Renewal of the Liturgy in the
Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa,
Potchefstroom Presbytery:
A practical-theological investigation

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Declaration

I, Kenneth Mohakabe, declare that “Renewal of the Liturgy in the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa, Potchefstroom Presbytery, A practical-theological investigation,” is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Date: 09 /11/2017

K. Mohakabe
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For these reasons, I am happy to submit this dissertation, fully hoping that it will bring changes in the worship of the URCSA, Potchefstroom Presbytery.
Abstract
Congregations in the Potchefstroom Presbytery of the URCSA are experiencing an exodus of members to other churches. The question is what can be done to respect tradition, while at the same time introducing worship practices that are contemporary and culturally conscious and that can transform the present culture in the church. First, a literature survey is conducted to research the theological basis on which the elements and actions of worship are based, the role of music and the role of the Church Year. This is followed by a survey of limited scope on issues regarding worship, liturgical orders, singing and the use of languages within the presbytery. This study shows that the presbytery needs worship that recognises diversity and that is relevant and suitable for all. A greater consciousness of the role of music, the meaning of the actions in the liturgy and the Church Year, could promote worship that is rich in diversity.

LIST OF ACRONYMS
Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa (DRC)
Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC)
Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA)
Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA)
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION

1.1 The historical development of the URCSA

URCSA is the product of the two sister churches of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC), namely the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA) and the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC). Historically, the DRC was one church in which people of all cultures and races worshipped together. In 1881, the formal separation of church services took place on grounds of race and culture when the DRC decided that all its members belonging to indigenous cultures should form separate congregations. The divided denomination comprised four separate denominations, White, Black, Coloured, and Indian. The DRMC was formed in 1881 and included people of mixed race, known both officially and popularly as Coloureds. The indigenous ‘Bantu’ congregations were later separated from the coloured congregations to form the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Bantoekerk in 1951. Its name changed to the DRCA in 1963. Each denomination was independent of the others, but all shared the similar history, doctrine and structure (URCSA 2010-2016 Strategic plan document 1996:3).

At the 1986 synod of the DRMC, a new confession, called the Belhar Confession, was accepted as the symbol of the DRMC’s new identity, which spelled out that the Church of God is one. The name Belhar refers to the coloured township in the Cape where the 1986 synod of the DRMC was held. Shortly after the DRMC synod resolution had been accepted in favour of church unity, talks for reunification culminated in the formation of the URCSA. The birth of the URCSA coincided with the birth of democracy in South Africa. On 14 April 1994, the URCSA was born when two of the four churches within the DRC family reunited (URCSA 2010-2016, Strategic plan document 1996:3).

1.2 Personal background to the study

I approached this topic as someone studying to be ordained as a minister in the URCSA. This means that I am practically involved in the programmes and activities of the church and have been in different congregations in the Potchefstroom Presbytery for the past four years, doing pastoral practical work as part of the student ministerial
requirements. My observation over the past four years has been that worship in its present form in the individual congregations in my presbytery in the URCSA does not represent or accommodate all members within these congregations of the local Reformed churches. The issue of participation remains a challenge in various local churches as it affects the people’s responses.

This study focussed on worship in the church (URCSA), which is one of the pillars of and without which the church loses meaning. The process of worship in the URCSA is clearly outlined in the proceedings of the sixth general synod of the URCSA (2012:199 – 226). This is also reflected in the Hosanna (1967:605). Apart from the inherited Church Order, is the inheritance of the Hosanna hymn book, around which worship revolves. The Hosanna hymn book was primarily established by the DRC for DRCA and there was a traditional manner in which the hymns were to be sung and certain ways of responding and reacting to them. The coloured congregations used their own hymn book, called Sionsgesange, which resembled the Hallelujah-liederen used in the DRC.

The worship as inherited from the DRC is mainly Western oriented and it had a strong influence on how URCSA members worship. In most cases in URCSA the church choir takes the lead and sing hymns excluding other members of the church. The congregational members are not only excluded from singing, they are also excluded from praying as a collective. This practice extends also to preaching, which is confined to the minister and the church council members only, as stipulated in the URCSA Church Order (2014:4).

Worship is seen to revolve around participative, praising, praying, interceding singing and thanksgiving to the almighty in a truthful Spirit, so that members can freely participate when attending services. The argument is based on the fact that Christian worship is congregational and the expectation is the participation of the entire congregation (Croft & Adkins, 2014:24). During worship, people are free from restriction but are free to verbalize and demonstrate their worship physically.

On this basis this study encourages a high level of participatory worship and this is what had been neglected by URCSA for years, as has happened in Hosanna (1967:605). This suggests that the new Church Order of URCSA and not the one
inherited, should be used to develop a new hymnbook. This could be positive in the sense that there is freedom in the way members participate, but it could be negative if ungifted members feel excluded and become strangers in the worship. Trying to make the worship accessible for all worshippers is positive, especially when it allows people to feel at home and familiar with what is going on in worship. It could become negative when members become passive without really taking notice of what is happening in the worship.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

1. The main problem this study seeks to investigate is, firstly, how the liturgy could be structured and filled in to accommodate different groups and different generations.

2. Related to this is whether congregations in the Uniting Reformed Church in the Potchefstroom Presbytery are willing to change in order to reflect multi-culturalism in their church services and to promote participation.

Questions related to the research problem are the following:

1. Which actions and elements are important in worship and what is the order in which the elements and actions should function best?

2. What are the possible variations in the order that would accommodate all people?

3. How could music be used to enrich worship and to promote a consciousness for active participation, as well as including various languages? Related to this is whether there is a consciousness for the use of any other language than the dominant language, especially in singing.

4. What contribution could a consciousness of the Church Year make?

1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this dissertation is to determine from a study of literature, how music, language, variations in the order of services and accommodating the Church Year, could all work together to bring about participatory worship and positive change in the worship and life of the church in general – also to promote a consciousness for active participation, including the use of various languages.
The actions and elements important in worship, and the principles underlying these actions and elements are determined. Secondly, the order in which these elements and actions could function best, as well as possible variations of the order, are determined.

The way music and language could be used to enhance and enrich participatory worship, and the role the Church Year could play in the liturgy are determined.

Secondly, a small-scale survey was done via questionnaires distributed in the Presbytery of Potchefstroom, to evaluate the current practices of worship in the Uniting Reformed Church. Bringing the literature and the results of the empirical study together, I strived to determine which actions and elements could be used and how they could be used to enrich and promote the participation of worshippers in the worship. The role of music and language, and the role of the Church Year, were also determined.

1.5 Research method

Swinton and Mowat (2006:255) state that practical theology is action research, which includes a number of participatory approaches. The study followed a method, which focused on practical problems experienced by local participants, with the intention of achieving a practical solution.

From a small survey within the Potchefstroom Presbytery of the URCSA, the current practices in worship were researched to determine the following:

- which elements and actions in worship ministers regarded as indispensable;
- are there variations in the order of the service in the Presbytery, or is the same basic pattern followed in each service; and if the latter is true, whether ministers are willing to deviate from a set pattern;
- how is music used to enrich worship and to create a consciousness for active participation;
• related to this is whether there is a consciousness for the use of any other language than the dominant language, especially in singing;

• whether the Church Year plays any role in worship – and if so, in which ways?

The study of enhancing and enriching participation in a church is limited here to worship. As the study focuses on the renewal of the worship in the Reformed churches, local churches which are not part of the Reformed churches are excluded. The URCSA in the Potchefstroom Presbytery is the investigative area for this study. The issue of the christening of infants is not considered, as there is controversy surrounding the sacrament of baptism, which leads to different interpretations and debates, which are not relevant to this study specifically. The internal validity of this study relied on the commitment of the participants (Cohen et al., 2000:255). The collected data was selected and categorized through analysis and interpretation. The study ends with recommendations for a changed praxis.
CHAPTER 2

ACTIONS AND ELEMENTS IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

INTRODUCTION

The present chapter outlines the conceptual framework for the study by providing a literature exploration of the actions and elements in Christian worship. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the four main parts or sections of the order of Sunday service. Frame (1996:67) points out that theologians have argued much over the question of the order of worship. Today, many churches find themselves embroiled in debate over how the worship should be structured (Weaver, 2002:3). One particular question that comes to mind is what Christians do when they worship, or what most Christians have done over the ages when they gathered to worship. In response to this question, liturgical scholar White (2000:161) explains that, for several centuries, the Lord’s Day provided the basic structure of worship of the English-speaking reformed tradition. Thus, one could ask whether the liturgical order of the Reformed church includes all the required elements for Christian worship. If so, does it involve the entire congregation, and does it allow an opportunity for responding to God’s “speaking”?

Two liturgical formats are given below. Format A is the traditional format printed at the back of the Hosanna (1966) hymnbook. It displays the picture of what URCSA members do when they have gathered to worship from the beginning to the end.

The format A of Sunday Service (Tsamaiso ya Tshebeletso) is as follows:

1. Votum / Thapelo ya hlophiso
2. Greetings / Tumediso
3. Song of praise / Sefela sa Poko
4. The law / Molao wa Jehovah
5. Repentance / Sefela 114 kapa 244 ho Hosanna
6. Forgiveness of sin pronounced / Polelo ya Tshwarelo
7. The creed / Boipolelo ba Tumelo

Hymn / Sefela Hosanna 122

8. Prayer / Thapelo e etella Lentswe

9. Hymn / Sefela se lokelang

10. Scripture reading / Palo ya Lentswe

Sermon / Thero

11. Prayer / Thapelo

12. Offerings / Dimpho tsa lerato

13. Choir

14. Hymn / Sefela sa Teboho

15. Benediction / Hlohonolofatso

The 15 actions and elements of worship that appears at the back of Hosanna (1966) hymnbook are still in use by URCSA congregations (Draft worship book 2016:23).

In an attempt to bring about positive change in the worship of URCSA in general, the Northern Synod of the URCSA developed the draft worship book 2016 in response to the draft liturgy book approved by the General Synod 2012 at Okahandja, Namibia (Draft worship book 2016:1). I present this as Format B

The draft worship format gives possibilities for more active participation of diverse members in the worship. A division of actions and elements in the draft worship is as follows.

**PHASE 1 ENTRY AND INCORPORATION**

Congregational singing
Vestry prayer
Votum
Liturgical greeting
Praise
Psalm
*Greeting one another
Affirmation of dignity
*Celebration of birthdays
*Law of God
Confession of sin
Proclamation of forgiveness
Commitment to new obedience
*Creed
Acknowledging visitors
Baptism
Public profession of faith ("Confirmation")
Welcoming of new members

PHASE 2 MINISTRY OF THE WORD
Prayer for illumination
Scripture reading
Prayer (*intercession)

PHASE 3 MINISTRY OF THE TABLE
Formulary
Self- examination
Sharing the peace
Preparation of the table
Eucharistic prayer
Words of institution
Distribution of the elements
Thanksgiving prayer

PHASE 4 SENDING AND BLESSING
Induction of church council members
Robing of new ministry members
Offerings
Announcements
Comparing the traditional Format A, which appears at the back of Hosanna hymn book (1966), with the draft liturgical Format B, which appears on the draft worship book 2016, there emerges a large number of differences between the two formats. There are, however, a few actions and elements that are similar.

Firstly, the differences between the two formats are given, after which the actions and elements that are similar are listed. Finally, additions and omissions are dealt with.

**The differences include the following:**

Traditional Format (A) does not have sub-divisions, whereas the draft format (B) is made up of four sub-divisions. The draft format gives direction and sketches of the manner in which the four sub-divisions would proceed. This format is easier for the worshippers to understand how are they going to begin, what are they going to do next, and how they are going to end the service. The draft format is crafted and developed in such a way that members present – even visitors – can easily follow what is taking place.

Secondly, the draft format (B), unlike the traditional format (A) provides flexibility and adaptability by allowing for options. For instance, elements marked with an asterisk* can be used at different places in the service (Draft worship book 2016:8). For example, relevant hymns can be sung at different points in the service or alternative psalms may be chosen. These numerous options make it easier for the liturgist to make changes to suit different circumstances.

Thirdly, the draft format is different from the traditional format (A) that has a non-participatory approach and where the liturgy is dominated by the liturgist and the congregation participates only by singing and reciting creeds (Letsotsa 2010:397).

The draft format encourages a participatory approach. In this format (B), the invitation is more open and creative and involves the entire congregation.
Furthermore, unlike the traditional format (A), the draft format is open for congregational responses, where members respond to almost every element of the worship. Unlike the traditional order where the two main prayers occur just before the scripture reading and after the sermon, the draft format (B), allows for optional prayers:

- A prayer for affirming dignity (which does not appear in the traditional format) emphasises that the dignity of a person is something that cannot be taken away. This prayer affirms that every person has value, and all deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. Peter reminds Christians to show respect for every one (1 Peter 2:17). The basis for the notion that all people are made in God’s image, is found in Genesis 1:27.

- Prayers for birthdays, which are not in the traditional order, acknowledge the life and growth of people and proclaim a heavenly blessing for them.

- A prayer of confession which leads to the prayer of forgiveness and the prayer for obedience. The intention of this prayer is to allow healing to take place through confession or forgiveness.

- Another prayer that forms part of the optional prayers is the prayer for the confession of faith. This prayer not only provides an opportunity to individual members to confess the faith, but it also enriches the worship and life of the entire congregation.

- A prayer of thanksgiving, in which God is praised, closes the third phase of the worship. In the traditional order, there is no prayer of thanksgiving.

- Finally, there are three prayers that have been included in the sending and blessing phase before benediction. There are also prayers for the induction of council members and robing of new ministry members.

- There is a prayer for intercession, which brings the hardship of the congregation before the Lord. The prayer for intercession addresses the inequality and exploitation of the poor and provides encouragement for the entire congregation to also address these inequalities.
Another difference one can identify is the number of elements that do not occur in the traditional format (A) which is printed at the back of the Hosanna (1966) hymnbook.

When one compares the number of congregational singing in both formats, it is clear that there is a limited number of congregational hymns in the traditional format (A), compared to format (B) which is dominated by congregational singing.

A further element that is not found in the traditional format (A) is the Psalm. The draft format, as appeared in URCSA Draft worship book, includes a Psalm. After the song of praise is done, the Psalm is read to the congregation as part of the weekly worship to deepen the congregation’s praise (Draft worship book 2016:28).

A third element that is missing in the first format, but included in the second, is the greeting, which shows love amongst church members. The traditional format therefore lacks the welcoming and acknowledgement of visitors so that they feel welcome in the Church. Thus, in the draft format, the notion of welcoming visitors is important.

Baptism in the draft format has been allocated on entry and incorporation, whereas in the traditional format, it could be done at any time at any phase.

Sharing the peace: In relation to the Eucharist, people are required to self-examine and introspect themselves. This process includes the peace that will emerge during and after the administering of Eucharist.

It can be concluded that the URCSA draft format (B), offers a variety of actions and elements that provide opportunities for members to respond. This format also creates a mood of joy in the worship.

There is a common phrase in URCSA that says that God is the God of order and that his Church should be governed in good order. One could argue, however, that joy does not disturb order. According to the Draft worship book (2016:5), the worship of URCSA revolves around singing and dancing. Therefore, congregants should be given an opportunity to praise, confess and thank God and to sing in the worship, because URCSA worship needs to be responsive.
The points of similarities: These are actions and elements that are similar between the traditional format (A) and the draft worship book format (B).

The traditional order and the draft worship format includes the votum, the liturgical greeting at the beginning of the worship. After the liturgical greeting follows the element of praise.

The law of God, confession of sin, proclamation of forgiveness, and the Creed are also similar in both formats.

Two spaces for prayers are found in both formats. These include a prayer for illumination before or after the Scripture reading, and the prayer for intercession after the sermon.

During offerings, music plays a central role in both formats. Both the traditional order and the draft worship format allows for announcements to occur at different points in the service.

Lastly the final hymn and benediction are placed at the end of the service in both formats.

Looking at the differences and similarities between the two formats, one can conclude that there is a need for renewal in the traditional format (A) printed at the back of Hosanna hymnbook and that Format B could present opportunities for the renewal of the liturgy.

The actions and elements of service are listed and explained below, and various possibilities and examples that can be used to bring changes in the worship are presented.
2.1 PHASE 1 Entry and incorporation

2.1.1 Gathering

In Common worship the first part of the service is called ‘The Gathering’ (Perham 2000:111). Earey and Myers highlight the fact that the idea of the Church (Greek: ekklesia) is one of gathering. A gathering is the coming together of congregants at the church, and the intention of the people who gather is to worship (Earey & Myers, 2001:184). Congregants believe that worshiping God is the means through which God addresses their expectations. Isaiah indicates that anyone expecting God in his/her heart is very near to God in spirit and truth.

A congregation is a gathering of people from somewhere, assembled for something, and eventually they will disperse back to the places from whence they came (Long, 2005:15). The people who come to worship have different needs and expectations. On this basis, Perham (2000:21) is of the view that to discover true participation means that members must look for something in which all worshippers can share. Perham believes that it is probably the most reserved person in the pew who can provide the clue. He is also of the opinion that if participation means coming out of the pew and doing something upfront, whether singing or reading, those who have none of these gifts will remain in the security of the pew and may feel excluded.

In most congregations, members begin to gather at the church building before the scheduled time for the service to start. Weaver (2002:46) justly suggests that perhaps this is a good time for people to rehearse new liturgical actions or music, so that when the service begins, worshippers may engage in the liturgy with a sense of confidence and attentiveness. Mitman (2001:124) maintains that the liturgical act, like all others, needs to be rehearsed by the participants prior to the beginning of worship.

An example of this practice is that members can rehearse hymns, chorus or Psalm 122:1-2:

_I rejoiced with those who said to me._
_Let us go to the house of the Lord._

While people are gathering, the church council takes their position in the vestry to commence.
2.1.2 Vestry prayer

The worship officially begins with a prayer in the vestry preceded over by the inducted leaders of the church, namely the church council (Draft worship book 2016: 23). The term vestry is similar to the word consistory (Vorster 2011:51). The vestry prayer is the first prayer activating the presence of God in the service. This vestry prayer marks the first and primary role of the church council.

The vestry prayer cannot be regarded as an ordinary prayer, but should be considered as a formal, honest and sincere intercessory prayer laying the foundation for the entire service. A practical example of this prayer is found in John 4:23-24 (URCSA Draft worship book 2016:23).

This prayer will sustain the liturgy from the opening greeting to the concluding dismissal (Perham, 2000:21). Once the vestry prayer has been conducted, worship has already started in the consistory.

It can be concluded that vestry prayer lays the foundation of the worship, because it is a prayer that starts the service and invites the presence of God to bless his children. This prayer is officiated by the church council.

2.1.3 Entering the church

After the vestry prayer has been conducted, the church council enters the church. The entrance of the church council members, followed by the presiding minister or the worship leader approaching the pulpit lectern or the front table, signals that the service is beginning (Weaver, 2001:47). The entry of the church leadership invites the people to put away their concerns and to focus on what God has prepared for them (Rice & Huffstutler, 2001:84). This part of the service involves people of all ages and ranks (De Klerk, 2012:37). Worshippers stand during the entrance of the church council and sing praises to God. These actions of worship invites active participation, because the worshippers actually express what they are singing with their body language (Senn, 2012:193). The liturgy begins with the entrance song and the presiding minister is always at the end of the procession as a shepherd leading the flock (Senn, 2012:196).
2.1.4 Votum (word of commencement)

The votum is presented after the church council entourage has entered and the presiding minister has taken his/her position on the pulpit. The votum is defined as a brief passage deriving from Scripture. This passage officiates and constitutes the gathering (Draft worship book 2016 :).

Since God is the one who has called us to worship, the votum usually comes directly from Scripture, Psalm 121:1-2, Psalm 124:8 or Psalm 27:1. It can be said in prayer or song. In general, the Votum was always spoken, but it is a new suggestion, that it can also be sung.

