustain and serve its people and restore communal relationships that have been broken due to political violence. True peace comes from fellowship with God and with each other, for all are children of one father, God. As mentioned previously, an unconfirmed source thought that about 85% of the Mberengwa

⁶³J. Messenger et la, Op. Cit. p. 33.

⁶⁴*bid*

⁶⁵ Churches in Manicaland, Op. Cit.p.123

⁶⁶Cheryl E Czubaczuba@canrl.cag.uconn.edu. The Truth will make you free: A compendium of Christian Social Teaching, 2006, p.123

⁶⁷Churches in Manicaland, Op. Cit. p.12

⁶⁸Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum Manual. Extracts from University of Cape town, Centre for Conflict Resolution; Cape Town 2002, UN DESA 2001 p. 15

population is Christians. Therefore, the church should not find it too difficult to unite people as they are its members. The Lutheran Church as a peacemaker has a great challenge to work for complete peace in the Mberengwa community.

1.11. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodological aspect of research concerns what may be called the “how” of social science research.⁶⁹ In other words it refers to “how should research be planned, structured, and executed to comply with the social science”.⁷⁰ Therefore, “Methodology can be explained as the logic of the application of the scientific method of the investigations of phenomena”.⁷¹ Yolanda Wadsworth defines social research as a way of “collecting information and things systematically”.⁷² Giving guidance on research methodology Yolanda says, “Research is a process that begins with having reasons to ask questions, then setting about getting answers”.⁷³ That is precisely what led the writer of this study to research on the involvement of the church in Zimbabwe’s political violence. The researcher hopes to come up with answers on why the church decided to take a back seat and be voiceless. Research methodology involves different approaches such as sociological, survey, interview, qualitative and quantitative approaches to mention only a few.

Therefore the study will use qualitative research and semi-structured interviews as techniques of data collection with the objective of designing a pastoral care model with potential to heal memories. In addition the researcher intends to explore church praxis an alternative theological approach to healing memories. The researcher will also examine secondary sources through library research.

1.11.1. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

The study will use the qualitative research methodology. Qualitative research has its roots in social science and is concerned with understanding why people behave as they do: their knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and fears. Qualitative research has a history which is important both to itself and to the extent that it shapes the present”.⁷⁴ In addition, “it has a variety of

⁶⁹Mouton and Marais, Basic Concepts in the methodology of social sciences, Human sciences Research Council, HSRC Publishers Pretoria, 2001. P. 15

⁷⁰ Ibid

⁷¹ Ibid, p.16

⁷²Yoland Wadsworth Do it Yourself Social Research; The bestselling practical guide to doing social research projects, Third edition, Left Coast Press, Walnut Creek 2011, p. 9)

⁷³ Ibid

⁷⁴Carol A.B. Warren and Tracy Xavier Karnerovering Qualitative Methods; Field Research, Interview a, and Analysis, Oxford University Press, Oxford.2010.p.2

purposes that range from the wish to change some aspects of society”⁷⁵ that taken everybody on board to the reality of life. Qualitative research takes into consideration the individual experiences and feelings of research subjects, the how they lived, felt and understood in a certain context. For this reason qualitative researchers

Study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, and interpreting phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the use and collection of a variety of empirical materials such as case studies, personal experience, introspection, life story, interview, observation...that describe...moments and meanings in individuals’ lives. Accordingly qualitative research deploys a wide range of interconnected methods.⁷⁶

Qualitative research also seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspective of the local population it involves. Thus the qualitative research’s aim is not to measure but to understand and scrutinize the experiences of the participants of research. It aims at finding and unveiling the hidden answers to questions which people employ to make sense of their experience. Its departure point is doing research with real people in mind.⁷⁷ As a result, in qualitative research, the research participants become co-researchers. Acknowledging the research participants as co-researchers is important on issues of ethical consideration and informed consent even though in this study the writer will deal with adults and professional people only.

The researcher will use semi-structured interviews and one focus group to obtain data in addressing the research question. The interviews will be taped with the interviewees’ permission. A prospective pastoral care model for dealing with trauma and healing memories will be developed as the final stage of the research project.

1.11.2. PROTECTING INTERVIEWEES

Data will be collected through in-depth interviews. “An interview is a conversation carried out with the definite purpose of obtaining information by means of a spoken word”.⁷⁸ An in-depth interview as a qualitative research technique involves conducting intensive individual

⁷⁵ Ibid

⁷⁶ Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y. S (eds.). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks,CA: Sage, 1994.p.2

⁷⁷Janesick, V.J..The Dance of Qualitative Research Design. Metaphor, Methodology, and Meaning in Denzin, N.K and Lincoln, Y.S. (eds.) 1994.p.210

⁷⁸ Cohen, L. and Manion, L. *A Guide to Teaching Practice* (3rded.). London: Routledge. 1998,p.30

interviews with individuals and small focus groups of respondents to explore their perspective of a particular situation.⁷⁹ Church leadership will be interviewed individually on how they view the political situation of Zimbabwe and its future. The study will seek ordained pastors and ordinary Christians from different churches especially the Lutheran Church to volunteer to participate in the study.

In qualitative research, interviews are often but by no means always, a face to face verbal interchange where the researcher attempts to obtain information or expressions of opinion from a certain person or group of people.⁸⁰ Therefore qualitative interviewing requires the researcher to know and understand the context and origin of the participants. For this reason King and Horrocks argue that, “qualitative research is fundamentally concerned with the particular rather than the general”.⁸¹ In this case the study’s aim is to co-develop a contextual model of care that is specifically concerned with those wounded and in crises of political unrest, particularly the Mberengwa community which was affected by the Gukurahundi massacre, the 2002, 2005 and 2008 political violence epochs. “The fact that humans are the objects of study in the social sciences brings unique ethical problems to the fore that would never be relevant in the pure, clinical laboratory settings of the natural sciences”.⁸²

The researcher is aware that ethical dimensions in research are imperative especially when vital information is shared with respondents who are taken as co-researchers. Issues of confidentiality will be clearly explained to ensure that all participants understand the procedure. Pseudonyms will be used to ensure the anonymity of the participants. The study will respect what the participants suggest about their anonymity. Some people will want to choose their pseudonyms so that when they read the report they will be able to identify themselves.⁸³

1.11.3. PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR THE STUDY

The study will interview church leaders, that is, the clergy and lay-leaders. The researcher will also question and interview a limited number of the Mberebgwa people together with the

⁷⁹ Stephens, D. *Qualitative Research in International Settings: A practical guide*. London and New York: 2009.p.19

⁸⁰ King, N and Horrocks, C. *Interviews in Qualitative Research*. Los Angels: SAGE, 2010,p.12

⁸¹ Ibid,p.27

⁸² Carol A. B. Warren Tracy XaviaKarner Op. Cit. p.62

⁸³ Litosselliti, L. *Using Focus Groups in Research*. London, New York: Continuum.2003.p.52

clergy and lay-leaders in a focus group. The researcher has already established a good relationship with participants once the bishops and pastor are both work colleagues. The two lay-leaders whom the researcher held a meeting with on 31 August at Chegato High School in Mberengwa are teachers. They all agreed to participate in the research programme. They are now waiting for the launch of the programme.

1.11.4. PRELIMINARY COMMUNITY AND PASTORAL CARE MODELS FOR HEALING OF MEMORIES.

Stone defines pastoral care as a community endeavour. Stone notes that western pastoral counsellors are schooled in individual care while Africa advocates community-based pastoral care. Hence community care is the primary level of care. Community care invokes the commitment of believers to one another and is spontaneous. While the interviews of traumatised people will be individual in part, the church will be urged to care for the broader community.

Hodgekinson and Stewart recognised that, while a crisis is a temporary process, trauma is a long term state. A basic framework for the pastoral care model includes four stages.

- The first stage involves the pastoral care-giver establishing interpersonal trust.
- The second stage recognizes that trauma is a common experience among people subjected to exceptional violence. The individual is not alone.
- The memories of victims are carefully listened to.
- The survivor is assisted in coming to terms with his/her traumatic experience.

The researcher will need to be clear on the difference between research interviews and pastoral care initiatives in these situations. The research interviews should try to retain the interview stance and recommend to the participant that more formal pastoral care is available. The pastoral care-giver should also be conscious of the need to refer persons who become too difficult for the care-giver to handle to the psycho-therapist.

1.12. DISSERTATION CHAPTERS

The dissertation will consist of six chapters.

Chapter One: will look at the introduction, the background, context, objectives and research methods which will be used.

Chapter Two: Literature in Zimbabwe concerning the problem of violence and attempts at relief from a secular and theological point of view

This chapter will review and analyse what previous Zimbabwean and other non-Zimbabwean writers have said about Zimbabwe's political situation from the 1980s to 2011. The writer will analyse the circumstances that caused the Mberengwa community to be angry and wounded to date. The author will also review books that attempt to bring relief to wounded communities.

Chapter 3: Literature review concerning healing of memories from a social and Christian point of view

This chapter will review literature on healing of memories including issues of reconciliation, forgiveness, and the mediatory role of pastoral care.

Chapter 4: Empirical research findings and pilot interviews

In this chapter the researcher will draw-up a theoretical framework for the study; the methodology, research findings and pilot interviews. The researcher will provide an explanation of the empirical research method regarding people's understanding of violence and possible ways of healing people in this particular context.

Chapter 5: Analysing and Interpreting empirical research results

In this chapter the writer will analyse the research results, interpret findings and come-up with a possible pastoral care model for healing of memories as a practical theology option.

Chapter 6: Recommendations and Conclusion

This chapter will cover recommendations, conclusion and areas for further research.

2.0. CHAPTER TWO: ZIMBABWEAN LERATURE ON THE PROBLEM OF VIOLENCE AND ATTEMPTS AT RELIEF FROM SECULAR AND THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter disclosed the extent to which the wounds and trauma suffered by the Mberengwa community due to political violence have not yet been addressed. This chapter will focus on Zimbabwean literature on the problem of violence and subsequent attempts at relief from both the secular and theological perspectives.

Surprisingly, not much documentation on the Zimbabwean crisis was done during or after the violence. However, from about 2000 there has been a rapid growth of literature on Zimbabwe's political violence and its effects. Selected sources by different writers will be reviewed and analysed. These will help shed light on what happened on the Zimbabwean political arena between the 1980s and 2011.

The writer will analyse forces that caused the Mberengwa community to be tormented and continue to be wounded to date. Books under review are those which attempt to address issues of violence and wounds suffered by the community. These comprise published and unpublished books, documents and articles including those written by scholars outside Zimbabwe. These will be selected due to their relevance to the study topic. Some of the books may be narratives of actual events in Mberengwa and others suggest solutions to the problem.

The pattern of this study is a theological reflection and this means issues within the theoretical framework of this study will be interpreted theologically. Practical Theology will guide whatever is going to be proposed or recommended, while Pastoral Care in Healing of memories and Reconciliation will be the focus of this research.

2.2 MAJOR CAUSES OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

The government intensified its attacks on the people in the early 1980s, when Robert Mugabe provoked a war against ZAPU (Party dominated by Ndebele and Karanga speaking people. Dube says, "The war was deliberately prepared well in advance to establish his (Mugabe) own political army recruited exclusively from Shona supporters and trained by North Korea for special combat duties".⁸⁴ The operation took the lives of about 20 000 people. It was called the Gukurahundi operation which means cleansing of chaff, thus

⁸⁴Dube, OP. Cit, 2006;97

Gukurahundi was indeed a carefully coordinated campaign against the Ndebele and Karanga population who were perceived to be a threat to the ZANU PF government's goal of creating a one party state. The most insidious plan of the whole effort was to criminalize people for being Ndebele or Karanga. The act apparently overlooked the role played by the targeted tribes during the liberation war that had ushered the country to its independence, the two liberation movements ZANLA dominated mainly by the Shona speaking group and ZIPRA dominated by the Ndebele speaking group. After independence the two armies including the former Rhodesian army were merged into one single army. War erupted between ZANLA and ZIPRA when a small group of ZIPRA deserted the army and waged a guerrilla war against the ZANU PF government. The Zimbabwe government responded by launching an attack on Matabeleland and part of the Midlands Province.⁸⁵ Unfortunately, the attack was more damaging on villagers than the bandits. Dube argues that, no one, not, even the church officially questioned this act of genocide.

Dube observed that, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (MCZ) as a denomination led by Shona people decided to ignore the Gukurahundi tragedy, even though some Methodist members were killed, because they were Ndebele people. He argued that, "Judging from the feeble voices of protest against the genocide, one is left to conclude that the leadership of the Methodist Church in general including many in local levels of the church especially within the Shona ethnic group gave tacit support to the government's ethnic cleansing program".⁸⁶ Gukurahundi- the book is concerned with the history of genocide in Zimbabwe just after independence. He was also of the view that, churches had an obligation to voice and investigate perpetrators of the genocide and bring them to book. Since, "local communities do have a social memory of these perpetrators and while the status quo is still intact, it may be years before these perpetrators are unmasked".⁸⁷

Dube elaborated the reasons why the government targeted Matabeleland and Midlands provinces. In addition, he highlighted the worst effects of Gukurahundi; the enmity created and the wounds left in the hearts of the victims. He did not however, prescribe any appropriate solution to the problem. Hence the task of the researcher is to try and develop a model instrument that will bring the people together and establish ways of reconciling members of this community one with another.

⁸⁵J. Dube 2006: 97,

⁸⁶J. Dube , 2006;100

⁸⁷ Ibid 2006;101

2.2.1 THE FORMATION OF THE ZIMBABWE UNITY MOVEMENT PARTY BY EDGAR TEKERE

In 1989 a long standing friend of Robert Mugabe broke away from ZANU-PF forming an opposition political party called Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM). Hill says, “Edgar Tekere, the man who had walked into Mozambique with Mugabe in 1976, quit the government and began speaking out against the president’s new powers. This is not what he had fought for, said Tekere”.⁸⁸ At least there was an alternative to ZANU PF.

The formation of ZUM led to new sufferings that provoked new traumas. ZANU-PF deployed members of the dreaded Central Intelligence Organization (CIO). The CIO tortured and killed people and led to the disappearances of some of the supporters of ZUM. There was untold human suffering mainly in the Midlands Province where ZUM was popular. Prospective members of parliament for ZUM were tortured by the operatives from the CIO. The CIO was accountable to the president alone. In the majority of cases, the disappearances, torturing and killings of ZUM activists and later MDC members were perpetrated by the CIO,⁸⁹ the most feared organization in Zimbabwe.

The formation of ZUM was important in that it exposed the agony of the people of the Midlands and Matabeleland provinces who had festering wounds from Gukurahundi. ZUM had a huge following in Matabeleland and Midlands and Mugabe responded by deploying the army to shopping centres, schools and growth points throughout these provinces. The army wore red berets that resembled the berets of Gukurahundi. In the next elections of 1989 many people did not participate in the voting process due to fear of the army. The fear that had been sown during the Gukurahundi era was resuscitated.⁹⁰

2.2.2 THE LAND REFORM PROGRAMME AND SUBSEQUENT FARM VIOLENCE

Banana highlighted that;

Zimbabwe has got a sad history of conflicts because of land. Colonialism was the taking away of prime land by white settlers who forced indigenous black people into poor soils and areas infested with mosquito. The pain of losing land to colonisers has not yet been healed. The church has not reconciled blacks and whites on the land question since 1894. Yet the economic basis of pre/colonial Zimbabwe was land and this is still true today for the majority of Zimbabweans.

⁸⁸ Hill, G. The Battle for Zimbabwe: The Final Countdown, Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2003;86

⁸⁹ *ibid*

⁹⁰ *Ibid*

Land is where people live on and eat from. Some tribes like the Vatsonga of Northern Zimbabwe worshipped the land as a god.⁹¹

The majority of Zimbabweans survived by growing crops for their families and keeping animals such as cattle, sheep and goats for meat, milk, manure and clothing. The land was also the home of the ancestors. Near every home, there would be the venerated graves of the family's ancestors. Land is life to a Zimbabwean. Land was everyone's sacred possession. As long as one was part of the community, one was assured of one's own piece of land.⁹²

Regrettably, the violent repossession of land in 2004-2009 resembled the barbaric colonial taking of the land and this deepened the divisions between blacks and whites. This created new wounds amongst the whites who had in turn lost their livelihood. The trauma caused by the land question in Zimbabwe to dispossessed blacks and white farmers whose land has been violently taken from them and farm workers who had lost their jobs and homes as a result of the struggle for land had left bleeding wounds that are yet to be healed.⁹³ These different groups of people still need to be reconciled if Zimbabwe is to be a socially stable country again.

The author has given detailed information concerning the pain most farmers and farm workers felt during the time of the land reform programme. However there is no literature that has addressed this pain and the loss of both employment and property. It is the task of this research to see that both the victims and the perpetrators are reconciled and there is hope for a conducive environment for the establishment of peace and friendship within communities.

2.2.3 THE POST 2008 GENERAL ELECTION VIOLENCE

Since 2000, state security forces (which one may call state driven violence) in Zimbabwe have meted out violence against thousands of civilians, targeting primarily political opponents and aid workers. Human rights violations have included imprisonment, disappearances, murder, torture and rape. In addition President Robert Mugabe's policies led to severe economic collapse and grave failure of the national health system. These events

⁹¹Banana, C. S. *The Church and the Struggle for Zimbabwe: From the Programme to Combat Racism to Combat Theology*. Gweru: Mambo Press, 1996.;98

⁹² Ibid

⁹³Kaulemu, D. Op. Cit. p.139

were pointers to the sinking of the titanic ship of Zimbabwe, in terms of the rule of law, human respect, and economic development and health delivery systems.⁹⁴

2.2.4 AN ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC LIFE IN ZIMBABWE 2000-2008

Indicators above pointed to the down fall of the Zimbabwean economy. The worst horror was yet to come. Alois Mlambo and Brain Raftopoulos in their document, argue that,

The throes of a severe crisis in the past decade or so, one which has seen a once vibrant and dynamic society and economy virtually collapsing as political instability, lawlessness, misgovernment and a relentless economic meltdown transform this erstwhile leading Southern African nation into an international pariah and the proverbial basket case.⁹⁵

The decline of the country's economy negatively impacted lives of ordinary Zimbabweans and alarmed neighbouring countries of the Southern African Development Committee (SADC) that ended up organising assistance to Zimbabwe. The further decline of Zimbabwe's economy was precipitated by the government's defeat by the MDC led campaign in the 2000 constitutional referendum. The government responded by unleashing a wave of terror against supporters of the MDC, white commercial farmers and Industrial big share-holders whom it blamed for having sponsored the new opposition party.⁹⁶ In addition Ndlovu says, "Paranoid tendencies were reinforced by reality. The early 2000 constitutional referendum results (ZANU-PF's first effective electoral defeat) were seen, as one war vet put it, as a 'clarion call' signalling the intent of the 'imperialists and running dogs'.⁹⁷

Alois and Brain further argue that,

By 2008 the Zimbabwean economy had undergone a veritable meltdown, with all indicators signifying a country in severe distress. Inflation rates were estimated in percentage of hundreds of millions, while the country's currency, now denominated in quintillions was becoming virtually worthless. The economy deteriorated to the extent that the GDP was estimated at \$200 compared to \$900 in 1990, while over 80% of the Zimbabwean population was reported in 2005 as living on less than \$2 a day. In addition, in 1997 exports accounted for 33.5% compared to 2007 when they accounted for 9.9% and unemployment was

⁹⁴ Hill, G. Op.Cit. p. 86

⁹⁵ Alois Mlambo Brain Raftopoulos Election processes, Liberation movements and Democratic Change in Africa Conference, Maputo 8-11 April 2010,

⁹⁶ Ibid and www.hrw.org/en/ne Zimbabwean year-reform-failure

⁹⁷ Ndhlovu-Gatsheni, S. "The Post-Colonial State and Matabeleland: Regional Perceptions of Civil-Military Relations, 1980-2002," Ourselves to Know, 2004.

90% in 2008. That led to the one time breadbasket of the entire region importing basic foodstuffs to feed its people.⁹⁸

The above crisis amplified the social frustrations of the Mberengwa people who had already been wounded and bruised by the past memories of Gukurahundi atrocities and other forms of political violence between 2000 and 2008. Sometimes one would think that the two; political violence phases and the drought were signals of each other. Apparently, whenever there was a drought, political unrest followed or vice-versa. This sequecedcwas also witnessed in Mberengwa. The seriousness of the political violence carnages resulted in the polarisation of the community and the obliteration of neighbourliness. Mberengwa is seriously affected by the political crevice due to its Shona sub-group linguistically and politically and is the most remote but ZANU PF had realised most of its political support from there. No other political party was supposed to infiltrate the area. Family men and most youths responded to these problems by voice-exit, that is; literally by leaving the country or figuratively by retreating into privacy.⁹⁹

Human Rights Watch observed that, in the aftermath of the defeat of ZANU-PF by the opposition Movement for Democratic Change in 29 March and June 27, 2008, ZANU-PF unleashed its violence machinery against those provinces that had overwhelmingly voted for the opposition. The Zimbabwe government under President Robert Mugabe led a campaign of terror against the MDC supporters before and after the electoral process. State-driven violence resulted in massive human rights violation including rape, torture and forced disappearances. Despite taking power by force in June 2008, President Mugabe continued to implement brutal attacks against the political opposition.¹⁰⁰ Responses by the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU) did not effectively address the crisis. Civil society groups such as the Human Rights Watch and the International Crisis Group swiftly responded and condemned the repression and human rights abuses by the government. Notwithstanding the establishment of a unity government through the signing of the Global Political Agreement in 2009, the situation remained uneasy as political reforms were not implemented and ZANU PF continued to engage in political violence.

⁹⁸Reuters, "Factbox-Zimbabwe's meltdown in figures" 2 December 2008 at <http://www.reuters.com>

⁹⁹Alois and Brain, et la, Op. Cit.p. 176.

¹⁰⁰Human Rights Watch February 2010

In fact, for the first time since 1980, President Robert Mugabe of ZANU-PF lost to an opposition leader, Morgan Tsvangirai of the MDC party. Constitutionally, the margin was not enough to enable the winner to go to state house. So there was a re- run of the presidential election. During re-run campaigns, ZANU-PF resorted to violence to win the election. The level of intimidation, torture and murder matched Gukurahundi events. The tactics that were used in the Midlands and Matabeleland genocide were now being used in Mashonaland central, west and east as well as in Masvingo province. Interestingly ZANU-PF was now deploying Ndebele speaking soldiers to brutalise Shona speaking people as opposed to Shona speaking brutalising Ndebele speaking people in Matabeleland.¹⁰¹

Neighbours were set against each other. At times relatives who belonged to different political parties were set against each other. So much animosity, suspicion and hatred were created within communities and the deep wounds that were inflicted are yet to be healed.

Vambe in his article, Zimbabwe genocide, cited other scholars as saying, the violence on ordinary people, which accompanied the 2008 presidential elections which was largely blamed on ZANU supporters. This was targeted mainly in to the Shona-speaking areas of Zimbabwe, where the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) commanded considerable support. Against this background these authorities came to conclude that ruling authorities are likely to react with excessive force whenever their political power is threatened.¹⁰² Though the document highlighted how the people were affected both socially and economically, resulting in some leaving the country for South Africa and overseas, and how the opposition supporters were affected by the Mugabe government, it did not however propose any solution to these problems. Poverty is still haunting the poor communities because the economy is continuously going down. Hence the writer will try to challenge the relevant authorities to address the issue of poverty as a way of healing the broken hearted people.

The concept of healing memories should be understood not only by reference to the victims of violence, but even to those affected socially and economically. For the healing of memories to be complete out the social aspect should not be over looked. As such, the writer

¹⁰¹ Ibid

¹⁰²M T Vambe in his article, Zimbabwe genocide: voices and perceptions from ordinary people in Matabeleland and the Midlands provinces, 30 years on, Routledge, London; 2012; p.282

will also look at these factors for total reconciliation and healing of memories is to be realised.

2.2.5 THE DESTRUCTION OF HOMES DURING MURAMBATSVINA¹⁰³

The literal translation of the Shona word Murambatswina is “refusal of dirt” so one can actually refer to this operation as “operation refusal of dirt”. In the name of this operation, the city was cleansed of substandard accommodation. It was an exercise that labelled poverty as dirt that needed to be flushed out. So the government of Zimbabwe translated it to mean ‘Operation Clean - Up’¹⁰⁴

David Kaulem, describes how the Operation was conducted in the months of May, June and July 2005. The operation destroyed all forms of shelter such as backyard cottages, shacks, and extensions to houses, tuck shops and vending kiosks. Heavy earth moving equipment and front-loaders were used to pull down the above mentioned forms of shelter. Houses that were destroyed throughout the whole country were estimated at 700 000. Thousands of people were left homeless and worse still, this took place during the coldest months in Zimbabwe.¹⁰⁵ Residents saw the operation as a systematic way of removing strategic population groups from Harare. They migrated to areas where they were not registered as voters. Harare had been a stronghold of the opposition MDC as could be seen from the results of the 2000 and 2005 parliamentary elections. Kaulema and Shylet argue that residents had already questioned the urgency of the census carried out before operation Murambasvina and they concluded that it was implemented to take strategic population groups away from Harare.¹⁰⁶

The operation affected the poor, a group that was also hardest hit by HIV and AIDS. People nicknamed it “Tsunami”, since the wreckages that were left behind in the cities could easily be mistaken for those caused by that natural disaster. The government was cleaning up the cities of poor people’s houses, their businesses and the people themselves. It seemed as if the

¹⁰³*Murambatswina* is a Shona word which means ‘refusing dirty’. The government of Zimbabwe destroyed informal settlements and informal businesses in both rural and urban centers and they called the process *murambatswina*. The operation is also known as Operation Clean Up. Those affected by *murambatswina* refer to the operation as *tsunami* because of the magnitude of the destruction which is comparable to the tsunami natural disaster.