The votum and the greetings are regarded as the opening scene of the worship (Immink, 2014:152). Before the act of the votum, liturgists may draw the attention of participants in the worship to the dependence and confidence expressed by the congregation in the votum (De Klerk, 2012:87). According to the URCSA Draft worship book (2016:24), a liturgist must ensure that the first impression created in the votum should last for the duration of the service.

The example of Psalm121:1-2 could involve the entire congregation in a very active way.

L: Leader C: Congregation

Psalm 121: 1-2

L: I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills
C: where does my help come from?
L: My help comes from the Lord,
C: the Maker of heaven and earth

Another common votum is found in Psalm 124:8:

L: Our help is from the Lord who made heaven and earth.

It is also possible to do an interactive (responsive) votum, for example Psalm 24:1-5:

L: The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it,
C: the world, and those who live in it,
L: for he has founded it on the seas,
C: and established it on the rivers,
L: Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord?
C: and who shall stand in his holy place?
L: Those who have clean hands and pure hearts,
C: who do not lift up their souls to what is false, and do not swear deceitfully,
L: They will receive blessing from the Lord,
C: and vindication from the God of their salvation.
All: In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The church members could affirm their participation with a vocal chorus of Amen.

This could suggest renewal as the greeting is shared by all members in a responsive form that could encourage participation of members.

The word Amen, ‘so may it stand’, is a frequent response in Scripture. In Deuteronomy 27, Moses told the people to respond with ‘Amen’, and this responsive form has been used as congregational response to encourage a greater level of participation (Frame, 1996:105).

It can be concluded that the Votum is a Scripture passage rendered by the minister to officially declare a gathering of believers to be opened. This Scripture passage should create a long lasting impression in the congregants.

2.1.5 Liturgical greeting or (salutation)

The liturgical greeting is defined as a speech rendered to the congregation by a liturgist on behalf of God (URCSA Draft worship book, 2016:26). Frame (1996:94) concurs that the blessing pronounced at the beginning of worship is usually called a salutation or greeting. He (1996:56) explains that there is no specific biblical command to include greetings and benedictions in public worship; however, Paul in his letters to various congregations expresses the importance of these greetings. In 2 Corinthians 1:2, we read that “in grace to you and peace from God our father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (Rice & Hufstuttle, 2001:83). The use of such a salutation indicates that worship is not an ordinary gathering, but a gathering of God’s own people. This usage is much preferred to the ‘Good morning’ greeting (Weaver, 2002:46). It is inappropriate to say anything at this point other than the specified greeting.
Alternatively, suitable hymns or Psalms may be selected for this element. For example, hymn 20(1), Lifela tsa Sione 386, stanza 1 (Hosanna 1996:10):

Re a o boka, Morena (We honor/ praise you Lord)
Re ntse re thabela wena (We still rejoice in you)
Re sa phela hamonate (We still live in harmony)
Ka paballo ya hao, Ntate. (Under your protection, Father)

In response to the liturgist, the congregants could affirm their participation with a vocal chorus of Amen (Draft worship 2016:27). Liturgical greetings are therefore an expression of pronouncement of God’s grace and blessings to his people by a liturgist on behalf of God, to which people affirm and accept pronouncement by saying Amen.

2.1.6 Song(s) of praise

Singing is a very important part of Christian worship. Both in the Old Testament and the New Testament music and singing played an important role in the congregation’s praise of God. The hymns sung express the greatness of God as stated in Scripture. A salutation without a song of praise to God is incomplete. Hence, the congregation after hearing and accepting a gracious greeting from God, has to burst out in praise (Draft worship book 2016:27).

In the Draft worship book (2016:27) it is stated that, in the reformed tradition, songs regarded for praise and worship should derive from Hosanna hymn book or Sionsgesange (Draft worship book 2016:27). The congregation is encouraged to sing more than one song in their pursuit to glorify God. The congregation can use instruments during worship so that the praise is activated (Draft worship book 2016:27).

Calvin supported music and singing in the church. He advocated and recommended that the entire congregation should be included and be involved in worship (Vorster, 1999:121). Praise entails that more than one song that is relevant to the message to be preached should be sung.
It can be concluded that the songs of praise during worship play a central role in the liturgy since they activate worship. The music chosen should be according to Biblical principles and in line with the confession of the church and fit for worship.

### 2.1.7 Reading a Psalm

Psalms are not only used for singing, but also during worship. The Psalm can be read by the liturgist or it can be read interactively. Psalm are key during worship as they help congregants to stand up against daily challenges and motivate them to look forward into the future (URCSA Draft worship book 2016:28).

### 2.1.8 Affirming human dignity

The draft worship book (2016: 28) encourages congregants to affirm their human dignity. It states that congregants have to ensure and know that they possess a God-given dignity. They are created in his image and as human beings they are subject to sin, and thus they have to confess their sins and ask for forgiveness. The following is a statement that could be recited as an indication of affirming human dignity:

*I stand with dignity before God and among my fellow members*

*I accept myself as a unique person*

*Because I am created in the image of God.*

The Zulu would say “Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu”.

Sotho-speaking people would say “Motho ke motho ka batho”.

“A person is person through other persons”

The affirmation statements are sometimes taken directly from Scripture to which the congregants will respond with a passage that is relevant, for example Psalm 8:1-9.

The congregation, after responding to the Scripture statements of dignity, could sing a song of praise to appreciate God’s gift of human dignity.

### 2.1.9 Greeting one another

Greeting visitors and fellow members is a very important aspect in the African tradition. It is an indication that one is welcome and that one has peace with the person greeting
one (Letsotsa 2010:386). In so doing, the congregants give practical expression that *motho ke motho ka batho*.

### 2.1.10 Acknowledgment of visitors

Africans are hospitable people. After members have greeted each other, the liturgist has the pleasure of welcoming visitors to the congregation (Draft worship book 2016:29). Welcoming visitors is a fundamental value that we find throughout the Bible (URCSA Draft worship book 2016:29). This manner of welcoming visitors finds expression on Gen 18, where Abraham, due to his welcoming heart, finally welcome angels. In his epistle to the Hebrews, Peter says: “Don’t forget to be kind to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it” (Hebrews 13:2). Furthermore, welcoming guests and visitors finds expression in Matthew 25:35 where Jesus said “I was a stranger and you welcomed me”. Welcoming visitors simply means making other people feel comfortable and at home. Paul explains in Galatians 6:10 that we should always be kind to everyone.

### 2.1.11 Celebrating birthdays

In this phase of the service, members who celebrate their birthdays are invited to come forward and give a thanksgiving offering to God and to be prayed for (Draft worship book 2016:30). The prayer for people who are celebrating their birthdays is divided into two parts (Draft worship book 2016:30). The first section deals with praise for a new year of life, and the second section concerns a supplication for God’s protection and blessing in the year to come. The thanksgiving prayer is coupled with a relevant song from the congregation. Psalm 16:5-7 is a good possibility, as well as hymn 264, *Lifela tsa Sione* 111, which is a setting of Psalm 23, stanza 7:

Ke na le Modisa. (The Lord is my Shepherd)

O sa tla mpaballa (Surely goodness and mercy

Le bophileong bona (Shall be with all of my life)

Mme ke tla hlola kamehla (And I will dwell

Ka tlung ya Morena (in the house of the Lord for ever)
It can be concluded that celebrating birthdays serves to indicate that God is appreciated and acknowledged for his love, protection and blessings. The minister prays for the celebrant and he/she wishes them well.

2.1.12 Reading the law

The reading of the law to the congregation plays a critical role. The law serves as a mirror enabling us to reflect on our sins, with the intention for us to confess our sins. The secondary role is that the law serves as a window that enables us to see the way of obedience and gratitude to God (Draft worship book 2016:30). The aforementioned uses of the law is evident in the Heidelberg catechism (Draft worship book 2016:30).

The first commandment in Exodus 20:3 tells us, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me”. The point is that our worship, our deepest devotion and our most ardent love are to be directed to God rather than to ourselves. Jesus also tells us that the first and greatest commandment is that we are to love God with all our hearts, all our minds, and all our souls. The commandments have been given to us to observe them as part of the reading of the law.

It is important for the liturgy to have the reading of the Ten Commandments (Ex 20: 1-17) or a summary of the law (Matt 22:35-40). This can be done by responsive reading or by singing. According to Letsotsa (2010:389) it would be appropriate to mention the number of the law, for example the first commandment, the second commandment until the last. Even children would then understand the law better. The following may also be said:

Dear brothers and sisters, listen what our Lord Jesus Christ says in Matthew 22:37-40.

Liturgist: One of them, a lawyer, asked Jesus. Sir, which is the most important command in the laws of Moses?

Congregation: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind.

Liturgist: This is the first and greatest commandment. What is the second most similar to the first one?

Congregation: Love your neighbour as much as you love yourself.
Liturgist: *All the other commandments and all the demands of the prophets stem from these two laws and are fulfilled. If you obey them. Keep only these you will find that you are obeying all the others.*

One of the relevant hymns that may be used for this part is hymn 225, *Lifela tsa Sione* 308, and stanza 1-3 (Hosanna 1966:120)

1
Ke se ke Utlwile, (I've already heard)
Jesu ha o mpitsa (Jesus when you call)
O mpona ke laihihile (Seeing me lost)
O re, oa mpholosa. (Then you saved me)

Chorus:
E, ke dumetse, (Yes I agreed)
Nthole, Morena (Save / find me Lord)
Nhlatswe, nthokodisise (Wash and purify me)
Ke be motle le nna. (So I be clean)
2
Ke tla ka ditshila ( I come to you impure)
Key moetsadibe ;( I'm sinner)
Ke tla ke le feela-feela (I come empty handed)
Oho, nkgauhele. (Oho have mercy on me)
3
Nkapese ka matla, (Cloth me with strength)
Wena ka sebele (You and you alone)
Ntholele sebe ka matla (Overcome sins always for me)
O nketse mohale. (Make me a winner).

Singing one of these hymns could bring about change in the worship.

It can be concluded that the reading of the law functions as a mirror to remind us of our sins and to propel and drive us to confess them.

2.1.13 Confession of sin

Wrongdoings must be confessed with a sincere heart. Confession of sin plays a critical role within the life of a Christian. The purpose of this act is to lead the congregation to confess their sins to God (Segler & Bradley, 2006:123). Any Christian has to admit his or her sins and ask God’s forgiveness for the sake of Jesus (Rice & Huffstutler, 2001:86).
The basic truth here is that we are all sinners by nature and by practice; even after we become Christians, we still sin and must confess (Frame, 1996:10).

The story of King David is a practical example: David loved the Lord, but one day he committed adultery with Bathsheba, and then ordered her husband to be killed in an attempted cover-up. When he realised that he sinned against God, he deeply regretted what he had done and sought God's forgiveness (2 Samuel 11:2-27).

Weaver (2002:48) adds that people are called to confession of sin with a biblical word that acknowledges both the sinfulness of humanity and the mercy of God, who desires to forgive. Draft worship book (2016:31) adds that the Hosanna 114 hymn is also sung to that effect, namely *Lifela tsa Sione* 86 stanza 1-4 (Hosanna 1966:64):

1

*Dibe di teng, re a di bona. (There are sins that I see)*

*Dibe di re ja dipelo ;( Sins that destroy our hearts)*

*Re lliswa ke dibe tsa rona. (These sins make us cry)*

*Ka bohloko bo boholo. (In very great pain)*

*Chorus*

*Tlosa libe, tlosa litsila (Remove the sins, remove the evil)*

*Moea oa ka, o be motle. (So that my spirit should be clean)*

*Lin tho tse mpe kea li ila, (Evil things, I hate)*

*A ko li lahlele kantle. (Throw them far away from me)*

Cherry (2013:166) believes that the prayer of confession of sin may come through spoken prayer, unison prayer, silent prayer, a song, Scripture and also mass prayer, where all members of the congregation pray aloud simultaneously.

The confession of sins could be done by reading 1 John 1:8-10:

*If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God is faithful to us and He is will to forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

The URCSA Draft (2016:31) adds that an interactive, responsive confession of sin can be used. Weaver (2002:48) affirms that this is a time express to the conviction that none of us are worthy to stand in the presence of the Holy God, save in and by the grace and mercy of God in Jesus Christ.
Rice and Huffstutler (2001:184) offer a similar view that confession of sin can take three forms.

- Public prayers of confession of sin, in which the entire congregation confesses together. Open confessions seem to have been a practice of Christians in the Early Church. There was the public confession of sin in the presence of witnesses (Segler & Bradley, 2006:24).

- Private confession made by the individual, personally, directly to God.

- Confession to another person. James urged his fellow Christians to confess their sins to one another and to pray for one another (James 5:16). For these reasons, it is good for Christians to confess their faith to profess to the world what they actually believe.

It can be concluded that confession of sin is a process of acknowledging one’s sin after which one asks for forgiveness. God can forgive any sin. The prayer of confession can be a spoken prayer, a unison prayer or a silent one, or even a mass prayer.

2.1.14 Proclaiming forgiveness

Immink (2014:153) highlights the fact that the prayer of confession is usually followed by the proclamation of grace. At this phase of liturgy, the minister speaks and announces God’s gracious word of forgiveness to the congregation (Draft 2016:36). The announcement to receive the gift of forgiveness is God’s invitation, not the minister’s. There is no human being allowed to forgive the sins of others; it is only proclaimed and announced on the basis of Scripture.

One of the following Scriptures may be used to convey the message of forgiveness: Psalm 32: 1 or Romans 4:7-8.

The manner in which the proclamation and announcement of forgiveness are offered is clear from diverse Scriptural texts, for example:

Liturgist: Brothers and sisters, David was guilty of terrible sins, yet he experiences the joy of forgiveness. We too can have this joy when we admit our guilt to God and ask his forgiveness.
After the announcement and proclamation have been offered as indicated above, the congregation is advised to respond in thanksgiving praise with a song such as Hosanna 20 (Draft worship book 2016:37).

Or Hymn 253, *Lifela tsa Sione* 264, stanza 1:

*Hoja ke se na wena, (If I didn't have you)*
*Jesu, Mmoloki e motle (Jesus, beautiful saviour)*
*Hoja ke se na wena (If I didn't have you)*
*Ruri- ruri nka fela (Truly - truly I would perish)*
*Nka bona kae tshwarelo (Where I would find forgiveness)*
*Ya dibe tsa ka tse ngata (Of my many sins)*
*Nka bona kae phomolo, (Where I would get rest)*
*Hojane o le siyo (If you were not there)*

Psalm 103:8-12) or (John 3:16-17):

*For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son so that anyone who believe in him shall not perish but have eternal life. God did not send his Son into the world to condemn it, but to save it.*

It can be concluded that proclaiming forgiveness marks the high point of entry and incorporation during which the minister, in the greatest humility, announces forgiveness on the basis of Scripture to the congregation who in turn responds with gratitude.

2.1.15 Commitment to new obedience

The challenge of being a faithful Christian is that most members take God’s grace given in Christ for granted (Letsotsa 2010:389). They are often tempted to fall back into the very same sin they have confessed and for which they have been forgiven (Draft worship 2016 :37). In an attempt to avert this sin, it is advised and recommended that they make a new commitment to obey God and to do his will (Draft 2016:37) The appropriate manner to ensure that they honour this commitment, and to ensure that they are committed into this covenant, is by means of reading a law of God which is known as using a “window” not a mirror. The relevant Scripture that could be used here is Deuteronomy 8:6:

*Obey the laws of the Lord your God. Walk in his ways and fear him.*
A responsive prayer could be developed for this purpose. Here is one possibility:

**Liturgist:** Creator Spirit, create a new heart and new mind within us  
**Congregation:** Transform us into the image of God  
**All:** In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen  
**Liturgist:** We heard what God’s will is, let us commit ourselves to live a new life.

### 2.1.16 Reciting a creed

This is a very important part of worship, as members of the congregation participate by stating publicly what they believe and openly confess their faith to affirm Christ’s truth as the foundation of the congregation’s unity. It is also during the recital of a creed that the entire congregation participates in an active manner in the liturgy. When the congregation sings a creed, they are unlikely to resist its meaning. In Calvin’s Geneva, the congregation sang the creed, which was an effective way to offer the creed (Byars, 2002:111). Reciting a creed has always been a fixed part of reformed worship. However, Frame (1996:105) does not believe that every worship must include the recitation of a creed. Rather, he is of the opinion that the purpose of such recitation may be accomplished in other ways, such as hymns, prayers, teaching, and sacraments.

Article 2.2 of the URCSA Church Order states that three Ecumenical creeds are used in worship. They are the Apostles’ Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed. The three creeds constitute the historic confessions of the Early Church. There are other contemporary creeds that are used from time to time, such as the confession Belgica (Dutch confession of faith), the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dordt, but the standard (“default”) option should be the Apostles’ Creed, Nicene Creed, or a liturgical version of the Confession of Belhar (1986).

Reciting a creed ensures that the congregation participate actively. This active participation is made possible in all the creedal confession as approved by the reformers.
2.1.17 Baptism
This is a climax of the first phase of the fourfold liturgical framework. Baptism is the sacrament of incorporation into the church (Draft worship book 2016:43). Baptism is therefore regarded as an entrance into a space of grace. This sacrament is divided into two types, namely, baptism of elderly people and infants.

Baptism is administered by an ordained minister according to reformed tradition. The minister baptises in the name of the Triune God (Draft worship book 2016:76). There are three forms of infant baptism that are approved by URCSA. On the other hand, there is only one form of baptism for mature people which is similar as the form for public profession of faith (Draft worship book 2016:43). All these are church-approved as Baptism forms.

Both the infant and mature baptism forms include questions to be responded to by the parents and guardians (or the mature people themselves) with the intention to indicate personal commitment (Draft 2016:43-43).

After the minister has requested parents and guardians to enter into personal commitment of raising children into God’s covenant, he or she uses the church-approved symbols of Christ, namely a candle and water.

The minister lights the candle (small) and hands it to the parents saying “Christ is the light of the world. Christ also said to his disciples in Matthew 5:14 “you are the light of the world”. This suggests that we are the light of the world just like Christ is the light of the world.

The minister can also use water, which is a sign of life and of renewal, with the baptism of both adults and children. They are touched and baptised by the minister with water three times on the foreheads, while he or she proclaims that they are baptised in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Once a year, an opportunity could be created for members of the congregation to reaffirm the covenant of their baptism (Byars, 2002:111). The minister, in agreement with the church council, is advised to set aside a day that will be annually celebrated as the renewal of baptismal promises. In this celebration, water is not recommended to avoid the suggestion that members are being re-baptised. A responsive liturgy is
advised on the day in question (Draft worship book 2016:50). This can also be observed in accordance to the month during which a member was baptised. The responsive liturgy is clearly articulated in the Draft worship book (2016:50).

More than one hymn may be selected during the ritual of baptism, for example hymn 196 stanza 2 and 6.

2 Ngoana enoa wa Adama (this child of Adam)
O tsoaletsoe libeng (is born in sin)
Jesu, u tle ho moa ma (come Jesus touch him)
Mo hlatsoe selibeng (wash him in the river)

6 U ngole lebitso la hae (write his name)
Bukeng ea bophelo (in the book of life)
Mohla a shoang a kene hae (When he dies let him enter home)
A pheme timelo (and escape distraction)

Or Hymn 105 stanza 1, 3, and 7:

Ke ngoana hao, bitso la hao le rokoe (I’m your child, let your name be glorified)
Morena, ke ineela oela (My Lord, I commit myself to you)
Ke ngoana hao, kea o rata, kea o boka (I’m your child, I love and praise you)
Ke ngoana hao, ke ngoana hao (I am you child, I am your child)

3
Kgale ke ne ke busoa ke lefatshe (I’ve been controlled by this world for long)
Ke sa kholoe, ke labella tsuo (I did not believe and judgement was waiting for me)
Seli la hao la ba la mpontsa tsela (But your light has shown me the way)
Ke ngoana a hao, ke ngoana a hao (I am your child, I am your child).

7
Bitso la ka kajeno u le ngole (Write my name today)
Le se ke la tloha bukeng ya hao (Let it not be removed from your book)
Nako ea ka ha e fihla u nthole (When my times come, fetch me)
Ke ngoana a hao, ke ngoana a hao (I am your child, I am your child).

It can be concluded that Baptism is a process of incorporating members into the church, both infants and adults. Parents and guardians, or adults themselves, are requested to undertake personal commitment to ensure that they will observe the law of God.
2.1.18 Public profession of faith

Public profession means that members express what they believe in their hearts, namely that Jesus is Lord of their life, of the Church, and of the universe (Draft worship book 2016:53). This implies that catechists are given an opportunity to confess, together with believers, their unity in the worldwide Church of Jesus Christ. The catechists make vows of commitment to their membership in the congregation (Draft worship book 2016:51). After they have satisfied the church council by answering questions positively, those catechists are incorporated into the congregation as members.

Members will publicly confess that:

- They will read bible Scriptures every day, and pay careful attention to the Bible as their primary source of guidance.
- They will spend more time in prayer, and share prayers with other members.
- They will give glory to Lord Jesus Christ in everything they do.
- They will spend more time praising God through songs, speech and good behaviour.

More than one hymn may be selected by various members of the congregation, or the prayer may be from one member from the youth, one from the men ministry or one member from the women’s ministry.

2.1.18 Welcoming of new members

Human migration is a process that entails that people move from one place to another, with the intention of settling permanently or temporarily in a new location. To keep on growing spiritually, those who relocate to a new place transfer their membership to the new congregation. The welcoming of new members must be arranged by the church council to welcome them to the congregation (Draft worship book 2016:56).

The new members of the congregation are subjected to three sets of questions to which they must respond. Their response is an indication of personal commitment. After their personal commitment has been expressed, the church council welcomes the members on behalf of the congregation.
It can be concluded that, once the people have gathered, reminded themselves of who God is, and have confessed their sins and been forgiven, cleansed, and reconciled (Hustad, 1998:238), the liturgy moves on from phase one and now enters to the second phase – that is the proclamation of the Word of God through the sermon. This is the heart of the service and it should not be treated lightly (Bradshaw, 2001:64). The centre of any worship is the reading and preaching of the Word.

2.2 PHASE 2 Proclamation of the Word of God

Once the people have gathered, prepared and prayed, they sit down to hear the reading of the Scriptures (Perham, 2000:119). It was perhaps St. Augustine of Hippo who first allowed people to sit during sermons. There were no chairs, so people sat on the floor or leaned against the walls. Today, people generally sit to listen to the readings or the sermon (Senn, 2012:192). Perhaps this is the reason why Long (2005:16) states that the preacher now moves to a different place, the preaching place, because the preacher is about to do something that others do not do. In other words, worshippers are now ready to hear the Word of God.

According to Mitman (2001:137) the “pulpit is a platform for preaching as well as the ministry of preaching.” It defines the place for preaching (from the Latin pulpitum ‘platform’) as well as the role of preaching. In Reformed Churches, the pulpit long occupied a central position, and the table rested in front of the pulpit on the congregational level. Calvin believed the pulpit to be the throne of God and from that throne, God wants to govern our souls (Muller, 2009:17). The pulpit is not just a stand for notes or a screen to hide the preacher’s legs, but it is a symbol of the presence of the Word (Long, 2005:239). There is a current trend where preachers leave the pulpit and move up and down the aisles. According to Long, many preachers are leaving the pulpit and standing in the chancel or even moving around in the venue as they preach. Immink (2014:118) argues that listeners no longer appreciate a static model with a number of points, because this tends to make the sermon too much like a lecture. Whether on or off of the pulpit, what matters is the preaching of the Word.

It can be concluded that the proclamation of the Word is conducted by a minister and the congregation takes their rightful place and the minister preaches from the pulpit on edifying message.
2.2.1 Prayer for illumination

The prayer that precedes the Word is important for blessing the Word of God. The prayer is infused by the Holy Ghost to ensure that the Word of God comes alive to God’s people (Draft worship 2016:59). With this prayer, the preacher should not think that he/she prays for personal help; the purpose is that God should bless the entire congregation (URCSA Draft worship book, 2016:59).

Mitman (2001: 128) concurs that the prayer asks that the Holy Spirit illuminates not only the leader’s words, but also brings the Word of God into the hearts and lives of the entire community.

Illumination is a short and earnest prayer before or after the Scripture reading, in which the liturgist leads the congregation to humble themselves before God and open their hearts and minds expectantly to receive God’s blessings, as seen in examples such as 1 Samuel 3:9 or Luke 24:45.

One would naturally expect an audible message from God. However, God may use unexpected channels for His Word to be heard. Luke’s Gospel portrays the Holy Spirit as the perfect example. Luke emphasises that the Holy Spirit will open our minds to understand the Scripture, and will give us the insight to put God’s Word into action.

Weaver (2002:52) adds that this short prayer reflects the conviction that God’s Word can neither be rightly proclaimed nor rightly understood apart from the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit.

Since the prayer for illumination cannot be restricted to one individual, this prayer can be done by any member in the congregation who has been pre-consulted by the liturgist (Letsotsa 2010:391).

One of the possibly songs that may be used is hymn 144, Lifela tsa Sione 362, stanza 1-4 (Hosanna 1966:79):

1 Lentswe la hao ke lebone (Your word is light)
Le letle le benyang (Beautiful and shining)
Ha lefifi le thibane (When the darkness disturbs)
Ke sedi le kganyang. (It becomes a bright light)
Chorus
Ke letlotlo le lekaakang (Oh what a wonderful treasure)
Ke le thabetse (I rejoice in it)
Ke monono o fetisang (It is a joy surpassing)
Ntho tsohle tse ding (All other things)

2
Ke le mponesetsang tsele (It shows me the light)
Le nthutang tshwanelo (It teaches me what is right)
Le nkgannang ha ke kgeloha (It directs when I get astray)
Le ntjesang letswalo (it burns my conscience)

3
Ha ke santse ke hlahlata (When I’m busy getting lost)
Ntate o khutsitse (And the Father remained quiet)
Ke mange a neng a ka nthusa? (Who could have helped?)
Ke se ke tsietswe. (When I was in serious trouble)

4
Oho Ntate tlosa lera (Oh Father, who’s the distortion)
Le mphifatsang mahlo (Which darkens my eyes)
Ke tseba ho le latela (So that I may follow)
Sedi le mohlolo! (The miraculous light).

It can be concluded that a prayer of illumination is a supplication prayer whereby God is called upon to bless the congregation, and the Word. This prayer is similar to the one Samuel submitted to God that He must speak for he is listening (1 Samuel 3:9).

2.2.2 Scripture reading

After the prayer that enlightens the spirit of the congregants has been done, the time of Scripture reading is essential and focus should now be on Scripture alone (URCSA Draft worship, 2016:60). God speaks to us through the reading and preaching of his word in Scripture (Frame, 1996:89). Earey and Myers (2001:45) endorse the fact that the Bible lies at the heart of the worship. In public worship, God’s Word is communicated in two ways: in the words read and the words that are spoken (in Scripture reading and in the sermon). The liturgist has to ensure that the passage being read to congregants is clearly announced and that people follow properly as and when Scripture reading commences (URCSA Draft worship book, 2016:60). He should
ensure that every cultural group present feels included. It is advisable to ask members to read the passage in whatever language that is most comfortable to them (Draft worship book 2016:60).

It can be concluded that Scripture reading is essential because it shifts the attention from human beings to God. The passage to be read needs to be properly and clearly indicated to avoid confusion. The idea behind this is for people to clearly listen to what God is saying to them. The authority of Scripture is discovered when the Scripture is read and studied for purposes of preaching to people.

2.2.3 Sermon

The sermon follows after the Scripture is read. Weaver (2002:54) states that the sermon that follows the reading concludes with a biblical ascription of praise, which reminds both preacher and listeners that the sermon, like the rest of the worship, is offered up to God. In agreement, the Draft worship book (2016:61) states that the sermon is the heart of the worship.

According to Earey and Myers (2001:45), the term “sermon” includes a less formal exposition in the use of drama, interviews, discussion and the insertion of hymns or other sections of the service between parts of the sermon. It means that the sermon is an interpretation of the Scripture reading. Frame (1996:92) states that many churches today use drama in an attempt to communicate the word of God more clearly than could be done through more traditional forms of preaching. The Draft worship book (2016:61) points out that the communicated Word should be interpreted very clearly to the people.

King (2008:95) states that in most African communities, the entire congregation practices the art of homiletics (preaching) and hermeneutics (interpretation of Scripture). King further indicates that, during worship, one person prepares the sermon without consulting members of the congregation, but during the preaching other members contribute to the theme of the sermon. Therefore, not only the worship leader is engaged in the task of interpretation, but the entire assembly is drawn into the hermeneutic circle. One should remember the context for homiletics is the homilos – the ‘crowd’ (Mitman, 2001:24). Provision should be made for an interpreter to do interpreting of the sermon (URCSA Draft worship book, 2016:61).
Empirical research by Theo Plezier (233-243) has shown that the involvement of worshippers in the sermon is directly related to the aspect of recognition (Immink, 2014:173).

Earey and Myers (2001:45) identify four other models of preaching:

- Dialogue or interactive preaching. This involves the use of “open” questions to encourage the entire congregation to connect their experience to the Bible.
- Expository preaching, which has strong post-reformation roots – the biblical passage is opened up verse by verse.
- Family service preaching often introduces imaginative visual aids to reinforce comprehension and to maintain people’s attention.
- Meditative preaching encourages the imagination of the listener to interact with the Bible stories, often applied as part of Good Friday services.

It can be concluded that the sermon is the biblical message being interpreted, explained and preached to the congregation in a simple manner that would allow them to understand.

2.2.4 Prayer following the sermon.

The prayer after the sermon allows the congregation a chance to respond to the message they have heard (URCSA Draft worship book, 2016:61). According to Immink (2014:158), the response entails thanking and praising God for the wonderful food of the Spirit given for our spiritual fulfilment. Bradshaw (2001:66) is of the opinion that the response prayer could prepare congregants emotionally, mentally and spiritually for what lies ahead. This prayer is powerful because it entails the words emanating from the Scripture, and ensures that the seven dimensions of prayer are kept, namely: adoration, praise, trust, confession, supplication, lament, commitment (Draft worship book 2016:61). A congregational song that serves as a bridge from the service of the word to the service of the table could be considered (Cherry, 2013:165), for example:

Hymn 139, Kopelo 334 stanza 1:
It can be concluded that the response prayer responds to God’s message. It is a thanksgiving and praising prayer, enabling the congregation to prepare themselves for what lies ahead.

2.3 PHASE 3 MINISTRY OF THE TABLE

Frame (1996:96) states that reformers refer to the sacraments as visible words. Segler and Bradley (2006:24) add that the Lord’s Supper occupied an important place in the early Christian worship. In Matthew 26:26-28, Jesus commanded that his disciples practice the observance of the supper in remembrance of Him.

According to De Klerk (2012:63), Calvin indicated three functions of the Holy Communion – it confirms faith, it generates gratitude, and it encourages joint love.

- The first function of the sacrament is to confirm faith. Byars (2002:26) highlights the fact that Christian faith is not just a set of doctrines to be believed or a set of scriptural texts to be learned. Frame (1996:97) adds that the blessing of the sacraments is not automatic, like the blessing of the Word; it must be received in faith. Just as the Word of God is received through faith, so the sacramental pledges and seals of the Gospel require faith on the part of believers.

- Frame further explains that these blessings are the same as those given in the reading and preaching of the Word of God. In faith, we affirm that in symbol, in Scripture, in preaching, and in sacrament, God reveals himself to us. Our faith can only be confirmed through our belief in and love for Christ. Without centring on Christ, there can be no joy. White (2000:196) maintains that God knows us best and knows our need to strengthen our faith.
The third function is to encourage mutual love. Calvin stated that the love and worship of God take precedence over all else. Calvin also insisted that one of the sincerest expressions of the service of God is love of one’s neighbour. White (2000:197) states that God’s self-giving occurs as love made visible. Perhaps this is why we can prepare ourselves through healthy introspection, confession of sin, and resolution of differences with others, removing the barriers to our relationship with Christ and with other believers. Just as we depend on our actions and emotions to express our love, so others can recognise our dependence upon the sacraments to observe the love of God.

Macquarrie (1997:38) adds that Jesus Christ is the source of the Lord’ Supper and the Lord’ Supper is His. This is why the validity of a sacrament does not depend on the worthiness or unworthiness of its human minister. White (2000:175) states that in the Lord’s Supper, words become part of an action using an object such as bread and wine. The bread and wine remain bread and wine, and no magical changes take place when these are used in the Lord’ Supper (Frame, 1996:96). Calvin was unwilling to go as far as Zwingli in considering the Lord’s Supper a mere symbol. He further disagreed with Luther that the real presence of Christ was in the bread and wine. He did believe in the spiritual presence of Christ, but related it to the receptivity of the believer (Segler & Bradley, 1996:38).

It can be concluded that Lord’s Supper is referred to as visible words that create faith, generate gratitude as well as encouraging joint love amongst the Christians themselves and Jesus Christ.

2.3.1 Fomulary

Huffstrutler regards the order of the table of the Lord as important. Perham (2000:13) states that there has been a variety of practices for the distribution and reception of communion. Vischer (2003:298) states that in recent years, there has been a movement within many Reformed Churches towards greater participation of the entire worshiping community, both those ordained to offices of leadership and those not ordained. Vischer explains that in some churches, preaching and administration of the sacraments are exercised not only by ordained ministers, but also by other members of the congregation who have been selected, trained and designated to carry out these
roles. These practices seem to be common in areas where there is a shortage of ordained ministers. In the Reformed tradition, only trained ministers are authorised to administer sacraments (Draft worship book 2016:62).

- In the URCSA, the Holy Communion is served four times a year. There are three formats used by URCSA regulating how Holy Communion is served:
  - In the pews: People remain seated in the pews while deacons serve trays of bread and wine as Zwingli did in Zurich (Senn 2012:193).
  - Seated at a table: A good number of worshippers come forward to stand comfortably around the table. Each person serves the person next to him or her as the elements make their way around the circle, which became the custom in the Netherlands. When finished, they leave and others come.
  - People come forward and walk towards two stations, where church council members serve them first with bread and then with a cup, as Calvin did in Geneva (Draft worship book 2016:63).

Each one of these formats carries its own symbolic meaning, and they are all meaningful to receive the elements of bread and wine. Cherry (2013:164) states that taking communion while in the pews has a community-orientated feel. The advantage is that all the people receive the sacrament at the same time, while served by members of the church council. On the other hand, gathering around a table set for participants depicts the Lord’s Supper. It up to the church council to consider which method will best serve the interests of the congregation.

In concluding this part, it is advisable to follow and accept the Golden rule that the observance of the Holy Communion should not disregard the core value and significance of the Holy Communion as instituted by Jesus Christ.

### 2.3.2 Self–examination

Paul gives specific instructions on how the Lord’s Supper could be observed. Croft and Adkins (2014:111) state that some Christians view Paul's interpretation as a discouraging action for frequent observation of the sacrament. Paul says, “If anyone eats this bread and drinks from this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, he is guilty
of sin against the body and the blood of the Lord. That is why many of you are sick and some have even died” (1 Corinthians 11:27-30). A misinterpretation of the text is that Paul connects some believers’ experiences of God’s discipline through illness, to their abuse of the Lord’s Supper. According to Croft and Adkins, Paul was not discouraging participation in the Lord’s Supper; instead, Paul was discouraging division among Christians. Paul has a very specific abuse in mind, namely that of disunity among Christians. Croft and Adkins stresses that the response is not to abstain from the Lord’s Supper, but the right response is to repent of our failure to love other Christians. Frame (1996:97) argues that this self-examination can be a microscopic analysis of all our sins. We need not be sinless to take the sacrament, because the Lord’s Supper is for sinners.

2.3.3 Sharing the peace

Peace is very important to Christians. Peace may be shared through words, smiles, a handshake, and embrace, or any other gesture that is appropriate in the URCSA congregations.

Before members can come to the table with joy, they must first make peace with their brothers and sisters. The word of the Lord command Christians to do so: “Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart, since as members of one body you were called to peace” (Col 3:15).

When the Lord’s Supper is not celebrated, peace could be made after the confession of sin, or at the end of the ministry of the Word, before the offerings.

It is appropriate at this stage to read Matthew 5:23-24, before inviting members to share the peace of Christ by greeting one another (Draft worship book 2016:65).

2.3.4 Preparation of the table

There must be a careful preparation of the table and the clear instruction of the Lord’s Supper (communion). The word communion is derived from the Greek ‘koinonia,’ which is translated as ‘participation, sharing or fellowship’. Luke (Acts 2:42) uses koinonia in reference to the breaking of bread. Paul also uses the same word in addressing the Corinthians regarding the importance of participating together in the
bread and cup (1 Corinthians 10:16). The Lord’s Table is given the special standing of sacrament in the Christian Church. The real focus of the word communion is the unity of the body, the uncommon fellowship believers share through Christ (Cherry, 2013:145).

The celebration of the Lord’s Supper in Protestant Churches shows a great diversity. The differences are not only visible in the liturgical format, but are also found in the way in which the sacrament is celebrated. Different groups have different approaches to the Lord’s Supper; some include the Lord’s Table in weekly worship. A weekly communion service on Sunday is not part of the Protestant tradition (Immink, 2014:94). In some congregations, the Lord’s Supper is celebrated about once every six weeks, and in other churches once a month. Perham (2000:81) indicates that the fundamental principle of the parish communion movement was that the Eucharist could be the main service of every Sunday.

In 1537, the reformers submitted articles concerning the worship at Geneva, in which they proposed that the Holy Communion ought to be celebrated every Sunday. In fact, Calvin was the one who proposed a weekly Eucharist. Calvin believed the Lord’s Supper ought to be celebrated every Lord’s Day and be well attended. However, he also suggested that the Supper can be celebrated once every month. Calvin was bolder than Luther in changing the liturgy, but he was less radical than Zwingli (Segler & Bradley, 1996:38).

Zwingli came up with the idea of celebrating the communion four times a year. He believed that four times a year was sufficient for the celebration of the Lord’s Supper (Segler & Bradley, 1996:37). Perhaps one of the reasons reformed Protestants are seen as “God’s frozen chosen”, is that they do not celebrate Eucharist frequently enough (Rice & Huffstutler, 2001:71). Just as baptism has become smaller and smaller, the Eucharist has also become smaller among us. Byars points out that ministers are so busy with other things that monthly communion has become a difficult task. Byars explains that infrequent communion became the pattern of Protestantism, not because of any theological principle, but because of circumstances.
**Invitation to the table**

The minister stands at the table and extends a word of invitation to the congregation to humbly come to the Table of the Lord (Draft worship book 2016:66). The invitation could be extended in any number of ways such as Scripture reading, a song, or well-prepared spoken words (Cherry, 2013:166). Various portions of Isaiah 55 could be used to invite the congregation to the table: “Ho everyone who thirsty come to the waters, even if you have no money, come and drink” (Isaiah 55:1).

**2.3.5 Eucharistic prayer**

In many denominations, this prayer is an invocation of the Holy Spirit to be present in the bread and wine (Cherry, 2013:168). In the Reformed tradition, the emphasis on celebrating the Lord’s Supper has always been on the work of the Holy Spirit in making the risen Christ present for believers (Draft worship book 2016:66). The Lord is not personally present; it is the Holy Spirit that makes Christ present for those who open their hearts and put their trust in Jesus. That is the reason why the Eucharist prayer, which is said before the breaking of the bread, has a strong element of epiklesis (Draft worship book 2006:67). This entails the call on the Holy Spirit to come and make the eating and drinking at the table a real encounter with the living Christ (Cherry, 2013:168). The Eucharistic prayer also has another important dimension, namely praise of God.