¹⁰⁴Sokwanele, www.sokwanele.com/thisizimbabwe

¹⁰⁵David Kaulemu, Political Participation in Zimbabwe; Regional Co-ordinator for Eastern and Southern Africa AFCASST, the African forum for Catholic Social Teachings; Pacprint, Harare. 2010;144

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. p. 176

idea was to disperse the opposition support which was concentrated in the cities. Another strong possibility was that informal traders would leave their stalls and those would then be reallocated to ZANU-PF supporters, so it might have been an economic strategy to punish opposition was supporters and create income generating projects for party supporters. The third possibility is that government was punishing urbanites for voting for the opposition.¹⁰⁷

In addition to the picture above, Kaulema argues, the individual worth and dignity of the human person was undermined by the disproportionate power of the political leaders. Political leaders used their power to maintain their positions. Any sign of dissent was punished and hence the perpetrators of violence became the defenders of those in power.¹⁰⁸ These perpetrators did this unaware that they were destroying their communal relationship and brotherhood and sisterhood, so it can be deduced that perpetrators too may become victims of some political systems or cultures. In Zimbabwe, perpetrators acted in allegiance to an authority by which behaviour to be judged by as to whether or not they were “patriotic”. The perpetrator was victimized and tormented as an individual, and was instructed, brainwashed to see brother and sister as an enemy and crack the whip so that they toed the line of the oppressor. It was a process of dehumanising one- self, resulting in gross pain and suffering as witnessed in the presidential elections re-run of 2008. The process traumatised people to the extent that, to date they are still in great pain and the wounds are still festering.

The writer argues that, many Christians seclude themselves from politics because they view it as a dirty and dangerous game. They do not want to be associated with dirt for they see themselves as holy. They view participating in politics as making them dirty, since they see themselves as not of this world. They need to be reminded that, the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the men and women of our time especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way , are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well. Nothing that is genuinely human fails to find an echo in their hearts for theirs is a community composed of men and women who are united in Christ, guided by the Holy Spirit and pressing onwards towards the kingdom of the Father and are bearers of a message of salvation

¹⁰⁷ More details on the operation are given in the section on the socio-economic and political developments in Zimbabwe.

¹⁰⁸ Kaulema, Op. Cit. 2010, p. 78

intended for all men. That is why Christians should cherish a feeling of deep solidarity with the human race and its history.¹⁰⁹

For as long as politics is dominated by human abuse and violation of human dignity, Church has to voice and clean the dirt out of politics. In a way Kaulemu argues that, though perpetrators were used by politicians the Church should have stood by the victims and voiced against all these forms of human abuse.

2.3 REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO THE ZIMBABWEAN CRISIS

Human Rights Watch argues that the region responded adequately, across the continent, Heads of states and governments condemned Mugabe's regime and called him to step down in order to end the suffering in Zimbabwe. However, the African Union (AU) did not question Mugabe's right to assume Zimbabwe's seat at the AU summit in Egypt from June 30 to July 1, 2008.¹¹⁰ They condemned his rule by word of mouth only but they did not take action against him. This is one of the reasons why Zimbabwe's situation does not improve.

On the international arena, as its response, the UN monitored the deterioration of the country, but failed to undertake measures that effectively addressed the mass human rights, violations and violence.¹¹¹ Apparently Mugabe was oblivious to his growing unpopularity. The abuse persisted although the international community continued to denounce the human rights violations perpetrated by his regime. The Friends of Zimbabwe, a group, which was composed of the UN, World Bank, African Development Bank, and several countries including the U.S., issued a statement on December 10, 2010 that expressed its "serious concerns...relating to the protection of fundamental rights, the rule of law, governance and respect for agreements,"¹¹² by the Zimbabwean government.

On 16 April 2008, the President of the European Union (EU) issued a declaration on behalf of the EU that expressed its deep concern about reports of violent incidents and the deteriorating human rights situation in the country.¹¹³ Surprisingly, although all the entire above mentioned organisation registered their concerns about Zimbabwe's political situation, the Church in Zimbabwe whose members were suffering was quiet.

¹⁰⁹D Kaulemu Op.Cit.p.79.

¹¹⁰Human Rights Watch August 2007

¹¹¹International Crisis Group March 2010

¹¹² Human Rights Watch February 2010

¹¹³ International Crisis Human Rights Group March 2010

Though the work undertaken by the Human Rights Watch was commendable, the organisation did nothing to mobilise the community in Africa to address the Zimbabwean situation and influence the government to stop the violence in the country. They continuously condemned Mugabe but did nothing to address the ills that affected the common people. This research seeks to challenge the church to take the lead in finding a lasting solution to the Zimbabwean crisis.

2.4 THE CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO THE ZIMBABWEAN POLITICAL SITUATION

The most recent document to be produced stating the vision of the church about the developments in Zimbabwe was authored by the three major ecumenical organisations representing the Church¹¹⁴ in Zimbabwe, that is; the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), the Zimbabwe Catholics Bishop's Conference (ZCBC) and the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC). The publication of The Zimbabwe We Want Document (TZWWD) can be hailed as a *kairos* (moment of truth) for the church. For the first time it appeared as if the Church was determined to make a meaningful contribution to the resolution of the Zimbabwean crisis through discussions and consultations, but the document seems to have lost its impetus. The document highlighted human rights' abuses in Zimbabwe and pointed out what a good nation should aspire to be.

The document went on to suggest how the church could contribute to the development of a national vision and values for a better Zimbabwe. The TZWWD argued that the church could meaningfully contribute to the national socio-economic and political transformation of the country. The TZWWD further argued that the church could help in national reconciliation and forgiveness thereby bringing the ethics of tolerance to estranged political supporters. The TZWWD acknowledged that the church had been absent from the political developments in Zimbabwe when it came to defending Christian norms and values that could have made a difference in political behaviour; "Clearly we did not do enough as churches to defend these values (love, peace, justice, forgiveness, honesty and truthfulness) and raise an alarm at the appropriate time...as churches we confess we have failed the nation..."¹¹⁵ The document was not prescriptive but created an opportunity for debating national issues in the security of the people's faith, with the church as a safe and sacred haven for honest engagements.

¹¹⁴ The EFZ, ZCC AND ZCBC represent about 85% of Christian Churches in Zimbabwe.

¹¹⁵ The Zimbabwe We Want, Towards a National Vision for Zimbabwe, Document by Christian Churches in Zimbabwe, 2006, p. 10

The majority of the people in Zimbabwe did not want to live in the Zimbabwe as described above. The Zimbabwe desired by the majority of the citizens of Zimbabwe was the one described by The Zimbabwe We Want document. The ecumenical church movements also made a major attempt to contribute to the re-establishment of democracy, respect for human rights and the reconstruction of Zimbabwe by publishing a discussion document entitled *The Zimbabwe We Want: Towards a National Vision for Zimbabwe by the Churches of Zimbabwe*. TZWWD is a prophetic contribution by the church towards political, social and economic reconstruction of Zimbabwe. To the researcher's knowledge, the church has not implemented the document for a variety of reasons such as fear, partisan politics by some church leaders and the theology of non-involvement in politics by others.

TZWWD was an invitation by the ecumenical church to all Zimbabweans and friends of Zimbabwe to engage in dialogue about the crisis, to come up with a national vision of the Zimbabwe people wanted, and agree on how to get there. The discussion document, according to its authors, "is inspired by faith in a sovereign God [and] in Jesus Christ [and] his solidarity with suffering, humanity and his power to transform our thinking and relationships through the power of the gospel".¹¹⁶ The core vision of the document was stated as:

Our vision of The Zimbabwe We Want is that of a sovereign, inviolable and unitary member state of the international community; a nation that is democratic and is characterized by good governance as reflected in all its structures, institutions and operations at all levels; a nation united in its diversity, free, tolerant, peaceful, and prosperous; a nation that respects the rights of all its citizens regardless of creed, gender, age, race and ethnicity as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and with a leadership that puts the interests of the people of Zimbabwe above all personal gains; a nation where all citizens enjoy equal protection of the law and have equal opportunity to compete and prosper; and above all a nation that is God fearing.¹¹⁷

To attain the desired aspirations the document suggested open, honest dialogue by Zimbabweans and its allies on the current crippling political situation; the vision and values of the Zimbabwe that people wanted; the constitution of Zimbabwe; national economic and social transformation; the land question as an important aspect of the economy as well as national reconciliation and forgiveness. In addition to this, the document suggested that it

¹¹⁶ Ibid,

¹¹⁷ Ibid, p. 15

would be important to discuss the mandate of the church in the past, present and future of Zimbabwe if the church was to be relevant to the people.

The vision suggested by the TZWWD implied that despite political and tribal allegiances, Christians had religious values of love, peace, justice, forgiveness, honesty and truthfulness which should be a reference point in their political allegiances. Furthermore, despite the churches' variety of creeds and denominations, through this document, they could speak with one prophetic voice based on Christian principles and values that should transcend political loyalties and propaganda. The document raised questions that challenged the church to revisit its ethos; "How could the situation degenerate to this extent as described above when more than 80% of the population is Christian, including many of those in leadership positions? Where was the voice of the church which is called upon to be the conscience of the nation?"¹¹⁸ The challenges posed by this document to the Zimbabwean Christian fraternity applied to the ELCZ as well.

In this book, the church was clear on the issues of peace, justice, human dignity and good governance, but the church left out an important aspect in their approach to peace. The church did not state how that peace would be brought about. The church concentrated on the leadership, how government should govern the country but the victims were not involved yet these were the people who in reality suffered a lot. Hence the writer will propose a model that will try to bring in the government, the chiefs, the perpetrators and the victims in order to find a lasting solution to poor management of resources, corruption, violence and the trauma and pain suffered by ordinary citizens in times of political crisis.

2.5 ATTEMPTS AT RECONCILIATION AND HEALING PROCESS BY THE GOVERNMENT

After the establishment of the Zimbabwean Government of National Unity (GNU) in September 2008, the government of Zimbabwe in February 2009 established the Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration (ONHRI) through the appointment and swearing in of the three ministers of state.¹¹⁹ The three ministers were each from the three political parties that were included in the GNU. These were; Vice President John Nkomo representing ZANU PF, Hon. Sekai Holland representing MDC-T and Hon. Gibson Sibanda representing the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). Production and approval of the Concept Paper on areas to be focused on in operationalizing the mandate of ONHRI were

¹¹⁸ Ibid

¹¹⁹ Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration Document of 2010

pursuant to Article Vii of the Global Political Agreement (GPA). The official launch of the ONHRI happened concurrently with the state function marking the National Dedication by the GPA principles on 24 July 2009 by the GPA principals. The three GPA representatives affirmed their commitment to peace.¹²⁰ Immediately after the launch various consultative outreach meetings with different stake-holders were held in the country's eight provinces from the 8th to 23rd of September 2009. Consultative meetings with Church and Civil society groups were also held throughout the eight provinces of Zimbabwe. The findings of these two consultative meetings will be discussed when reviewing the documents below.

The National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO) collected information from these consultative meetings held by the ONHRI and came up with two documents; Compendium Civil Society Dossier to Cabinet (CCDC) and Church and Civil Society submissions, (CCS). The CCDC document stated key issues towards reform and recovery in the Zimbabwe situation. This came as a result of the understanding that the struggle of emancipation is steeped in a political environment characterised by:

a) lack of respect for the use of rule b) political violence most notably that occurred in early 1980s in Provinces of Midlands and Matabeleland and that which occurred in the years from 1997 to date, where lives were lost as a result of the government's action undertaken with impunity, c) a lack of fundamental rights and freedom including freedom of expression and information, association and assembly, all characterised by the militarization of arms of the state and government. Again the other apprehension highlighted in this compendium document is that since the 1980s to date all elections conducted in Zimbabwe remained illegitimate and without merit due to issues raised above.¹²¹

The document raised the imperative question as to the role of the church both theologically and socially.

In the same document, people registered their concerns about the national reconciliation and forgiveness which in other words is the process of National Healing. The message of reconciliation is the core of the gospel that the church proclaims, therefore, by virtue of its calling, the church has to actively participate in bringing about national healing, and it is for the sake of this duty that the study of the Mberengwa Community has been undertaken.

¹²⁰ Ibid

¹²¹ Civil Society Dossier to Cabinet: A compendium of Civil Society Position on Key Issues towards Reform and Recovery in Zimbabwe, Presented on the Occasions of the Ministerial Summit, Harare March 27 2009.

The document welcomed *Article 7* of the Global Political Agreement which acknowledged that the new government should consider setting up a mechanism for proper advice on what measures might be necessary and practical to achieve national healing, cohesion and unity in respect of the activities of pre and post-independence. People “welcomed the fact that the inclusive government appointed three ministers of state to be responsible for national healing and for putting in place mechanisms and processes to achieve national healing and reconciliation”¹²²

This brilliant thinking remained on paper. Nothing materialised to date. The idea remained hazy due to lack of practical ground for reconciliation and national healing. This imperative for Zimbabweans especially in Mberengwa district was supposed to be conducted by the Church which has the biblical mandate for reconciliation. Instead of preparing for the reconciliation and national healing, “there is also, an increasing scale of violence perpetrated by people seeking revenge in the absence of visible efforts by government to see that justice is being done. It is therefore imperative that the nation swiftly embark on national healing. It is also clear that it is impossible to start work on national healing while fresh wounds are being inflicted”.¹²³ Indeed, how could perpetrators of violence be expected to facilitate the process of national healing and reconciliation? This compendium from the people to the Cabinet would have been an effective eye-opener had it been taken sincerely and thoughtfully.

In pursuit of the concept of National Healing and Reconciliation the researcher’s review of the document called Church and Civil Society: Submissions Towards the Development of a National Framework for National Healing, Integration and Reconciliation in Zimbabwe; November 2009 – April 2010, Issue No. 2 revealed that, the document like the Civil Society Dossier to Cabinet raised vital issues in terms of who was supposed to carry out the national healing process. The document also explained why the government, despite the appointment of the three ministers, was unable to make this programme practicable. The document also illustrated the contributions by the various stakeholders, that is; the Church, Civil society organisations and ONHRI from different districts including Mberengwa which is the focal area of this study. According to Article 7 of the GNU, the ONHRI was tasked to properly “advise on measures necessary and practical to achieving national healing, cohesion and

¹²² Ibid, p. 23

¹²³ Ibid

unity with respect to victims of pre and post-independence violence” through the three appointed ministers¹²⁴

One may wonder if the three ministers were not part of the perpetrators or victims. If individually they belonged to the side of perpetrators or victims, how were they going to be advisors or instrumental to the necessary measures for the practical achievement of national healing? Again one is forced to question the commitment of the three ministers in the ONHRI.

The Chairperson of ONHRI was Honourable John Nkomo the then Vice President of the government of Zimbabwe yet he had been at the core of violence. Could this be a genuine process or government was dramatizing the process? The other minister was Honourable Sekai Holland whose role was to represent Church and Civil Society’s role in this process and Honourable Gibson Sibanda was telling the history of conflict in Zimbabwe. Responding to the designated functions of the three ministers, “the church leadership recommends that a church based national healing programme should be implemented through broad based strategies with the following elements: advocacy, training, pastoral counselling and referral: Information, education and communication, material dissemination and networking strategies”.¹²⁵

The strategies would ensure the buy in of the opinion that leaders of the church based national healing programme for Zimbabwe. It will also highlight the role of the church in social service delivery for national healing. The referral system would ensure that issues and cases beyond the mandate and expertise of church leaders were referred to relevant authorities.¹²⁶ Again the underlying and guiding Christian principles/ values neutrality, empathy, love, consistency and confession would ensure the holistic and evidence based approach to the problem.¹²⁷ The document emphasised the importance of pastoral care and counselling in the healing process.

The document stated a very clear strategy by churches that would have taken Zimbabwe’s national healing process to a higher level if it had been implemented. The church came up with sound strategies, but when it came to implementation, it was ineffectual. Most of its strategies ended at the planning stage. A good example is what happened to The Zimbabwe We Want document. The vision of Zimbabwe was good, but it just ended on paper. If one

¹²⁴Church and Civil Society submission November 2009 – April 2010; 1

¹²⁵ Ibid

¹²⁶ Ibid

¹²⁷ Ibid

went through the strategies raised in the CCS submissions towards the development of a national framework for ONHRI, they raised hopes of a bright future for Zimbabwe. If however, one was to ask how many years it is now since the strategies were documented and if anything has changed or has been implemented, the answer would be undesirable. Instead there is lot of the church s' ideologies and strategies only on paper. People of Mberengwa no longer need philosophical ideologies and strategies since these have no effect in terms of development and positive outcomes.

The researcher also reviewed literature by Bishop JC Shiri, the first black bishop of the ELCZ which commented on the depressing experiences of the liberation war against the Colonial government, but then he decided to remain silent on the post war issues of Gukurahundi and other forms of state driven violence. Bishop Shiri confessed that, "it was common knowledge that the freedom fighters were supported by the masses of Zimbabweans and that they could get medical assistance from hospitals and clinics. As the Smith regime closed a number of these hospitals, clinics and store, this sabotage confirmed the adage that "if you want to kill the fish, drain the water and the fish will die easily" observed Bishop Shiri. By closing these institutions, the colonial regime ensured that the freedom fighters were eliminated from these areas as they were deprived of these lifelines. Doctor Zhou helped the people of Mberengwa by executing medical operations, was the only doctor in the area in 1979 at ELCZ mission hospitals was shot dead by some solders. This was a big blow to the church as all hospitals in Mberengwa were ELCZ institutions. Sisters who worked with Dr Zhou could not stand it. They all left Mnene hospital at once. As if this was not enough, all secondary schools and other hospitals in the district were closed by August 1979. Women of Masase area wept as they saw their mission on fire and furniture as well as church vestments being taken away.¹²⁸

Despite the fact that some soldiers were religious, chapels were used as barracks while alters were used as kitchen tables; vestries were used as kitchens and for food storages. Parsonages were used by white officers, Parish halls were used as cocktail bars and some halls were used for torturing civilians.¹²⁹ Bishop Shiri again purported that, "some pastors were arrested for either failing to report the presence of the guerrillas or for helping the youth to leave the country for guerrilla training."¹³⁰ Again the Bishop highlighted that, "Zimbabwe lost not less than 30000 lives during the war of liberation. It was not possible to tell how many of these

¹²⁸ My first decade as Head of The ELCZ, 1975-1985, p.93-95

¹²⁹ Ibid, p.111

¹³⁰ Ibid

were Lutheran. The church had its evangelists, pastors and ordinary people killed during this liberation war".¹³¹ One can imagine the lengthy struggle of the Mberengwa people during the whole era of political instability.

Most of the political history is recorded, but when it came to the Zimbabwean state driven violence such as Gukurahundi, Murambatsvina and other episodes of human abuse and killings perpetrated throughout the elections between 2000 to 2008, neither churches nor Bishop Shiri ever mentioned them in their writings.

In his writings Bishop Shiri just like his church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe is silent about Gukurahundi and the 2000-2008 traumatic events for Mberengwa people. There are no Lutheran documents that talk about pastors and members that were killed, raped, seriously beaten, maimed or lost property during the 2008 elections. Rev O (not real initial) who will be one of the interviewees in this study was beaten and left half-dead. However, neither he nor the church said a word to the government concerning this brutal act.

The other unpublished book, *The Truth Shall Set You Free by Churches in Manicaland* is a very useful document. In this book they argued that, since May 2000, the churches had been seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit on what action to take to promote tolerance in society. They also urged people to live by the gospel values and principles. The churches were strictly non-partisan in regard to party politics and are available to all people for counselling, pastoral care and the building of a Christian mission for society.¹³² Again, the document highlighted what role these churches could play to enhance the social life of the people. The church, like Christ had to announce the good news and denounce injustice. Many political leaders in Africa like Herod were comfortable with a church that did not criticise their governments and took a more pro-active role in translating the gospel values into concrete life styles. They wanted the church to feed the poor, to provide shelter and visit the sick and those in prisons, but they did not want the church to teach about human rights, good governance or criticise the economic and political performance of their governments.¹³³ The document highlighted a sensitive area according to the Zimbabwe government that regarded these atrocities as none of the business of the church. The document rightly says, the Church's mandate was accepted as being limited to only caring for the sick, executing diaconal work and preaching the gospel. They forget that Jesus preached, taught, prophesied,

¹³¹ Ibid, p. 145

¹³² Churches in Manicaland, Op. Cit. P. 123

¹³³ Ibid

healed and fed people and released the oppressed. Thus, material in this document was relevant to the Mberengwa people who are longing for truth, justice, human dignity, healing and respect for human life.

Though the government had noble intentions about reconciliation, their strategy had some weaknesses. How could interested parties be involved in bringing a solution to the problem they had created? How could the perpetrators of violence be part of the solution to the problems? How could the people who had been murdering and raping people be the problem solvers? In this research, the church will be challenged as an independent and non-partisan entity to take the lead in this process of reconciliation and healing of memories. This is an important part of the mission of the church.

2.6 CHURCH - STATE RELATIONSHIPS IN ZIMBABWE

Another relevant study on church and state relations in Zimbabwe is a paper by a historian, Paul Gundani. He investigated the role played by the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe from 1980 to 2007. He took interest in “the way in which the Catholic Church has exercised her prophetic office within the changing social, political and economic environment since independence”¹³⁴. Gundani uses the pastoral letters of the bishops as a source in the study of the participation of the Catholic Church. He argues that the pastoral letters are a legitimate source of understanding of what the Catholic Church thinks because these pastoral letters “are themselves a product not only of the theological reflections of the bishops but of the wide consultation that took place prior to their publication. In this sense, they genuinely represent the thinking and position of the Catholic Church on issues discussed in the article”.¹³⁵

It is worth noting that the Catholic Church decisively spoke out regarding the Zimbabwean Crisis through its Bishops who wrote pastoral letters after wide consultation with the church’s membership across the country. Gundani says,

Owing to the pastoral significance of the statements, bishops are normally obliged to consult widely before drafting [their pastoral letters] and issuing them for public consumption. There are many levels in the Church that they may consult, including, among others, Deanery councils, Diocesan Pastoral councils, Episcopal commissions, councils for the priests, councils for the laity, and theologians, among others. Sometimes, bishops invite experts to address them on a specific subject at a plenary meeting before they begin to

¹³⁴ Paul Gundani, *Prophecy, politics and power: changing relations between the Catholic Church and the Zimbabwean state 1980-2007*

¹³⁵ *Ibid*

work on the draft statement. Ideally, the principle of collegiality must inform the whole process, which culminates in the publication of the statement bearing the names of the bishops of that particular Church.¹³⁶

As a way of implementing pastoral care, the Catholic Church challenged state activities that were unjust and oppressive to its membership. It is Gundani's contention that, the Catholic Bishops, "...have since 2000 come out openly in defence of the oppressed and marginalized citizens".¹³⁷ The basic theological argument for the vigorous involvement by the Catholics is the strong belief that;

At the heart of Christianity is the conviction that God has a purpose for creation, and that her will impinges on the history of the world. In keeping with this conviction, the Church, as a community of believers, consistently tries to interpret God's will in order to align their lives and the lives of those around them to God's will. The role of the Church leaders is to interpret and impart the Church's understanding of the will of God to their followers. As teachers of the Faith, Catholic bishops are thus associated with a discursive function that strives to embed the belief in a God whose will and purpose continuously impinge on and shape the course of history.¹³⁸

Arguably, the Catholic Church has aligned its teaching to the realities of its membership. From the perspective of this study this is interpreted as situational pastoral care. Gundani's article also recognises that the Catholic Bishops wrote 30 pastoral letters between 1980 and 2007. One can argue that the Bishops were publishing an average of two letters a year. Unfortunately Gundani argues, the Catholic Bishops lost their pastoral prophetic voice in 1980 because of a very close relationship between the Church leadership and the political leadership. The church only regained its prophetic voice in 2000.