The Eucharistic prayer is used to praise God for the benefits of salvation flowing from the cross and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord’s Prayer as part of the Eucharistic Prayer could also be prayed here (Draft worship book 2016:67-70).

**2.3.6 Words of institution**

These words from Scripture (1 Corinthians 11:23-25) form a very critical part of the service. Quoting Jesus at the Last Supper, Apostle Paul says:

‘The Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, ‘This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’ In the same way, he took the cup also, after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me’ (Cherry, 2013:167). Christians have several opinions about what Christ meant when he said, ‘This is my body’. Some believe that the wine and bread
actually becomes Christ’s physical blood and body. Others believe that the wine and bread remains unchanged, but Christ is spiritually present with the bread and wine. However, the important point to remember is that God is a part of the communion experience, blessing us as we remember Christ. God himself, the Holy Spirit, comes to us in and with the word to seal it in our hearts.

The above message (as taken from 1 Corinthians 11:23-25) are the words of institution of the Holy Communion.

2.3.7 Distribution of the elements

The distribution of the elements occurs on the time of the Eucharist. The breaking is the third of the fourth action of Jesus. It is not only about sharing, but about brokenness. The bread that Christ gives in the Eucharist always represents his broken body (Perham, 2000:130).

The fourth action of Jesus is the giving of the bread and wine. To eat the bread and drink of the cup is to participate mysteriously in the very being of the Christ, to become bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh (Rice & Huffstutler, 2001:68).

As the bread is given into the hands of the worshippers, the minister may say “The body of Christ given for you”, and with the cup, “The blood of Christ shed for you” (Weaver, 2002:63). There is number of ways that can be used to distribute the bread and the wine (Cherry, 2013:163).

During the distribution of the elements, communion hymns may be sung, or the minister may read appropriate passages of Scripture (Draft worship book 2016:68), for example Hymn 161, Lifela tsa Sione 322, stanza 1, and 2:

He, ba nyorilweng, tlong, le tle metsing. (Those who are thirsty, come to the water)  
Sedibeng sa bophelo bo sa feleng (The well of everlasting life)  
Moya phutheho, di tlasana di re (Spirit together, agreeing each other)  
Motho, mang le mang, a tle! (Every one, come)

Chorus:  
Motho mang le mang x2 (each and every one)  
Ya nyorilweng a tle (Who is thirsty)  
Le a bitswa bole, baetsadibe, (You are all called, sinners)  
Motho, mang le mang, a tle (Every one, come)
Bradshaw (2001:120) argues that these four actions are not all equally important. Vorster (1999:107) affirms that the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is rich in meaning and it is important that all the aspects of the Lord’s Supper could be equally emphasised. This may be the reason why White (2000:194) states that, in recent years, great changes occurred throughout Western Christianity in terms of how the sacraments are understood. The way in which the sacrament could be administered in reformed circles is also explained in the Church Order. Earlier synods of Reformed Churches, such as the synod of Dordrecht (1578) resolved that people could not kneel, because the practice was based on an inaccurate view of the Lord’s Supper (Vorster, 1999:110).

2.3.8 Thanksgiving prayer

Bradshaw (2001:108) states that the service of the Holy Communion has been known by a range of titles and some are retained in the title. White (2000:229) remarks that there is a variety of names for ‘Eucharist’ (that is, thanksgiving), the Lord’s Supper, Holy Communion, or the Lord’s Memorial. Bradshaw explains that Justin Martyr and others in the second century referred to the ‘Eucharist’ (meaning thanksgiving) and by the fourth century the sacrifice and the offering appeared. The worshippers express thanksgiving by celebrating Eucharist.

According to Senn (2012:43), the term ‘Eucharist’ was applied to the meal liturgy by Ignatius of Antioch and Justin Martyr. The name ‘Eucharist’ emerged as a preferred term for the meal liturgy in the modern liturgical renewal movement.

The purpose of Eucharist is to give thanks and praise for what God has done for us. The Lord’s Supper must be a celebration of thanksgiving and joy. By giving thanks, we are reminded that all we have comes from and belongs to God (Nthakhe, 2016:115).
2.4 PHASE 4 SENDING AND BLESSING

2.4.1 Offerings

Having heard the Word of God and participated in the body and blood of Christ, the congregation now responds to God’s grace by taking offerings (Draft worship book 2016:71). According to Frame (1996:58), the term ‘offering’ in the Old Testament usually referred to sacrifices brought to the tabernacle or the temple. The author explains that, in the New Testament worship, we do not bring offerings of that sort to God, since Jesus has given his life as the once-for-all sacrifice. Perhaps this is the reason why Calvin did not include an offering in the service that he crafted for the community in Geneva. Calvin felt that the true offering is what is expressed when the Christian meets the Christ in the neighbour (Mitman 2001:51).

Many churches refer to the Sunday collection as an ‘offering’, even though that term may cause some confusion with the sacrifices of the Old Testament (Frame, 1996:59). Although is celebrated differently throughout the world, many places celebrate it in the same manner (Nthakhe, 2016:120). This element is part of the congregation’s response to the Word of God to give their money for God’s work and thanks. God owes us nothing, because all our blessings come to us by his kindness or by his grace (Frame, 1996:103). Since singing is the primary way most people engage in worship, and since singing consumes a large part of most worship experiences, congregational song must be seen as one of the highest priorities during the offertory (Segler & Bradley, 2006:113). There are different ways to present offerings:

- The entire congregation comes forward to give their offerings at a table, while singing a hymn (Senn, 2012:197).
- Ministries are called separately to come forward and give their offerings at a table, each ministry singing a different hymn or song.
- Members remain seated in the pews and the offerings are collected from them by deacons or other ministry members, who pass collection plates or baskets up and down the pews (URCSA Draft worship book 2016:71).
After the offering has been given, it is customary for a deacon or other church council member to hold the collected money and pray a thanksgiving prayer.

It can be concluded that offerings is a direct response of people to God’s Word with their money.

2.4.2 Induction of new church council members

The Church Order correctly guides the election and the affirmation of church council members into their office (Draft worship book 2016:71). Also, the Church Order indicates the tasks of the council. These tasks of elders and deacons call for members who are mature to exercise their office with prayer, patience, and humility (URCSA Draft worship book 2016:72).

This form may be used as example for the ordination of church council members:

The minister: Congregants of the Lord, before I invite the newly elected church council members. I would like to invite those who have completed their term of office, to come forward.

The minister: Dear brothers and sisters, I would like to thank each one of you, for the excellent contribution you made during you term. On behalf of our Church, please accept this certificate or gift as token of appreciation. The minister ask the congregation to offer a round of applause.

The prayer of thanks for the excellent work of the outgoing members might also be included. The outgoing members return to their places.

The minister: Invite the newly elected church council members to come forward. Those appointed to the office of deacon and those appointed to the office of elder are introduced one by one to the congregation.

Relevant hymns could be sing or Scripture can be read, for example, Colossians 3:23-24: “Dear brother and sisters, since you have been chosen by God who has given you this new kind of life (23). Work hard and cheerfully at all you do, just as though you were working for the Lord and not merely for your masters (24) Remembering that it
is the Lord Christ who is going to pay you, giving you your full portion of all he owns. He is the one you are really working for.

**Minister:** Dear brothers and sisters, may you please answer the following questions to express your acceptance of these office:

- Do you believe that is not you, but God himself who is calling you to these holy office?
- Do you believe that the old and new Testaments are the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and life?
- Do you subscribe to the doctrinal standards of this church, rejecting all teaching which contradicts them?
- Do you promise to do the work of your office faithfully, in a way worthy of your calling and in submission to the government and discipline of the church?

**Answer from the Church council members:** Yes I do, please help me God (Draft worship book 2016:74).

The prayer or hymn for the newly council member could also be included, or Isaiah (6:8) may be read by the minister:

**Minister:** Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?”

**Council members:** And I said, “Here am I. Send me!"

or a hymn such as *Thuma mina, thuma mina, we Baba, thuma mina* (Zulu)

Send me, Lord, send me, Lord( English) Isaiah 6:8.

**Question to the congregation:** Do you promise to accept and respect this church council and acknowledge them as the Lord’s servants among you.

**Answer from the congregation:** We do, God help us.

**Minister:** Modimo a be le lona ka di nako tsohle (May God be with you at all times)

**Amen.** It may also be suitable to ask one senior church member in advance to prepare words of encouragement for newly church council members.
2.4.3 Robing of new ministry members

This action is used when various ministries in the church welcome and introduce new members into their ranks. According to URCSA Draft worship book (2016:77), there is an acceptable standard liturgy of each ministry (CWM, CWL, CMM, CYM).

It is advisable to do the robing of new ministry members as soon as the worship ends. Much time may be devoted to this part. Each new member may come forward with his or her favourite hymn. Relevant Scripture reading may be read or words of encouragement from committee member may be considered.

2.4.4 Announcements

Frame (1996:60) states that some people feel that announcements during the service is a distraction from worship. The author agrees that announcements can often be an annoyance because of their length or inappropriate presentation. The announcements can be made at the beginning of the service, but it is theologically better to be placed after the sermon or after the offering.

The announcements should build a bridge between the weekly activities of the congregation and the worship services. Frame also believes that it is appropriate in worship to announce opportunities for further teaching, including social events.

2.4.5 Intercession

Before the liturgy concludes with a benediction, it is proper to conduct an intercession prayer. Intercession prayers are offered to intercede for the oppressed, sick, poor, and homeless people. It is also advisable to include intercession prayers for public leaders, government officials, prisoners, schools.

People who are faced with challenges, as indicated above, may come forward. It might be appropriate that the individuals can announce their concerns. The intercession can be achieved by personal prayer or public prayer.

Relevant Scripture may be read here by the minister or a member from the congregation. The member must be informed well in advance so that he or she can read the passage clearly (Draft worship book 2016:57). Examples that can be read
are:

- Psalm 34:1-6: This poor man cried to the Lord and the Lord heard him and saved him out of his troubles.

- 2 Corinthians 1:3-4: What a wonderful God we have. He is the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of every mercy, and the one who so wonderfully comforts and strengthens us in our hardships and trials. And why does he do this? So that when others are troubled, needing our sympathy and encouragement, we can pass on to them this same help and comfort God has given us.

- Matthew 11:28-30: Jesus said “Come to me and I will give you rest.

- Romans 12:15: When others are happy, be happy with them. If they are sad, share their sorrow. Don’t try to get into the graces of important people, but enjoy the company of ordinary folks.

- Philemon 1:7: I myself have gained much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because your kindness has so often refreshed the hearts of God’s people.

It does not matter how comfort and encouraging words are communicated. What matters is that this element should not be neglected.

This new element enriches URCSA worship by addressing all conditions of members. However, it is important that a congregation does not only pray for the needs of its own members. It can also make intercession for the world as a whole.

It is advisable that the congregation should draw up an intercession programme to spread across the four Sundays of a month (URCSA Draft worship book 2016:77). The intercession programme emphasises the spirit of unconditional love and care for the entire congregation.

It can be concluded that an intercession prayer plays a vital role because it aims at addressing the needs of all people from various spheres of life.

2.4.6 Closing hymn

The fourth section of the liturgy is now left with only two elements. The congregation stands to sing a final hymn (Perham, 2000:139). It means that, before concluding the
liturgy, the congregation may sing a final hymn to wrap up every activity that took place during the worship (URCSA Draft worship book, 2016:78). Perham points out that very often it is the hymn that can move the mood of the service into the final phase of ‘sending out.’

2.4.7 Benediction

The final element in the Christian worship is the blessing. The service ends by sending people forth into the world to live as Christian disciples. The key to the end of the service is to offer some word of hope and some way of taking the Gospel with them as they head into the world (Wright, 1997:91). From our initial discussion, several basic questions were asked such as 'Whom do we worship? Why do we worship and how do we worship? In response to this kind of questions, Freming (1997:132) explains that liturgy is a benediction in which we speak well (bene + dicere) of the mighty and merciful God. We have looked at the liturgy (in particular the Lord’s Supper) as one great blessing of God by the Assembly of God’s people. It can be argued that after receiving communion, no further blessing is necessary (Bradshaw, 2000:137). Others feel that a blessing needs to be a mark of a special occasion, rather than forming part of the liturgy week in week out (Perham, 2000:139), because the benediction is God's blessing on the people.

The minister pronounces a benediction, which means that he/she “places” God’s blessings on the congregation (Frame, 1996:94). God has “the last word” by sending out believers into society with a firm promise of God’s supporting, guiding and comforting presence. The minister is simply the medium through which the blessing is communicated. This is not a prayer asking for God’s blessing, but a declaration of a blessing given and it may be drawn from Scripture (Weaver, 2002:64). It should therefore be spoken by a minister with open eyes, who looks at the congregation and places God’s blessing on them (URCSA Draft worship book, 2016:78). The minister may pronounce a benediction such as the Aaronic benediction of Numbers (6:22-27) or the apostolic benediction of (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Nowhere in Scripture it is commanded that the Church should use these texts in public worship, but it is appropriate for God’s people, when gathered in the name of Christ,
to receive a blessing that identifies them as God’s own (Frame, 1996:94). The assembly has now been dismissed.

2.4.8 Evaluating the effectiveness of a service

Basden (1999:144) states that ministers who do not evaluate worship miss the valuable learning experience of improving corporate worship for the glory of God. In some churches, the worship leaders are involved formally through a worship committee, which meets regularly. In other churches, the minister seeks the view from the pew on an informal, occasional basis in order to receive helpful feedback. Basden is of opinion that taking the initiative to look at what went well and what went awry in each service could assist any worship planner to evaluate worship. Segler and Bradley (2006:273) argue that, if evaluation is not done, members may respond only from their tastes and personal preferences, giving little attention to the priority of God in worship.

Conclusion

From the foregoing discussion, the following can be summarised: Actions and elements of Christian worship express the culture of worship. The importance of these actions and elements is found in giving the worship of the church spiritual sense and direction to be followed right from the vestry prayer to the evaluation of the worship service. The importance of such actions and elements is furthermore based on their worth in assisting the preacher to plan his/ her sermon properly.

Thirdly, the value of actions and elements is to help the preacher to ensure the proper implementation of church worship in a sequential and systematic manner. The manner in which worship is implemented allows for the accurate evaluation and assessment of such actions and elements. Important is that participative worship is encouraged and motivated in worship in the church. Therefore, actions and elements of worship are concerned with creating a specific culture of the Church, providing spiritual sense and direction in the Church, and also with planning, executing and evaluating the worship.
THE ROLE OF SINGING IN THE WORSHIP

INTRODUCTION

The role of singing can be explained by acknowledging the fact that faith is communicated through participation in various actions and rituals in a dynamic process of socializing into the Christian community. Worship is the prime locus for growing into the community of faith. The singing of hymns in worship is important for people to participate in the faith, to socialize into the Christian community and to strengthen the identity of the faith community. Flowing from worship and back, singing and making music, as gifts of the Holy Spirit, are relevant in all activities of the church. Music is used to proclaim the Gospel, to teach the faith, to comfort and support people pastorally, to open up the opportunity for participation, to give space for communication, to reach out, to bring people together, to form community and foster koinonia, and in doing so, to contribute in building up the community of faith. The community of faith is sung into being. Making music and singing together therefore have to be part of the encompassing programme of a congregation and a church. Ministers need a thorough liturgical-hymnological training as a sound theological base for working with other people actively building up the community of faith through music.

Kloppers (2017) distinguishes five liturgical functions of music, namely the liturgical, kerugmatic or missional, catechetical, koinonial and pastoral function of music.

3.1 The liturgical function of music

Music has several purposes in worship, each of which is valid on its own. Music is a part of the liturgical process (Segler & Bradley, 2006:105).

Worship music is praise.

Osei-Bonsu (2013:95) states that while music may be used for recreational purposes, its main objective is the glorification of God. After the exile of Israel from Babylon, the people diminished the role of music and the musical organization that had been such an integral part of Israel's worship for so many years. The centre of worship in Israel became the local synagogue and praise marked the beginning of the synagogue service, which distinguished itself with music. The synagogue service effectively
functioned as a bridge from Hebrew worship to Christian worship. The first purpose of worship music was to glorify the Trinity and nothing else motivated these early Christians when they gathered for worship other than praising God and praying (Basden, 1999:23).

The primary purpose of music in the kingdom is to worship God. No one questions the idea that worship music is used to praise God (Jones, 2010:8). Paul and Silas sang praises to God in prison at Philippi. Certainly, praising God is the leading role of music in worship, and the majority of biblical songs contain elements of praise, even if praise is not the main theme. If fact, some people refer to all the musical elements of worship as ‘praise,’ even when music serve many purposes. In leitourgia worship, praise and prayer are directed to God. In the leitourgia service, the congregation sings to God. In this type of worship, leaders see to it that the people play an active role. There may be prayers of confession, of adoration, but all actively engage in the intercessory prayer. The other side of the leitourgic function of music is the music prayer.

**Worship music is an act of prayer**

While the purpose of worship is to glorify God, prayer is an aspect of declaration in which members turn their focus away from one another and direct it to God. Christians may use music in the discipline of prayer in several ways. We may read the hymnal as prayers. We may sing them alone, we may even sing spontaneous song, making up words to fit the occasion. Collective prayer hymns provide the congregation an opportunity to focus on a single concern in faith (Jones, 2010:20). Members tend to put singing and praying into separate categories. Perhaps this is because worshippers singing with open eyes looking at words and notes, but pray with closed eyes. Any communication with God (spoken, sung or thought) is prayer. According to Kroeker (2005:106), “prayers have been present in our singing all along but the sheer number of words and the stanzas of ordered thought tend to obscure the recognition that while we are singing, we are also praying.” Jones explains that music often serves as prayer. Prayer in the midst of the congregation should be a group activity, such as is the case with the psalms, which served as the repertoire for the entire congregation of Israel. Since we consider worship music to be a collection of prayers and praise. Several purpose for psalms can be mentioned, including prayer, praise and thanks (Jones,
Perhaps it is true that the one who sings prays twice. Psalms are another form of musical prayer (Corbit, 1998:167).

**Psalms in Christian worship**

Even though the singing of Psalms has been neglected in the worship, psalms are the most often used texts in the Service of the Word (Webber, 1998:107). Luther, Calvin and Zwingli were all well-trained musicians. However, their views on music's place in worship differ widely (Segler & Bradler 2006:107). Unlike Luther, who encouraged the use of hymns that reflect Scripture, Calvin felt that congregational singing of psalms ought to be a part of the public worship. Since people were not trained in congregational singing, Calvin suggested that children be selected and taught to sing. He believed that if people listened to others, they would gradually learn to sing together as a congregation (Segler & Bradley, 1996:38). Calvin maintained that putting the words of prayer and praise in the mouths of the whole congregation is vital and a fitting way to express the public prayer through singing.

While Zwingli felt that music had no part in Christian worship, Calvin believed in the united singing of psalms without using instruments (Segler & Bradley, 2006:107). Calvin believed that the use of instruments is not appropriate in worship. He maintained that the only songs to be sung should be the psalms. He believed that psalms are the only acceptable form of singing because they were “divinely composed music” (Rice & Huffstutler, 2001:105). Calvin introduced a new liturgy in all the churches in Geneva that included the singing of a psalm, “John Calvin with psalmody” (Osei-Bonsu, 2013:87). In fact, his liturgy is called “The form of prayers.” Calvin wrote hymns and included them in his psalters, such as Ten Commandments, the Apostles Creed, Songs of Simeon. The first psalm booklet appeared in 1539, and the complete psalter in 1562 with 150 psalms (Vischer, 2003:19).