Further Gundani points to the fact that "The pastoral statements vary in purpose, ranging from theological exposition, practical instruction and definition of moral principles, to analysis of social problems accompanied by answers based on Scriptures, Church doctrine/tradition, and the social teachings of the Church. They also take the form of exhortation, criticism and rebuke".¹³⁹ The pastoral letters are also based on the experiential stories of lay Catholics as they live their lives in the political arena. This implies that for the church to be able to speak out in a pastoral manner, it should initially minister pastoral care to

¹³⁶ Ibid

¹³⁷ Ibid

¹³⁸ Ibid

¹³⁹ Ibid

its membership. It is through this pastoral care that the church can listen to the “reflections of the faith stories of the entire Church that the bishops represent”.¹⁴⁰

In line with Gundani’s paper, Ezra Chitando of the Department of Religious Studies, Classics and Philosophy, University of Zimbabwe and Lovemore Togarasei of the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Botswana also engaged in writing about the church and the political crisis in Zimbabwe following the post-election violence of 2008. Chitando and Togarasei scrutinized the reaction of the Church in Zimbabwe to the 2008 political predicament “that was precipitated by violence, economic decay and social strife”.¹⁴¹ Chitando (et.al.) give an outline of the church-state relations that kept on changing depending on the nature of political developments in Zimbabwe. This is an example of a church that responds to the given situation as need be. The title of Chitando (et. al.)’s article sounds like a biblical reference though it is not. It suggests that ZANU-PF used scriptural nuances in its violent campaign rhetoric which sounded like a mockery of the church. This article argues that, from nowhere came the hate speech, the ranting and raving that declared everyone who had actively participated and was suspected of supporting or even sympathising with the opposition as an enemy of the ‘State’. Slogans punctuated with religious phrase were designed to fuel violence¹⁴². In the language of the Bible, a slogan to do with the date of the re-run and ZANU-PF’s rejection of any other winner other than Mugabe went, ‘June 2008, verse 27: *handichazofizvendakafurirwakubvapana baba Mugabe*’ [I shall never again in my lifetime be misled to betray Father Mugabe in a vote] Chitando (et.al)’ cited Mungwini. They used this slogan as the title of their article. It captures ZANU-PF’s appropriation of religious language to further its political goals.¹⁴³

Chitando (et.al.) show that the run-up to the elections was peaceful but then waves of violence followed Mugabe’s defeat at the polls. “During the run-up to the re-run’, Mugabe and his henchmen resorted to naked violence”.¹⁴⁴ This article outlines the response of the church to these developments showing “how the church sought to promote healing and reconciliation, provided humanitarian assistance, as well as the monitoring of elections”.¹⁴⁵ The article takes note of the challenges that were faced by the church such as lack of political

¹⁴⁰ Ibid

¹⁴¹ Ezra Chitando and Lovemore Togarasei’s Article, ‘June 2008, verse 27’ 1: the church and the 2008 Zimbabwean political crisis; 2010:153

¹⁴² Chitando, Op.Cit. 2010,p.155

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid

¹⁴⁵ Ibid

knowledge, lack of unity of purpose by the church leadership, the emergence of ZANU-PF sponsored pastors who glorified Mugabe's actions and the general lack of theological sophistication by the clergy.

The basic argument by Chitando (et al) is that, "Principally, the church remains as much part of the problem as it is part of the solution. The article maintains that as an entity existing in space and time, and manned by human beings, the church is an integral part of society".¹⁴⁶ The church is praised for being "extremely courageous, challenging a vicious regime while preaching patience and tolerance in an environment where 'the way of the wicked appeared to prosper."¹⁴⁷

This article also identified the important groupings of churches such as, "the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) for the principally mainline churches, the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference (ZCBC) for the Catholic Church and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ) for Pentecostal and Evangelical Churches",¹⁴⁸ which were umbrella bodies used by the churches in responding to social challenges. It should be pointed out that the ELCZ is a member of the ZCC. The ZCC is yet to challenge the government of Zimbabwe on the abuse of human rights. Amongst the above church institutions this article argues; the Catholic Church unsettled the ruling nationalists when it facilitated the publication of a document outlining the atrocities in Matabeleland during the Gukurahundi period of the early 1980s¹⁴⁹. Church-state relations were also strained over the issue of political violence. As Mugabe's popularity plummeted due to worsening socio-economic conditions that were precipitated by the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme of the 1990s, his party adopted violence as a political strategy, with Mugabe boasting at one time that he had 'degrees in violence.'¹⁵⁰

2.7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter critically described and explained the conditions of Zimbabwe political violence that pushed Zimbabweans including the Mberengwa community into oblivion, not by choice but by man-made, events that led to deep wounds and hurt. Moreover, it discussed the Zimbabwean crisis as a socio-economic and political factor that negatively affected people

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 2010, p. 156

¹⁴⁷ Ibid"andJeremiah 12:1

¹⁴⁸ Ibid

¹⁴⁹ Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace and legal Resources Foundation, Breaking the Silence- Building True Peace, Harare, 1997, p.78

¹⁵⁰ Ibid

and made them vulnerable to numerous kinds of human abuse. A lot of literature exposed Zimbabwe as being one of the worst countries in the Southern African region that is terrorising its own people.¹⁵¹ The suffering of Zimbabweans was intensified by state violence unleashed on them. Discussing and explaining the intensity of human abuse and wounds, the chapter started by analysing the background of how the Mberengwa community dominated by the Lutheran Church was hurt and wounded to the extent of pleading for a National Healing process. The chapter also discussed how the suffering of Zimbabweans degenerated to the extent of breaking communal relationships which was intensified by the lack of political will by the SADC leaders whose futile attempts to condemn the Zimbabwean government on the abuse of human rights that was rife in the country that went unheeded. This chapter exposed the series of elections that were accompanied by political violence and human abuse not yet instigated by the government due to its own selfish gain.

The literature under review shows how political instability fuelled the economic and social breakdown. Ordinary people were the most affected because the meltdown of the economy increased human suffering in Zimbabwe. This affected children and women more than men. Children were most vulnerable as their parents/fathers who were bread winners were retrenched resulting in them discontinuing their education and lacking most of their daily needs. Children were forced to be providers for families. It is however, clear according to reviewed literature that the driving force behind Zimbabwean killing and fighting each other was power hunger by self-seeking leaders who did not care about human life.

The breakdown of the socio-economic and political system in Zimbabwe fuelled corruption, poverty and a decline in the rule of law to the extent that Zimbabwe became a lawless country. In addition, existing literature does explicitly reveal that churches have been trying on paper to strategise on how they can combat the Zimbabwean crisis by coming-up with The Zimbabwe We Want document (TZWW) and Church and Civil Society Submissions. In these documents the groups again discussed their views and made recommendations towards the National Healing Programme. However, articles reviewed maintain that as an entity existing in space and time, and manned by human beings, the church is an integral part of society and it remains as much part of the problem as it is part of the solution.

¹⁵¹USAID and UNICEF, 2010; cf Jackson, 2002: 267

3.0 CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW ON HEALING OF MEMORIES FROM BOTH THE SOCIAL AND CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

A lot has been said about Zimbabwe's propensity for political violence, but the role of pastoral care as a way of healing memories has been underrated. The preceding chapter reviewed literature on the problems of violence and the subsequent attempts to deal with this violence from both the secular and theological perspectives. This chapter will review literature on healing memories with special emphasis on the role of reconciliation, through forgiveness, remembering and confession, elements that are deemed central to the role of pastoral care. This theological reflection on the healing of memories is the focal point of this study. Whatever literature on healing that may help in addressing the woes of the Mberengwa community where the Lutheran church is pre-dominant will be analysed.

3.2 DEFINITION OF HEALING MEMORIES

Healing memories is a complex process that includes the ventilation of great pain and the potential resolution of negative memories and trauma which individuals and communities may experience during long periods of violence and wars. The process of healing of memories is sometimes described as a project aimed at creating an opportunity for the wounded to tell their stories and be listened to. The project also concerns the role of pastoral and community care and church leadership in trying to attend to the severe trauma of these individual members of the community.

3.3 UNCOVERING OF HIDDEN HURT AND ANGER

David A Seamands, a theologian pointed out that, time alone cannot heal memories of experiences that are so painful, and may be deeply embedded in a people's subconscious mind. Instead these painful memories continue to haunt people and result in emotional and spiritual breakdown. Seamands points out that memories should be treated by a special spiritual therapy known as "memory healing."¹⁵² This spiritual therapy could be a Christian biased counselling tool coupled with healing power and prayers that focus on God as the healer. This tool could also be used by the church to comfort those who are emotionally hurt. He points out that, "Counselling is often necessary to uncover the hidden hurts, the unmet needs and repressed emotions which are preventing us from getting to the truth which will set us free".¹⁵³ This implies that, when a community exists with unmet grievances, these impact

¹⁵²David A Seamands, *Healing of Memories; If only putting Away Children Things*, Victor Books, Wheaton, Illinois. 1996;23-79

¹⁵³ Ibid

negatively on the development of the community. Hence, hidden hurts demoralise the spirit of cooperation and hope for the future.

It can be inferred that the Lutheran Church undermined its own growth in Mberengwa district by not attending to the wounds of its members. Seamands argues that, “In many instances, there can be no true healing and spiritual growth until we are released from painful memories and unhealthy patterns which now interfere with our present attitudes and behaviour”.¹⁵⁴ In a way, healing of memories of the Mberengwa people does not benefit only the residents of this area, but it will also benefit the Lutheran Church as a community of believers.

Seamands was convinced that, prayer is at the very heart of healing of memories. He points out that, “It is in prayer that the healing miracle begins. Without it, the whole process may simply be a form of autosuggestion, catharsis, or feeling therapy. This special time of prayer cannot be bypassed, if there are to be lasting results”.¹⁵⁵ Seamands is not looking down upon other means of healing of memories but as a theologian rooted deeply in prayer, he raised prayer as a tool for healing of memories. David avows that, “Our attitudes of mind, emotion and spirit play a big part in memory processing and can often throw us clear off from healing”.¹⁵⁶ This is why Jesus’ words about truth are so essential, “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free”.¹⁵⁷ Thus, it is vital for the people to know the truth of what happened and it is long overdue for them to share their painful memories. Only then can the reconciliation process be applied as a strategy for ensuring behavioural change and attitudes.

3.4 RESTORATION AS A WAY OF SOCIAL RECONCILIATION

Schreiter argues that, in the ministry of reconciliation, a distinction should be made between individual and social reconciliation”.¹⁵⁸ According to Schreiter, individual reconciliation refers to damaged humanity’s restoration by God through a supportive community offering safety, accompaniment and hospitality while social reconciliation is the process of transformation of the moral order of society.¹⁵⁹ Any transformation resulting from these two types of reconciliation is inherent in God’s work of restoration of the victims of ethnic conflict. This restoration should be carried out by the church and the community who are both well placed in bringing about social reconciliation. In a situation of ethnic conflict,

¹⁵⁴ Ibid

¹⁵⁵ Ibid

¹⁵⁶ Ibid

¹⁵⁷ John 8:32

¹⁵⁸ Robert J Schreiter, *Reconciliation Mission and ministry in a changing Social order*; Orbis Books, New York 1997, 111-112

¹⁵⁹ Ibid

nationalism often plays a critical role in fostering love between the groups. Retelling the history is central to nationalism because it presents us with the origins of the conflict in a clearer and well defined manner. Hence, social reconciliation cannot take place without exploring what past wrongs have been inflicted upon the particular ethnic group.

Reconciliation is not only a matter of healing memories and receiving forgiveness, but also about elimination or changing the structures in society that provoked, promoted and sustained violence. Above all, reconciliation represents most of all a call to humanity to come under the cross of the crucified. The church cannot speak reconciliation without the cross. Therefore, this chapter is going to present the elements of reconciliation which the church can to use bring about healing of memories.

3.5 ELEMENTS OF RECONCILIATION

The researcher does acknowledge that many different scholars have written on reconciliation and each of them had his/her own approach on how reconciliation could be attained in the context of a society in conflict. The researcher presents the following elements of reconciliation in line with Russ Parker's approach propounded in his book "healing wounded history" but the context and the interpretation will differ.

The elements below will be explained in detail later.

- Remembering
- Lamentation
- Confession
- Repentance
- Forgiveness

These five elements will be vital in the process of perpetrators and victims telling their experiences during times of political violence.

3.6 THE NATURE OF STORYTELLING IN RECONCILIATION

It is important for both victims and perpetrators to tell their stories. It will help the listener or the counsellor to have a complete insight of what really happened at the time. It will also help the victims be heard and as they tell their stories, their subconscious mind is simultaneously healed.

3.7 THE DYNAMICS OF RECONCILIATION

3.7.1 REMEMBERING

Reconciliation is like a journey or a process that needs to be followed diligently such that one does not get lost. Remembering is one of the processes which both the victims and the perpetrators should come to terms with. Without accurately remembering what happened in the past, true reconciliation becomes impossible. The past should be told for the future to be certain. Remembering is a process of stepping into either one owns actions or those of the people or groups of which one was part.

It is that disturbing discipline by which we unmask the dark ways in which we have lived in denial of what we or our people have inflicted upon others. If the past is not told, history haunts the victim or the perpetrator, frightening them with the reality so that they feel helpless before this ghost of their past. So remembering is the first step on the journey of reconciliation.¹⁶⁰

3.7.2 LAMENT

Parker describes lament as “the need for others to recognise the wrongness of the acts perpetrated against us”.¹⁶¹ Consequently, lament should be understood here as a language of suffering uttered by the victim and its motive is to appeal to the compassion of the hearer. It is not an isolated groaning or mourning. It is a public outcry and the real importance of the church’s role in reconciliation is to provide a context for this shared recognition of the whole story. Moreover what is important to the victims is that at least justice is achieved. Their cry was heard, and a solution to their pain and hurt has been found.

3.7.3 CONFESSION

Confession is one of the most important elements in the reconciliation process. It is the first step for any Christian who wants fellowship with the Lord. One has to acknowledge that one has sinned and has to confess their sins before the Lord in order to renew their relationship with God. The purpose of owning up that one has done wrong is that the victims of one’s wrongs may enjoy justice and this change will bring about some kind of relationship so that the two parties work together for a better future. An apology, though not valued at first, helps begin the process of healing. “We may well have further demands imposed upon us by those who suffered at our hands, but even if our confession appears to be a small degree in the healing process, the victims would see that we have begun to own our part in their

¹⁶⁰ Russ Parker, *Healing Wounded history; reconciling peoples and healing place*, Darton, Longman and Todd, 2001.83

¹⁶¹ *Ibid*, P. 84

suffering”.¹⁶² In the Zimbabwean context, confession should be made both to the individuals and to the public. The local leadership should be seen to be making public confession, if the nation is to attain peace. The role of leadership in this confession process is very critical as we shall see in the next chapters.

3.7.4 REPENTANCE

There is no reconciliation without repentance. Repentance is a personal response by the individual against a sinful agenda. The individual changes direction from the old pattern of sinful rebellion and destructiveness toward others as well as self.¹⁶³ In this, repentance will help people realise how reconciliation can be achieved. The church teaches that repentance regenerates and renews people’s relationship with the Lord and with others. A new sign of good behavior, peace and love should then manifest in the perpetrators heart. It is possible as God promises that, “If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear... and will forgive their sin and heal their land, (2 Chronicles 7:14, NIV). In addition the church could intercede on behalf of the crying community.

The action of repentance demonstrates the genuineness of confession by walking in newness of life. One has to believe first that God has forgiven them such that they will be able to repent and to forgive others too. The most important aspect in repentance is to live a new life. This will be discussed further in Chapter Six.

3.7.5 FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness means letting go some grievances one has against another who is seen to have offended or hurt him or her. To forget is to choose not to go on with life wanting revenge against another. We do not forgive and forget. To forget is to deny the offence and trivialize our own pain. Actually to forgive is to speak of a great grace and a great judgment.¹⁶⁴ It is a great grace because we are saying that with the help of love and the power of the Lord, one is not pursuing revenge but rather wanting to free the perpetrator from continuing in their destructive pattern of life. At the same time one is pointing out that what was done was very wrong and that the perpetrator must face up to the consequences of what they have done.

¹⁶²

¹⁶³ Ibid

¹⁶⁴ R Parker, Op Cit. P.87

Forgiveness should begin with victims and should not be hurried or offered cheaply because it is the story of one's life that one is sharing. This is why they must not diminish themselves for the sake of a shadow of peace.

In this process, the community should be encouraged to forgive one another. The perpetrators should be encouraged to honestly tell their stories and ask for forgiveness. Both the church leadership and the local political leadership or the president should work towards reconciliation. It is very vital for leadership to learn to say "sorry" on behalf of the community or the nation. The political parties involved would be requested to participate in this journey of forgiveness. The following chapter will show how the process should be executed if reconciliation is to be achieved.

Parker's five elements of reconstruction will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter. The researcher will show how essential these elements are for reconciliation as well as demonstrate their relevance and practicability in an environment of crisis and disharmony. The researcher will show how relevant these are in addressing the plight of the Mberengwa community.

3.8 FORGIVENESS AS A COMPONENT OF THE HEALING OF MEMORIES PROCESS

The process of healing memories discussed earlier is completed through forgiveness. Matthew Linn, S.J and Dennis Linn, reiterate that, healing of memories is completed through the process of forgiveness.¹⁶⁵ To demonstrate this, the Linns use a case study of Agnes and her father who abandoned her for 45 years. She became blind when she was 15 years. Even when she was praying for healing and tried to forget and ignore the painful memories of being abandoned by her father, healing could not take place. She felt the pain of abandonment. Even when she left home to become a nurse, "Agnes always tried to bury this memory because thinking about it made her anxious about her own development. She feared that she hadn't developed properly because she had lived a lonely and isolated existence without the encouragement and support of a loving father".¹⁶⁶ Agnes' healing process,

happened at a weeklong workshop on healing of memories. After the second day of the workshop, Agnes allowed her Father to embrace her in that lonely moment of 45 years ago when she so much needed a father's

¹⁶⁵ Matthew Linn, S.J and Dennis Linn, S.J. Healing life's hurt; Healing Memories through Five Stages of forgiveness, 1978. 30-63

¹⁶⁶ Ibid

love. After Agnes felt the arms of the Father melt her feelings of loneliness and isolation, the Father took her by the hand and invited her to extend that same love to her own father who had died 15 years ago.¹⁶⁷

All this took place during a serious moment of a healing session at the workshop. Thus, Agnes forgave her father even when he was no more. She had to do this for the sake of healing the painful memories she had of him. Forgiving him paved way for her physical healing hence her blindness was also healed. As the writer put it, “may be the Lord had healed her in the workshop as an example to us of the importance of forgiveness and healing of memories”.¹⁶⁸ This also means, forgiveness completes or opens doors for the healing process.

It is the duty of the church to apply the same techniques of organizing healing of memories’ workshops to deal with pain and anger in the Mberengwa community. Workshops would allow people to share their stories as part of the of healing process although this cannot be achieved overnight. It is true that deep anger and bitterness hinder development in life and robs people of their joy, peace and happiness. “True, the healing of my eyes is wonderful, but the deep healing of memories I have had with my father is beyond any blessing I have ever experienced or expected to experience. I can now thank God for the blindness I had for I realized through it, I was inspired with this retreat which has brought me true memory healing, true happiness and peace”,¹⁶⁹ Agnes confessed.

This case study demonstrates that, true forgiveness and confession bring about complete healing of memories rather than trying to bury anger and bitterness in ones sub-conscious. For Agnes, her bitter memories about her father which before had made her anxious and fearful transformed into inexplicable joy and happiness after forgiveness was “beyond any blessing”. The Linns explained further why people should deal with anger and fear. Their observation was that, refusal to deal with anger and fear can trigger physical illness.

3.9 THE CHURCH’S INVOLVEMENT IN THE SOCIAL LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY

Emmanuel Y Lartey argues that, “Scientific status and particularly the sub discipline of psychotherapy offered a feasible, social and scientifically acceptable alternative to religion in dealing with the perplexities of life”.¹⁷⁰ In other words Lartey is saying, psychotherapy as

¹⁶⁷ Ibid

¹⁶⁸ Ibid

¹⁶⁹ ibid

¹⁷⁰ E. Y. Lartey, Op. Cit.p.81-88

science should be implored as a way of physiotherapy in religion when addressing problems of distress. Religion in pastoral counselling has to deal with the problem of the mind. Thus, scientific figures play an important part in pastoral counseling of distressed people. In the same vein, Lartey quoted A Halmsa as saying, “the values and ideas espoused by the counseling professional seemed well suited for a post-Christian post political society.”¹⁷¹ Lartey in his discussion pointed out that counseling is a component of pastoral care and pastoral counseling is vital in times when one is confused and wounded. If it adopted this strategy, the Church would register its existence in the community. Therefore the Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe is challenged to play its core ministerial role in Mberengwa. The core values of the church are to focus on the individual that it is the dignity, worth and uniqueness of each person as an individual and this is what lies at the heart of the pastoral care theory.

Clebech and Jackle define pastoral care as consisting of helping acts erected by representatives of Christian persons, directed toward the healing, sustaining, guiding and reconciling of troubled persons, where troubles arise in the context of ultimate means and concern.¹⁷² The writers highlighted a number of elements in the definition. They raised the issue of historical and social factors, when they pointed out that pastoral care is defined by helping acts that are undertaken by the Church through its diaconia ministry. The definition alluded to troubled people. This implies the implementation of a problem-solving approach with definitive techniques. Lartey, reiterated Clinebell’s definition of pastoral care and counseling as involving the utilization by persons in the healing ministry of one-to-one or small group relationships to enable healing empowerment and growth to take place. Pastoral care is the broad and inclusive ministry of mutual healing and growth within the congregation and its community using the life cycle. Life cycle refers to the catechumenal process used on initiation of new members, into the church. This means that, pastoral care according to Clinebell is a duty of the Christian Church. Therefore, the Lutheran Church in Mberengwa as a Christian entity was and is supposed to use the tools proposed above to heal wounded memories and solve other socio-economic ills faced by the people. Consequently, pastoral care as a mediatory tool will be explored in this research.

¹⁷¹ Ibid

¹⁷² Clebech W. A. and Jackle C. R. Pastoral Care in Historical Perspective. New York: Harper. (1967).4

3.10 THREE MODELS OF PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral care is an expression of human concern through action, whereby pastoral caregivers have a concern for what meets the eye about human persons as well as what lies deeply buried within them.¹⁷³ In other words pastoral care addresses the heartfelt desire for humanity to be truly and fully human. It is an all-encompassing passion for all people to live to the fullest of their potential. Theologically, this is confirmed by Jesus when he says, “I have come that they may have life and may have it in its fullness”.¹⁷⁴ Thus pastoral care has to do with the holistic well-being of humanity.

Pastoral care can be offered at different levels, for instance; during celebrations, or times of mourning or in difficult times such as the ones the Mberengwa society has been subjected to.

The researcher will explore three models of pastoral care as highlighted by Lartey in trying to reconcile communal relationships and enable healing, empowerment and growth to take place in Mberengwa.

The three models are:

- (i) Pastoral care as therapy
- (ii) Pastoral care as ministry
- (iii) Pastoral care as empowerment

These three models do not imply mutual exclusivity of any overlapping models of pastoral care. They imply complementarily in the necessary task of problem-solving and settling of communal relationships of a troubled community. The three models will be explored in detail in Chapter Six.

3.11 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT: A WINDOW TO DEVELOPMENT

The Mberengwa people have been quiet about their pain and hurtful experiences for a long time. This is not because they have forgotten about their experiences of the political violence at different junctures in the political history of Zimbabwe. Flora A Keshgegian reminds people that, many abused survivors hide their memories deep in their minds, soul and bodies. Often, marginalized and dispossessed groups do not know enough of their histories to give voice to their story because their past has been subsumed under “master narratives” written

¹⁷³ Ibid

¹⁷⁴ John 10:10, NIVI.

by historical winners and dominants.¹⁷⁵ Thus, the process of remembering must find its origin in silence and silencing”.¹⁷⁶ Shona people say that, *fuma yavanyerere inodyiwa navakangwara*. The proverb literary means, the wealth of vulnerable people is exploited by the crafty ones. Thus, the history of wounded people is being manipulated and misrepresented and sometimes for the benefit of those who document it.

Keshgegian explained it well in her book that in a historical context, when telling the stories of women’s history and the claiming of their own histories by groups of people struggling against oppression and toward liberation of marginalized women of remembering anew, to remember as persons, as society and as a religion are critical functions. People who have been marginalized in society and whose voices have been suppressed are seeking to uncover their past in order to claim the present in different ways and to change the future.¹⁷⁷ She went on to explain the historical context of these people “as a melting pot in the society in which instead of their grievances being listened to, they were blended with those of other societies with different cultures as a way of assimilating them such that they forget their past and their culture.¹⁷⁸ Assimilation means conformity with a dominant culture and narratives that serve the interests of the dominant. What is being said by Keshgegian in her book precisely represents what happened in the Zimbabwean political crisis

What happened on 22 December 1988 and is popularly referred to as the Unity Accord between PF ZAPU and ZANU PF and is still celebrated to date was just blending together of parties. There was never a process of healing that took place. Those who were wounded are still “hung up”, and they are bound and held in a vicelike grip and stuck”.¹⁷⁹ The act was a mere assimilation of parties and it was aimed at swallowing of one party for the benefit of the ruling party. Hence, assimilation means conforming to the dominant party and its narratives that serve the interests not of the marginalized and disenfranchised, but of whom ever is already in power and intends to stay there forever.