The psalms may be used in a variety of ways. Psalm 23 “The Lord is my shepherd”, for example, can be said or sung in different ways. It can be used in a metrical (hymn) version, or in responsive form. Psalms are the people’s prayers and praise in public worship (Vischer, 2003:19). Choosing a psalm for liturgical use may also be driven by the process of preparing for preaching. The psalms not only help worshippers pray, they also help preachers preach. Effective homiletic use of the psalms often involves
the pairing of texts from the Psalms with other portions of Scripture. Singing or reading these psalms in conjunction with the primary Scripture text for the sermon, allows the worshipper to be drawn into the drama of a particular biblical narrative and provides the preacher with additional material for the development of the sermon (Witvliet, 2005:56). Paul in Colossians 3:16 also encourage the Colossians to “sing” psalms, hymns and spiritual songs to God. It is true that psalms were used in worship and are referred to throughout Scripture.

Jones (2006:23) argues that the psalms may not have been the only music used in worship. The canonical Psalms are not the only appropriate worship songs for the people of God, the Bible provides other songs as well. Jones further explains that the early Reformed churches published worship books that offered not only psalms, but hymns and spiritual songs as well. Instrumental music can be employed in worship so long as they contribute appropriately and do not detract from the service and its purpose (Jones, 2010:11).

Music could play a role in all the liturgical actions described in chapter 2, such as the confession of sin and the confession of faith.

**Music as confession of faith**

Hymns can serve in the worship to express the faith of the congregation. In order for us to have a clear understanding on how our Christian faith relates to the music of the church or what our Christian faith has to do with music, Stonehouse (1998:145) states that before people respond to such questions, it will be helpful to first explore the biblical meaning of faith. According to Stonehouse, Hebrews 11:1 defines “faith as the assurance of things hoped for the conviction of things not seen.” Biblical faith is not feelings that stand alone. It is confidence in the willingness and the ability of Jesus to bring us into a relationship with God and to empower us to live the Christian life. Faith is also the response of a human being to God’s promises and love. Paul in Ephesians 2:8 states that our faith responds to grace, which results in salvation (Stonehouse, 1998:145). Because our salvation and even our faith are gifts, we should respond with gratitude, praise, and joyfulness. Yust (2004:3) has a similar understanding of faith. His definition is that, “faith is a gift from God. It is an act of grace, in which God chooses to be in relationship with humanity.” Faithfulness is a human response to God’s gift of
faith. A faith tradition helps us recognize God’s presence within us and respond faithfully.

Johansson (2001:99) states that church music, as an expression of the Christian faith must align itself with that faith. Such an attitude might be incorporated into the music of the church in two ways. First, faith action might be shown in worship using music that is somewhat difficult for the assembly to comprehend. The second way that faith might be shown in worship is through the principle of delayed gratification. Delayed gratification is a means for establishing worth in music. That is to say, by faith one knows that the goal will be reached, but the route to that goal is not immediately apparent. People of faith are not concerned with finding an answer now, because they know that ultimately there will be one. Active faith requires a willingness to experience creatively what one does not know in the certain knowledge that the individual is being led rightly to the conclusion of the matter (Johansson, 2001:101).

Faith then is an important ingredient in living fully and well. It entails the concepts of wholeness (the life in faith) and faith action. To see how music can strengthen and express the holistic life of faith, people must involve mind in order to believe, for without it they cannot understand the Word. Mind acts upon emotion and emotion upon mind. Each contributes equally to the making of the complete person. Emotion and mind together constitute the necessary balance.

Any music that seeks to focus on the whole person emotionally and intellectually, that causes anguish as well as joy, and that does not judge its success on the basis of immediate gratification, is music that the Christian Church must embrace. It is music that witnesses to our faith and exercises our faith. Johansson states that the days of the church musician as silent partner in the congregations are over. Church musicians must become articulate prophets and teachers in order to confront the tangled web of conflicting worldviews. Musicians must help congregations understand the full implications of their musical faith life, both by direct teaching and as proclamation. Corbit (1998:55) states that worship is not complete without a holistic response of the individual and the community.
3.2. The kerygmatic function of music

Worship is not a time to speak corporately about God, but a time to speak directly to God and to hear from God (Gibbs & Coffey, 2001:177). In the New Testament, proclamation is more than speaking or preaching, but calls for response, so the Bible Scriptures teach us that God’s people are not only to speak, but also to sing during worship (Corbit, 1998:117). The response is the goal of proclamation. According to Gibbs and Coffey, preaching still played a central part in the New Testament, but congregational worship songs became part of the programme.

Jones (2006:6) maintains the idea that singing the Word of God will strengthen one’s understanding. Singing should, in fact, be a result of hearing and meditating on God’s word, as the psalmist said in the last section of Psalm 119:172. Since singing is a biblical response to God’s word, it follows that the singing of psalms, hymns, or other musical responses rightly follows the reading and preaching of Scripture in our worship. Basden (1999:116) shares a similar view that music is an important means of teaching biblical truth to the people of God.

Martin Luther championed the biblical idea that church music may teach and preach spiritual truth. He realized the significant role that music could play in the spiritual growth of the faith community. Luther advocated the significant role that music can play in the spiritual growth of the Christian when he declared “music and notes which are wonderful gifts and creations of God do help again a better understanding of the text especially when sung by a congregation and when sung earnestly.” Luther’s basis for musical proclamation was Scripture, where his aim in writing was to put the “Word of God into song” (Jones, 2010:29). In other words, Martin sought to teach the Bible through music.

Luther believed that the Gospel was proclaimed both by the spoken and by the sung word. He frequently employed the phrase “say and sing or sing and say” to describe hymnody proclamation. Luther said that singing and saying is the mark of a true believer, the mark of the Gospel on his or her life (Jones, 2010:34). Luther’s motto encourages every Christian to speak and to sing the Gospel everywhere we find ourselves.
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) was a great student of Luther’s work. He had three sets of Luther’s commentaries. He was one of history’s most remarkable composers and he spent his life serving as musician at a number of German churches and minor courts (David, 1998:108). He has been called a musical preacher and his church music can be properly termed “hermeneutical” (Jones, 2006:5). Bach maintained that worship music possesses the qualities of a good sermon. He understood artistic music to be part of the preaching and teaching ministry and never as something merely for the entertainment of the congregation or as an adornment to the liturgy. Bach’s music not only proclaims, but also invites worshippers to participate so that hearing is enhanced (Jones, 2010:32). Georg Motz, a German contemporary of Bach, highlights the fact that music can be an evocative type of sermon. Motz maintained that good church music possesses the quality of a good sermon. In his view, an excellent church music composer is the equal of an excellent preacher.

**Music is proclamation of and response to the Gospel**

Jones (2010:29) states that Luther championed the idea that church music teaches and preaches spiritual truth. He also states that spiritual truth in turn contributes to spiritual growth. Another important aspect of Calvin’s worship is the proper place of the Word of God. Carson (2002:167) states that the entire service is built around the sermon; all the songs and hymns are made to relate to the text. The singing of hymns would relate to the central biblical Scripture of the day. At a practically level, Carson believes that music in worship could principally serve the text of the day. According to Jones (2006:8), music proclamation could be defined to include any text that teaches or sets a passage of Scripture to remind us of God’s promises, so what the congregation sings and what it hears will flow from the central biblical text of the day.

Although the difference between Zwingli and Calvin continues to provoke conflicting points of view, it seems as if they were both committed to scriptural faithfulness. They were willing to make adaptations and concessions as necessary to meet particular situations. From Zwingli came the emphasis upon the Word preached as central to worship. Zwingli had little use for anything besides the preached Word (Rice & Huffstutler, 2001:4). The most important thing for Zwingli was the preaching of the Bible in the language of the people on a regular basis (Vischer, 2003:11). Although Zwingli was the most gifted musician among the reformers, he rejected the use of
music in public worship. Calvin shared the common Protestant conviction that preaching the Word was one of the most critical factors that had to be re-introduced and maintained as a vital part of public worship (Vischer, 2003:17). Calvin in contrast with Zwingly believed that music has the power to inflame the human heart with spiritual zeal. He actively recruited musicians for the church in Geneva and set them to work on producing new melodies for singing psalms (Rice & Huffstutl, 2001:3).

A hymn is similar to a sermon

When music is like a sermon, its responsibilities and characteristics may be similar to those of a sermon (Jones, 2010:36). Since the Gospel may be preached through music, there is an obligation to ensure that it is done well. Worship planners may apply several principles as they select and arrange songs for worship gatherings (Croft & Adkins, 2014:73). People complain and they even leave the church over the choice of hymns and the style of music used in worship. The most difficult task for those responsible for leading the Sunday service is to choose hymns for worship.

3.3 The Missional function of music

The Bible lists a whole range of activities that promote Christ to the world and draw others towards him. Since the meaning of the word “mission” is sending, it is for this reason that Jesus commands his disciples in (Matthew 28:19). “I have been given all authority in heaven and earth. Go and make disciples in all the nation” (Pass, 2005:43). Jesus left the disciples with these last words of instruction: they were to make more disciples. According to Gibbs and Coffey (2001:55) the term “missional” draws attention to the essential nature and vocation of the church as God’s called and sent people. From the psalm singing of ancient Israel to the synagogue services of Jesus’s day, public praise of the one true God was believed to serve a missionary function.

This was not the purpose of the gathering. It was not the Jewish “seeker” services, but it was considered an important by product of the corporate praise of God (Dickson, 2010:159). The worship of God is not all about attracting members to worship. Gibbs and Coffey explain that mission means sending, and it is the central biblical theme describing the purpose of God’s action in human history. Our songs, our creeds, our prayers in our churches can help visitors realize what believing in Christ is all about (Dickson, 2010:170).
The term “missional” was well spoken in the book *Missional Church: A vision for the sending of the Church in North America*, published in 1998. It was written by a team of missiologists, theologians, and practitioners from a variety of church backgrounds. It has its beginning around the writings of Bishop Lesslie Newbigin, a missionary in India for over 30 years. Newbigin, upon his retirement in the late 1960s, returned to his native England and found that the church he had left some 30 years earlier had changed dramatically. Newbigin recognized that the greatest challenge to Christian mission was now those very nations that had once sent missionaries out around the world. It was the people of Europe, shaped by the Western tradition, that were rapidly losing their identity as Christian (Roxburgh, 2004:1).

### 3.4 The catechetical function of music

Jones (2010:34) points out that six of Luther’s hymns were catechetical. These included a hymn on the Ten Commandments, Apostles Creed, one for the Lord’s Prayer, another for baptism, one for confession, and one for the Lord’s Supper. This indicates that music of worship was no longer limited to choirs, but every worshipper was free to participate. Children in many church groups, such as Sunday school classes, often sit idle for months, sometimes years before really participating in church activities. Nowadays we ask whether or not children are part of the whole worshiping congregation, and whether it is wise to invite them to sing with their elders (Routley 2005:273). The church actually used to be the centre of musical education, but this responsibility was handed over to the state decades ago. Perhaps this is the reason most public education has made music an extracurricular subject (Jones, 2006:149).

In responding to such questions, Yust (2004:168) states that it takes ongoing effort for a faith community to be inclusive of all ages. When we are participating in worship, we look for several signs that might indicate commitment to welcome children as active participants. Welcoming children means recognizing them as humans and as active participants in God’s realm. Children have the capacity to make God known.

Congregational worship seems to function as an adult experience to which children are admitted only if they act like little adults. In this case, a faith community is not truly welcoming their young members. One goal, Luther explained, was to properly educate the youth of his day. Luther compiled and edited several hymn collections. Those
songs were arranged in four parts for no other reason than to attract the youth (who should be trained in music and other fine arts) away from love songs and carnal pieces and to give them something wholesome to learn instead. Luther viewed the neglect to teach and train the poor children as an unfortunate tradition. Luther encouraged adults to teach their children, who will in turn teach their own children (Jones, 2006:4). Because children are part of our faith community, we desire to have our children join us for worship. First, we want our children to relate, to understand and participate in many parts of the worship.

Since children learn through imitation, there are many ways children can be involved in the worship as active participants in the pew. One way to include children is to have them participate in some of the rituals that take place in the service (Keeley, 2008:104). There are other ways to have children involved in worship. They can also do special reading or participate in presentations.

An important aspect of John Calvin’s church music was his use of children in worship and training them to lead church music to incite the people to pray and praise God. For a beginning, the little children had to be taught, then in time all the church would be able to follow. The children may sing monophony, which is simple so that the congregation learn to sing it easily.

John Calvin’s use of children in church music was aimed at emphasizing humility during worship. He wanted the children to teach adults simplicity, childlike devotion and a sincere heart when singing, even though there might be problems with intonation and the like (Osei-Bonsu, 2013:91).

In the 1790 edition of Charles Wesley’s children’s hymns, published by his brother John after Charles had died, we find that hymnody for children, after a period of considerable activity, did not make any noticeable progress until the later sixties. The period 1906–1951 was a pedagogic period and was not likely to be the period of real breakthrough in children’s hymn writing (Routley, 2005:427). Many new books of children’s hymns appeared between about 1920 and 1950, all of which were doing their best to find the right balance in this delicate form of communication. The two most interesting were the Church and School hymnal and School worship which came out in 1926 (Routley, 2005:391). During the latter sixties, a few writers managed to do the
one thing that was required. Hymns specially written for children came into their own only after the invention of Sunday schools by the late eighteenth century. The use of children in church music should help instil humility and childlike simplicity in adults as they worship. It is possible for church children to learn hymns and songs that will teach them the Word of God.

The catechetical music programme in the church can make space for children who want to participate in the worship. In public worship, singing was always a cappella and in unison, led by a cantor and schoolboys who were trained in music to keep the congregation on the melody (Vischer, 2003:20). For this reason, it is good practice when the youth takes part in the singing of hymns in the worship. Perhaps this would make children feel even more part of the service.

3.5 The koinonial function of music

This term is at the heart of the Christian understanding of the Triune God as a rich relationship, not between individuals, but between persons who indwell one another in a loving harmony of friendship and communion. Koinonia or communication is a relationship between two persons in which they are brought into perfect mutual coordination within the framework of a definite order, yet with no destruction of their separate identities and particularities, but rather in its confirmation and expression. In fact, the meaning of the word koinonia signifies a common participation, a togetherness, a community life (Canlis, 2010:9). We are concerned with building up the community so that members can be encouraged, inspired and motivated through koinonic music.

The function of koinonial song is to focus on the needs of believers and especially to form the community of the faithful (Kloppers 2015). No one is better or worse in koinonial music, everyone is accepted for who they are. Nekola and Wagner (2015:92) argue that nowhere in Scripture are worshippers commanded to sing skilfully. Singing with others reminds us that there are others in the room and those individuals around us have voices. In singing together, we gain experience in hearing one another, we learn to move in a dance of sympathy with those around us.

When singing a song together, we become participants rather than observers of worship (Gerrish, 2015: 215). Because we are a community of believers, a group of
members who gathers to serve the Lord, it is essential that we do things together. Members are meant to be comfortable with koinonial music because its function is to affirm and build up the community.

Related to the koinonial function, is the pastoral function, where people are comforted and be cared for through singing. Psalms can also be chosen for use in worship for pastoral reasons. The Psalms are one of the richest resources in all of Scripture for pastoral care (Bradshaw, 2001:65). The practice might connect a congregation’s worship life and pastoral care ministry (Witvliet 2007:61).

**The praxis of singing: choosing the right hymns**

Every pastor walks a tightrope trying to please those who want only the “good old” hymns and those who are bored with the usual fare and want more contemporary and lively such as “praise choruses” (Rice & Huffstutler, 2001:95). The selection of songs is often dictated by the taste of a worship leader, but if it is without the assistance from gifted, trained and ministry-conscious musicians, the choice is difficult and painful (Corbit, 1998:75). Most pastors have had little musical training and received no church music instruction in seminary (Jones 2010:24). These debates are not about tradition, but instead about familiar habits that may have no theological meaning whatsoever (Rice & Huffstutler, 2001).

Basden (1999:119) points out that music may be used in various ways, including instrumental music, congregational music and music for choirs, ensembles and solos. The function of music in the liturgy could frequently guide the selection of hymns. There are two ways in which text and Scripture are important in Christian music. First, Scripture informs our selection of music and singing style. Second, Scripture is central to the songs of the Christian, either as the text or as the basis for the text (Corbit, 1998:235).

The choice of music for a particular use in worship should “fit” its purpose for that use. In other words, each service, each season in the life of the worship is determined by a good choice of hymns to accompany the sermon. The choice of hymns people sing should also fit the choice of Scripture reading (Kroeker, 2005:199). Although the Bible invites us to praise God, we often are not sure how to go about it. The selection of appropriate worship music is not merely a matter of choice between tradition and
contemporary Christian music. The decision is based on three criteria. Text, tune and fit (Carson, 2002:169).

- Evaluation of the music’s text comes first. Whoever selects music is supposed to do the biblical work required to conform all text-based music to the thrust of the sermon text.

- The tune must support the meaning of the text.

- Lastly, hymn selection must fit the congregation.

Hymns can be chosen in several ways. In choosing music for worship, the planner may consider several goals (Basden, 1999:120):

- Music should be chosen with a specific intention and purpose in mind. Songs selected at random or without valid reason do nothing to enrich worship (Basden, 1999:120). Our musical offerings must be intentional and have purpose.

- The music should bring people into closer contact with God, with the self and with the world. Our music should be God-centred. The problem with entertaining music is that it makes worshippers more self-centred, which is to say more selfish than their normal human inclination already is. Maynard-Reid (2000:71) shares a similar view by saying that of course it is entertaining in the sense that it makes the worshipper feel good in the Lord and in the company of fellow worshippers, but it is not a means of entertainment for a bored congregation.

- The music should balance objectivity and subjectivity. Texts and hearts should be focused on God, who is both the subject and objects of worship (Jones, 2006:297).

- The music should balance the familiar with the less familiar. To use only familiar music restricts the musical “canon” of a congregation. There must be a reasonable balance between what is new and what is old. This means that our music should find its basis in congregation song, the most important kind of
worship music. It also means that the congregation should be fully involved in singing, listening and learning.

- This characteristic informs our musical choices in that our music should be accessible to the people or made accessible, although it is principally directed at God (Jones, 2006:300). Music is the aspect of worship that leads to conflict more than any other element. It has great power to unite or divide a congregation. There are specific characteristics of music making that foster participation of the maximum number of people. Based on the theological importance of including all who are gathered in worship, hymns must be accessible to the entire congregation, including struggling singers (Nikola & Wagner, 2015:93).

- Finally, the music should be doctrinally and experientially valid (Basden, 1999:121). Without due caution one can actually be guilty of worshiping the music that one enjoys.

Hawn (2003:113), a prominent worship scholar, acknowledges the fact that many “do not think they can sing.” Because of this “non-singing factor”, there should be a leader who invites the congregation to sing through direct invitations. Hawn (2003:117) says that the most important role of those leading music in worship ‘is to establish the congregation as the primary choir of worship.’ Such a practice can encourage full participation, positive encouragement and musical accessibility. For example, the worship leader, a soloist or specialist group may sing the verse and invite the congregation to respond on the refrain by singing, humming or clapping of hands, or the performer may “call out” to the audience during a piece, inviting an echoing response from the people. Sometimes the performer walks into the audience and sings (Pass, 2005:78). According to Corbit (1998:54), music provides an opportunity to create participation in music as a form of community experience. It expresses group sentiment. We should promote the singing of hymns in unison as John Calvin advocated (Osei- Bonsu, 2015:96).

Conclusion

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that music in worship has the following functions: a liturgical function, which includes but cannot be limited to praising; praying
and confession of one’s sins through faith. Secondly, a kergmatic function, which has to do with music as a strategy to proclaim and preaching the Word. Thirdly a missiological function, which has to do the mission of taking the Gospel and winning souls for the kingdom. Forthly a catechetical function, which has to do with focussing on the spiritual wellbeing of little children, but also grown-up people. Fifthly, a koinonial function, which has to do with koinonia or communication to establish a good relationship in an effort to build up the church community so that members can be encouraged, inspired and motivated through koinonial music and music fulfilling a pastoral function.