The other fascinating point raised by Keshgegian is the redefining of the concept of pastoral care so that it becomes relevant to today’s challenges. She challenges the church to be relevant to the community that it is operating in, in a way that is inclusive, liberating and

¹⁷⁵ Flora A Keshgegian, *Redeeming Memories; (A Theology of Healing and Transformation*, Abingdon Press, Marlow; 2000. P.18

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid

¹⁷⁸ Ibid

¹⁷⁹ David A Seamands, *Op. Cit.* p.63.

transforming. The definition needs to give the church a new face that will change the way it does things such as witnessing and practice. The impetus for such change often comes from those who have been excluded, suffered and deemed powerless. In the Zimbabwean context however, these are the survivors and victims of political violence. She pointed out that, “the church’s remembering ought to attend particularly and preferentially to those who are and have been victimized”.¹⁸⁰ Hence healing of memories should be a church’s pastoral care model of a care giver to wounded communities. It has also to attend to the mute such as long suffering people who have been silenced by pain and anger. The concept of redefining the church’s role in the healing of memories model will be further explored in the research analysis chapter.

3.12 AN EXAMPLE OF A WINDOW TO THE HEALING PROCESS

The researcher reviewed Larry Miller’s document on healing of memories as an example of the reconciliation process that took place between Lutherans and Mennonites.

The document highlighted the relationship that was taken for granted between the two Christian groups. Lutherans had sidelined Anabaptist and made him a target of its condemnation in the sixteenth century. This resulted in the state persecution of members of Anabaptist. The act caused serious damage both physically and emotionally to this Christian group from then up to 2010. However, what was interesting was, though the pain had been inflicted 450 years before, the wounds were still fresh and traceable. Since December 1526 after the conviction and the brutal killing of the members of the “Free Church” (Anabaptist) by “State churches reformers” (Lutherans) dialogue between them started.¹⁸¹ This dialogue did not yield significant results until 1980 when the Lutherans both in Germany and France invited Mennonites’ representatives to participate in ecumenical festivities in the countries marking the 450th Anniversary of the Augsburg Confession (confession Augustana) which was the Lutheran Confession condemning the persecution of the Anabaptists. How could the wounded Mennonites celebrate their own condemnation? The wounds and anger of the 16th century were revived. Little did the Lutheran leaders know that Mennonites were deeply moved and angry. The focal point of this case study is, the effects of wounds that took 450 years to heal because they were not attended to timeously. Generation after generation inherited these wounds up until the Lutherans became conscious of this scourge and then seriously engaged in dialogue with the Mennonites. It was this that then led to a repentance

¹⁸⁰ F. A. Keshgegian, *Op. Cit.* 2000, p. 207

¹⁸¹ Larry Miller, *Lutheran Dialogue with Mennonites: An Example of a Dialogue of Free Church a Postscript of Vision of Unity.* 2011

and reconciliation ritual service that took place at the Lutheran World Federation's 11th Assembly in July 2010 in Germany.¹⁸²

This embarrassing experience of the Lutheran church should not be repeated. The Lutheran leadership as the dominant denomination in Mberengwa should attend to the wounds and pains inflicted on the people by post-independence political violence.

Some wounds live on and others are passed on from generation to generation unless a healing process is affected. The moral of this story is that, not all wounds heal at once but with time they can. It will be much better to solve a problem in its infancy rather than leave it to fester and worsen.

3.13 EMPTING THE GRIEF

The literature under review reveals the extent to which violence can damage human relationships and the communal set-up.

Ian A. Nell in his article, Practical theology as healing of memories critical reflection on a specific methodology, points out that, if post-conflict relationships are not attended to, they can divide the nation and hinder any development in the country or community.¹⁸³ Ian further highlighted that if people were to become one nation living together in harmony, they would have to listen to one another's stories. Some would begin to set-up safe and sacred spaces where people could speak and listen with the heart to one another and where they could vomit out the poison which had filled their hearts.¹⁸⁴ In a way Nell is saying living with wounds and grieved hearts destroys communal relationships.

He further cited Lapsley, the Director of the Institute for Healing of Memories as saying, he became aware of the importance of giving people space in which their experiences could be told and acknowledged. He realized this as he deeply listened to the victims and survivors of the apartheid violence in South Africa. Consequently he became aware that healing of memories is a process that takes time to show positive results. For instance, South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) 1996-1997, during its investigations discovered that victims and survivors were still grieved and the healing of memories campaign by the commission was the "driving force in developing healing of memories' workshops as an

¹⁸² The writer of this research witnessed the service as she was a one of the delegates to this assembly.

¹⁸³ Ian A Nell in his article Practical theology as healing of memories Critical reflection on a specific methodology 2011

¹⁸⁴ Ibid

alternative support for victims and survivors”.¹⁸⁵ Even though Nell did not completely combat the pain and hurt of all victims and survivors of violence, his methodology opened an opportunity for people concerned to empty their grieved hearts.

These “Healing of Memories workshops” inter alia helped individuals and groups to remember the apartheid years and venture into healing their inner wounds. Nell, in his methodology of healing of memories workshops, described the vision of the institute as seeking the healing of individuals, communities and nations whilst their mission is a commitment to facilitating the healing process of individuals and communities in South Africa and internationally. These workshops helped people in remembering the apartheid years and healing the wounds, remembering the past by celebrating that which was life giving and burying to rest that which was destructive. To achieve this, they worked in partnership with others who shared their vision.

It seems Nell’s methodology worked very well and was helpful in the South African situation. In the Zimbabwean situation this methodology might work but, in addition, research must explore the methodology that was suggested by the public during church and civil society out-reaches. The methodology that reconciliation and healing process should be done by the Church as it is the natural entity. Since then however, nothing was implemented and no follow-ups were made.

3.14 THE CHURCH’S RESPONSE TO ZIMBABWE’S POLITICAL CRISIS

Matikiti in his PhD thesis highlighted that, from the nineteenth century to the twenty-first century, Zimbabweans experienced political violence and this became most intense during the Gukurahundi era.¹⁸⁶ Like other writers on the Zimbabwean political crisis, Matikiti focused on Gukurahundi that was conducted by the state with the aid of its North Korean trained army. The army killed about 20 000 people in Matabeleland and the Midlands provinces alone. No one, not even the government, ever attended to these atrocities. Matikiti pointed out that the church responded by writing pastoral letters only, while on the ground violence intensified. During the 2000 parliamentary elections, land reform, Murambasvina, the harmonized elections of 2005 and 2008, hundreds of opposition supporters were killed, homes were burnt and women and girls were raped. None of the Churches in Zimbabwe took the government to task. Matikiti argues that, “Sermons in some churches continued to focus

¹⁸⁵ Ibid

¹⁸⁶ Christian theological perspectives on political violence in Zimbabwe: The case of United church of Christ in Zimbabwe, May, 2012.

mainly on how to go to heaven at the expense of addressing political violence and the fundamental part of the mission of the church”.¹⁸⁷ In a way Matikiti was trying to provoke the religious community to challenge the status 'quo in times of political crisis. The writer raised important issues in his thesis about political violence and the invisibility of the church. He also commended the work done by the CCJP of making noise condemning violence.

3.15 CONCLUSION

The various themes raised in this chapter are going to provide the basis for the research. David Seamands, the Linns and Miller, just to mention a few, highlighted in their writings that time alone cannot heal hurt and hearts broken by painful experiences, which may become imbedded in the people's subconscious mind. These painful memories continue to cause emotional and spiritual damage on the individuals. These memories could be treated with a special spiritual therapy known as “memory healing”. Schreiter argued that forgiveness and reconciliation involved at least two parties coming together in mutual respect and dialoguing, rather than assuming that healing would take place with time. Schreiter pointed out that; the church was better placed to bring about social reconciliation. It is known that one may forgive and not reconcile. The ministry of reconciliation represents most of all a call to come under the cross of the crucified. Thus, the church cannot speak of reconciliation without the cross. The church's mission on earth and moral place in society is to reconcile and heal the memories of victims and the oppressed. Paul says, “Therefore, we are ambassadors of Christ, God is making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God”¹⁸⁸ Reconciliation is a daily exercise because human being miss their path or good standing with God and with one another, so it is like taking a bath regularly. They need things to be right again. They are happy when relations are going well. God has initiated reconciliation through Christ, so Christians should be imitators of Christ. To reconcile is more than to say 'I am sorry' but to also resolve in your heart that you want a new start. This power of reconciliation is that it can happen every single day and it should work in the Mberengwa context.

Books and documents reviewed above point to that after going through traumatic experience, reconciliation, forgiveness and healing of broken hearts are important. It is also true that the task of reconciliation cannot be limited to the Church alone but other civil organizations and

¹⁸⁷ Ibid

¹⁸⁸ 2 Corinthians 5:20

the state all have a stake. However this study seeks to focus on the role of the Church with specific reference to the Lutheran Church in Mberengwa District.

4.0 CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, EMPIRICAL RESEARCH AND PILOT INTERVIEWS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher will outline the research methodology, including interviews and research findings. She will provide an explanation of the empirical method used to elicit information from the clergy and lay people regarding their understanding of violence and possible ways of healing victims of violence in the Zimbabwean context.

The first chapter of this study has made it clear that the research method will be qualitative. It also outlined the advantages of the qualitative compared to the quantitative method. The interesting part of this research is the church's endeavour in healing memories as a pastoral care model. Therefore it rallies on the deep story-telling procedure to come up with an informative account. The researcher will explain what qualitative research means.

4.2 THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The focus of this research is on communal and church endeavors to bring about the healing of memories to the people of Mberengwa. The research wants to come-up with a pastoral model that can be used to respond to the wounded community of the area under investigation.

J.S. Dreyer, in his book pointed out seven general qualitative research characteristics;

- (i) the participant as a researcher
- (ii) the emphasis on the participants interpretation
- (iii) it is descriptive
- (iv) the importance of the context in which the research is undertaken is important
- (v) its attention on the dynamic nature of life
- (vi) it is free and open
- (vii) individual cases are not generalized¹⁸⁹

These seven characteristics of qualitative research should be taken seriously. The perception of people who were engaged in this study will be respected while the researcher's own views or beliefs will also add to the qualitative nature of the research. This is what distinguishes the qualitative method compared to the quantitative where the researcher takes the stance of an outsider.¹⁹⁰ In this process both the researcher and participants have the right to ask questions and request for clarifications and interpret views or responses. Alven Illionis Jacob agrees that, the narrative unfolds as story tellers and research participants recount their life stories to

¹⁸⁹ J S Dreyer, op. Cit.p.16

¹⁹⁰ Alarm Bryman, "The Debate about Quantitative and Qualitative Research," "Qualitative Research Volume 1. Eds. Alan Bryman and Robert G. Burgess. London: Sage, 1999.:38

a listener and explanatory measurer are applied as the teller and listener work together to gain a holistic understanding.¹⁹¹ Thus, the participants own the data collected from them and can interpret it better than anyone else.

4.3 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

This section qualifies what the researcher means by qualitative research. According to Mouton methodological aspects are concerned with what may be called the “how” of social sciences research.¹⁹² Thus, the aspects refer to how research should be planned, structured and executed to comply with social science. Research methodology uses different approaches such as sociological survey, interviews, questionnaires and observations. The researcher used the qualitative research method which “tends to keep field notes as they participate in the field work”.¹⁹³ Qualitative researchers look for ways to understand people in very natural ways. It is a way which tries to describe and analyze how people live within their natural habitations. This is about how people live. This kind of research looks at the ideas, theories, themes, concepts and all other possible ways to understand people for better enhancement of their life.¹⁹⁴ Thus, in this kind of research the researcher becomes an insider, unlike quantitative research where the researcher adopts the stance of an outsider.

The qualitative research method has its roots in social science. It has a history which is important both to itself and to the extent of shaping the present.¹⁹⁵ Furthermore, the qualitative method serves a variety of purposes that range from the desire to change some community features to become relevant for its people. The other purpose is of allowing individuals to narrate their stories while being listened to. Thus, this research method values individual experiences and sentiments of research subjects, how people live, feel and view certain contexts.¹⁹⁶ The writer contends that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings in an attempt to make sense of phenomena in terms of the meaning that the people bring to them.

The qualitative method also seeks to understand a given research problem from the perspective of the local population involved. It achieves this through scrutinising the

¹⁹¹ Jacobs, Alvean Illinois. “Disabled Identities”, pastoral work with people who are mobility impaired (Pretoria: Unisa, Dissertation, 2004.152

¹⁹²Mouton J. Basic Concepts in the methodology of social sciences, Human sciences Research Council, HSRC Publishers Pretoria, 2001.15

¹⁹³ Mouton 2001:107

¹⁹⁴ Mouton 2001:161

¹⁹⁵ Carol A.B. Warren and Tracy Xavier Karner, Op. Cit. p. 2

¹⁹⁶ Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y. S (eds.). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994.2

participants' experiences with the aim of finding or unveiling hidden information that would help the researcher come up with relevant solutions to problems.

4.4.1 THE SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Sampling is defined as “the selection of research participants from an entire population and involves decisions about which people, settings, events, behaviors and /or social processes to observe”.¹⁹⁷ The participants were sampled from the Mberengwa community which is the study area. They were selected due to their experiences of political violence. Others were selected according to their role in the community. Bishops and Deans have roles in the church and community as leaders. Another presupposition was that Church leaders are apolitical and they stand for justice. Hence, the researcher would not only rely on information from victims and survivors. The independent voice was imperative.

In this case, sampling means representatives of certain groups of people on whom the research focuses and aims to draw conclusions from. A criterion for selections of the participants depends on the attentive purpose of the research problem. The samples may be picked randomly or non-randomly. The samples can be conveniently randomly and purposefully chosen.¹⁹⁸ The number of participants depends on the nature of the problem under investigation. Again it also depends on the researcher's access to larger numbers of participants and research resources. What is important in sampling is to meet the intended goal and objectives of the research topic. In this study, the researcher selected one Bishop one Dean, two pastors and two parishioners. Among the clergy and parishioners selected were victims of political violence in the district under study. The gender of the clergy was both male and female as the researcher is gender sensitive. Again, the contributions of women in dealing with community problems are imperative.

4.4.2 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The research used semi-structured questionnaires and unstructured interviews as research instruments. Mouton and Hofstee point out that a questionnaire is an instrument that comprises a series of questions that are to be filled in by respondents themselves. Thus, the respondents respond independently. No outside influence was allowed. This helped the researcher to come-up with an authentic and original study document that would be used in

¹⁹⁷ Durrheim Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y. S (eds.). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks,CA: Sage, 1994.2

¹⁹⁷ Durrheim, K & Painter D. *Collecting quantitative data: Sampling and measuring in Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences*. 2nd revised edition, edited by M Terre Blanche, K Durrheim, & D Painter, D. Rondebosch: UCT Press. 2006.49

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.p.50.

the process of healing pains and wounds. Questions were organized by the researcher to lobby information from the clergy and parishioners. The questions were open-ended to elicit as much information from respondents. In order to get church leadership's response such as from Bishops and Deans, dissimilar questionnaires were designed and marked, "Semi-structured Questionnaire to Church Leadership". Furthermore, the structured interviews were modified from other categories, since respondents would be asked to give the church's position in view of the research question.

The questionnaires for Bishops and Deans had two sections and each section had five questions, whereas, questionnaires for pastors and parishioners had eight sections, where by the first four sections required personal background and the last four required political violence experiences. In this reason the questionnaire was employed as the main research instrument for several reasons. The instrument is the most effective tool for collecting objective data. Questionnaires are organized in a systematic way for the purpose of eliciting information from respondents.¹⁹⁹

Open-ended questions are ably the most appropriate technique for obtaining information from subjects of research. They allow the researcher to make more accurate assessment of what the respondents really believe.²⁰⁰ In a broader way, open-ended questions give respondents freedom to say whatever they want to share independently or not. Open-ended questions or any other situations which require written responses have limitations in case of illiterate respondents, but this need not be since the researcher is the one who selects the respondents. Mulwa argues that the most effective healing process is best developed using information elicited from open-ended questions.²⁰¹

4.4.3 DATA GATHERING

Data for this study was collected using the ecclesiastical structures within the Mberengwa community. Questionnaires were distributed to the pastors and parishioners in the district. The researcher made arrangements with the Dean in the area to facilitate the collection of questionnaires from their subordinates. The researcher then assessed the questionnaires at the church offices in Mberengwa District. Questionnaires were completed within a given time

¹⁹⁹ Mulwa, F.W. Participatory Monitoring And Evaluation Of Community Projects: Community Based Project Monitoring Qualitative Impact Assessment And People Friendly Evaluation Methods. Nairobi: Zapf Chancery Eldoret, Kenya and P Olivex Publishers.2006.86. Muranda, Z. Dissertation Writing: Concepts and ractice. Harare: University Of imbabwe.2005.54. Mouton J. How to Succeed in Your Master's & Doctoral Studies: A South African Guide and Resource Book. Pretoria: Van Sheik Publishers.2006.48

²⁰⁰ Mulwa F.w. Op Cit. p.87

²⁰¹ Mulwa F.w. Op Cit.p.88.

and were collected. The researcher ticked a distribution list to make sure that all copies of questionnaires were collected and to determine the number of those that had not been returned.

Hundred percent of the questionnaires were returned since the number of respondents was minimal. Unstructured interviews were conducted at ecclesial offices for clarifications.

4.4.4 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The data presentation and analysis were qualitative in nature. Questionnaires had a mixture of closed and open-ended questions. The open-ended questions solicited qualitative responses that were presented and analysed qualitatively. The information from open-ended questions required a thematic approach. The themes were derived from the objectives and research questions.

The interviews used English as the medium of communication since the Bishop, Dean and pastors are professionals who are conversant with the language. Laity interviewed were both teachers. As explained in the methodology, interviews were held at Diocesan and Parish centres away from all forms of interference since the research topic is a sensitive subject to violence perpetrators.

The researcher would explain the community's ideal of working together as one against a common enemy as imbedded in the traditions of the people. In Shona it is called *kukomberana mambure*. According to this concept, the Shona people in Mberengwa used to come together when they faced a common problem in order to combat it. For instance, in case of a funeral the community comes together and contributes whatever each family has, be it food, equipment, human resources as long as they were needed in the burial process of the deceased member. The concept of *kukomberana mambure* derived from the hunting method in which *vavhimi* (hunters), in order to catch a big animal, collectively surrounded the animal and pushed it into the *mambure* (nets). This way, they did not miss it. The community's healing process requires the involvement of all members of the community. This research adopted this strategy to effectively come up with an effective tool for the process of healing of memories of the community under study.

4.5 EMPIRICAL PILOT RESEARCH

Three subjects were interviewed using the structured interview in order to determine its appropriateness. The other plan of the pilot research was to find out whether the questions

were objective, understandable and clear. This was done in very simple and understandable language and referred to subjects' life experiences. Again the researcher wanted to see how freely people would respond to such sensitive issues. The pilot interview was also undertaken to test the level of difficulty of the questions before conducting the actual research. It was also undertaken to ensure that ethical issues that related to participants as highlighted in Chapter One were taken care of.

4.5.1 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

The concept of *kukomberana mambure* alluded to above hinges on the submission that, in life one does not exist in isolation. Using the example given in the preceding section, it is difficult to manage a funeral as an individual. In even though today families pre-arrange for their funerals, the *kukomberana mambure* concept is still valid. One still needs immediate assistance with the funeral arrangements. The family still needs the cooperation of the community. Similarly, the concept of coming together to find solutions to common problems and implement them as one is an integral part of communal life. Problem solving need not be the preserve of the educated elite but lies within the ordinary community members. Community members have special skills of solving problems within the framework of their settings. There is a Shona proverb which says, “*wapunyaira haashayi misodzi*” meaning, there is no problem without a solution as long as people sit together and talk about it. In communal settings, there are people who are really talented when it comes to solving problems. The concept of *kukomberana mambure* can be applied as a tool for reconciliation and healing of memories.

4.5.2 THE PILOT STUDY

This is the important part of the research. It is not wise for the researcher to be “overly hasty to get to the main investigation ignoring the pilot study. Mc, Burney pointed out that, the temptation to skip the pilot phase should be resisted because a little effort can greatly increase the precision of the study”.²⁰² Mc. Burney also pointed out that, the research process is to be done as it is supposed to be. Since, “a pilot study is defined as the process whereby the researcher’s design for a prospective survey is tested, the pilot study can be regarded as a small scale trial run of all the aspects planned for use in the main inquiry”.²⁰³

²⁰² Mc Brunnery D.H. Research method Wadsworth Thomson Learning. London, 2001.228-229

²⁰³ As de Vos Research at Grass Roots: For the social sciences and human service professions, Second edition, Van Schaik, Publishers, Pretoria,2003.211

The pilot study helps the researcher fine-tune the study for the main inquiry. Bless and Higson Smith defined a pilot study as “A small study conducted prior to a large piece of research to determine whether the methodology, sampling, instruments and analysis are adequate and appropriate”.²⁰⁴ Therefore, one can interpret the purpose of a pilot study as a prior investigation on how to walk through the entire study design. Higsamen cited by As de Vos, views the purpose of a pilot study as an investigation of the feasibility of the planned project, as well as bringing possible deficiencies in the measurements procedure to the fore”.²⁰⁵ Definitions and explanations above point to that, a pilot study is a necessary sequel to the main research although a research may be well prepared for the practical unknown factor for which it is entered into. De Vos highlighted the other importance of a pilot study as, “Preliminary exploratory studies are especially important with a view to the practical planning of the research project, such as transport, finance and the time factor”.²⁰⁶ Again, all apparatus such as audio tapes and cameras need to be tested. De Vos also highlighted another vital function of the pilot study as alerting the researcher of possible unforeseen problems that could emerge during the main investigation.²⁰⁷

4.5.3 KUKOMBERANA MAMBURE; A GUIDE TO THE INTERVIEW

The interview was carried out in English as most respondents were able to read and understand the language. There were two sets of questions. The first set was for both pastors and laity and the second set was for the church leadership that is: the Bishop and Dean. All participants would see the questions for the first time; therefore, there was no prior answer preparation. All the answers they would give would be off the cuff.

4.5.4 THE STRUCTURE OF THE QUESTIONS

The first semi- structured interviews were divided into seven sections, A-G. The first section covered the individual’s background. Section B covered educational information, Section C employment, Section D political victims’ details, Section E health information, Section F1 conflicts’ related information and Section F2 response by the church to the conflict. Lastly, Section G required information about the present situation in Mberengwa.

²⁰⁴Bless and Higson Smith, *Fundamentals of social research methods; an African perspective* 2nded. Cape Town, Juta, 2000.55

²⁰⁵ As de Vos *Research at Grass Roots: Op. Cit.* p.212

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid. 2003;2013

Section A, B and C require personal details for the sake of the information that would benefit the research, therefore, the researcher wrote down all questions from Section D, E, F1, F2 and G as follows:

Section D Political Victims' details

- (a) Were you a victim of political violence? If not who was?
- (b) What kind of abuse was perpetrated?
- (c) How often was this abuse experienced?
- (d) Were there any casualties? Explain.
- (e) Were you affiliated to any political party? Explain.
- (f) Do you want to participate in the healing of memories process? If Yes explain how you would prefer it done.

Section E: Health

- a.) Did you or any other victims suffer bodily harm?
- b.) Were you or others hospitalised and for how long?
- c.) Was it easy to get medication? Explain
- d.) Was the nursing staff ready to help?

Section F. 1: Conflict

- (a) What would you say was the cause of conflict in your area?
- (b) What are the causes of the conflicts in your area?
- (c) What were the consequences of this conflict?
- (d) What do you think can restore harmony in your community?

Section F2: Response of the church to the conflict

- a.) Was the Church in any way involved in the crisis? Explain
- b.) What role did the Church leadership play in this situation? Explain?
- c.) What was the local Church's response to this situation?

Section G: Present Situation

- a.) What is the situation as of now?
- b.) Is the environment conducive to affiliating to a political party of own choice?

- c.) Is the environment right for people to discuss issues of peace and reconciliation?
- d.) What do you think the political situation will be like in the next 5 years?
- e.) Make any comments about your personal experience during any political violence episode.

The other set of semi-structured questions had two sections of which Section B was supposed to elicit a lot of information to do with the research. Therefore, the researcher wrote down all questions in this section as follows;

Section B:

- a.) Has there been any political violence in your Diocese/ Deanery? Explain
- a.) If yes, what do you think is/are the root cause(s)?
- b.) Have any of your members been involved in political violence and conflict? Yes/No
- c.) What measures did you take as a Church leader to resolve this situation? Explain.
- d.) Were any of your pastors or congregants victimised or abused during this political violence? Yes/No.
- e.) What problems did you encounter in trying to resolve this situation with the political leadership in your area?
- f.) Do you have any theological strategies that you think can bring about peace, reconciliation and healing memories?
If yes explain.
- g.) Are you ready as a Church leader to confront the political leadership in your area and those who were perpetrators of violence to discuss peace and reconciliation?
If No explain, if Yes explain.

You can use separate sheets for your answers

4.5.5 KUKOMBERANA MAMBURE (Community Collaboration in Solving Problems)

All the above questions for laity and clergy were seeking solutions for the healing of memories process in the Mberengwa community. Therefore, questions in Section D required the respondents' involvement in the political violence either as a victim or as a close witness or political activist. In other words the questions sought the respondents' political violence experience which they had to share off-hand. Section E sought the respondents' experiences at hospitals/clinics they visited due to injuries sustained. This included the help they received

from the hospital staff including hospital Chaplains since most hospitals in Mberengwa were Lutheran run.

Section F1's questions wanted to test whether participants were able to discern what caused the conflict in this community. Respondents were part of the affected community; therefore, they could come-up with peace initiatives relevant to this community. Political violence might have been exacerbated by differences in culture and tradition since Mberengwa has a mixture of different ethnic groups. Thus, the element of community participation in the process of healing of past experiences could contribute to a lasting solution since the community might know where the problem is rooted and who should be taken to task. Community participation is supposed to involve all stakeholders. In Shona they say, *Chara chimwe hachitswanyi inda*. (one fingernail cannot kill a lice) Thus, the healing, peace and reconciliation process needs the participation of all stakeholders in Mberengwa district.

Again Section F2 was meant to test the church's response to the political violence that happened in the community under scrutiny. The presence of the church in this community is a great advantage to the residents in terms of the provision of pastoral care and fostering of unity amongst members. Section G sought the views of the respondents on the current situation to establish whether the environment allowed people to discuss political issues publicly regardless of political affiliations. Respondents were asked to predict the political situation of Mberengwa in the next five years.

All questions asked were probing for details of the respondents' memories of what happened during the times of political unrest.

Again questions (a) to (f) of Section B on Church leadership interviews wanted respondents to state whether they were political activists or not and to share their stories about what happened during the time of political unrest.

Questions (g) and (h) required the church's response to politically motivated violence and to ascertain its readiness to engage victims as well as perpetrators in the peace and reconciliation process. Community participation in the healing memories process is as important as the role of the doctor when diagnosing a disease and giving prescription for treatment. There is no legitimate solution to any community's problems without the community's involvement.

4.6 REPORT ON THE PILOT INTERVIEW

Three participants were interviewed to test the research tools. The researcher chose a dean, a pastor and a lay-person. The reasons for choosing them were that; the dean was representing the church leadership in the community under review and the pastor and lay-person were victims of political violence. The other reason was that, the researcher did not have to interrogate them in order for them to share their stories. Instead, they voluntarily shared their life experiences. Real names of the three participants will not be revealed nor any clue to the village or parish do they come from given. Confidentiality is essential due to complexities that result from any political unrest or its potential volatility. Revealing of real names may put participants' life at risk.

The three participants interviewed would be referred to as Dean A, Pastor B and Mr C. Fortunately, there are more than one dean and pastors in this community though all subjects are Lutheran. The researcher enjoyed listening to and thanked the participants for agreeing to talk about their experiences. All three participants could read and understand English.

Mr. C. was the first to be interviewed at his pastor's office, but the pastor did not become one of the participants in this research to allow for a geographical spread of this research. Fortunately, all the three participants can read and understand English. Mr C. explained that he was not an activist of any party, but he was accused of supporting an opposition party. Mr C and his wife were beaten and tortured before a crowd. As if that was not enough, the perpetrators went on to burn his three huts including a granary. In the process of sharing his painful experience, Mr C sobbed and confessed, "I wonder if God is still in defence of the innocent".²⁰⁸ He remained quiet for some moments then he continued, "Torture was a daily practice especially towards elections. What pains me a lot is that local people were the ones who were perpetrators in all this deadly practice. They accused me of disloyalty and threatened to kill me".²⁰⁹

Pastor B was married and stayed with her family. The husband was employed as a teacher and was an activist in one of the opposition parties. Furthermore, he was a business person in that same area. Pastor B was accused of campaigning for her husband's party. Pastor B poured out her emotions as she shared her experiences. She bitterly lamented that, "there are

²⁰⁸ Interviews held on 8 February 2014 at one of ELCZ parishes in Mberengwa district

²⁰⁹ Interviews held on 8 February 2014 at one of ELCZ parishes in Mberengwa district

some people who declared war against me. I don't know how to handle them and I am not sure of how we are going to relate with each other, God help me".²¹⁰ While narrating how ordered pastor B was squeezing the deep scar that had not yet completely healed since the 2008 election violence. She continued,

I am a pastor I never attended any political meetings of any party in my life, but I am accused of campaigning for an opposition party. This pains me a lot. What pains me most is that people who are behind my accusations are Christians. That is the reason why I was transferred from that parish (she mentioned the name of the parish) after my husband's death two years ago.²¹¹

During the 2008 political persecution, her husband was kidnapped for two weeks and was nowhere to be found. For the two weeks he was in the hands of persecutors, the perpetrators looted goods from his shops. When the researcher asked a follow up question as to why the perpetrators did not burn their shops and home like they did to other victims, her response was; their shops were attached to other shops owned by ruling party senior members. Her husband died three years after as a result of political violence injuries and effects.

The third respondent was the dean who in his narration confirmed the experience of Pastor B. He said,

Besides the *gukurahundi* atrocities and political violence of 2005 to 2013, the worst human persecution occurred between 2008 and 2010, during which serious beatings, torture, burning of homes, killings and also amputations of people's limbs were committed. In some cases, the church and members of the community were refused involvement in the burial of people who were killed as a result of political violence. If they insisted on burying them as a church they were perceived to be supporters of the opposition party. However the church would override all restrictions when it was one of their members killed. It fought hard to bury its members.²¹²

4.7 THEMES THAT CAME-UP FROM THE PILOT RESEARCH

Two themes came up from the pilot research. What was clear was the existence of painful memories of the elections violence and these that still haunt people. The role of the Church as the provider of both pastoral care and as a communal organiser is challenged.

²¹⁰ Interviews held on 9 February, 2014, at one of ELCZ parishes in Mberengwa district

²¹¹ Interviews held on 9 February, 2014, at one of ELCZ parishes in Mberengwa district

²¹² ELCZ Dean interviewed at His Deanery office in Mberengwa on 9 February, 2014

4.7.1 PAINFUL MEMORIES IN PEOPLE’S LIVES

Stories of the three participants revealed that there are still painful wounds in individuals and the community at large. According to the way they expressed their feelings, it was clear to the researcher that the community is still suffering the pain of persecution in one way or another. Even the Dean who represented the church seemed to be still grieving. The researcher, shocked by the extent of the pain and grief of the subjects wondered whether the silence by the Lutheran Church in particular was a result of lack of awareness of this trauma or wilful neglect of its mandate. Although days, months and years are passing by, unless the community speaks out, the pain of these people will remain a thorn in the flesh. There is a shona saying, “*Zimunzwa rakabaira mundove*”. The saying means a hidden agenda can balloon small issues into disproportionate dimensions.

The truth of this is demonstrated by the story of Naboth’s death;

So the men of his city, the elders and nobles who were inhabitants of his city did as Jezebel had sent them, as it was written in the letters which she had sent to them. They proclaimed a fast, and seated Naboth with high honour among the people. And two men, scoundrels came in and sat before him; and the scoundrels witnessed against him, against Naboth in the presence of the people saying, Naboth has blasphemed God and the king. Then they took him outside the city and stoned him with stones, so that he died.²¹³

A close look into the background of the event reveals that Naboth had done nothing but people chose to remain silent on the scoundrels’ action even though they knew the scoundrels’ testimonies were false, Naboth was killed. They promoted the spirit of individualism. Naboth’s family was deeply grieved by his death but they could not voice their anger since the murder had the back-up of the royal family. All sympathisers of Naboth were helpless. Instead of enjoying the victory for Jezebel the perpetrator, another atrocity was yet to come. The incident ruined the concept of communal relationship.

4.7.2 PASTORAL CARE AS BOTH CHURCH MINISTRY AND A COMMUNAL IMPERATIVE

In the New Testament, Paul talks of reconciliation of the church as pivotal to church ministry. Absence of pastoral care in a community leads to collapse of communal relationships.²¹⁴

From the stories shared by the three respondents, one may observe that communal pastoral care is inactive or is fading out. Fear of being accused of supporting the victims took

²¹³ 2 Kings 21:11-13. (NIV)

²¹⁴ 2 Corinthians 5: 20. (NIV)

precedence and promoted individualism. In the case of the three respondents, as in Naboth's story communal pastoral care was neglected because of fear.

The pastoral care ministry can liberate people from being reduced to mere objects which render them defenceless in the face of intimidation and victimisation. Charles V Gerkin valued the importance of pastoral care and proposed two concepts; the "Centripetal and Centrifugal",²¹⁵ to enact this. He explained the Centripetal concept as a pastoral care model that is a "clergy-centred community of faith".²¹⁶ In other words it means that ministers are at the centre of pastoral care as caregivers to the community. If there is no involvement of the community then the prophetic ministry of the church is inactive and dormant. He further, explained "the Centrifugal, as a pastoral care model envisioning the community as primarily involved in preserving and nourishing a body of meanings and style of relationships by which all other communal relationships are to be understood fostered and evaluated".²¹⁷ Again, in his second concept of centrifugal, Charles acknowledges the benefits of both the African culture and the word of God. In the African culture, no one lives for his/her own sake but one lives with others and for others. The word of God takes the issue of communal relationships as pastoral care's core ministry. Lartey argued that "This is an affirmation of the positive nature of all culture and traditions and can be said to spring out of the Christian doctrine of creation with its statement that all creation comes from God and that God is at work in all history, upholds all the world, cares for all people within it and is present in all areas of life".²¹⁸ Thus, the pastoral care ministry fulfils God's community service through communal relationships.

4.8 ALTERATIONS OF PILOT QUESTIONS FOR THE MAIN INTERVIEW

It is possible for the researcher to use many of the pilot questions in the main research interview but there could be some questions that need to be clarified and quantified for clearer interpretation by respondents. In the Semi-structured interview questions, most questions were not going to be changed. However, question (b) of section F1 as evidenced by

²¹⁵ Genkin V. Charlee. *Prophetic Pastoral Practice: A Christian Vision of Life, Together*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991.81

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Ibid. 1991;137

²¹⁸ Emmanuel Lartey, Y. *Pastoral Counselling in Inter-Cultural; Perspective* (Frankfurt am Main, Bern, New York: Verlag Peter Lang, 1987.13-14

two participants' responses seemed confusing. They perceived it as a repetition of question (a) of the same section. Therefore, question (b) would be removed completely.

Again, question (c) of section F2 relating to their understanding of the church's role and church leadership's response to the political violence seemed to be one and the same question. The Church as an institution cannot respond to situation but the church leadership in its representative capacity of the institution does. Thus, for the sake of the respondents' understanding, question(c) would be omitted.

Questions for the semi structured interview would remain unaltered as the respondent seemed to understand and smartly answered them all. As mentioned earlier, respondents were seeing the questions for the first time.

4.9 CONCLUSION OF PILOT RESEARCH

The pilot research formed the basis of the main research. The researcher analysed critical data and interpreted themes that came out of the responses. These themes could be complemented by others that might emerge from the major research. Together they would provide a framework for the research problem. The major research will concentrate on six (6) samples of respondents. Mason pointed out that, the only reason for engaging a stipulated number of respondents that the empirical study discovers can be used as a model that can be used to address the problem being examined.²¹⁹ In this study the researcher intended to come-up with a model that would be used to restore and rebuild relationships in the community under review.

4.10 MAJOR EMPERICAL RESEARCH

This is an important section of the study from which information collected will shape the process of healing memories of the Mberengwa community. This does not mean that the pilot research is minor and is a waste of time and resources. It is also an important exercise where research tools are being tried and tested. De Vos adds that, preliminary exploratory work in pilot research is important as it helps with the practical planning of the research project, such as resources and validity and clarity of questions. It was actually seen in the report that it was necessary to test the interview tools that were used in the pilot research.²²⁰ As a result, the final questionnaires for the major interview were revised and some of the questions were

²¹⁹ Mason, Jennifer. "Qualitative Interviewing: Asking, Listening and Interviewing." *Qualitative Research in Action*. Tim May ed. London: Sage, Publications, 2002.126

²²⁰ As de Vos Op.cit, p. 23.

removed. The revision of the questionnaires did not affect their focus and purpose for the research topic.

4.11 KUKOMBERANA MAMBURE; INTERVIEW GUIDE

The interview was conducted in English and Shona to ensure clarity of the explanations. The smooth flow of interviews was possible by assuring participants that the answers given and the stories would be treated with strict confidentiality. Each answer or story would earn credibility because it was a first-hand narrative of the individuals' experience. The duration of each interview ranged from between 30 minutes to one hour depending on the individuals' expression of their stories, and the need for clarifications or explanations.

4.12 INTERVIEWEE PERSONALITY

There were 6 interviewees from right across the central Diocese under which the Mberengwa community falls. Participants comprised two females and four males that is inclusive of the Bishop and the Dean. The oldest participants were the one lay-leader, the Bishop and one pastor. All three were above 55 years. For confidentiality, the researcher used initials that had no relationship to their actual names and surnames to avoid names of people, places and other details that might give clues to their real identities.

1. Mr. Z is 47 years, married with 3 children. The village location will be omitted for security reasons. He is a teacher at a certain school in Mberengwa. His home is also in Mberengwa.
2. Mrs. V is female and is in her late 40s. She is literate. Mrs. V chose to be interviewed in English. She is married and has 5 children. She stays with only three of her children the other two staying with her husband in town. She is a full member of the Lutheran Church in Mberengwa.
3. Pastor M is female and is fifty five years of age and is a mother of five children. During the time of this research, she was transferred to another parish outside Mberengwa. Her husband died some years back. Her children have all finished school and are working. She has problems walking long distances due to injuries sustained during the political violence that accompanied the 2008 country general elections. During that time, she was posted to a certain parish in the community under research and was staying with her husband and three of her children.
4. Pastor O is a male of 50 years, married and has four children. He has two grandchildren. One of his young brothers was beaten, tortured and killed during the

political violence of 2005-2009. At the time of this research, he was still in one of the parishes in Mberengwa which is also his home area.

5. Dean P is a male aged 47. He is married with four children. He is in one of the two church Deaneries in Mberengwa. All the Deans in the Central Diocese can speak and write more than three languages including English.
6. The Bishop 63 years of age resides in the area under investigation and was once the president of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches. He is well known, and is the only Bishop of the Central Diocese of which Mberengwa community is part. Again, as a church leader he is in a position to speak on behalf of the ELCZ. He is Bishop Naison Shava, married and has three children two girls and a boy. He is familiar with the way of life of the Mberengwa community. He was born and grew up in this area and worked there as an Evangelist, Pastor, and Dean and currently as a Bishop.

4.13 THEMES THAT CAME OUT FROM INTERVIEWS

Four main themes that emerged from this main research are:

- 1) the importance of neighbourhood support
- 2) the manifestation of deep seated hatred and pain despite the time lapse.
- 3) the existence of unhealed wounds disturbed people's attitude to developmental issues and faith in God
- 4) the need for church involvement in people's suffering.

These 4 themes will each be expanded in this chapter.

4.13.1 NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT

In his teachings, Jesus emphasised true love as the one enacted to one's neighbour. He cited love of neighbour as the second of the greatest commandments. Jesus says that "love your neighbour as yourself."²²¹ According to Jesus, the Greek verb expressing this kind of love is "Agape", that means the commitment and devotion that is directed by the will of God and can be commended as a duty. Thus, when talking of neighbourhood support in the context of the narratives of the six respondents in this research, there were some inactions and mis-action of love among the Mberengwa people. The accounts of their painful life's experiences indicated that Jesus' dimension of a gained love and neighbourly support was missing as the respondents poured out their hearts of the pain and suffering perpetrated against them. In Shona they say "*Chinokangwamwa idemo asi muti wakatemwa haukanganwe*". Literally, that

²²¹ Matthew 22 v 39, (NIV).

means, it is the axe which forgets which tree it cuts but the tree does not forget the axe which cut it. The settlement of neighbourhood conflict is imperative. Days and months may pass on but as long as painful memories still live on and are fresh in the minds of the members of the community, healing remains a faint shadow in the distance.

There are other aspects of neighbourhood support that need attention, and one example is the need for psycho-social support that seems to have been missed by both the church and the community itself (villagers and the district at large). From the information that the researcher got during the interviews, it seems that communal intervention or communal support in times of hardship was non-existent. One wonders how neighbours tormented each other despite that some victims or perpetrators were either chiefs or head men. One also wonders what had happened to the authority of the traditional leaders of communities.

During their days, headmen and chiefs had effective ways of handling conflicts and controlling social life of every community. Ways and means of handling conflicts differed from area to area. At village level, headmen settled cases dependent on the gravity of the cases. More serious cases were referred to the chiefs. Usually, both the complainant and the perpetrator attended the hearing at the headmen's or chief's court. At the end, the guilty person would be fined in the form of a goat or cattle. The charge would depend on the gravity of the case. The goats and cattle would be slaughtered and the meat shared and eaten by everybody who attended the court session.

Once that happened, the conflict was resolved. The two parties were not allowed to talk about that issue again outside the court, since both would have been given a chance to express their grievances before the court. Depending on the severity of the case and how often the perpetrator had been warned, the perpetrator could be expelled from the community. In some serious cases the chief would take a branch of a certain tree called *Chitarara* and place it at that person's kitchen entrance. That would mean that the person and the whole family had been excommunicated from the community. No one would argue with or resist the chiefs' judgment.

From the experiences shared by the respondents in this study, it is clear that obligations the above of chiefs and headmen were not executed accordingly. During the times of political violence, these community leaders became activists who openly supported certain political parties. One reason could have been that they benefited from the system, for example, chiefs were given cars, tractors, land and their homes were electrified. Headmen were also given

monthly allowances. Thus traditional chieftainship values and customs became very difficult to implement.

The majority of these traditional leaders compromised their original chieftaincy duties because of these benefits from the ruling party. Those who did not conform to the ruling party's strategies and policies did not get these benefits. In some cases the resistant ones forfeited their positions as chiefs / headmen.

In addition, neighbourhood support was mandatory for all and sundry. Under the normal functional community, the cry or yelling of a person in trouble was enough invitation to neighbours for help or rescue. This was done regardless of individual differences, especially when death occurred. There is a Shona principle which says *rufu ndimaunganidze*. That means death brings people together, regardless of one's social status. Unfortunately the opposite obtained in the community under review. A family could struggle to bury its member while neighbours were busy with their daily chores. That showed the extent to which traditional values and social norms in the area under study had declined.

The church is supposed to take the driving seat in conflict resolution as it recognises that both the victims and perpetrators of political violence are in danger. Perpetrators might be in pain and guilt of how people look at them or how they would then relate with their neighbours, for instance, during her confession Mrs V. pointed out that "I do not think I will ever forgive my neighbour".²²² On the other hand the perpetrator cannot openly reveal his views or emotions about what happened. Election violence comes and goes but the victims of violence still live with perpetrators as neighbours and others as are relatives. The perpetrators may also have these questions and guilt conscience on how they are going to relate with other villagers, neighbours, friends and relatives. One is forced to ask; what comes to their minds when they look at those whose limbs were amputated, beaten, killed and homes burnt? They could be equally traumatised by this experience. They could also be anxious about their future. The church, because of the commandment of love as the basis of its teachings has a leading role in reconciling this community.

The victims might also think of revenge because they feel victimized daily as they mingle with perpetrators. When Mr Z & Mrs. V shared their stories, they were sobbing because of either bitterness or anger. The assumption is, if situation continues like this, one may think of

²²² Interviews held at ELCZ Parish office 12 June 2014 in Mberengwa District

either revenging by killing the perpetrator or burning their houses or committing suicide. The frustrations may be aggravated by drought and other socio-economic ills currently prevalent in Mberengway. Every year, most parts in Mberengwa receive little rains or no rains. Thus, for someone to burn one's home including the granary is just as bad as cleaning fresh burns with boiling water.

4.13.2 DEEP SEATED HATRED MADE MANIFEST

Deep seated hatred sometimes manifests itself in many ways. Usually its manifestation reveals unhealed wounds in some persons. It only shows more the ugly face of bitterness and anger rather than forgiveness. If not attended to, it leads to serious psychological illness and poses potential danger to those whom one is staying with or neighbours. Thus, deep seated hatred has to be attended to and dealt with as a matter of urgency. The writer of the Civil Society Submission documented the unresolved problems as, "Personal healing for individuals who have been violated, or have violated others, and are carrying heavy physical and emotional pains are in turmoil, have lost primary means of support, and are suffering a drastic change in social reputation or economic status".²²³

The interviews of the six respondents revealed some deep seated hatred that needs attendance. If not attended to, the seed of hatred could sprout and grow from generation to generation. The value of communal life will be lost. Those interviewed were only samples of the whole community of Mberengwa. Other residents of this community might have serious political violence testimonies not covered by this study. When asked whether Christians were not involved in the violence. One interviewee answered, "Violence knows no religion, and it was a case of brother fighting against brother in the name of political loyalty. Political affiliations were stronger than faith for some Christians. Some pastors were beaten and others went into hiding".²²⁴

The pain and hatred in this community can be corrected by both local and political leaders through genuinely participatory methodologies in the healing process. This could help in removing people's hatred and reducing pressure. Church can participate in this process by playing an intermediation role by convening meetings as a natural motif. It should not take sides because it has to stand on behalf of God's office.²²⁵

²²³ Church and Civil Society Submission document, November 2009-April 2010:18.

²²⁴ Interviews held in Mberengwa District on 12 June 2014

²²⁵ 2 Corinthians 5:19. (NIV)

God intervened on behalf of his people of Israel when they were suffering in Egypt under Pharaoh's rule. He showed that he cares about the downtrodden. God came down to deliver his people of Israel from the oppressive and exploitative rule of Pharaoh. Moses was used as a suffering motif in Israel's experience.²²⁶ In the same way, God is sending the Lutheran Church to deliver the Mberengwa residents who are suffering for deep hatred and bitterness.

The church is not sent to preach only, but also to liberate and reconcile God's people during times of suffering and conflict. Jesus the church's role model says, "...I came that they may have life, and that they may have it in abundance".²²⁷ The church is (was) being sent with the kind of authority that Jeremiah was sent with by God; without fear or favour. Jeremiah was sent "to root out and pull down... To build and plant", and to stand before any ruler to proclaim what was said by God accordingly.²²⁸ Thus, the church is there to pluck the spirit of hatred and jealous, and to plant the seed of hope, peace, love and forgiveness. Hence the Church was sent to remove animosity and evil among God's people.

4.13.3 UNHEALED WOUNDS WEAKEN PEOPLE'S FAITH

If people do not forgive, it will also be difficult for them to appreciate God's forgiveness and His love for them. People can learn this from Jesus Christ on the Cross. He forgave those who had nailed him. Thus, it is a lesson for people that no matter how many obstacles and pain they may suffer, they should forgive. If problems pull people down they should see Christ on the cross and remember, through Him comes victory. Their faith will be uplifted knowing that tomorrow they will be conquerors. The wounds that people have Jesus also had. The pain people feel is the same pain Jesus experienced. That knowledge should not destroy people's faith in God Instead it should strengthen them.

The great commission means a lot where it says "I will be with you all the times",²²⁹ that means even in suffering situations and disappointments, Jesus will be with his people. Additionally, it means people have a loving friend who always picks them up when they fall and also comfort them when in distress. This is only possible through the love of Jesus that was shown on the cross. Lartey hails the,

African primarily thinking that God is both transcendent and immanent. If this is so then the task of healing in pastoral terms involves a recognition and facilitation of the activity of the transcendent in people's lives. The God

²²⁶ Exodus 3:3f. (NIV)

²²⁷ John 10:10 (NIV)

²²⁸ Jeremiah 1:9-10 (NIV).

²²⁹ Matthew 28:18 (NIV)

who heals is not the one who is far away. Instead such a God is present all the time and bears all the pain and anguish of the sufferer,²³⁰

Thus, Jesus' promise to be with the people all the time up to the end will be fulfilled.

Unhealed wounds that remain in people's lives for long periods distort and disturb their faith in God and normal healthy living. Normal health is not the absence of diseases only but also freedom from disturbances of physical, mental, psychological, social and spiritual wellbeing. Not all of the above conditions need medical attention. Some conditions need Pastoral care intervention.

One can deduce what the six respondents from Mberengwa community need. Unhealed wounds shake people's lives and hinder development. This is so, because in most cases affected people continue to concentrate on their pain and forget that there is Christ who also suffered but was able to forgive. Therefore, the power of the cross helps to heal these wounds. Therefore, hope and faith takes people beyond their problems. Hope is built in faith but without faith people perish. The other element that became obvious during interviews with Mr Z and Mrs V was that, they were still in denial and hence the question, "how can one man do such a thing to another and still get away with it?"²³¹ Little do they know that denial destroys their faith and delays their healing. They are concentrating more on their enemies and pain. Jesus on the cross did not concentrate on His pain. Instead, he focused on God's purpose that had to be fulfilled. The six respondents are not to be blamed. They are misdirected by their pain since, nothing was done to remove the pain and hurt they suffered.

4.13.4 The CHURCH AS THE PANACEA FOR HUMAN SUFFERING

God as the initiator of pastoral caregiving sent His only begotten Son Jesus Christ to liberate the downtrodden, the suffering and the oppressed.²³² He came as the Liberator and at the end of his ministry the oppressors were also liberated from their oppressive tendencies. Thus, he became the world's liberator. He did not judge either. All were forgiven. Therefore, the church has to promise and emphasise the issue of salvation in the Mberengwa context.

In the Old Testament, salvation was associated with healing and curing of diseases. Thus church involvement and the promise of salvation through reconciliation are relevant to this community. Even in the New Testament, healing was accompanied by salvation. Given the

²³⁰ Lartey E. Op. Cit.p. 14

²³¹ Interviews held in Mberengwa District on 12 June 2014

²³² Luke 4:18-19 (NIV).

example of the blind, lame and deaf.²³³ The church is there to promise salvation and show companionship to people in times of suffering. It has to promise people a liveable future and not focus on present suffering.