Music is everyone’s responsibility. Vischer (2003:325) emphasizes the fact that in the reformed tradition, music plays a central role in Christian worship, as it extends an invitation to all people. In the Old Testament, music was a priestly function. The Apostle Paul commented on this musical responsibility when he instructed the church in Corinth about the public exercise of gifts. He said “When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation or an interpretation.” All of these may be done for the strengthening of the church (Carson, 2002:166).
CHAPTER 4

AN OVERVIEW OF THE CHURCH YEAR

INTRODUCTION

Participation in the full Christian liturgical year is what makes Christians active in worship. The issue of active participation goes wider than getting worshippers to join in the singing. The Christian calendar developed so that the people in the church could follow the events in the life of Christ systematically and logically. Unfortunately, during the Reformation, Calvin eliminated not only all of the saints’ celebrations days, but also most of the other holy times such as Advent and Lent. He celebrated four holy days on Sunday. Rice and Huffstutler (2001:144) argue that by doing so, Calvin rejected the use of the liturgical year. It meant that the practice of observing the five major feasts, Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost, began to disappear among the Reformed.

Churches over the world now see the liturgical year as a flexible resource to enhance and encourage the events in the Gospel in the whole of worship. Most Reformed congregations today try to establish some kind of balance in observing the major days of the Church Year (Rice & Huffstutler, 2002:143). The Christian year allows the church to have a balanced approach to its worship life, with the purpose of uniting Christians of all backgrounds by focusing on the events the church celebrates in common. In doing so, the Christian church offers members an opportunity for unity as they seek to proclaim the good news of Christ to others (Segler & Bradley, 1996:178).

This chapter demonstrates how the order of the Christian liturgical year could enhance and enrich the full participation of the members. The theological significance of the Church Year or liturgical year is discussed with regard to its theological meaning and the implication for modern life. This means people are involved in these ceremonies by singing, praising and praying together. The Christian year is organized around the two primary events in the life of Christ – his death and resurrection. The Christian calendar can be systematized as follows:

1. The Christmas (Incarnation) cycle.
   - Four weeks of Advent.
• Twelve days of Christmas.
• The day of Epiphany (January 6)

2. The Easter (Resurrection) cycle.
• Forty days of Lent; which begin with Ash Wednesday
• Palm Sunday
• Maundy or Holy Thursday
• Good Friday
• Holy Saturday
• Easter Sunday
• Fifty days of Easter, which includes Ascension Day
• The day of Pentecost
• Trinity Sunday, leading into “ordinary time.”

4.1 Advent
The word “advent” comes from the Latin phrase *Adventus*, which means “the coming.” It can be understood as the time of preparation during the four weeks before Christmas (Segler & Bradley, 2006:220). It means we have four Sundays before we celebrate Christmas.

On the first Sunday of advent, people are asked to examine themselves, repent for any wrong they have done to God, to themselves and to others (Hollings 1995:6). In many churches there is a custom of a special advent service that explores some of the advent themes, usually in the evening, often involving candlelight and engaging with the ‘darkness and light’ theme – usually advertised as an ‘advent carol service’ (Perham, 2000:217).

During Advent, four candles are lit, one on each of the Sundays of Advent. These candles may be lit by individuals, members of families, youth members, and others. This makes an excellent opportunity for participation and building bridges. The first Sunday lighting symbolizes hope, the second Sunday candle is for peace. As we come closer to Christmas on the third Sunday, the candle symbolizes joy, and on the fourth Sunday the candle is for love. This section of the service could be expanded with the
use of music. During this service, carols are sung and readings about the symbolism of the candles are given (Segler & Bradley, 2006:221).

It could be very good for local congregations to reconsider the many possibilities of celebrating the coming of Jesus as part of their regular services during the Advent season.

4.2 Christmas
Christmas refers to a day on which all Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Although no one knows the actual date of Jesus’s birth, Christendom accepts December 25 as the symbolic date of Jesus’s birth. In reality, the Christmas season begins with Christmas Day and is followed by the twelve days of Christmas, ending on January 6, the day of the Epiphany of the Lord (Segler & Bradley, 2006:223).

Weaver (2002:73) states that the celebration of Christmas as a season in the church’s liturgy has for the most part been lost. By the Sunday after Christmas, most people are ready to get on with the New Year. Keeping Christmas alive for eleven days after December 25 in the church’s worship may be difficult, but it is important to stress the meaning of the birth of Christ to its fullest. Churches should therefore continue the celebration of Christmas until the Epiphany. Weaver further explains that during Christmas, a special effort is made, which includes various events such as carol services; crib services; sometimes with a nativity play, preparing families, especially children, for Christmas; a Christmas midnight service and a service on Christmas morning. In my church the major elements of the Christmas celebrations on 25 December are the Christmas midnight service and the service on Christmas morning. These celebrations take place in a participative gathering at home or at the various churches.

4.3 Epiphany
According to Segler and Bradley (2006:223), the term “epiphany” comes from a Greek word meaning “manifestation” or “showing forth”. In the early centuries of the church’s life, a celebration of the ‘Theophany’ or ‘Epiphany’ took place on 6 January. Because the Epiphany always falls on January 6, which more often than not is a weekday, it may be celebrated on the Sunday preceding the actual day (Weaver, 2002:74).
The feast of Epiphany is not as known today as Christmas, although it is older and has a more important place in early Christian history (Perham, 2000:225). It is an obvious day for a baptism within the liturgy. The baptism of Jesus urges us to repent, ask for forgiveness of our sins and it encourages us to live as witnesses to Christ each day. It has become the day to get rid of the Christmas decorations and festivities (Hollings, 1995:25). After the baptism of Jesus, he was driven by ‘the spirit into the desert’. Members might spend a few weeks looking at this part of the life of Christ before entering the long and more intense forty-day period of Lent (Perham, 2000:225).

4.4 Lent

The word Lent means “the lengthening of days” and is the term used for the period of preparation before Easter (Segler & Bradley as cited in Bethke, 2015). Lent is a time set aside by the church to commemorate the death of the Lord. The period of forty days was a grace period for people to repent past committed sins. Repentance ensured that people will be ready to be crucified with Christ on Good Friday to become new creations (2 Corinthians 5:17). It is crucial to understand the theological meaning of the word forty. This number is significant in the Judeo-Christian heritage. It appears in several places in the Bible.

- It rained for forty days when Noah was in the Ark (Genesis 7:4).
- Nineveh was given forty days to repent (Jonah 3:4).
- Jesus fasted for forty days (Matthew 4:1).
- Jesus appeared to his disciples for forty days after the resurrection (Acts 1:).

Although Lent is observed for forty days, Sundays are excluded because they are celebration days, and since Lent is a penitential season, Sundays are not actually part of Lent (Segler & Bradley, 1996:182). The Lent period starts on a Wednesday called Ash Wednesday (Hollings 1995:38). The Christians participate and involve themselves in prayers, praise and studying the Word to seek repentance (Bethke 2015:34). Ash Wednesday is now celebrated by some Protestant churches as well, as it is so rich in symbolism.
Historically the Lenten season is a time when Christians fast voluntarily on certain days. It also became the time of personal spiritual renewal, a time of introspection. Many Christians choose to give up something during the Lenten season and to renew their commitment to Christ (Segler & Bradley, 2006:224). Fasting in the forty-day period is a custom not commonly followed in the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa, but it could be a good way of reminding people of the “suffering” that Christ had gone through for their sins.

Throughout Lent, the hymns should be that of penitence. Hymns of the Resurrection or of the Spirit that we associate with Pentecost, are inappropriate in this season in which we are reminded of Christ’s suffering.

4.5 Holy week
The last seven days of Lent prior to Easter is called the Holy Week, which begins with Palm Sunday and concludes with the Easter Vigil on Saturday evening (Weaver, 2002:69). Holy Week is not only the most important week of the Christian year, it is also the week with the greatest potential for leading Christian people into a deeper experience of life and faith. The liturgy of Holy Week is like a symphony with its different movements, or a drama with its several acts (Perham as cited in Bethke, 2015:40-41). The crucial movements or acts are:

- The liturgy of Palm Sunday morning
- The Communion of the Last Super on Holy Thursday / Maundy Thursday evening
- The liturgy of Good Friday
- The Easter liturgy (whether in the night, or at dawn or in the morning)

People are called to focus on what really matters and are encouraged to take that seriously and to make the most of the four movements (Perham, 2000:231).

4.6 Palm Sunday
Palm Sunday is the Sunday leading up to Easter Sunday. Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week (John 12:1-18). The major theme of Palm Sunday is Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem preceding his crucifixion. The palm was used to
appreciate and acknowledge Jesus as the saviour. The Palm Sunday worship is
dramatic, focusing on four sections: the procession with the palms, the reading of the
Word (passion), responses and offerings. Before the service, the congregants gather
outside the church, with either palms or green branches in their hands, waving and
shouting Hosanna during the entrance (Perham as cited in Bethke, 2015).
Theologically, Palm Sunday becomes a day that marks the culmination of Jesus’
earthy ministry (Bethke, 2015:41).

4.7 Holy Thursday
According to Weaver (2002:94), the name “Maundy is derived from the new mandate
or a new commandment of John 13:34”. Maundy Thursday is also frequently called
“Holy Thursday” (Segler & Bradley, 2006:225). This Thursday is called holy mainly
because of the Holy Communion that Christ served to his disciples (Perham,
2000:233). On that day He took bread, symbolizing his holy body, and also wine,
symbolizing His blood. The body and the blood of Jesus were for redemption of
humanity. Weaver explains that the Maundy Thursday service continues the liturgies
of Good Friday and Easter vigil. The service is actually the beginning of the three great
days. Holy Thursday includes a series of events that Jesus shared with his disciples,
for example foot washing and celebrating the last supper (Holy Communion). It marks
the beginning of the most joyful celebration of the entire Christian year – that of Easter.

4.8 Good Friday
The name Good Friday was derived from the outcome that is good and favourable for
all humankind (Segler & Bradley as cited in Bethke, 2015:48). The goodness of the
day lies in the fact that God expressed his love as a gift to humanity on that day (John
3:16). The goodness lies not only the father giving his son, but also in the fact that
Jesus Christ was willing to obey the Father and to die for people. This day has the
following theological significance:

- Christ bought humanity at a price (1 Corinthians 6: 20)
- He wanted to reconcile man to himself and to one another
- His act was to ensure forgiveness for humankind
Humankind was bought with blood, which brought reconciliation, freedom, forgiveness, love, cleanliness from sins. This indicates the reason why the day of crucifixion was termed Good Friday.

4.9 Easter Sunday (Resurrection Day)
Easter Sunday is the celebration of the resurrection of Christ. This day marks the birth of Christianity (Hollings, 2005:54-55). The theological significance of Easter Sunday involves, among others, the following:

- The risen Christ
- The authority of Christ
- The great commission with regard to the risen Christ.

Easter seasons last for fifty days until the Day of Pentecost (Perham, 2000:237). This means Easter is not simply one day. It is the first and primary day of a fifty-day season of celebration. The forty days of Lent serve to prepare us not simply for a one-day celebration, but for a season of celebration. Many denominational calendars have begun to emphasize this by designating the Sundays following Easter day as the Sunday of Easter rather than Sunday after Easter (Weaver, 2002:70).

Easter services are characterized by songs of resurrection. It is the most important day of the Christian year and should be a model for all worship of the Christian church as people gather weekly to celebrate Christ's birth, life, death, and the promise of his return (Segler & Bradley, 2006:227). The Easter Service could be at the normal Sunday morning time, but to stress its importance, it would be better to have the service at dawn, so people could see the new day breaking after the long darkness before that. In this way, they could be reminded that Christ is the Light of the World.

4.10 Ascension Day
This marks the day on which Christ ascended to His father. The theological significance of Ascension Day lies in a clear identification of God with us, and Jesus's continuous presence with us. Ascension Day refers to a period during Jesus went back to His father after identifying with humanity. Although Ascension Day always falls
on a Thursday, it can be celebrated the Sunday before Pentecost when the texts on the Ascension are usually read (Segler & Bradley, 2006:227).

The nine days after Ascension Day until Pentecost should be days of prayer and preparation to celebrate the outpouring of the Spirit. Just as the disciples in the Acts of the Apostles return from the Ascension and spent their time in watchful prayer, waiting for what the Lord has promised, so the church should observe the days between Ascension Day and Pentecost by praying ‘Come, Holy Spirit, renew’. Hymns, songs and prayers of the Spirit are appropriate throughout this period, so that we arrive at the Day of Pentecost with a real sense of openness to the spirit whose presence is celebrated (Perham, 2000:240).

4.11 Pentecost
According to Segler and Bradley (as cited in Bethke, 2015), the term Pentecost is taken from the Greek and means “fifty days”. The Feast of Pentecost marks the end of the Easter season in the Church’s calendar. Pentecost is rightly celebrated ‘most radiantly’ as the Church continues to rejoice at the great things that have been accomplished through the death and Resurrection of the Son of God (Baggley, 2000: 140). At Pentecost, the Church was commissioned to proclaim the Word of God in Jesus Christ to all people, and the good news was spoken in every tongue. Pentecost is the birthday of the Church, and the mood of the day should be appropriately joyful (Segler & Bradley, 2006:227).

Easter should end on a note of proclamation, people ready to take the Gospel out with confidence (Perham, 2000:240). Christ had been raised and glorified and the Spirit had been poured out on the church. Through the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the revelation of the Holy Trinity is brought to fulfilment (Baggley, 2000:140). Pentecost, and therefore Eastertide, should end on a strong note. Pentecost should be a day of great celebration in the Church, a day when we focus on our empowerment for ministry and when we renew our commitment to the work of being the Church of the risen Christ in the world (Weaver, 2002:71).
4.12 Trinity Sunday
The Sunday after Pentecost is known as Trinity Sunday (Segler & Bradley, 2006: 227). The Trinity refers to the three persons of God, namely the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The time after Pentecost gives the church greater freedom in choosing the direction of its worship. Trinity celebrations take many forms: singing, praises, contemplation, physically humbling oneself before God. The traditional song associated with the celebration of trinity sung by the participants on the commemoration is still “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty”.

Conclusion
From the foregoing, the following is evident; the liturgical year helps the Church of Christ to experience a sense of identity with the whole body of Christ by reliving some experiences of the past today so that it can have meaning for us. This expression means that the church today can relive the history of God with his people through Christ and the Holy Spirit in its own age and time.

In the Church Year, the most prominent events in the life of Jesus Christ and of the church are commemorated. It gives people the opportunity to participate actively and collectively in the events that shape the faith of people and the life of the church. From what came to the fore in this chapter, good reasons can be given for emphasizing the Christian liturgical year:

- Following the liturgical year might help diverse congregations experience a sense of identity with the whole body of Christ as it addresses the same biblical texts on a Sunday and sings similar hymns and songs appropriate for the time of the year.
- It could be a way of catechesis so children could participate and learn about Jesus Christ, about the Trinity and about the church.
- Moreover, the Church Year can challenge preachers who might otherwise fall into the habit of preaching on only a few favourite passages with new sermon texts. Congregations can therefore encounter a richness and diversity of expressions of experience with God and the Gospel.
• At the same time, the liturgical year provides for the possibility of extensive planning, inviting congregational involvement in worship preparation, the harmonizing of music and other arts with Scripture (Moeller 1998:66).

Even if the events of the Christian year are celebrated and commemorated by Christians over the world, there are unfortunately still many churches where only parts of the Church Year receive attention, and often in a limited way. There also is no way that the events of the liturgical year can be acted upon as individuals. More room should be allowed for participation in all church-related activities. If a fuller form of the Church Year could be celebrated and much more could be made of each event on the church calendar, then people would become more actively involved in worship. Fuller forms of celebration could contribute to more involvement with the Gospel and stronger participation in various aspects of faith.

A stronger consciousness and more expansive celebrations should develop in the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa. The Church Year is where the church can develop forms of worship with rituals, metaphors and colours that are unique to the culture in Africa, making sure that worship is culture-conscious and therefore relevant and suitable for all church members. Through making more of the many symbols and rituals associated with the Church Year, people could open up for each other and become more involved with one another. Celebrating a richer form of the Church Year could unite Christians of all backgrounds and ages and be a means to building bridges.
CHAPTER FIVE

The current situation in the Presbytery of Potchefstroom: A small survey

INTRODUCTION

Following the theoretical framework presented in the previous chapters is the hermeneutical circle, as defined by Heitink (1999). This hermeneutical circle forms the operational phase of the research. The operational phase constitutes the questionnaire on elements of the church. The aim of the study is to probe people's understanding, instead of their feelings. This is the reason why the researcher chose the survey to acquire information.

The congregations were selected on the basis of their differences. The differences in these congregations greatly determine how they worship. The differences in worship result from factors such as how they were exposed to the culture and traditions of their church, as well as how the democratic dispensation has impacted and influenced the culture. The rationale with the questionnaire was to determine and evaluate the liturgical experience of the members of the Potchefstroom Presbytery and to determine respondents' understanding and interpretation of liturgy.

The respondents varied in age and gender. The selection of specific congregations was determined by the position or office held by the minister within the Potchefstroom Presbytery. These selected ministers were diverse in terms of language. One member was selected from each congregation. The selected member as expected to knowledgeable and well experienced with the elements and actions of the worship and their use. The questions asked in the questionnaire were simple so that everyone would be able to understand and answer without any difficulty.

This chapter starts with a geographical description of the Potchefstroom Presbytery, followed a work plan, the symbols representing the respondents and the conclusion of the chapter.
5.1 Geographical area of the Potchefstroom Presbytery

The URCSA consists of 683 congregations and those congregations belong to several presbyteries. Neighbouring congregations are grouped together into presbyteries to express the reality of confessional church unity (URCSA, 2012:555).

The Potchefstroom Presbytery is situated in the North West province of the Republic of South Africa. The Potchefstroom Presbytery stretches across two cities, namely Potchefstroom and Klerksdorp, and four smaller towns, which are Hartbeesfontein, Orkney, Ventersdorp, and Stilfontein. Structurally, the presbytery consists of eleven congregations, and of the eleven congregations, two are coloured congregations using Afrikaans as their preferred language. Nine are African congregations.

5.2 Work plan

In the Potchefstroom presbytery, the executive committee is made up of the chairperson, deputy chairperson, the scribe, the deputy scribe and the treasurer of the presbytery. This leadership was given questionnaires to complete. Secondly, presbytery congregations were randomly selected. The selected congregations included Ikageng URCSA, situated in Potchefstroom, the congregation after which the presbytery was named, Schoonspruit URCSA, Wa Boikanyo URCSA, Orkney URCSA, and Alabama URCSA. Five members of various categories from each congregation were given questionnaires. The principle of anonymity and confidentiality was communicated to all participants.
The rationale and objective with this exercise was to gather data on the elements of worship as practiced in the various congregations. This chapter first gives the information as gathered from the presbytery and from each congregation per question asked in the questionnaire. Thereafter the same information are presented per member, irrespective of the congregation from which the answer came.

**Questionnaire**

The following people were given questionnaires in the said congregations: the Reverend, a church council member, one women, one man, and one youth. For purpose of identification, the following are symbols used:

“RC” for the Reverend Chairperson
“RDC” for the Reverend Deputy Chairperson
“RS” for the Reverend Scribe
“RDS” for the Reverend Deputy Scribe
“RT” for the Reverend treasure
“C” for the Church council
“M” for man
“W” for woman
“Y” for the youth

5.3 Questionnaires issued to the Potchefstroom presbytery executive members.
The executive members of the presbytery were issued with questionnaires. These five ministers are also leaders at the congregations under study as set out in the work plan. This suggests that when responding, they will be doing so as both a member of the presbytery and as ministers of the congregations. These ministers who are in the executive committee should not be seen in isolation from their congregations. Information pertaining to the identity of respondents are not provided anywhere during the discussion. The respondents were assured of anonymity. The targeted congregations to which the executive committee ministers are attached, were Sotho, Tswana, and Coloured (Afrikaans) congregations.
**Question 5.3.1 What elements and actions in worship do you regard as essential?**

The respondents responded as follows on the question relating to the elements and actions used in URCSA during worship:

RC said that the Word is one of the most crucial element in worship. For the Word builds us up and comfort us and through the Word we become Christians.