4.14 CONCLUSION

The main empirical research disclosed opportunities in Mberengwa that could be used in the healing of memories in Mberengwa. The selected participants of this study revealed sufficient information for one to recognize hurt, pain and suffering still in the community. It also highlighted the deterioration of neighbourhood support, communal care and church involvement in people's suffering. In Shona they say, *munhu munhu navanhu* which means, one becomes a person because of others. In other words it means that immediate support is rendered by neighbours. However, helpful communal systems were destroyed by corruption and political unrest. On the other hand, church involvement in human suffering as a pastoral caregiver remains questionable, why? This is the question that this study seeks to address.

²³³ Matt 11:4 (NIV)

5.0 CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETION OF EMPIRICAL RESEARCH RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this Chapter, the researcher is going to critically analyse all the data collected through structured questionnaires and interviews with different respondents. This will assist the researcher in getting a clear understanding of what really happened during the different periods of political violence. The information will be used as a tool in reconciling the wounded community of Mberengwa.

G Vulliamy contends that, communicating the findings of research is arguably the most important aspect of any research process.²³⁴ The empirical study has opened the eyes of the researcher to the reality of the experiences of the Mberengwa community during times of political crises. The study revealed how communal life disappeared and paved way for individualism and promoted political violence and divergence.

The study sampled church leaders, clergy and lay-leaders of the Lutheran Church in Mberengwa district, Midlands Province Zimbabwe. The sample is very instrumental in articulating the appropriate model for reconciliation and healing of memories in this community.

The researcher targeted some clergy and lay leaders who were either victims or survivors of the political violence in the area under study. Thus, church leaders such as the Bishop and Dean speak for the church. Keily argues that, informants for the research are sample participants. The findings challenge the Lutheran Church to commit itself to resolving the crisis in Mberengwa. Rene Girard argued that, “Christ broke into the vicious arena of violence by taking upon himself, the violence of humanity to pay back for violence”.²³⁵ Therefore, the Church is Jesus’ instrument for peace in the world.

5.2 QUESTIONNAIRES AND DATA ANALYSIS

The methodology engaged in this research was deemed best in the researcher’s attempts to come up with a pastoral caregiver approach to the wounded, traumatised and hurt community of Mberengwa. Questionnaires were formulated to obtain primary data. Besides, follow up

²³⁴ Vulliamy, G. “Papua New Guinea: Policy Implications and Theoretic Perspective,” in Vulliamy, G. (ed), *Doing Educational Research in Developing Countries: Qualitative, Strategies*, London: Falmer Press, 1990.

²³⁵ Girard, R. *Violence and the Sacred*, London: New York, 2005.

oral interviews of the sample population were held. Keily contended that, interviews give the researcher an opportunity to get to know people quite intimately so that the researcher can really understand how people think and feel.²³⁶ The feelings of respondents were outlined in the previous chapter.

5.2.2 ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM THE SAMPLE PARTICIPANTS

Table 1. The sample of respondents to questionnaires

Category of respondents	Number of respondents	Percentage
ELCZ Bishops	1	100%
ELCZ Deans	1	100%
ELCZ Pastors	2	100%
ELCZ Lay-leaders	2	100%
Non-returned questionnaires	0	0%

Statistics in the table above show the participants interviewed in this study according to the structures of the ELCZ.

Table 2. The sample of participants affected by political violence

Category of respondents	Number of respondents	Number of affected	Percentage
Bishops	1	0	0%
Deans	1	0	0%
Pastors	2	2	100%
Lay-leaders	2	2	100%
Total	6	4	66.67

Statistics in Table 2 above show participants who were directly affected and were victims of political violence. If the number of affected people represented political violence victims in Mberengwa, it means that almost 66.67% members of the community were affected and the Church was no exception. The situation was tense and mostly Christians were hurt and are still in pain. Something practical has to be done to pacify the community. Since it is presumed that Zimbabwe is a Christian country, the 66.67% represents Christian victims.

²³⁶ Kelly, K. 2006. From encounter to text: Collecting data in qualitative research in Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences. 2nd revised edition, edited by M Terre Blanche, K Durrheim, & D Painter, D. Rondebosch: UCT Press. 2006.297.

Application of Christian values and the meaning of the gospel in this community would be fruitful.

5.2.2.1 POLITICAL VICTIMS

About 75% of the people interviewed were persecuted and tortured during the political violence. The study shows that, people were forced to chant ZANU PF slogans at public gatherings. Sometimes they were taken to night camps where they were beaten by the youths. Parents were abused before their children and family members. One of the interviewees said “I was taken by the ZANU PF youths from my home. My children followed behind crying out vain for help from neighbours in vain, since the latter had already fled for safety. I was taken to a camp where I was beaten and left half dead.”²³⁷ Some people actually died at these camps.

One of the interviewees from Mberengwa near Mataga Growth Point pointed out that homesteads near Mbuyanehanda and Mataga were burnt down by these youths. Their cattle were burnt or slaughtered for meat. Many people left their homes and lived in the bushes in fear of the ZANU PF youths.²³⁸

The researcher found out that, though it was possible to seek treatment from the nearest hospitals like Mnene and Msume, it was not safe since victims were monitored so that they would not get proper treatment nor tell the causes of their injuries. Nurses who attempted to found assist them were also beaten up. One of the nurses had this to say, “We were not allowed to treat those who were suspected of belonging to the opposition party MDC. It was an offence. Some of our staff members nearly lost their jobs because of that”.²³⁹ Coincidentally, all hospitals in this area including Mnene District Hospital are under the Lutheran Church.

5.2.2.2 CAUSE OF CONFLICT

During the interviews, it was clear that the conflict in different places in Mberengwa was caused by political differences. 92% of the people interviewed confessed that the main opposition party MDC was not tolerated in Mberengwa. No one was supposed to affiliate to this party. One of the interviewees said, “If your family was suspected of supporting the opposition party, that family would be in trouble”.²⁴⁰ Only the ZANU PF party was allowed

²³⁷ Interviews held on 14 June 2014 in Mberengwa District

²³⁸ Interviews held on 14 June 2014 at Mataga in Mberengwa District

²³⁹ Interviews held on 14 June 2014 at Msume Mission in Mberengwa District

²⁴⁰ Interviews held on 14 June 2014 at Msume Mission in Mberengwa District

to operate in this area. There was no freedom of association or speech in this area. Everybody was supposed to support the status quo.

5.2.2.3 CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONFLICT?

Of the people interviewed 80% confirmed that this conflict had divided the once peaceful and united community. The Mberengwa people were known for peace and unity, but political parties destroyed the peace that had existed for decades. Mr Z said “families were divided against families, brothers were forced to fight each other, and children were forced to turn against their parents”.²⁴¹ That means, the communal way of life in Mberengwa was no more. One of the interviewees said, “I watched my niece stoning her father to death because he was accused of being an MDC supporter”.²⁴²

Professionals were living in fear. About 72% of the teaching staff in Mberengwa ran away for fear of their dear lives. Children were severely affected. Some students sat for June examinations in 2008 without proper examination preparation. One of the parents interviewed said, “schools, churches and people lived in fear and did not enjoy their rights.”²⁴³ Everyone was afraid and it was difficult to trust anyone. It was like the community was running on its own. Traditional systems of leadership had ceased to exist.

5.2.2.4 WHAT CAN BE DONE TO RESTORE PEACE?

98% of the people interviewed believed that only the Church and the chiefs could bring back the peace that had been destroyed by political violence. Mrs V said, “The church as a neutral party can play a pivotal role in reconciling the community. The chiefs were blamed for fuelling violence in the community because they were openly siding with the ruling party and so they cannot be part of the mediators.” Mr Z also added that “only the church and not the chiefs can bring peace.

Of the people interviewed 2% believed that both the church and the government could bring peace. They contended that the government should denounce violence, and should live its word. One of the persons interviewed said, “The government, led by the president should be committed to bringing unity and peace. We cannot leave the church alone to resolve this matter. All stakeholders should be involved for peace and unity to be possible”.²⁴⁴

²⁴¹ Interviews held on 24 June 2014 at one of the ELCZ parishes in Mberengwa District

²⁴² Interviews held on 24 June 2014 at one of the ELCZ parishes in Mberengwa District

²⁴³ Interviews held on 24 June 2014 at one of the ELCZ parishes in Mberengwa District

²⁴⁴ Interviews held on 24 June 2014 at one of the ELCZ parishes in Mberengwa District

Some of the above respondents were of the view that, the church together with the government and civil society organisations should hold peace building workshops for the victims and perpetrators. This could help the perpetrators seek for forgiveness at the same time help the victims accept and forgive them. Mr Z again observed that, “peace is only possible if the perpetrators come out and ask for forgiveness and if the victims accept it. Without that, it will be difficult to attain peace.”²⁴⁵ The above suggestions by interviewees are positive recommendations for reconciliation. Difficulties could however arise from the inclusion of the government as a facilitator in the process of healing due to its involvement in violence perpetration.

5.2.2.5 THE CHURCHS RESPONSE TO THE CONFLICT

Of those interviewed, 87% indicated that though the Church was visible in some areas like food donations to the victims, it left a lot to be desired. The Church was in hiding, and it was not clear which side it was on. Mr C. said, “The problem was that some of the church leaders were in support of the ruling party. Some government officials are their relatives; hence the church was divided”²⁴⁶

Of the communal people, 98% were not happy with the way the Church responded to violence. To make matters worse, the Mberengwa community had many missionary institutions like schools and hospitals and it was at these missionary institutions that political violence was at its peak. One of the teachers at one of the mission schools said, “Our school was the camping ground. There, the youths were fed and trained on how to torture MDC supporters, and the church leadership said nothing to such practices.”²⁴⁷ It showed that the Church was irrelevant. It failed to live its calling to side with the oppressed, the victims and the powerless.

The research found out that, in some areas such as Masase communal lands, some pastors were victimized by the ruling party. Others were even asked to lead in opening prayers at ZANU PF rallies. One of the victimized pastors said, “I was victimized by the youth, some of them my parishioners. They said I was an MDC supporter because most of my children are teachers. I reported the matter to the Bishop, but nothing happened. I had to run away for my life”.²⁴⁸ This is a clear indication that the church was either afraid to oppose violence or they

²⁴⁵ Interviews held on 24 June 2014 at one of the ELCZ parishes in Mberengwa District

²⁴⁶ Interviews held on 24 June 2014 at one of the ELCZ parishes in Mberengwa District

²⁴⁷ Interviews held on 24 June 2014 at one of the ELCZ parishes in Mberengwa District

²⁴⁸ Interviews held on 24 June 2014 at one of the ELCZ parishes in Mberengwa District

were in support of the status quo. How could a pastor be victimized and yet the head of the church remain quiet?

Only 13% of the interviewees consented that the church was relevant to the people during this crisis. They saw the church's congregants assisting their fellow members with food, shelter and medication. A certain woman said, "I was helped by fellow Christians when my house was burnt down by the youths. The parishioners gave me food stuffs and blankets. I could see the hand of God."²⁴⁹ This woman was, however not talking about the church in terms of its leadership but fellow Christians and it appears such incidents were just a drop in the ocean. The truth is that the church was not visible.

5.3 THE CHURCH'S INVOLVEMENT IN HEALING OF MEMORIES

Tafadzwa Christmas, when discussing the importance of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission Shadow Bill by the church and civil society argues that,

If the culture of violence was like a thorn in the flesh of only those who were involved directly with the violations, we would simply surgically remove the thorn from the flesh of those who were hurt. But because the legacy of violence in Zimbabwe is like a cancerous gangrene or potent poison which is hereditary and threatens to wipe out even those who were not directly exposed to it, the healing cannot be an event but it ought to be a process involving not only the living but also the experiences of those who now only reside in the memories of their loved ones. The process is not a simple extraction of a decayed tooth but it is an esoteric process akin to exorcism.²⁵⁰

That means, negative experiences/memories need inner healing. This should be at the core of any counselling and therapy could be carried out. Parker pointed out that, "There is also need to recognise that our memories are not just our own individual enterprise, but often shaped by the communities of which we are a part".²⁵¹ Parker cited Maurice Halbwachs as saying, "Individual and social memory are umbilical linked in the sense that do not depend in some way upon our membership of a group of some sort".²⁵² The emphasis is on action towards healing and reconciliation that has to be taken seriously. Furthermore, "it seems that memories and, wounded memories in particular, have a shaping influence not just on the individual but on the communities, place, people and tribes as well".²⁵³ This serves to demonstrate the urgency of healing in this community.

²⁴⁹ Interviews held on 24 June 2014 at one of the ELCZ parishes in Mberengwa District

²⁵⁰ Tafadzwa Christmas Addressing Zimbabwe Heads of Christian denomination., 22 October 2014

²⁵¹ R. Parker, Op. Cit. p. 40

²⁵² Ibid

²⁵³ Ibid

It is clear that if the healing and reconciliation process is ignored for long, it will affect secondary victims as well.

Mark 2007 and Amadiume and Aiv Naim, in The Church and Civil Society Forum for National Healing, defined healing of memories as an attempt to address sources of physical or emotional pain and restoration of human dignity.²⁵⁴ In support of the same concept, some scholars like Galtung interpret healing and reconciliation as one and the same. He argues that reconciliation is a “process of dealing with the traumas of both the victims and perpetrators after violence, providing a closure of the bad relation”.²⁵⁵ Therefore, the two processes will run concurrently, that is, healing of memories and reconciliation. These processes can be fruitful if carried out by the Church, and in this case, the Lutheran Church in Mberengwa. The drive towards healing and reconciliation of wounded people requires an effective approach in order to close the hatred chapter in the history of the Mberengwa community.

Unfortunately, the Lutheran Church, unlike the Catholic Church’s CCJP had no organised structure to deal with political violence atrocities, therefore talking about the Lutheran Church’s involvement in healing of memories in Mberengwa is a daunting task. Unfortunately, for the ELCZ, to fail to voice even in a minimal way when its employees were beaten and their property was destroyed was shameful. It silently moved employees to other places. Surprisingly, the Lutheran Church leader of Mberengwa, Bishop N Shava argues that, “There was no political violence in my Diocese. During the election campaign, reports of violence were made but not substantiated”, but in the interview he contradicts himself when asked what he thinks was the root cause of violence. He answered, “Power struggles. It might be related to party association and long standing family conflicts. Politics can be used as a vehicle to satisfy personal needs”.²⁵⁶ Whatever the case may be, the bishop’s statement substantiates the fact that violence was experienced in his Diocese although he was evasive. When further asked if church members were involved in political violence, he answered; “Church members in my diocese are also political party members. They tend to be influenced by tensions which arise during elections; some of them are leaders at different levels in political structures”.²⁵⁷ This statement might mean that either Lutheran members were

²⁵⁴ Church and Civil society Forum; Op. Cit.p.11

²⁵⁵ Galtung, Reconciliation After Violent Conflict-the United Nations, www.un.org/.../Reconciliation-After-Violent-Conflict-A-Handbook-Full-... 2003.3

²⁵⁶ Bishop N Shava interviewed at Gweru, 25 October,2014

²⁵⁷ Ibid

involved as perpetrators of violence or as party members, or they were victims of the violence.

On the contrary, when the Dean was interviewed on whether any of his pastors or congregations were victimized or abused in this political violence, his answer was “yes but only in 2008”. When he was further asked what problems were encountered in trying to resolve this situation with the political leadership in his area, he responded, “it was not easy at that time because political violence was across the country and the police force was ineffective”. This was also supported by Pastor B when she said, “There are some people who declared a war on me. I don’t know how to handle them and I am not sure how we are going to relate with each other, God help me”, as she squeezed the deep scar on her hand, a scar that was sustained due to political violence and is still not completely healed. She confessed that, ‘I never joined any party in my life, but I was accused of campaigning for an opposition party. This pains me a lot. What pains me most is that most of the people who were behind my accusations were Christians. That is the reason why I was transferred from that parish (she mentioned the name of the parish) after my husband’s death two years ago.’ During the 2008 political persecution, her husband was kidnapped for two weeks and was nowhere to be found. During the two weeks, he was in the hands of persecutors, the perpetrators looted goods from his shops.

Yet another member interviewee explained that, “there was bullying of opposition party members by the ruling party wanting to control all organizations and institutions such as schools and churches amongst others. This resulted in children not attending school, whether they were church members or not”.²⁵⁸ Explaining further, the respondent said, “ZANU PF was in control of everything in the community. At one time they refused people the right to worship as they used pews for their meetings”. When the respondent was asked what the local church’s response to this situation was she answered, “nothing was done because of fear of victimization”. All these respondents contradict the Bishop’s claims of the non-existence of political violence in the Diocese. The church cannot be excused in its failure to address political violence problems in the community.

As head of the Lutheran Church, when asked if as a church they had any theological strategy to bring about peace, reconciliation and ways of healing memories. Bishop Shava “We collectively have strategies for action as an ecumenical body. The Church should have one

²⁵⁸ Ibid

position in response to the challenges related to political violence”.²⁵⁹ The position enunciated by the Bishop is noble. When he talked about the Church in Zimbabwe, he was referring to the four umbrella bodies, that is; EFZ, UDACIZ, ZCBC and ZCC. However, the Lutheran Church cannot stay idle when it comes to addressing its members’ grievances while waiting for other churches to come in. As stated earlier, all respondents are members of the Lutheran Church. Moreover; Mberengwa is a strong-hold of the Lutheran Church. The populace had every reason to expect it to act even when other bodies remained silent.

When asked what the role of the church leadership was in this situation, one responded that, “the church leadership could do nothing because of fear. Even now, long after”.²⁶⁰ Therefore the church has a duty to intervene on behalf of not just its members but the community at large. This study will come-up with recommendations on how the Church can heal wounds and reconcile communities. One cannot deny the legitimacy of fears of Christians as humans, “but difficult experiences should not prevent Christians from engaging the unjust political, social and economic structures that persist”.²⁶¹

From the interviews carried out by the researcher, it is clear that the church leadership was not proactive and did very little if not nothing to assist the affected people in this community. The community did not receive the support they thought the church should provide. It seemed as though the church leadership was siding with the ruling party because some of the ZANU PF leaders are the latter’s relatives. They ignored their responsibilities for the sake of pleasing their relatives. Hence, Parker argued, “while the church certainly has this ambassadorial commission from God to be a channel for reconciliation, it is a fact of history that we have often forfeited this right because we have become part of the problem rather than part of the solution”.²⁶² It was embarrassing for the church to be found wanting in such situations.

In the New Testament, Jesus Christ proclaimed that His coming was to preach good news to the poor, that the captives be released, that the blind see and the down trodden be freed from their oppression”.²⁶³ This is the most important mandate of the church in the community and in the world. When Jesus came, He solely confronted every oppressive situation and political violence of His day without fear.

²⁵⁹Bishop N Shava interviewed at Gweru, 25 October,2014

²⁶⁰ Ibid

²⁶¹ Wermter, O. *Op. Cit.* p.49.

²⁶² R. Parker, *Op. Cit.* P.78

²⁶³ Luke 4.18, (NIV).

Drayer pointed out that, the starting point of the scripture both in Old and New Testament was concerned with human life. The biblical message was for human protection, healing and deliverance. He added that the message was for the awakening of a critical consciousness amongst those who are materially privileged in society.²⁶⁴ This is precisely what Jesus came for. Drayer added that it shows how practical theology is a momentous theological and pastoral event that is a “profound challenge for today’s church”²⁶⁵. The position of fear and idleness shown by the Lutheran Church can be interpreted as an abandonment of its calling. The gospel according to John says, “I came so that they may have life in abundance”.²⁶⁶ This is an inclusive statement by Jesus; meaning every human being has a right to life and to enjoy life in its fullness. If the church is the body of Christ, why is it that the church has no wounds when Christ had wounds? What is its statement to the world? Why is it so quiet and protects the status quo, instead of standing for justice.

Once again, Bonhoeffer reminds the church that “categorically if the church has truly received its mandate from God, it must disclaim and confront evil in the most concrete forms possible and act from its deepest insight into the matter and must issue a call to obedience”.²⁶⁷ Bonhoeffer encouraged decisiveness in regards to ethical problems in the incomplete church. “When it comes to issues involving the world, a church can be neither credible”.²⁶⁸ All research respondents, political parties and the society in Mberengwa seemed to question the credibility of the church during and after the elections. For instance, Morgan Tsvangirai remarked on the response of churches to the extensive political violence by saying,

The Church, like business was equally anxious about the political impasse. While a number of denominations including some in the leadership of the Anglican Church, a few Apostolic Church sects and Pentecostals- sided with Mugabe and Zanu-PF, the majority voiced their concern about rising violence against innocent people. Others professed neutrality.²⁶⁹

The Zimbabwe National Pastors’ Conference hosted a meeting in Gweru, the capital of Midlands of which Mberengwa district is part, in February 2002 with the theme *Prophetic*

²⁶⁴ Dreyer J. S. *The Research Challenge: doing empirical research in theology* (Only Study Guide for CMM305-X). Pretoria: Unisa, 2004.33.

²⁶⁵ Ibid

²⁶⁶ John 10:10, (NIV)

²⁶⁷ Bonhoeffer, D. T Op. Cit. p.150

²⁶⁸ Ibid

²⁶⁹ Morgan Tsvangirai, *At the Deep End*, Johannesburg: Penguin Books, 2011.412

Ministry In Times of Crisis. The meeting reported the extent of political violence in the country and encouraged pastoral care to politically troubled spots in the country.²⁷⁰ The group consisted of members from various churches under the four umbrella bodies. Its goal was to promote peace, human rights, tolerance and good governance. As said earlier in Chapter One, all this effort was ineffective due to the disbanded nature of the church. N Mkaronda lamented that, when the violence was escalating to extraordinary levels in Zimbabwe, only a few voices from the Church voiced a position.²⁷¹ The Catholic priests did not wait for other bodies to respond against the violent situations. They were all over, for instance, Fr. Oskar Wermter, denounced the political dispensation of the time as dictatorship.²⁷² Similarly, Archbishop Pius Ncube of the Catholic Church conducted a service for peace and justice in Bulawayo and on June 6, 2002 at St Mary's Cathedral, the Archbishop embarked on a peace campaign march. In addition to that, in May 2002, the Anglican Bishop Bakare of Manicaland cautioned Zimbabweans to reject political violence and called for unity and peace among the people of Zimbabwe.²⁷³

These were responses from other churches in their denominational capacities, but when it came to the Lutheran Church, the leaders waited for a collective response so says Bishop Shava.

5.4 THE CHURCH'S ENGAGEMENT AND ITS PROPHETIC ROLE

Zimbabwe's political crisis made most of the churches lose their credibility. Although the Church in Zimbabwe could vehemently denounce this moral crisis in the country including Mberengwa, its response was not always helpful or consistent. The crisis pushed some churches and church members into a survival mode. Some were convinced that though they were Christians, they were private citizens and not politicians. Their main duty as Christians was to pray and preach and not to be caught up in the middle of politics.

Indeed, it is very true that the church should not be partisan but neutral. The retreat taken by the Lutheran Church however, worsened the plight of Christians and society throughout the country including Mberengwa . Instead of taking political leaders to task with respect to wide spread of the violence acts the Lutheran church chose to transfer its workers and remain silent. No healing and reconciliation initiative of the wounded has been taken to date. Such

²⁷⁰ David Kaulemu, Op. Cit.p.112

²⁷¹ Mkaronda, N. *Prophetic Witness in Zimbabwe*, Harare: Femhouse Ltd, 2003.29

²⁷² Wermter, O. *Politics for Everyone and by Everyone: A Christian Approach*, Nairobi: Paulines Publications, 2003.

²⁷³ Ibid

inaction by the Church frustrated the people who rightly accused it rightly of not standing by them. Dube argued that,

Unfortunately, the church has failed the people specifically in two ways. It has failed to stand in critical solidarity with the oppressed and to empower ordinary citizens who are engaged in a socio-political struggle. They look up to the church for the Word that comes from above but the Church is not exercising its prophetic role. On the other hand, it has failed the people by not taking a leading role in developing and articulating a theology that engages the victims, survivors and perpetrators of political violence.²⁷⁴

Misihairahwi Mushonga in the Post-elections Conference organised by the ZCC on 17 October 2013 expressed the view that “Our hope for a peaceful Zimbabwe is the church. If the church will continue to be quiet about the Zimbabwean situation, it will have betrayed the nation of Zimbabwe. In any case, the church is a neutral entity which is not interested in who wins and loses elections. Instead it should focus on promoting issues of peace and justice”.²⁷⁵

In situations where human life is in danger and justice is denied, the church should try to recall its mandate in society. From the beginning, God is seen and understood as the God of the oppressed, the distressed and marginalised. This is the true nature of our living and loving God. In Exodus, God heard the cry and afflictions of his people in Egypt, and sent Moses as the inter-mediator to go and liberate His people. The Exodus story is the action of God fighting for His people, their justice and human rights. In the Old Testament, we see God calling prophets to put checks and balance in the societies where the poor were denied fair rights to life. One example is Amos who was called to fight the social systems that had dehumanised the poor. Amos, like all the other prophets, was sent to confront the systems and the authorities of the day, to tell them to repent and be saved. He was also sent to tell them to stop abusing others, and be leaders and drivers of peace and reconciliation in society. God wants leaders who stand for justice, for the oppressed and marginalised.

In the New Testament, Jesus proclaimed publicly that “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives..., to set at liberty those who are oppressed...”.²⁷⁶

This proclamation by Jesus shows the mission of the church to the world. Jesus laid down clearly how the church should carry out its mission. In this scripture, the church’s mandate in

²⁷⁴ Wermter, O. Op. Cit.p.78.

²⁷⁵ Misihairahwi Mushonga in the Post-elections Conference organised by ZCC on 17 October 2013

²⁷⁶ Luke 4:18-19 (NIV)

society is said to be to bring the Good news to the people. The church should liberate the oppressed of our societies. Liberation is only possible when there is reconciliation and forgiveness. The church's existence in society should not be compromised. It should be clear and straight forward.

In Mberengwa, the church was supposed to confront all the authorities involved in violence. It was its task to investigate the cause of violence and to address it without fear or prejudice. Jesus unreservedly confronts the leaders of his day in order to set people free. He said, "... I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly",²⁷⁷ The church should give life where there is no life. It should also inject hope where there is no hope.

The theology of the cross is the theology of reconciliation. The church should be a living witness to that effect. Christians/Church cannot be what they should be if they do not preach reconciliation. That is the ultimate goal of Christian faith. Bonhoeffer urged, "The church is the church only when it is the church for others, and it strays from its own self when it fails to identify with the need to maintain its own existence. The church loses its soul when it revolves around itself".²⁷⁸

It is imperative for the church to reconcile and heal the memories of the Mberengwa community. Parker argued that "God offers a powerful and comprehensive vision of what He has determined to do through Jesus to bring healing to the world of broken relationships".²⁷⁹ This could be achieved through change from enmity to friendship and change on the part of one party, induced by an action on the part of another". The bible says, when we were God's enemies we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son..."²⁸⁰ It is the church's mandate to heal and reconcile communities. The purpose of this study is to come up with a church approach for the healing of memories and reconciliation.

Even though it was dangerous to challenge the repressive state machinery, the church as the mouthpiece of God, should have converted its position. Villa-Vicencio argues that God does not stand impartially in the midst of human conflict. God stands unconditionally and passionately on this and only on this side always against the exalted and for the lowly, against

²⁷⁷ John 10:10. (NIV).

²⁷⁸ Bonhoeffer, Op. Cit. p. 151

²⁷⁹ R. Parker, Op. Cit. p. 74

²⁸⁰ Romans 5:10. (NIV).

those who already have rights and for those from whom they are robbed and taken away.²⁸¹ Thus, the church does not have to choose what to say or to do but to do precisely what God says.

5.5 ESSENTIAL TOOLS FOR PASTORAL CARE, COUNSELLING AND REHABILITATION.

Wounds and memories cannot be healed if there is no proper pastoral care given to the affected people. God should be seen accompanying his people along the painful journey of healing memories. The church should establish counselling centres and train pastors in counselling.

5.6 EMPOWERMENT

The church should always side with the weak, the oppressed and find a way of empowering them. In response to the Mberengwa community's agony, the church should identify all those victims who need to be empowered. Empowerment in this case should be understood as one's ability to control and make decisions that affect oneself. This means the individual is empowered to think independently. The church can do this through awareness programmes on reconciliation and justice. It should also make people realise their contribution to this process and the benefits they will enjoy from living in a peaceful environment. Through the diaconal ministry, those who lost their property can be assisted to start small income generating projects as a way of getting them to start afresh. The church can initiate programmes where the community can work together to replace huts/houses of those whose homes were destroyed.

5.7 JUSTICE

God spoke to the rich of Israel who had taken the widow and orphan's property or land. The people promised that they would return everything they had taken from their brothers/sisters.²⁸² By so doing, the community was reconciled. Justice is a virtue from God which the Lutheran Church is supposed to proclaim and practise. When we proclaim that "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" we mean, justice be done also on earth as it is in heaven. The church should see to it that the oppressors are justly dealt with. There should be a forum/process whereby both the victims and the perpetrators are brought together in an open environment. The church should take the lead. The oppressor should be punished as a

²⁸¹ Villa-Vicencio, C. (ed), *Theology and Violence : The South African Debate*, Johannesburg : Skotaville Publishers, 1994.76.

²⁸² Nehemiah 5:9, (NIV)

way of teaching him acceptable societal values. Without that, there would be no justice. The law should be applied justly regardless of one's political affiliation.

5.8 THE CHURCH'S DIVISIONS PROMOTES INDIVIDUALISM

Inflexibility, privatisation and militarization of state institutions disrupted social and the Christian life of the community at large. Life in the community in both rural and urban areas was not spared the brutality of the ruling party. Consequently "Christians and individuals cannot avoid responding to at least some of the crises".²⁸³ They did this by participating in intercession prayers, fasting amongst other religious activities. Many who had political engagements seem to have been overwhelmed by fear because ZANU PF had placed fierceness at the centre of its political strategies.

As a result "many Zimbabwean Christians do not worry much about the moral legitimacy, legality or decency of what happens in Zimbabwe. They care mainly about getting what they can to survive in a corrupt, violent and economically difficult environment".²⁸⁴ Thus people prioritized on issues that affected their daily lives such as enough food on the table for their families. This compromised Christian values since in some cases, what they were doing to secure those things was ethically incorrect.

This also created division in the body of Christ (church) and promoted individualism. "Their sense of moral responsibility ends with caring for their own families; they ignore the social, political and economic environment in which these families must function in a larger sense".²⁸⁵ However, in 2006 as already cited in Chapter Two, the Lutheran Church as a member of the ZCC umbrella body joined other churches in raising a prophetic voice and together they developed the 2006 document "The Zimbabwe We Want". Little did they know that the process was long and precarious, and only much later did the churches discover the extent of ZANU PF's capacity for manipulation and bullying.²⁸⁶

In an attempt to confront the ZANU PF government, prophetic churches articulated some of their own weaknesses, including their vulnerability to co-optation and intimidation, making their attempt to change the status quo almost futile. That is precisely the route that was taken by the Lutheran Church when its members were brutalized by ZANU PF in Mberengwa.

²⁸³Wermter, O. Op. Cit.p.49

²⁸⁴ Ibid

²⁸⁵ Ibid

²⁸⁶ Ibid

The other example of the division of the church was a result of church leaders like Rev Obadiah Musindo of the controversial Destiny of Africa Ministry. When other churchmen criticized and condemned the acts of violence by the government, this man of God was literally glorifying and praising the government and its leader President Mugabe, portraying him as divinely appointed and declared him the new Moses of Zimbabwe. At some stage, Rev Musindo was joined by controversial Bishop Kunonga of the Anglican Diocese of Harare, whom Mr. Gunda described as a self-servicing empire builder.²⁸⁷

Kunonga branded himself as a nationalist bishop fighting for the cause of common Africans and cantered his tenure on land theology in direct agreement with the state and its haphazard land reform programme. While Kunonga understood himself at least in public as a nationalist Bishop, others have questioned his motives and linked them to a systematic program of empire building.²⁸⁸

Again he was publicly castigated by other church leaders who felt that he was diverging from his calling as a man of God and head of a church. Gunda pointed out that “while many people have accused the government of RG Mugabe of economic mismanagement and of pursuing disastrous political policies, in his wisdom Kunonga sees Mugabe as an agent of God”.²⁸⁹ This is a good example of how some high ranking church leaders compromised their calling at the cost of God’s ministry. Again, it highlights the extent of confusion that was brought about by political unrest in Zimbabwe.

5.9 THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS IN HEALING MEMORIES

As stated in Chapter Four, community leaders such as chiefs and village heads were originally responsible for spearheading and guiding life in the communities. The harmony of villages and their unity was promoted by chiefs and the village heads. They were the entry point of every alien into the community. Their presence was crucial for order within of the community. Communal life and care were chief and headmen driven. In the interview, it was clear that, because of political violence, the communal functional systems collapsed.

The new constitutional roles of Zimbabwe’s traditional leaders are clearly defined in that,

The Traditional leader is responsible for performing the culture, customary and traditional functions of a Chief, head person or village head, as the case may be,

²⁸⁷ Gunda, M.R. “The Reign Bishop Nolbert Kunonga: Nationalist Spirit or Empire Builder” in *Missionalia*, Southern African Journal of Missiology, Vol. 36 No 2/3 August/November 2008, p. 299

²⁸⁸ *Ibid*.p.300

²⁸⁹ *Ibid*

for his or her community. Some of their operational principles are also plainly articulated in that, Traditional leaders must (a) act in accordance with this constitution and laws of Zimbabwe; (b) observe the costumes pertaining to traditional leadership and exercise their functions for the purposes for which the institution of traditional leadership is recognized by this constitution; and (c) treat all persons within their areas equally and fairly. (2) traditional leaders must not (a) be members of any political party and should not in any way participate in partisan politics; (b) act in a partisan manner; (c) further the interests of any political party or cause; or (d) violate the fundamental rights and freedoms of any person .²⁹⁰

Although these principles are highlighted in the new constitution, they were had been in the old constitution. Unfortunately, because of the promises made by the ruling ZANU PF party, that every patriotic chief and headman would get a vehicle, tractor, and their houses would be electrified, most of the chiefs and headmen were forced to compromise their communal constitutional obligations. This led to the collapse of social values such as neighbourhood and respect for one another. Chiefs were no-longer pillars and custodians of the community's moral values. Hence, the chiefs cannot be called upon to reconcile the people. Community members have lost trust in them.

Currently, the traditional principles of most chiefs and headmen are contradicting their constitutional mandate. As was mentioned earlier in Chapter Four, in a true and genuine reconciliation and healing process, it appears as if, only the church becomes a model in all processes as it has the mandate to promote peace and justice and is expected to live the talk. A reconciliation process for the nation is necessary hence “researchers found that in those countries where reconciliation processes were held, 64 percent did not return to violent conflict while of these where no such events took place only 9 percent did not return to war”.²⁹¹

Therefore, to prevent future conflict, reconciliation has to be genuinely articulated and pastoral care and counselling have to be applied to the victims, perpetrators and witnesses and the society at large.

5.10 POLITICAL PARTIES' CONTRIBUTION TO THE IN PERPETRATION OF VIOLENCE

After ZANU PF was successful in its plan of swallowing ZAPU through a bogus Unity Accord in 22 December 1987, it enjoyed ruling without any strong political opposition parties

²⁹⁰ Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act 2013.110

²⁹¹ Garcia, “Bridgijng Memory and hope: reflections on conflict seetings”, In Reconciliation: Rhetoric or Relevant, B.Hamber and G Kelly, eds. Belfast: Democratic Dialogue, 2005

until the formation of the MDC in 2000. This was a real opposition party as it nearly won in the 2008 March general elections. Since the MDC's formation, ZANU PF has never found rest in everything. It had to increase survival tactics in elections. Political violence worsened. ZANU PF started to castigate the opposition party as "British sponsored", as the "imperialist agent of the west" and "Zvimbwasungata" meaning western stooges.²⁹² These were phrases used to sanction certain forms of violent behaviour. It showed that the ruling party was stranded and had failed.

In the words of S Ndlovu, Gatsheni aptly described ZANU PF's failure as "this quasi-nationalism through songs as a crucial instrument of its machinery to frame and articulate its ultra-nationalistic discourse, which it dubbed the 3rd Chimurenga. These songs were a reiteration of war cries for instance "*Zimbabwe ndeyeropa*" (Zimbabwe came through blood). Many musicians joined the bandwagon and composed different songs which were, in most cases directed at opposition parties and their supporters. Chikowore argues that "the invocation of liberation war memories through song and narrative was designed to convince voters that the MDC was a puppet party of the same evil white colonialists who killed and brutalized them and their relatives".²⁹³

In that sense, it portrayed a Zimbabwe that had become a personal dynasty only identifiable with certain groups of people's views of the political reality. Any other views from outside became heretical and inimical to the status quo and the whole dynasty's survival. All media was state controlled and portrayed Zimbabwe as a nation under siege. This warranted murder, brutalization, torture and arson as loqitamate means of dealing with political miscreants to deal with political miscreants. This was ZANU PF's tactic to strengthen their strategies and was the

Product of failure in nation-building as well as the flawed and narrow ZANU PF strategy of national construction on the promise of the assumption of absolute power and moral authority within a one-party political and ideological framework. The catastrophe of quasi nationalism as opposed to pan-ethnic nationalism is that it legitimized and authorized violence against all those that were perceived to be opposed to the new ZANU PF agenda²⁹⁴.

²⁹² S. Ndlovu Gatshem Op. Cit. p. 22

²⁹³ Chikowero, M. "The Third Chimurenga: Land and Song in Zimbabwe's Ultra-Nationalist State Ideology, 2000-2007" in S.J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni and J. Muzondidya, *Redemptive or Grotesque Nationalism?: Rethinking Contemporary Politics in Zimbabwe*, Bern: Peter, Lang, 2011.

²⁹⁴ S.Ndlovu Gatshem Op.Cit.p.22

The foregoing shows how political strategies by ZANU PF increased evil and cruelty toward innocent people. Other parties too were involved in this violence one way or the other. Ezra Chitando commented that “the animosity between ZANU PF and MDC has resulted in violence and heightened political tension in the country over the past decade but there has been tension since independence. In many instances ZANU PF has used violence as a political weapon, particularly during the long battle with the MDC”.²⁹⁵

The ruling party succeeded in its strategy of unleashing violence although it was against the country’s laws. This was confirmed by the Dean during interviews when he said “it was not easy at that time because violence was at its peak and the rule of law was ineffective.

John Nkomo affirmed, “the widespread existence of conflict and its consequences on the Zimbabwean society, the post-independence victimization of people mainly citizens and burning of properties, murders and rape and all the scenarios that caused uncertainties and ruptures that have wounded and scarred the Zimbabwean society”.²⁹⁶ In this regard, Minister Nkomo who was the ONHRI chair indicated that within Zimbabweans there were both perpetrators and victims of political violence.

In the ONHRI outreach in the Midlands under which Mberengwa district falls, participants expressed the view that “the national healing process should be left to and led by the church; civil society, retired judges and credible people in society. The current composition of ONHRI is not acceptable”.²⁹⁷ Comments such as these weakened the ONHRI and it failed to make an impact.

5.11 CONCLUSION

The analysis above implies that the political crisis in Mberengwa can only be resolved if the church and community leadership could perform their duties as per their mandate. The Lutheran Church has the capacity to achieve this by virtue of its popularity as the oldest and dominant denomination in the district. After all, most village heads and Members of Parliament are members of this church, and so it can mobilize the community, the church and political parties to leverage all efforts to bring about the healing of memories. What therefore the church needs is commitment and courage to start the process of reconciliation and healing of memories in Mberengwa

²⁹⁵ E. Chitando, Op. Cit. p44

²⁹⁶ Church and Civil Society Submissions, November 2009-April, 2010 Issue No.2.p.6

²⁹⁷ Ibid. 27

6.0 CHAPTER SIX: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this last chapter, the researcher seeks to highlight critical issues that came-up in this study. The researcher will suggest an appropriate pastoral care model for the healing of memories in Mberengwa. This study analysed the Mberengwa community's perception of the political violence in post independent Zimbabwe. Civilians are still seething from the wounds and hurt inflicted by the violence. The role of the church in society as the voice of the voiceless and under trodden . The paper will define how the Lutheran Church as the main Christian group operating in this community can influence communal value systems and promote reconciliation and healing of the wounded.

6.2 RECOMENDATIONS

6.2.1 INVOLVEMENT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN COMMUNITY LIFE

The community requires a church that can stand on its feet and assert its existence in the community and for the community. Surprisingly, during Chimurenga war, churches were very active in denouncing violence and human abuse, for instance, Bishop JC Shiri who was the first African Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe and then president of the Rhodesia Council of Churches says “we made a number of statements against the government of Rhodesia, one such statement was about conscription of black students to fight against their own brothers”.²⁹⁸ He was also a member of the Zimbabwe Christian Council for Political Reconciliation Committee.

Bishop Shiri contends that “Christians were also pleased to see that we were concerned about the plight of our people who were oppressed”.²⁹⁹ This is the kind of church needed in the era of President Mugabe during which different types of human rights violations such as Gukurahundi, Murambatsvina and the 2008 political violence have occurred. In Mberengwa, war veterans like Big Chitoro terrorised the Mberengwa community and forced naked people to sit on electric hot plates (see pictures on last appendices). The church was quiet and nowhere to be found. People believe that the church had succumbed to the states oppressive machinery. Harold Barry D observed that “events around the turn of the new century have shown how naive we were. In the present crisis people ask how it is possible that we have reached where we are now. No one can claim to have foreseen the extent of the catastrophe

²⁹⁸ Bisho JC Shiri. Op.Cit. p.244

²⁹⁹ Ibid

we now experience”.³⁰⁰ The church lost its direction and failed in its task of being there for the community. Instead, in order to restrain the political leadership and constrain the status-quo from its state of political violence, the church was to enact its theology of pastoral care and counselling.

The Lutheran Church was supposed to give a form of life in such a crisis but it did not. The undesirable consequences of this form of governance was traumatised, disfigured, pained, fearful, hurt and depressed society.

6.2.2 THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN THE SOCIETY

The church is the driving force for peace and justice including the healing of the wounded in the world. Although the secular world can provide care and support for the people, the Church must execute pastoral care as justification for its existence in the world.

The church will therefore need to create an open environment for its members in Mberengwa for them to share their painful stories whilst being listened to. In Chapter Five, we learnt that some of the perpetrators of violence were members of the Lutheran Church. Victims interviewed were also members of the same church. Thus the church’s intervention initiatives will be difficult unless its leadership is no partisan, otherwise the church will have lost its salt.

It is the duty of the church to speak for justice on behalf of victims of political violence. From this study, it was also realised that political violence was the major source of discord. The church’s ministry is not merely preaching the word but reduction of people’s “sitz imleben” or speaking on behalf of total life situations of the community. Preaching should go hand in hand with practical action. Most people interviewed were convinced that it is the church which is supposed to spear-head the healing process in Mberengwa because of its ideally neutral and non-partisan characteristic. This shows that society still looks to the church for relief and deliverance. Thus, the Lutheran Church has to improve and reaffirm its biblical mandate in order to successfully spear-head the healing of memories process.

The healing process could start with church members meeting and discussing how this could be achieved. Wednesdays and weekends would be most ideal since the people in this area rest on Wednesdays. Pastoral care and counselling would be part and parcel of the process. The church would facilitate the process through its structures of pastoral care and counselling.

³⁰⁰ Barry, D. H. Zimbabwe: Our Past is the Present, Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2004.

The church would need to be very active in the reconciliation and healing of memories. Reconciliation will not be complete in the absence of repentance and forgiveness; therefore the church would ready itself to conduct absolution rituals to allow for the confession and assurance of forgiveness of perpetrators.

The church would be conveniently placed to carry-out the healing process in Mberengwa through education and training of its clergy and laity in areas such as: communication, advocacy, caregiving and counselling. Communication skills is an important element in improving the church's networking strategy. The referral system in the reconciliation and healing process by the church would be necessary for cases that would be beyond the church's mandate and expertise.

Community leadership would be empowered to enable them to deal with wounded situations. They would be given judicial powers to a certain level so they could decide on the ruling on some cases as per their mandate. Some members of the community could show remorse for what they have done, therefore, the church and community would therefore have to be prepared to handle such situations. The role of the church in the society would be complete if the church practised pastoral care.

Thus, **pastoral care**- is a sub-discipline of practical theology that is concerned with the personal and social well-being of God's community including children on issues of physical and psychological health as well as social life. Clebsch and Jaekle's define pastoral care as "...consisting of helping acts done by Christian representatives, directed towards healing, sustaining, guiding and reconciliation of the troubled, whose problems arise in the context of ultimate meanings and concerns".³⁰¹

6.2.3 PASTORAL CARE AS THERAPY

Pastoral care as therapy is a model in the healing and reconciliation process, explains Lartey. Therapy or "*therapeo*" essentially means 'to heal'. Healing assumes that something has gone wrong with the proper functioning of the body, mind and spirit.³⁰² Thus, if the proper functioning of these is disturbed, problems arise. Lartey describes such problems in medical terms as 'illness' or 'deviation from bio-physical norms' or in theological terms as 'sin' or alienation from essence.³⁰³ This then simply means that; the pastoral caregiver as a therapist is there to restore and correct the malfunctioned order in affected people. The model predicts

³⁰¹ Clebsch W.A. and Jaekle C.R. Pastoral Care in Historical Perspective, York: Harper,1967.4

³⁰² Lartey E.Y. Op.Cit.p.55

³⁰³ Ibid

possible smooth healing, helping and a saving process of the sufferers. Hence, the process requires 'divine assistance, divine grace and divine intervention. Again, the whole process involves investigation for a clear interpretation of the problem in order to come up with the right solution. This could be achieved by targeting wrongs in order to leave one's body functioning normally. "Without an acknowledgement of a problem, no solution can be sought".³⁰⁴ The model should however, not be hurried to avoid "quick-fix miracle cure" that may lead to abuse of the model. Therefore, the Lutheran Church should apply pastoral care as part of its healing model for the community under study as many hearts are hurt and wounded.

6.2.4 PASTORAL CARE AS A MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH

This model is understood "as the operation or activity of particular people, viewed as agents or intermediaries. These people have specific rites, procedures and training schemes established for the recognition of those summoned by God to such activity and for their dedication to the task".³⁰⁵ In addition, such people are trained in communication skills and sacramental rites to foster the well-being, growth and spiritual advancement of communities of faith. Lartey highlighted five classical activities that are engaged in pastoral care as a ministry. These are: proclamation (kerygma) in which essentials of belief and attendant practices are set forth in a coherent form for the teaching (dedache) and other activities such as prophecy. The second activity is service (diaconia) which is care given to the vulnerable people including the elderly and the sick.³⁰⁶ Lartey added that, such service is integral to the recognition and increasing concern for social and political action.

Fellowship (Koinonia) is the third activity and is very essential in the healing process of a broken hearted community like Mberengwa. Fellowship has to do with the provision of opportunities for social interaction within communities. In these communal activities, people share meals, enjoy games, celebrate and commemorate events together. This however, can only happen if community relationships are good and again, if communal life strongly exists. These can only be spearheaded by the church and community leadership that are fully functional as per their mandate. These affirm the social nature of human existence.

Administration (oikonomia) is about management and proper ordering of the institutional aspects of communal life. This is a very important aspect of this model which the church had

³⁰⁴ Ibid.p.56

³⁰⁵ Ibid

³⁰⁶ Ibid

neglected. The aspect of communal life includes issues of financial affairs, property and legal matters that need to be attended to if any organized social group or individual for that matter is to exist and function in a given society. This activity is very essential for community life. Worship (eucharistia) which is the last activity in this pastoral care ministry offers the faithful community the opportunity to express their spiritual longing and aspiration before God in a meaningful way. This is relevant to their beliefs and life experiences. This aspect is essential for the healing process and in pastoral care as a therapy model. In theological terms, therapy deals with malfunctioning of 'bodies' or sins or alienation from essence. Most communities of faith conceptualize worship as giving time, honor space and recognition to God as the ultimate source of life. Worship is given to God within the context of social encounter as well as private communion.³⁰⁷ All these activities recognize that the love of God means that He cares for and engages with those who draw near to Him. To conclude this model, the leader of this activity as a trained professional engages in all these activities. These will be implemented for the betterment of the communities' life as well as the healing of malfunctioning bodies and souls.

6.6 THE PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELING PROCESS

Although this model is referred to as a western approach discerning social, political, ideological and cultural trends, African culture also seems to have developed an approach to dealing with the personal emotional and relational ills that beset individuals. Halmos cited by Lartey acknowledges that "the values and ideals espoused by the counselling profession seemed well suited for a post Christian, post political society".³⁰⁸ They provided a way of being loving and kind without being religious.

The counselling process encompasses the following:

- i. Focus on individuals dignity, worth and uniqueness
- ii. Value verbal expressiveness.

Counselling is based on the skills and careful use of relationships within which conditions are created to facilitate the expression of thoughts and feelings and the exploration of behavioural patterns which may be causing concern.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁷ Lartey E.Y. Op.Cit.p.57

³⁰⁸ Ibid.p.81

³⁰⁹ Lartey E.Y. Op.Cit.p.85

Therefore, the above components and client self-disclosure make the counselling process work. Counselling is a gradual process and requires time. The church as a community has to continue its work until reconciliation and healing is realised by the Mberengwa society. Carl Rogers as cited by Lartey is convinced that, no matter how deprived the early experience of a human person, she has within her a potential and a chance to fulfil her potential”³¹⁰”and results will be realized later.

The role of the counsellor in this case is to create the obligatory environment, through relating with the clients (perpetrators, victims, witnesses and others) openly, accepting in a warm way, within which such potential would be realised.³¹¹ Such an act by the Lutheran Church would give it relevance as a church of God in the world. Pastoral counselling is an inclusive approach. It takes care not only of the Christians but also those who belong to no church and who may not consider matters of faith as a critical concern to them and their families.