RDC stated that the Word, prayer and singing are important.

RS asserted that the Word and confessions are the essential elements.

RDS pointed out that the Word, prayer and the Votum are important.

RT stated that the Word and singing includes prayer are essential.

C argued that the Votum is one of the critical elements during worship because the Votum introduces us to the presence of God who welcome us for a worship.

M stated that music is one of the important elements in worship as it brings the presence of God in our midst, for when we praise God by singing, the glory of God comes down.

W asserted that confession is one of the pivotal elements during worship because it strengthens our faith in God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Y pointed out that prayer is one of the fundamental element in worship because in prayer you directly communicate with the Father, who is able to meet you at the point of your need.

The outcomes of the respondents on the question dealing with elements and worship are as follows:

- All respondents agreed that there are essential elements and actions during worship.
- The respondents differed on which of the elements are important or essential.
- According to the researcher, the Word is the most highly placed element of the worship.
When one analyses and interprets the responses of all respondents, it can be concluded that all elements and actions of worship are essential, even if some regard the Word as more important.

**Question 5.3.2 Are these elements and actions in your services usually arranged in the same order every Sunday?**

The following responses resulted from the question relating to the arrangement of elements and actions:

RC alluded to the fact that the arrangement of the elements and action follows a certain order, except when there is a special event in the church.

RDC stated that the elements and actions are mixed in terms of arrangements.

RS argued that the elements and actions are arranged in a sequential manner according to the Church Order.

RDS pointed out that the elements and actions are arranged in a logical systematic manner prescribed in the Church Order.

RT stated that the elements and actions are arranged in accordance with our Church Order.

C asserted that the arrangement of elements and actions do follow the same pattern every Sunday.

M stated that the arrangement of elements and actions are of less significance to him, what matters is what is supposed to be done on Sunday.

W said that the arrangement of elements and actions has been the way it is for many years; we are not even aware if it sometimes changes or not.

Y postulated that whether the arrangement has stayed the same or has changed means nothing to him or her, because there is no difference, they remained the same.

The results of the empirical research on the arrangement of elements and their actions are as follows:
Most respondents felt that there is a pattern that is systematic and that follows the logical order in the worship. This logical order is only compromised when there are special activities in the church.

All respondents agreed that the logical order of elements and actions is of no value, what matters is that the core business of the church is ultimately achieved.

The one thing that stood out is that the arrangement of the elements and their actions are immaterial, for at the end of the day what was scheduled, happens as planned.

Therefore, it can be concluded from the responses, is that the respondent think that whether the order of elements and actions are followed, is not important, what matters is whether the core business is achieved.

**Question 5.3.3 If not the same every Sunday, how are the elements arranged, and why are they arranged differently?**

Respondents responded as follows to the question of how the elements and actions are arranged:

RC argued that elements and actions are sometimes arranged differently when the church council has invited another minister from a different church.

RDC stated that elements and actions are rearranged when a special arrangement has been done.

RS argued that elements and actions are only rearranged when there is a special holiday, for example mother’s day, father’s day or youth day where speakers are scheduled to talk on that day.

RDS pointed out that there are rearrangements of elements and actions when the catechumens do confession of faith, because on that day time is spent on them for motivation.

RT stated that the elements and actions are rearranged when one church ministry has had a fundraising through the night.

C argued that rearrangements of elements and actions only occur when there is a conference of the presbytery.
M pointed out that elements and actions are rearranged when there is a presentation of finances of the church because that presentation consumes a lot of time.

W stated that elements and actions are re-arranged when a minister wants to invite as many people as possible to share the Word (preach) after he/she has read the Scripture.

Y argued that elements and actions are arranged differently when the church council is dissolved (rested) or elected into their position because the minister takes his/her time to confirm them.

The results of the question relating to the reasons for rearranging elements and actions are as follows:

- All respondents in the study agree that there is a rearrangement of elements and actions. The reason for this differs from one congregation to the other.
- The arrangements are not done to disturb the order of the church, but to embrace, acknowledge and appreciate other church-related activities that are aimed at enhancing Kingdom of God.

Therefore, it can be concluded that when arrangements of the liturgical order are made, the intention is not disturb the core business of the church, but to accommodate other church-related activities that enhance the Kingdom of God.

**Question 5.3.4 How many hymns, songs should there be in a service?**

This question sought to enquire on the number of hymns and songs sung during worship. The responses were as follows:

RC stated that hymns and songs are not an issue, what matters most is that at the end of the service we have praised and worshipped God.

RDC said that in that church, six (6) hymns and songs are sung and another three hymns and songs during collection.

RS asserted that approximately six hymns and songs are sung, with an extra two songs for collection.

RDS argued that only five hymns and songs were sung, with an extra one song for collection.
RT said that the church sings six (6) hymns and songs apart from those during collection.

C argued that hymns and songs are important because they determine the length of the service. Therefore, there are only six (6) songs during worship except for songs sung during collection time.

M pointed out that hymns and songs are not that much of a concern to him. “What concerns me most is that the songs of our church as prescribed by the church in Hosanna, are no longer being sung properly.”

W postulated that hymns and songs are contaminated by the charismatic hymns and songs. These charismatic hymns and songs have had a strong influence in this congregation. However, six (6) songs are sung during Sunday service, apart from those songs sung during special events.

Y stated that hymns and songs are not correctly sung to such an extent that the congregation is experiencing an exodus of young people to charismatic churches that sing hymns by utilizing instruments. In this church, only six hymns and songs are sung.

The results on the number of hymns and songs are as follows:

- Most respondents are of the view that only six (6) hymns and songs are sung, the number increases only during collection or at special events.

Therefore, it can be concluded that in URCSA, more or less six (6) hymns are sung during worship, except when there is a collection or special event.

**Question 5.3.5 Who chooses the various songs and hymns and according to which principles are they chosen?**

The question of who choose the songs and hymns was answered with the following responses:

RC pointed out that the preacher of the day is the one who chooses the hymns and songs in accordance with the preparation for his/her sermon.

RDC. The minister is the one choosing the hymns and songs in accordance with the church calendar.
RS. The minister in consultation with the church choir to ensure that the hymns are in line with the message and to ensure that the choir prepares those hymns and songs.

RDS. The minister requests the choir to lead the congregation with a song.

RT. The minister is the one who is always choosing the song so that the hymns and songs are in line with his/her message.

C stated that the church choir is the one responsible for choosing hymns to be sung in the church, for they feel that this element resorts with them.

M asserted that the conductor of the church choir chooses songs and hymns to be sung in accordance with the church calendar or the annual programme of the year as received from the head office.

W thought that hymns and songs are chosen by the preacher of the day on the basis of the theme to support his Scripture.

Y argued that the choosing of hymns by the preacher of the day normally happens only during the preaching time. Y further argued that during collections, the congregants choose their own hymns / chorus.

The responses to the question about the choice of hymns and whether songs are regulated by a certain specific principle were as follows:

- All respondents agreed that the choice of hymns and songs is left to a responsible person. However, the principle according to which the choice is made differs according to their understanding. The one says the choir has the ability to choose as he/she is the conductor in charge of the music.

- One believes, that the preacher of the day, as the person presiding over the message knows the hymns and songs that correlate with his/her message.

- Others felt that the church calendar directs the choice of hymns and songs, for the calendar is already drawn and it would be easy to attach songs and hymns to it.

- Lastly, there is a view that the church’s head office prescribes which hymns and songs should be sung.
The manner in which respondents answered shows how the choice of hymns and songs could be done. It seems that it does not matter who chooses hymns and songs – what matters is that music energizes and inspires people during worship.

**Question 5.3.6 How often would a song, hymn or chorus be sung spontaneously over and above the chosen hymns?**

The question relating to how often a chorus be sung over above the chosen hymns, elicited the following arguments:

RC said that in their congregation choruses are dominant over hymns because choruses are easily comprehended and sung.

RDC said that in their church choruses are used over hymns because choruses are more inspiriting, activating and fulfilling the inner person.

RS said that in their Sunday services, the choice of choruses over the hymns happens always because there is a strong charismatic influence.

RDS pointed out that the reason behind singing choruses more than hymns in their church is because most of youth and adults have been recruited from other churches by means of these choruses.

RT argued that the chorus dominates hymns in their church because the Hosanna hymns, when singing them, you have to have the hymnal in your hands. This distracts a person from praising and worshipping by freely lifting up his/her hands and concentrating fully in God.

C stated that choruses in that church is always sung more than hymns because most of the congregation are working outside the scope of our city, therefore they come with a strong influence of charismatic churches.

M stated that in their congregation, the chorus is used mostly because the congregants want to adjust to the changing times.

W pointed out that the reason for weekly singing choruses is due to an inability of Hosanna hymn to bring the Glory of God.

Y argued that they love the chorus very much over Hosanna hymns because Hosanna is inherited from the NG Kerk, we don’t get the sense of identity with Hosanna.
The outcome to the question relating to how often are the chorus sang over the hymns is as follows:

- Respondents felt that they sang choruses more often than the hymns because choruses is more likely to give a person a sense of identity. The identity with God can only be feel when God is praise and worshiped in a manner that activates the inward man of Spirit.
- When the inward man of Spirit is activated, one’s faith is strengthened and deepened.
- Some respondents are not in favour of hymns from the Hosanna because they are not easily comprehended and cannot touch the inner man like choruses does.

It can therefore be concluded that respondents favour choruses over hymns. They see choruses as easily understood; they inspire, motivate, and create an atmosphere of the presence of God. The Hosanna hymns on the other hand are difficult to understand because they are given only in Sotho.

**Question 5.3.7 Which language is used predominantly in your congregations?**

To the question relating to the language in the congregation the following are the responses:

RC said in their congregation the language used is Sotho, because the congregation is located within the area of the Sotho speaking people.

RDC stated that in their congregation the language used is Tswana, because he is a Tswana speaking minister.

RS argued that in their congregation the language used is Zulu because the people in the area where he ministers, are Zulu speaking.

RDS said that in their congregation the language used is Xhosa, because Xhosa is his mother tongue.

RT said that in the congregation in which he is ministering, Afrikaans is the dominant language, because it is a coloured area.

C responded that the language used in that congregation is Sotho and English. English is to accommodate the youth who are in multiracial schools.
M answered that the predominant language in this church is Tswana because their minister is a Tswana speaking person.

W pointed out that the language used in this church is Sotho, because the minister is Sotho, who minister in a predominantly Sotho-speaking area.

Y said that in their congregation the language used is Afrikaans because their minister is a white person in a coloured area.

The results to the question relating to the language used in the congregation are as follows:

- The languages used in all the congregations under study, to a certain extent reflect the diverse languages existing in the country. These diverse languages are Sotho, Tswana, Xhosa, Zulu, Afrikaans and English.
- The usage of each of the mentioned languages should be highly valued and respected.
- The manner in which a language in a specific context is used determines the number of people who will be Christians.

Looking at the number of responses to the language of worship, it seems that there is no cultural diversity per se, but a mixture of ethnicity in the Presbytery. The study does not indicate whether there are whites, no Indians.

**Question 5.3.8 Which other languages are used in your worship and how often?**

The question relating to which other languages are used in URCSA worship and how often, was met by the following responses:

RC answered that the other language used is Tswana because Tswana is closely related to Sotho. It is sometimes used to clarify the context of the chosen Scripture.

RDC said that Sotho is one other language used because Sotho and Tswana are dominating in their area. It is sometimes used interchangeably in preaching.

RS argued that English is the other language used in their worship. It is used during interpretation of the sermon only.
RDS said Zulu is used in that church, because Xhosa and Zulu are related to each other. Therefore, people can easily understand Xhosa when interpreted to Zulu. It is only used during interpretation.

RT pointed out that the language used is English. It is only used for interpretation of the Word.

C stated that the other language used is Xhosa. It is used for the purpose of interpreting of the Word from Xhosa to English.

M stated that the other language used is Afrikaans because the message is always interpreted from Sotho to Afrikaans.

W responded that the other language used in their church is English, to accommodate school children from English-medium schools.

Y asserted that the alternative language used is Sotho, to accommodate most of the Sotho-speaking children who have migrated to the coloured churches.

The response to the question of which other language used and how often, are as follows:

- All respondents agreed that there is an alternative language used in their congregation.
- The reason behind the use of other languages ensures that all congregants understood the message equally well.
- This acts an indication that there is diversity of language.
- However, other languages used during worship are not permanently used like the language of worship in the church.
- It can therefore be concluded that diversity management is an area that reveals scope for improvement in the church.
Question 5.3.9 If other languages are used; in which way are they used?

The question relating to other languages used and how are they used. The responses are as follows:

RC stated that in their congregation the other language used is Xhosa. It is used mainly for the interpretation and translation of the sermon presented in Sotho.

RDC said that the other language used in our congregation is English. It is used for Sunday children so that they can understand the lesson.

RS answered that the other language is Afrikaans. The Sotho is interpreted to Afrikaans so that there is common understanding.

RDS responded that the other language is Xhosa. Sotho Gospel message is interpreted to Xhosa speaking people.

RT alluded to the fact that Sotho is used. Afrikaans is interpreted into Sotho so that Sotho speaking understand the message.

C pointed out that in the local church the language used is Zulu. It is used for interpreting Sotho to Zulu for few Zulu speaking people.
W asserted that in the local church the language used is English. This is for interpreting the message from Tswana to English for the school children who are in model C school.

M said that in their church, Afrikaans, English and Sotho are used during worship, and praising because most chorus in the church are in all these languages.

Y said that Tswana is used alongside the Afrikaans because there are people who stay in the squatter camp (informal settlement) who are from the farms and through urbanization have come to stay in Promosa (coloured area in Potchefstroom). They have form part of that congregation. They are not familiar with Afrikaans, hence they are using Tswana alongside Afrikaans.

The respondents to the question about other languages used in their worship responded as follows:

- All respondents are in agreement that there are one or two other languages used in their Churches. The rationale behind the usage of such languages is to accommodate people of other languages so that they can equally comprehend the teaching of the Word, which is able to build them up, empower, inspire, motivate, heal, deliver and redeem them.

Therefore, it can be concluded that URCSA Potchefstroom Presbytery tries to value diverse language in their midst because the church is tolerant, accepts and embrace the difference. However, there is a need for the church to optimally embrace the diverse congregants and help them develop their God given talents in reaching out over the barriers of languages.
The role of language in worship

**Question 5.3.10 Would you say your worship is participatory in any way? And if so, in which ways?**

The respondents responded as follows to the question relating to participation during worship:

RC asserted that there is no participation in church services because Baptism is meant only for children and not for the elderly as prescribed by the church order.

RDC argued that the church service is not participative because the order of worship drafted is such that only individuals are doing what is supposed to be done.

RS responded that the worship is not participative because the prayer before and after the sermon is led by one person only.

RDS argued that the worship is not participative because there is lack of responses to almost every part of the service. The congregants participate only in singing hymns and reciting the creed.

RT stated that the worship is not participative because there is lack of joy in the URCSA service. There is silence right through the whole service. The whole service is dominated by the minister.
C said their responsibility as members of the congregation is to participate during worship, however this is not the case because mostly they are observing what others are doing.

W said that the service is participative because their minister ensures that he involves congregants by telling them that is time for us to pray.

M stated that the worship is not participative because the preaching of the Word is conducted by the minister only and the church elders are not allowed evaluation of the sermon or question and answers session.

Y said that the Sunday service is not participative because in their church the choir is the only one singing for the entire service. The service only becomes participative during collection when all ministries are allowed to lead their own hymns and songs.

The result to the question relating to active participation during worship is that:

- Participation and involvement on all church related elements is important. Most respondents are of the view that there is no participation in the church. They feel that most of the time, they are relegated to the periphery and have become observes and spectators watching how things of the church are being played out by the few individuals.

A lack of participation has the following far reaching implication:

- They will not be able to identify and enhance their God given talents, so people will move out of the church and go somewhere where their talents will be noticed.
- People will lose sense of belonging and ownership of the church.

In the democratic dispensation in which the church finds itself, there is a call for people not to be spectators, but to be consulted, to participate and respond in all things. Therefore, it can be concluded that URCSA should actively promote participation and all discrepancies must be addressed.
5.3.11 Do you have suggestions on how your worship could reflect liveliness or vibrancy in your service and would you be willing to incorporate such practices?

To the question relating to suggestion on how URCSA can welcome and reflect liveliness or vibrancy, the following was said:

RC said that our church is a predominantly Afrikaans inherited church with its own culture and traditions. RC further states that we have our own vibrancy, done in the context of our own culture.

RDC stated that the church must extent invitation to charismatic churches to seek for advices on how URCSA can be vibrate.

RS argued that URCSA has to conduct seminars and workshops on how to revolutionize the church to avoid losing members to other churches.

RDS pointed out that the usage of instruments is the answer to vibrancy. RDS states that the involvement of youth including Sunday school children in the worship is essential.

RT said that our church should not just speak about the Holy Spirit, but should allow the Holy Spirit to act in our lives. RT further says that there is need for enough praising through singing before the sermon.

C asserted that the Sunday service has to be naturally vibrant so that one feels the presence of God. The status quo in our Church, does not stimulate the inner person to be fulfilled.
W pointed out that there is a dire need for our church to move out of its closet and begin to appreciate vibrancy brought about the instrument during worshipping.

M stated that past traditions and cultures have to be done away with, for they are real barriers to vibrancy in the church. Therefore, if these oppressive cultures and traditions of the church can be done away with, then the spirit of liveliness or vibrancy will be accommodated easily in the church.

Y pointed out that our choirs are too traditional in nature as they sing only from our Hosanna hymnbook, as well as songs competition, which don’t have ability to touch the inward man of spirit, hence the need for change.

The outcome of the question dealing with liveliness or vibrancy needed in URCSA are:

- All respondents strongly feel that there is a need for vibrancy in the church. The vibrancy can be brought about by using instruments in the worship, seminars, workshop and involvement of youth in the worship. This could help reduce the exodus of youth to other Churches. Instead, it will unearth the potential and talents of youth.

Looking at the number of responses, one can conclude that the order of service in the Potchefstroom Presbytery should be enriched by improving congregational responses.

**Conclusion**

The preceding chapter gave data as gathered and obtained from the questionnaires. After data was received, it was analysed and interpreted. There was a determination of the findings and results of the empirical study. This was done separately in an effort to ensure validity of the outcome. This chapter revealed that there are misunderstandings and misinterpretation, causing confusion amongst members.

The following chapter will bring together the findings in a comparative study between the theoretical study and the empirical survey. The idea with the comparison is to deal with possible changes in the praxis of the congregations of the Potchefstroom Presbytery, in order to alleviate and combat the challenges as indicated.
CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A CHANGED PRAXIS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a short summary of the preceding chapters to reach an understanding of the findings. Chapter 2, 3 and 4 dealt with the theory on worship. These chapters described different principles, guidelines and practices based on the work of scholars and Scripture itself. Chapter 5 dealt with the empirical surveys, which included the information gathered from the respondents by means of questionnaires. The questionnaires examined the elements of worship and the actions involved, music, language, the extent to which participation is considered as important, and the respondents’ experience of worship.

6.1 Summary of the research findings

Chapter 1 outlined the background that necessitated this study and indicated the direction of the study. The research problem centres on the fact there is a need to renew worship in the Potchefstroom Presbytery.

6.1.1 Research objectives

The objectives of the study was to:

- consider the theoretical principles that could provide guidance for worship;
- explore current practices and believers’ experience of these practices by means of empirical research; and
- find guidelines for participatory worship in the Potchefstroom Presbytery.

6.1.2 Method

In an effort to achieve the said objectives, the following method was used:

- an extensive literature review on the elements and actions of worship, music in worship, and the possibility of using the Church Year to enrich worship;
- a small survey by means of questionnaires to investigate the current practices of worship in the Potchefstroom Presbytery.
a synthesis of the theoretical and empirical research results to arrive at proper guidelines for churches in the Potchefstroom Presbytery.