6.7 PASTORAL CARE AS EMPOWERMENT

According to Lartey, this model emphasizes that there is something good or of worth and value within human persons. The pastoral care as an empowerment task is to draw out and build up on the unnoticed strength and resources within and around people and communities. In this model pastoral care will adopt an educational and dialogical approach in facilitating achievements of communities’ goals. Paulo Ferrier argued, “pastoral caregivers who work with the empowerment model seek to assist in the conscientisation’ of the oppressed and marginalized through enabling them to ask questions about their life situation”.³¹² This therefore, means people would become aware of their life situation and use necessary and appropriate resources they have to support their contextual development. Pastoral care for the church therefore would not be complete without the inclusion of the two elements highlighted in Chapter One which are; empowerment and transformation.

6.8 EPOWERMENT AND TRANSFORMATION

Empowerment as defined in Chapter One “emphasizes the fact that there is something good, something of worth and values within human persons as they presently are”.³¹³ This implies that even those who do wrong, when empowered, have some pre-existing positive strength upon which they can build. Through the empowerment and transformation process, the task

³¹⁰ Ibid

³¹¹ Ibid

³¹² Paulo Fereire. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (trans. M.B. Ramos), London: Sheed andWard. 1972, p59

³¹³ Ibid.p.58

of the church would be “drawing out and building up of the unnoticed strengths and resources within and around people and communities”.³¹⁴ This would help achieve the community’s goal of healing and prevention of negative effects of future political violence.

The process would be a “conscientization of those who feel like they are powerless, oppressed and marginalized, enabling them to evaluate their life situations. This would help them be aware of their situations together with those of victims, perpetrators and society at large. They would identify gaps to be filled using resources they have in their community. As mentioned above, the church would monitor the process as part of pastoral care and healing of memories.

Lartey adds that, “some communal affair is when the community is trying to make governments more responsive to people’s needs, encouraging groups based on one or other identity issues, political education and consciousness-raising and organizing users or service groups and encouraging groups to develop their own alternative economic power base”.³¹⁵ In the Zimbabwean context, this would help the society in which those who were used for political violence by politicians and were given a paltry \$USD35.00 to beat, kill, amputate, torture victims and destroy property would realise their folly. The process would therefore bring confidence and improve personal well-being of members and reduce psychiatric illnesses.

There are other pastoral care models besides these, but the above were deemed to be most appropriate for the healing process in Mberengwa.

6.9 RECONCILIATION

The major task of the healing process is reconciliation.

Reconciliation comes from the Greek family of words that has its roots in *allasso*. The meaning common to this word group is "change" or "exchange." Reconciliation involves a change in the relationship between God and man or man and man. It assumes there has been a breakdown in the relationship, but now there has been a change from a state of enmity and fragmentation to one of harmony and fellowship. In Romans 5:6-11,³¹⁶

The transformation experience after reconciliation gives us a new lease of life and prompts us to cast away hatred. Paul says, before reconciliation we were powerless, ungodly, sinners,

³¹⁴ Ibid

³¹⁵ Ibid

³¹⁶ William J. Woodruff, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries.evangelica.dictionary/reconciliation.htm>

and enemies; we were under God's wrath.³¹⁷ Because of change or reconciliation we become new creatures. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"³¹⁸ Reconciliation has to do with the relationships between God and man or man and man. God reconciles the world to himself. Reconciliation takes place through the cross of Christ or the death of Christ. "God reconciled us to himself through Christ."³¹⁹ Therefore, the reconciliation process is critical; as evidenced by the majority of respondents in this research who confirmed that their situation needs the involvement of the victims and perpetrators to narrate their stories in truth. In addition there is also the need for a witness protection mechanism on a case by case basis, since victims would want to know what, why, how it happened, why it was done and who did it. Since reconciliation is the neutral work of amending broken relationships, the process would be necessary in fulfilling healing of memories as suggested by this study.

Reconciliation is also subjective in that the sinner is spoken of as being reconciled. It is a relationship that comes between man and wife as well as Jew and Gentile. If a person is about to offer a gift at the altar and remembers that he has something against his brother he should leave his gift and be reconciled first to his brother and then come and offer his gift. Reconciliation is something done by the one who offers it; it is not just something that happens to the estranged people. It is the cross of Christ that reconciles both Jew and Gentile. They are brought near by the blood of Christ.³²⁰

Reconciliation would be effective especially if led by the church. Perpetrators would be crying or lamenting as they remember what happened. They would then be encouraged to repent of their sinful acts. Parker however, argued, "Refusal of reconciliation means we continue to choose the role of enmity and struggle with the powers of wrath and anger. To be reconciled we must listen to and remember the pain of such a broken relationship, realise the consequences on those separated, and choose to respond to love and receive new life".³²¹ That means, "The personal reconciliation to God suggests a serious principle for the reconciliation needed for healing broken relationships between people and people-groups".³²² It is the Lutheran Church's task to commit itself to accommodate this component in executing its healing and reconciliation strategy.

³¹⁷ Romans 5:9, (NIV)

³¹⁸ William J. Woodruff, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries.evangelica.dictionary/reconciliation.htm>

³¹⁹ 2 Corinthians 5:18, (NIV)

³²⁰ William J. Woodruff

³²¹ R Parker, Op. Cit. P. 75

³²² Ibid

Remembering is one of the processes which the victims and the perpetrators should come to terms with. Without true reflection of what happened in the past, genuine reconciliation and healing become impossible. The past should be told for the future to be certain. “It is that disturbing discipline by which we unmask the dark ways in which we have lived in denial of what we or our people have inflicted upon others.”³²³ If the past is not told, history would haunt either the victims or perpetrators, terrifying them with the reality so that they feel helpless before this ghost of their past.

Confession has the appearance of “a tribunal in which you are both the prosecuting attorney and simultaneously the accused, but it is not a torture chamber. I am not saying that you should be easy on yourself. Examine your conscience and be tough and exacting. When making your confession, do your best, be clear, precise and hide nothing. But don’t torment yourself in doubts about vague memories”.³²⁴

There can be no reconciliation and healing without repentance. Repentance is a personal conviction and response by an individual to their sinful deeds. In theological terms, this means regenerating and renewing our relationship with God and with others. The church will be interceding on behalf of the crying community.³²⁵ The action of repentance is to demonstrate the genuineness of people’s confessions by walking in newness of life. However, one has to believe first that God has forgiven one’s sins and that one should also repent and forgive others. The imperative in repentance is to live a new life.

On one hand, lamenting means begging for forgiveness and regretting the evil action committed. On the other, lamenting could be understood as a language of suffering uttered by the victim and its action is to appeal to the hearing compassion. This would be taken into consideration during the reconciliation and the healing process in Mberengwa. Witnesses would be asked to testify what they saw and experienced.

To make the healing effort effective and efficient, the process would be gender sensitive to accommodate both sexes in the community including those who were raped. Again, reconciliation and healing of memories in Mberengwa is very sensitive as it is now beyond the people who were wounded directly. One lawyer in Zimbabwe highlighted that,

³²³ R. Parker, Op. Cit. p83

³²⁴ <http://www.Wdt.prs.com/blog/2013/quaentur-i-arm-sure-if-icconfessed-this-sin-or-not/>

³²⁵ Exodus 32:11-14,(NIV).

If the culture of violence was like a thorn in the flesh of only those who were involved directly with the violation, we would simply surgically remove the thorn from the flesh of those who were hurt, but because the legacy of violence in Zimbabwe is like a cancerous gangrene or potent poison which is hereditary and threatens to wipe out even those who were not directly exposed to it, the healing cannot be an event but it ought to be a process involving not only the living but also the experiences of those who now only reside in the memories of their loved ones. The process is not a simple extraction of a decayed tooth but it is an esoteric process akin to exorcism.³²⁶

This analysis demonstrates the importance of involving all stakeholders in the healing process.

In the process perpetrators will be accountable for their acts in order to avoid similar offenses in future while the victims will be compensated as a way of healing and conciliating them. In the African culture, reconciliation is fulfilled through compensation as it is a deterrent to the offenders. Compensation also helps quicken the healing process and improves the relationships between the victims and perpetrators. Reconciliation without compensation results in the persistence of deep seated hatred. Compensation plays an important role as a seal on the past and signifies the opening of a new chapter. The role of the church in this whole process is to mediate, making sure that justice and fairness have been achieved. On the other hand the government has a role to play. It must create enabling environments by maintaining and applying correctly the rule of law in the country for healing and reconciliation to last.

6.10 RECONCILIATION FROM A THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The involvement of the church in this reconciliation and healing act is because of its Biblical mandate to spearhead the process. In addition, it is God's call for spiritual leadership to provide healing services to the Mberengwa community regardless of the fear expressed by interviewees.

Paul in his second letter to the Corinthians declares that, God reconciled the world by himself through Jesus Christ. He played a mediatory role between God and His people. This helped to amend the relationship that was lost between God and His people. Therefore the church as the representative of Jesus Christ in the world should play a reconciliatory role. "For God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. This is a wonderful message He has given us to tell others we are Christ's ambassadors and God is

³²⁶ Tafadzwa at the conference organized by Zimbabwe Heads of Christian Denominations on 21-21 October 2014, Harare

using us to speak to you. We urge you as though Christ himself were here pleading with you “Be reconciled to God”.³²⁷ This therefore, shows that the church was assigned by God to take the reconciliation responsibility in the world. The Lutheran church as well as other denominations must fulfil their roles in Mberengwa area.

Again in Romans, Paul says, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”. Yet now God in his gracious kindness declared us not guilty. God is entirely fair and just in this present time when he declares sinners to be right in His sight. This also clearly points to the duty of the Lutheran Church have, to explain and apply pastoral care and counselling as part of the healing process.

Based on this theological understanding, perpetrators will be treated with compassion, respect and dignity regardless of ethnicity, religion and gender. For Christians, reconciliation brings healing of relationships through the grace of God in Jesus Christ. The church in its theological function will encourage all stakeholders including victims and perpetrators to work towards reconciliation and healing of the community of Mberengwa.

6.11. THE STATE RELATIONSHIP AND PEACE BUILDING

As the head of state, the president has a duty to promote peace and justice in the country as enshrined in the new constitution,

The president must promote unity and peace in the nation for the benefit and well-being of all the people of Zimbabwe. (2) (c) Also the president must ensure protection of the fundamental human rights and freedom and the rule of law”. Again,...the force of law and order must not be used for political purposes...the government must respect the freedom of political expression and association in order to avert street demonstrations.³²⁸

Consequently, the Global Agreement of 15 September 2008 acknowledges the need to “Build a society free of violence, fear, intimidation, hatred, patronage and act in a manner that demonstrates respect for democratic values of justice, fairness, openness, tolerance, equality, respect of all persons and human rights”.³²⁹ The agreement recognises human security and need for violence prevention.

If the president implements his constitutional mandate above, the process of reconciliation and healing will be a success. If he says, “Peace begins with me, peace begins with you”, by word of mouth without action, this will not have any impact. It is high time the country had a

³²⁷ 2 Corinthians 5:18-21,) NIV).

³²⁸ Constitution of Zimbabwe, Amendment Act 20 section 90 (2) (a) of 2013.110

³²⁹ Church and Civil Society Forum; Op. cit. p. 20

leader who stands by his word. In the past, the government established the so called ONHRI which was just a rubber stamp for reconciliation whereas what the country needs especially the Mberengwa society “when established for the right reason, truth commissions are intended to help establish the truth about the past, promote accountability among perpetrators of human rights violations, provide a public platform for victims, inform and catalyse public debate, recommend victim reparation, recommend necessary legal and institutional reforms, promote social reconciliation and help consolidate a democratic transition.

The above should be the church’s strategy if it is to provide the blueprint for the road map to true and genuine reconciliation and healing. The church is a model in all processes as it has the mandate to promote peace and justice and live the talk. The reconciliation process for the nation is necessary hence “researchers found that in those countries where reconciliation processes were held 64 percent did not return to violent conflict while of those where no such events took place only 9 percent did not return to war”.³³⁰

Therefore, to prevent future conflicts, reconciliation has to be genuinely executed and pastoral care and counselling has to be applied to the victims, perpetrators, witnesses and the society at large.

6.12. CONCLUSION

This empirical research was an eye opener in as far as the healing of by the Mberengwa society is concerned. Although the researcher was born and bred in this community, what was revealed by this study was new and unimaginable, especially the extent to which the society is bitter and in traumatised due to post-independence political violence. There is deep-seated hatred among the people and this has been haunting them for more than one and a half decades. The concept of *Kukomberana Mambure* is now history for this society. Systems of communal life collapsed due to the political violence of 2000-2008. The picture of Mberengwa that is portrayed by the informants in this study is one of a people in serious need of healing and reconciliation. People are in great pain and bitter about the church because it did not respond to their problems, even though most of the members victimized were Lutherans.

The theological mandate of the church to the world is to;

- a.) reconcile the world with God and people to people.

³³⁰E. Garcia, “Bridging Memory and hope: reflections on conflict settings”, In Reconciliation: Rhetoric or Relevant, B.Hamber and G Kelly, eds. Belfast: Democratic Dialogue, 2005, at 39.

b.) speak out about peace and justice on behalf of the society.

Church and civil organizations are known for advocating for peace and justice. Therefore the church is expected to spearhead or initiate the process of reconciliation, healing peace and justice in Mberengwa. The church has to begin to set values and standards they will follow and respect as per their biblical mandate. The church's perspective should not be understood only in the context of spreading the word and saving souls, but also affecting the lordship culture of Jesus Christ of peace and justice. The church's role is more than just building up a Christian community but also building a society for the glory of God. "Although we live in a pluralistic society, we serve a God who is sovereign over all, and all aspects of personal and social life are at their best when they reflect his character" Lartey observes.

Government has a lot to do in support of the church's effort to calm the bitter and angry Mberengwa society through healing of memories. Its function as enshrined in the country's constitution is very clear when it comes to issues of law and order. Community leaders should observe their duties as per constitutional obligations.

Chiefs and village heads were idle. They were used by the ruling party as strategists of political campaigns while on the other hand this crippled their duty of promoting communal value systems. Chiefs as well as village heads were given nicely built houses, land, new cars and tractors apart from monthly salaries. These benefits were only open to those aligned to ZANU PF and not those who opposed it.

Instead of uniting the community, chiefs and village heads divided the people. They publicly became ZANU PF partisans. Those who were not ZANU PF supporters were exposed to all kinds of violence and abuse. The victims besides being hurt and wounded due to being beaten raped and tortured are also bitter about being deserted by the community leadership.

During the interviews Pastor O confessed, "One of my young brothers was beaten, tortured and killed during the political violence of 2005-2009. Community leaders failed to intervene and they did not even attend the burial. How can I relate with them"? There is therefore a pressing need for reconciliation and healing in this regard.

Traditional leaders lost their grip on the community when they started focusing on political gains. Blessing argued that "traditional systems of justice that promote reconciliation are also valuable to the success of reconciliation processes'. Communal care and counselling that

were previously driven by community leaders were not the individual's concern for just for a certain group in the community. Instead it was the concern of the whole community. Through the leadership of chiefs and their subordinates, (core- workers,) community care was for all. They were viewed individually or as family problems and as the community as a whole. The cry of an individual attracted the whole community; one's burden was a burden for the whole society. However, the opposite is true in today's life in Mberengwa. Individuals in that community are heavily burdened. Systems of sharing problems and joy have collapsed.

Communal life was concerned with the development of the people in that community. Chiefs and their core-workers were working with the jurisdiction the African context where human life is valued most. Peter Clark's contribution in African Religion highlighted that "throughout sub-Saharan Africa today, the most dynamic forms of religion are those born of the interaction between traditional religion and Christianity or Islam".³³¹ In the context suggested by the writers, the present situation of Mberengwa needs to be corrected and restored to its original traditional practice.

³³¹ CLARKE PETER. "African Religions." Microsoft ® Encarta ® Encyclopedia 2005.© 1993-2004 Microsoft Corporation.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix One

KUKOMBERANA MAMBURE (Community Collaboration in Solving Problems)

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

This survey exclusively prepared for scientific purposes in the framework for the Masters research at the University of South Africa (UNISA), Department of Practical Theology. The research is oriented towards HEALING MEMORIES: A Practical Theological Study of victims of violence with special reference to the Lutheran Churches in the Mberengwa district of Zimbabwe. The expectation is that your experience will contribute to the best source of the solution towards the process of healing memories. We kindly require you to freely respond to this survey.

We assure you that your answers will be strictly kept anonymous. Therefore, your name and your address do not have to be written on this survey.

Please write the response that corresponds with your opinion by filling in the empty space (.....)

Section A: Background

- a) Gender
- b) Age.....
- c) Marital status.....
- d.) If married how many children do you have?
- e.) Are you living with them?.....

Section B: Education

- a.) Are you academically educated?
- b.) Which level?.....
- c.) What position are you holding

Section C: Employment

- a.) Are you employed?.....
- b.) As what?.....
- c.) For how long?

Section D: Political Victim

- a.) Are you the victim of political violence if not who was the victim?
.....
.....

.....
b.) What kind of abuse was involved?
.....
.....
.....
.....

c.) How often was this abuse?
.....
.....
.....

d.) Were there any casualties? Explain?
.....
.....
.....

e.) Were you affiliated to any political party? Explain.
.....
.....
.....

f.) Are you prepared to share your political violence experience with us? What information can you share
.....
.....
.....

g.) Do you want to participate in the healing of memories process? If yes explain how you would prefer it done.
.....
.....
.....

Section E: Health

e.) Did you or any other victims suffer bodily harm?
.....

f.) Were you or others hospitalised and for how long?

g.) Was it easy to get medication explain?.....

h.) Was the nursing staff ready to help? Explain.....

Section F. 1: Conflicts

a.) What would you say was the cause of conflict in your area?

.....
.....
.....
.....

b.) What are the causes of the political conflicts in your area?

.....
.....
.....
.....

c.) What are the consequences of this conflict?

.....
.....
.....
.....

d.) What do you think can restore peace in your community?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Section F. 2: Response of the church to the conflict

d.) Was the Church in any way involved in the crisis? Explain

.....
.....
.....

e.) What role did the Church leadership play in this situation? Explain?

.....
.....
.....

f.) What was the local Church's response to this situation?

.....
.....
.....

Section G: Present Situation

f.) What is the situation as of now?

.....
.....
.....

b.) Is the environment conducive to affiliating to a political party of own choice?

.....
.....
.....

a.) Is the environment good for people to discuss about peace and reconciliation?

.....
.....
.....
.....

b.) What do you think the political situation would be like in the next 5 years?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

c.) Make any comments about your political violence experience personal or of you area

Appendix Two

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS- Church Leadership

This survey exclusively prepared for scientific purposes in the framework for the Masters research at the University of South Africa (UNISA), Department of Practical Theology. The research is oriented towards HEALING MEMORIES: A Practical Theological Study of victims of violence with special reference to the Lutheran Churches in the Mberengwa district of Zimbabwe.

The expectation is that your experience will contribute to the best source of the solution towards the process of healing memories. We kindly require you to freely respond to this survey.

We assure you that your answers will be strictly kept anonymous. Therefore, your name and your address do not have to be written on this survey.

Please write the response that corresponds with your opinion by filling in the empty space (.....)

Section A: Background

- h.) Gender
- b.) Age.....
- c.) Position.....
- d.) Marital Status.....
- e.) If married how many children do you have.....
- f.) Are you living with them.....

Section B:

- b.) Has there been any political violence in your Diocese/ Deanery? Explain
.....
.....
.....
.....

- a.i) If yes, what do you think is/are the root cause(s)?
.....
.....
.....
.....

- i.) Have any of your members been involved in political violence and conflict? Yes/No
.....

- j.) What measures did you take as a Church leader to resolve this situation? Explain.

.....
.....
.....
.....

k.) Were any of your pastors or congregants victimised or abused during this political violence? Yes/No.....

l.) What problems did you encounter in trying to resolve this situation with the political leadership in your area?

.....
.....
.....
.....

m.) Do you have any theological strategies that you think can bring about peace, reconciliations and ways of healing memories?

.....
If Yes explain.....
.....
.....

n.) Are you ready as a Church leader to confront the political leadership in your area and those who are perpetrators of violence to discuss peace and reconciliation?

.....
If No explain why, if yes
explain.....
.....
.....

You can use separate sheets for your answers

Appendix Three Questionnaires

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

This survey was exclusively prepared for scientific purposes within the framework for the Masters research at the University of South Africa (UNISA), Department of Practical Theology. The research is oriented towards HEALING MEMORIES: A Practical Theological Study of victims of violence with special reference to the Lutheran Churches in the Mberengwa district of Zimbabwe. The expectation is that your experience will contribute towards the process of healing memories. We kindly request you to freely respond to this survey.

We assure you that your answers will be treated with strictest confidence; therefore, your name and your address do not have to be written in this survey instrument.

Please write the response that corresponds with your opinion by filling in the empty space (.....)

Section A: Background

- o.) Gender.....
- b.) Age.....
- c.) Marital Status.....
- d.) How many children do you have?.....
- e.) Are you living with them?.....

Section B: Education

- d.) Are you educated?
- e.) Which level?
- f.) When was level attained?
- g.) What position are you holding in church or society?
.....

Section C: Employment

- d.) Are you employed.....
- e.) If yes as what.....
- f.) For how long.....

Section D: Political Violence experience

- h.) Were you a victim of political violence, if not who was the victim?
.....
.....
.....
- i.) What kind of abuse was involved?

.....
.....
.....
.....

j.) How often was this abuse?

.....
.....
.....

k.) Were there any casualties? Explain?

.....
.....
.....

l.) Were you affiliated to any political party? Explain.

.....
.....
.....

m.) Are you prepared to share your political violence experience with us? What information can you share

.....
.....
.....

n.) Do you want to participate in the healing of memories process? If Yes explain how you would prefer it done.

.....
.....
.....
.....

Section E: Health

i.) Have you been hospitalized?.....

j.) For how long?.....

k.) Was it easy to get medication?.....

Explain.....

.....
.....

l.) Was the nursing staff ready to help?.....

Section F. 1: Conflicts

e.) What are the causes of political conflict in your area? Explain?

.....
.....
.....

.....
f.) What are the consequences of this conflict?

.....
.....
.....
.....

g.) What do you think can restore peace in your community?

.....
.....
.....

Section F. 2: Response of the church to the conflict

g.) Was the Church relevant to your situation? Explain.

.....
.....
.....

h.) What was the role of the Church leadership in this situation? Explain?

.....
.....
.....

Section G: Present Situation

g.) What is the situation as of now?.....

.....
.....

h.) Is it conducive to anyone to affiliate with any political party?.....

.....
.....

i.) Is the environment safe enough for people to discuss peace and reconciliation?

.....
.....
.....

j.) What do you think the political situation would be like in the next 5 years?

.....
.....
.....
.....

.....
.....

k.) Make any comments about your political violence experience as an individual or as a society.

Appendix Four

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS- Church Leadership

This survey was exclusively prepared for scientific purposes within the framework of a Masters research at the University of South Africa (UNISA), Department of Practical Theology. The research is oriented towards HEALING MEMORIES: A Practical Theological Study of victims of violence with special reference to the Lutheran Churches in the Mberengwa district of Zimbabwe.

The expectation is that your experience will contribute to towards the process of healing memories. We kindly request you to freely respond to this survey.

We assure you that your answers will be strictly kept anonymous. Therefore, your name and your address do not have to be written on this survey.

Please write the response that corresponds with your opinion by filling in the empty space (.....)

Section A: Background

- p.) Gender
- b.) Age.....
- c.) Position.....
- d.) Marital Status.....
- e.) How many children do you have if any?.....
- f.) Are you living with them?.....

Section B:

- c.) Was there any political violence in your Diocese/ Deanery? Explain
.....
.....
.....
.....
- q.) If Yes, what do you think are the root cause(s)?
.....
.....
.....
.....
- r.) were your church members involved in political violence and conflict?
.....
- s.) What measures did you take as a Church leader to resolve this situation? Explain.

.....
.....
.....
.....

t.) Were there any of your pastors or congregants who were victimised or abused during political violence?

.....

u.) What problems did you encounter in trying to resolve this situation with the political leadership in your area episodes?

.....
.....
.....
.....

v.) Do you have any theological strategies that you think can bring about peace, reconciliations and ways of healing memories?

.....
If Yes explain.....
.....
.....

w.) Are you ready as a Church leader to confront the political leadership in your area and those who are perpetrators of violence to discuss peace and reconciliation?

.....
If No explain why, if yes
explain.....
.....
.....

You can use separate sheets for your answers

Appendix Five

Informed Consent Form:

Title of study: Healing Memories: Can the Church find peace in the midst of political confrontation, not as a partisan player but rather as a peace maker and reconciler?

I,, agree to participate in this research study conducted on Healing Memories, as explained to me by the researcher.

I have been informed about the reason for my participation, and understand what the research is about. I have not been forced to answer any questions, and I understand that I am at liberty to refuse to answer any questions which may cause me discomfort, even after signing this consent form.

I understand that this interview will be conducted under the supervision of, contact.....

I understand the content of this consent form.

Signed: Date:

Participant

Signed: Date:

Researcher

Appendices Six
Some Pictures of Political Violence