6.1.3 A summary of the study in relation to the objectives of the study

Chapter 2 explored the liturgy of a Sunday service. The different actions, parts and sections of worship – the elements of worship – constitute the liturgy of the church. Liturgy gives the congregation its culture, in other words a way in which things are done in the church. The elements and actions determine how the congregation worships. The manner in which worship takes place in churches in the URCSA can be divided into four phases (Hosanna, 1967:605) and (URCSA Draft worship book 2016: 8). The first phase is entry and incorporation into the church, the second is the ministry of the Word, third is the sacraments and fourth is sending and blessing. The elements and actions of the church do not only create the culture of the church, but also gives worship a spiritual sense and direction. It gives direction to the service, in that believers follow their Christian beliefs from the time of entry into church up to the benediction at the end. Paul emphasizes that worship should be conducted in a good and orderly way so that people can be prepared to serve God (1 Corinthians 14:33–40). The direction worship takes should therefore be sequential and systematic.

The role that the Word plays as one of the key actions and elements of worship is central to liturgy. The Word stands above all other elements (Earey & Myers, 2001:45) because it edifies, corrects, rebukes and builds Christians.

Chapter 3 focused specifically on the role music plays in the church. Singing is an important part of worship, and as such it is a part of the liturgical process (Vorster, 1999:120). Music gives meaning to the service arrangement and fulfils a kerygmatic function in that it provides an opportunity to hear from God directly (Gibbs & Coffey, 2001:177). During the process of singing, God responds to the needs of the people. The kerygmatic function of singing has to achieve the goal of proclamation. Through singing, the entire church in a participative manner expresses their faith in God.

Chapter 4 discussed the Church Year, which includes various events that Christians should commemorate. The purpose of this chapter was to demonstrate how events relating to the Church Year are actually celebrated by all people in the church, and paying attention to this can help a local congregation feel connected to the universal Church (Segler & Bradley, 1996:178).
The celebration of these events also has the potential to enhance and enrich the active participation of church members. The Church Year is just as important than any of the other actions and elements of worship, when it comes to involving all members of the church.

In Chapter 5 the results of the limited questionnaire administered within the Potchefstroom Presbytery are presented. Respondents indicated that they do not feel involved and active during worship. They called for renewal in the church, especially by managing diversity and using diverse talents optimally. Such renewal requires transformational leaders who will ensure that renewal of worship becomes a reality. In addition, the alignment of congregants to the vision of the church is crucial.

6.2 The interaction between the results of the theoretical principles and the results of the empirical study

6.2.1 Leadership

The elements and actions of the church are largely regulated and controlled by the leaders (Wolterstorf, 2009:200). They are what the leaders make them to be. The elements and actions of the church can be regulated and deregulated at the same time. The order of services are greatly influenced by the specific leader a congregation has. People feel worship is too much about what the leader of the church wants. The Church Year can contribute greatly to solving this problem. It provides a structure that fits in with the principles of liturgy. The leadership of the church has the responsibility to transform the manner in which worship is conducted in the church.

The role of the leadership involves the following:

- the church elements and actions are made and implemented by the leadership of the church;
- singing is controlled by the leadership of the church;
- the leader plays a critical role in the manner of in which things are done.
- church leaders do not realise that they are responsible for the liturgy and worship;
- leaders should realise that they have the power to make things happen.
6.2.2 Participation

The elements and actions of worship of the church should involve all people in the church (Perham, 2002:21). Members should not be reduced to mere observers, since liturgy is the means through which we worship God. Worship cannot be meaningful if there is no active participation in the church elements and actions (Perham, 2000:19-21). The elements and actions are not only for worship and glorification of the Lord, but they should be accepted as means of receiving answers and responses from God.

Singing and music play an important role in liturgy. It cannot be separated and conducted apart from the elements and actions of the church. Music, like the other elements and actions of worship, cannot be effectively conducted without the full participation and involvement of all congregants (White, 2000:112). Music and singing in the church has become a wonderful means through which God is worshipped, praised and glorified. In turn, music gains more meaning within the context of the Church Year.

The Church Year has been celebrated in the Church of Christ throughout the ages by all people. The Church Year, similar to the elements and actions and music, cannot be effectively celebrated when there is no active involvement and participation in the church (White, 2000:71). The people in church have a role to play; therefore they have to be involved. By involving people in the church, they are empowered to give their best to God and to the other congregants.

Important points that emerge from the theoretical and empirical study:
- The active involvement and participation of members is central.
- Elements and actions, singing, music and the Church Year are all aimed at glorifying God and winning souls for the kingdom of God.

6.2.3 Diversity

Diversity cannot be understood unless one has an understanding of why God created us differently. This diversity can be properly managed, only if God’s purpose is well acknowledged and appreciated. Diversity cannot be properly managed if the church disregards multilingualism during services. Yet it is practically not possible for any church to conduct a service in different various languages. This side-lines certain
groups. The elements and actions of the church are supposed to happen in a manner that is understandable and acceptable to all people in the church. It is important in a multicultural congregation to find a middle ground so that the people can worship in a manner that is acceptable for all.

Singing in the church cannot be done in isolation from the other elements and actions of the church, and the other elements and actions of worship cannot function without music. With the way music is made in the church, the diversity in languages should be considered (White, 2000:32). It is when people sing together that the importance of diversity can be seen. It is not good if people in the church have forgotten about singing with all other people of diverse languages. The reality is that when people can acknowledge diversity in singing, they would praise and worship God more fully.

The Church Year cannot be celebrated without acknowledging and appreciating diversity. Worship on the whole involves people, and people are diverse. This diversity is often overlooked when people start taking it for granted. One possible way of acknowledging the presence of diversity is to ensure that all people are participating in all the activities of the church. This can be done by singing as one of the best way to make people active. An inclusive worship style that involves different groups and their cultures should be developed (De young & Yancey, 2003:176).

From the questionnaires, it can be deduced, that in the Potchefstroom Presbytery, diversity management has been ineffective to a large degree. The proper way of doing diversity management in the church is for the church to show that diversity is a God-given gift from which both the church and each individual should benefit. The important thing is that no one should be disrespected.

The diversity of the church has the following implications:

- the church cannot do without diversity;
- the church without diversity is not a Church;
- the church should actively manage diversity.

6.3 The similarities between the conclusions of the theoretical and empirical studies

6.3.1 Leadership
The following points on leadership emerged from the study:

- Church elements are made and implemented by leaders.
- Singing is controlled by the leadership of the church.
- The church calendar is determined and recommended for use by the leadership of the church.
- The manner in which things are done in the church can be attributed to the leadership of the church.

The four concluding remarks suggest that leadership is central in the church. It is the task of church leadership to decide how to improve worship (De young & Yancey, 2003:179).

6.3.2 Participation

The following points on participation emerged from the study:

- The leadership of the church plays a pivotal role in ensuring that people are actively participating for the empowerment of the church.
- The leadership of the church has an important role to manage diversity.

This suggest that the church leadership has to ensure participation of all members in the church.

6.3.3 Unity in diversity

The following points on unity in diversity emerged from the study:

- The church cannot do without diversity;
- The church without diversity is not a church;
- Diversity should be actively managed.

These concluding remarks suggest that the church leadership has to manage the diversity in the church.

6.4 Recommendations for a changed praxis for the Potchefstroom Presbytery

In the research proposal (Chapter 1) the challenge in the worship of URCSA revealed room for improvement. In Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5, salient theoretical principles and practical empirical principles were highlighted. It is from these principles that recommendations for renewal in worship are formulated.
6.4.1 Leadership
The fundamental element of a solution for the problems that URCSA church experiences with worship is leadership. Kloppers (2017:189) states that leadership is about vision, about gaining trust and guiding people to follow and adopt practices that have theological and pastoral integrity. In an effort to realise this leadership, URCSA should have profound and sound knowledge of the structure and theological principles of the liturgy and knowledge of their own worship traditions (Kloppers 2017:189). For the purpose of this study, the leadership of URCSA should focus on the following key issues for renewing church worship:

- Participation and involvement
- Management of diversity
- The role of music in the worship
- Alignment of activities, elements, actions and people

6.4.2 Participation and involvement
The church is composed of many types of people from a variety of backgrounds with a multitude of gifts and abilities. Paul emphasised the importance of each member (see the note on 1 Corinthians 12:12). Each of us is a part of the one body of Christ. Transformational leaders have the ability to ensure the proper involvement and participation of all members in activities. Participation is a process whereby a leader shows that he/she acknowledges and appreciates members by empowering them and making sure that they are being taken into consideration when they are participating in activities, and that they are being exposed to opportunities. Ways to enable participation include, for example:

Establishing a worship committee that will plan and prepare worship in advance. The committee may be made up of ushers, liturgists, Scripture readers, music leaders and interpreters (Kloppers 2017:186). This will relieve the burden of the minister and recognise the gifts of the entire congregation to lead or participate in worship. The worship committee may choose hymns and select Scripture readers in advance. This may allow members to rehearse Psalms, Scriptures, and hymns during the gathering phase. Members may become familiar with the Psalms and hymns and more fully participate in the worship.
These opportunities can bring about change within the life of the church. A transformational leader has the ability to create a conducive environment wherein people can grow. The participation process does not only allow a person to grow but also to take responsibility. According to Kanter (1997:93), a transformational leader who intends to bring about culture change in the Church of Christ has to be aware of the following:

- He/she has to know the exact position of the church at that point (currently).
- Secondly, he has to know where the position of the church should be tomorrow.
- Thirdly, he/she has to know ways and means of how to effect change.
- Fourthly, he/she has to clarify to the followers the need and importance of change.
- Fifthly, he/she has to sketch to them what the end results would look like.

Failure to consider the above issues could easily result in resistance to change because people do not take it easy when their values, norms and behaviours of people in worship have to be renewed or changed (Coetsee, 1999:44). Participation of all congregational members in a church project like culture change, and renewal of worship towards greater participation implies that people will feel empowered. Participation ensures that members gain confidence and grow. Furthermore, when people participate, they develop a sense of ownership. Participation cannot be seen in isolation from involvement. Participation and involvement should be seen as ongoing elements in the church. The leadership of the church is left with the most important responsibility of ensuring that congregants are actively participating in church activities in order to achieve the vision of the church (Hendriks, 2004:205).

6.4.3 Management of diversity and language
The URCSA is a church with a rich diversity of cultures and languages. The church finds itself in a process of uniting black, white, Indians, and coloured people. This suggests that the church is characterised by divisions that need to be overcome. The Belhar confession has become the means through which diversity could be managed. In a memorandum of agreement 2012 as well as in the spirit of the Belhar Confession, the leadership of URCSA agreed to treasure the different languages used in the church.
One possible manner to accommodate diversity is to ensure that congregations worshipping differently, should begin by coming together for worship under one roof to accommodate the diversity of languages in one service (Kloppers 2017:179). This notion is agreed to and supported by the DRC. In their declaration at their Synod of 2015, they indicated that they advocate for unity in diversity, not uniformity. The diversity of nation’s cultural differences and variety of worships styles, confessional expressions, and formulas should be recognised. In Genesis 1:27 the desirable sentiments for managing diversity as stated above are expressed as follows:

- Every human being is created in the image of God and therefore deserves the same degree of respect and love, despite differences of belief, culture, age, gender or ethnic origin.

The following are recommendations to unite different people:

- Prayer for each other and for unity ecumenical pilgrimages
- Social and diaconal initiatives
- Cultural projects.

All liturgical resources must be translated into all languages that are used in the URCSA, as will encourage church members to learn the languages of the other cultures represented in the worship. This does not mean that everyone is going to be fluent in all the languages, but it is an opportunity for members to learn certain words.

For example, members may learn the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6 9-13) in another language, such as:

\begin{quote}
Ntata rona ya Mahodimong (Our Father which art in heaven)  
Lebitso la hao a le ke le kgethehe (Hallowed be thy name)  
Ho tle mmuso wa hao (Thy kingdom come)  
Thato ya hao e etswe lefatsheng (Thy will be done in earth)  
Jwaloka e etswa lehodimong (as it is in heaven)  
O re le kajeno bohobe ba rona (Give us our daily bread)  
Ba tsatsi leleng le leng (as usual)  
O re tshwarele melato ya rona (And forgive us our debts)  
Jwaloka re tswarela ba nang le melato ho rona (as we forgive our debtors)  
O se ke wa re isa molekong (And lead us not into temptation,)  
O mpe o re lwele ho e mobe (but deliver us from evil)
\end{quote}
This may allow all members present to respond faithfully to the prayer. It is also important for church members to engage in dialogue with each other. The use of sign language should likewise be encouraged to accommodate members whose hearing is challenged, in the worship of URCSA (see Kloppers 2017:183). This can help to provide a more open worship forum where everyone can have an equal voice.

It is therefore suggested that there is a need for the church to properly manage diversity. There are biblical metaphors used to desirable the management of cultural and language diversity in the worship. One example is that the church is a community of believers called together for worship by the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit. The coming together of people is purpose driven. In Ephesians 2:11-22, the people who have assembled together at one place for worship are referred to as the whole people of God or the family of God in which all members are bound to each other in love. The second metaphor is the one referring to a building into which believers are crafted together with each other, and where God welcomes everybody (1 Corinthians 3:9).

The discussion about the management of diversity can be concluded by affirming that the leadership of URCSA must be informed about resources for managing diversity at their disposal with a view to enrich worship. This notion is encapsulated in the Belhar confession as well as in the declaration of 2015 of the DRC. The Scriptures in Genesis 1:27, Ephesians 2:11-22 and 1 Corinthians 3:9 correctly sketches the path to be followed for the purpose of diversity management that will enhance effective church worship.

6.4.4 The role of music in worship

Kloppers (2017:183) states that music can serve as a means of expression for diverse cultural backgrounds, believing that it can help to overcome language challenges, confessional differences as well as bridging cultural gaps.
In an effort to achieve this, Kloppers (2017:183-184) states that the leadership of the church needs to ensure that workshops are conducted and that seminars in relation to inclusive music are conducted. The workshops and seminars aimed at giving expression for congregants should include, but need not be limited to:

- Ensuring that members are comfortable in singing different songs emanating from the diverse cultural and language backgrounds (Kloppers 2017: 183). These songs should be sung by means of utilising musical instruments such as piano, drums, and beats.
- Dancing in the church should be encouraged. Dance after the benediction when all members of the congregation greet each other may also add a deeper dimension of participation to worship and enhance communication.
- Additional to these is that some hymn books can have songs, stanzas and texts in other languages, for example:
  - Stuur ons uit, Heer, stuur ons uit (Afrikaans)
  - Thuma mina, thuma mina somandla (IsiZulu)
  - Roma nna, roma nna Modimo (Sesotho)
  - Seng’ ya vuma, seng’ ya vuma somandla (IsiXhosa)
  (Liedboek van die Kerk 2001, Numbers 533 and 534)

Learning and singing songs in various languages could encourage participatory worship (Kloppers 2017: 184). This may develop a sense of confidence in the worship of the church, and it may become more inviting to all people.

For the URCSA it is important is that hymns and songs based on the Belhar confession have to be included (Kloppers 2017:186).

The music of the church cannot only be regarded as a means of bridging cultural differences in accommodating diverse people in the church, and is focal point should remain praising and glorifying the Almighty God.

The leadership of the church should choose from the Psalms of David with a view to take the powerful words of wisdom used by David and to meditate on them through singing. The music sung in the church should also include the words uttered by Christ Jesus and his disciples. This kind of music will enrich the church as well as spiritually uplifting Christians to another level in life.
The implication is that renewal of worship in the URCSA can be achieved through music, because music has the ability to unite diverse people in worship. However, music can only achieve this objective if the leadership welcomes and introduces intensive training relating to music in the church. The training should include ongoing workshops and seminars. Workshops will not only benefit adults, but may educate the next generation about the role of music in the worship.

The use of musical instruments to attract the youth of the church has to be encouraged. Allowing a variety of congregational hymns in the worship will recognise the value of the different members.

6.4.5 **Alignment of activities/people**

The concept of alignment refers to a process of ensuring that all people under the command of the leader are following the vision of that leader. The vision of any leader cannot be achieved if people’s hearts, minds and efforts are not behind the vision (Litwin *et al.*, 1996:60). Transformational leaders should be aligned with the church’s elements and actions. This means that the elements and actions, if properly observed, should bring about a sound understanding of worship, and establish the presence and glory of God. The musical part of worship should be aligned to the Word in such a manner that God is united with his people through music. According to Black (2000:92), music in worship creates a sense of unity and participation.

6.4.6 **The diagram below shows the characteristics of a transformational leader**

The relevant characteristics bring about new praxis for the URCSA in the Potchefstroom Presbytery, that is participation, diversity, alignment, empowerment:
6.4.6 Conclusion

Over the years, people in the church have done much to ensure that they worship God correctly, but these efforts need to be expanded in new times. The church has to explore new avenues, since there is a need for a renewal in worship. The best way to bring about renewal is through a transformational leader. The transformational leader should accept, that, as minister of the Word of God, he/she is called to be a transformational leader, who must walk in the steps of Jesus Christ, and who has the ability to effect change in worship. That leader has to command things to happen to the glory of the Lord.

Possibilities for bringing about this renewal include:

- Firstly, to have good knowledge of worship itself;
- To know the theological meanings of the actions in worship;
- To know the role of music and all the functions music could fulfil in worship;
- To know the possibilities various languages could open up to enrich worship.
- To know the meaning of all the times in the church year and the possibilities the various seasons could open up.

By knowing, and constantly bearing in mind all these aspects, ministers could lead in bringing about renewal in worship, which is transformational, and which could change people and also change the church as a whole – effecting change in the world.
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ANNEX A

Dear Sir/Madam

I am currently enrolled in a master’s program at the University of South Africa and am in the process of writing my dissertation. The purpose of the study is:

To determine firstly actions and elements that are important in worship. Secondly, to determine the order in which these elements and actions could function best, as well as the possible variations in the order.

To determine the way music and language could be used to enhance and enrich participatory worship.

Lastly to determine the role the Church Year could play in the liturgy.

Reflecting on the above-mentioned objectives, I would like you to take part in a Research Study entitled: **Renewal of worship in the URCSA, Potchefstroom Presbytery: A Practical Theological investigation.**

The questionnaire has been designed to collect information. If you agree to participate in this study, please answer the questions on the questionnaire sheet as best you can. Please return the questionnaire as soon as possible (The responses will be expected within 3 weeks from now).

I hope you find my request in order and view it in the light of advancement of our Church.

Sincerely yours.

DETAILS OF THE RESEARCHER: MOHAKABE KENNETH.MR

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ANNEXURE B

Questionnaire for quantitative survey

5.3.1 what elements and actions in worship do you regard as essential?
Response: .............................................................................................................

5.3.2 Are these elements and actions in your services usually arranged in the same order every Sunday? (E.g. Votum, Blessing, Hymn of Praise, Reading of the Law, Confession of sin etc.)
Response: .............................................................................................................

5.3.3 If not, how the elements are arranged and why are they arranged differently?
Response:

5.3.4 How many hymns and songs are sung approximately in each service?
Response: .............................................................................................................

5.3.5 Who choose the various songs and hymns and according to which principles are they chosen?
Response: .............................................................................................................

5.3.6 How often would a song, hymn, or chorus be sung spontaneously over and above the chosen hymns?
Response: .............................................................................................................

5.3.7 Which language is used predominantly in your congregation?
Response: .............................................................................................................

5.3.8 Which other languages are used in your worship and how often?
Response: .............................................................................................................

5.3.9 If other languages are used, in which way are they used? (In singing, readings, or other)
Response: .............................................................................................................

5.3.10 Would you say your worship is participatory in any way? And if so, in which ways?
Response: .............................................................................................................

5.3.11 Do you have suggestions on how your worship could reflect vibrancy (high-spirited, lively) in URCSA and would you be willing to incorporate such practices?
Response: .............................................................................................................